
Frontiers and transfers in Iron Age Iberian agricultural production

Natàlia Alonso*^{†1} and Pérez Jordà Guillem*^{‡2}

¹GIP, Departament d'Història, Universitat de Lleida – Plaça Victor Siurana 1, E-25003 Lleida, Espagne

²GI Bioarqueología, CCHS-CSIC – Calle de Albasanz, 26-28, 28037, Madrid, Espagne

Résumé

Agricultural products and other related technological features are key elements to understanding the economy of the Iron Age Iberian Culture as well as to define their economic, cultural traditions and identity. Farmland is the fundamental element in all of the processes and the archaeological record validates the existence of very diverse realities. These differences are not in the domain of farming, which remained relatively uniform, but rather in the direction and scale of production, as well as in the typology and application of certain production features. There are several elements that together facilitated the development of communities closely connected to other cultures of the Mediterranean world that were recipients of agricultural products at times in high demand. Improvements or innovations in agriculture were therefore essential to the shaping and social development of Iberian communities.

Two different agricultural traditions emerged in East Iberia as a result of this process. A more diversified agriculture was initiated in the area of Valencia with a predominance of cultivating fruit in different types of settlements. By contrast, agriculture in Catalonia, in spite of the presence of arboriculture, was predominantly focused on grain production. Although environmental factors may have given rise to this process in certain areas, political decisions may have also played a role. The political and cultural factors that ended up defining this strategy require reassessment. Without underestimating the aspects of tradition or the environmental issues that may favour one or the other production, one must consider to what extent the demands of the market or the influence of the prominent Mediterranean cultures may have conditioned these contrasting tendencies.

In this context a boundary marked by the Ebro River seems to appear separating two regions characterised respectively by cereal and fruit production. Each of these regions can also be distinguished along the lines of storage systems and wine production systems while simultaneously sharing food production activities and innovations such as cereal milling mechanisms.

Mots-Clés: Food production, Iberian culture, Iron Age, Identity, Wine presses, Mills and querns, Storage, Archaeobotany

*Intervenant

[†]Auteur correspondant: nalonso@historia.udl.cat

[‡]Auteur correspondant: guillem.perez@cchs.csic.es