

it is readily fetishized, but commodity values that disconnected producers and consumers shaped, without utterly determining, the experience of consuming food.

See also FOOD AND CAPITALISM; FOOD PRESERVATION; INDUSTRIALIZATION OF FOOD AND FOOD PRODUCTION; MARKETS/EXCHANGE; STORES/MARKETS; TRADE ROUTES

Further Reading

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FOOD AS SENSORY EXPERIENCE

The archaeology of food has been shaped primarily by the paradigm of “subsistence,” which relies on the discourse of optimization and of formalist economics, that is, the assumption that past peoples managed resources for optimal output. Some of the consequences of this managerial discourse have been to prioritize procurement and production, but also to ignore the fundamental fact that eating and drinking are acts of incorporation: they are primarily about the circulation of substances through bodies. In this flow of substances that, more often than not, takes place in the social arena, the bodily senses are of fundamental importance. An archaeology of sensoriality goes beyond the Western canon of the five senses, however, and against the singularization and enumeration of sensorial modalities. The synaesthetic field of sensoriality involves bodies, things, and food and drink substances. In addition to the senses of taste and smell, eating involves several recognized and unrecognized senses in a commingled manner: from tactility and tactile visuality, to the sense of emplacement that eating and drinking produces, to the sense of intoxication and altered states of consciousness that certain substances generate, and, of course, to the metasense of memory. Indeed, food and memory are closely linked. It is often through the sensorial experience of eating and drinking, and the conviviality and affectivity that accompanies them, that prospective remembering is generated. This affective and mnemonic horizon incorporates, in addition to food substances and human bodies, artifacts, things, places, and performances, creating a *sensorial assemblage*.

Through this framework of sensoriality, several novel interpretative possibilities are opened. For example, cooking and food preparation practices will be shown to be not simply functional measures to make food digestible, nor purely symbolic attempts to render foods socially acceptable, but efforts to accentuate and enhance the sensorial effects of eating and drinking, and thus its mnemonic and affective qualities. Or, at the methodological level, the study of food remnants will be done on the basis of the

sensorial assemblage to which they belong, bringing together artifactual and bioarchaeological studies, without, however, fetishizing the object, the thing, or the isolated substance, but foregrounding instead the in-between space of flows, and affective and mnemonic encounters and interactions.

Archaeologists have attempted to apply some of these ideas to ritual deposits associated with feasting at the site of Nopigeia-Drapanias in West Crete, specifically the deliberately accumulated deposits that were the outcome of eating and drinking episodes. It is well known that public, ritualized commensal events often produce an intentionally created mnemonic record on the ground in the shape of pits, ditches, or other features that contain and preserve the remnants of such episodes. Such features commemorate these occasions and at the same time produce and materialize sensorial and mnemonic history. By treating the deposits from Nopigeia-Drapanias as a unified sensorial assemblage, archaeologists hope to find the connections among materials and objects, and show how the sensorial affordances and agentic qualities of one reinforce and accentuate the sensorial possibilities and effects of the other. For example, animal bones, cooking pots, charcoal, and drinking cups found in the same pit as a result of a singular episode are not treated as diverse archaeological assemblages on the basis of their material, destined thus for the respective specialists who will transform them into separate reports, but rather as elements of the same sensorial assemblage with affective and mnemonic implications. This approach allows us to examine these intentional deposits as an assemblage that might also have been intended to present and materialize immaterial sensorial and affective flows.

See also BEER; BLACK DRINK (CASSINA); CACAO/CHOCOLATE; COFFEE; DISTILLED SPIRITS; FEASTING; FERMENTATION; FOOD AND RITUAL; FUNGI; MIDDENS AND OTHER TRASH DEPOSITS; PSYCHOACTIVE PLANTS; TOBACCO; WINE

Further Reading

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FOOD OFFERINGS

See OFFERINGS AND GRAVE GOODS

FOOD PRESERVATION

Food preservation is a transformative process that, through time and space, has encompassed various different technologies. These technologies are designed to conserve the calories, nutrients, and fat of foodstuffs readily available in the present, in order to