A completely normal practice: the emergence of selective metalwork deposition in Denmark, north-west Germany, and the Netherlands between 2350-1500 BC

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Part II

Data and Patterns

3

Selective deposition before 2000 BC

3.1. Introduction

In the Bronze Age, valuable metal objects were deliberately deposited in the landscape and never retrieved on a massive scale, as discussed in the introductory chapter. However, depositions were actually not a phenomenon unique to the Bronze Age; hoards were not a Bronze Age invention (Hansen 2012:29). Deliberate depositions of objects in the landscape took place already long before this period. In fact, 1700 years before the start of the time period under investigation, around 4000 BC, people already intentionally deposited objects in the landscape, and never retrieved them. Depositions are known to have occurred in the Early and Middle Neolithic (EN and MN), in the Funnelbeaker Culture (TRB) and the Single Grave Culture (SGC, Wentink et al. 2011, Fontijn 2002:59, Fontijn 2019:63-85, see Table 3.1). Even metalwork was already deliberately deposited in parts of the research area as early as the Early Neolithic (EN, Klassen 2000). How do these early metalwork depositions then relate to the much later Bronze Age depositions that are the focus of this study?

Both in the TRB and the Bronze Age, valuable metalwork imported from afar was thus deliberately buried in the ground and never retrieved. However, a specific characteristic of Bronze Age selective deposition is its "double-exclusive-logic": people deposited specific objects in specifically selected places in the landscape, thereby avoiding other objects and other places (Fontijn 2019:29-33). There were thus specific *conventions* behind these depositions: people did not just deposit any object in any location, as already observed in the introduction. These conventions were probably the result of many individual depositional events: there was likely a "general understanding of how to act" when it came to depositions, which was not necessarily communicated between different regions, but rather self-evident across regions (Fontijn 2019:29-33). What were then the conventions behind Neolithic depositions? Can the practice of "double exclusivity" (Fontijn 2019:29-33) which is observable in Bronze Age depositions already be recognised in Neolithic depositions? If so, were Bronze Age depositions then simply a continuation of these earlier practices? Or was selective deposition in the Bronze Age a new practice, with new, different conventions? These questions are the main focus of this chapter.

Going back even further in time, certain finds from the research area dating to the Late Mesolithic may have been intentionally deposited in the landscape (Bradley 1998:27-28, Louwe Kooijmans 2001:112-113, Karsten 1994:166ff, Wentink 2006:42,

Denmark	The northern Netherlands
	Early Neolithic 4900-4200 BC (EN)
Early Neolithic 3950-3350 BC (EN, TRB)	Middle Neolithic A 4200-3400 BC (MN A)
Middle Neolithic A 3350-2850 BC (MN A, TRB)	Middle Neolithic B 3400-2900 BC (MN B, TRB)
Middle Neolithic B 2850-2350 BC (MN B, SGC)	Late Neolithic A 2900-2500 BC (LN A, SGC)
Late Neolithic I 2350-1950 BC (LN I, Bell Beaker)	Late Neolithic B 2500-2000 BC (LN B, BB)
Late Neolithic II 1950-1700 BC (LN II)	Early Bronze Age 2000-1800 BC (EBA)

Table 3.1. Conventional chronology for the early periods discussed in this chapter (after Vandkilde 1996, fig. 134, Klassen 2000, fig. 24, Iversen 2014, fig. 3.4, Van den Broeke et al. 2005, fig. 1.10). See Section 2.7 for a detailed explanation of the chronologies used. TRB: Funnelbeaker Culture; SGC: Single Grave Culture.

Fontijn 2011:433-434, Fontijn 2019:63-85). However, there is a "lack of patterning" in these Late Mesolithic finds (Wentink 2006:42). It was not until the TRB that depositions became more structured in the research area (Wentink & Van Gijn 2008:29, Fontijn 2002:59). Indeed, there seems to have been a clear system behind Neolithic depositions (Ebbesen 1993:122). Furthermore, Late Mesolithic depositions seem to concern local and everyday objects, whereas from the Neolithic onwards, depositions involve non-local objects acquired through exchange, *i.e.* objects with a very different *biography* (Fontijn 2011:435). To sum up, depositions in the research area during the Late Mesolithic may have been intentional, but they are anecdotal and lack any patterning. They are therefore not discussed here. This chapter thus does not go further back in time than the TRB, *i.e.* the south Scandinavian Early Neolithic (3950-3350 BC, see Table 3.1).

Even though these Early and Middle Neolithic deposition practices are not this study's main focus, they shed light on the central theme of the *emergence* of selective metalwork deposition in the Early Bronze Age. By systematically examining the patterns in selective deposition in the Neolithic, we can investigate the conventions behind these early deposition practices, and study their development over time.

This chapter has a somewhat different structure than the following data-based chapters. It is divided into two parts: Sections 3.3 and 3.4 consist of a systematic and chronological overview of the conventions behind selective deposition practices in the research area in the TRB and the SGC, based on patterns identified in the literature. Section 3.5 deals with the earliest patterns in the data from the investigated time period, examining the conventions behind selective deposition in the Bell Beaker period (Late Neolithic I/Late Neolithic B) in greater detail, and comparing them to TRB and SGC depositions. The conventional chronology concerning the periods in question is shown in Table 3.1. The main object categories that are used to examine patterns in Bronze Age depositions – as explained in Chapter 2 – are also applied in this chapter: the categories that occur in these early periods are daggers, axes, and ornaments. These are investigated with a particular focus on metal as well as on other foreign materials and imports.

3.2. The introduction, disappearance, and reappearance of metal: a thousand-year gap?

Before turning to the conventions behind selective deposition practices in the Neolithic, the introduction of metal and metalworking in the research area needs to be addressed. Metal (copper and gold) was introduced to the research area during the Late Neolithic, an introduction that is traditionally associated with the Bell Beaker period (Van der Waals & Glasbergen 1959:110, Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:42, Vandkilde 1996:263, Willroth 1996:18, see Section 3.5). Finds of metalworking tools, such as cushion stones, in Bell Beaker burials in the Netherlands indicate that not only the material metal, but also the craft of metalworking was introduced to the research area (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:69-70, 77).

However, the introduction of metal in the Bell Beaker period was not the first time the research area came into contact with metal. Copper artefacts – mainly flat axes and ornaments – already reached Denmark and northern Germany, as well as southern Sweden, in the TRB, in the south Scandinavian Early Neolithic (3950-3350 BC), in fact in surprisingly large numbers (Klassen 2000:13, 239, Vandkilde 1996:178-179, Laux 2000:198). The oldest metal in southern Scandinavia is based on metal analyses and typochronological grounds thought to date to the second half of the fifth millennium BC (Klassen 2000:235-236). The copper was probably imported from the Balkans, Slovakia, and the Erzgebirge in the earliest phase, and later on primarily from the Alpine region (Klassen 2000:235). Already at this early stage, a local manufacture of metalwork in Denmark is thought to have existed (Klassen 2000:308).

In contrast, there was apparently no metal in the Netherlands prior to the Bell Beaker period, although a few copper scraps and ornaments have been found in megalithic tombs in Drenthe, in the north-eastern part of the country (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:76-77). Their dating, however, is highly uncertain, so they cannot shed any light on whether there was metal in the Netherlands during the TRB (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:76-77). But even if there was metal, it must have been very rare in this region (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:77). These scraps and ornaments are therefore not included in the discussion in the following sections.

At the end of the Early Neolithic, around 3300 BC, metalwork appears to disappear from the archaeological record in Denmark and northern Germany. Compared to the wealth of copper in the TRB, the subsequent SGC has yielded very little metalwork (Klassen 2000:238, Laux 2000:198-199, Vandkilde 1996:180). This break is thought to be linked with an almost complete collapse in metal production in the Alpine region at this time (Klassen 2000:238). Metal was then reintroduced roughly a thousand years later, in the Bell Beaker period, around the same time as what is thought to be the first introduction in the Netherlands. There thus appears to be a thousand-year gap in southern Scandinavia and northern Germany, in which not only metalwork seems to have disappeared, but also the practice of metalworking itself. With the benefit of hindsight, this is a puzzling situation.

However, it should be noted that it is highly problematic to date copper flat axes, which are the main type of metalwork in these early periods (Vandkilde 1996:177, Willroth 1996:17, Laux 2000:21-29, 198-199). They occur in the Early and Late Neolithic, *i.e.* during a vast time span. Because of their rather simple shape it is often difficult to make morphological distinctions. Although metal analyses may shed some light on these chronological issues, this method is not unproblematic either (Vandkilde 1996:177).

A small number of copper flat axes from the Netherlands illustrate this problem: they are similar in shape to the south Scandinavian TRB axes, but metal analyses do not indicate a dating earlier than the Bell Beaker period (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:76-77). The copper flat axes from Niedersachsen also present chronological problems. They are tentatively dated by Laux to the Early Neolithic (Laux 2000:21-29, 198), which would suggest that none of the flat axes date to the Late Neolithic, but based on the adjacent areas, at least an *occasional* occurrence of copper flat axes in Niedersachsen during the Late Neolithic is to be expected. This thousand-year gap may thus in part be created by the typochronological methods employed by archaeologists.

The thousand-year gap in terms of metalwork in southern Scandinavia and northern Germany may thus only be a virtual one: there is a possibility that there was in fact more metalwork in this 'gap' than we think. Finds of copper ornaments in Single Graves in Moravia and eastern Germany (Bourgeois & Kroon 2017 and references therein) and depositions of double axes of Eschollbrücken type, attributed to the SGC, in western Central Europe indeed suggest that metal could occur in SGC assemblages (Laux 2000:190-191, Hansen 2012:32, Willroth 1996:17). The same applies to the lack of metal finds in the Netherlands prior to the Bell Beaker period: there may possibly be earlier metalwork, but this may be obscured by chronological issues.

Nevertheless, it is a fact that a number of assemblages with metalwork can be dated to the TRB with some certainty, based on typological comparisons and find associations (Klassen 2000:79-90). The best example is the famous Bygholm hoard, which was found inside a Funnelbeaker (see Section 3.3.3). Such finds are lacking for the SGC in the research area (cf. Vandkilde 1996:177). An actual scarcity of metal appears thus to exist in the research area in the SCG, compared to earlier and later periods.

In the following sections, the conventions behind selective deposition in the Neolithic are discussed, starting with the TRB.

3.3. Selective deposition in the Funnelbeaker Culture: an overview

The Funnelbeaker Culture (TRB) is divided into a number of regional groups, two of which are relevant for the research area: the TRB West Group, comprising the Netherlands and north-west Germany, and the TRB North Group, comprising southern Scandinavia (Bakker 1979:11, fig. 1, Klassen 2000:13). The conventional chronologies for these groups are shown in Table 3.1. The TRB is known for its communal burial tradition in megalithic tombs, which occur in the entire research area. Another well-known phenomenon of the TRB are large-scale flint axe depositions in wetlands (Achterop 1960, Nielsen 1977, Rech 1979, Karsten 1994, Wentink et al. 2011). But in addition to these flint axes, axes made of copper and Alpine jade were also deposited in parts of the research area (Klassen 2000, Klassen 2004, Pétrequin 2012). Evidently, the axe played a significant role in deposition practices in this period. Axes of Alpine jade were a western European phenomenon, whereas copper axes are mostly found in south-eastern Europe (Klassen 2004, fig. 145). Southern Scandinavia is in fact the only region in Europe where they occur together (Klassen 2004, fig. 145), making Denmark an interesting case study to investigate selective deposition practices in the TRB. In addition to axes, copper ornaments were also deposited, and one copper dagger has been found in the research area.

The following sections first focus on the conventions behind depositions of axes made of various materials, and then on depositions of other metal objects. [4]

3.3.1. Flint, Alpine jade, and copper axes

Axes made of flint, Alpine jade, and copper played an important role in selective deposition practices in the TRB. Starting with flint axes (thin- and thick-butted axes with rectangular cross-section), these occur in massive numbers[5] both in burials and in hoards during this period. However, they have different biographies in these different contexts, as shown by studies of TRB flint axes from the Netherlands (Wentink et al. 2011), and the patterns in flint axe depositions in southern Scandinavia are strikingly similar (cf. Nielsen 1977, Rech 1979, Karsten 1994). These patterns are shown in Figure 3.2. Flint axes in burials, on the one hand, are small, polished, heavily used, and locally produced. Flint axes in hoards, on the other hand, are oversized, often unpolished, and show no traces of functional use. Instead, these axes are thought to be ceremonial (Wentink et al. 2011). They were deposited in wet landscape settings, often at the edge of bogs, and they were often carefully arranged in hoards. The two flint axe groups were strictly separated; the deposition of flint axes was highly *selective* (Wentink 2006, Fontijn 2002:59). Flint axes were not combined with axes made of other materials in depositions. Flint was a local resource in Denmark and northern Germany. The oversized, ceremonial axes in the Netherlands are thought to be imported from that region (Wentink et al. 2011:400), *i.e.* from *within* the TRB area. Flint axes were thus culturally associated specifically with the TRB domain.

Moving on to axes made of Alpine jade, they were deposited all over western Europe (Pétrequin 2012, figs. 3 and 4) and occur in modest numbers in southern Scandinavia and in the Netherlands (Klassen 2012:86, Schut 2016:238). Unfortunately, the available information on Alpine jade axes in the research area is limited. They were imported from present-day northern Italy, from the mountains Monte Viso and Monte Beigua (Klassen 2012:86), *i.e.* from *outside* the TRB area. They were manufactured in that region between the end of the sixth and the first half of the third millennium BC (Klassen 2012:86), so they may in fact be older than the Early Neolithic in the research area. Unfortunately, many of the European finds are from unknown find contexts (Pétrequin 2012:17, Klassen 2012:86). Nevertheless, it is clear that these axes were generally not used as burial finds (Klassen 2012:86, see Figure 3.2). Instead, they were deposited singly or in hoards. Elsewhere in Europe, a careful arrangement of axes in hoards is known to have occurred (Hansen 2012:30-31). Oversized jade axes are thought to have been objects of power with ritual significance (Klassen 2012:88-89), while smaller axes are thought to have been tools (Schut 2016:239). Finds from the research area and elsewhere in Europe have demonstrated that these axes often have very long and complicated biographies (Klassen 2010:41-42, Hansen 2012:30). To conclude, Alpine jade axes can be argued to be "transcultural objects" (Vandkilde 2014b, Fontijn 2019:68-70): they were not only widely distributed, but also deposited in similar ways across western Europe (Fontijn 2019:68-70).

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4 It should be noted that other objects and materials were also involved in TRB selective deposition practices. These include amber, ceramics, human and animal bones, various wooden objects (e.g. posts, canoes), arrows, and bone tools (Randsborg 1978, Rech 1979, Koch 1998). However, as these objects and materials are not the main focus of this chapter, they are not included in this discussion.

5 According to Ebbesen, Neolithic flint axe depositions in Denmark are "practically innumerable, and any attempt at counting them is pointless" (Ebbesen 1993:123-124).

Figure 3.1. Copper flat axe displayed in Moesgaard Museum, dating to 3500-3300 BC (Klassen 2000, catalogue no. 113). Photo: Rogvi N. Johansen, Photo- and Media-dept., Moesgaard Museum.

Lastly, copper flat axes (see Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.3) dating to the Early Neolithic have been found in Denmark and northern Germany, but not in the Netherlands (Vandkilde 1996, Klassen 2000, Laux 2000, Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67). They occur in surprisingly large numbers (cf. Klassen 2000:13), considering that these are the very first metal axes in the research area, and that all this metal had to be imported from afar. Yet compared to the Late Neolithic and Bronze Age, copper axes occur in small numbers in the research area. The copper was imported from *outside* the TRB area, from south-east and Central Europe (Klassen 2000:235). A local production of metalwork probably already existed in Denmark at this early stage (Klassen 2000:308), as discussed in Section 3.2. The import of axes of Alpine jade and copper happened in the same time period (Klassen 2004:101), and some of the copper axes have been suggested to be copies of Alpine jade axes (Klassen 2010:41-42).

Turning to the conventions behind copper axe depositions, many of the early copper flat axes from southern Scandinavia and north-west Germany unfortunately come from unknown find contexts (Randsborg 1978:310, Klassen 2000:255, 268 and catalogue, Laux 2000:21-29, Vandkilde 1996:179). Nevertheless, although the number of axes is small, some significant patterns can be observed (see Figure 3.2). It is clear that copper axes were generally not used as burial gifts. Instead, they were relatively often deposited in dry land settings, particularly in or close to burial mounds, while wetland finds are relatively uncommon (Vandkilde 1996:179, fig. 168). Most axes have been found singly, but they were occasionally deposited in hoards in the research area: four hoards contain copper flat axes, and three of them also contain copper ornaments, including the Bygholm hoard, which in addition also contains a copper dagger (see Section 3.3.3 and Figure 3.3). Copper axes were thus usually not combined with other materials.

Some of the copper axes are thought to be deliberately destroyed in prehistory (Klassen 2000:278-280). It is thought that many of these early copper axes were not intended for functional use, since they are oversized or remarkably shaped, or because they carry decorations that would be invisible if the axes were hafted (Klassen 2000:278-283). Furthermore, many axes carry casting seams or casting remnants, some even on the cutting edge (Klassen 2000, catalogue, see Figure 3.1), suggesting that these axes were not functional tools. These early copper axes are therefore thought to be

Axes TRB	Flint axes		Alpine jade axes		Copper axes	
n	South Scandinavia: ? The Netherlands: ±130		South Scandinavia: ±30 The Netherlands: ±70		South Scandinavia: ±70 (Niedersachsen: ±30)	
	BURIALS	DEPOSITS	BURIALS	DEPOSITS	BURIALS	DEPOSITS
Landscape context		Bog		?		Dry
Used						
Unused						
Small						
Oversized						
Polished/finished				?		
Unpolished/unfinished				?		
Local						
Foreign/import						

Figure 3.2. The main patterns in the selective deposition of flint, Alpine jade and copper axes, based on patterns identified in the literature. Flint axes: Nielsen 1977, Rech 1979, Karsten 1994, Wentink 2006, Wentink & Van Gijn 2008, Wentink et al. 2011. Alpine jade axes: Klassen 2004, Klassen 2012, Schut 2016. Copper axes: Klassen 2000, Laux 2000.

prestige or cult objects rather than utilitarian axes (Klassen 2000:278-283). Klassen actually argues that these objects should perhaps not be called 'axes', as they were not axes in the modern sense of the word, but rather copper images *representing* axes (Klassen 2000:281).

Summing up, flint, Alpine jade, and copper axes were each deposited in specific ways, in specific contexts, and with specific biographies. Copper and Alpine jade axes, both being foreign objects from *outside* the TRB domain, were treated and deposited in similar ways: they were not used as burial gifts. Copper axes were probably not intended to be functional tools.

3.3.2. Copper ornaments

Copper ornaments dating to the TRB have been found in small numbers in Denmark and northern Germany (Klassen 2000, Schlicht 1973). They occur in burials, where they occur together with flint axes, amber beads and/or ceramics; and in hoards, where they occur, sometimes in large numbers, in combination with copper flat axes, amber beads and/or ceramics (see Figure 3.3). Copper ornaments obviously belonged to a different conceptual category than copper axes: copper ornaments are found both in burials and in hoards, whereas copper axes were never used as burial gifts; and copper ornaments were frequently associated with other objects and materials, in contrast to copper axes. Apparently, it was not only the material copper *itself* that steered selective deposition practices.

3.3.3. The Bygholm hoard

An extraordinary find from this period that warrants being highlighted is the famous Bygholm hoard, dating to ca. 3500-3300 BC (Klassen 2000:80-81, see Figure 3.3). The hoard was deposited in a sandy stretch of land bordered by the Bygholm Å (river) in Jutland, Denmark (Klassen 2000:351, no. 94). It is the largest metal find from this period: it consists

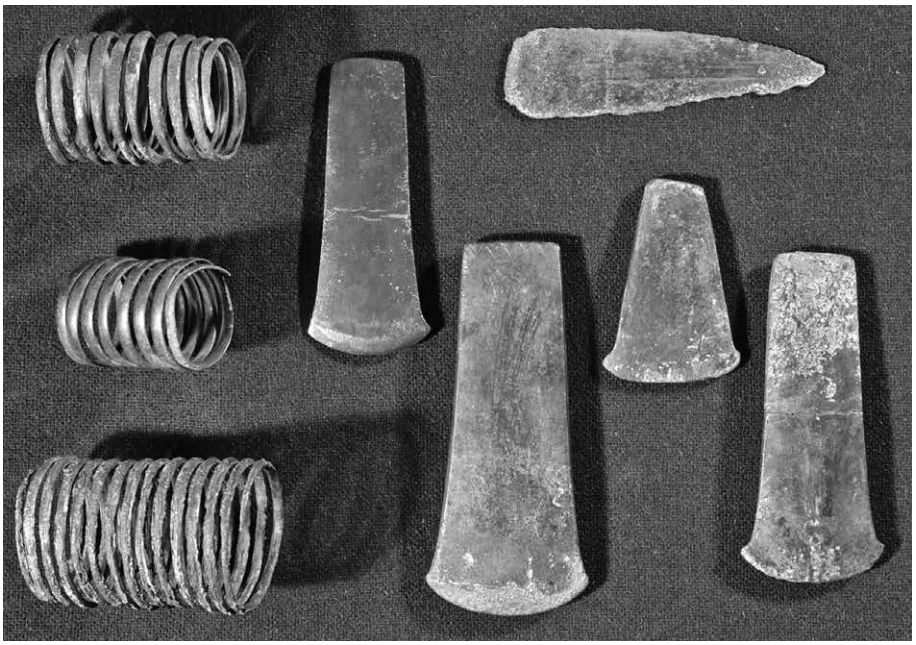

Figure 3.3. The Bygholm hoard containing four copper flat axes, a copper dagger, and three copper arm spirals, which were deposited inside a Funnelbeaker (not depicted). Photo: National Museum of Denmark, Lennart Larsen, cropped and adjusted to greyscale, used under licence CC-BY-SA, http://samlinger.natmus.dk/DO/asset/2001.

of four copper flat axes, three copper arm spirals, and a copper dagger, all placed inside a Funnelbeaker (Randsborg 1978:303, Klassen 2000:19 and fig. 2). Amber beads were often deposited in pots in the TRB (Randsborg 1978:311, Rech 1979:41), so at first glance, this seems to be a 'normal' depositional act. However, amber is a local material, whereas in the case of the Bygholm hoard, foreign metalwork was deposited inside a pot. Furthermore, the hoard was deposited in a dry context, while amber beads were often deposited in bogs (Randsborg 1978:311, Rech 1979:40). No parallels to the Bygholm hoard are known from the research area, making it a unique hoard and a remarkable depositional act.

Zooming in on the objects themselves, the dagger is the earliest copper dagger in Denmark, and a unique find this far north (Müller 2013:444, fig. 1). It is thought not to be meant for practical use, but rather interpreted as a symbolic or cult object (Klassen 2000:282-283). Since the objects were deposited inside a Funnelbeaker, it can be assumed that the axes were deposited unhafted, which means that they were unusable at the moment of deposition. In addition, one axe is deliberately destroyed, and another was possibly not meant to be hafted (Klassen 2000:280, 351). The dynamics between the local or 'usual' (the Funnelbeaker itself and the act of depositing objects in pots) and the foreign or 'unusual' (the metalwork, the combination of objects, and the deposition in a dry landscape context) in the Bygholm hoard are intriguing, and so are its unique contents. Depositing such a special and unusual hoard must have been a special event that stood out. This observation is returned to in the following chapters. It is worth noting that three different metal object categories – axes, a dagger, and ornaments – occur all together in one assemblage; these apparently did not have to be separated. This convention changed later on in the Bell Beaker period, which is discussed below.

3.3.4. Conclusion

After examining the conventions behind selective deposition of axes and other valuables in the TRB, a number of conclusions can be drawn.

Firstly, although axes played an important role in these deposition practices, they were not all deposited in the same way. Instead, flint, Alpine jade, and copper axes were all deposited in specific ways, in the 'right' place and with the 'right' biography. Foreign Alpine jade axes, which were imported from outside the TRB region, and copper axes, which were also made of an exotic, valuable material that came from outside the TRB domain, were both never used as burial gifts. Instead, copper axes were frequently deposited singly in dry land contexts, and they were probably not intended for functional use.

Secondly, copper ornaments follow different conventions than copper axes: they occur both in burials and hoards, and they were frequently combined with other objects and materials. The material copper itself was thus not treated in uniform ways in selective deposition.

Finally, the Bygholm hoard represents a remarkable depositional event, consisting of a unique combination of three different object categories, including the only copper dagger from this period, and connecting a number of different local and foreign objects and depositional acts.

In the following sections, selective deposition practices in the subsequent SGC are examined. How did the conventions behind selective deposition develop during this period?

3.4. Selective deposition in the Single Grave Culture: an overview

The Funnelbeaker Culture (TRB) was succeeded by the Single Grave Culture (SGC) in the research area (see Table 3.1). The SGC is thought to be part of the Corded Ware complex, which was widely distributed across Europe. The Corded Ware complex is highly discussed: its widespread uniformity as well as its regional manifestations have been frequently debated (see Furholt 2014). This debate, however, is left aside here. Instead, the focus is on selective deposition in this period. As already discussed in this chapter's introduction, there appears to be a break in selective metalwork deposition in the SGC. Interestingly, the results of genetic analyses also suggest that there was a break in this period: around 2800 BC, the SGC is thought to have emerged in the research area as a result of a migration from the Eurasian steppe, replacing the local Neolithic farmers (Allentoft et al. 2015, Haak et al. 2015). In this period, Corded Ware groups emerged all over Europe. In light of this migration, the break in selective metalwork deposition becomes highly significant. In Denmark, the situation has a particular local character: the TRB lasted longer on the islands than in Jutland, resulting in a coexistence of the SGC in Jutland and the TRB on the islands (Iversen 2014:222). The SGC has a limited distribution in Denmark, Single Graves only occurring in Jutland (Iversen 2013:24, fig. 3).

In the SGC, a new, supra-regionally shared burial ritual was introduced. Particularly male burials are very similar across regions, whereas female burials are distinctly local (Bourgeois & Kroon 2017:13). The dead were now buried in individual graves with a standardised burial equipment, expressing a focus on personal display and a new idea of personhood (Fontijn 2002:59, Treherne 1995:106-113). This concept is discussed in detail in Chapter 9. Which objects did people choose to include in this male burial package? And what relationship does this burial package have with depositions outside burials?

In the following sections, the SGC burial package is discussed first, after which the focus is on depositions of axes and ornaments.[6]

3.4.1. The Single Grave burial package

In this period, a new burial ritual was introduced, in which particularly male burials were equipped with a standardised and supra-regionally shared SGC burial equipment (Bourgeois & Kroon 2017, see Figure 3.4). Stone battle axes were now the main status symbol in these male burials (Iversen 2014:211). Battle axes have been found all over the research area (see *e.g.* Glob 1945, Iversen 2013:24, fig. 3, Kühn 1979, Struve 1955, Butler & Fokkens 2005:395, Figure 3.4). They were also deposited in wetlands (Iversen 2014:104). However, flint axes were still used as burial gifts in Single Graves in the Netherlands: both locally made, used flint axes and imported, unused flint axes are found in burials (Wentink et al. 2011:506).

Flint blades/daggers are also a common element in the male burial package (Bourgeois & Kroon 2017, Wentink 2020:86). In Single Graves in the Netherlands, imported daggers made of northern flint (from southern Scandinavia or northern Germany) and French Grand Pressigny flint were used as burial gifts (Wentink 2020:94). These imported flint daggers in Single Graves do not show any traces of use (Van Gijn 2010:142-147, Wentink 2020:97). Because of this lack of use wear, they are thought to have been display items (Van Gijn 2010:145-147, Wentink 2020:100). Grand Pressigny daggers have also been found in burials in Niedersachsen, but not in in Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein (Kühn 1979:35-36, cf. Lomborg 1973:88-90). No finds of Grand Pressigny daggers are known from hoards: these daggers were specifically associated with (male) burials. Lastly, the male burial package also commonly included Corded Ware (Bourgeois & Kroon 2017, see Figure 3.4). To conclude, display items and imported objects were now used as burial gifts in Single Graves, in contrast to the TRB, when such items were deposited in wetlands.

3.4.2. Flint and copper axes

This section focuses on the conventions behind axe depositions. Starting with flint axes, there are both similarities and differences between flint axe depositions in the SGC and the TRB (Ebbesen 1983, Wentink et al. 2011). In the SGC, depositions of flint axes are far less abundant than in the TRB. Furthermore, the conventions in terms of the axes' biographies were different than in the TRB, and burials and hoards were not strictly separated (Wentink et al. 2011). In burials in the Netherlands, both locally made, used flint axes, and imported, unused flint axes are found (Wentink et al. 2011:506). As discussed above, imported objects could now be used as burial gifts, in contrast to the TRB, when such objects were deposited in wetlands. SGC flint axe deposits occur in landscape contexts similar to TRB deposits, and a careful arrangement of axes in hoards is also observable (Ebbesen 1983:158, Wentink et al. 2011:404). However, in terms of their biographies, the Dutch axes in deposits are similar to TRB axes found in burials: they are small, heavily used, and made of local flint (Wentink et al. 2011:406). In Jutland, on the other hand, flint

6 Objects made of organic materials were also deposited in this period. Typical for the Netherlands are the wooden disc wheels that were deposited singly or in pairs in the peat in the northern part of the country during a short phase in the late SGC (Butler & Fokkens 2005:390, Van der Waals 1964). Similar finds are known from Denmark (Van der Waals 1964). As these are not the main focus of this discussion, they are not discussed further here.

Figure 3.4. Inventory of a male SGC burial near Eext, Drenthe, the Netherlands. Photo: JAV Studios, Drents Museum.

axes in deposits show similarities to flint axes in TRB deposits, *i.e.* they are mostly large and unused (Ebbesen 1983). Although in broad terms a continuity in flint axe deposition may be observed, a shift in terms of the conventions behind flint axe depositions evidently happened, and these were apparently not uniform across regions.

Moving on to copper axes, very few copper flat axes from the research area can be dated with certainty to this time period, as discussed in Section 3.2. In large parts of Europe, the practice of depositing metal axes appears not to have played a significant role in this period (Hansen 2012:32). Nevertheless, the practice *did* exist: metal axes were actually frequently deposited in south-eastern Europe in this period (Hansen 2012:32). Closer to the research area, copper hammer axes of type Eschollbrücken were deposited in western Central Europe, and these depositions are attributed to the SGC based on typochronological grounds and metal analyses (Kibbert 1982:23-35, Laux 2000:190-191, Hansen 2012:32). Metal axe deposits thus did occasionally occur in the SGC, but they do not seem to have played an important role in the research area. It is important to note that copper axes have not been found in Single Graves: just like in the previous TRB, they were not used as burial gifts. Even though imported valuables were

part of the SGC burial package, this did not apply to copper axes. Bearing in mind that the SGC and the TRB co-existed in Denmark (Iversen 2014:222), it is worth noting that TRB copper axe finds are lacking in northernmost Jutland as well as western Jutland (Klassen 2000, figs. 112-114, cf. Randsborg 1978:307, figs. 2-4), which is SGC territory (Iversen 2013:24, fig. 3). This supports the notion that copper axe depositions did not happen frequently in the SGC.

3.4.3. Copper ornaments

In line with the overall scarcity of metalwork in the research area, copper ornaments are not abundant in this time period. Occasional finds from burial contexts are known from the research area, but their dating is debated (Klassen 2000:209, 238, 357-358, Willroth 1996:17). Elsewhere in Europe, copper ornaments occasionally occur in SGC burials, *e.g.* in Moravia and eastern Germany (Bourgeois & Kroon 2017). Even though the evidence is limited, it is clear that copper ornaments could be used as burial gifts, just like in the preceding TRB.

3.4.4. Conclusion

Comparing selective deposition practices in the SGC and the TRB, it is evident that a shift happened between these two periods. This shift can be interpreted in light of the migration that is thought to have occurred in this period. A number of conclusions can be drawn.

First of all, depositions outside burials happened much less frequently than before. Flint axe depositions are less numerous than in the TRB, and copper axes were not deposited in the research area.

Secondly, the conventions behind flint axe depositions were different: foreign imports of flint axes could now be used as burial gifts, while small, utilitarian axes were deposited in bogs, which is the exact opposite of the conventions behind TRB flint axe depositions.

Thirdly, while there was a wealth of copper in the TRB in southern Scandinavia, copper did not play an important role in the SGC period. Copper ornaments occasionally occur in Single Graves elsewhere in Europe, but copper axes have not been found in burials, and copper axe deposits were also rare. Metal was not part of the new burial package.

Lastly, the SGC burial package included display items and imported objects; objects that would have been deposited in bogs in the TRB.

In the following sections, the conventions behind selective deposition in the Bell Beaker period are examined, which corresponds to the first part of the investigated time period. These are thus the earliest patterns in the data collected in the database and examined in this study. How did SGC selective deposition practices develop in the following period?

3.5. Patterns in selective deposition in the Bell Beaker period

The Bell Beaker period corresponds to Late Neolithic I (LN I) in Denmark, and to Late Neolithic B (LN B) in the Netherlands (ca. 2350-2000 BC, Sarauw 2007b:36-37, Fontijn 2002:56, see Table 3.1), *i.e.* to the first part of the investigated time period. The patterns in selective deposition in this period are thus the earliest patterns in the data investigated in this research. The Bell Beaker period is traditionally closely linked with the introduction of metal in the research area: from ca. 2350 BC metal reached the research area in greater quantities once more, now including both copper and gold (Butler & Van

der Waals 1966/67, Vandkilde 1996:177, Willroth 1996:18). Different regions within the research area were connected through Bell Beaker routes, and metal is thought to have circulated through these routes (Vandkilde 2005a:30, Vandkilde 1996:295). Furthermore, the research area was part of the pan-European Bell Beaker region, which reached from the Iberian Peninsula to the British Isles and southern Germany (Müller 2009:77, fig. 79).

As discussed in Section 3.2, metalworking was also introduced, which is demonstrated by finds of metalworking tools in Bell Beaker burials in the Netherlands (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:69-70, 77). A local production of metalwork is thus thought to have existed in the Netherlands in this period (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:98), and probably existed in Denmark as well (Vandkilde 1996:190). A specific type of copper alloy is typical for Bell Beaker metalwork in the Netherlands, for which reason it has been named "Dutch Bell Beaker metal" (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:96). This type of metal has also been found elsewhere in north-west Europe, including in LN I metalwork in Denmark (Vandkilde 1996:178-179, Fontijn 2002:61). Imported finished objects in Denmark mainly originate in the western European Bell Beaker region, but a few imports from Central Europe also occur (Vandkilde 1996:190).

The Bell Beaker period is characterised by a shared material culture, containing the eponymous Bell Beakers and gold and copper objects, among other items; and by a specific burial package. The dead were buried in individual burials with a standardised set of burial equipment. For the first time, this burial equipment also contained metal, an important development that is discussed in detail in the following sections. This shared material culture and burial package can be recognised across large parts of Europe. In the research area, they are primarily found in the Netherlands (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67), and in Niedersachsen (Lanting 2007/2008:84, fig. 23; Willroth 1996:18). Bell Beaker influences in Denmark are limited to northern and central Jutland (Sarauw 2007b:29 and fig. 18), and of a local character (Vandkilde 2005a:2). The southern part of Jutland is noticeably empty of Bell Beaker finds, and this also applies to the Danish islands (Sarauw 2007b:29 and fig. 18). Nevertheless, the distribution of LN I metalwork in Denmark is not limited to the Bell Beaker region (see Vandkilde 1996, fig. 184, and see Figure 3.6).

The majority of the metal objects recorded from this period are found in Denmark, and a considerable number of metal objects has also been found in the Netherlands (see Figure 3.5 and Figure 3.6). In contrast, northern Germany shows a striking lack of metal in this period (see Figure 3.5 and Figure 3.6). Bell Beaker burials in Niedersachsen rarely contain metalwork (Lanting 2007/2008:88, Willroth 1996:18). Overall, metal was still rare in this early period compared to the Bronze Age. Flint objects were still frequently deposited, particularly in Denmark. In this region, it was only from the start of LN II that metalwork was deposited more frequently than flint (Vandkilde 2005a:13, see Chapter 4). In contrast, flint deposits were rare in the Netherlands in this period (Wentink et al. 2011:407).

What were the conventions behind selective deposition in this period now that metal circulated in greater quantities? Which (metal) objects did people choose to include in the burial package, and what relationship does this burial package have with depositions outside burials? The following sections first focus on the Bell Beaker burial package, and then on depositions of daggers, axes, and ornaments.

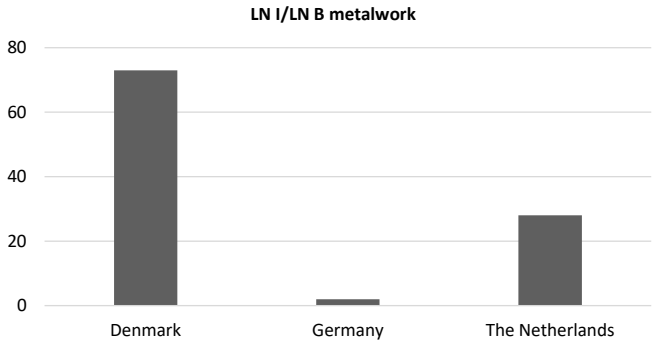

Figure 3.5. The number of metal objects in the database dating to LN I/LN B.

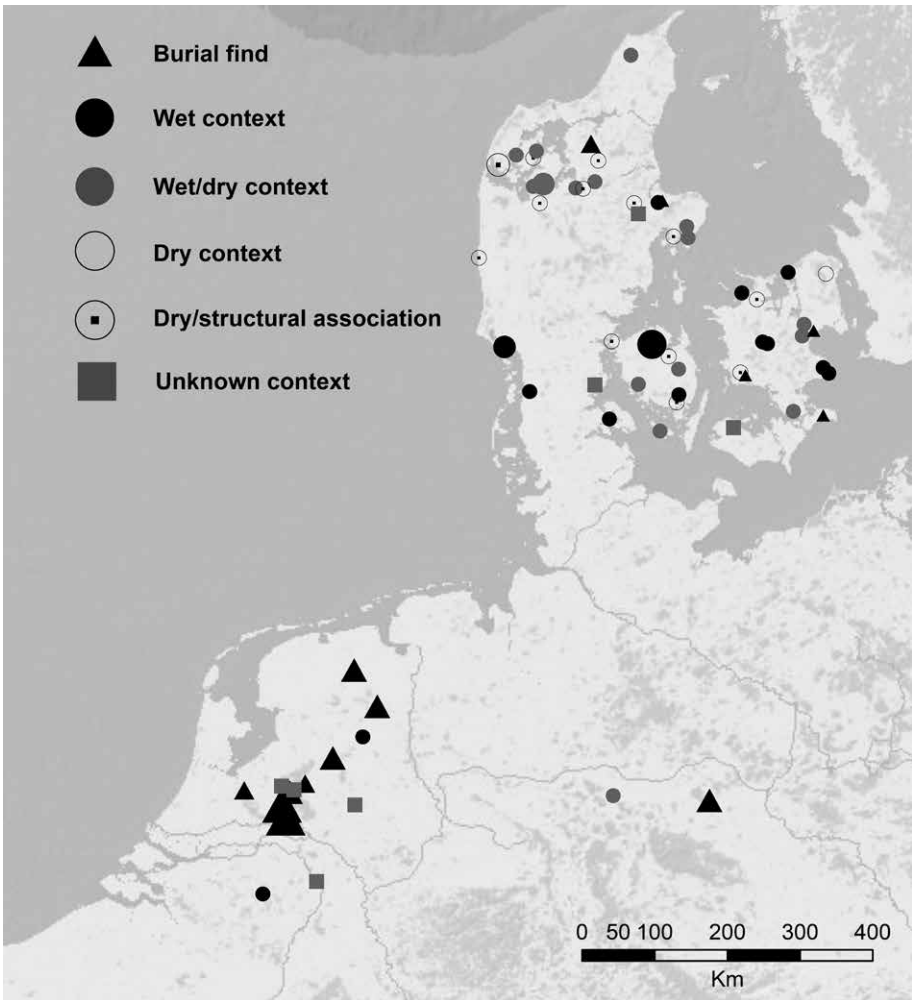

Figure 3.6. The geographical distribution of LN I/LN B metalwork in the research area. The size of the symbols indicates the number of objects found (largest symbol: 18 objects).

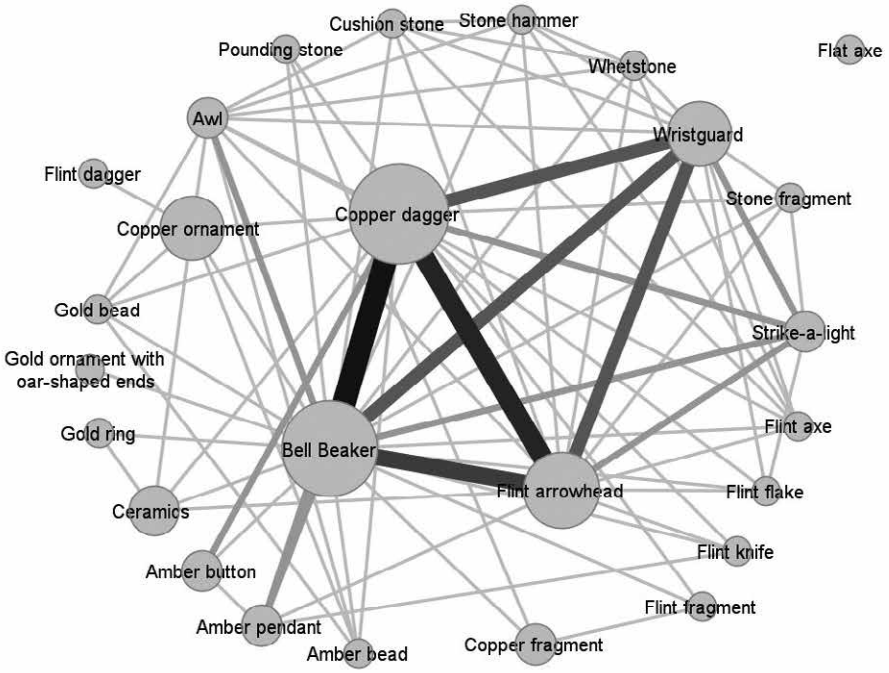

Figure 3.7. Network showing all objects and the associations between them in LN I/LN B burials recorded in the database. The size of the nodes indicates the number of objects (value largest node: 12), the size and colour of the links indicate how often objects occur together (value largest link: 7).

3.5.1. The Bell Beaker burial package

In the Bell Beaker period, the dead were buried in single burials with a standardised set of burial equipment, expressing ideas of personhood (Fontijn 2002:59, Treherne 1995:106-113). This burial package resembles the SGC burial package discussed in Section 3.4.1. The Bell Beaker burial package typically contained a copper flat tanged dagger, V-perforated amber buttons, flint arrowheads, wrist guards, and Bell Beakers (Sarauw 2007a:65-66, see Figure 3.8). These Bell Beaker burials are usually interpreted as male archery burials (Sarauw 2007a:65-66). However, it rarely happens that all these objects are found together in the same burial, and in Jutland, Bell Beaker burials typically contain a flint dagger instead of a copper dagger (Sarauw 2007a:66, 71-72). The dagger evidently played an important role in burials in this period, an association that also occurs in later periods, and that is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9. In the Netherlands, a number of Bell Beaker burials also include gold ornaments, which are related to gold ornaments in Bell Beaker assemblages in England and Brittany (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:62-63). In contrast, metal is scarce in Bell Beaker burials in north-western Germany (Lanting 2007/2008:88). The Bell Beaker burial package thus contained metalwork, among other objects, yet only *specific* metal objects were included in the burial package. This is an important notion that is discussed in detail below. This was the first time in the research area that *metal* objects were used as burial gifts in single burials to express ideas of personhood, which was another important development. This development is discussed in detail in Chapter 9.

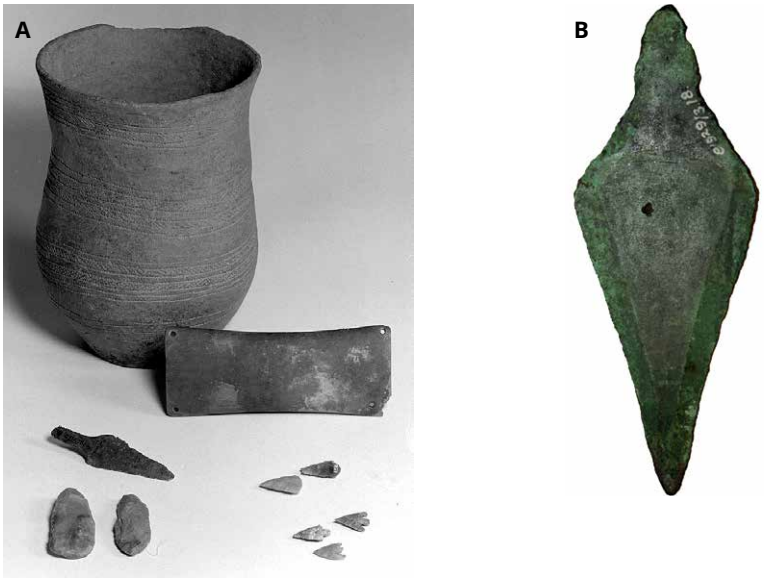

Figure 3.8. A: Inventory of a Bell Beaker burial from Ginkelse Heide, Ede, the Netherlands, containing a copper tanged dagger, flint arrowheads, a wrist guard, a strike-a-light, and a Bell Beaker. Photo: National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden, used under licence CC-BY 3.0 NL, https://hdl.handle.net/21.12126/155414. B: Copper dagger (RMO e1929/3.18, 13 cm) from a Bell Beaker burial in Stroeërzand, the Netherlands, found together with a wrist guard. Photo: Marieke Visser. Scale 1:2.

Network analysis was applied to the finds from LN I/LN B burials with metalwork recorded in the database to examine and visualise the Bell Beaker burial package. These objects and the associations between them are shown in the network in Figure 3.7. Even though there is a degree of variation in these burials, it is clear that people often made specific choices in terms of the objects that they selected. A burial package is clearly observable: copper daggers, wrist guards, flint arrowheads, and Bell Beakers are the main ingredients; the association between copper daggers and Bell Beakers is the strongest. In addition, a number of other objects made of flint, stone, amber, and gold also occur. Although not all burials are composed in exactly the same way, we can indeed speak of a 'burial package', and zooming out, all burials contain a selection of objects from a specific Bell Beaker burial repertoire. To conclude, a specific burial package existed in this period, in which *specific* metal objects played an important role.

3.5.2. Flint and copper daggers

After examining the Bell Beaker burial package, this section focuses especially on flint and copper daggers. Both flint and copper daggers were deposited in the research area in this period. Lanceolate flint daggers of type I and II, dating to LN I (Iversen 2014:34-35), have been suggested to be inspired by Bell Beaker copper daggers (Vandkilde 1996:295, Sarauw 2007a:66). If flint and copper daggers were indeed conceptually so closely connected, did this have implications for how they were deposited?

Starting with lanceolate flint daggers (see Figure 3.9), they occur in the entire research area, but they were not deposited in similar ways. In Denmark, where they

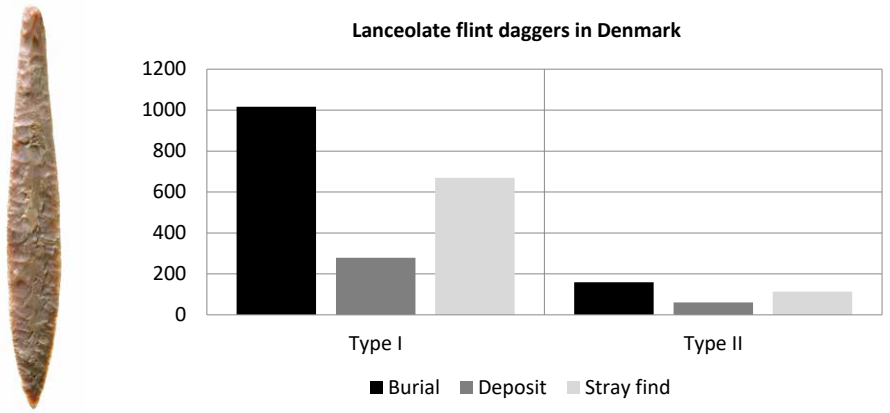

Figure 3.9. Lanceolate flint dagger from Thy, Denmark. Photo: National Museum of Denmark, Roberto Fortuna and Kira Ursem, used under licence CC-BY-SA, https://samlinger.natmus.dk/do/asset/3844.
Figure 3.10. Flint daggers of types I and II in Denmark per site type (based on data in Lomborg 1973:64, fig. 42).

were manufactured locally (Vandkilde 2005a:15), the majority of type I and II daggers are burial finds (Lomborg 1973:64, fig. 42, see Figure 3.10). The majority of type I daggers from all contexts shows traces of use, resharpening and reworking (Lomborg 1973:34-35). These daggers were thus (heavily) used. Only a smaller proportion of type I and II flint daggers in Denmark come from deposits (Lomborg 1973:64, fig. 42, see Figure 3.10). Unfortunately, no information is available on the landscape contexts of these deposits.

In Schleswig-Holstein, the patterns are similar: flint daggers were also locally manufactured here (Kühn 1979, map 2), and they have also predominantly been found in burials (all types, Kühn 1979:14). Approximately 50% of the daggers had been used before they were placed in burials (Kühn 1979:40-41). It has been suggested that the dead were buried with a useful, but not necessarily new, flint dagger, probably the dagger that belonged to their personal equipment (Kühn 1979:40-41). Just like in Denmark, only a small number of flint daggers from deposits is known from Schleswig-Holstein; they were predominantly unused, in contrast to the burial finds (all types, Kühn 1979:14, 25, 41).

Although the data from Niedersachsen are fragmented, the patterns in flint dagger deposition appear to be different here (Siemann 2003, Siemann 2005). It appears as if deposits in wet landscape settings were relatively common in this region (Siemann 2003:198-199) and that these daggers were hardly used prior to deposition (Siemann 2005:105). A similar, even stronger pattern can be observed in the Netherlands. In this region, flint daggers were mainly deposited in wet contexts, while burial finds are very rare (Van Gijn 2010:191-192, Bloemers 1968, catalogue). They were imported from Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein (Beuker & Drenth 2006:289). Flint daggers from the Netherlands are thought to have been display objects without practical function, in a similar fashion to the earlier daggers in Single Graves (Van Gijn 2010:189-191).

Summing up, there is thus a division in terms of flint dagger use and deposition between Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein on the one hand, and Niedersachsen and

especially the Netherlands on the other. In Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein, lanceolate flint daggers were locally made, they had a practical function, and they were primarily used as burial gifts. But in the Netherlands, these daggers were foreign imports, they were display items, and they were deposited in wetlands. Imported objects were thus treated and deposited differently from locally made objects, an observation that is discussed in more detail in this chapter's conclusion, and elaborated on in Chapter 8.

Moving on to the copper flat tanged dagger (see Figure 3.8), this is seen as a typical Bell Beaker artefact and an important element in the Bell Beaker burial package, as discussed above. These daggers occur in modest numbers in the research area (see Table 3.2). Eleven copper tanged daggers are known from the Netherlands, of which ten are from the central part of the country, and they were all found in Bell Beaker burials (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:58-59, Bloemers, Louwe Kooijmans & Sarfatij 1981:49). A twelfth dagger from the Netherlands is also thought to date to this period, but this dagger is riveted rather than tanged, and it comes from an unknown find context (Drie; Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:87, 109). These copper daggers are the first metal daggers in this part of the research area. A copper tanged dagger has also been found in a Bell Beaker burial in Germany, actually at the border of the research area (Esbeck; Willroth 1996:18-19, Thieme 1985:134-136), but overall, metal objects in general, and tanged daggers in particular, are rare in Bell Beaker burials in north-western Germany (Lanting 2007/2008:88, Thieme 1985:135, Willroth 1996:18).

Copper daggers were specifically associated with the burial package; they were in fact the first metal object with this particular association in the research area. These daggers were *not* deposited singly or in hoards outside burials. Indeed, this is the first time selective *metalwork* deposition can be observed in the research area, which is discussed in detail in Section 3.6. However, there is one exception to this pattern: one copper dagger from Denmark dates to this period, and it was a single object deposit, not a burial gift. It was found beneath a stone close to a barrow in northern Jutland (Vandkilde 2005a:26). Depositing metalwork near barrows was actually a relatively common practice in Denmark in this period, as can be seen in Section 3.5.3 on axe depositions and in Section 3.5.4 on ornaments. Bell Beaker burials in northern and central Jutland typically contain a locally made flint dagger of type I or II instead of a copper dagger (Sarauw 2007a:66). The fact that flint daggers seem to have taken over the role of copper daggers in Bell Beaker burials in Denmark may be an explanation for the divergent deposition of the single Danish copper dagger.

The Dutch copper daggers vary in size, but overall, they are quite small; several are shorter than 10 cm, although one dagger measures 21 cm (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:58, cf. Fontijn 2002:67). Although little is known about their use and function, they may not necessarily have been used as weapons, but rather as 'all-purpose blades' (Wentink 2020:181, cf. Fontijn 2002:67, 221). The Danish dagger is of a different shape, being remarkably long (30 cm), and riveted; it is thought to be an import from Brittany (Vandkilde 2005a:26). In contrast, several of the Dutch daggers may have been locally produced of imported copper (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:59, Fontijn 2002:67). The Danish dagger thus forms an exception to the pattern in several ways.

Summing up, copper flat tanged daggers were specifically associated with burials in the research area, and not deposited outside burials, with one exception. They may have been used as 'all-purpose blades'.

Copper daggers LN I	Denmark	Schleswig-Holstein	Niedersachsen	The Netherlands	Total
Context	**1**	**-**	**1**	**12**	**14**
Burial find	-		1	11	**12**
Single find	1		-	-	**1**
Wet	-			-	**-**
Dry	-			-	**-**
Settlement	-			-	**-**
At/in burial mound	*1*			-	***1***
Gravel/sand	-			-	**-**
Field	-			-	**-**
Unknown	-			-	**-**
Hoard	-		-	-	**-**
Wet					
Settlement					
At/in burial mound					
Gravel/sand					
Unknown					
Unknown	-		-	1	**1**
Details					
Decorated	-		-	-	-
Undecorated	1		1	12	14
No information	-		.	-	-
Import	1		-	-	1
Local	-		-	-	-
Import or local	-		-	11	11
Origin unknown	-		1	1	2
Used	-		-	-	-
Possibly	-		-	-	-
Unused	-		-	-	-
Use unknown	1		1	12	14

Table 3.2. Selective deposition of copper daggers in the research area in LN I/LN B. Mainly based on data in: Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67, Vandkilde 1996, Willroth 1996.

Comparing the selective deposition of flint and copper daggers, a number of observations can be made. Flint daggers were used as burial gifts in the regions where they were manufactured, *i.e.* Denmark and northern Germany. They were imported from these regions in the Netherlands, where they were deposited in wetlands, and not used as burial gifts. In the Netherlands, copper daggers were used as burial gifts, as part of the Bell Beaker burial package. There is thus a division in the research area in terms of flint and copper dagger deposition.

3.5.3. Copper axes

Copper flat axes (see Figure 3.11) occur once more in larger numbers in the research area in this period (see Table 3.3). As already discussed in Section 3.2, copper flat axes present chronological difficulties, for which reason the exact number of copper axes from the different regions in the research area in this time period is difficult to grasp. Furthermore, many of these axes are without provenance, *e.g.* in the Netherlands (Butler 1995/96:162-167), so it is difficult to draw any conclusions in terms of their selective deposition. There are, for example, two axes from the Netherlands which were allegedly

Figure 3.11. Copper flat axe from Ølst, Jutland, Denmark (ÅM 8105, 10.6 cm), dating to LN I (Vandkilde 1996, no. 35). Photo: Marieke Visser. Scale 1:2.

found together on the Veluwe, *i.e.* they are supposed to be a hoard, but this information is uncertain and cannot be confirmed (Butler 1995/96:163).

Nevertheless, based on the LN I copper flat axes from Denmark, a number of observations can be made (see Table 3.3), and these are the main focus of this section. The most important observation is that these Danish axes were not used as burial gifts. Even though there was a specific burial package containing metal in the Bell Beaker period, it did *not* include copper axes. The much earlier TRB copper axes were not used as burial gifts either, which is remarkable considering the chronological distance between them. Most of the axes are single finds, but one hoard is known from Denmark (Gerdrup Ravnemark; Vandkilde 1996, catalogue no. 38). Copper axes were more frequently deposited in wet locations in the landscape than their TRB counterparts, although depositions in dry contexts near man-made structures, such as settlements and barrows, were still relatively common compared to later periods (Vandkilde 1996:179-180, see Table 3.3). Depositing metalwork in dry contexts near man-made structures appears to be a common practice in Denmark in this early period, while depositions in wetlands become more common in later periods (see chapters 4, 5, and 6).

In terms of the axe biographies, many of the Danish axes appear to have been used, although they may not necessarily have been very effective as tools (Vandkilde 1996:268). This is in contrast to TRB copper axes, which appear to be non-functional, as discussed in Section 3.3.1. It is unknown whether the Danish axes are locally made or imported, but since a local production of metalwork is thought to have emerged, the axes may be local products (Vandkilde 1996:190, 295).

In addition to copper flat axes, a small number of double axes of type Zabitz were deposited at the border of the research area in this period, in eastern Niedersachsen and the southern part of the Netherlands (Willroth 1996:17-18, Butler 1995-1996:169-170, Laux 2000:189, Fontijn 2002:65-66). They were deposited singly outside burials, following the same general pattern as flat axe depositions. Lastly, the very first flanged axes possibly appeared in Denmark in LN I (Vandkilde 1996:189). They have not been found in burials, thus apparently following the same pattern as flat axe depositions.

Summing up, LN I copper axes in Denmark were mainly deposited singly, and increasingly often in wet contexts compared to earlier copper axe depositions in the TRB, but still relatively often in dry contexts. They appear to have been functional, and they may have been locally made.

Copper flat axes LN I	Denmark	Schleswig-Holstein	Niedersachsen	The Netherlands	Total
Context	**31**	**?**	**?**	**6**	**37**
Burial find	1			-	**1**
Single find	22			1	**23**
Wet	*7*			*1*	***8***
Dry	-			-	**-**
Settlement	*1*			-	***1***
At/in burial mound	*3*			-	***3***
Gravel/sand	-			-	**-**
Field	*7*			-	***7***
Unknown	*4*			-	***4***
Hoard	1 hoard, 2 axes			1 hoard 2 axes	**2 hoards 4 axes**
Wet	-			-	**-**
Settlement	*2*			-	***2***
At/in burial mound	-			-	**-**
Gravel/sand	-			-	**-**
Unknown	-			*2*	***2***
Unknown	6			3	**9**
Details					
Decorated	-			-	**-**
Undecorated	31			6	**37**
No information	-			-	**-**
Import	-			6	**6**
Local	-			-	**-**
Import or local	31			-	**31**
Origin unknown	-			-	**-**
Used	7			-	**7**
Possibly	11			-	**11**
Unused	10			-	**10**
Use unknown	3			6	**9**

Table 3.3. The selective deposition of copper flat axes in LN B/LN I. Mainly based on data in: Butler 1995/96, Vandkilde 1996.

3.5.4. Copper and gold ornaments

Both copper and gold ornaments occur in assemblages from this period. Starting with copper ornaments, they have been found in a small number of burials in the research area. In four burials in Denmark, (fragments of) copper ornaments, including arm rings, a spiral ring, and a rolled racket pin, have been found; in some cases, they were associated with one or more flint daggers, and in one case with ceramics (Vandkilde 1996:181-182). They were thus not combined with other types of metalwork. These burials are not restricted to the Bell Beaker region in northern and central Jutland. In the Netherlands, the rich Exloo/Odoorn Bell Beaker burial assemblage contained – apart from a copper tanged dagger, two gold ornaments, two amber beads and a Bell Beaker – a copper spiral bracelet, and also a copper awl (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:49 and fig. 5). Copper ornaments thus follow a different pattern from copper axes, since the latter were never found in burials. Apparently, it was not the material *copper* itself that steered how these objects were deposited.

Figure 3.12. Two gold 'basket ornaments' from the Bell Beaker burial in Eelde-Grote Veen, Drenthe, the Netherlands. Photo: Karsten Wentink.

Gold ornaments are a new element in selective deposition practices in this time period, occurring in relatively large numbers in the research area, particularly in Denmark. They may have been manufactured locally in the research area out of imported gold (Vandkilde 2005a:27, Fontijn 2002:67), but some ornaments may be imports, *e.g.* from Brittanny (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:62). These ornaments are made of sheet gold, and consist of 'basket ornaments', which were probably worn as hair or ear rings (see Figure 3.12), ornaments with oar-shaped ends, and lunulae. They are related to basket ornaments and lunulae in the Anglo-Irish region (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:62-63, Vandkilde 1996:182-184), and the decoration on some of the ornaments is of an 'international Bell Beaker style' (Fontijn 2002:66-67). These gold ornaments are thus part of the supra-regionally shared Bell Beaker material culture. Yet despite their 'international style', these gold ornaments were not deposited the same way across regions (Table 3.4).

In Denmark, all gold ornaments were deposits. They were relatively often deposited in dry contexts, just like the copper flat axes and the copper dagger discussed above. This appears indeed to be a general pattern for Denmark in LN I. Some were deposited singly, like the three gold lunulae, and this also applies to the singly found gold lunula from northern Germany. In contrast, hoards with lunulae occur elsewhere in Europe, for instance in Brittany (Briard 1965:319 and fig. 20). Another difference concerns how they were treated prior to deposition: in Brittany and the Anglo-Irish region, lunulae are sometimes found folded or rolled up (Briard 1965:319 and fig. 20, Taylor 1980, plates 16, 18, 19), while the three lunulae in Denmark were all found intact. Ornaments with oar-shaped ends were also sometimes deposited singly in Denmark, but they were more often deposited in pairs or in larger hoards. They are the most common type of gold object in Denmark in this period (n=23). The Søndersø Holm hoard consists of four large gold ornaments with oar-shaped ends, bundled together with a piece of sheet copper and deposited in a bog (Vandkilde 1996, no. 100). These ornaments are thought to have been worn as finger or ear rings, or neck or arm rings, depending on their size (Vandkilde 1996:184).

In marked contrast to the Danish practices, gold ornaments have only been found in Bell Beaker burials in the Netherlands (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:62-63). Four sheet gold ornaments have been found in two Dutch Bell Beaker burials (Exloo/Odoorn, Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67; and Eelde-Grote Veen, Drenth et al. in Kegler et al. 2013:235, see Figure 3.12). The Exloo/Odoorn burial also contained additional metalwork. Furthermore,

Gold ornaments LN I	Denmark	Schleswig-Holstein	Niedersachsen	The Netherlands	Total
Context	**29**	**-**	**1**	**5**	**35**
Burial find	-		-	5	**5**
Single find	13		1	-	**14**
Wet	*3*		-		***3***
Dry	*1*		-		***1***
Settlement	-		-		**-**
At/in burial mound	*4*		-		***4***
Field	*3*		*1*		***4***
Gravel/sand	*2*		-		***2***
Unknown	-		-		**-**
Hoard	7 hoards 16 ornaments		-	-	**7 hoards 16 ornaments**
Wet	*8*				***8***
Settlement	-				**-**
At/in burial mound	*6*				***6***
Gravel/sand	*2*				***2***
Unknown	-				**-**
Unknown	-		-	-	**-**
Details					
Decorated	13		1	3	**17**
Undecorated	6		-	2	**8**
No information	10		-	-	**10**
Import	-		1	3	**4**
Local	26		-	-	**26**
Import or local	-		-	-	**-**
Origin unknown	3		-	2	**5**

Table 3.4. Selective deposition of gold ornaments in the research area. Based on: Vandkilde 1996, Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67, Drenth et al. in Kegler et al. 2013.

an ornament with oar-shaped ends from Bennekom, found together with a Bell Beaker (Butler & Van der Waals 1966/67:62), probably constitutes a third Bell Beaker burial (Glasbergen & Butler 1959). A fourth assemblage, probably a burial, containing gold ornaments was found just south of the research area in the Netherlands (Beers-Gassel, Noord-Brabant, Fontijn 2002:67).

It should be noted that the distribution of gold ornaments in Denmark is not limited to the Bell Beaker area in northern and central Jutland (Vandkilde 1996, fig. 184). This may explain the differing treatment of gold ornaments in depositions: in the Netherlands, they were conceptually part of the Bell Beaker burial package, and thus used as burial gifts, whereas the Bell Beaker package had a different, local character and limited distribution in Denmark, and hence gold ornaments were deposited in dry contexts following local practices. There are, in short, two depositional practices involving gold ornaments that can be observed in the research area.

3.5.5. Conclusion

After examining selective deposition practices in the Bell Beaker period, during which metalwork was deposited in larger numbers once more, a number of conclusions can be drawn.

Firstly, the most important development in this period is the separation between different contexts in terms of the selection of metalwork. People selected specific metal objects to be used as burial gifts, and others to deposit outside burials. Copper flat axes were never used as burial gifts, but mostly deposited singly in specific places in the landscape: this happened more often in wet contexts compared to the TRB, but compared to later periods still relatively frequently in dry contexts near man-made structures. In contrast, copper daggers were specifically part of the Bell Beaker burial package, and hence not deposited outside burials.

Secondly, a number of local practices can be observed. In burials in Denmark, copper daggers were substituted with locally made, used flint daggers. However, south Scandinavian flint daggers were deposited in bogs in the Netherlands, where they were probably used as display objects. Imported objects were thus treated differently from local objects, an important observation that is discussed in more detail below.

Lastly, gold ornaments, which are a typical element of the 'international Bell Beaker style', only occur in Bell Beaker burials in the Netherlands; yet in Denmark, they were never used as burial gifts, but usually deposited in dry landscape settings, reflecting local practices in Denmark, where Bell Beaker influences were limited and of a local character.

3.6. Discussion

The main aim of this chapter was to investigate the *emergence* of selective metalwork deposition. The patterns in selective deposition in the Funnelbeaker Culture (TRB), Single Grave Culture (SGC), and Bell Beaker period were examined – focusing especially on depositions of metalwork and other imported valuables, and on axes, daggers, and ornaments – in order to investigate the conventions behind these depositions. Can the practice of "double exclusivity" (Fontijn 2019:29-33), which is observable in depositions in the Bronze Age, already be recognised in Neolithic deposition practices? Or was selective deposition in the Bronze Age a new practice, with new, different conventions?

The practice of selective deposition fluctuates throughout the 2000 years investigated in this chapter, with peaks and dips in the frequency of depositions in general and of metalwork in particular, and with shifts in the conventions governing this practice. The relationship between burials and deposits in terms of metalwork deposition changes, too. These fluctuations and changes may be seen in light of cultural and social changes. In the following sections, these developments are discussed focusing on three main themes: firstly, a brief overview of how the practice of selective deposition developed over time is given; secondly, the focus is on how local and foreign objects were deposited; and lastly, a discussion on the emergence of selective metalwork deposition concludes these sections.

3.6.1. Selective deposition: developments over time

Starting this chronological overview with the TRB, depositions happened on a huge scale in this early period. Axes played an important role in these depositions, but there was no general 'axe deposition convention': axes made of flint, Alpine jade, and copper were not deposited similarly. Instead, they were all deposited in specific ways, in the 'right' context and with the 'right' biography. There was a well-established TRB flint axe deposition system in which two groups of axes were kept separate: axes in burials and in bogs were strictly separated in terms of their biographies. But copper and Alpine jade axes do not fit in the flint axe system. Instead, copper and Alpine jade axes, both made of imported

materials and both coming from *outside* the TRB domain, were treated similarly: they were not used as burial gifts. Copper axes were often deposited in dry landscape settings, often near barrows. The fact that copper and Alpine jade axes were both exotic valuables was of vital importance for how they were treated in depositions. This is discussed in more detail in the next section. Copper ornaments did not follow the same conventions as copper axes: they were both deposited in hoards and used as burial gifts, frequently in association with other objects and materials. They are in fact the only copper items occurring in burials in this time period.

Moving on to the SGC, a shift in deposition practices is clearly observable compared to the earlier TRB. Overall, a dip in depositions appears to have occurred in this period: flint axe depositions were less numerous than in the TRB, and copper axes were not deposited in the landscape anymore in the research area, although this did happen elsewhere in Europe. Furthermore, the conventions behind depositions were different from those in earlier TRB practices, which is exemplified by flint axe deposition: foreign imports of flint axes could now be used as burial gifts, while small, utilitarian axes were deposited in bogs. This is the exact opposite of what happened in the TRB. A new development is that the dead were now buried individually with a standardised burial equipment, including stone battle axes and imported flint daggers, expressing new ideas of personhood. Copper ornaments are occasionally found in Single Graves, but copper axes were never used as burial gifts; copper apparently did not play an important role in the SGC package.

Lastly, metal was deposited in larger numbers once again in the Bell Beaker period, after it had been scarce in the research area for about 1000 years. The most significant development in this period, of fundamental importance for the practice of selective metalwork deposition in the Bronze Age, is that for the first time, *metalwork* in burials and in deposits was separated: copper daggers were included in the burial package, and not deposited outside burials, whereas copper flat axes were deposited in specific places in the landscape, and not used as burial gifts. These two object types did not occur together, in contrast to the TRB Bygholm hoard, in which axes, ornaments and a dagger were deposited together. For the first time, the material copper *itself* was thus differentiated: it became associated with different domains, and therefore separated in depositions. Axes, on the one hand, are thought to have been associated with the communal domain of deposits (Vandkilde 1996:267). Daggers, on the other hand, were used as an expression of personhood in individual burials. This concept is expanded on in Chapter 9. The idea of the dagger being associated with individual burials was introduced to the research area in the SGC, but it was in the Bell Beaker period that *copper* daggers for the first time were used as an expression of personhood in burials. The *object association* was thus not new, but the *material association* was. The material copper acquired a whole new meaning in this period.

Alongside axes and daggers, ornaments follow a pattern of their own in the Bell Beaker period. Copper ornaments occur in burials, and gold ornaments were also part of the Bell Beaker burial package in the Netherlands, while in Denmark, where Bell Beaker influences are limited, they were deposited following local conventions. In Denmark, LN I metalwork was frequently deposited in dry contexts near man-made structures. However, depositions in wet contexts start to become more frequent, especially copper axe depositions, and this development continued in the subsequent LN II and Early Bronze Age (Vandkilde 1996:39, 243).

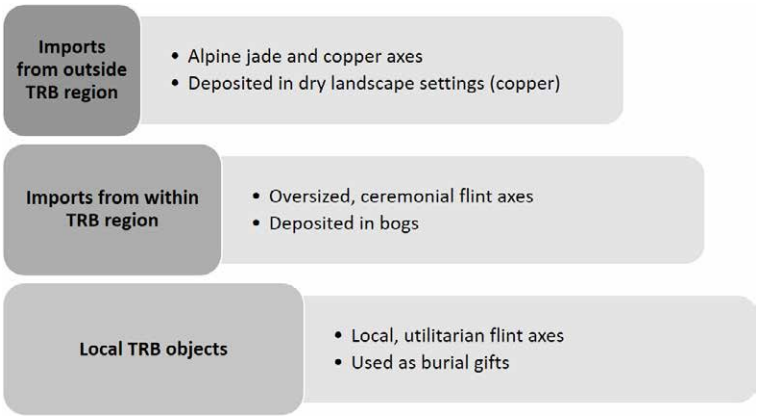

Figure 3.13. The three levels in terms of the origins of deposited objects in the TRB (cf. Wentink et al. 2011:404).

This situation forms the starting point for selective deposition in the following period, LN II/EBA, in which the frequency of metalwork deposition intensified. The conventions behind selective metalwork deposition in this period is discussed in the next chapter.

3.6.2. Local vs. foreign objects

Throughout the entire time period examined in this chapter, both foreign objects (imported finished objects and objects made of imported materials) and local objects (objects locally manufactured out of local resources) were deposited. It has become evident that foreign objects were consistently treated in special ways in depositions, yet they were not treated similarly throughout the entire time period. This section discusses how conventions behind depositions of foreign objects and local objects changed.

In the TRB, foreign objects were deposited outside burials, while local objects were used as burial gifts. The origins of objects were thus of vital importance for how they were deposited: foreign objects were consistently treated differently from local objects, exactly *because of* their foreign origins. Among the foreign objects, a distinction can be made between objects imported from *within* the TRB region, and objects imported from *outside* the TRB region. In terms of origins, three levels can thus be discerned (cf. Wentink et al. 2011:404): local objects, which were locally manufactured of local materials; objects imported from within the TRB region, which were part of the TRB domain; and foreign objects imported from distant regions, which were not part of the TRB domain (see Figure 3.13). Examples of the first level are flint axes in burials, which are made of local flint. To the second level belong flint axes deposited in bogs, which were made of imported south Scandinavian flint in the Netherlands. Lastly, copper and Alpine jade axes belong to the third level: they were imported from outside the TRB region, and they were never used as burial gifts; copper axes were frequently deposited in dry contexts near barrows. Depending on the level objects belonged to, they were deposited in a specific, 'appropriate' way.

In the subsequent SGC, the conventions behind deposition of foreign and local objects were completely reversed: foreign imports could now be used as burial gifts, while local objects were deposited in bogs. Imported flint daggers were included in the SGC burial package; imports were thus now 'allowed' in burials, where they were used in the

construction of personhood. This was a completely new development and explored in more detail in Chapter 9; such objects would have been deposited in bogs in the TRB.

Lastly, in the Bell Beaker period, foreign objects ended up both in burials and in deposits, but these contexts were separated in terms of the selection of objects, as already discussed above. Copper was thus not simply an exotic material anymore, coming from afar, and deposited accordingly, like in the TRB. Instead, the material copper *itself* became differentiated and associated with different domains, and therefore separated in depositions. Another example of foreign imports in this period are the south Scandinavian flint daggers, which were used as burial gifts in the regions where they were manufactured, *i.e.* Denmark and northern Germany, but deposited in bogs in the Netherlands.

Summing up, how foreign objects were treated changed over the course of time, from being specifically associated with deposits, to becoming associated with the individual in burials, to becoming differentiated and separated between burials and deposits.

3.6.3. The emergence of selective metalwork deposition

Lastly, this section discusses the *emergence* of selective metalwork deposition, which was the main focus of this chapter. The main question around which this chapter revolves is whether the practice of "double exclusivity" (Fontijn 2019:29-33) which is observable in Bronze Age depositions can already be recognised in Neolithic depositions. There were specific conventions behind Bronze Age depositions: people deposited specific objects in specifically selected places in the landscape, thereby avoiding other objects and other places, as discussed in this chapter's introduction (Fontijn 2019:29-33). Was this practice simply a continuation of earlier Neolithic deposition practices? Or was it a new practice, with new conventions? After examining the conventions behind depositions in the TRB, SGC, and Bell Beaker period, I attempt to answer this question in this chapter's last section.

Starting with the TRB, a "double exclusivity" (Fontijn 2019:29-33) can in fact already be observed in this early period: people chose to deposit copper axes in dry landscape settings, or to deposit oversized, imported flint axes in bogs, and not use them as burial gifts. They chose specific objects and places, and avoided other objects and places. However, it should be noted that copper and Alpine jade axes were deposited in similar ways because they were foreign imports; the material copper does not appear to have a special significance beyond its foreign origin. Furthermore, these axes were not intended to be functional tools, suggesting that the material copper was treated in an abstract way as an exotic material. This is further supported by the Bygholm hoard, in which copper axes, ornaments, and a dagger were all combined. The material copper apparently did not have any other significance beyond being an exotic material. This observation is discussed further in Chapter 7.

Moving on to the SGC, people chose to include specific objects in the burial package and not deposit them outside burials, such as imported flint daggers. This is, again, an example of "double exclusivity" (Fontijn 2019:29-33). However, the conventions behind depositions in this period were very different from those in the TRB. Furthermore, the material copper did not play a significant role in depositions in the research area, in contrast to the preceding period. Although a "double exclusivity" (Fontijn 2019:29-33) can still be observed, it is of a different type, governed by different conventions.

Lastly, in the Bell Beaker period, depositions again demonstrate a "double exclusivity" (Fontijn 2019:29-33): daggers were used as burial gifts, while axes were deposited outside

burials. However, this is the first time that *metal* became differentiated: before the Bell Beaker period, a separation between metalwork in different contexts is not observable. In contrast to the TRB, when the material copper was regarded as an exotic material in an abstract way, the material metal now acquired a completely new significance. This is further supported by the fact that the copper axes from this period were most likely intended as functional tools. Depositing a hoard like the Bygholm hoard would thus not be possible according to this period's conventions. The fact that copper axes were deposited in dry landscape settings is in itself even *more* significant knowing that copper daggers were *not* deposited in such places, but used as burial gifts. I return to his conclusion in Chapter 7.

It should be noted that copper ornaments do not appear to fit in the picture outlined above. They occur in burials and hoards in the TRB, in burials in the SCG, and in burials in the Bell Beaker period. From the first introduction of copper onwards, ornaments were used as burial gifts, clearly following a different pattern from copper axes.

In conclusion, even though selective (metalwork) deposition existed throughout the entire 2000 years discussed in this chapter, the Bell Beaker period can be argued to be the beginning of a new practice. Only then did the material copper itself become associated with different domains and consequently deposited in separate contexts. Even though a "double-exclusive-logic" (Fontijn 2019:29-33) can be observed in depositions throughout the Neolithic, it is only from the onset of LN I/the Bell Beaker period that this logic specifically concerns *metalwork*.

By examining earlier deposition practices, an understanding of the nature of the Bronze Age deposition practices that are the focus of this study has been acquired, and it can be concluded that they emerged in the Bell Beaker period. In this sense, this chapter forms a bridge between the introductory chapter and the following three data-based chapters; the point of departure in terms of metalwork deposition for the subsequent discussion we have now formulated in detail. In the following three chapters, the conventions behind selective deposition in the subsequent three sub periods are examined in detail in the same way as Bell Beaker depositions were examined in Section 3.5. Chapter 4 starts by considering patterns in selective deposition in LN II/EBA. How did the practice of selective deposition develop after the crucial developments in the Bell Beaker period?