



## PANEL 1 – IDENTITY(S): Man and Territory – Esposende and the origins of Castro Culture

During the period between the end of the third millennium and the end of the first millennium BC, our ancestors established themselves in settlements located in high and strategic points of the vast territory that makes up the Northwestern region of the Iberian Peninsula.

With distinct chronologies and geographical specificities, each settlement had its own particularity and a development that did not necessarily conform with each other.

In the Northern part of Portugal, from the end of the Bronze Age up until the conquest of Rome, a very specific cultural reality was established, generically called “*Cultura Casteja*” or “*Castro Culture*”, because one of its most emblematic features is the fact that it is a settlement organized in fortified villages: the “*Castros*” and the “*Citânias*” or “*Cidades*”.

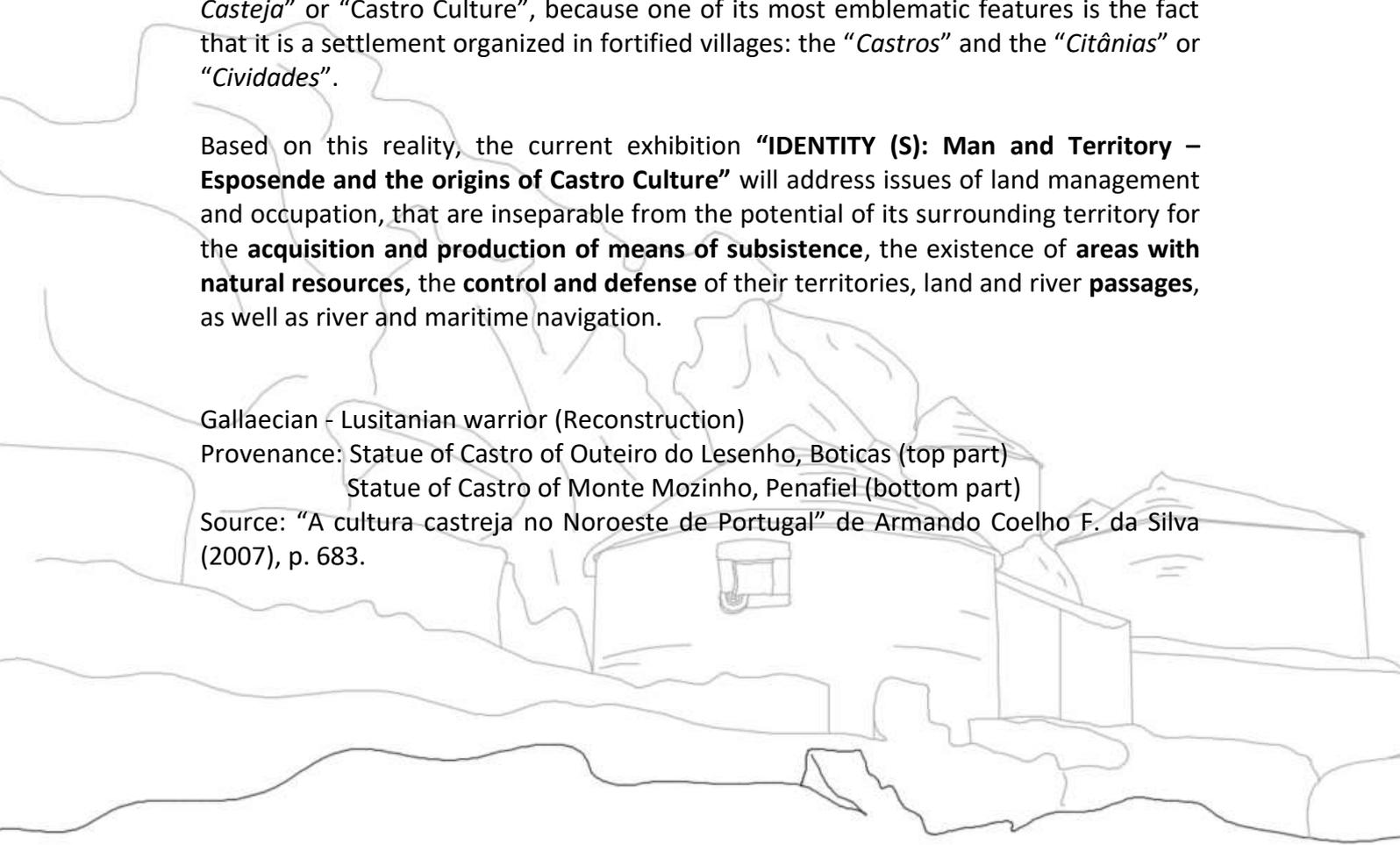
Based on this reality, the current exhibition “**IDENTITY (S): Man and Territory – Esposende and the origins of Castro Culture**” will address issues of land management and occupation, that are inseparable from the potential of its surrounding territory for the **acquisition and production of means of subsistence**, the existence of **areas with natural resources**, the **control and defense** of their territories, land and river **passages**, as well as river and maritime navigation.

Gallaecian - Lusitanian warrior (Reconstruction)

Provenance: Statue of Castro of Outeiro do Lesenho, Boticas (top part)

Statue of Castro of Monte Mozinho, Penafiel (bottom part)

Source: “A cultura castreja no Noroeste de Portugal” de Armando Coelho F. da Silva (2007), p. 683.





## PANEL 2 - Pre-Roman Populations in the Iberian Peninsula The pre-Roman “populi” in the present territory of Portugal

Throughout the first millennium BC the Iberian Peninsula witnessed the arrival of several groups of people, who coexisted with the indigenous population and inhabited different regions. The present Portuguese territory, was culturally diverse in the first millennium BC and can be broadly divided into two areas: the **Celtic-Turdula** area and the **Gallaecian-Lusitanian** area.

The **Celtic-Turdula** area would correspond to the south of the Tejo River (except the Northeastern region of Alentejo) and the Atlantic façade between the Tejo and Vouga Rivers. Here, in addition to the “**Celtici**” and the “**Turduli**”, the “**Conii**” also inhabited the region. The latter would establish themselves in this region since the 9<sup>th</sup> century BC, while the “**Celtici**” reached the far southwestern part of Europe in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. So, it appears that we are looking at a scene of considerable coexistence, in multiethnic urban areas. During the second half of the first millennium BC, there was an influx of “**Turduli**” and “**Celtici**” to the coastal areas, the “**Turduli**” settling themselves in the area south of the Douro River. This was due to the movement of important members that gave rise to the “**Turduli Veteres**”. With this establishment the Celtic-Turdula area was widened.

The Gallaecian-Lusitanian (or castro) region would correspond broadly to the area comprised between the Northern part of the Douro River and the central part of Portugal up to the Spanish Extremadura. Tradition says that the Lusitanians lived in the region of the Hermínio hills (present day Serra da Estrela), where they would have settled themselves during the Late Bronze Age. Their fierce character made them the main opponents of the Romans through the figure of Viriatus.

### MAP I.P.

- 1 – Castro culture of the Northwestern region of the Iberian Peninsula with the delimitation of its southern area
- 2 – Douro Culture
- 3 – Tejo Culture
- 4 – Tartessus / Turduli Culture, predominantly Phoenician and Punic area of influence
- 5 – Iberian Culture predominantly Greek area of influence
- 6 – Urnfield Culture and its area of influence (Taffanel IV)

### MAP PT.

Distribution of the main pre-Roman populations in the Iberian Peninsula

Source: “A cultura castreja no Noroeste de Portugal” de Armando Coelho F. da Silva (2007), p. 555

Distribution of the main pre-Roman populations in the present Portugal territory

Source: “O Domínio Romano em Portugal” de Jorge de Alarcão (2007), p. 32

### DECORATION

Short sword | iron blade and bronze handle

Provenance: Castro of S. Julião (Vila Verde)

Source: “A cultura castreja no Noroeste de Portugal” de Armando Coelho F. da Silva (2007), p. 555



Rectangular stone with an engraved decoration  
Provenance: Castro de S. Lourenço (Vila Chã – Marinhas)

Bronze helmet  
Provenance: Castelo de Neiva (Viana do Castelo)  
Source: “A cultura castreja no Noroeste de Portugal” de Armando Coelho F. da Silva (2007), p. 650





### PANEL 3 – Pre-Roman Populations and Settlements in Northwest Portugal

The “**Callaeci**” would initially be an ethnic group located just North of the Douro River (in the Northern Coastal region), whose name was changed by the Romans to designate a collective of multiple “populi” (people) of the Northwestern region. Of the 24 “populi” or “civitates” attributed by Plínio to the “Conventus Bracarum”, only 21 are known through literary or epigraphic sources. There are, therefore, 3 unknown “populi”.

On the other hand, there are 4 “populi” that can be safely located in the Entre Douro e Minho Region (“**Seurbi**”, “**Leuni**”, “**Bracari**” and “**Callaici**”) and 3 whose location is possible, but not certain (“**Nemetati**”, “**Luanci**” and “**Lubaeni**”). The “**Leuni**” and the “**Seurbi**” were established between the Minho and Lima Rivers.

The central location of the “**Bracari**” was in the Cávado River Valley and the “**Callaeci**” were located in the area immediately North of the Douro River. As for the “**Nemetati**” we can place their capital in the immediate vicinity of “**Bracara Augusta**” (founded at a later date) and “**Valabriga**” (in the area of the Ave River).

The “**Luanci**” and “**Lubaeni**” could position themselves in the Entre Douro e Minho Region. The capital of the “**Turodi**” (later moved to “**Aquae Flaviae**”) was located along the Tâmega River. The location of the “**Naebisoci**” does not gather consensus and may have been in the immediate vicinity of Chaves or on the banks of Neiva River.

#### MAP

References of pre-Roman settlements of the Northwestern region of Portugal, according to Armando Coelho Ferreira da Silva

Source: “A cultura castreja no Noroeste de Portugal” de Armando Coelho F. da Silva (2007), p. 566

#### Northwestern Settlements of Portugal

The Castro Culture covers the period between the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC and the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. From then on it was dominated by the Romans, becoming Roman-Gallaecian. Geographically it extended between present-day Galicia, Northern Portugal (Minho and Trás-os-Montes), North of the Douro River and the Northwestern part of the Iberian Peninsula (Astúrias).

Since the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, in a wide area between the Douro and Navia Rivers and to the West of the Gallaecian Massif, there was a widespread petrification of the existing villages, forming the castros. These villages show the stages of indigenous evolution with the establishment of more recent ones, characterized by the mixture between the preexistent Castro Culture and the partial assimilation of Roman Culture.

The Castros were fortified settlements – with a defensive system consisting of stone walls and moats – almost always located on top of hills or mounts that allowed the strategic control of natural resources – water springs and small streams, farmland, mining, salt extraction... – and commercial resources – the control of the mouth of rivers and streams, water crossing areas...



Castros, that opposed and strongly resisted the Roman invasion, were concentrated housing units, in defensive isolation, led by warrior elites.

The inhabitants of Castros entered the orbit of Rome after the invasion of 137 BC by the troops of "Decimus Junius Brutus", nicknamed the Gallaecus by the Roman Senate after his brilliant victory. It was Octavius Caesar Augustus who placed the Gallaecian border on the Douro River, separating it from Lusitania.

The total number of castros in the Northwestern region of the Iberian Peninsula can amount to a few thousand villages, indicating a high population density for the time, with the most privileged areas being the coastal regions and the basins of the main waterways.

#### MAP

Distribution of castros in the Northern region of Portugal, according to Armando Coelho Ferreira da Silva

Source: "A cultura castreja no Noroeste de Portugal" de Armando Coelho F. da Silva (2007), p. 556

#### Iron Age Settlement – Esposende

In the present territory of Esposende 7 castros were identified, with different origins and development paths, but the material culture present in each one of them allows us to generically catalog them as belonging to the universe of the Northwestern Peninsular castros.

Most of the habitats were located along the northern coast, positioned in the most defensible areas of the granitic cliff: **Cidade de Belinho** (S. Paio de Antas), **Castro Cova da Bouça** (Belinho), **Castro de N. Sra. da Paz** (Marinhas) and **Castro de S. Lourenço** (Vila Chã-Marinhas).

The **Castro do Sr. dos Desamparados** (Palmeira de Faro) and the **Castro do Outeiro dos Picoutos** (Fonte Boa) are located in the innermost southern areas of the territory.

In contrast to the imminently fortified villages, were small late Iron Age habitats, located in the immediate vicinity of the **Forjães Parish Church** (Forjães) and in the place of **Monte / Talhóz** (S. Paio de Antas).

#### MAP

Iron Age settlements in the territory of Esposende

Source: PDM – Carta de Património Arqueológico



## PANEL 4 – Chalcolithic (Copper Age)

### Occupation of Esposende territory during the Chalcolithic period

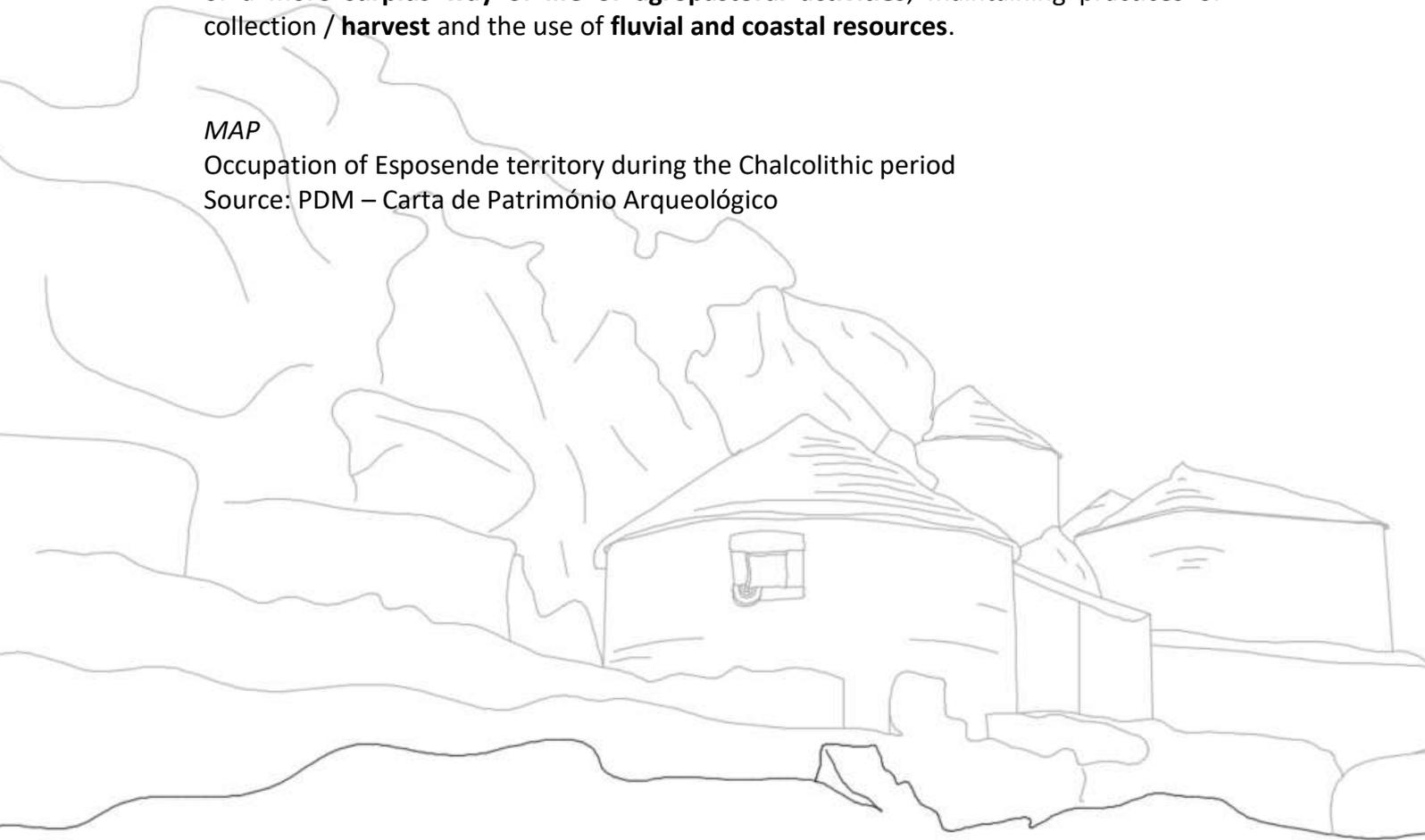
The **CHALCOLITHIC** is a chronological-cultural stage marked between the end of the IV millennium and the third quarter of the III millennium BC, where significant changes in community interaction with the environment took place.

Throughout this period there is the appearance of **occupations on plateaus, granitic alveoli or tops of medium altitude spurs, or on hills of valleys or of the coastal platform.** Such settlement strategies will be closely related to the potential development and **diversification of subsistence activities**, as well as **symbolic** factors. It also reveals a **higher occupational density**, a **longer occupation** period of each place and the **increase** of a more **surplus way of life of agropastoral activities**, maintaining practices of collection / **harvest** and the use of **fluvial and coastal resources**.

*MAP*

Occupation of Esposende territory during the Chalcolithic period

Source: PDM – Carta de Património Arqueológico





## PANEL 5 - Bronze

### Introduction to the Bronze Age

**The Bronze Age** is a chronological and cultural period marked between the **end of the III millennium BC up until the second quarter of the I millennium BC**. It can be subdivided into three phases: Early Bronze Age, Intermediate Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age.

It is characterized by the circulation of **new ideas, goods, techniques and skills**, possibly associated with the **exchange of metals** – such as copper, gold and silver – and the **change** in the symbolism of **artifacts** produced out of these materials, now handled by local communities.

However, it is throughout the first half of the II millennium BC that **bronze metallurgy is adopted**. Like its copper counterparts, the **earliest bronze artifacts** would remain **symbols of prestige and power**. Turning stone into metal and successfully creating alloys, would have given a profound and special characteristic to the protagonists of the metallurgical activity, to the object itself and to the mining sites.

In terms of **settlement strategies**, the **number of residential sites increases** and **some changes** occur indicating new forms of interaction and structuring of populations throughout the territory. If, on one hand, the previous characteristics are maintained, on the other, the tendency towards the emergence of **new dynamics** is consolidated. This paradigm is reflected in the **development of settlements in high spurs, bordering agricultural valleys** or the **coastal platform**, with excellent visibility conditions over the territory. In **coastal areas**, in the **lowlands** and in some **plateaus** or **slope areas**, **cist necropolises**, mostly consisting of flat open graves in the ground, are sometimes located in the **vicinity of villages**.

### Occupation of Esposende territory during the Bronze Age

The **Castro Cova da Bouça** (Belinho) stands on an impressive elevation that stands out on the coastal platform, **observable from a great distance** and surely used as a **point of reference in coastal navigation**. In the Northwestern slope, between granite rock formations, a **group of metallic bronze elements composed of a Bujões / Barcelos type ax, a flat ax and an argaric sword** was recovered.

The **Castro of S. Lourenço** (Vila Chã – Marinhas) is another example of a village that appears in this period, situated on the **coastal platform**, with excellent visibility and control over the territory. In the coastal areas, in the lowlands and in some plateau or slope areas, there are cist necropolises, in the vicinity of which villages could be located, such as the **village of Linhariça / Susão** (Palmeira de Faro). In the Esposende territory, for example, we find the **Necropolis of Cavaleira** (Gandra) and **Padeira** (Curvos) – framed in the Early / Intermediate Bronze Age – the **cist necropolises of Belinho** (S. Paio de Antas) and **Agra de Antas** (S. Paio de Antas) – incorporated in the Intermediate Bronze Age – the **tombs of Monte / Talhóz** (S. Paio de Antas), of **Terroso** (Palmeira de Faro) and **Vilar** (Curvos) graves – associated with the Intermediate / Late Bronze Age –



as well as the cist of Curvos, the tomb of **Rio** (Marinhas) and the necropolis of **Terroso / Sr. Desamparados** (Palmeira de Faro) – attributable to the Late Bronze Age.

It should be noted that in the **Early** and **Intermediate Bronze Ages**, **megalithic monuments** continued to be **reused**, such as the **Mamoa (Tumulus) of Monte da Cerca**, **Antela of Portelagem**, **Mamoa (Tumulus) of Rapido III** and the **Mamoas (Tumuli) of Serra** (Vila Chã). From this period onward we are unaware of new reuses in megalithic structures.

#### *OBJETS*

Flint Blades

Provenance: Dólmen da Cruzinha - Vila Chã

Chalcolithic Settlement of Bitarados – Vila Chã

Source: “Bitarados. A estação arqueológica de Bitarados, Vila Chã (Esposende – Norte de Portugal)”, de Ana Bettecourt et alli (2007), B.C.E., 2.ª série n.º 1, pp. 14-16

Ceramic vase fragment with incised decoration

Provenance: Chalcolithic Settlement of Bitarados – Vila Chã

Source: “Bitarados. A estação arqueológica de Bitarados, Vila Chã (Esposende – Norte de Portugal)”, de Ana Bettecourt et alli (2007), B.C.E., 2.ª série n.º 1, pp. 14-16

#### *PHOTOGRAPHS*

Ceramic vase with incised and punctured decoration

Provenance: Chalcolithic Settlement of Bitarados – Vila Chã

Source: “Bitarados. A estação arqueológica de Bitarados, Vila Chã (Esposende – Norte de Portugal)”, de Ana Bettecourt et alli (2007), B.C.E., 2.ª série n.º 1, pp. 14-16

Deposit consisting of an argaric type sword, a Bujões / Barcelos type ax and a flat ax

Provenance: Castro Cova da Bouça (Belinho)

Collection: Museu Pio XII – Braga

Ceramic pot with mammillated and ridge decoration

Provenance: Anta da Portelagem – Vila Chã

Collection: Museu Sociedade Martins Sarmiento – Guimarães

Vase with horizontal wide lip / rim

Provenance: Necropolis of Agra de Antas – S. Paio de Antas

Collection: Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade do Porto

Photography: Marta Marques

Cists of the necropolis of Agra de Antas – S. Paio de Antas

Source: “A propósito de quatro necrópoles proto-históricas do Concelho de Esposende. Actas do Colóquio Manuel Boaventura - 1985.” de Teresa Soeiro (1988)

#### *MAPS*

Occupation of Esposende territory during the Bronze Age

Source: PDM – Carta de Património Arqueológico



## PANEL 6 - Iron Age

### Introduction to the Iron Age

**The Iron Age**, a chronological-cultural stage marked between the **9<sup>th</sup> century BC and the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD**, can be generically assigned the following **subdivision**:

**Late Bronze Age – 1<sup>st</sup> Iron Age | 9<sup>th</sup> century BC to the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC** – formation of the Castro Culture in the Atlantic context, with continental and Mediterranean interactions. Implementation of hilltop villages, in coexistence with open villages.

**1<sup>st</sup> Iron Age | 7<sup>th</sup> century BC up to the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC** – development of the Castro Culture, with the consolidation of the occupation of the territory, characterized by the construction of circular buildings with perishable elements and the beginning of the creation of defensive systems. This phase coincides with the “Turduli” migrations – which may have promoted the development of indigenous communities, guided by Mediterranean influences – the contact with Punic trade and early Italian imports.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Iron Age | 6<sup>th</sup> century BC up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC** – peak of the Castro Culture, with the beginning of the petrification of villages, with the introduction of buildings erected with small stones, covered with perishable elements.

**2<sup>nd</sup> century BC to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD** – decline of the Castro Culture and the advent of Romanization, coinciding with the first direct contacts with the Romans. It is from the second half of the I millennium BC, coinciding with the peak of the Castro Culture, that local communities adopted and developed **iron metallurgy**, applied to the most diverse socioeconomic areas.

### Occupation of Esposende territory during the Iron Age

**The majority of habitats** in the present Esposende territory are spread over a territory that is **far from uniform**. The innermost **landscape** is consisted of plateaus or is guided by a succession of small reliefs crisscrossed by valleys of variable sizes, that at the time were covered by dense patches of forest, **thick vegetation**, cut by **dirt roads**. In contrast the **slopes** and **ridges** of the **fossil cliff** and the **ridges** of the **innermost** relief were covered with **undergrowth** where the gleaming boulders emerged. The **shoreline** provided a vast patch of arable land, marked by small marine lagoons near the shoreline, but that were only truly harnessed during the dawn of Romanization.

Faced with this reality, on the North coast, on the most defensible reliefs of the granitic cliff the **Cidade de Belinho** (S. Paio de Antas), the **Castro Cova da Bouça** (Belinho), the **Castro de N. Sra. da Paz** (Marinhas) and the **Castro de S. Lourenço** (Vila Chã-Marinhas) emerged.

On the South coast of the Cávado River, the absence of adequate orography led to the retreat of the Iron Age populations to more interior and southern reliefs such as the **Castro do Sr. dos Desamparados** (Palmeira de Faro) and the **Castro do Outeiro dos Picoutos** (Fonte Boa).



In contrast to these high altitude fortified settlements, there were also **small habitats** from the late Iron Age, such as the one in the vicinity of the **Parish Church of Forjães** and in the place of **Monte / Talhóz** (S. Paio de Antas).

*MAP*

Iron Age settlements in the territory of Esposende

Source: PDM - Carta de Património Arqueológico

*OBJETS PHOTOS*

Pots and Cup

Provenance: Castro de S. Lourenço (Vila Chã - Marinhas)

