ANIMAL MANAGEMENT AND CONSUMPTIVE STRATEGIES AT HALAF DOMUZTEPE

Implications for Political Economy and Social Complexity

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INTRODUCTION

Animal management and consumptive strategies are vital to a society’s economy and social organization. Feasting represents a key social activity and allows us to examine how the society’s political and economic organization manifested and operated. If feasting is a social activity, then the planning, organization, and nature of that activity reflect the social, political, and economic organization of the society. The organization and leadership of a feast and the consumption of the food signify the organization of the social body. Further, such events were clearly repeated over time. This may have had the effect of institutionalizing these changing social relationships. And one can imagine that as feast functions were organized more and more elaborate and more and more expensive, they were being essentially institutionalized. This is exactly what we are proposing: we argue that Domuztepe’s feasting context not only institutionalized social relationships through the control of access to food resources and the differential treatment of individuals through the control of amounts of food resources consumed, but also that this process became institutionalized over time. Far from being a casual and infrequent event triggered by some form of romanticizing or celebratory impulse, almost like a modern birthday party, the feasting context at Domuztepe may have been an important way to manage and control the distribution of food and non-food resources, through the differential treatment of individuals, through the manipulation of the amounts of food consumed, and through the differential treatment of food and non-food resources. This is particularly important given the nature of the site. We argue that the feasting context and ritual consumption of food essentially institutionalized the political and economic relationships within this community.

FAUNAL ASSEMBLAGES AT DOMUZTEPE

Domuztepe is a 35 ha site located on the Kahramanmaraş plain. Survey and excavations at Domuztepe have been ongoing since 1995. Concomitant with the faunal assemblages from the site, the site’s location on the edge of the site allowed access to a larger range of faunal remains and from the deposits that formed the Ditch.

The Ditch: As the second largest deposit at Domuztepe (the first being the Death Pit), the Ditch is the area of focus of this study. The refuse was deposited into a series of pits cut into an artificial structure likely required group effort to build. Coupled with clear evidence for transregional contact and some measure of economic loss engendered by a feast function as proxy measures (i.e. the presence of exotic bird species), the Ditch is key to understanding the trajectory of consumption and economic organization at Domuztepe.

The patterns recognized in the archaeological data constitute the baseline of the day-to-day experience of Domuztepe’s inhabitants, a key factor in understanding the context and comparison of Domuztepe to other feasting contexts and to in- and domestic contexts. We evaluate the dietary and organizational components of this context and the ways in which these contexts, and their resultant food consumption, have affected the changing social relationships within the community. Any pattern of communicable disease, or any pattern that may have extended at least 75 meters in length. Within the site, the Red Terrance Ditch comprises a 20-m-long series of deposits with cultural material and glassy soil cut into the terrace. Excavators recovered large masses of stones and faunal remains from the deposits that formed the ditch. These long mass-assemblages (i.e. 1 x 1.25 m) are located adjacent to the ditch. These assemblages appear to have multiple use phases, with the latest phases of the mass at the same level and the top at level of the ditch deposits.

CONCLUSIONS

The Ditch, a large deposit dating to the Late Halaf period, is the second largest deposit at Domuztepe. The refuse was deposited into a series of large ovens (ca. 1 x 1 x 0.6 m) that may have extended at least 75 meters in length. Within the site, the Red Terrance Ditch comprises a 20-m-long series of deposits with cultural material and glassy soil cut into the terrace. Excavators recovered large masses of stones and faunal remains from the deposits that formed the ditch. These long mass-assemblages (i.e. 1 x 1.25 m) are located adjacent to the ditch. These assemblages appear to have multiple use phases, with the latest phases of the mass at the same level and the top at level of the ditch deposits.

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EXPERICTIONS

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Top Ranked Taxa in the Ditch

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