Cultural landscapes, social networks and historical trajectories: A data-rich synthesis of Early Bronze Age networks (c. 2200-1700 BC) in Abruzzo and Lazio (Central Italy)

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Stellingen behorende bij het proefschrift

"Cultural landscapes, social networks and historical trajectories.
A data-rich synthesis of Early Bronze Age networks (c. 2200-1700 BC) in
Abruzzo and Lazio (Central Italy)"

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1. Starting from the notion that landscapes are networks of places, European
    landscape approaches and Mediterranean network approaches are highly
    complementary. The potential for such a cross-over has as yet remained
    unfulfilled despite the high degree of cultural similarity as evidenced by
    Bronze Age archaeological records.

    This thesis, chapter 2

2. The common practice in Italian Bronze Age studies to exclude single finds of
    metalwork as so-called "isolated objects" has left the study of Early Bronze
    Age metalwork deposition in Central Italy disconnected from a major strand in
    European Bronze Age studies. It has also created a 'gap' in syntheses of this
    period, given the prominence of metalwork deposition in Early Bronze Age
    archaeological records.

    This thesis, chapter 4 (metalwork) and chapter 8 (synthesis)

3. The enigmatic character of Early Bronze Age funerary practices in Abruzzo
    and Lazio can be resolved by a comprehensive absolute dating programme
    on human remains from Copper Age cemeteries and Middle Bronze Age cave
    assemblages. This will either corroborate that low archaeological visibility
    refers to a past reality, or reveal culturally significant problems of
    chronological overlap.

    This thesis, chapter 5

4. (Sub)regional entities are inappropriate units of analysis for the study and
    synthesis of cultural landscapes, social networks and historical trajectories in
    Italian Bronze Age studies. Different from the micro-regional scope of Iron
    Age territories, Bronze Age notions of territoriality emerged from social
    interaction and acts of place-making at distinctive locations in physical
    landscapes that were separated over long distances.

    This thesis, chapter 8

5. The focus on the Late-Final Bronze Ages as the starting-point of early state
    formation in Italian protohistory gives the wrong impression that nothing
    happened in the Early-Middle Bronze Ages. This approach is retrospective in
    the sense that it reverses the order of events. It fails to appreciate that Early-
    Middle Bronze Age trajectories changed the structure of connectivity in
    Central Italy and set conditions for Late-Final Bronze Age trajectories.

    This thesis, chapter 9

6. The notion of a biography of landscape is a misconception, because – unlike places – landscapes do not follow a trajectory. In order to study landscapes in the long term they have to be conceptualised explicitly as networks of places – not landscapes.

7. The notion of exchange (or exchange networks) often remains implicit and enigmatic in Bronze Age studies. This black-box is to a large extent self-inflicted, resulting from a selective focus on either production (including the provenance of raw material) or depositional practices. In order to locate meeting-places (i.e. the undefined somewhere inbetween sites of production and deposition), a non-selective, multi-sited and data-rich approach to studying networks should be adopted.

8. The bias towards deposition is a structural property of Bronze Age archaeological records. The overrepresentation of acts of deposition highlights a period-specific concern with particular forms of place-making. It refers as much to a research bias as to a cultural bias.

9. The spatio-temporal entities that emerge from typological classification cannot be adopted as a self-evident starting-point for diachronic comparison. In order to get as many pieces of the four-dimensional jigsaw as possible into place, the focus should not lie on the best pieces alone, but also on those that do not fit (yet).

10. The complexity of archaeological bibliography should not be underestimated. A departmental librarian with specialist knowledge is therefore invaluable for students, staff and outsiders alike.

11. It takes a lot of dwarfs to clean up after the giants on whose shoulders we stand.

    After Google Scholar™'s well-known motto "Stand on the shoulders of giants"