

Social Networks And Social Complexity: The Southern Italian Drive For Trade Exchange During The Late Bronze Age

Authors : Sara Fioretti

Abstract : During the Middle Bronze Age, southern Italy underwent a reorganisation of social structures where local cultures, such as the sub-Apennine and Nuragic, flourished and participated in maritime trade. This paper explores the socio-economic relationships, in both cross-cultural and potentially inter-regional settings, present within the archaeological repertoire of the southern Italian Late Bronze Age (LBA 1600 -1050 BCE). The emergence of economic relations within the connectivity of the regional settlements is explored through ceramic contexts found in the case studies Punta di Zambrone, Broglio di Trebisacce, and Nuraghe Antigori. This paper discusses the findings of a statistical and theoretical approach from an ongoing study in relation to the Mediterranean's characterisation as a period dominated by Mycenaean influence. This study engages with a theoretical bricolage of Social Networks Entanglement, and Assertive Objects Theory to address the selective and assertive dynamics evident in the cross-cultural trade exchanges as well as consider inter-regional dynamics. Through this intersection of theory and statistical analysis, the case studies establish a small percentage of pottery as imported, whilst assertive productions have a relatively higher quantity. Overall, the majority still adheres to regional Italian traditions. Therefore, we can dissect the rhizomatic relationships cultivated by the Italian coasts and Mycenaeans and their roles within their networks through the intersection of theoretical and statistical analysis. This research offers a new perspective on the complex nature of the Late Bronze Age relational structures.

Keywords : late bronze age, mediterranean archaeology, exchanges and trade, frequency distribution of ceramic assemblages, social network theory, rhizomatic exchanges

Conference Title : ICHSD 2025 : International Conference on History and Social Development

Conference Location : Florence, Italy

Conference Dates : May 17-18, 2025