

CHANGING THE FEAST: SOCIAL AND MATERIAL TRANSFORMATION OF FOODSCAPES IN IRON AGE AND ARCHAIC SICILY

Dr. William Balco¹

¹ *University of North Georgia*

Feasts were significant loci of social and material transmission, gathering individuals to share food, drink, and ideas. Concomitant to the transmission of knowledge between groups was a gradual transformation of the behaviors and material culture of the feast, particularly among complex social entanglements. For example, as Iron Age Sicilian populations encountered Greeks and Phoenicians, they experienced new behaviors and material culture, transforming their own foodscapes in the process. The incorporation of Greek-like cups and other vessels into Iron Age Sicilian feasting assemblages demonstrates the conspicuous consumption of imported material culture. Likewise, local populations began to manufacture commensal vessels combining Sicilian and foreign forms and styles. This paper focuses on the use and discard of these vessels as evidence of shifting feasting behaviors. Commensal vessels from Iron Age and Archaic Sicilian contexts are discussed. Changes to commensal foodscapes are but one component of a broader social transformation during the Late Iron Age and Archaic periods. The possession and use of these vessels empowered individuals with the agency to redefine their social identities via the conspicuous consumption of material culture. In this manner, the foodscape was a complex forum of power and wealth negotiation as individuals expressed an identity that others would perceive.

Keywords

Feast

Sicily

Iron Age

Social Transformation

Abstract book ISBN

978-80-907270-3-8 (European Association of Archaeologists); 978-84-9168-140-3 (Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, vol. 1); 978-84-9168-143-4 (Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, vol. 2)