

Meeting synthesis

Recent Pre-History Enclosures and Funerary Practices

J. E. Márquez Romero & Víctor Jiménez Jáimez
(University of Málaga, Spain)



Lisbon, 8th November, 2012



Recent Pre-History Enclosures and Funerary Practices

Lisbon November 2012

main topics involved

Prehistoric
Enclosures

Funerary
Practices



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Prehistoric
Enclosures

— ***Long-lasting, geographically widespread tradition***

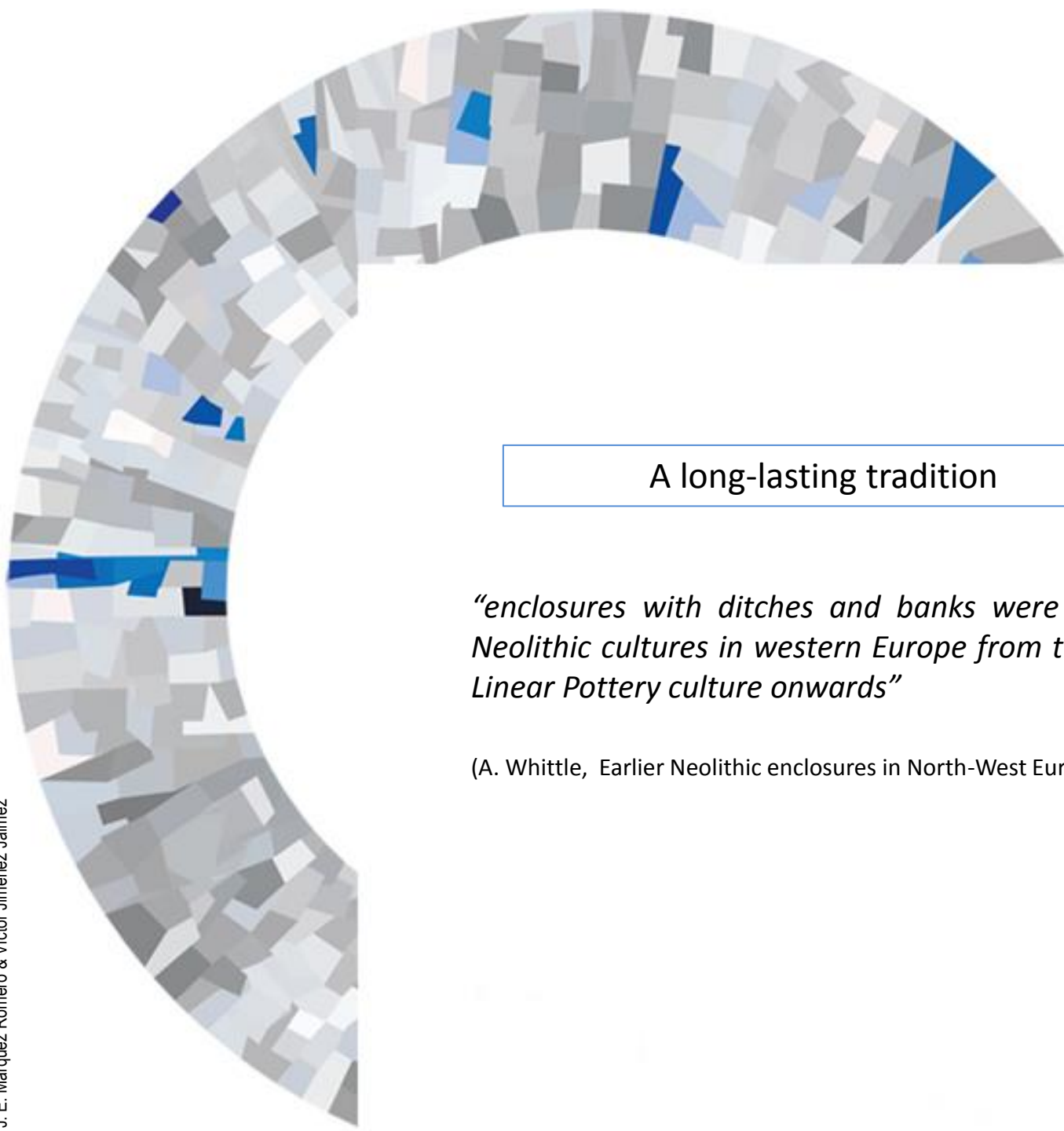
— ***Variability***

— ***Depositional practices (especially ditched enclosures)***

— ***Chronology and temporality (recuttings)***

— ***Almost no discussion about: function and meaning /design***

— ***The Iberian Peninsula!***



A long-lasting tradition

“enclosures with ditches and banks were a feature of Neolithic cultures in western Europe from the end of the Linear Pottery culture onwards”

(A. Whittle, Earlier Neolithic enclosures in North-West Europe, 1977)



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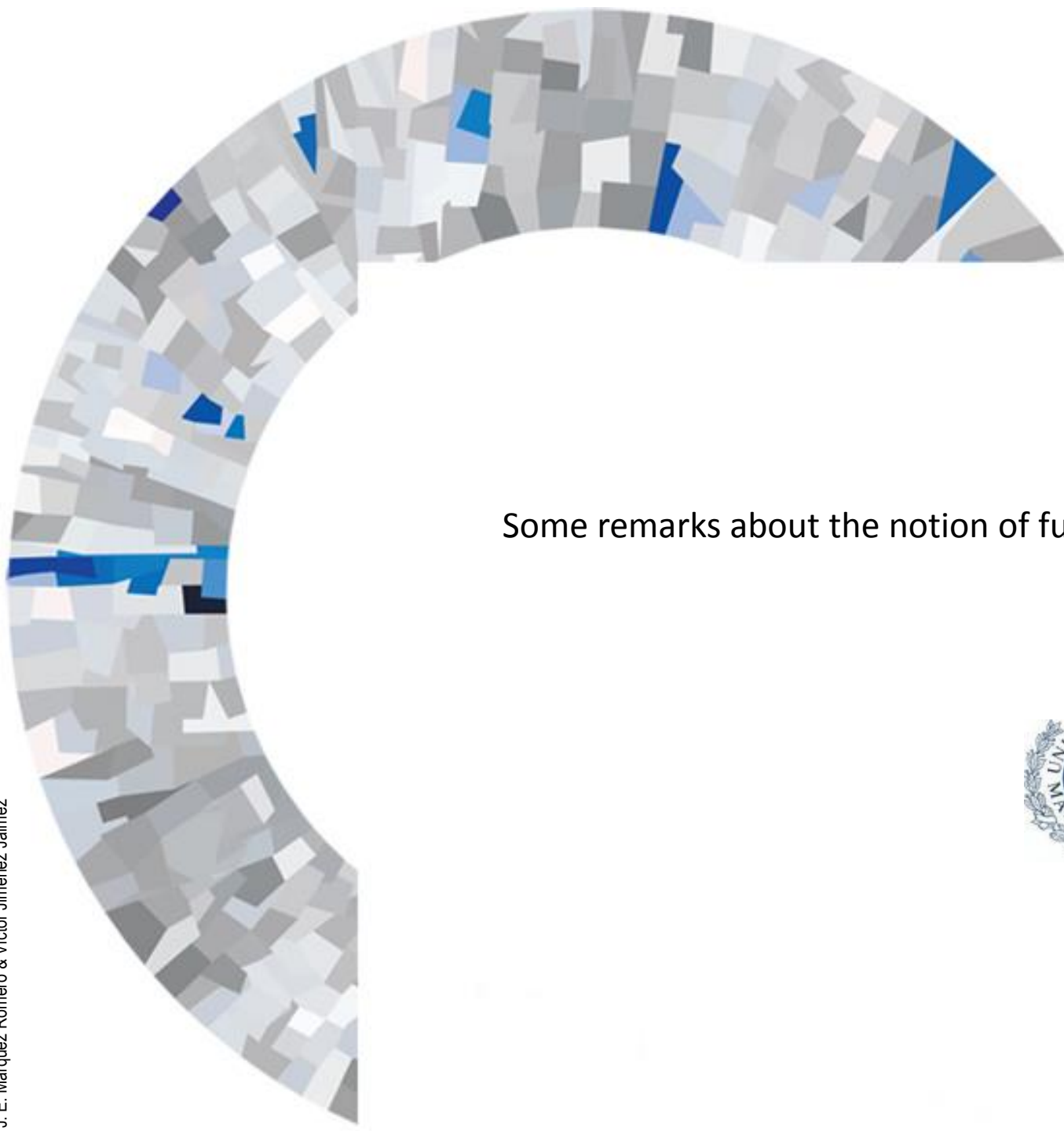
Prehistoric
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Funerary
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Funerary
practices

- ***Variability in the treatment of human remains***
- ***Pre and post-depositional manipulation***
- ***Dedicated funerary areas?***
- ***Human remains are not alone***
- ***Non-funerary practices***
- ***What does 'funerary' mean?***



Some remarks about the notion of funerary





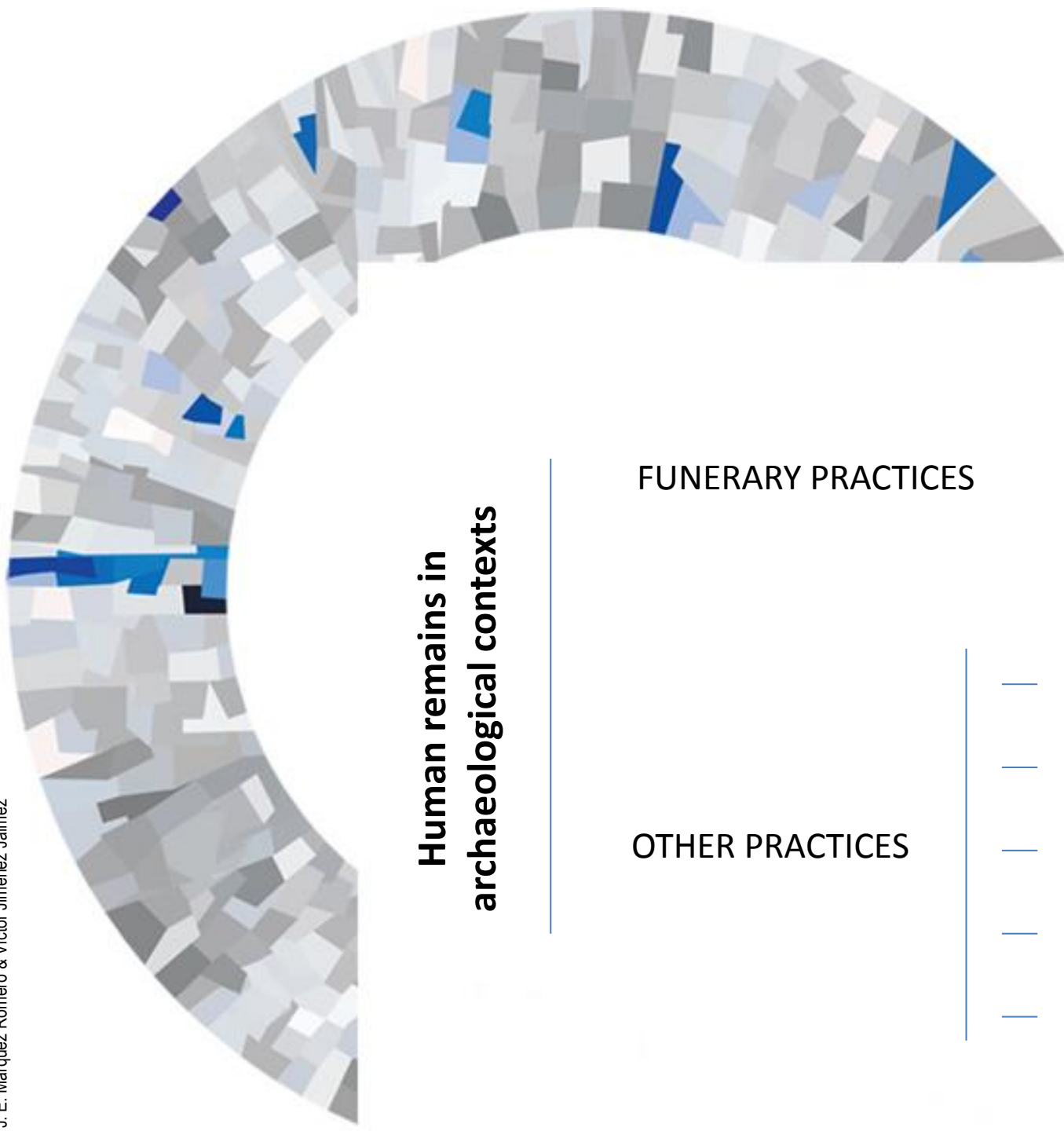
Funerary Practices?

“Human remains do not simply imply burial”

(I. Kinnes, Monumental function in British Neolithic burial practices, 1975)

“Although excavators normally assume that the recovery of human remains attests to the fact of a burial, there are other strategies which operate with reference to the human corpse and which will result in similar archaeological deposits”.

(John C. Barrett, Fragments from Antiquity, 1994)

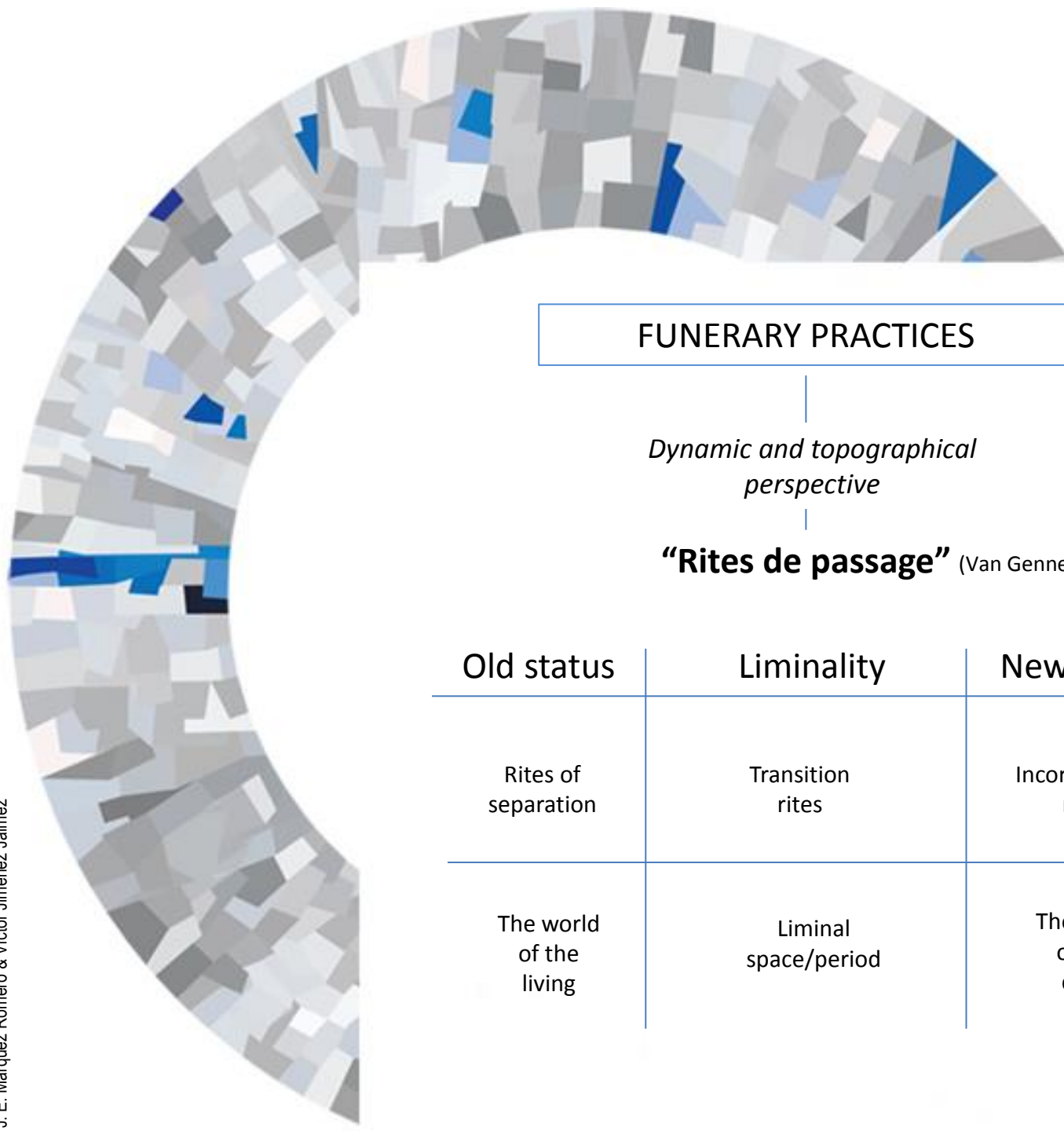


**Human remains in
archaeological contexts**

FUNERARY PRACTICES

OTHER PRACTICES

- Human Sacrifices
- Pollution
- Violent conflict
- Punishment
- As objects...



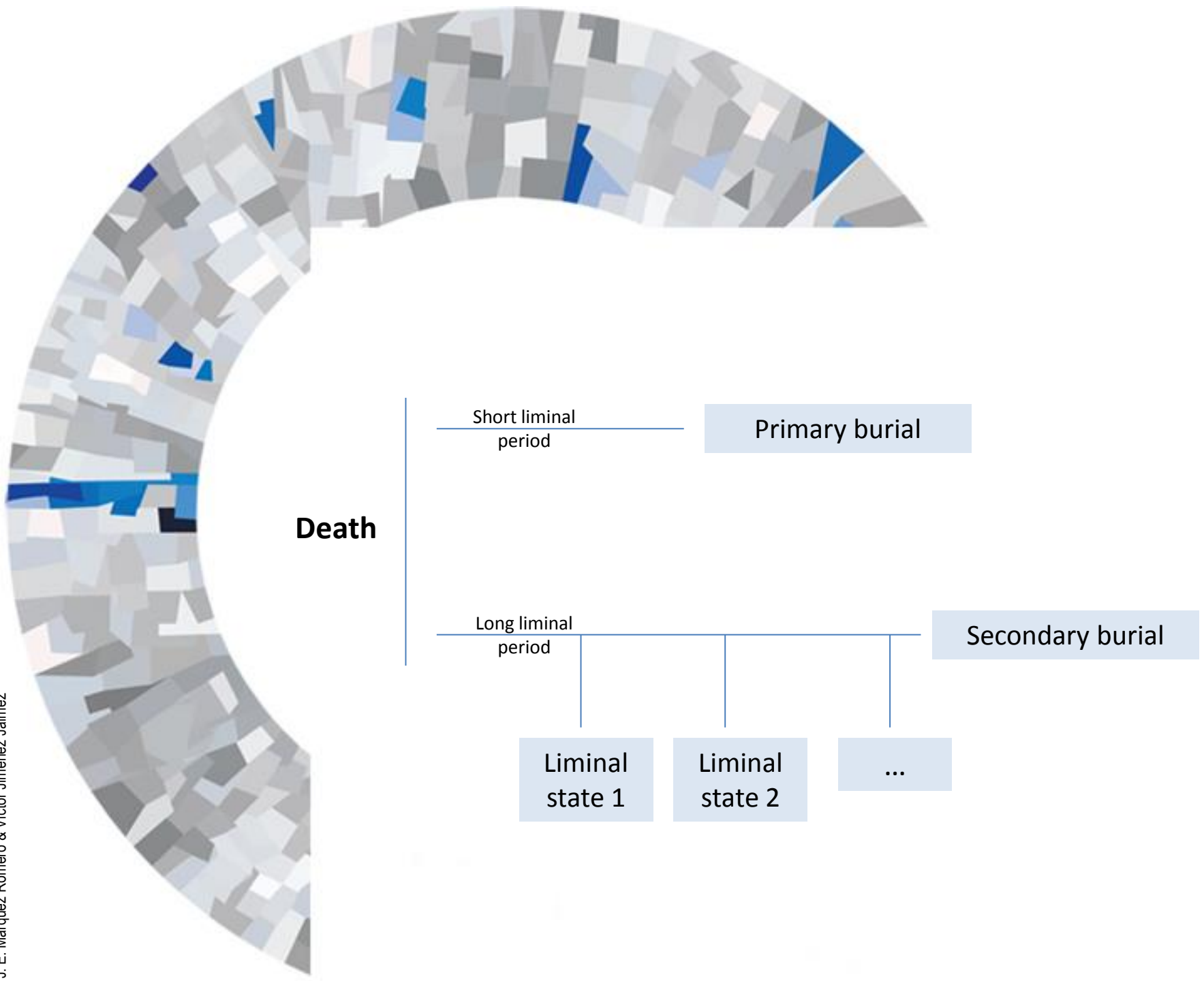
FUNERARY PRACTICES

Are specifically concerned with human burial (Barret 1988)

Dynamic and topographical perspective

“Rites de passage” (Van Gennep 1909)

Old status	Liminality	New status
Rites of separation	Transition rites	Incorporation rites
The world of the living	Liminal space/period	The world of the dead





Wider
depositional
practices

- ***Non-anthropocentric perspective***
- ***Human body as one element in a wider spectrum of depositional practices in pits and ditches (objets, animal bones.....)***
- ***The presence of human remains is contingent***
- ***Inside (pits, ditches) / outside (hypogea, megalithic tombs) dichotomy***
- ***One depositional context – different biographies***

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