

CROSSING BORDERS. GENERAL ASPECTS

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The present volume brings together a set of studies and reflections presented at the International Conference *Breaking Borders, Crossing Territories. Identities and exchanges during the Late Prehistory in the northern interior of the Iberian Peninsula*, held on 23 and 24 September 2021 and organized by the Transdisciplinary Research Centre «Culture, Space and Memory» (CITCEM) and the Department of Heritage Studies (DCTP) of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Porto. This conference, initially programmed for April 2020, was confronted with a pandemic that forced two postponements and the reformulation of the format in which it was conceived, having been held entirely in an online format. This did not lead to a demobilization of the participants or the audience, resulting in a full program of twenty-four presentations, with a wide range of views and lively debates in between sessions. We highlight, from these twenty-four papers, those presented by the invited speakers, to whom we thank: Julian Thomas, keynote speaker (University of Manchester), Carlos Aguiar (Polytechnic Institute of Bragança), Primitiva Bueno Ramírez (Universidad de Alcalá), Elisa Guerra-Doce (University of Valladolid) and Pedro Díaz del Río (CSIC-Madrid)². It is also important to mention and thank the members of the Scientific Committee of the conference: Primitiva Bueno Ramírez, Ramon Fábregas Valcarce (University of Santiago de Compostela), Raquel Vilaça (University of Coimbra), António Valera (Era-Arqueologia; ICAREHB — University of Algarve), Mariana Diniz (University of Lisboa), Sérgio Monteiro Rodrigues (University of Porto), Andreia Arezes (University of Porto), Elisa Guerra-Doce, Germán Delibes de Castro (University of Valladolid) and Pedro Díaz del Río.

The idea that the research tradition in Portugal and Spain has been accommodated to political-administrative boundaries, categorizing material data and creating narratives separated from each other, was the starting point that motivated the organization of this international conference. Although multiple traces of unity in cultural terms have long been recognized, at different scales and in different periods, in the Late Prehistory (VIII-I thousand B. C.) of the northern interior of the Iberian Peninsula, borders, as walls, have imposed restrictions on the study of these phenomena. Late Prehistory studies are

² Professor Raquel Vilaça, to whom we also thank, was also invited to participate. She was unable to present her paper at the conference as planned, but submitted the text for publication that we present in this volume.

still hostages of the delimitation of the Luso-Spanish border, conditioning visions of the whole. Such practices, inasmuch as they structurally shape the ways of thinking and conceptualizing the Past, have created discursive categories whose questioning has been one of the main goals of this scientific meeting.

The main motivation for holding this conference was the promotion of dialogue and common reflection, interdisciplinarity and cross-borderism, in a clear convergence with CITCEM's programme lines. In short, it sought to break down borders. To break borders in a multiple sense — political-administrative, but also in terms of the peninsular research tradition. In the same way, to break borders when it comes to the study of common archaeological entities and categories, often treated separately. Today, we can say that this appeal to the peninsular scientific community has been very well received, leading us to infer that there is a broad consensus on the necessary and urgent strengthening of relations between researchers from different disciplines, fields of knowledge and territories.

This scientific meeting, and the publication of the present volume, sought to promote renewed readings of the archaeological record, expanding the possibilities of analysis to better characterize the region from a paleoecological and chronological-cultural point of view, identifying spaces of interculturality. The wide range of perspectives included in the program provided new clues about the processes of identity management, strategies of settlement and occupation of the territory(ies) and the reconfiguration of the economic and social mechanisms that deeply marked the Late Prehistory of the Iberian Peninsula.

The volume we now present consists of twenty-one texts, submitted to scientific peer review, to which we are very grateful. The texts are signed by forty-two researchers: twenty-one Spanish, twenty Portuguese (or carrying out research in Portugal) and one British. Two of the texts are even signed by researchers of different nationalities. This work is organized in two great thematic blocks. The first brings together texts of general approach to historical processes at the regional scale; the second block is dedicated to case studies. Together they constitute the portrait of archaeological research in the northern peninsular interior of the Iberian Peninsula at the present time and embody the development of synergies that have broken borders, contributing to the integration of this region in the broad space of the peninsular interior as far as archaeological research is concerned. The dialogue now initiated will not solve, by itself, all the vicissitudes that result from the traditional separation that for more than a century has conceptually separated the peninsular interior territories, but it assumes itself as a platform for the gestation of more fruitful narratives to current research.