

Surveys in western Sicily: Punic elements in indigenous and Greek landscape through GIS analysis.

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We begin with a summary of surveys carried out along the Jato, Belice Destro and Eleuterio rivers in west Sicily through the processing of methodological research, aimed at identifying the potential of archaeological sites. The study was conducted through the integration of analysis techniques based on the GIS platform for managing and developing spatial data, examining settlement principles (possibility of water supply, exposition, slope, intra-site visibility) and the influence of Punic element in indigenous hellenized settlements. Specific targets are therefore: to record the relationships between settlements and landscape and to apply landscape archaeology to the study of pre-classical and classical Sicily.

Most of the identified indigenous and Greek settlements show a homogeneous distribution of Punic amphorae, relating to the sixth and fifth centuries. This shows evidence of the presence of Punic element in an area influenced by the Greeks. As a result western Sicily seems to have been involved in flourishing trade that seems to decrease after 480 BC, when many indigenous sites were abandoned or destroyed.

Following 480 BC, Selinunte changed the way of managing pro-punic indigenous centers, creating a crisis for them. This could be the case for the settlements along the Jato and Eleuterio rivers, in which the pottery collection is attributed to mainly the sixth and early fifth century BC. This decreases in the following decades, showing signs of a weak revival around the end of the fifth and beginning of the fourth century BC. After a period of neglect, these sites were inhabited again, perhaps a short Carthaginian occupation, which occurred after the capture of Selinunte and the destruction of Himera in 409 BC.