

Eating & Drinking at Medieval Kinet

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In the course of about 2 centuries, between the mid 12th and early 14th centuries, the port town of Kinet changed hands between the Knights Templar, the Kingdom of Armenian Cilicia, and the Mamluk Sultanate. Despite these changes in overlordship, and being sacked and burned three times, the ceramic and faunal records display much more continuity than change. One of the most noticeable changes in the ceramic record is the local production of the glazed earthenware known as Port Saint Symeon ware in thirteenth century, and continuing after the Mamluk conquest of the coast.

This paper will review the ceramic and faunal evidence for eating and drinking at medieval Kinet, proposing that glazed ceramic bowls were used for drinking as well as eating, and that in addition eating may have taken place directly from cooking pots. Faunal analysis points to little exploitation of marine resources despite Kinet's seaside location, and the use of pig as a primary source of animal protein. Very preliminary analysis of the archeobotanical record indicates that there were some irrigated (rice and cotton) but mainly dry-farmed (barley, wheat) crops produced locally. Analysis of cattle and possibly water buffalo bones indicate their use as beasts of burden or plough animals, and that sheep/goat were raised primarily for their wool and not their meat.