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DISCUSSION

Global archaeology and microhistorical analysis. Connecting scales in the 1st-milennium B.C. Mediterranean

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Abstract
Recently, voices have been raised regarding the challenges of Big Data-driven global approaches, including the realization that exclusively tackling the global scale masks social and historical realities. While multi-scalar analyses have confronted this problem, the effects of global approaches are being felt. We highlight one of these effects: as classical scholarship struggles to decolonize itself, the ancient Mediterranean in global archaeology pivots around the Graeco-Roman world only, marginalizing the non-classical Mediterranean, thus foiling attempts at promoting post-colonial perspectives. In highlighting this, our aim is twofold: first, to invigorate the debate on multi-scalar approaches, proposing to incorporate micro-history into archaeological analysis; second, to use the non-classical Mediterranean to demonstrate that historical depth at a micro level is essential to augment that power in our interpretations.

Keywords: Big Data; non-classical Mediterranean; microhistory; multi-scalar analysis; urbanism; citizenship

Introduction

In the last 20 or so years social and historical sciences have been going through a global turn: while history has arguably spearheaded this trend from the late 1990s, partly thanks to the legacy of the French *Annaliste* school and the breaking down of the nation state focus in the writing of history (Subrahmanyam 1997; 2014; Chartier 2001), global approaches are a more recent phenomenon in archaeology notwithstanding the large-scale comparative studies that have preceded them (i.e. Hornborg and Crumley 2007; Earle and Kristiansen 2010; Smith 2011). This may be because new refinements of scientific analytical techniques, the mining of large data sets and hence Big Data applications, all of which are offering a hitherto unknown potential for large-scale analyses, have been made possible only recently, although notably the trend for such analyses in the study of antiquity pre-dates these developments (Horden and Purcell 2000). With the 'deluge' of what are largely digital and spatial data, otherwise known as the Big Data revolution (Huggett 2020), comes the task of managing and exploiting the deluge to the best of the discipline's advantage, maintaining the caution, explicitly called for in an otherwise optimistic evaluation, towards all the potential pitfalls that the deluge may generate, not least a move towards hyper-empiricism (Bevan 2015; Huggett 2020, S14).

There seems to be little doubt that the Big Data revolution, for want of a better phrase, has facilitated global perspectives in archaeology (Kristiansen 2014; Shennan 2018; Fuller and Stevens 2019; Bevan 2014; 2020; Walsh *et al.* 2019). While archaeologists have begun to voice their concerns with Big Data applications, from methodological to ethical problems (Bevan

2015; Huggett 2020; Sørensen 2017; Van Valkenburgh and Dufton 2020), only a few others have made a wider point about the interpretive and ultimately intellectual consequences of doing Big History through the use of Big Data (Hodder 2018; Ribeiro 2019). As Hodder (2018) stated, some of these consequences have been the inability of grand-narrative archaeology to challenge the present status quo, putting the capturing of headlines and impact above all else and risking leading us into a post-truth archaeology; to expose power relations and give space to alternative voices; to be context-sensitive and exploit the unique features of archaeology, of which multi-scalar analysis is key. Of these, we wish to push further the last two points. On the former, we suggest that one of the casualties of global archaeology has been the 1st-millennium B.C. Mediterranean, a disciplinary subfield that has struggled to shed its centuries-old ethnocentric biases towards its Graeco-Roman past and its Eastern-centric research focus (cf. Foxhall 2014, 109), but has matured Mediterranean-wide perspectives over the last 20 or 30 years by integrating regions that have always been marginal to that Eastern-centric and/or Graeco-Roman focus (Van Dommelen 1997; Hodos 2006; Broodbank 2013; 2014; González-Ruibal and Ruiz-Galvez 2016; Knapp and van Dommelen 2014; Cifani and Stoddart, 2012). This process of decentring and decolonization, however, has been put in jeopardy by recent Big History studies of long-term Mediterranean trajectories where the grand narrative's preference for integration is largely for the Graeco-Roman world and the east of the basin, or at best the eastern colonial projection westwards manifested by Phoenician colonization (Manning 2018).

The pulse of this shift backwards is felt by related conceptualizations of the basin that anything west of the Aegean is the west Mediterranean (Dietler 2007; Lewis 2019, 497), and that the city state, which we can examine on a Mediterranean-wide scale, is seen exclusively as Greek, Rome, and a Graeco-Roman-textual version of Carthage (Fibiger Bang and Scheidel 2013). Anything west of Rome is sometimes, literally, a blank slate (Morris and Manning 2005, figure 2) or, at the best of times, that is, through genuine attempts at providing a decentred picture, a field of colonial–indigenous contact and material consumption (Dietler 2007). The fragmentation and quantitative and qualitative variability of the archaeological record, often discussed in relation to the non-classical Mediterranean (Dietler 2007, 242–43; *contra* Broodbank 2014, 46, on our 'cornucopia of knowledge'; Broodbank and Lucarini 2019), misleadingly lead one to believe that the same record for the classical world is of much higher quality; in fact, it is only so for sites that have been the object of long excavation histories and investment. The risk of this backward shift is that global studies may reinforce, rather than diminish, as rightly advocated for by *longue durée* approaches to Mediterranean history, 'a revived Greco-Roman exceptionalism' (Purcell 2014a, 60) and thus prevent alternative ancient realities from filling the picture of a Mediterranean history that can fit the objectives of premodern global history (ibid.).

The second and final point raised by Hodder is related to the former, just discussed: the grasp of context and hence of the micro-scale level of analysis, whether from the angle of a single object or a site and its contexts, in the exploration of macro-historical dynamics is the most powerful heuristic implement in the archaeologist's toolbox or for historians, ancient or modern, sensitive to the analytical affordances of material culture (Biedermann, Gerritsen and Riello 2017): thinking across different scales, both spatially and temporally, remains archaeology's central concern and multi-scalar analysis is arguably standard methodology, especially for comparative investigations (cf. Robb and Pauketat 2013a on temporal scales). Yet the neglect of that grasp by Big Data-driven grand narratives has resulted in single, uniform accounts often along evolutionary lines, obscuring the variety of histories and 'accidents' which, in the case of premodern long-term Mediterranean history, can provide a novel, bias-free way of periodizing it (Purcell 2014a, 70, 72; 2014b, 409; cf. Graeber and Wengrow 2021 on conventional interpretations and evolutionistic views vis-à-vis variability). In this respect, the 1st millennium B.C. of that history offers an unparalleled opportunity to explore this variety for two reasons: first, its micro-scale diversity, seen in the fragmentation of local dynamics, cultural differentiation and different forms of social organization across regions, which scholars have for some time investigated within and at the margins of the Mediterranean (e.g. Araque Gonzalez 2014; Sastre 2011), and which is the result of a culmination of dynamics of two millennia rather than the beginnings of the classical world (Broodbank 2013, 445–505; 2014, 56; Purcell 2014a, 72); second, the richness of the documentary record, both material and textual, notwithstanding the differences between text-rich and text-free regions, which we deem a symptom of that diversity and hence an opportunity for micro-scale comparative exploration rather than a challenge, as is often assumed. It is not, after all, accidental that this millennium has been the object of analysis by scholars interested in exploring diverse local contexts of cross-regional interaction intensified by colonial and other networks, which arguably represents an earliest instance of globalization or 'glocalization' (Hodos 2006; 2020; Van Dommelen 2017 for an overview). A most recent call not to lose sight of the local vis-à-vis that connectedness further highlights the rich micro-scale diversity of the 1st-millennium B.C. Mediterranean (Beck 2020).

In this article, we propose a truly post-colonial 1st-millennium B.C. Mediterranean as a laboratory for investigating the benefits of multi-scalar analysis, with the inclusion of the micro scale to enrich the agenda of global archaeology and Big Data-driven studies. Considering this scale, we contend, is a *conditio sine qua non* for the ultimate success of the latter, much of which depends on avoiding replicating the long-standing biases and ethnocentrism alluded to above. In a brief analysis of global archaeology and its consequences, we first compare and contrast the ways in which archaeology and early modern history have confronted multi-scalar analysis. We then propose that we adopt a microhistorical approach from early modern history, which places emphasis on the variation of scales and on the heuristic value of historical anomalies in order to investigate norms, and adapt it to comparative archaeology. We finally illustrate how we can do that by examining citizenship, a concept squarely framed within classical urbanism, in the Iberian region, and the extent to which the latter represents an anomaly vis-à-vis other, particularly Graeco-Roman, regions. Our aim therefore is not merely to defend the micro scale in order to reinvigorate the debate on multi-scalar analysis, but also to shift current perspectives towards interpretive methods that mediate between macro- and micro-scale analysis as recently advocated (Ribeiro 2019), whereby the former maintains an equally footed explanatory power as the latter in its potential to disprove generalizations provided by the latter.

Global archaeology vis-à-vis global history: opportunities and problems

Given the several phrases used to refer to global approaches (global archaeology, Big History, grand challenges), a single definition would be useful, although not feasible because of the sweeping global turn across all social and historical sciences and the interdisciplinarity of scholarship (Ghobrial 2019, 11). Two interrelated trends may nevertheless help us towards a working definition of global archaeology: (1) 'global' refers to both perspective and the analytical scale, one of which is part and parcel of the other; (2) because of the frequent interest in the connectedness of past societies, several archaeological and ancient studies that take a global approach explore macro-economic phenomena (Morris 2010; 2015), employing, in some cases, neo-institutional economics (NIE) as a methodological entry into these phenomena and a distinct move away from substantivism (Morris and Manning 2005; Scheidel, Morris and Saller 2007), and/or an evolutionary perspective (Bevan 2014; 2018; 2020; Manning 2018). These two trends pose significant challenges, which we now turn to in order to unpack their consequences vis-à-vis parallel trends in modern history.

The first comes from the top-down perspective that a global approach entails, which is often combined with a macro-economic focus that drives the interpretation of social and cultural dynamics. Such a focus is reductive as it is often based on the assumption that macro-economic trends determine these dynamics (Boldizzoni 2011, 18–53, for a critique). Early modern historians have been particularly sensitive to this and to the problem that a top-down perspective renders uniform historical phenomena that never were; the elaboration of connected histories rather than global history speaks to serious concerns with overcoming these problems (Subrahmanyam 1997;

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Hunt 2014, 24; Sabbatini 2016, 146–47). The second challenge, related to this top-down viewpoint, stems from the evolutionary perspective itself, which often goes hand in hand with macro-economic modelling and NIE: especially when combined with NIE, such a perspective has, as an end goal, the analysis of economic performance, productivity and the volume of transaction costs to the extent that the study of specific institutions is worthwhile only insofar as these aspects are at the centre of the enquiry (e.g. Manning 2018, 202–61; *contra* Boldizzoni 2011, 87–119; Smith forthcoming). Even when NIE is not involved in the enquiry of macro-economic phenomena, the question of the value in treating a specific phenomenon as an evolutionary one remains to be investigated (Bevan 2014 and responses).

The third challenge faced by global approaches lies in identifying causal links in the analysis of patterns detected in the archaeological record. The confusion between correlation and causation has been noted recently (Huggett 2020, S14), as has the potential danger of relying on correlations themselves for explanation in Big Data analysis (Van Valkenburgh and Dufton 2020, S2). In fact, when correlations identified on a global canvas are examined, the 'direction of causality' (Purcell 2014b) is not easy to detect or demonstrate (cf. Bevan 2015, 1478). Thus, for instance, the causal link between urbanization and arboriculture (domestication of fruit crops) can be surmised (Fuller and Stevens 2019), but it cannot be demonstrated until the analytical eye is taken to a much more refined scale, where a much more robust theoretical framework is required to explain the causal nature of that correlation (cf. Huggett 2020 on theory-poor Big Data analysis). More generally, as modern historians contend (Ghobrial 2019, 3), the global perspective is not always essential: it is the questions about specific historical phenomena that should determine the need of that perspective, not vice versa. On the other hand, in the case of archaeology, that global perspective is useful in providing the larger canvas for advancing multi-scalar analysis, but on its own, namely without a close attention to context, the explanatory power of the analysis is weakened by the very scale adopted (Bevan 2015, 1478).

The final challenge of global archaeology is the very nature of the archaeological record, its messiness and fragmentation (Wylie 2017), often considered not carefully enough in Big Data-driven analyses (Huggett 2020, S13). While efforts are, in fact, taken towards resolving this both on the ground and at the point of analysis (Bevan *et al.* 2013; Bevan 2015, 1477), the risk of over-looking the ambiguity and uncertainty of our analytical and interpretive steps nevertheless remains. Micro-scale analysis, by contrast, sheds ample light upon ambiguity and uncertainty, and, in so doing, has the potential to radically alter our scaffolding inferences with momentous consequences (Wylie 2017, 213). Early modern history encounters similar challenges: the fragmentary source that makes the act of interpretation an arbitrary one, hence leaving an undeciphrable layer that has to be recognized and acknowledged (Ginzburg 1976, xxv), is no different from the 'open-ended traces' of archaeological research (Wylie 2017). Yet, due to the nature of their sources and the historiographical tradition of the *Annaliste* school first and microhistory later, historians have been more proactive and discerning in contending with different analytical scales, both in time and space, suggesting novel directions in the current global turn and Big Data revolution (Revel 1996; Aslanian *et al.* 2013). We turn to these directions next and propose to adopt and adapt them to approach multi-scalar analysis in archaeology, noting that there are shared concepts and broad questions that make this worthwhile.

Microhistory and multi-scalar analysis

One of these novel directions has been the integration of the lessons of microhistory into the global perspective (Ginzburg 2015; Trivellato 2009; 2011; 2015; cf. issue supplement 242 of *Past and Present*, 2019). Notwithstanding the 'intellectual galaxy' underlying microhistory both in Italy and elsewhere (Trivellato 2015, 125–29), these lessons can be broadly and briefly summarized in three main points. First, 'micro-' refers to the perspective rather than the scale of observation: 'micro-' refers to the microscope (Ginzburg 2015, 462; Trivellato 2011, 9), used on any object of analysis or social phenomenon at the centre of the enquiry. The variation and multiplication of scales are key: by enlarging or shrinking the 'focal lens' of observation, not only does the size of the object change, but, more crucially, so too do its configuration and inner workings, throwing into question its very identification and characterization by the observer (Revel 1996; Trivellato 2015, 130). Second, microhistory sees the context of its object of analysis not univocally, but rather as social actors understood it through their different experiences, their reconstruction and representations of reality (Revel 1996; Trivellato 2011, 16): the intersection of multiple scales allows for the intersection of multiple actors at different levels and therefore multiple contexts, providing a full integration, rather than an opposition, between local and global scales, which can be augmented by synchronic and diachronic analysis (Trivellato 2009). The social actor, furthermore, includes not only the observed, but also the observer: hence the consideration of both emic and etic perspectives upon interpretation (Ginzburg 2013; 2015, 460). Third, microhistory places heuristic value upon anomalies and idiosyncracies (cf. Grendi 1977 on the 'exceptional normal') that are found in the documentary record as clues, and that mess up standard narratives, patterns and documentary series (Ginzburg 2012, 202; Ghobrial 2019, 20). In so doing, they enlighten those very narratives and patterns in unexpected ways and provide the case studies upon which generalizations are built (Trivellato 2009, 8; 2011, 5; Ginzburg 2015, 462): by virtue of including the norm, the anomaly, in other words, has more generalizing potential than the norm itself (Ginzburg 2013, 109). Ultimately, in all of these aspects, microhistory provides a stronger toolbox for comparative analysis than do global approaches (Wickham 2005; Belich, Darwin and Wickham 2016, 10–14).

The points of contact with multi-scalar analysis in archaeology are obvious, as recent scholarship explicitly drawn to the benefits of such an analysis emphasizes (Pitts 2008; Perego, Scopacasa and Amicone 2019): the relationship between different levels of agency and wider structures and/or historical phenomena (Ribeiro 2019), the attempts at reaching an emic perspective via attention to different contexts of social action are some of these shared concerns. The tension between agency and structure across different temporal scales, a constant concern in archaeological analysis (Robb 2002; 2010; 2020), has been approached through various theoretical and analytical frameworks, from Marxist and post-structuralist to *Annaliste* perspectives (Robb and Pauketat 2013b). The latter is notably a shared historiographical tradition with history that has proven fruitful especially in landscape archaeology, where a sensitivity to this tension and the multiplicity of scales is key and has been developed further in interesting ways (Bintliff 1991; Knapp 1992; Barker 1995; Hodder and Hutson 2003; Forbes 2007; Given 2013; 2017). An *Annaliste* attention to multiple scales has also propelled the growth of disciplines such as medieval archaeology, which, in its infancy, required a reconfiguration of methods and objectives in a vivacious phase of *Annaliste* scholarship (Blake 2011, 470–71). But even studies on cultural evolution, which is especially concerned with long-term change, cannot fail to appreciate the role of micro-scale, quotidian action in evolutionary processes such as those of cultural transmission (Shennan 2011).

Yet proposals for developing archaeological theories in order to explore multiple temporal and spatial scales (Robb and Pauketat 2013b) have overall focused on the former at the current global juncture (Hodder, 1987: vii; see Souvatzi, Baysal and Baysal 2019); less attention has been paid to the latter and to integrating the two. Ultimately, 'the greater the scale of analysis (temporally or spatially), the less room is left for accounts of human agency' (Aslanian *et al.* 2013, 1444). A notable attempt by historians (Horden and Purcell 2000) and an archaeologist (Broodbank 2013; Broodbank *et al.* 2014) to investigate this integration has only been done in the specific context of the ancient Mediterranean and its environment of micro-ecologies; while the approach is distinctively developed for that environment, hence arguably not applicable to other larger regions, the broader impact of those studies has mostly concerned connectivity and interaction in all of its forms, leading to further impetus for other 'connected histories' (e.g. Purcell 2016) rather than promoting an archaeological debate on multi-scalar analysis at the global turn; hence

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the focus, in recent scholarship of the 1st-millennium B.C. Mediterranean, on networks and interlinkages (e.g. Hodos 2020). Indeed, within long-term, global studies of the Mediterranean, concerns over the ability to overcome the challenge of studying multiple scales have been expressed (Broodbank *et al.* 2014, 108, 117). One way of overcoming this challenge may be to engage with the lessons of microhistory outlined above and adapt them to our own global approaches in archaeology. Investigating a seemingly anomalous case study of a specific sociohistorical phenomenon may prove particularly productive to our research questions. We now proceed to demonstrate this by examining a specific aspect of 1st-millennium B.C. Mediterranean urbanism, namely citizenship.

Urbanism and citizenship

Comparative studies in the archaeology of cities have been growing, leading to a renewed phase of interest in urbanism and its related aspects on a global scale (Wengrow 2015; Frangipane and Manzanilla 2018; Riva 2020; Fulminante *et al.* 2021). With lively debates on what the urban form entails, which have reached no consensus precisely because of this scale, attention has shifted towards urban dwellers, their agency and collective decision making in the functioning of cities (Gaydarska 2016), and hence civic identities, social cohesion and membership of the urban or citizen community (Wengrow 2019), from city states to empires (Stuurman 2019). These aspects raise, in turn, the question of the mechanisms by which this membership was articulated, if at all. The Graeco-Roman mechanism for this is citizenship, for which the Greek, and especially Athenian, world has received the lion's share of attention thanks to the remarkably rich documentary base. This may explain why recent global approaches to citizenship have employed Atheno-centric and more precisely Aristotelian concepts as a shorthand reference to Mediterranean antiquity (e.g. Wengrow 2018, 34; Stuurman 2019); however, this shorthand usage severely reduces the potential for comparative analysis of the 1st-millennium B.C. Mediterranean where other kinds of mechanisms may have been at play, demonstrating, once again, our claim of a regressive shift from a decentered ancient Mediterranean.

The opportunity to explore whether and to what extent these other mechanisms were at play in the non-classical Mediterranean is there if we adopt a micro-scale approach to this evidence; we can then pursue a truly comparative analysis across the basin that enables us to integrate this evidence with that from the classical Mediterranean thanks to recent debates that have radically re-examined ancient Greek citizenship itself. These debates have unequivocally jettisoned the Aristotelian model as a construct and the evolutionary thinking associated with it, according to which primitive forms of archaic citizenship evolved into a complete form in classical Athenian democracy (Blok 2018, 80–83; Duplouy 2018; 2019, 37–38, 49–50; Stuurman 2019, 291). Historians of archaic Greece now acknowledge citizenship as a fluid and dynamic process of building ties and obligations with no predictable outcome or single solutions, and the emphasis, in archaic and classical texts, upon participation in religion rather than political participation. The 'covenant' between the members of the *polis* and the gods, its rules and regulations on religious matters such as sacrifice, delineated both community and participation – in one word, citizenship, along with descent, real or metaphorical, and law: citizenship was thus constituted by shared cult, descent and law (Blok 2013a; 2013b; 2017; 2018). Even classical Athens is no longer viewed as a completed political project (Schirripa 2013). This social – rather than strictly political – understanding of citizenship highlights social relations and civic behaviour or performance at the basis of citizenship (Duplouy 2019, 61–68). This perspective has developed alongside a rethinking of the Greek state and social status therein (Duplouy 2019): while the latter is seen as fluid, contested and shaped by strategies of social distinction underlying civic behaviour (Duplouy 2006), the city state has been investigated through social theory (Pebarthe 2012).

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Drawing from these recent debates and recognizing the multifarious and dynamic character of the concept of citizenship (Tilly 1995), we can adopt, on broader historical sociological grounds, an ideal-type definition of citizenship as a tie – however weak or strong – to the state, which pivots around transactions, rights and obligations between members of a community and 'agents of the state' (ibid., 8), and therefore explore citizenship as an entry into the relationship between urban communities, 'political agency' broadly defined (Stuurman 2019, 281, 291) and the state, or, in short, into state formation (Bourdieu 1997; 2012).

Concurrently, the focus on religion is fruitful if we consider the role of religion in promoting cooperation and trust in large urban communities (Feinman 2016); this perspective can be integrated with an understanding of religion as communication, where the religious environment is shaped by a dialectical relationship with individual agency and therefore the worshipper members of urban communities (Rüpke 2015). The time is ripe, then, for examining citizenship comparatively across the 1st-millennium B.C. Mediterranean and evaluating whether and to what extent parallel trajectories occurred in those regions where the state never turned into a classical Greek state, such as south-eastern Iberia, which arguably provides the anomalous case to the classical Mediterranean. Building on this recent scholarship just outlined, we focus on ritual participation as a vehicle for expressing ties, rights and obligations, and hence the sociopolitical community's inclusion in or exclusion from citizenship.

South-eastern Iberia: kinship, funerary space and changing affiliations

The Iron Age (*ca* 800 B.C.–A.D. 50) in south-eastern Iberia was characterized by the development of complex social relationships in the context of urbanization, early states and increasing economic complexity through interregional exchange. In this long period, a formative phase (7th–6th centuries B.C.) can be distinguished when the population began concentrating in fortified centres, the first cremation necropolises appeared, and economic intensification occurred in a framework of contacts with colonial settlements on the coast. From the late 6th century onwards, these processes intensified along with the consolidation of the so-called Iberian Culture. The Iberians were the peoples who inhabited the Mediterranean areas of the Iberian peninsula. These groups shared some cultural aspects as writing and language, wheeled pottery, iron metallurgy or stone sculptures, to name just a few, but were a mosaic of independent polities distributed across a wide region. As a result, different societies in each territory present a remarkable heterogeneity in their economic, political, social and ideological structures.

The Iberian Culture is divided into three major phases according to the local evolution and connections to wider Mediterranean dynamics. In the Early Iberian Period (late 6th to late 5th centuries B.C.) the features of Iberian societies were formed. In the Middle Iberian period (4th to 3rd centuries), the socio-economic and cultural structures are fully recognized. Finally, the Late Iberian Period (2nd to 1st centuries) saw Roman domination and the progressive dissolution of this culture.

The south-eastern Iberian landscape saw the emergence of a series of urban centres controlling subordinate rural settlements devoted to intensive agricultural production. Farming surplus was channelled through dense trade networks, fostering trans-Mediterranean relationships. The archaeological record of settlements, funerary spaces and landscape surveys shows the political control of these centres by elite groups who deployed different social strategies to gain and enlarge power and control over the local population (Bonet, Grau and Vives-Ferrándiz 2015).

The expansive nature of this process leading to new urban state communities required mechanisms for social ascription and membership through new formulas of kinship. The segmentary kinship relations of the previous Bronze Age evolved into different forms of association and changed social relationships. The limitations to the growth of the communities imposed by consanguineous kinship produced the appearance of new schemas suitable for these urban

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societies with a higher level of complexity and demographic growth. New kinship relations, not limited by consanguinity, arose, leading to the formation of social bodies that were articulated through political relations and that entailed different types of ties and obligations towards the larger community. Families and groups that acquired positions of power through the control of economic and political mechanisms linked themselves to other dependent families, thus building new forms of kinship relations. Concurrently, these processes entailed the emergence of new institutions that managed these new relations of dependence such as client relations based on metaphoric kinship. The structures of dependency, and hence of sociopolitical power, and transfer of legitimacy are key to understand these new relationships.

In Iberian societies, these relations, political authority and power structures were institutionalized and articulated through specific funerary rituals, and later new forms of religious worship at sanctuaries. Through repetitive and recurrent acts in the same funerary location, whether interment or related rites, specific individuals and families established themselves as power groups according to these structures. Differences in funerary structures and commemorative practices indicate a diversity in the social body of single communities and practices of wealth display in death, which in turn point towards forms of status display and hence of social exclusion. Cemeteries therefore were loci where social groupings were articulated and rearticulated in increasingly complex and larger urban settlements.

From generalizations to regional differentiation

The most frequent proposal for understanding these group affiliations is through the gentilicial model, according to which aristocracies used funerary rituals to build group lineages and hence establish a dominant social role (Ruiz 2008, 792). This model, however, suffers from the generalizing and markedly evolutionary character of macro-scale studies. First, deriving from intepretations of Iron Age Italic societies, the model directly transfers these interpretations to the Iberians (Ruiz-Galvez 2018, 23) and does not take into account particularities and local variation, a limit noted for Italy itself (Smith 2019). Second, it homogenizes the vast Iberian peninsula, which covers the entire fringe of the west Mediterranean, and thus the multifarious societies inhabiting it. Reducing the analytical scale is, in fact, a prerequisite for understanding the vast sociopolitical mosaic of Iberian communities.

In south-eastern Iberia, our study region (figure 1), differences from this generalizing model are notable, particularly the lack of powerful hierarchies and sociopolitical centralization that characterize instead southern and northern Iberia (Grau Mira 2019, 345–46). In the case of southern Iberia, we see ostentatious forms of elite representation such as prominent elite residences as in Puente Tablas and conspicous display of power in funerary contexts (Ruiz 2008, 811–13). These hierarchical centralized structures are also detected in the north-western region of Iberia. Four large political units spanning between 2,000 and 2,800 square kilometres have been identified corresponding to the Indigecia, Layetania, Cosetania and Ilercavonia regions with prominent large cities in political structures that have been assimilated in archaic states (Sanmartí *et al.* 2019).

Nor do we see, in our study region, individualized forms of authority typical of powerful lineages headed by a warrior aristocracy. Lastly, the evolutionary perspective of the gentilicial model puts forward increasing inequality and the centralization of aristocratic power as the end point of trajectories towards social complexity. Yet micro-scale analysis discloses divergent and multiple trajectories that in turn indicate different modes in which membership to the urban community was conceptualized. Examining different analytical scales at south-eastern funerary sites will highlight this and the contribution that micro-scale analysis can bring to the understanding of these trajectories.

Figure 1. Map of the Iberian peninsula with the different regions distinguished in the area of the Iberian Culture. The area of study is marked in a darker colour.

Analysing different scales in the cemeteries

Urbanization from the late 6th to the 4th century B.C. saw the consolidation of cemeteries where only some households had exclusive rights to perform funerary and commemoration rites. Differences in structures and burials, underlying in turn different practices, show a group diversified in its social composition, without the need of exceptional wealth display, but characterized by a distinguished and exclusive status. At the same time, these burials contributed to creating common genealogies that configured the communities through the institutionalization of repetitive and recurring ritual practices in exclusive spaces before the establishment of sanctuaries.

Cemeteries were formed of tens, even hundreds, of cremation tombs furnished with grave good sets in which armour, luxury vessels, adornments and other valuable objects were deposited. In most cases, palaeo-anthropological studies allow us to recognize the sex and age of those buried, and hence to identify the population and kinship structure of those cemeteries. Funerary spaces and burials provided the framework to create and re-create power structures through commemoration as well as materializing the ideology that buttressed those structures. Conceiving of this space as structuring nodes of power among different social groups has been essential to Iberian social analysis (Ruiz 2008, 784–89). In south-eastern Iberia, this has entailed identifying elite burials standing at the top of social systems, and burials of non-elite groups and members of the family group arranged around them radially at a certain distance. Examining at different scales such spatial arrangements and the composition of tomb groups at cemeteries enables us to formulate interpretive alternatives to the gentilicial model. We can do so through analysis of the archaeological and bio-archaeological record, at both site and burial level, of some of the most representative necropolises of this region at the time of the greatest development of these latter between the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. (figure 2).

The regional scale The spatial relations between these necropolises across the landscape indicate the coexistence of several comparable social groups that had their own cemetery. Several necropolises were, in fact, related to single settlements, such as the three necropolises belonging to Coimbra del Barranco Ancho, two necropolises belonging to El Cigarralejo and two others related

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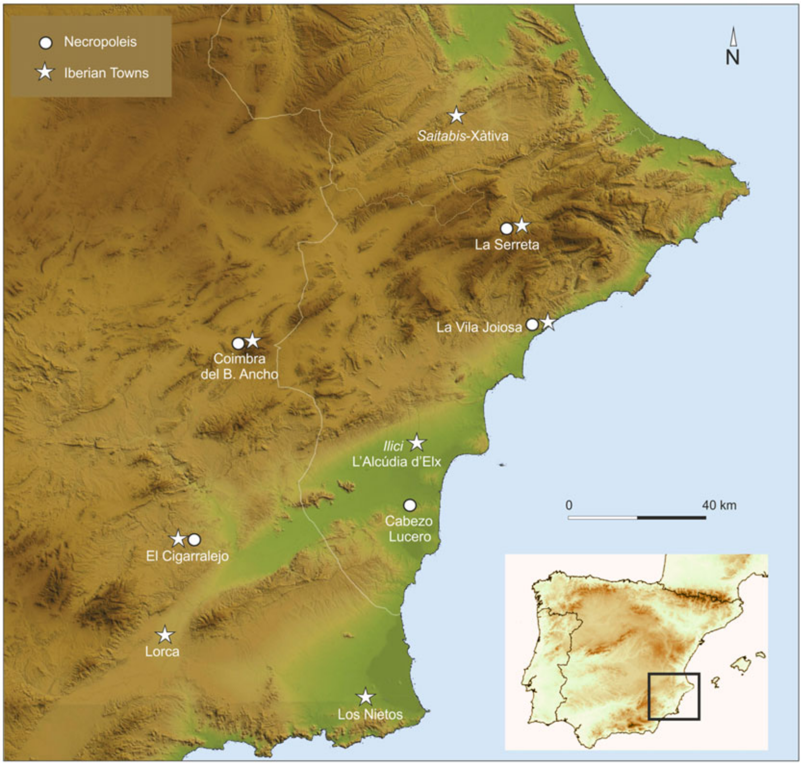

Figure 2. Map of south-eastern Iberia with the main towns and the necropolises mentioned in the text.

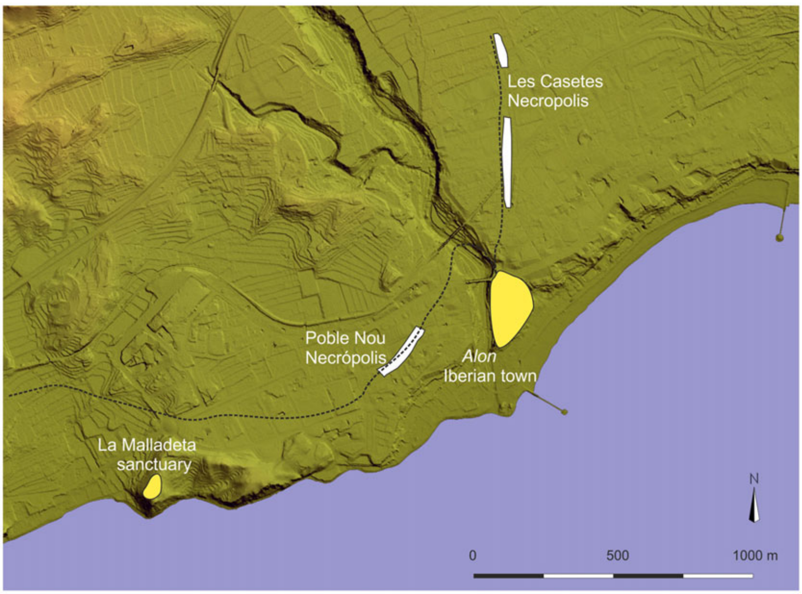

Figure 3. Location of the Iberian town of Alon-La Vila Joiosa with the necropolises and the sanctuary.

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to La Vila Joiosa (figure 3). We do not find a single cemetery corresponding to a community structured according to a single, strongly hierarchical lineage. Conversely, different social and/or kinship groups used these necropolises in order to reinforce social exclusion within their community.

The cemetery scale Prominent tombs belonging to exclusive lineages in the necropolises are several; rarely did a single such tomb stand out at any one time. The presence of several outstanding graves that can be considered as corresponding to the same generation seems to indicate the existence of different kinship groups articulated horizontally, in competition for power. These graves may have belonged to contemporaneous leaders of different kinship groups. Competition is gauged by the prominent burial mounds of El Cigarralejo and Coimbra del Barranco Ancho; the funerary monuments not associated with specific graves of El Cabezo Lucero relate to these different power groups. At the same time, all the rites that took place at these cemeteries – from the performance of sacrifice to funerary processions that contributed to the conceptualization of space within and across them – were ultimately communal acts across different but connected spatial locales, within and outside the settlement. Permanent occupancy of these locales and their linkages can ultimately be interpreted as an expression of collective endeavour which must be understood alongside the ties and ritual obligations that bounded members of the community to these locales and, simultaneously, to the community itself. Furthermore, the tombs' spatial arrangements at single cemeteries varied greatly. At the Iberian town of La Vila Joiosa, for example, the cemeteries were aligned with the main roads that approached the settlement from the north and from the south: they thus configured a long discontinuous space at a distance of about a kilometer from the town, and highlighted the role of ritual processions linking them to urban spaces, hence creating places of collective memory. This particular arrangement contrasts with the frequent organization of small dense funerary spaces very close to other towns in the region.

The burial scale The earliest tombs that established the genealogical affiliation and other outstanding burials are often tombs of couples, male and female, and can be interpreted as belonging to ancestral lineage founders of the genealogy. This emphasis on the couple in the construction of the social group has been related to the symbolic legitimation of marriage (Rísquez and García Luque 2007). Yet this recurring association in the south-eastern necropolises also indicates that both men and women transmitted rights, wealth and legitimacy through bilateral cognatic lineages rather than the patrilineal transmission that characterizes the gentilicial model (Grau Mira and Comino 2021).

In the necropolis of Cabezo Lucero, one of the first burials, tomb 75 of a young female adult and an adult, apparently male, buried in two cinerary urns, is exceptional in its composition. The cinerary urns, dated from the 6th century, namely one century earlier than the burial context, are heirloom-type objects. Among the objects accompanying the bodies, the following stand out: a panoply formed by a *caetra* or shield, two bronze greaves, a knife and a spear, unusual in this cemetery, and a ring-shaped *fibula* and an Attic black-figure *lekythos*, which date the tomb to 490–460 B.C. This burial has been interpreted as the founding burial inaugurating the funeral space and highlighting the deceased's persona as armed warrior (Rísquez and García Luque 2007, 267). However, the emphasis is ultimately on the couple sharing the objects, without a clear distinction between the man as armed warrior and the woman. Tomb 84, from the 5th-century-B.C., although a couple of generations later, has a similar structure and composition, but went unnoticed perhaps due to the absence of weapons (Aranegui *et al.* 1993, 256–58, figure 90, plates 73–74): it is a double grave of a mature female and another adult, possibly male. The marked ritual character of the objects deposited is striking: they include a miniaturized bronze yoke, an Egyptian amulet, two silver earrings, two *fibulae* and 481 necklace beads made of bone, glass and mollusc shells.

La Serreta is another notable cemetery with similar patterns. Here, some of the wealthiest tombs are located in the central area, which highlights a symbolic epicentre structuring the funerary space concentrically. Among the main tombs in this central area, tomb 14 stands out

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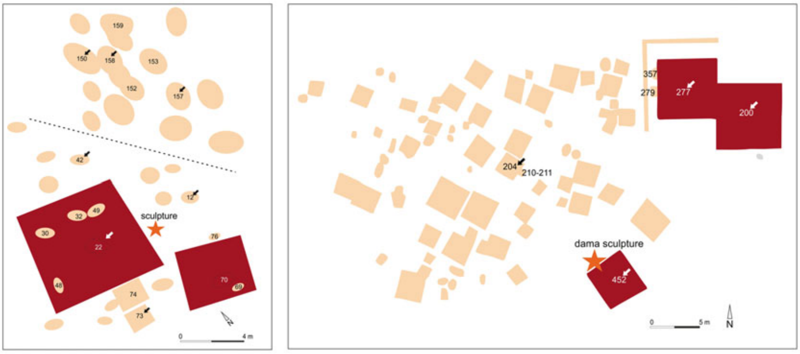

Figure 4. Schematic plan of the necropolis of Coimbra del Barranco Ancho, left, and El Cigarralejo, right (after Grau Mira and Comino 2021, figures 5, 6). The most relevant tombs are indicated in a dark colour and the double graves are marked with arrows.

and is a particular case of a triple deposit: three secondary cremations of individuals of different ages and genders were placed in their respective urns. These vessels remarkably show a correspondence between their sizes and the bodies they contained: a male adult in the largest urn, a female adult in a middle-sized vessel and a child in the smaller one (Gómez Bellard 2011, 107). This set can be interpreted as a family group, although whether this was a real or fictive affiliation is difficult to verify. These human remains are associated with an Etruscan ivory plaque reused as textile implement, some personal ornaments such as Iberian ring-shaped *fibulae* and earrings of precious metal, which are exclusive to a few tombs only (Cortell *et al.* 1992, 109).

Tomb 22 of El Poblado de Coimbra del Barranco Ancho (figure 4) is one of the richest and most notable burials in this necropolis. A large tumulus covered a double burial which held an adult individual, probably male, along with another of undetermined age and sex (García Cano *et al.* 2008, 35, 38). The grave goods include Attic and Iberian drinking vessels and plates, and two gold earrings. Among other objects, weapons predominate, with a falcate sword, a *soliferrum*, two iron spearheads and fragments of the handle of a *caetra*. The tumulus that covered this tomb was later reused by sixteen tombs, most dated to the 4th and few dated to the 3rd and early 2nd centuries B.C. (ibid., 35), indicating the attachment of several kinship groups to the tumulus.

The funerary space in the necropolis of El Cigarralejo (figure 4) is structured around the so-called tumular 'princely tombs' 200 and 277, located in the most prominent sector and distinguished from other burials by a stone wall separating this area as an area of respect. Both graves are some of the first in the cemetery and dated between 425 and 375 B.C., although tomb 200 slightly overlaps both physically and chronologically with tomb 277. In fact, the area had already begun as a cemetery by this time, since previous burials were destroyed for the construction of tumulus 277. The study of the grave goods from both tombs, which included weapons and textile implements, has determined that they belonged to couples (Cuadrado 1987, 39).

In another tumulus with double burial of this cemetery, tomb 452, probably belonging to a male and a female, and located in the south-eastern area of the cemetery, marking the separation of the groups formed by 200–277 tumuli, the male human remains were deposited inside a painted Iberian ceramic jar surrounded by different types of weapons. The woman's cinerary urn, on the other hand, was a locally manufactured Greek-type bell crater with Iberian painted decoration. The grave goods for this burial were distributed inside and outside the urn and included glass beads, textile implements, hair bone implements, a ring and a *fibula* (De Prada and Cuadrado 2019, 82–83).

All of this evidence shows the ways in which, through burial ritual, forms of aggregation that united the components of bilateral and metaphorical kinship, typical of social relations beyond those exclusively consanguineous, were expressed. The tombs and their grave goods were the means for articulating various languages of power, combining elements that are traditionally associated with gender identities, but that in reality should be understood as symbols of authority of powerful figures, in a similar pattern to that found in 7th-century B.C. elite burials of Tyrrhenian Etruria (Riva 2010, 88–95). That would explain the cases of female burials with weapons (tombs 104, 107 and 153, at Coimbra del Barranco Ancho), and of male burials associated with textile instruments, especially numerous at Cabezo Lucero.

A detailed analysis of the timescales related to these cemeteries shows specific dynamics. Most of the necropolises ceased or experienced a drop in activity and tomb use at the end of 4th century and in the early 3rd century (Bonet, Grau and Vives-Ferrándiz 2015; Grau Mira 2019): this is a distinctive anomaly vis-à-vis trends towards centralization across Iberia where cemeteries continued to be used, or indeed elsewhere across the Mediterranean. Contemporary to this funerary decline is the establishment of territorial sanctuaries where a new cohesion of larger urbanized communities was expressed (Grau Mira 2016, 114–16). In other words, the disappearance of tombs and/or transformation of burial ritual signalled profound changes in the forms of social affiliation and expression of kinship structures revealed by the cemeteries. The cemeteries of La Vila Joiosa are, again, instructive: while the 4th century B.C. saw their largest growth, ritual activity there ceased at the end of this century and no burials are recorded in the 3rd century. Only in the second half of the 2nd century does activity in the urban cemeteries resume. This caesura corresponded with the establishment of the town's sanctuary, which was aligned along the same road where the necropolises to the south of the city had grown. This case study, in fact, demonstrates a continuity in the ritual movement in and outside the settlement and thus further highlights the role of public performance, this time linked to the sanctuary, in sanctioning community cohesion and designating a new space for the expression of ties and obligation towards the community.

As at La Vila Joiosa, other south-eastern Iberian new cult places were dedicated to the tutelary divinities of the surrounding territory; not directly associated with families and power groups as was the case in burial ritual, sanctuary cult led to more inclusive participation. The worship of female divinities at these sanctuaries is notable, and was not socially restricted, allowing direct participation by most members of the households of these urban states. This contributed to mitigating the competition between groups and families and the exclusionary aspects associated with funerary cults (Grau Mira 2019, 350–54).

Discussion and conclusion

This brief micro-scale analysis of south-eastern Iberia contributes to our understanding of the sociopolitical construction of urbanism in the Mediterranean in the 1st millennium B.C., of which citizenship or membership of the urban community by means of participation and integration played an integral part. While we lack a text-rich record, which we do have in the Greek world, to comprehend these processes in greater depth, we can nevertheless affirm that such anomalous cases as are the towns of this micro-region contribute to a comparative analysis of what we have defined as citizenship across the Mediterranean, while discarding the uncritical application of Graeco-Roman models to the whole basin.

The analysis has started from an approach that uses similar heuristic tools to understand a phenomenon, urbanism, that was shared by a wide interconnected region over the long term. Parallel forms of participation in ritual, first formalized in necropolises and then at sanctuaries, were thus detected across south-eastern Iberia. However, culturally specific processes, identified through a micro-scale investigation, from cross-site comparisons to context-sensitive foci, has revealed changing forms of membership to the urban community, which involved different forms of ties, participation, integration and exclusion, which are in turn distinctive and thus informative for a comparative analysis of citizenship.

Incorporating a region whose sociohistorical trajectories are not consistent with generalizing Graeco-Roman models can only enhance our understanding of the complexity of the Mediterranean in the 1st millennium B.C. Close analysis discloses both specific temporalities and micro-dynamics in social processes. In other words, changing usage and participation in necropolises and sanctuaries in Iron Age Iberia highlight specific historical phases not dependent on pre-established etic frameworks in long-term processes. The analysis of both refined time lapses and the spatial micro-scale transformations of ritual participation has enabled us to observe the intensity and sequencing of constitutive practices that can be compared to what we know of Greek citizenship. In fact, such a comparative exercise can only be enriched by the incorporation of other well-known and well-investigated urban micro-regions such as southern Tyrrhenian Etruria, also subjected to a Graeco-Roman straitjacket as far as urbanism is concerned (Riva 2010, 2–8). Ultimately and beyond the Mediterranean, it is recognizing diversity at different scales that we come to an in-depth understanding of specific social phenomena comparatively beyond conventional interpretations and excessively broad views (Graeber and Wengrow 2021).

The brief treatment of south-eastern Iberia is ultimately aimed at proposing a truly global archaeology, one which takes into account the variability of scales across both time and space. Mindful of its methodological potential, we thus advocate a microhistorical approach to global archaeology accompanying multi-scalar analysis. Despite this potential, scholarship proposing the integration of a microhistorical perspective is infrequent (Fahlander 2003; Boric 2007; Mimisson and Magnusson 2014; Ribeiro 2019) and much more so in studies related to the Mediterranean in the 1st millennium B.C. (Perego *et al.* 2019). We hope that our present review will contribute to further debates for a true global archaeology.

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On microhistory, Iberian culture and other neglected Mediterranean ancient civilizations

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I thank the editors for this invitation to discuss this excellent paper by Corinna Riva and Ignasi Grau Mira. The paper includes a theoretical and methodological reflection on global archaeology and its consequences for archaeological interpretation, namely the negative effects it has had on the study of specific Iron Age Mediterranean cultures outside what is commonly understood as the classical world. The globalizing approach has tended to generalize, ignoring particularities. As an alternative, the authors propose the incorporation of microhistory into archaeological interpretation, using non-classical Mediterranean civilizations in particular.

I agree with the authors on the two main points of their proposal: the advantages of a microhistorical approach to investigate the past and the need to vindicate the study of non-classical