



Paisagens Mineiras Antigas na Europa Ocidental

Investigação e Valorização Cultural

A reconhecida importância dos valores patrimoniais do vale superior do Rio Terva, em que se destaca o Complexo Mineiro Antigo, classificado como Sítio de Interesse Público, justificou um esforço de convergência de interesses e de ações entre o Município de Boticas e a Universidade do Minho, no sentido de garantir uma valorização sustentada e uma gestão integrada do valioso património identificado, tendo em vista promover a sua difusão alargada, a criação de serviços, o aumento da oferta cultural de Boticas e a internacionalização da história milenar e da identidade do seu território.

Esta publicação corresponde às atas do simpósio internacional **Paisagens Mineiras Antigas na Europa Ocidental. Investigação e Valorização Cultural**, que encerrou o projeto "Conservação, Estudo, Valorização e Divulgação do Complexo Mineiro Antigo do Vale Superior do Rio Terva, Boticas", iniciado em 2006 e financiado por fundos europeus no quadro do EEC PROVERE AQUANATUR-PA/1/2011, do Eixo Prioritário II-Valorização Económica de Recursos Específicos, do ON.2-O Novo Norte.

O Simpósio estruturou-se em dois temas, Investigação e Valorização, através dos quais se pretendeu dar a conhecer o estado da arte, no ocidente europeu, das investigações das paisagens mineiras antigas e dos projetos de valorização das paisagens culturais correlacionadas, abordando-se, para o primeiro tema, questões relacionadas com os objetivos, metodologias, resultados e perspetivas de desenvolvimento futuro das investigações e, para o segundo tema, questões relacionadas com as razões e processos de criação de estruturas de gestão de paisagens culturais, respetiva componente de investigação, modelos de gestão implementados e desafios para o futuro.



Atas do Simpósio Internacional
Boticas, 25/26/27 julho 2014

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Investigação e Valorização Cultural



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THE PAVT PROJECT – LIVING (IN) LANDSCAPE.

Mafalda Alves

Scholarship from Archaeology Unit of the University of Minho (PoPaTERVA 2013-16 project)

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In 2005, the Municipality of Boticas, aware of the importance that cultural landscapes would have in a very near future, requested the Archaeology Unit of Minho's University (UAUM) to design a complete development program based on the region's heritage assets, structured over one of the most emblematic local archaeological sites, the Poço das Freitas ancient mining complex¹.

Braced by an institutional protocol between the University of Minho and the Municipality of Boticas, the program advanced for implementation in 2010 as "Preservation, Study, Valorization and Promotion of the Old Mining Complex of the Upper Terva River Valley", supported by the Action Plan "Aquanatur – Thermal Complex of the Upper Tâmega" N-99-99-99-01-09, which obtained formal recognition as Collective Efficiency Strategy (CES PROVERE) on 15/06/2009, formalized by a joint Order of the Ministers responsible, constituting one of its Anchor Project².

This was the starter up for the Terva Valley Archaeological Park, developed in a sense of local management instrument, towards the promotion of a highly dynamic cultural landscape.

The upper Terva valley comprises a complex cultural landscape, stratified by a multi-scale occupation pattern, imprinted with different levels of settlement options, related to different historical stages. The first evidence of human occupation in the valley dates back to Chalcolithic, to which period one settlement site has been identified, near the yet to be roman mining site of Limarinho. The human occupation remains sparse during the Bronze Age, but by the beginning of the Iron Age the valley assists to a significant increase of its population, revealed by the assemblage of nine hillforts, whose remains are still strong landscape marks on the border mountains that constrain the Terva river basin (FIG.1a). The large volume of settlement sites, regarding the area extents and when compared to the surrounding areas of Beça basin, by West, and Tâmega basin, by East, are tied, in our opinion, to the mineral resources available. By the time the Roman Empire started to expand to the Iberian Peninsula, the gold reserves available in the valley core were recognized to be valuable enough to justify an extensive industrial exploitation, reinforced by the settlement of, at least, two supporting mining quarters, established in the neighbourhoods of the extraction sites. In this period, the settlement pattern reveals itself amongst the valley lowlands, strategically distributed alongside the roman road network (FIG.1b). The mining activity decreased to the abandonment or sporadic exploitation somewhere by the end of the second century. The singularity of the mining remains was recognized by the Directorate-General for Cultural Heritage that promoted the "(...) classification as a Site of Public Interest (SIP) for the Old Mining Complex of the Upper Terva River Valley (structured in three cores: Poço das Freitas, Brejo and Batocas)"³.

The known world would change dramatically over the following centuries, and, with the dawn of nationalities ahead, the territories, at a European scale, were adjusting, based on volatile boundaries. Updating with this new political reality, the communities of the valley adjusted as well. By the XIII century, records show that there were six villages, fully settled in the valley's meadow edges, strategically planted between the fertile alluvial terraces of the lowlands, the ager, and the mountain woodlands, the saltus (FIG. 1c). As gold exploitation lost its trade importance, the agro-pastoral "industry" became the main activity from Middle Ages onwards, having yet today a major role in the remaining villages' economy. The villages of Ardãos, Nogueira, Bobadela, Sapelos and Sapiãos still articulate the valley's territory, having the biggest administrative change since the Middle Ages occurred last year, with the fusion of the Bobadela and Ardãos parish areas.

With this historical scenery in hands, the PAVT project followed a tangible scientific path, oriented towards the knowledge, assessment and promotion of this territory. On this conceptual basis, multidisciplinary recognition projects were held, in areas such as

Archaeology, Biology, Geology and Paleoenvironments, not only to increase the knowledge about the valley's genesis and idiosyncrasies, but also to inform the museographical strategy for the PAVT. Alongside its multipart historical path, the high biodiversity levels recorded in the upper Terva river valley, boosted by its particular location, between the Eurosiberian and Mediterranean climate areas, makes the ecological aspect of this landscape highly suitable for eco-sustainable tourism (FIG.2).

The PAVT, conceived as a cultural park over a landscape structure, includes a first basis Interpretation Centre (CI), in Bobadela village, designed to be an interactive place where visitors are invited to acknowledge the PAVT multi-cultural features by sensorial experiences in loco, being given the information and the resources for the discovery of this cultural landscape throughout a multi-thematic itineraries network. Therefore, the CI is the gateway for the PAVT fruition (FIG. 3).

Planned from the outside, the project execution wouldn't be possible without the support and the involvement of the resilient communities. Since the beginning of the project, the team of investigators was fully aware that involving the locals was not only crucial for the success of the action, but also a natural and logical step towards the future, after all, they are the main landscape architects operating in the valley's scenario (FIG. 4). Struggling with decreasing number of resident's, the remaining populations managed to maintain territorial administration strategies dating back to the medieval organization policies, based upon a still major agro-pastoral activity, where the natural resources play the most fundamental role in the socio-economical life. The importance of these resources determined the empiric recognition that the ecological balance between exploitation and renovation was imperious for the biodiversity increment.

The valley's inhabitants relate to solid communitarian bonds, expressed in a set of countless cooperative chores, some of which dedicated to the maintenance of the Village's wood-fired oven, property of the entire village. So, as we can see, the populations still relate to their history, even if in an empiric form. They lovingly conserve the memoirs of their ancestors in local collections, exposed with their unique way of showing who they are and how proud they are of their outcome. Inspired by this genuine sense of life, the PAVT project is endorsing a House of Memoirs, fully assembled by the Bobadela's residents. One of the first actions of the project team was to explain to the communities what was the PAVT and in which way it would promote their wellbeing in a near future, and how we needed them to integrate the project in order for it to be successful. The communities responded in their one genuine way, telling us their stories, their way of seeing, feeling and living the landscape. Today, four years later, we are treated like part of the family, sharing laughs and tears over the dinner table (FIG.5). It was at that moment we've realized that to fully understand this way of living the landscape, we needed to experience it from the inside.

The PAVT, nowadays established as an Archaeological Park, due to the absence of the Cultural Park concept in Portuguese Law, is in its final phase of implementation, having the CI, inaugurated in past July, received over 1 200 visitors already, driven by buzz marketing alone (FIG.6).

It is our ambition that the PAVT turns out to be an anchor for the development of new and sustainable economic cores, based on the conservation of this cultural landscape, and by conservation we mean maintaining it a living landscape, not a "snow globe".

The PAVT promotes the natural, archaeological and social features of the valley in equal form, as it's our understanding that landscape is the glass-half-full, the seeing and the being.

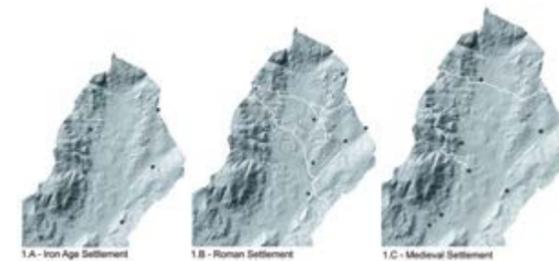


Figure 1 - Historical Settlement evolution in the PAVT area



Figure 2 - Biodiversity examples in the PAVT area



Figure 3 - The PAVT visiting structures



Figure 4 - Empirical "landscape architects"



Figure 5 - Living in people's lifes



Figure 6 - The inauguration of the Bobadela's Interpretation Centre

References

¹ Fontes, L. (2013). Proposta de Programa para a Conservação, Estudo, Valorização e Divulgação do Complexo Mineiro Antigo do Vale Superior do Rio Terva, Boticas. Trabalhos Arqueológicos da U.A.U.M. / MEMÓRIAS, N.º 40, Braga: Unidade de Arqueologia da Universidade do Minho. (<https://repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt/handle/1822/24693>).

² Fontes, L. e Alves, M. (2013). O Projeto PAVT, Boticas. Boticas: CMB & UAUM. http://www.uaum.uminho.pt/novidades/ProjectoPAVTBoticas_PT.pdf

³ Portuguese Republic Diary, 2.º Series, N.º 206, 24th of October, 2012

⁴ Fontes, L. et al. (2011). Projeto "CONSERVAÇÃO, ESTUDO, VALORIZAÇÃO E DIVULGAÇÃO DO COMPLEXO MINEIRO ANTIGO DO VALE SUPERIOR DO RIO TERVA, BOTICAS". TRABALHOS ARQUEOLÓGICOS PAVT 2010. (Levantamentos Topográficos, Prospecção e Sondagens Arqueológicas). Relatório Final, Trabalhos Arqueológicos da U.A.U.M. / MEMÓRIAS, N.º 20, Braga: Unidade de Arqueologia da Universidade do Minho. (<https://repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt/handle/1822/16887>).