Between the 3rd and 2nd Millennia BC: Exploring Cultural Diversity and Change in Late Prehistoric Communities

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Chapter 1

Introduction: The Turning of Things

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Introduction

It is generally agreed that during the 3rd millennium BC (Chalcolithic) and the 2nd millennium BC (Bronze Age) complex transformations of the social dynamics within the diverse communities inhabiting the different regions of Europe occurred. This book intends to revisit such consensus by highlighting how researchers explain these transformations and differences. The volume assembles some of the contributions presented at the seminar 'In between the 3rd and 2nd millennium BC – Which kind of turn?' held at the University of Coimbra (Portugal) in November 2018. The meeting aimed to examine different points of view on the topic, asking what archaeological evidence could be analysed to discuss the turning process. During the seminar, talks were presented about different geographical units in Western Europe. Most focussed on the Portuguese territory, however, as our original goal was not to present a synthesis on this region, we also invited researchers working in the UK, Spain and France (Lopes and Gomes 2018). In doing this, we were aiming to expand our view of the Portuguese territory, widen our insights into the turn between the Chalcolithic and the Bronze Age, and to contribute to a better understanding of our possibilities of investigating the development of European Late Prehistoric cultural diversity by positioning it within a broader geographical scale. This also allowed the addition of diverse perspectives in questioning the subject and brought together colleagues working within different institutional contexts and inspired by disparate conceptual backgrounds.

It was decided, for the purposes of this volume, mainly to concentrate on the Iberian Peninsula. By limiting our focus to this region, we felt we could thoroughly examine the differing approaches and interpretations of the turn between the Chalcolithic and Bronze Age. Although this chapter, and the others in this volume base their discussions around the Iberian Peninsula, we decided we had to include McFadyen's provocative paper on Cambridgeshire. Her analysis of the singularity of the 'Must Farm' landscape raises important questions about the limitations of archaeological narratives based on linear perspectives and periodisation. These questions, and those raised by the other papers presented at the seminar, form the basis of this introductory chapter.

We want to be very clear that we do not see this volume as answering all the questions that can be asked about the turn from the Chalcolithic to the Bronze Age, rather we see this volume as part of an ongoing discussion, one that ranges beyond the turn itself and begins to examine the very questions we should ask about this period. In order to begin this conversation we have not written the standard style of Introduction to a volume of edited papers, although we do discuss these papers in detail below, we have taken the opportunity to include the questions that occurred to us as we re-read these papers, the areas that we think would be most interesting to explore. We were also revisiting our thoughts and motivations in organising the seminar; how we wanted to discuss the possibilities of understanding the nature of the turn between the 2nd and 3rd millennia. Additionally, we decided to present our own brief essay on the Serra da Aboboreira located in Northern Portugal (see below). Our aim is to attempt blending a narrative based on landscape, periodisation and coexistences. In doing this, we conclude that in the discussion of the turning points – or, in other words, in the discussion of the cultural becoming – one should always think about the topology of things, situating traditional and novel elements in order to question what things can tell us about the historical tensions under which long reconfiguration processes occurred. In exploring such a topology, can we move towards an understanding of the historical singularity of past remains and, in doing this, become closer to creating a narrative on the turning of things; a narrative situating things and talking about how they may have changed the world under which they emerged? This is how we would like readers to experience this book: as an

attempt to understand our knowledge and imagine what further investigations can be made into late prehistory.

We will begin by discussing the papers included in this volume, analysing their similarities and differences in approach and understandings of late prehistory. The first three chapters discuss data from the Iberian Northwest: Bettencourt (Chapter 2) presents a synthesis of this region by discussing a wide range of archaeological data (from pottery to DNA analysis); Alves (Chapter 3) focuses her perspective on the dynamics of Late Prehistoric art traditions in Northern Portugal; and Luz (Chapter 4) analyses a single Bronze Age site located in Porto. These three contributions use very different analytical frameworks in their approach and concerns in thinking about the late prehistory of this region. The Iberian Southwest is the focus of several chapters: Soares (Chapter 5) searches for the turning point of Bronze Age societies in Southern Portugal; Valera (Chapter 6) discusses how monumental ditch enclosures may be understood as an historic-geographical context marking the end of the Neolithic worldview during the 3rd millennium; Serra's goal is to tell the story of a particular landscape (the plain of Beja) after these monuments have been abandoned, and how the Bronze Age ends in new monumental cycle (Chapter 7); Costa (Chapter 8), by contrast, discusses the differences between the 3rd and 2nd millennium through the faunal remains.

These texts suggest different perspectives and approaches to late prehistory, demonstrating how the coherence of our work as prehistorians is based on the multiple choices we make while developing research strategies. McFadyen's contribution (Chapter 9) is geographically decentred, however her perspective allows us to emphasise the heterogeneity of thinking on the subject. In a sense, the geographical difference of her chapter allows us to reinforce our standpoint that the aim of the seminar, and of this book, was not only to discuss the regional diversity of the archaeological data but also to think about the disparate perspectives on the data. Ironically, as we will see, McFadyen's alternative stance is based on her options regarding the geographical scale of analysis.

This group of eight texts allows multiple discussions of the variety of approaches, interpretations and styles of writing used in thinking about the past. We will begin by examining the geographical range, taking the geographical scale not only as a process of regional delimitation but as a strategy for analysis chosen by each author. This first approach to the chapters will demonstrate how the geographical dimension of the analysis is deeply intertwined with the ideas and discourse that each author wants to construct with their exploration of the archaeological data. The chapters focusing on Portugal allow a comparison of the role of monumental architecture, funerary contexts, and deposition contexts in each author's narrative, and so we decided to present an individual section on this topic. The reading of these chapters suggests an image of the cultural becoming as one of change and disruption. This has long been the consensus on this period and these chapters present important perspectives for revisiting that understanding. However, McFadyen's chapter offers us an opposite view by asking about long-term dwelling and situated knowledge (after Haraway 1991, and Ingold 1993). These different approaches suggest that questions need to be asked regarding the coexistence between what is interpreted as being from the old world of the Chalcolithic and the new world of the Bronze Age. In presenting the chapters focusing on the Portuguese territory we wanted to raise this question and look at how we might explore this direction in further research.

The different approaches taken by these authors result in different narratives whose comparison is also an interesting exercise in understanding the differences between the authors. The Narrative Styles section (below) is a contribution to understanding how our research frames the story we tell; thus it also sets the possibilities of making sense of the changes within the archaeological record between the 3rd and 2nd millennia. At the core of the consensus about the transformations of the social dynamics there is also a tacit agreement that periodisation is one of the main strategies that archaeologists have to create order out of the heterogeneity of the archaeological data. Periodisation allows narratives about continuity and collapse to explain the transformations and also permits the creation of longer or shorter periods, producing different rhythms for the historical processes. All these options intertwine with the way the narrative is then constructed by each author. In turn, McFadyen shows how an analysis focusing on the landscape and situated knowledge allows us to create a different narrative from those authors privileging periodisation. In this sense, her paper enables us to revisit the consensus while resisting its pressure on the ways we think and organise long-term processes in studying late prehistory.

Periodisation played a major role in our organisation of the original seminar and the subsequent rethinking as we brought together this volume. We were trying to discuss the possibilities of understanding the nature of the turn between the 3rd and 2nd millennia and we asked 'which kind of turn?'. Periodisation is the most immediate strategy to answer this; discussing different periodisations, alternative explanations and regional variability is a way to demonstrate the complexity of the theme. Asking 'which turning points?' is another

necessary question for bringing order to the discussion and the narrative style. However, while these two questions are both necessary and enlightening, they often shape the answers into a linear perspective on the subject. In order to create a different conversation and divergent perspectives, we suggest a different question 'between the 3rd and 2nd millennia: what should we be asking?'. Perhaps such a question could create the conditions to rethink the ways to narrate the turning and understand its nature. By wondering what to ask of particular archaeological evidences we may find a way to rediscover the singularity of past remains, the otherness of past communities, and the differences of approach by the researchers committed to its study.

Geographical scale(s)

Reading the eight chapters challenges us to understand a dialogue between the Mediterranean and Atlantic worlds. The analysis of Bettencourt and Alves on the Iberian Northwest questions these biogeographical unities, stressing that there was a permeable border during the 3rd and 2nd millennia. Soares and Valera focus on the Iberian Southwest, referring to the dynamics between the Western and Central Mediterranean. In this regard, Valera's perspective should be noted because of the emphasis he places on geographical thinking to make sense of the archaeological data. His approach directly refers to the insertion of local communities into an historical-geographical complex that places different parts of the Mediterranean in an intense cultural dialogue during the 3rd millennium. According to Valera, the end of such cultural dynamics would have resulted in the collapse of the Neolithic worldview and the beginning of a different order.

In contrast to these regional approaches, there are two chapters whose geographical scales are particular landscapes. Serra's analysis is centred on the Alentejo peneplain and looks at how monumental architecture would have contributed to the landscape reconfiguration during the 2nd millennium BC. This interest in the disruptive character that monuments may have had in the landscape contrasts with McFadyen's perspective. In discussing Must Farm archaeology, rather than looking for disruptive turns, McFadyen directs her analysis toward an understanding of the conditions under which past communities stayed in a place. Her aim is not to identify different landscape marking strategies but the contextualisation of the landscape's knowledge and practices. Correspondingly, for Costa and Luz geographical scale is expressed in the attention given to such knowledge and practices. Costa emphasises a change in the faunal record between the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC in the Alentejo peneplain, arguing for a transformation in the relationship between human and animal communities. Luz focuses on a pit site – Areias Altas – dating from the first half of the 2nd millennium BC, located near the sea at Porto, exploring the possibility that the site was related to salt production and how the artefactuality of such a custom may have participated in practices of deposition.

In considering the above-mentioned diversity, this volume provides different perspectives on the geographical dimension of archaeological data. In the first group of texts, there is a comparison between the territories of a wide region, searching for a regional synthesis to overcome the (in)coherence and heterogeneity of the archaeological data. This comparison between territories led Soares and Valera to recognise the role of large-scale relationships of dependency in explaining the cultural changes of communities in southern Portugal. Such a comparison also allows Bettencourt to emphasise that from the middle of the 3rd millennium BC onwards the Iberian Northwest present different rhythms of change. Alves uses the comparison in a different way. Her analysis of different rock art traditions – schematic art in the hinterland Mediterranean region and Atlantic art – and its role in the creation of landscape make her realise how both, regardless of their differences, are expressions of the same Neolithic worldview, ending at the beginning of the 2nd millennium. In this sense, Alves's emphasis on the landscape makes her closer to the second group of texts, in which the analysis pays attention to the particularities of local geographies. Regarding these different geographical approaches, we would again like to stress that for each author geographical scale is a condition emphasising both their discussion of the past remains and the narrative that they want to create. This is particularly so in McFadyen's chapter, her analysis of the singularity of the landscape is a strategy to overcome the limits of an archaeological discourse based on periodisation, challenging the structure of normative archaeological narrative.

Perspectives on monumental architecture, settlements, burial contexts and practices of deposition on the western façade of the Iberian Peninsula

Since the middle of the 20th century, general syntheses focusing on the late prehistory of Western Europe have stressed the contrast between the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC (Aranda Jiménez *et al.* 2015; Blanco-González *et al.* 2018; Cruz Berrocal *et al.* 2013; Lilios 2019; Meller *et al.* 2015; Müller *et al.* 2019, just to mention some more recent titles). Such overviews highlight how the great monuments and collective identity rituals of the 3rd millennium BC – fixing the matrix of a Neolithic worldview – had continued into the 2nd millennium BC. Following this, new, individualised powers, with

little visual monumental expression, emerged all over western Europe. From an architectural point of view the novelty of the Bronze Age world was initially almost invisible. And yet, paradoxically, it was this world that contained the potential social/political conditions which gave rise to the hierarchical/proto-state powers that ended the story of Western European prehistory. In contrast, our seminar invited researchers to alter the scale of analysis to question this change by basing their investigations locally or regionally. Thus, it was also about discussing the cultural differences between the local communities of the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC. Overall, the seminar was intended to expand and reinterpret these hegemonic large-scale narratives.

The south of the Portuguese territory is analysed as a whole by the authors discussing this region. Valera establishes and characterises a long historical period (from the 4th to the end of the 3rd millennium BC) with a vigorous, unitary identity, manifested, for example, in the monumentality of architectural devices (enclosures of different types), in supra-regional interactions promoting exchanges of artefacts made of exogenous materials, or in heterogeneous ceremonial practices associated with a wide range of social contexts. During the 3rd millennium, there was an acceleration and intensification of the monumental architecture tradition and supra-regional interaction. This acceleration/intensification process would have created the conditions for its complexity. Simultaneously, this process is also understood by the author as creating the conditions for its implosion. The Chalcolithic world is then the apex of a linear process of growth, and, concomitantly, of collapse at the end of the 3rd millennium BC. Valera does not discuss what may have happened after such a devastating decline. However, complementing this view, Serra discusses the Alentejo Plain during the 2nd millennium BC, describing the emergence of a society with little archaeological visibility. This society is materialised through pit sites, necropolises of cists, possibly associated with stelae; it is of a different organisation and social complexity, where individualised powers emerged without the need for the wide-ranging monumental choreography of the earlier powers of the 3rd millennium BC. From this perspective, this so-called Middle Bronze Age seems to be a counter-cycle, after the expansion/collapse (Chalcolithic) and immediately before the community awoke to a new cycle materialised in the emergence of new enclosures associated with the complex communities of the Late Bronze Age. In addition to these complementary perspectives, Costa accentuates the differences between the Chalcolithic and Bronze Age contexts in the zooarchaeological record, allowing the reader to visualise a linear sequence between the two worlds.

Soares presents a different periodisation to the one suggested by Valera and Serra, nevertheless, it is also a perspective privileging a linear sequence. The local Chalcolithic tribal communities were experiencing social disarticulation. This unstable social context leads to the emergence of incipient chiefdoms around 2500 BC. In arguing this, Soares emphasises the appearance of individual funerary practices associated with Beaker pottery and novel metal objects. Such burial practices were changes in continuity, in the sense that they represent the emergence of embryonic personal powers within the unstable political context of a tribal society. The advent of such social individuality, Soares argues, is a milestone marking the beginning of the Bronze Age. In the analysis of this new world, the author reviews data from settlements and burial contexts that had little impact on the landscape. By searching for elements indicating social and political complexity during the 2nd millennium, she identifies the formation of proto states ruled by chiefs, under the influence of the El Argar state located in the south east of the Iberian Peninsula.

A fundamental question arises while reading these chapters about southern Portugal: how to interpret the coexistence between traditional/communal Chalcolithic contexts and individual contexts during the second half of the 3rd millennium? One should emphasise that the 'Ferradeira Horizon' (Schubart 1971; 1975) associated with Beaker pottery is well known in the literature and often interpreted as an expression of a complex socio-political change. There is an ideology of individuality expressed by the 'Ferradeira Horizon' coexisting with the Chalcolithic tradition. Soares often uses it as a matter of classification; Serra refers to it when considering its role in the regional periodisation. The question of the coexistence of communal and individual funerary practices would be an interesting topic of further research and debate to understand the turn between a world where expressions of individuality are lacking, to a world which is structured by such an ideology. We will return to this in our discussion of Serra da Aboboreira.

As mentioned, the chapters about Northern Portugal accentuate the differences between the Atlantic littoral and the Mediterranean hinterland. This division is used by Bettencourt as a means to explore an asymmetric cultural evolution: a coastal area which presents elements of a new world from the middle of the 3rd millennium; and a hinterland whose Chalcolithic traditions seems to resist the adoption of novelties. Despite this regional diversity, Bettencourt's chapter presents a global linear sequence, also reviewing and reinterpreting data from neighbouring Galicia, which results in a synthesis of the Iberian Northwest. From this perspective, the author argues that since the middle of 3rd millennium there are changes – new cultural

interactions, for example – leading local communities to take different paths; these changes become more intense during the last quarter of the millennium, resulting in a multiplicity of communities, who, however, may have shared the same social structure. In this understanding of becoming, Bettencourt stresses how Chalcolithic communities (polarised around monuments of Neolithic tradition, including different kinds of enclosures) evolved into communities with a sense of individuality expressed in different funerary contexts (with individual or restricted numbers of inhumations), accompanied by offerings of metal weapons and jewellery. Alves also emphasises that in the littoral rock art sites – Atlantic rock art – there is a change in the motifs; new engravings appear consisting of halberds and daggers. Alves's argument about these engravings is of a different nature. In her chapter, art is questioned from a landscape perspective. This point of view allows her to understand that the novelties highlighted by Bettencourt should be interpreted as new motifs in a Neolithic rock art tradition. The engravings of halberds and daggers do not alter how Atlantic rock art crafts the landscape, rather, it is an updating of the traditional Neolithic worldview. Her argument strengthens as she compares Atlantic rock art to schematic rock art showing a similar ontological frame. In doing so, Alves suggests that the change should be looked at as the differences between rock art and statuary, and how this last expression would become a hegemonic art expression during the Bronze Age (stelae and/or armed statues). Here, too, a linear sequence is obvious. However, admitting the addition of engraved weapons into the Neolithic worldview could contribute to a discussion of the social nature of certain signs and the possibilities imaginable for interpreting an engraving.

These two chapters present a contrast between approaches: Bettencourt plays with a wide range of archaeological data, aiming to organise it into a historical process; Alves focuses on art expressions to understand their landscapes. Their interpretations are very different but equally persuasive, and a dialogue between the two approaches would be a constructive area for further research discussing the coexistence between the old and new world, such as the 'Montelavar/Carrapatas Horizon' (mentioned by Bettencourt; see also Harrison 1974; 1977; Schubart 1973).

Luz's chapter focuses on Areias Altas, a Middle Bronze Age pit site from the littoral north of Portugal. While her contribution does not reflect the discussion of periodisation, or the turn between the old and the new world, her contextual analysis of the social role of deposition practices during late prehistory provides an important topic for discussion. By looking at pit fills, Luz highlights how the pits may have been architectural devices created under diverse social settings, such as the production of salt and the practices of deposition. Although these deposition practices are assigned by Valera and Bettencourt to the 3rd millennium, they make little reference to their material and social nature. Costa also discusses these phenomena, mentioning the deposition of articulated animal bones in funerary and dwelling contexts. It is therefore worth stating that the Chalcolithic deposition practices, associated with a community ceremonial social scenario, also occur in the Middle Bronze Age, as highlighted by Luz (for further information about the relevance of these contexts in the South of Portugal during Late Prehistory, see Baptista and Gomes 2019; Gomes and Baptista 2017; and Valera 2019). That depositions can be identified so late makes it imperative that we should be examining and debating the formal and social typology/nature of these contexts. It is likely that throughout the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC, practices of deposition could happen in the most diverse places, organised according to different orders, and related to incongruent social practices. The intentional deposition of disparate materials may cross the margin of the 3rd and into the 2nd millennium BC, contributing, in the most diverse and opposite ways, to the consolidation of two antagonistic worlds. Regarding this, 'deposition' is then a conceptual 'umbrella' for different archaeographic/social realities, whose historical uniqueness needs to be investigated for the information it may reveal about the differences between these two worlds.

By reading these chapters as a whole, we are presented with variations of the same global linear approach, admitting, explicitly or implicitly, that the observable changes between the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC are related to alterations in the social structures of power. For example, the disappearance of Neolithic monuments and the emergence of individual/restricted burial contexts (in old or new spaces), accompanied by differentiated ceramic/metallic assemblages, is interpreted as a break between the old and the new worlds. For Soares and Bettencourt this rupture still begins in the second half of the 3rd millennium BC – as soon as the new individual burials appear. When these occur, these authors talk about an 'Early Bronze Age', a transition period between the old and the new. This coexistence is interpreted as an hegemonic indicator of a new world ahead, but it may also disclose a cultural meaning we can further explore.

Narrative styles

In this section, we will highlight how the archaeological analysis intertwines with aspects of the narrative style chosen by the authors (after Pluciennik 1999; see also Gomes 2020). We will compare how the chapters present different rhythms to the processes under which the turn occurred; how these rhythms entail different scales of observation expressed in the storytelling;

and how these associations come to an argument or a point of view on the question of the seminar. In doing this, our aim is to understand how we can construct narratives to answer the question 'What kind of turn?', and see where such an understanding can take us.

The chapters about the Portuguese territory offer a perspective on the turn between the Chalcolithic and the Bronze Ages; or, in other words, the ending of the old Neolithic world and the beginning of a new cultural and political order on the western facade of the Iberian Peninsula. To the north of Portugal, Bettencourt points to an early chronological turning point on the coast, around 2400/2300 BC, whose manifestation in the hinterland only becomes visible around 2200/2000 BC. These turning points, marking her narrative, are the results of her analysis of the temporal and spatial distribution of the archaeological data. In organising the heterogeneity of data, she enlarges her geographical scale of analysis, exploring the north west of Iberia to explain the diversity of material; it is a detailed order which by itself constructs the narrative. However, while it is true that the author plays with both time and space, it is time (chronology) which structures the narrative, as she focuses on the last quarter of the 3rd millennium BC, as a privileged moment to understand the turn. In contrast, Alves chooses only art expressions (rock art and statuary) to construct a narrative where different art traditions produce landscapes and identities. In so doing, she explores the cultural diversity within the Neolithic and demonstrates how such diversity constitutes the otherness of this world. The discernment of such an alterity and its comparison with the Bronze Age, is used by Alves to argue that the understanding of their difference is not so much a matter of time, or chronological division, but a matter of space, translated into different landscape dynamics.

Soares discusses the disarticulation of Chalcolithic communities in the south of Portugal around 2500 BC, which leads her to consider an Early Bronze Age. This is the first stage of a process which, between 1800 and 1200 BC (Middle Bronze Age), marks the emergence and consolidation of proto-state regional powers. Soares's narrative is based upon a tight periodisation, centred on a social and economic evolutionary process, influenced by Marxist and anthropological theory. In her discussion she also questions how the increased social complexity through the Middle Bronze Age is recognised (see also Soares and Silva 2016). In Valera and Serra's chapters, the change – or the global turn – occurred later, around 2200/2000 BC. Valera talks of the collapse of a Neolithic world, assuming the existence of a historical entity from the end of the 4th millennium and expressed by the construction of several ditched enclosures. These monuments are thus the main character of this narrative, Valera argues that they express a process of intensification and complexification of a supra-regional network defining this chronological period. The abandonment of such monuments would then mark the end of this world and the beginning of a new era. Serra's chapter tells the story of a world without monuments until the construction of new ones, during the Late Bronze Age. Despite their dissimilarities, these authors see the background of these different historical explanations as based on the importance of endogenous factors, even if natural influences (climate changes, for example), or cultural influences (the proximity to El Argar and the interaction with the Central Mediterranean) may have hastened or transformed the nature of change. Additionally, while acknowledging the differences between these narratives, we may say that Soares is privileging – as did Bettencourt – the chronological division as a means of ordering the narrative, whereas Valera and Serra, like Alves, base their storytelling on a spatial dimension, asking how particular features structure the local landscape and relate to broader geographies.

The diversity of narratives also suggests different perspectives on the rhythms of historical processes. The detailed periodisation advanced by Soares suggests communities in constant response to internal and external changes, gradually consolidating a sense of territorial and sedentary identity which organises people, goods and ideas according to vertical relations of power. Bettencourt presents the Iberian Northwest according to a similar narrative order resulting, however, in a divided region moving, changing, and living to different rhythms. The gradual nature of the turn of these narratives contrasts with the historical acceleration proposed by Valera. In response to an exponential increase in the number and dimension of ditch enclosures over the 3rd millennium, Valera's narrative highlights the density of a network allowing the circulation of goods and people who share a Neolithic worldview. This system leads to collapse because the acceleration is not accompanied by the necessary reconfigurations for its maintenance or transformation. In contrast, Serra's narrative of the 2nd millennium is a slow awakening of the plain.

The rhythm of historical processes proposed by these authors becomes a way of shaping the narrative. This is illustrative in understanding the difference between Soares and Valera's narrative. Soares's gradual changes (and detailed periodisation) are made by interpreting each novelty of the archaeological record as an indicator that 3rd millennium communities were always changing their social nature. In Soares's narrative, the Chalcolithic is seen as a world in crisis seeking stability. Given this, any novelty is interpreted as restructuring the social dynamics towards a stable order. Valera's point of view is quite different; he sees the 3rd millennium as a great moment of the monumental Neolithic. There is no

crisis, instead he sees a world whose characteristics are interaction, permeability, and transmutability, allowing and integrating novelty. In such a permeable world, any novelty acts as an element accelerating the process of growth until its implosion. The shape of the narrative represents the general image that the authors have of the historical conditions framing the archaeological evidence they study. The rhythm, both from the historical process and the narrative, then becomes as persuasive as any argument they may present.

McFadyen's main character is also the landscape. However, her narrative is markedly different. She is analysing another reality, but besides that, she is also creating a different narrative avoiding the restrictions of periodisation. To analyse her narrative, let us start with an archaeological entity that she has in common with other authors: the beaker pottery. Having referred to it, she is not interested in understanding its novelty. Instead, she situates this new element – situates its knowledge within the landscape. From this perspective, she has an image of a beaker within a landscape and constructed in the same way – before, during, and after the emergence of this historical element. As important as the beaker is, it is the repetitive and daily gestures of caring for the landscape which provide the circumstances for this beaker existence. This is a challenging perspective, but it also entails asking what kind of visible and meaningful changes on a landscape can we see when considering the novelty of particular artefacts? McFadyen's narrative goes beyond the continuity/discontinuity dichotomy organising the other narratives. Rather than resistance or tradition, it is organised by seeking to do justice to the tenacity of prehistoric communities. A tenacity expressed through long-term practices, which, in their repetition and difference, take care of a landscape and its (in) finite possibilities. This emphasis on tenacity does not seek novelties as indicators of adaptation or collapse, but as an understanding of the situated knowledge of a landscape. In this sense, periodisation is not an adequate strategy or narrative to think about this knowledge, because continuities and ruptures cannot reflect the centrality of caring for a place enacted by that place's community. It may initially seem that McFadyen is far from answering the question of the seminar, however, by following her thoughts – and reaction to periodisation – we find an opportunity to rethink what we emphasise and what we overlook while thinking about long-term perspectives.

McFadyen's narrative does not advance our thinking on the problematisation of the historical process, however, it requires us to think of the turn at the landscape scale, without attempting to define a global explanation. This entails a different focus from the ones proposed by Bettencourt and Alves, highlighting the differences of two biogeographical regions, by Valera, whose thoughts are made by considering a historical-geographical complex, and by Serra, whose landscape is analysed by studying cycles of monumentality. McFadyen's focus is on the becoming of the landscape and refers to situated knowledges. Such a perspective allows an emphasis on the coexistences we refer to in the previous section. At the scale of the landscape, it is possible to situate and discuss the coexistence of material that we consider to be an expression of Neolithic and Bronze Age worldviews. Investigation of this coexistence may allow deeper understanding of the turn; an understanding resisting periodisation and its grammar of chronological succession ordering archaeological data. This is a difficult task, but it is worth the attempt. In the following section, we will assay this by discussing a set of coexistences at a landscape in the north of Portugal: the Serra da Aboboreira, a granitic mountain in the Douro Valley, comprising long plateaus at the summit and small platforms with streams on the slopes. Serra da Aboboreira is then a landscape of micro-landscapes presenting different conditions/challenges to the tenacity of communities who, as we will see, dwelt differently across geographical diversity and time.

Coexistences and landscape(s) at Serra da Aboboreira (North Portugal) in between 2500 BC and 1000 BC

Serra da Aboboreira is located in the Atlantic sub-region (see Chapter 3). During the late 1970s and 1980s, a research project developed by the University of Porto focussed on the excavation of several prehistoric sites, dating from at least the 5th millennium BC to the beginnings of the 1st millennium BC (that is, from the Neolithic until the end of the Bronze Age). The diversity of sites, including megalithic monuments, flat pit burials, settlements, and the different studies (carbon dating, for example) allowed the construction of a chronology for this area which is still used as a reference point for the Iberian Northwest (Jorge, S.O. 2000; 2003; Jorge, V.O. 1989; 1991; 1995; Lopes and Bettencourt 2017). A Neolithic monumental necropolis, centred on the top of the mountain, was first used in the 5th millennium BC and grew throughout the 4th millennium BC. This construction resulted in a landscape marked by several mounds of different dimensions in dialogue with the rocky granite outcrops framing this complex scene. Under the mounds there is a diversity of hidden architecture (closed or opened chambers and passage graves, for example). The construction of the landscape of these mounds appears to have ended between the middle of the 4th millennium and the first half of the 3rd millennium BC, although the old monuments continued to be reused throughout this period and beyond (Jorge, S.O. 2000; Lopes and Bettencourt 2017).

During the second half of the 3rd millennium BC construction of new monuments restarted. Two of

these monuments are double cist chambers covered by mounds and containing individual or restricted numbers of inhumations. At one of the monuments, Chã de Carvalhal 1, the grave goods included with the burial comprised bell-beaker fragments and an assemblage of copper tanged daggers and Palmela points (Cruz 1992). The other monument, Meninas do Castro 4, was very dilapidated but contained a silver spiral (Jorge 1983). Slightly later, during the transition from the 3rd to the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, a third grave, Outeiro de Gregos 1, was constructed next to an earlier monument. This cairn is almost invisible in the landscape, yet it contained an individual burial with fragments of an undecorated tronco-conical vessel and a silver spiral (Jorge 1980). These three monuments are new architectural devices in a space where construction had stopped at the beginning of the 3rd millennium BC. In addition, they also present unfamiliar funerary practices, with individual or restricted numbers of inhumations, containing differentiated grave-goods (ceramics and metal). Thus, during this period there is a coexistence between constructions, suggesting different practices and worldviews: a coexistence which reasserts the traditional landscape as a meaningful and active element within the new funerary practices.

The necropolis of the Serra da Aboboreira occupies a relatively restricted space, integrating, side by side, collective tombs built in the Middle/Late Neolithic, and individual tombs from the Late Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age (to use classic designations). Certainly, the burial landscape has changed over time, but the memory of an ancient world was strong enough, for example, to justify the construction of a cairn, at the end of the 3rd or the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, a few metres from a Neolithic monument. And, by doing so, lay claim to Neolithic burial traditions – as if the necropolis of Neolithic ancestors was fundamental to legitimating the social change reflected in these new inhumations. Within the topology of these new constructions, we may see that these communities were deliberately connecting to this ancient space, using the memory of the old monumental landscape to link to this new way of being (Jorge, S.O. 2000; Lopes and Bettencourt 2017).

The burials of the second half of the 3rd/beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, despite being part of a social apparatus promoting individualised burials, respect the traditional/collective locus for memory. And, from that point of view, they are perpetuating a world that is at an end. In a sense, this coexistence, and its topology, tell us a story which is not about collapse nor a linear continuity nor a disruptive change. This is a coexistence referring to cultural diversity, it opens up the possibility of asking how a worldview developing in the 2nd millennium converses with an ancient, and ending, Neolithic tradition. This coexistence enables us to think again about McFadyen's narrative on tenacity; and how communities' situated knowledge of a landscape relates to the dialogue between cultural differences. The analysis and discussion of this coexistence contribute to a narrative about the care of a landscape, about the conditions under which a cultural turn occurred.

Only in the first half of the 2nd millennium BC do we have consistent data to argue for a profound change in Serra da Aboboreira. The locus of this change is no longer the top plateaus, but the slope platforms. On one these platforms is located Bouça do Frade, a pit settlement inhabited during the middle of the 2nd millennium BC (although we suspect that it was occupied for the first time a little earlier) and the beginning of the 1st millennium BC (Jorge, S.O. 1988). Nearby, and also dating from the beginning of the second half of the 2nd millennium BC, there is a necropolis, Tapado da Caldeira, in which the burial architecture is also made through negative structures; there are no mounds covering the individual inhumations. Only four burials were dug, three corresponding to adult inhumations, and one to a child. Each grave contained a differently decorated, entire ceramic vase (one of which was a beautiful Cogotas I pot, suggesting social contacts with the northern Meseta). It should also be noted that in the last quarter of the 2nd millennium BC a pot without decoration was deposited within a small depression in one of the graves. This pot may be associated with a funerary cremation practice dating from the beginning of the Late Bronze Age. If so, from the middle of the 2nd millennium BC the Tapado da Caldeira burials mark the shift in focus far away from the Neolithic necropolis at the top of the mountain (Jorge, S.O. 1980; 2000; Lopes and Bettencourt 2017).

From the middle of the 2nd millennium BC onwards, Tapado da Caldeira is then a new burial space, constructed by flat pits (without mounds) and associated with ceramic vessels, but not metal objects. In addition to this, we should mention that there is no spatial differentiation between the burials and the pit settlement. While it is true that we cannot ignore the possibility of the long reuse of the Neolithic necropolis, it is also true that in the Middle Bronze Age the community burial locus moved to a new space, making a topological/symbolic system with the Bouça do Frade settlement. In this way, the ideology of individuality expressed by the burial contexts of the mid 2nd millennium BC at the Serra da Aboboreira coincides with a real displacement of burial contexts. It participates in a much broader cultural turn, whose contours are not confined to social burial practices, but to a whole new way of producing a landscape.

The analysis of the coexistences between the Neolithic and Bonze Age worlds allows us to rethink the narrative we can create around this landscape. Instead of a linear

sequence organised by periodisation and a narrative shaped by the idea of material (technical) progress, we can create a narrative exploring periodisation as a means of discussing the singularity of a landscape and its situated knowledges. By exploring the coexistences, we can get closer to the singularity of the archaeological data and use this singularity in the construction of a narrative (Pluciennik 1999; Gomes 2020). From this perspective, we speak not of a moment of transition between different chronological periods, but a social dynamic in which the topology of burial contexts stages a cultural dialogue: a material dialogue made through the reactivation of an ancient landscape, and, consequently, updating the novelty of funerary practices. In other words, it is a narrative situating things, and their knowledges, and talking of how they may have turned and altered the world under which they emerged.

Final remarks

In reading the following chapters, it will be seen that, with the exception of McFadyen and Luz, the authors roam on the macro-scale and opt for linear sequences. Such approaches present an overarching picture of historical processes whose variability makes us understand the complexity of the themes and diversity of the perspectives that can be raised. Partly as a result of this option (large scales, linear periodisations), individual burial contexts appear and (explicitly or implicitly) are seen as hegemonic indicators of cultural change and rupture, displacing the monumentality of the previous era. And yet, a small- or medium-scale investigation may lead to the observation of human intervention in the landscape as a complex system of balance/disruption that generates tradition and innovation. Regarding the consensus we mentioned at the beginning of the text, we may say that large-scale periodisations conceal the variety and ambivalence of social processes. These chronologies erase the topological nodes that can be recognised in each space, each time – they do little to explain a coexistence of differences and similarities, innovations and traditions. In our reading of the chapters we have emphasised regional particularities/asymmetries, in which the coexistence of the old and the new worlds can be explored as a means to think about the cultural turn. This is also our suggestion to the reader: try to find in each chapter other elements whose ambiguity is an exciting node to open up what has been written by this diverse and committed group of authors.

In the narrative that we have presented of the late prehistory of Serra da Aboboreira, we examined one of the fracturing points between the perspectives of Valera, Soares, and Bettencourt: the meaning of individual burials. To Valera these burials occurred at the zenith of the Neolithic social world and had little consequences for its structure; and to Soares and Bettencourt they are understood as contexts expressing a restructuring process leading to a progressive transition. Serra da Aboboreira was perceived as a landscape in which we sought to understand the topology of the contexts of individual burial compared to a landscape of Neolithic origin, emphasising how these new contexts perpetuate/update their practices; it is then a narrative of coexistence. In doing this, we realised that within a landscape we should consider two different landscapes: the monumental Neolithic necropolis at the top of the mountain which was being constructed and transformed until the beginning of the 2nd millennium; and the landscape of the slope platforms which becomes the focus of burial and domestic settlements. In the Neolithic necropolis, the disruptive character of the social practices of individual burial is even greater because it allows us to consider their occurrence as an interstice of cultural differences. An intervening space in which a 'not yet new world' and a 'no longer old world' are enhanced. A 'not yet new world' of individual burials that seem to need the knowledge and legitimacy of an earlier monumental landscape; an ancient landscape that, by welcoming new practices, marks the stage of a 'no longer old world'. As such, there is no social breakdown or transition, but a cultural dialogue made through situated (or contextual) knowledge: a knowledge of a common ancestors' landscape and a knowledge of individual burial practices. Within this cultural dialogue of knowledges the conditions for the emergence of different identities were being created – different material conditions creating modes of subjectivation, allowing different social hegemonies and landscapes.

In concluding this chapter, we should stress the need to keep looking for new ways of questioning archaeological data and interpretation. At the beginning we suggested that 'In between the 3rd and 2nd millennia: what to ask?' would be an excellent question for future research. This question would enable a situation where it was possible to discuss how each author uses their methods, conceptual frameworks, prejudices, imagination, and strategies of persuasion. Such an approach would provide an opportunity to re-imagine the circumstances and conditions under which we craft and produce knowledge about the past. After all, discussing any archaeological evidence is a matter of freedom, and only by promoting such freedom will we be able to think differently and do justice to the differences between us.

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