Introduction

'Food' is an intensely explored subject in archaeology. Yet surprisingly, archaeologists have devoted little attention to one of the most commonly evoked types of meal: the feast (Hayden 2001). Feasting (essentially commensality, or eating with others) is a virtually universal social institution and one which has traditionally captured the imagination of anthropologists and the general public alike (i.e. the Kwakiutl Potlatch or the Hawaiin Luau). Yet in archaeological circles, feasting has usually only superficially been analysed, despite the fact that feasts can be highly visible in the archaeological record. However, in recent years, archaeologists have increasingly highlighted the usefulness of feasting studies for understanding past societies, and have subsequently called for more archaeological investigation of feasting practices (Dietler and Hayden 2001). Of personal interest to me is the fact that, as a social institution, feasts are uniquely situated to provide archaeologists insight into micro- and macro-level social processes. Thus, an understanding of a society's feasting practices might explain how labour was organised for single construction projects, or even how that society changed or developed over hundreds of years. Furthermore, the diversity and utility of feasts is such that they can play a pivotal role in numerous social, political, and economic practices. Thus, my research interest has been to demonstrate how feasts can provide insight into past cultures and explain processes of social change and development. Therefore, the objectives of this paper are three-fold:

1. highlight some of the particular socio-political roles of feasts.
2. identify archaeological correlates to feasting; in particular, certain types of feasts.
3. use two distinct spatio-temporal case studies from prehistoric Britain to demonstrate how feasting practices can explain processes of socio-political development and change.

To meet these goals, I analysed feasting practices in Britain from the Late Bronze Age to the Late Iron Age. The evidence for feasting is especially rich in the region of central southern Britain from the Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age, and in eastern Britain from the Late Iron Age to the Roman Conquest. These two spatio-temporally distinct case studies provide a plethora

of feasting evidence which allows unique insight into the social processes of these societies. Feasts have long been a recognised phenomenon from these regions and periods, yet many of the arguments and connections I make are novel and more detailed than previous studies. Thus, I will analyse the emergence of the middens and hillforts of central southern Britain, as well as the emergence of a cremation burial rite focused on feasting from eastern Britain. Ultimately, I demonstrate (through a lens of feasting evidence) that critical developmental periods (i.e. the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age; the Late Iron Age to Roman-British period) were not sudden collapses of social systems brought on by external forces, but rather rapid developments of existing native social practices. Feasting evidence is key to this argument, since feasts are enduring institutions that seem to change and adapt to the changing social discourses of these 'transitional' periods.

Both of these periods see significant development and changes to the social discourse in these regions. For example, the end of the Bronze Age and beginning of the Early Iron Age is a period of substantial restructuration and re-evaluation of social, political, and economic systems. Likewise, the LIA, leading up to the Roman conquest, saw significant development of socio-political systems, with the eventual development of an archaeologically recognisable 'elite' class. Because feasting practices also changed during these periods of social flux means makes feasting evidence ideal case studies for understanding the role feasts plays in the development of social processes. English Heritage (2010) has highlighted the need to provide alternatives to the simplistic 'three-age system' and other chronologies that draw arbitrary lines between periods. They caution that period specialties have led to few studies of the transitions between periods, and assert that more research on transitionary periods is needed. Thus, many transitional phases (such as those discussed in this paper) have been flagged as priorities in national and regional research in recognition of a need for a better understanding socio-economic change (see Theme PR4, EH 2010, p.15**)**. Thus, my research is not only relevant to British Iron Age studies, but also to archaeological studies of social change in general.

The nature and length of this paper is such that I have laid out my research in four chapters. The first chapter provides some background on the social and political roles feasts often play and highlights three key types of feasts which are exemplified by the data from my case

studies. Chapter one also explains how feasts are recognised in the archaeological record. The second chapter establishes the background and context of the two case studies by firmly grounding their geographic and chronological settings and providing a theoretical background of these societies. Chapter three is the first case study, which analyses the social developments in central southern Britain from the LBA to the MIA. The key features of this region with evidence of feasting are middens and hillforts. The evidence suggests a continuation between these periods and the use of these monuments, with feasting being the key institution for facilitating socio-political changes. Finally, chapter four turns to the LIA in eastern Britain, where significant socio-political changes were taking place just before and during the Roman conquest. In particular, new burial practices, focused on feasting, provide insight into the emergence of an 'elite' class. Contrary to ideas of 'Romanisation' the feasting evidence suggests these changes may have been the continuation and escalation of earlier native social practices.

Chapter One

In the effort to study past societies, archaeologists have by and large neglected one of the most significant and informative social institutions: feasts (Hayden 2001). Defining the term 'feast' is an imprecise venture, since it is often used in its most general sense and therefore covers a wide range of practices (Dietler and Hayden 2001, p.3). Although attempting to specifically define the term 'feast' is counterproductive, it is useful to break down and analyse some of the general forms and functions feasts can exhibit. First of all, it is important to recognise that while feasts may vary in form, scale, and function, all share certain features that distinguish them from everyday meals and make them valuable tools for social transactions. Essentially, feasts are ritual events of commensality which distinguishes them from daily meals and imbues them with the power to articulate social relationships (ibid.). They tend to incorporate dramaturgical effects such as dancing, singing, and intoxication, which help create experiences of "condensed meaning" and make feasts ideal 'stages' for social transactions (Dietler and Hayden 2001, p.4). Feasting is essentially a "language through which society

expresses itself and therefore the activity of eating can be used, consciously or otherwise, by the social group or individual within the group, as a symbol to communicate a message" (Ralph 2005, p. 56). For all of these reasons, archaeologists (Arnold 1999; Bray 2003; Dietler 2001; 2006; Hayden 2001) have begun to give feasting more serious consideration as an important social institution; in fact, many now recognize feasting as "one of the most powerful cross-cultural explanatory concepts" for a wide range of cultural processes (Hayden 2001, p.24). Feasting practices can explain social processes ranging from the production and transformation of agricultural surpluses, to the construction and maintenance of social and political relationships, to craft specialization, and even the emergence of systems of inequalities and the establishment of elites (ibid.). Thus, studying feasts has the potential for better understanding past societies on all levels. In this chapter, I will examine the social significance of food, highlight some of the socio-political roles of feasting, and address how feasts can be recognized in the archaeological record.

Food plays a critical role in feasts, not just in its subsistence value, but in its social value. Food has always been employed to distinguish social identities from one another; in virtually no society do all individuals have equal access to all foods (Curet and Pestle, 2010). Food is a unique form of material culture because it is 'embodied'; that is, it has much more social meaning and power through its consumption than its possession (Dietler 2005). Furthermore, food is imbued with symbolic meaning essential to the metaphysical understanding of the world in many societies. Therefore, food is often an essential 'ingredient' for many social interactions. It functions to structure and smooth the process of many ritualized activities, from the formal to the everyday. In this way, food accomplishes much more than mere physiological subsistence needs—it fulfills 'social subsistence' needs as well. Feasts therefore draw on the social value of food.

Feasts are complex social institutions that can exert tremendous influence over social relations. They operate to affect social relations through the act of consumption. Because social identities exist in a constant state of flux, they require constant reaffirmation, and the consumption of material goods play a key role in the creation, maintenance, and manipulation of identity (Bray 2003). Thus, feasts are essentially a "context-renewing practice" where people

'practice' their roles and learn how to act and relate to others of different statuses (Bray 2003, p. 287). New and changing social relations do not happen purely in the mind, they are lived and acted out in the flesh, and feasts offer the perfect stage for this (*ibid*.). Feasts also function to "mark and naturalize" social categories (Dietler & Hayden 2001, p.10). They can be the setting for important social functions such as gossip, oath-making, settling disputes, telling tales, or arranging marriages (Dietler 2005, p.165). They often have a formal role as well, being a key component of ceremonies and rituals such as rites of passage, marriages, funerals, births, and initiations. (*ibid*.). These are some examples of the many essential social interactions that function to structure, define, and perpetuate a society, and feasts often accompany all of them. That said, individuals and groups who exercise prowess in the realm of feasting are well-positioned to manipulate social interactions and relationships to some degree. This process can lead to forms of feasting (i.e. competitive feasts) which can eventually restructure societies in significant ways.

Feasts can be an essential tool for political strategies, especially the consolidation of power in small-scale societies. For example, the concepts of hospitality and generosity are commonly associated with feasting, meaning the host of the feast is expected to provide sufficient amounts of food and drink for the guests. This process can be economically demanding, requiring large amounts of resources, and at first glance may seem counter-productive to aggrandisers' efforts. However, hospitality and generosity actually function to create relationships of obligation; that is, the host treats his or her guests to a feast, and in exchange the guests are socially obligated to the host (Dietler 2005). This formula can be employed in different ways to create and perpetuate social relationships of inequality.

On a macro-level, feasting can essentially be used to manipulate political systems in two ways: to maintain the social norm or change it. For example, societies with a relatively centralised political structure often institutionalise feasting as a way of maintaining political authority (Dietler 1990). Whereas in less structured political systems, feasting is very important for allowing informal leadership and personal power (*ibid*.). Control over feasting is often related to who can gather the appropriate resources such as the agricultural produce required to feed large groups, or the trade connections required to acquire important food, drink, or feasting-

related imports (Dietler 2005). Control over the physical resources required for feasts allows control over the symbolic attachments associated with feasting practices. Aggrandisers can use feasts to subtly manipulate and introduce symbolic elements that function to either maintain the social order or change it (*ibid*). For example, they can influence aspects of feasting such as what participants are allowed to eat or drink, how they are allowed to behave, or with whom they are allowed to interact. Aggrandisers might also attempt to create a more centralised political authority by creating diacritical symbolism associated with feasting practices, such as restricting the use of specific feasting accoutrements to certain classes. Over time, these symbolic social distinctions become ingrained in the ritual form of feasting and become infused in the social order. Over time, these processes can lead to increasing social stratification and inequality, and the development of an elite class where previously one did not exist.

It is unrealistic to try and identify specific 'types' of feasts in the archaeological record since feasting activities are particular to the societies they are practiced in and therefore cannot be typologically categorised. However, dismantling 'feasting' into several very general 'sub-types' can be a helpful exercise in understanding how different feasts functioned and what kinds of social interactions took place at them. The feasting 'forms' that are relevant to Iron Age Britain offer a conceptual guide for interpreting the diverse functions of Iron Age feasts. In particular, I will address work feasts, funerary feasts, and diacritical feasts.

One common form of feasting that may have existed in Iron Age Britain is the 'work feast'. The work feast is an important institution because it is often one of the only ways to organize large amounts of labour in small-scale societies (Dietler 2005). The term 'work feast' may actually describe a variety of feasting forms, but in its general sense it is a feast that is provided as 'payment' for people's labour. However, this definition is crude, as work feasts do not function as payment in the way wages or even gift-exchange systems function. The work feast is more about relationships of obligation, influence, cooperation, and community. That is, the feast is considered more valuable than one's labour. Because feasts are highly socially valuable (i.e. in creating and maintaining social relations) and are so costly that only certain individuals or groups can throw them, they become more valuable than mere labour, which anyone can produce. Thus, the guests of work feasts (i.e. the labourers) feel they are getting a

good bargain (Dietler 2001). However, work feasts can effectively be used to separate people from the products of their own labour, essentially exploiting them (Dietler 2005). Because work feasts are an essential form of labour organization in small-scale societies, they constitute an important connection between social and economic discourses. In Iron Age Britain, where monumental architecture is prevalent, work feasts may have had a key role in the construction of monuments such as dykes, settlement enclosures, and hillfort ramparts.

Funerary feasts are another common form of feasting in parts of Late Iron Age Britain. They are essential social events—moments of flux in a community when kinship groups and lineages strive to display their continued success, and political alliances and social relationships must be reaffirmed. They are also moments when power relations within and between lineage groups are in flux and these relationships must quickly be negotiated. Their significance is demonstrated by the enormous amounts of resources and time that are devoted to these feasts (Ralph 2007). Identifying these kinds of feasts archaeologically can be difficult, since it is likely that such feasts did not always occur where individuals were interred. However, the presence of feasting sites in close proximity to funerary monuments in the Iron Age suggests an association between the two (Ralph 2005), as does the presence of feasting related grave goods.

Diacritical feasts function to distinguish social classes and identities from one another through differences in the accoutrements people use and the food they eat; in doing so, this process creates symbolic social differences that become naturalised and eventually can lead to increased social stratification (Dietler 2005; Ralph 2007). Diacritical feasts stand out archaeologically through the presence of ‘high-status’ feasting accoutrements and foods. They might also tend to be smaller in scale, since the goal is not in feasting large groups of people, but in creating symbolic distinctions between the how and what people eat. These feasts are most commonly used by aggrandisers and would be expected to coincide with moments of political flux and the establishment of more personal forms of power, such as in LIA Britain.

Identifying feasting activity in the archaeological record is not a straightforward procedure since feasts vary in scale, form, purpose, and location. However, all feasts tend to share some things in common. For example, all feasts require people, and the aggregation of people tends to leave behind more refuse and thus is more archaeologically visible. Feasts also

require food and drink, and often in quantity, which means the refuse left over is more likely to be archaeologically visible. Feasts also need a venue, which can be as simple as an open field or can require specially made structures. Furthermore, feasts tend to be associated with special occasions such as weddings, initiations, or funerals, which means we might expect to see them in association with these practices (i.e. funerary monuments)(Wiessner 2001). The fact that feasts require an abundance of agricultural resources is also significant because the production and storage of surpluses can be archaeologically visible.

Broadly speaking, archaeological evidence of feasting falls into two categories, location and material evidence. Both types of evidence can be very informative, but only when taken together can past feasting practices be best understood (see Appendix A). For example, the types of pots used might tell us what kind of meals were being prepared, whereas faunal evidence might highlight 'luxury' foods. At the same time, special feasting enclosures might indicate a more formal, ritualised form of feasting, and feasting near mortuary sites might indicate funerary feasts. Similarly, the location of feasts in the landscape can provide an indication of who was attending them. Were they intra-community feasts or inter-community feasts? All of these data present pieces of the puzzle, which is why it is best to consider the evidence together.

The puzzle in this case takes the shape of Iron Age Britain, where the feasting practices mentioned above are demonstrable by the data. For example, the concept of feasts as stages where social roles are enacted and realised is applicable to the LBA-EIA communities of central southern Britain, which seem to have used feasts, held at or near midden sites, to promote social cohesion, create alliances, and relearn how to interact in a radically changing socio-economic atmosphere. The political strategies offered by feasts may have facilitated and allowed work party feasts, which were likely key to the construction of the hillforts that followed and took over the role of middens in central southern Britain. On the other hand, funerary and diacritical feasts were a significant component of LIA social discourses in eastern Britain. By using mortuary and feasting practices in conjunction, and selectively adapting imported feasting accoutrements into native customs, a new class of elite was able to emerge and firmly establish itself in this region. Of course, to understand these complex processes, it is first necessary to examine the socio-political context in which they took place.

Chapter 2

Certain types of feasting activity in Iron Age Britain, like other social practices, seem to have been regionally and temporally specific. Thus, the aim of this paper is not to describe the general feasting practices of Iron Age Britain as a whole, but to focus on regionally specific practices in detail in order to demonstrate some of the roles feasting played in particular social processes. For this reason, this paper focuses on regionally and temporally specific feasting practices: namely, the LBA-MIA period in central southern Britain and the LIA-Roman conquest period of eastern Britain (regions adapted from Cunliffe 2005; see figures 1 & 2). These two case studies were chosen for several reasons. First, they both offer some of the most substantial and archaeologically visible evidence of feasting in Iron Age Britain. For example, the LBA-EIA middens of central southern Britain contain huge quantities of faunal and ceramic evidence related to feasting in a period where fairly small amounts of this kind of material evidence are found on other sites such as settlements (Hingley 1980; McOmish 1996). Likewise, during the LIA, eastern Britain develop a highly archaeologically visible burial rite relative to other regions at the time. The quantity and preservation of feasting evidence from these burials allows closer and more detailed analysis of the feasting practices from this region during the LIA. But before analysing the feasting evidence, it is necessary to examine the wider socio-political context of these two regions during the periods discussed.

Fig. 1. Map of England showing the regions discussed (after Cunliffe 2005; image source: Dalet 2012).

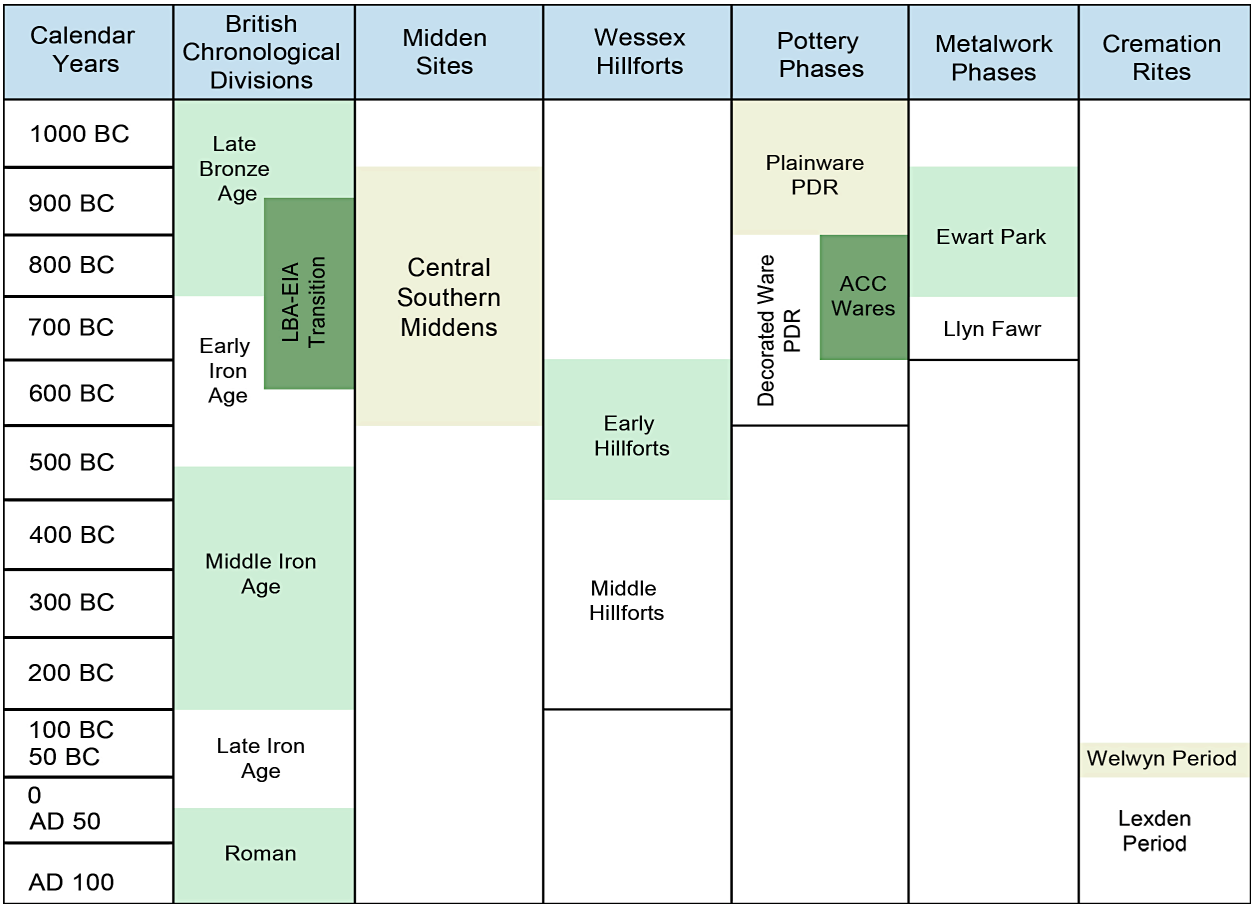

Fig. 2. Chronological background (after Hill 1995; Sharples 2010; Cunliffe 2005; Barrett 1980; image source: author).

Chapter 3 of this paper addresses feasting practices in central southern Britain from the LBA to the MIA. This region is the epicenter of the midden phenomenon which especially permeates the archaeological record from about the tenth to sixth centuries BC (Waddington and Sharples 2011). Around the time that middens cease being accumulated and managed, hillforts begin to be built. The use of these two types of monuments overlap chronologically and thus beg the question, why did hillforts become so important just as middens were falling out of use? The answer may lie in changing social processes related to feasting, where the communal relationships established and cemented by middening and feasting were transferred to hillforts. Feasting appears to have played a role in facilitating and organising the construction of hillforts and eventually these sites became foci for further feasting activity. By the MIA, 'developed' hillforts appear to have held substantial storage facilities required for feasts, and feasting activities may have taken on a more centralised form. To fully appreciate these complex processes, it is necessary to acknowledge the context in which they occurred; that is, the nature

of life in central southern Britain during these periods. Some of the major themes of everyday life in the Wessex region include belief systems, concepts of landscape and space, and concepts of regionalism and identity. Everyday life in EIA central southern Britain was governed by these themes and so was feasting.

Iron Age belief systems in central southern Britain have been described as cyclical, focusing on the agricultural cycle and thus ideas of life, death, and regeneration (Fitzpatrick 1997; Hill 1995; Sharples 2010). These beliefs were incorporated into aspects of everyday life, such as the orientation and use of space in houses, to the ironworking process, to treatment of the dead, to agricultural production. The rituals incorporated into these practices may provide insight to similar rituals which governed feasts and provide an idea of how, when, and where they happened. Because feasts tend to be highly ritualised, it is likely that the ritual structure of Iron Age feasts in central southern Britain shared elements of the cyclical, regenerative belief system that was incorporated into other aspects of everyday life.

The concepts of space and boundaries were meaningful to Iron Age Wessex communities. Structures, settlements, activities, monuments, and boundaries were organised and situated in culturally significant ways. Landscapes were lived-in and experienced (Gwilt and Haselgrove 1997, p.6). Settlements and monuments were integrated into the larger landscape through which people moved and lived: "places gained identity by their association with repeated human practices, or by the appropriation of earlier loci" (*ibid.*). Ways through the landscape also became increasingly fixed physically and conceptually (*ibid.*). For example, LBA-EIA middens seem to have been strategically situated in the landscape to facilitate inter-communal interaction and gathering. Some midden locations also seem to have been chosen for their association with earlier monuments or other potentially symbolically significant parts of the landscape. The construction of early hillforts in the central southern region also demonstrate a consideration for these concerns, suggesting that hillforts may have taken over some of the roles of middens. However, the increasing enclosure of space into the MIA (as demonstrated by the increasing enclosure of settlements and 'developed' hillforts) suggests ideas of space were being manipulated in new ways to create and influence new social relationships. The construction of these enclosures—whether simple wooden palisades or huge earthen ramparts—required large

amounts of labour. Feasts, in particular work feasts, may have provided the means of organising and facilitating this labour. Regardless, the fact that hillforts seem to have become foci for feasting into the EIA-MIA suggests such considerations of space and landscape are relevant to understanding developments in feasting practices.

Finally, feasting seems to be tied up in the important concepts of regionalism and identity. Iron Age societies in Britain were regionally distinct and exhibited significant cultural differences, however, this does not imply isolation or limited contact between groups. Rather, distinct regional identities often develop as a result of frequent interregional contact (Hill 1995). Feasting likely played an important role in this process of regionalism for several reasons. First, certain feasting locations, such as LBA-EIA middens, are situated strategically between regions, likely to facilitate inter-community gatherings. Second, material evidence such as pottery types suggest people from different regions were gathering together at feasting sites. Third, the function of certain feasts, such as work feasts, was to aggregate the large numbers of people required for large labour projects; these projects required more people than a single community could provide and therefore needed to draw on labour forces from nearby communities. Likewise, the construction of monumental boundaries likely created and defined relationships between communities (Sharples 2010, p.6). Fourth, the agriculture cycle mandated certain use of space and time such as varied use of uplands and lowlands at different times of the year. The movement of people and animals was also based on the logistics of managing large herds; people likely came together during breeding and birthing seasons and to exchange and breed animals, as well as keep them safe. (Fitzpatrick 1997). Thus the agricultural cycle meant different communities needed to interact and cooperate with one another at certain times of the year; feasts seem to have accompanied and facilitated these interactions. Finally, the change from largely kin-based social systems to those where different communities (and kin groups) were interacting required changes in how people related to each other. Daily interactions needed to be negotiated and new social roles and relationships needed to be established to allow the “day-to-day intermingling of people who [knew] very little about each other” (Sharples 2010, p.6). Of course, a natural ability of feasts is to mark and naturalize social relationships, meaning it is a powerful tool for constructing and defining social identities. Thus, feasts would function to

highlight and make salient cultural differences between communities, thereby contributing to the development of strong local identities.

The late Pre-Roman Iron Age (100 BC-AD 43) saw some of the most drastic changes in British social systems, especially in eastern Britain. Some hillforts took on a more 'central' role as did some settlements (Hill 1995; Cunliffe 2005). Craft specialization reached new levels as did agricultural intensification. Trade with the continent greatly increased, which brought new imported goods to Britain. The driving force behind these changes has often been argued to be the emergence of elites and increased social stratification. However, the models that have been put forth to explain this process (i.e. prestige economy, 'Romanisation', etc.) have come under much criticism in recent years (Haselgrove and Moore *et al.* 2007; Hill 1995; Pitts 2008) as unfit explanations of the complex social changes that took place during this period. Rather than a sudden adoption of continental lifestyles, it now seems apparent that many of the processes witnessed during the LIA were merely the escalation of processes set in motion in earlier periods (Hill 1995). This line of reasoning has garnered support in recent years (Hill 1995), but requires further analysis. What does seem accurate is that power became imbued in much more personal forms, evident in a newly distinguishable elite class which was previously unknown in the British Iron Age (Hill 1995). What is debated is *how* this class established itself and why it had not in an earlier period. To answer this question, I propose examining the changes that took place during this period to the fundamental social institution: the meal.

Identities in the LIA (communal and personal) were increasingly being represented by what people ate and what objects they ate with. New modes of drinking and feasting in particular created new ways of expressing identity (Haselgrove and Moore 2007, p.8), with the "individual...placed centre stage as [the] agent and locus of social change" in relation to themes of identity, causality, household structure, society and class (*ibid*., p.12). For example, developments in LIA pottery indicate changes in social interaction; new pottery forms and shapes develop in southern Anglia from c. 125-75 BC onwards, implying that these 'ceramic tools' were being used to prepare and serve food and drink in new ways (Haselgrove and Moore 2007). Drinking alcohol especially seems to have taken on a new social role, as evident from the new forms of drink-serving ware such as pedestal urns and tall cylindrical jars. The importance

of food and drink for creating and sustaining new social relations was not new, but the ways in which it did so changed. Eating and drinking became an arena for social interaction that distinguished eastern Britain from other regions. The ceramic evidence suggests types of cooking changed from communal vessels to more personal ones. This hints at increasing difference in social statuses such as age, gender, and class. The meal also became an increasingly competitive arena for displaying differences in wealth and success between individuals, groups, and families. Feasting was used as a diacritically symbolic tool to mark these differences in social classes and identities. Significantly, continental imports to the region were mostly restricted to vessels for serving food and drink, objects for preparing beverages, and exotic foods and drinks themselves (Hill 2007, p.27). More forms, shapes, sizes, styles, and differences in quality (including imported ware), coupled with the fact that ceramic use became more personal (i.e. people ate and drank with different vessels), tells us much about the increasingly diacritical emphasis of feasts.

Linked to the adoption of new feasting practices were new burial practices, namely the cremation of distinct individuals with unique grave goods. This marks a deliberate attempt to distinguish different members of society through funerary practices, and supports the idea that some British societies were becoming more stratified and differentiated, with power becoming more personal and individual (Hill 2007, p.28). Stratification between these graves, based on size and structure of the graves themselves, as well as the wealth of grave goods, suggests this medium was used to clearly mark class differences. The overwhelming emphasis on feasting accoutrements in these funerary rites suggest that feasting played a significant role in marking individuals' identity and social class in life.

The themes and theories explained in this chapter provide a context for understanding the data analysed in the following two chapters. Feasting practices are influenced by a society's belief systems, social order, and political relationships as much as any other institution, but also act reflexively to influence these societal traits in turn. Thus, it is critical to understand these spatio-temporally specific societies since feasting practices are ultimately particularistic to the societies which engage in them. Doing so allows a more thorough, thoughtful, and accurate analysis of the data related to feasting. The data presented in chapters three and four therefore refer back to the themes and theories explained in this chapter.

Chapter 3

The middens and hillforts of central southern Britain are two of the most salient features of the Iron Age in this region. Interestingly, middens begin to dot the landscape during the decline of Bronze Age, suggesting they are relevant to understanding the processes of social change that took place from the LBA to the EIA. Likewise, hillforts seem to become widely constructed and used just as middens go out of use, suggesting a close relationship between the two (see Figure 2). By the MIA, many early hillforts are abandoned while others are built up and more intensively used. These transitions seem to be more or less chronologically fluid, but *how* and *why* these changes occurred is not well understood. I argue that feasting may have played a key role in facilitating these changes and adapting to the restructuring of society that followed.

During the Bronze Age in central southern Britain, elites maintained their status and position through the control, trade, and ritual deposition of bronze objects and other prestige objects. However, during the LBA this social reproduction framework began to break down, a process which escalated in the EIA. A new medium took the fore in this region as the key to social reproduction: agricultural produce. However, the means of transforming agricultural produce into socially valuable relationships are much different than with precious metals such as bronze, since it is inherently difficult to control access to agrarian surpluses (people can simply move away and produce their own food). This transition initially seems to have led to the breakdown of the elite class established in the Bronze Age. However, while agricultural produce cannot be easily controlled by a gift-exchange economy, it can nonetheless be transformed into social credit or prestige through feasting.

The midden sites that mark the transition from the LBA to the EIA in central southern Britain have been known since the excavations in the early 20th century of sites such as All Cannings Cross and Runnymede Bridge, but only recognised as part of a regionally unique

phenomenon in recent years. Midden sites (at least 30 are known) are unusually large-scale accumulations of refuse debris consisting primarily of bone, pottery, and organic residue. They are concentrated in central southern Britain, mostly in Wiltshire, and primarily date from the tenth to sixth centuries BC. They range in size from very small to very large; in fact, some of the largest sites such as East Chisenbury are monuments in themselves (Waddington and Sharples 2011, p.57; McOmish 1996). They are noteworthy sites since similar accumulations are not seen in previous periods (Needham and Spence 1997); their sudden appearance thus marks an important transition during the LBA-EIA in how people conceptualised and realised their world. But what is the nature of these sites? What formation processes led to their creation? And what was their social, political and economic significance to the communities who created them?

Site Name	Location
Compact Farm	Dorset
Eldon's Seat	Dorset
Rope Lake Hole	Dorset
Welland Bank	Lincolnshire
Wallingford	Oxfordshire
Wittenham Clumps	Oxfordshire
Woodeaton	Oxfordshire
Llanmaes	South Wales
Runnymede Bridge	Surrey
Shinewater Marsh	Sussex
Whitchurch	Warwickshire
All Cannings Cross	Wiltshire
East Chisenbury	Wiltshire
Potterne	Wiltshire
Stanton St Bernard	Wiltshire
Westbury	Wiltshire

Fig. 3. Notable midden sites (after Waddington and Sharples 2011).

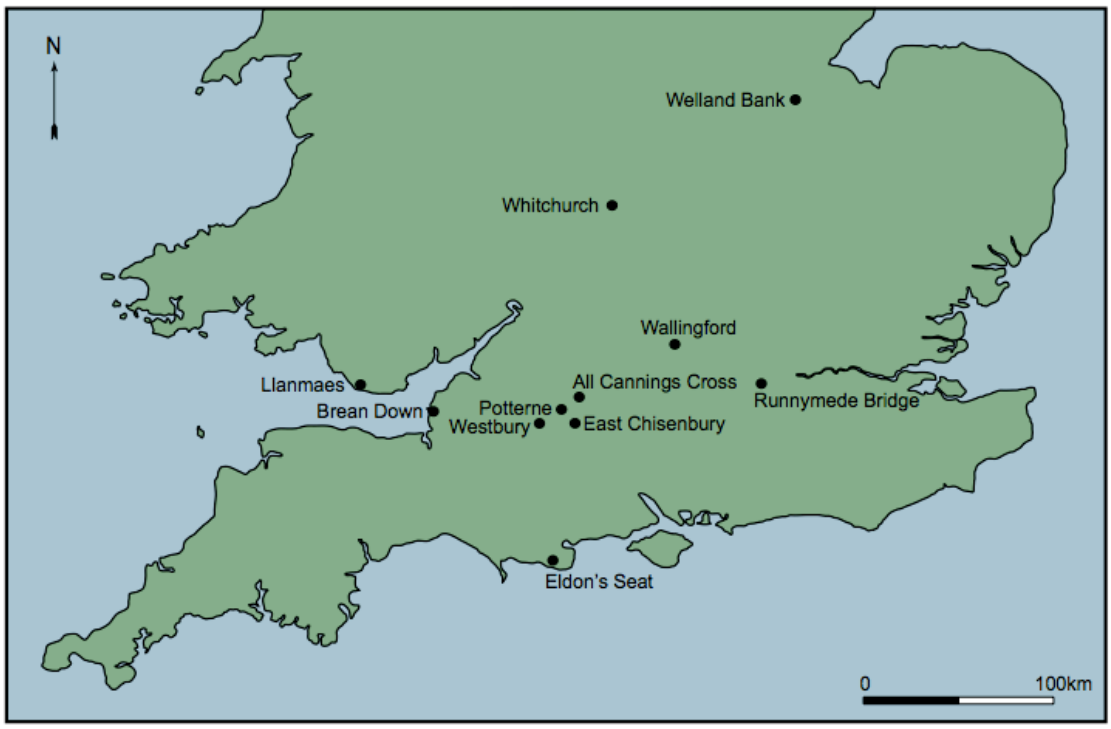

Fig. 4. Key midden sites from southern Britain (source: Waddington and Sharples 2011, Fig. 45).

To answer these questions, it is worth noting how these sites differed from other contemporaneous sites. Characteristics of the LBA-EIA middens include: the accumulation of dark anthropogenic soils (high phosphate levels indicating feces and food residue); high density of animal bone and broken pot; structural features associated with dwelling, animal corralling, and other activities, as well as the intensity and continuity of these practices to allow accumulation on a monumental scale (Gwilt 2009; Lawson *et al*. 2000; Needham and Spence 1997; Waddington and Sharples 2011). Middens were likely formed by a variety of practices, but the most prominent were feasting, craft production, and ritual deposition (Needham and Spence 1997). These complex processes of feasting and social competition/reproduction suggest that these sites were much more culturally significant and complex than the term 'midden' usually implies (Tubb 2011, p.47). Furthermore, the scale of these sites clearly indicates that middens were the result of more than a single community's activities.

Midden sites are often located at 'nodes' within the landscape, whether boundaries between communities or environs, important natural routeways, visually conspicuous hills, or in proximity to past monuments (Needham and Spence 1997; Waddington and Sharples 2011). These locations were carefully chosen for both practical and symbolic reasons. Their location between communities, often on natural routeways or waterways, facilitated the gathering of large numbers of people and animals. For example, the site of Runnymede is situated on a river confluence (Needham and Spence 1997), whereas East Chisenbury is only 10km away from Stonehenge along an ancient natural thoroughfare through the Salisbury Plain (McOmish 1996). Other sites are located at the boundaries between probable 'territories' (Ralph 2005), often on visually prominent hilltops or hill-slopes (as is the case at East Chisenbury) (Waddington and Sharples 2011). In fact, *all* of the midden sites in the Vale of Pewsey are situated on or in close proximity to prominent natural features that are highly visible in the landscape (Tubb 2011). Midden locations thus indicate that midden sites were intended for inter-communal gatherings.

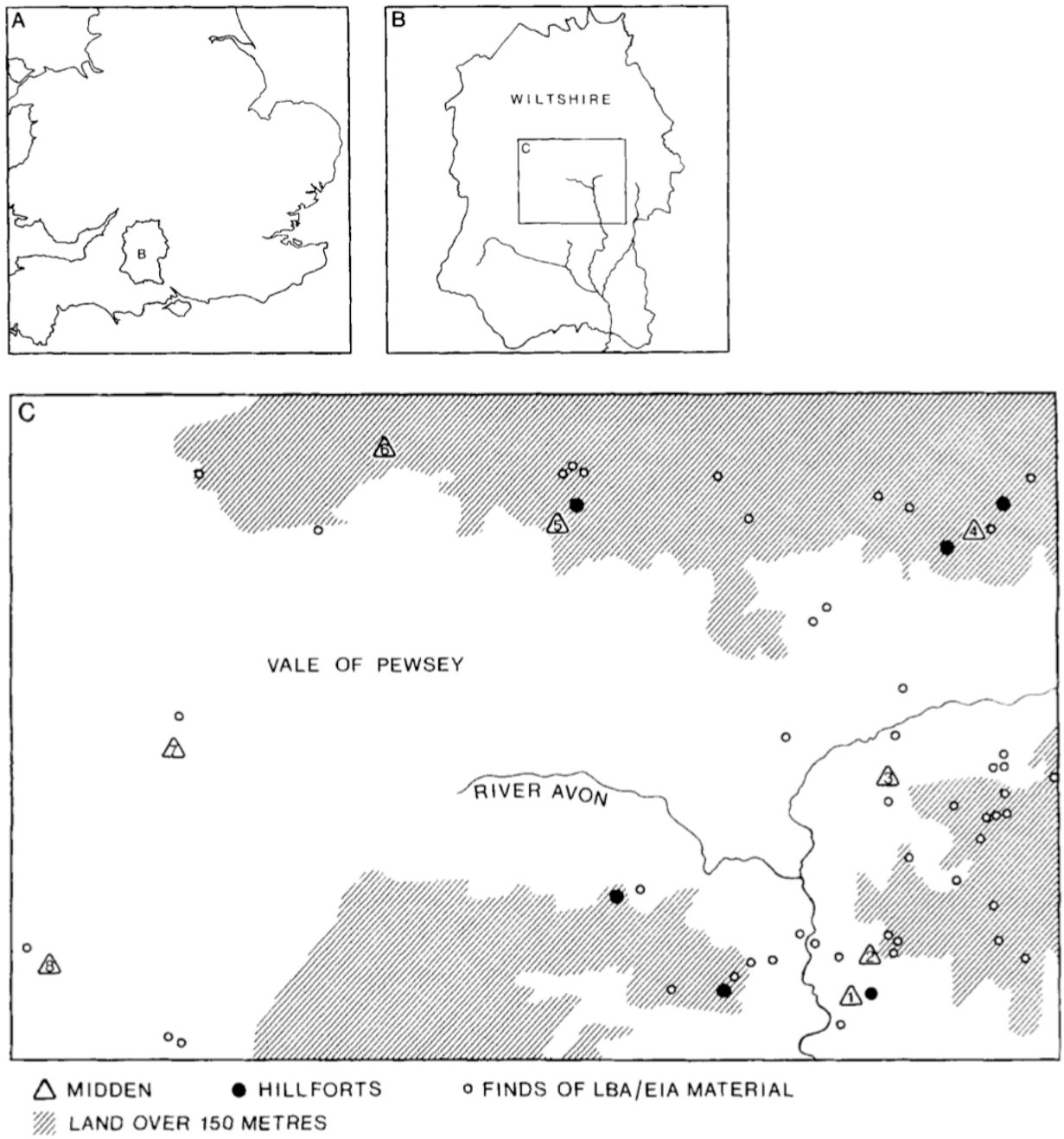

Fig. 5. Location of midden sites from central Wiltshire. 1) East Chisenbury; 2) Chisenbury Field Barn; 3) Blackpatch; 4) Martinsell; 5) All Canning's Cross; 6) Bishop's Crossing; 7) Potterne; 8) Erlestoke (source: McOmish 1996, Fig. 1.).

Midden locations also likely had symbolic attachments, since some are located near past monuments (i.e. East Chisenbury's proximity to Stonehenge). For example, the midden at Llanmaes was set in a previously significant part of the landscape, only a few hundred metres away from a Bronze Age barrow cemetery. This choice of setting was likely meant to associate

the midden with this important ancestral place (Gwilt 2009, p.33). It is interesting that this midden seems to create continuity with the Bronze Age landscape, rather than a break with it. This might mean that feasting evidence suggests overall continuity between the Bronze and Iron Ages, albeit with a change in how socio-political relations were enacted and maintained (i.e. via feasting and agricultural production). On the other hand, certain middens may have gained symbolic power over time and become monuments in themselves (Lawson *et al*. 2000; McOmish 1996). The sheer size of some middens (the East Chisenbury midden was originally assumed to be a natural hill) may have imbued them with cultural and symbolic significance over time, visually recalling the past and the socio-political relationships created during feasts there (Ralph 2005, p.63). Furthermore, the size difference between midden sites may indicate a hierarchy between them that was visible in the landscape (Tubb 2011); larger-scale feasting and middening being a sign of the success and productive potential of the communities involved (Ralph 2005). The material evidence from middens supports these interpretations and allow a much more detailed analysis of the feasting practices that contributed to their formation.

The ceramic assemblages from middens offer much information about the feasting practices that occurred at these sites. First, it is worth noting that the quantity and density of pottery deposits at midden sites is much higher than other occupation sites of the Iron Age (see Figure 6) (Waddington and Sharples 2011, p.58). Thus these sites are somewhat better situated to tell us about certain aspects of Iron Age societies based on the production, use, and deposition of pottery. Presumably, pottery is not present at settlement sites in high quantities because broken pots were either fixed and reused, spread with other rubbish on agricultural land as fertiliser, or other less durable materials were more commonly used as eating and drinking vessels (McOmish 1996). Midden sites, on the other hand, seem to have formed as the result of conspicuous consumption, meaning ceramic vessels were more likely to be used and more likely to be broken (accidentally or deliberately).

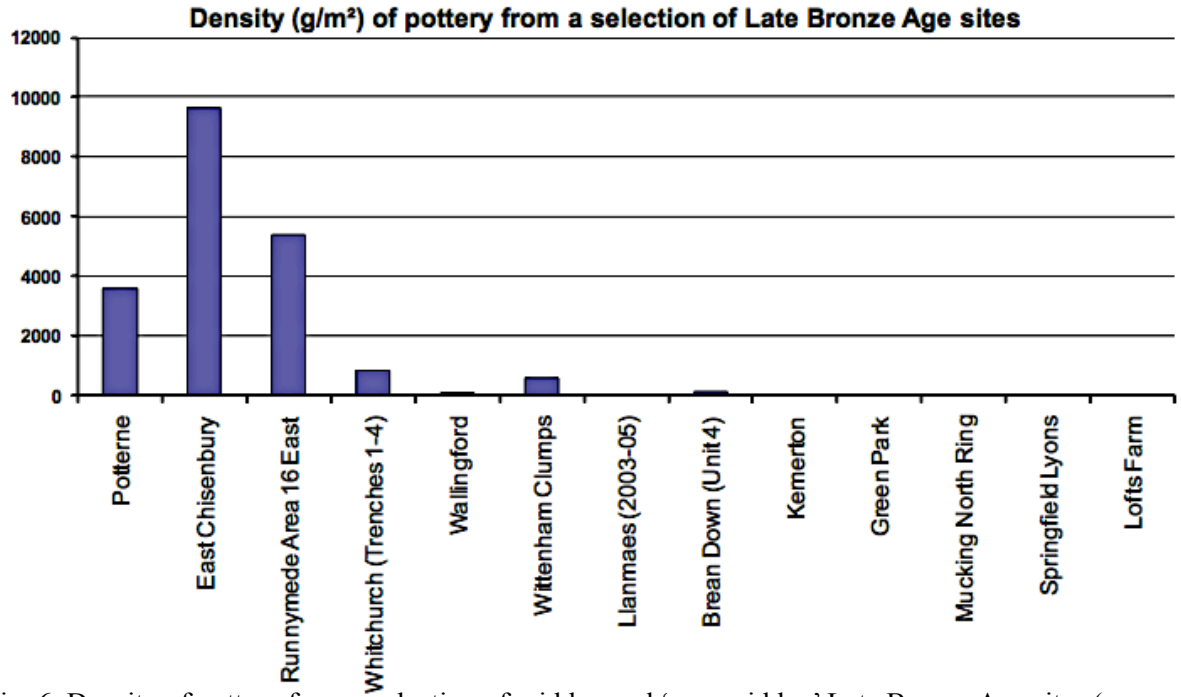

Fig. 6. Density of pottery from a selection of midden and 'non-midden' Late Bronze Age sites (source: Waddington and Sharples 2011, Fig. 46).

The amount of pottery being deposited at midden sites, in relatively stark contrast to contemporaneous settlement sites, gives a sense of the scale of feasting that took place at these places. Figure 7 provides a sense of just how much pottery came out of these sites. Though the formation processes that led to the accumulation of middens are debated (see Needham and Spence 1997), evidence from East Chisenbury suggests large numbers of pots were deposited over a relatively short period, suggestive of large gatherings of people. Furthermore, the vessel forms (many decorated and designed for preparing and serving food) and high amount of breakage (likely deliberate in many cases) suggests that these feasts were events of conspicuous consumption, perhaps similar in some regards to competitive feasting practices such as potlatch. At some sites, the deposition of broken pot vessels also appears to have been structured and curated to an extent (McOmish 1996). The deliberate breaking, mixing, reincorporating, and depositing of pottery may be related to the regenerative, cyclical ideas related to life, death, and fertility which were part of societies' conceptual frameworks in the LBA and Iron Ages (Brück 2006, 297). If so, feasting likely played an important role in developing this belief system which possibly altered the focus of this regenerative ideology from the deposition of objects (i.e. bronze) in the LBA to the production and consumption of agricultural produce in the EIA.

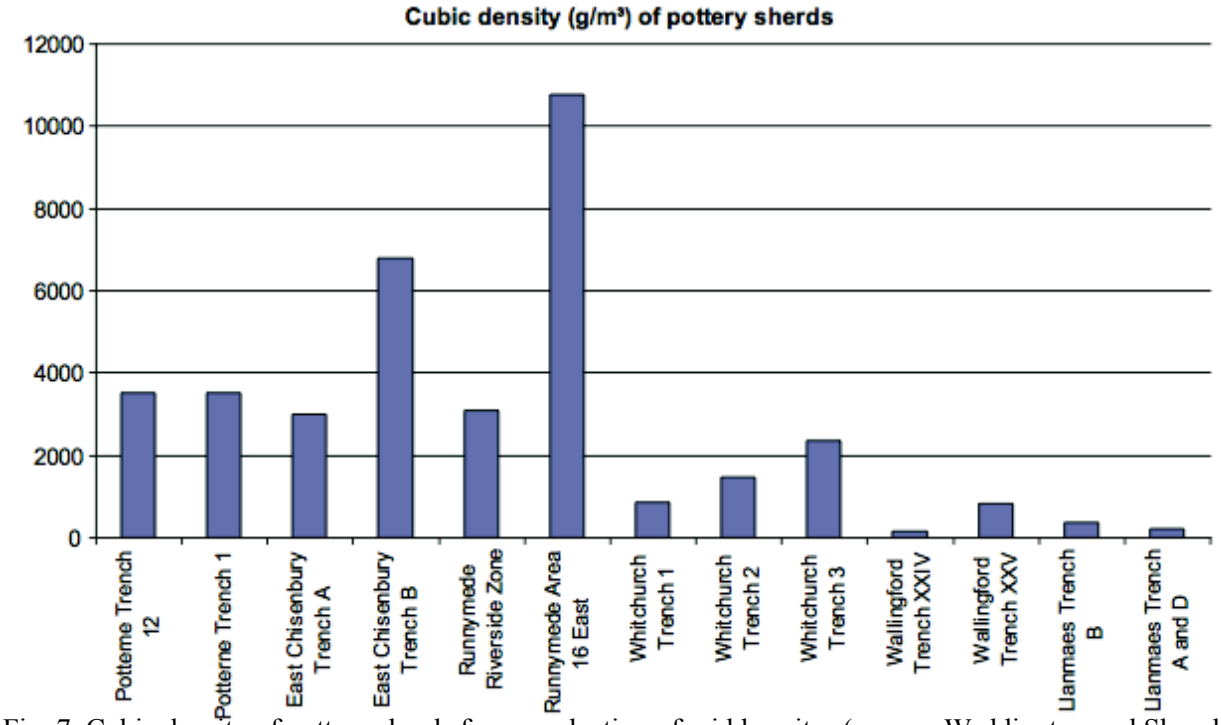

Fig. 7. Cubic density of pottery sherds from a selection of midden sites (source: Waddington and Sharples 2011, Fig. 47).

The changes to vessel forms during the LBA-EIA transition may also provide insight into feasting practices during this period.

Most of the midden sites in central southern Britain contain pottery types from the LBA-EIA transition (800-600BC) (Sharples 2010). This period is characterised by the replacement of LBA 'Plainware' post-Deverel Rimbury (PDR) with the 'Decorated' PDR types representative of the LBA-EIA transition as well as other EIA traditions such as All Cannings Cross wares (Brudenell 2011, p.47; Tubb 2011). The changes in vessel form, decoration, and fabric during this period suggest pottery production took on a increased emphasis on feasting. The LBA Deverel Rimbury pottery types (1400BC-1150BC) are typified by bucket urns, globular urns, and barrel urns. These vessels are all similar in size and form, with an average capacity around 1600cc. The later 'plainware' PDR types (1150BC-800BC) tend to have less decoration. However, during the LBA - EIA period, 'decorated' PDR vessels become the norm (800BC-500BC). This period is typified by jars, bowls, and small cups with a wider range of sizes and forms (Barrett 1980). This broader range of vessel forms and sizes suggests there was

an increased structure to and emphasis on the ‘meal’. This is supported too by the greater presence of pots on LBA-EIA sites. It seems ceramics were beginning to serve a wider range of functions and play a more prominent role in the consumption of food (Barrett 1980, p.313). Accounting for their context in midden sites, it seems plausible to assume that an increased emphasis on feasting during the LBA-EIA period drove the changes in vessel forms. Similarly, the vessels of this period display a renewed emphasis on decoration in the form of fingertip and tool marks on rims and shoulders of un-burnished coarsewares (particularly jars), or incised motifs on burnished or smooth finewares. These decorative styles are also similar between some midden sites and occur on these sites in similar ratios (an average of 20% of vessels were decorated) (Brudenell 2011, p.51). This fact indicates contact between these sites or the communities that frequented them and perhaps indicates a shared sense of identity was established through inter-communal feasting practices. Furthermore, the decorations on these vessels (beading around the rim and girth and ‘incising’ on already fired surfaces) seem to be more reminiscent of metalworking decoration techniques than those typical for ceramics (Barrett 1980). Similarly, the All Cannings Cross finewares imitate sheet metal copper vessels such as cauldrons and are also strongly associated with the storage, preparation, presentation, and consumption of food. The appearance of these forms may be due to bronze being reserved for deposition (i.e. Llyn Fawr type hoards), the need for a new competitive media based on local resources, and the marked expansion in feasting and midden making activities. The rapid innovation of these vessels meant to imitate cauldrons in looks and function suggest LBA-EIA communities strived to maintain the importance of feasting and display. This is demonstrated by the varied forms of copper vessel imitations found on midden sites such as Potterne (Tubb 2011, p.45). Cauldrons already had a long tradition as feasting vessels from the Bronze Age (Gerloff 1986) and imitating these vessels was likely an attempt to conjure up the ‘traditionalism’ of feasting as a way of emphasising its renewed importance.

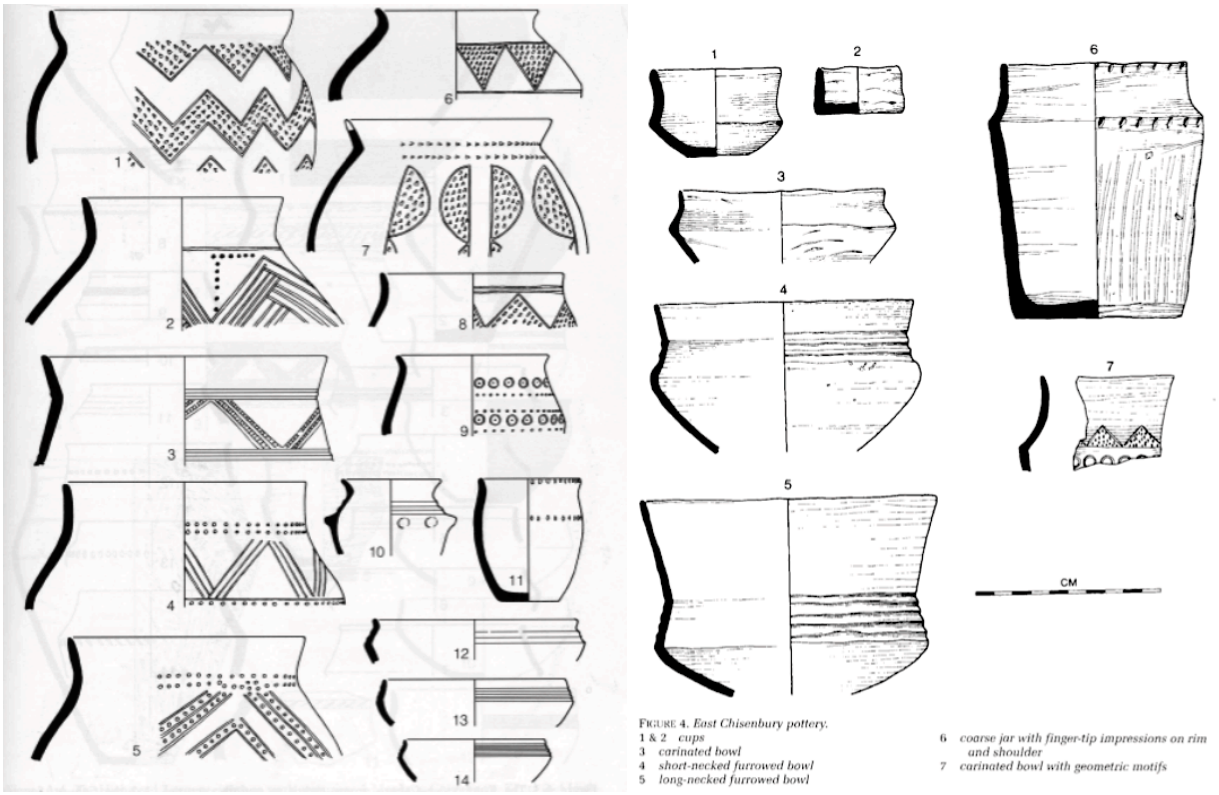

Fig. 8. Early All Cannings Cross pottery from 9th to 8th centuries (left); and pottery from East Chisenbury (right) (sources: Cunliffe 2005, Fig A:2; McOmish 1996, Fig. 4).

The faunal evidence from middens is also highly suggestive of feasting and provides clues to the nature of feasting during the LBA-EIA period. The huge quantities of animal bone deposited in middens are unusual for this period in their sheer volume alone. Relatively few animal bones are found on domestic LBA or Iron Age sites, largely because of taphonomic reasons (i.e. acidic soils) (Hambleton 1998). This indicates large-scale consumption took place at these sites, and more meat was eaten than was necessary for a single community's subsistence needs. Furthermore, the high archaeological visibility of animal bones at middens suggests a more wasteful use of bones, an indication of feasting. However, a more in-depth analysis also indicates feasting took place on midden sites. For one, all midden sites have evidence of butchered animal bone (Tubb 2011), indicating meat was likely prepared on site. The evidence of burnt animal bone from many of these deposits likely indicates the roasting of meat, which causes fat to drip from the meat. This is a wasteful form of cooking but also produces better tasting meat (Jackson and Scott, 2003). At some sites, such as East Chisenbury, the faunal

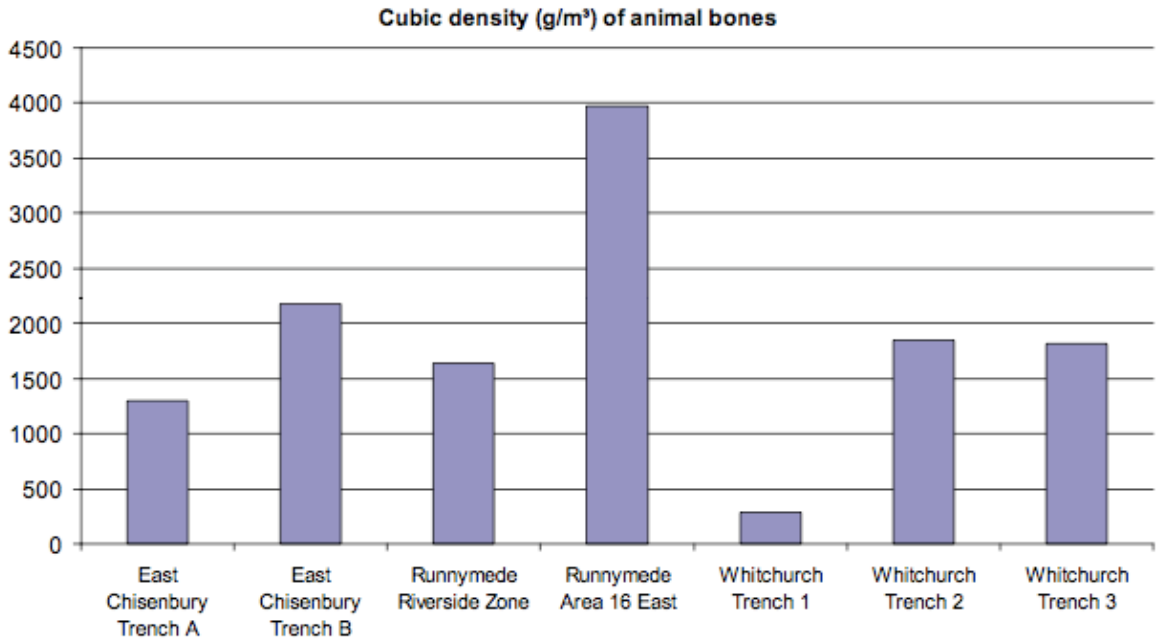

Fig. 9. Cubic density of animal bones from a selection of midden sites (source: Waddington and Sharples, Fig. 47).

assemblage had a disproportionately high number of foetal and neo-natal sheep (McOmish 1996). This kind of evidence is indicative of 'luxury' foods, which are common at feasts and are sometimes associated with high-status individuals or groups (Curet and Pestle 2010). A similar trend is apparent in the proportions of animal species represented at middens. There are an unusually high number of pig bones at midden sites relative to contemporary settlement sites. For example, Runnymede, Potterne, and Whitecross Farm all have between 28-30% pig remains. Non-midden LBA sites typically have about 10% pig remains (Madgwick 2011, p.55). Llanmaes' faunal assemblage of 70,000 bone fragments is over 78% pig bone (Gwilt 2009). Pig is a commonly preferred type of meat for its fat content and taste (Hayden 1996) and tends to be more commonly associated with feasts in many other cultures (i.e. cultural groups from the Pacific Islands). Furthermore, at Llanmaes, there is a strong pattern showing a higher proportion of the right fore-limb of pigs—a pattern which is not demonstrated in sheep or cattle (Gwilt 2009). Preference for particular portions of an animal are another indicator of feasting and luxury foods (Curet and Pestle 2010). This pattern also recalls the 'champion's portion' from Medieval Irish texts about feasting. This preference for particular portions of certain animals (especially

pig) is also reflected in different LIA cremation burials from eastern Britain (see Appendix B), suggesting an enduring and supra-regional feasting practice. Regardless of what this practice means, it indicates Iron Age feasting practices were symbolically and ritually structured. Metal objects related to feasting also reflect the strongly ingrained ritual structures of feasting practices in this region.

The metalwork related to feasting that has been found at midden sites includes cauldrons, bowls, and ladles (or cups). For example, at Llanmaes, fragments of at least four bronze cauldrons, nine slightly smaller ring-handled bronze bowls and a handled-cup or ladle, possibly for drinking alcohol were found, which appear to be contemporary with metalwork from the Llyn Fawr hoard (Gwilt 2009). Similar metalwork was found at the midden site of Whitchurch (Waddington and Sharples 2011). Similarly, hoards deposited in other contexts besides middens (such as at Llyn Fawr) often contain similar items, as well as firedogs, which were used as spits for roasting meat and therefore likely related to feasting. However, these items, and cauldrons in particular, were not created just for ritual deposition (as is the case with some bronze objects during the LBA-EIA transition) (Waddington and Sharples 2011). That cauldrons were used for cooking is evident from their common repairs (especially of the bottom which was most intensely heated) and stress near the handles due to lifting and suspension over a fire. However, cauldrons appear to be symbolically valuable as well. They are a common object of many Mediaeval Welsh and Irish mythological texts and seem to have a strongly ingrained association with life, death, and regeneration (Green 1998). Despite the fact that these stories were written down nearly two thousand years after the deposition of LBA-EIA cauldrons, Bettina Arnold (1999) and others (Green 1998) have argued that these stories might be fairly accurate representations of much earlier beliefs which endured via a strong oral tradition in these cultures. The combination of evidence of cauldrons and preference for certain portions of pork at Llanmaes is certainly reminiscent of the ‘champion’s portion’ alluded to in these stories. If such a connection is appreciated, it seems likely that cauldrons held a special symbolism related to death and regeneration. Thus, their presence at feasts may have functioned to influence ideologies which persisted into the Iron Age and were repeated in other aspects of daily life. Similarly, the cauldron, being a large vessel for sharing food, may have symbolised the

communal sharing that was emphasised at LBA-EIA feasts. Thus, the actual act of feasting (rather than just the location of feasting sites) likely played an important role in establishing relationships between communities and overall contributing to the communal nature of power that is evident in the EIA.

The emergence of hillforts in central southern Iron Age Britain has been much discussed and debated, the full extent of which is beyond the scope of this paper (see Cunliffe 2005; Sharples 2010). However, it does seem clear that hillforts were used, abandoned, reused, remodeled, and served different functions throughout the Iron Age. Of particular interest is how and why hillforts emerged, and how and why their roles changed over time. While recent studies have addressed these questions with much success (van der Veen and Jones 2006; Tubb 2011), I argue that an analysis of the evidence for feasting provides an alternative and insightful approach to understanding the emergence and role of hillforts in central southern Britain.

The earliest hillforts date to the LBA-EIA transition (around 800-600BC), were not intensively or permanently occupied, and had slight ramparts (hill-top enclosures may be a better term). However, they also had four-post structures which have been interpreted as grain storage or fodder storage for corralling livestock (Cunliffe 2005). However, most hillforts were constructed around 600BC and seem to have initially played a communal role. These also were not occupied permanently or intensively (van der Veen and Jones 2006). These ‘early hillforts’ were more uniformly and densely distributed through the landscape of central southern Britain and their locations tend to show concern for access-ways through the landscape as well as

Fig. 10. Distribution of Iron Age hillforts in southern Britain (source: van der Veen and Jones 2006, Fig. 5).

possible territorial boundaries (Tubb 2011). Furthermore, four-post structures as well as storage pits are common within these hillforts. By the MIA (roughly 400-100BC), there was a marked change in hillfort use; many were abandoned while others were remodeled, often with additional ramparts. These 'developed' hillforts have been interpreted as something close to central places (Cunliffe 2005), which is questionable (see Hill 1995; Stopford 1987), but their roles do seem to have changed in many ways. What is of most concern with this paper is the evidence of feasting associated with these sites, including storage pits and four-post structures, black-earth (animal bone and pot) sealed within ramparts, or from external, adjacent settlements, and the association between middens and hillforts.

Recent work by Marijke van der Veen and Glynis Jones (2006) has identified a correlation between grain-rich site assemblages and large-scale grain storage facilities (storage pits and four-post structures) in central southern Britain. Storage pits and four-post structures occur predominantly at hillforts and in quantities which would provide much more storage than would be needed for the individual site, suggesting these sites were used to store surplus (*ibid*.). The exact purpose of 'four-post' rectangular structures found in hillforts is uncertain, but presumably they existed as storage facilities for food or fodder (Cunliffe 2005). Whether these functioned as silos for storing grain (similar to Roman granaries) is questionable based on structural analysis and the fact that storage pits seem to have fulfilled the role of grain storage

(Reynolds 1974). However, it does seem likely that these structures were meant to keep grain or other foodstuffs off the ground to prevent damage from heat, moisture, and vermin. They were not likely used for long-term storage, but as storage for grains or foods that needed to be accessed on a day-to-day basis. I find their possible use as fodder storage for livestock intriguing as it would suggest large numbers of animals were kept in or nearby hillforts, possibly to be used in feasts. Storage pits, on the other hand, seem to have fulfilled the role of long-term grain storage. Peter Reynolds' experiments demonstrate just how effective these pits can be for storing grain. The experiments showed that 'beehive' shaped pits work the best for grain storage, which correlates to the archaeological evidence from the Iron Age, ethnohistoric accounts such as those by Tacitus, and ethnographic comparisons (Reynolds 1974).

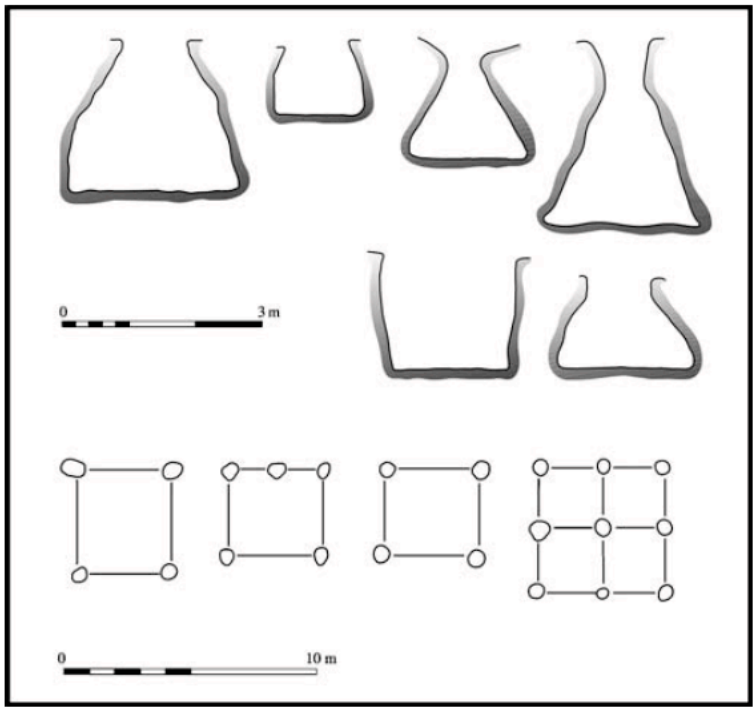

Fig. 11. Storage pit profiles and four-post structure plans from Iron Age Britain (source: van der Veen and Jones 2006, Fig. 3).

The pits function by being covered with clay or cow dung (or a mixture of both) to hermetically seal the pit in a way that protects the grain from developing toxic microflora. These seals could withstand considerable trampling without being broken, meaning pits could be kept within domestic enclosures (Reynolds 1974). Furthermore, the size of the pit did not affect its storage ability, and in fact larger storage pits seem to have been favoured in the Iron Age for their increased capacity. However, the tests also showed that the pits were only effective if they remained sealed, meaning they could not be opened, partially emptied, and then resealed (*ibid*.), suggesting that these pits were emptied all at once. Yet, the size of many pits means they held much more grain than could be consumed in a short period by a single community. It seems likely that these pits were emptied for feasting activities, where the surplus grain would be needed (van der Veen and Jones

2006). The fact that such storage pits are not found in the same quantity at settlements from the period also suggests that hillforts served a special purpose related to feasting. Thus, it appears that four-post structures were used to store foods needed on a daily basis, or even for fodder required for large numbers of livestock, while storage pits were used to store grain which could be accessed when needed for feasts.

An interesting and little examined evidence of feasting comes from within the ramparts of hillforts, where feasting debris has been found. For example, at Quarley Hill and Meon Hill, in Hampshire, midden deposits (containing the same detritus as large midden mounds) were found sealed or overlaid by hillfort ramparts (McOmish 1996). The sealing of feasting debris within ramparts might indicate a very specific type of feast—the work feast. That is, I argue that feasting refuse was sometimes deposited within ramparts at the time of their construction, since the evidence often comes from the lowest stratigraphic contexts suggesting the material was overlaid and sealed soon after by the construction of the rampart (*ibid*.). These feasts were thus likely related to the construction of ramparts in the form of the work feast. Work feasts would have been the optimal way of amassing the labour required to construct monumental ramparts, since EIA societies in central southern Britain had relatively decentralised political systems (Hill 1995). In fact, work feasts may have been the only way to organise labour at this scale in such a social system (Dietler 1990). The fact that these deposits were deliberately sealed by the ramparts and contained human bone suggests they were ritualised and symbolic, and not merely payment as food-for-labour. The sealing of these deposits within the ramparts may have acted as a kind of 'pact', where the relationships kindled during the feasts that created the refuse were forever sealed (and thus symbolically incarnated) by the ramparts. The hillforts themselves would thus become visual reminders of the relationships and alliances established by inter-communal feasting. Further evidence of feasting from outside hillforts corroborates this argument.

LBA-EIA feasting evidence has been found at several external sites adjacent to and associated with hillforts in south Britain. These include All Cannings Cross, Battlesbury Camp, Cherbury Camp, Devil's Dyke, Martinsell, Rybury, and Wittenham Clumps (Hingley 1980, p.54; Tubb 2011). At Whittenham Clumps, for example, a black-earth occupation layer rich in animal

bone and pot was investigated just outside the ramparts of the hillfort. The black-earth layer contained pot and bone dating to the LBA-EIA, similar to feasting material from midden sites. The settlement site and hillfort appear to have been broadly contemporary (Hingley 1980). Interestingly, occupation deposits like this are common on urban and intensely occupied sites, but are rare on Iron Age sites (*ibid*.), suggesting that these black-earth occupation layers were evidence of feasting rather than domestic activities. Their association with hillforts can hardly be discounted, and it seems likely that they were venues for feasts while hillforts stored the food for feasts. Furthermore, since few excavations of hillforts have targeted the area outside the ramparts, it is likely that other sites like this exist just outside or in close proximity to EIA hillforts (Hingley 1980). In fact, black-earth sites associated with hillforts have been identified in the Vale of Pewsey in south Britain by Tubb (2011), suggesting a wider and stronger connection between feasting, midden sites, and hillforts.

The evidence of feasting in the LBA-EIA suggests that as feasting became an increasingly important arena for social reproduction and competition, it developed into and facilitated other forms of display. Thus, feasting seems to have played a key role in the development of middens and the transition to early hillforts. It seems that particular locations became significant and associated with certain groups through feasting and middening, and that this sense of place and identity was transfered to nearby hillforts (Tubb 2011). Interestingly, certain middens, such as East Chisenbury, became monumental in themselves, and even resembled early hillforts in shape and size (McOmish 1996), and may have been the first sites that were recognised as powerful forms of display in their monumentality. The evidence of feasting sites adjacent to early hillforts and feasting debris deposited in the ramparts of early hillforts, along with the fact that midden sites began to go out of use just as hillforts became more common, suggest these monumental sites replaced the functions of earlier middens. However, hillforts seem to have retained their role as foci for feasting activities into the MIA as evidenced by the presence of food storage facilities located within them. Feasting, via work feasts, appears to have been the mechanism which allowed the organisation of the labour required for the construction of early hillforts. They also allowed particular individuals or groups to succeed in enhancing their status and to organise the construction of ‘developed’ hillforts in

the MIA (van der Veen and Jones 2006). This process indicates a change in the social reproduction of inter-communal relations towards more monumental/architectural forms of social reproduction, but might also suggest that feasting continued on in association with hillforts, though in different forms than what is seen in the LBA and EIA. This process also suggests that the establishment of inter-community cohesion, via LBA-EIA feasting, became more structured and permanent through the construction of hillforts, which cemented these relationships in the landscape. This new emphasis on spatial forms of social reproduction is reflected in the increasing emphasis on the enclosure of sites and development of monumental architecture—conspicuous display—into the MIA and LIA.

Chapter 4

During the Later Iron Age in the southeast of England, unique social changes take place including long-distance exchange with the continent, increased social stratification, and the emergence of distinguishable 'elites' (van der Veen 2007). Authors have traditionally attributed changes in southeast England during the Late Iron Age to 'Romanisation' or 'Romanisation before conquest' (Cunliffe 2005); however, others (Pitts 2008) see these changes as deriving from more complex and inherently internal mechanisms, though certainly related to increased contact with the continent. The evidence for feasting during this period in eastern England is quite prominent and markedly different from earlier forms of feasting in other regions such as central southern England. What, then, can feasting tells us about the social, economic, and political changes that took place in this region? LIA feasting in eastern Britain takes on new forms which become an important means of establishing, defining, and maintaining power, especially more personal forms of power related to personal identity (i.e. elites). This type of feasting is predominantly diacritical in nature, augmented through the selective incorporation of foreign feasting accoutrements into native practices. There is also a close connection between feasting and mortuary rituals, which seems to associate elites with a novel 'feast-giver' identity.

Feasting also appears to have been integrated with mortuary rituals in new ways during this period in southeast Britain. The introduction of new funerary rites, predominantly cremation, is accompanied by the hitherto unseen incorporation of rich grave goods, especially related to eating and drinking. Extravagant and individualistic burials such as the famous 'Welwyn type' burials are often referenced, yet somewhat more common graves also include a range of feasting-related grave goods. This burial tradition suggests not only that feasting may have been intimately tied with funerary rites, but that feasting itself became highly structured and ritualised during this period. Other forms of evidence include feasting locations associated with burials, such as at Brisley Farm, Kent, which suggest feasting and mortuary rituals were being integrated in socio-politically strategic ways.

The burial traditions from eastern England from 50BC-AD43 are largely attributed the the 'Aylesford Culture' and comprise a 'set' of feasting-related grave goods previously unknown from Iron Age Britain. These burials were cremations, usually with the cremated remains deposited in simple pits either inside or in association with certain vessels (Whimster 1981, p.

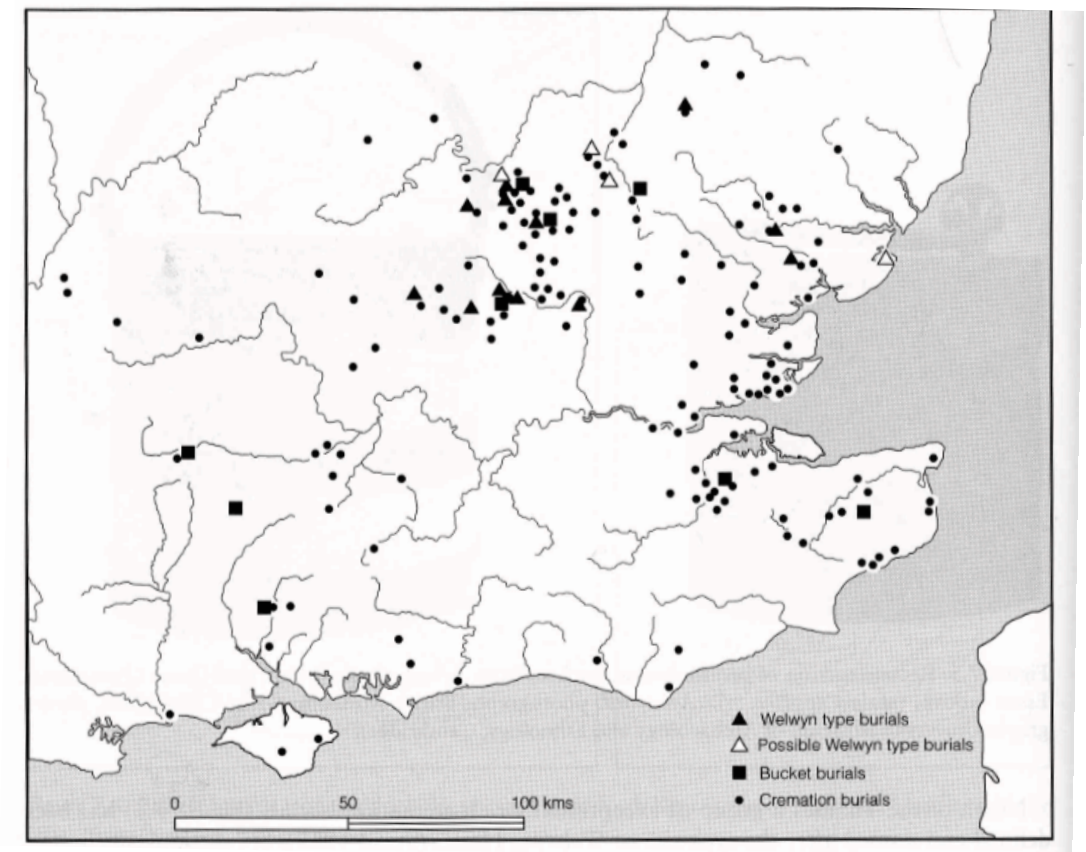

Fig. 12. Late Iron Age cremation cemeteries of eastern Britain (source: Cunliffe 2005, Fig. 7.6).

157). The most common of these vessels were imports or copies of Gallo-Belgic forms such as pedestal urns, wide-mouthed bowls, and butt-beakers, while a smaller and presumably richer group of individuals were buried in or with iron and bronze-bound buckets (Pitts 2008; Whimster 1981). This strongly suggests that these individuals used feasting strategically to establish and maintain their status in life, and in their death they (or family members) wished to recall the feast. The grave goods included in these burials can be broken into three 'levels'. The simplest and more common include a single cinerary vessel (usually a pedestal urn, butt-beaker, or bowl), although some also include 1-5 associated additional pots of native, Samian, or Gallo-Belgic wares (Whimster 1981, p.158). The second range of burials are slightly 'wealthier' and include 4-6 ceramic vessels as well as iron or bronze-bound buckets. Some also include a small number of items of personal adornment (*ibid*.). These groups seem to have been structured according to what was 'expected' as grave goods, suggesting similar structures pervaded the feasting practices and etiquette associated with these objects. A structured or ritualised form of feasting may have contributed to its diacritical nature, since only certain individuals and groups would have knowledge of the etiquette expected for feasting (similar to the status-defining role of feasting etiquette in Mediaeval Britain). The third and most lavish group of burials, known as 'Welwyn' type burials (after the extravagant burial found in Welwyn Garden City) all come from north of the Thames and include much larger assemblages of feasting gear as well as exotic goods. These 'Welwyn type' burials also include unique items which seem to suggest an emphasis on personal identity. Interestingly, this period also sees the first literary mentions of single, named rulers (Whimster 1981), suggesting personal identity and power was a feature of Late Iron Age politics in eastern Britain. The most impressive of these burials is from Welwyn Garden City which contained 36 native and imported pieces of ceramic table-ware, 5 dressel IB amphorae, an imported silver cup, a bronze dish and strainer, 24 decorated glass gaming counters, an iron-bound wooden bucket, an iron knife, and several fragmentary wooden vessels with metal fittings

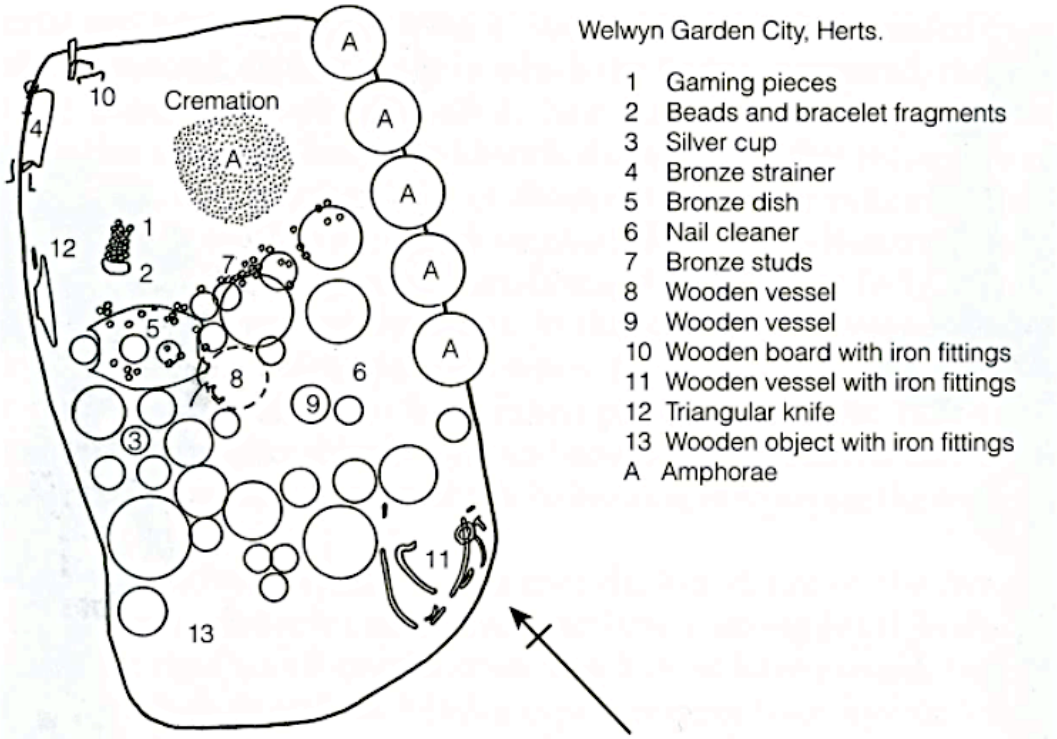

Fig. 13. Plan of the Welwyn Garden City burial (source: Cunliffe 2005, Fig. 7.7).

(Whimster 1981, p.159). Interestingly, there are relatively few items of personal adornment from these graves despite their apparent elite status (*ibid.*, p.160), which further strengthens the assertion that feasting was the key institution at this time for facilitating the rise of an elite class.

Fig. 14. Cremation Burial from St Albans (source: the British Museum).

Of the several rich LIA cremation burials from Hertfordshire, the most recently excavated is the burial at Folly Lane, Verulamium. This burial pit was located in the center of a ditched enclosure and associated with a large funerary shaft which was timber-lined and contained the remains of at least 40 ceramic vessels (see Appendix B), as well as fragments from an iron fire-dog (used for roasting meat), a silver cup, and an iron plate (Niblett 1999, 44-5). The burial and shaft were likely covered by an earthen mound as well, although subsequent plowing has completely destroyed evidence of this (Niblett 1999). Although the cremated remains were buried just outside this shaft, it seems very likely they were associated and contemporary (Niblett 1999, p.56). The shaft would have accommodated 10-12 people and its hidden and restrictive nature suggests it was reserved for a special section of society. It is likely that the funerary ritual included a meal, since the floor of the shaft is covered with the broken tableware and amphorae. The pottery and metalwork suggest that this meal took place about AD 55. The oven, cut into the base of the enclosure ditch may have been used to prepare food, although no food evidence

Fig. 15. Reconstruction drawing of the burial rite at Folly Lane (source: Niblett 1999).

remained (Niblett 1999, p.59). The Folly Lane burial is similar in nature to nearby burials such as Welwyn Garden City, Hertford Heath, Harpenden, and Lexden (*ibid.*, p.61) and also seems to reflect similar rites in northern France and Luxembourg, such as those found at Clemency, Vieux-les-Asfeld (Niblett 1999), and Flere-la-Riviere. Thus, Folly Lane represents a funerary rite particular to LIA eastern Britain that almost certainly included a funerary feast. Similar ditched enclosures with timber-lined pits which contained evidence of feasting but with satellite burials were found at the site of Stanway, which suggests these shafts may have been mortuary chambers for funerary feasts (Niblett 1999, p.395). The connection between these and other similar burials from this area, along with comparisons from Gaul, suggest a strongly established and ritualised form of funerary feasting accompanied these burials. This point is important because it suggests that the feasting accoutrements common in LIA burials in eastern Britain were valuable in their use in feasts rather than their mere possession as exotic imports. Therefore, feasting must have played as prominent a role in these buried individuals' lives as it did in their deaths.

Further proof that feasting-related grave goods were valuable in their use rather than their mere possession comes from two burials from Brisley Farm in Kent. Although cremation became the norm in this region during the Late Iron Age, at Brisley Farm, two 'warriors' were interred in small square barrows directly adjacent to a 'feasting enclosure' (Stevenson and Johnson 2004). This large rectangular enclosure's ditch was full of animal bones, burnt and unburnt, and numerous pots, many of which were deliberately broken. To the south was an entrance approached by a causeway, with a dense cluster of pottery and burnt bones around the entrance (*ibid*.). Both 'warriors' were buried with a sword, shield, spear, and butt-beaker, while one warrior also had a plate and small cup. Although these individuals were apparently buried near the very end of the LIA, the vessels date earlier (20BC-AD45) and were perhaps even heirlooms (Stevenson and Johnson 2004). Interestingly, the dating from the feasting debris in the enclosure's ditch suggests this area was used for feasting well after the individuals' deaths and into the 2nd century AD (*ibid*.). This evidence indicates that native forms of feasting continued in eastern Britain well after the Roman conquest. Furthermore, the warriors' choice (or someone's choice) to be interred rather than cremated and to be buried with native weapons also suggests

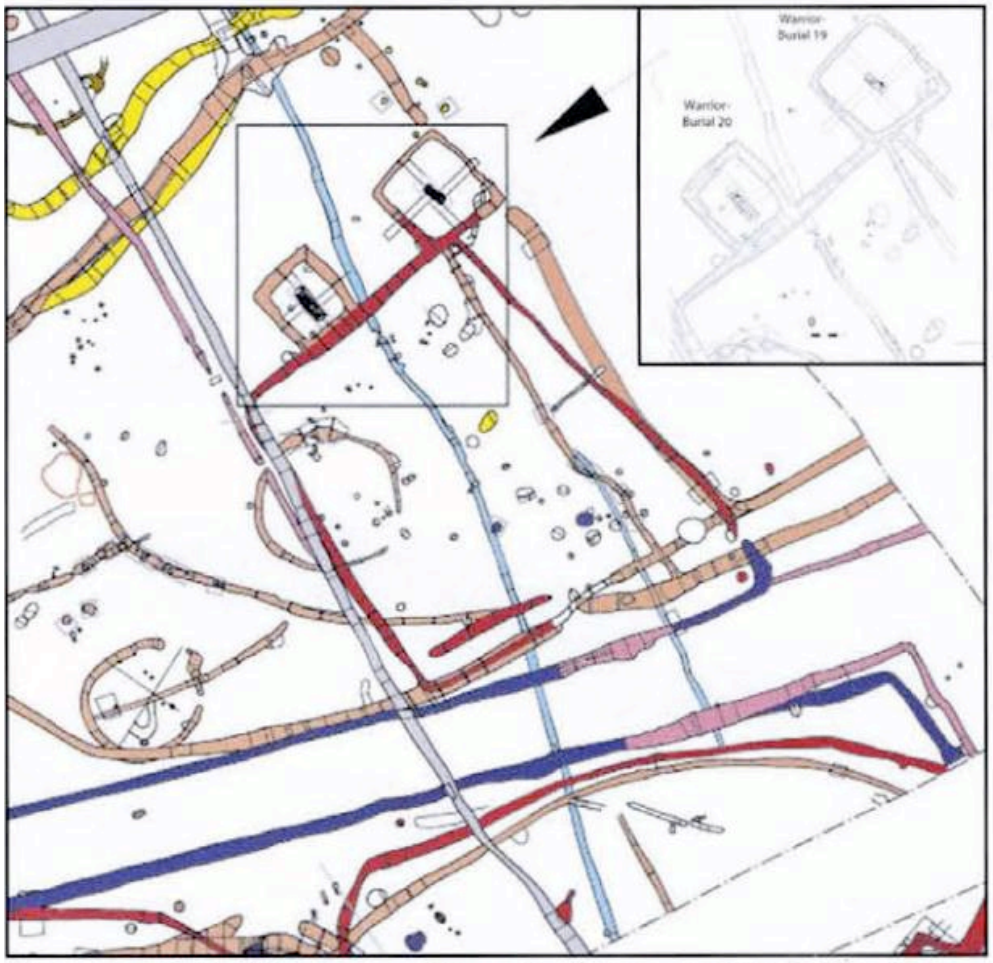

Fig. 16. Plan showing the two 'warrior' burials from Brisley Farm and associated 'feasting enclosure' (Stevenson and Johnson 2004, p.491).

they were drawing on native customs. This evidence strongly points to the significance and endurance of native forms of feasting, suggesting the feast played such an important socio-political role that it took longer to be replaced in the Romano-British period than other social institutions.

The ceramic assemblage from LIA eastern Britain has generally been considered (see Pitts 2005, p.143) evidence of 'Romanisation' due to its inclusion of continental imports and native imitations of imported wares. However, a close examination of the evidence suggests that Late Iron Age people in SE britain were not actually adopting wholesale the Roman or Gallo-Belgic behaviours associated with certain ceramic vessels primarily related to drinking wine (Pitts 2005). In fact, it seems native Britons were selectively adopting and adapting certain

imported objects to native traditions of feasting. This process of 'glocalisation' (e.g. Pitts 2008) was no doubt complex, but it does seem clear that a class of British 'elites' initially adopted imported objects for their exoticness, exclusivity, and thus their ability to augment the diacritical emphasis of feasting already established in the first century BC.

The apparent adoption of foreign pottery in LIA eastern Britain was not a sudden change in social practice. In fact, the preference for non-local ceramic vessels over local versions has its roots in the MIA. While the EIA was dominated by mostly local-made pottery, by the MIA and LIA, there are more distinctive forms being made at concentrated production sites, and these are exchanged over greater distances. Local pottery types almost completely disappear in certain parts of Britain. This change—from locally-made pottery in the EIA to non-local forms in the LIA—is seen in several regions of southern Britain (Hill 1995). This suggests that the importation of Gallo-Belgic pottery and eating and drinking gear was not a new phenomenon, but simply built off of changes that started in the MIA and rapidly escalated in the LIA.

LIA ceramic traditions in eastern Britain indeed saw important changes from early traditions. Earlier ceramic forms, such as those from the EIA, comprised a smaller range of forms, functions, fabrics, and sizes and were mostly locally made. However, in the LIA, a larger range of vessel forms appeared with much more specific functions, sizes, and decorations, which suggest a greater emphasis was being placed on the use of ceramics to categorise and define the 'meal' (Ralph 2007, p.27). Near the beginning of the LIA in eastern Britain, a large number of 'tall' and 'constricted' vessel forms emerged, which included necked or cordoned jars, basic tall 'beakers', and pedestal urns (*ibid*.). The earlier forms include a wide range of 'tall cylinders' which were hand made, but with the introduction of the potter's wheel, these were replaced by undecorated, cordoned necked and other tall jars (late 1st century BC) and later by beakers. Pedestal urns, the most distinctive of first century BC vessels, are wheel made and copy northeastern Gallic types. Narrow-necked flasks and jars are also prominent and were probably used for serving alcohol. While these forms compromise only 1.4% of assemblages before c. 125-100 BC, they make up 10% of assemblages from 100-10BC, and 12.2% from 10BC-AD43 (Ralph 2007, p.28). From 10BC onwards, this eastern England range of forms adds platters,

cups, beakers, flagons, and flasks almost all of which are imported from Roman Gaul or are copies of these. These forms were all designed as tableware and had specific functions,

Fig. 17. Aylesford-Swarling style pottery *c*. 50BC-AD43 (left); and a Romano-British Jug (right) (sources: Cunliffe 2005, Fig. A:32; the British Museum).

compared to earlier forms which had multiple functions such as preparing, cooking, and serving food (*ibid.*). A high proportion of these forms were drinking vessels used for alcohol, especially local copies of Gallo-Roman butt-beakers, thus showing a preference for large drinking vessels (Pitts 2005, p.148). It should also be noted that these assemblages demonstrate an integration of local wares, imported wares, and copies of Gallo-Belgic wares. Furthermore, these assemblages are mostly representative of more cosmopolitan, urban sites. Rural sites have similar assemblages, but with more emphasis on older native forms than imported wares. Thus, while these changes in the ceramic repertoire were a region-wide phenomena, it seems that imported wares were strategically used for elite feasting practices (Pitts 2008, p.499). Even after the Roman conquest there was not a complete acceptance of Roman ways of life. Nearly 200 years later, some sites were still using pre-Roman forms association with native drinking practices. For

example, at Elms Farm and Baldock, butt-beakers and cauldrons (respectively) were found as were generally higher than average proportions of pre-Roman drinking vessels (Pitts 2008, p. 501).

Imported wine-drinking vessels from the LIA have traditionally been explained as representing the adoption and replacement of wine over native forms of alcohol. However, this explanation is mostly based on an analysis of imported vessels which is divorced from the evidence of native drinking vessels and copies of imports (Pitts 2005). A more complete picture suggests a hybridization of native and imported forms of drinking vessels (*ibid*.), but with an emphasis on incorporating imports and copies of imports into native traditions of drinking. Based on the ceramic evidence, it appears many imported wares were favoured based on their ability to be easily accommodated within existing practices of consumption. This is clear from the copying of butt-beaker and platter forms (Pitts 2005, p.151). Imported ceramics during the LIA seem to have been selectively imported. Gallo-Belgic vessels tend to be larger such as butt-beakers and girth-beakers, implying that there was an indigenous need for large drinking vessels (implying communal drinking) (Pitts 2005, p.148). Furthermore, a possible vessel made exclusively for native beer drinking is a form called the Late Iron Age spouted strainer bowl, similar to a teapot in appearance with a strainer at the spout. It has no Roman correlates to wine drinking, and a finding of one with wormwood flavouring suggests some native form of beer was used. These have an almost perfect association with butt-beakers, which are common and large drinking vessels ideal for drinking beer. Likewise, they are barely found with amphorae or other 'wine-drinking' vessels. Furthermore, the spouted strainer/butt-beaker sites all date within a generation of the Roman conquest, indicating that this practice of native drinking was still common and favoured even long after 'Romanisation' presumably began. While this evidence is too scant to say beer consumption was widespread in the LIA of SE Britain, it sits nicely with the other evidence to suggest such a case (Pitts 2005, p.155-6). Of course, what was drank from these vessels may not have been as important as the vessels themselves.

LIA societies in eastern Britain seem to have favoured highly decorated objects, from imported pottery, glass, and metalwork, to native pottery forms and metalwork objects related to feasting such as buckets and cauldrons. For example, the Chiseldon cauldrons, discovered on a

farm in Wiltshire in 2004, have some unique and exquisite decorations. One of the Chiseldon cauldrons has been revealed to have a highly decorated handle, which is significant since cauldrons were rarely decorated (Hood Feb 14, 2012). After being cleaned, the handle decoration was revealed as three curved plates of metal riveted below the rim and handle. The plates were carefully made and were not only decorative but functioned to add strength to the handle (*ibid.*). The motif resembles a bull with the side plates being ears, the centre plate the muzzle, and the handle the curved horns (ibid.). While Iron Age British art tends to be non-naturalistic, the

Fig. 18. Decorated handle from one of the Chiseldon cauldrons depicting a bull (source: the British Museum).

human and animal designs that do exist tend to be related to feasting gear (Hood Feb 14, 2012; Joy 2011), suggesting this kind of art had a specific grammar (Joy 2011). Interestingly, this unique cow's head design may be associated with the cattle skulls which were deposited with the cauldrons. The Late Iron Age in eastern Britain saw a rise in the amount of cattle being consumed (Hambleton 1998) possibly suggesting that this change in meat preference was related to feasting practices from the period.

Similarly, some of the native bronze and iron-bound buckets common in many 'Welwyn type' burials also exhibit decorative motifs. For example, the bronze-bound buckets from the Aylesford and Baldock burials both have highly decorative bands as well as handle mounts in the shape of human heads (Stead 1971). Were these heads meant as portraits of certain individuals?

Fig. 19. Bronze model of man's head decorating a bucket in a Late Iron Age cremation burial (left); and Bronze head decoration on the bucket from the Baldock burial (right) (source: the British Museum).

In a lecture on 27 March 2012, M. McCartney explained that by the 3rd century BC, the continental Celts' (primarily from Gaul) images of the head became less stylised and more individualised, possibly as 'portraits' of individuals. Thus, these British examples of the head may have similarly drawn on the symbolism of the head as a form of establishing personal, individual identities.

The decorations on feasting objects such as cauldrons and buckets in LIA east Britain were related to contacts with Gaul and a heightened significance of eating and drinking (Joy 2011) and are revealing of LIA feasting practices in this region. Decoration itself is a telling feature, since most objects from Iron Age Britain (at least those archaeologically visible) tend to be undecorated and plain (Joy 2011). Thus, decorated objects stand out against the plain everyday objects. Why were certain objects decorated (especially related to eating and drinking)

during the LIA? It seems that decorations may have been meant for exclusive audiences, since certain pieces of Iron Age art are decorated in such a way that their full beauty cannot be appreciated unless they are handled directly. For example, some decorations are too fine to be seen from a distance; other decorations may have a tactile element. This suggests that these pieces were not meant to be displayed by an individual as he/she parades around, but were meant to be handled intimately (Joy 2011). This suggests that art was used to facilitate and augment intimate social relationships (recall the chamber at Folly Lane was only large enough for 10-12 adults). Decorated feasting gear may have been a strategic way for aggrandisers to make close connections at feasts, and to *selectively* make these connections (i.e. who they invited to examine or handle their personal 'dining set'). Furthermore, there may have been a 'code' to understanding the full meaning of art and those who understood it were privileged above those who did not, creating a form of social distinction. This correlates with the increasingly personal forms of power in LIA eastern Britain. The increased emphasis on decorated feasting gear used for smaller, more exclusive feasts established diacritical symbolism between participants and non-participants, ultimately contributing to the establishment and maintenance of an elite status hitherto unknown in Iron Age Britain.

The changing mortuary practices in LIA eastern Britain strongly suggest the development of an increasingly stratified social system emphasised by the personal identities of an 'elite' class. The stratification between burial rites, from small pit graves with a single cinerary pot, to large timber-chambered graves covered in earthen mounds and set in ditched enclosures, suggests mortuary rites were increasingly being used to reflect social differences. Similarly, the disparity between the richness of grave goods, with the richest graves containing 'feasting sets' of exotic imported feasting accoutrements, suggests distinction was being made between classes. The emphasis of these funerary rites was feasting, as evidenced not only by the grave goods, but by the evidence of funerary feasts. These funerary feasts indicate diacritical elements were being employed in feasts to establish and maintain social differences. This was accomplished by the types of feasts (i.e. only small groups could fit in the funerary feasting enclosures and timber-lined chambers) and the nature of the feasting accoutrements used (i.e. exotic, richly decorated, 'dining sets'). The intermingling of native and imported feasting grave goods, as well as

preference for certain imports, suggests these objects were deliberately and selectively adopted to fit native feasting practices, likely focused on drinking.

Conclusion

It is difficult to ignore the evidence for feasting in Iron Age Britain; and yet, the roles feasts played in these societies have barely been examined. Thus, this paper attempts to highlight the significance of feasting in Iron Age Britain and offer examples of how this type of evidence can be approached. Of particular significance is the insight feasting practices provide to processes of social development and change; the somewhat arbitrary breaks between chronological periods in British prehistory belie the complexity of these processes. Thus, the decline of the Bronze Age and rise of the Iron Age may have been more seamless than traditionally envisioned and seems to have centred on changing systems of social reproduction related to production and consumption of agricultural produce. Likewise, the socio-political changes at end of the British Iron Age and beginning of the Romano-British period may not have been an inevitability of the Roman conquest, but rather a result of internal social processes. These macro-level arguments can be difficult to sustain with certain types of archaeological evidence. However, they are well represented by evidence of feasts, which as a social institution operate at a fundamental social level, making them ideal for approaching these kinds of questions of social change.

More specifically, the evidence of feasting explains how the significant restructuring of social systems took place in particular regions and periods in prehistoric Britain. In central southern Britain, the decline of a Bronze Age social system dependent on control over valuable resources such as metal objects was met by the rise of a social system based on agricultural production. The restructuring of communities from largely kin-based to community-based mandated novel forms of social interaction. The consumption of food facilitated these social interactions and led to a system where communities interacted cooperatively and competitively to define themselves and their relations to other communities. The formation of middens, largely produced by the result of feasting activities, cemented these relationships not only in peoples'

minds, but in the landscape. The large gatherings at these sites also allowed the new modes of economic production, most importantly the resources for large construction projects. Feasts provided a way to organise this potential labour force, which allowed the construction of monumental forms of architecture, such as hillforts. Hillforts then became a new mode of social reproduction, through their monumental display, but took over many of the social roles middens had begun to inhabit. Feasting continued on at these sites, but in different ways; feasts were increasing centralised, and hillforts became the focus of feasts rather than communities. This restructuring of the social structure paved the way for later social developments.

In eastern Britain during the LIA, feasts began to be used in a completely different way. Larger, more urban settlements, combined with increasing continental trade and other factors, created the necessary conditions for increased social stratification. A new class of 'elites' established themselves through diacritical feasting, where feasts were used to 'create' exclusivity and status differentiation. This was accomplished by the selective adoption of foreign eating and drinking vessels, which were exotic and thus 'high-status'. Yet, the use of the vessels, through diacritical feasts, made them even more exotic and made their owners even more socially distinct. To augment this process, elites adopted new burial rites, which further displayed their social status and which reminded society that they were unique and high-status because of how they ate and drank. Native practices were still the norm, and these individuals retained their 'British' identity, but their knowledge and use of exotic feasting objects separated and elevated them over other members of society.

This paper is hardly an exhaustive analysis of the evidence for feasting during these periods, nor is it a complete analysis of the roles feasts played in these societies. Beyond the scope of this paper, but critically relevant to it, are comparisons with the Iron Age 'Celts' of continental Europe. A great deal of research has highlighted feasting evidence on Hallstatt and La Tene sites from the continent and similarities with British feasting practices abound. Of particular relevance is Dietler's (2005) work on feasting and colonialism in Iron Age Gaul, which deals with similar processes as those discussed in chapter four. Likewise, burial practices from Gaul and Belgae are closely related to LIA eastern Britain burial rites, and offer insight into the ritual structure of these rites. Furthermore, feasting practices from other parts of Britain, as well

as Ireland, may hold clues to the processes I have discussed. This topic has proven to be a fruitful one and certainly warrants more research.

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Appendix A:

Archaeological Recognition of Feasting Evidence

Criteria	Archaeological Recognition
Food	• Rare or labour-intensive plant/animal species • Special 'recreational' foods—sprouting grains are said to represent the production and consumption of beer • Quantity of food items • Evidence of waste of food items
Preparation vessels	• Unusual types, large sizes, numbers • Closed vessels v open display feasting vessels
Serving vessels	• Unusual quality of materials, size and numbers of serving vessels
Food-Preparation facilities	• Unusual size of facilities, location or construction of facilities
Special food-disposal features	• Bone dumps • Special refuse fires containing feasting items • Feasting middens
Feasting facilities	• Special structures • Special display facilities
Special locations	• Mortuary or remote locations, not habitation • Loci associated with nuclear households • Ports of trade, temples, religious sites

Associated prestige items	• Presence or absence • Destruction of wealth or prestige items
Ritualised items of etiquette	• Smoking and narcotic paraphernalia • Ritualised vessels for consumption of alcohol
Existence of aggrandisers	• Wealthy burials • Social hierarchies of sites • Large residences with high storage per capita
Pictorial and written records of feasts	• Classical accounts
Food-storage facilities	• Stables, storage pits, granaries
Resource characteristics	• Abundance, intensified exploitation, invulnerability to over-exploitation

(after Hayden 1996; Ralph 2007)

Appendix B:
Notable Cremation Burials from the Late Iron Age to the early Roman Period

Site Name	County	Site Type	Feasting Evidence	Notes
Hinxton	Cambridgeshire	Cemetery	Pottery, Animal Bones	8 cremation and 3 inhumation burials with ring-ditches. All of the cremation burials contained pottery vessels. The central ring burials contained animal bone.
Snailwell	Cambridgeshire	Burial	Amphorae, Pottery, Metalwork, Animal Bone	A wooden structure occupied the floor of this burial. At the centre of the were the cremated remains. Pottery vessels included three Spanish amphorae, a wine jug, four jugs, a butt beaker, and oval beaker imported from Gaul, a terra rubra cup and platter, two terra nigra bowls, a native bowl, and a native tazza bowl. There were also cattle and pig bones as well as a complete skeleton of a young pig and a fowl.
Ardleigh	Essex	Burial	Pottery, Animal Bone	Two groups of three cremation burials containing 'Belgic' vessels. The first group consisted of a grave containing five vessels, and the other two containing a pair of pots. In all three, the cremated remains were placed between these vessels rather than within. The second set of graves consisted of one grave with a pair of pots, one of which contained cremated bone. The second contained two pots, one a butt beaker, with the cremated bone placed between them. The third had only one butt beaker which contained the cremated remains.
Birchangar	Essex	Burial	Pottery, Animal Bone	A cremation burial was found in pit 42 containing eight vessels of a mid Claudian date. These included a butt beaker and terra rubra oval beaker imported from Gaul, a two-handled flagon, two platters, two local Essex vessels, a beaker and two cups. The vessels were of a variety of wares and came from parts of Britain as well as the continent. Five unburnt pig bones were also deposited (skull, scapula, humerus, radius, ulna). The limb bones were from the right foreleg.
Lexden 'C', Colchester	Essex	Burial	Amphorae, Pottery	A rich burial dating to 15-10BC and covered by 70 foot diameter mound about 5 feet high. The grave is an oval pit with the cremated remains of an individual along with a wealth of grave goods. The grave was likely contained within a large wooden burial chamber. The grave goods consist of several copper-alloy figurines, chain mail, and several pieces of furniture, and a silver medallion made from a coin. They also included fragments from 6 Dressel 1B amphorae and 13 Dressel 2-4 amphorae.
Maldon Hall Farm	Essex	Cemetery	Pottery	Nine graves were contained within a small rectangular ditched enclosure, three of which were cremations. The largest and central grave contained three small bowls and five pedestal urns. These wares were not Gall-Belgic imports or copies.

North Shoebury	Essex	Cemetery	Pottery, Animal Bone	Three cremation burials dating from 50BC-AD50. The center burial had a small rectangular enclosure around it and contained five pottery vessels of Essex (local) and Kent styles. Some fragments of animals bones were found around and under the vessels, including those from cattle, sheep, chicken, and even an articulated spine from a pig. The other burials contained similar pottery assemblages and animal remains.
Stansted DFS	Essex	Cemetery	Pottery, Animal Bone, Metalwork, Glass Vessels	Cremation 345 Cremation burial in the center of this cemetery, including 10 pots: two flagons, three platters, two terra nigra cups, a butt-beaker, a narrow-necked jar, and a globular jar. Animal bones were found on two of the platters. Cremation 400 This burial contained several pottery vessels: two platters, an everted-rim beaker, two miniature necked jars, a terra rubra pedastal beaker and a terra nigra carinated cup. A chicken skeleton was also found with the grave goods, its skull inside one of the cups. Many copper alloy objects were also found. Cremation 505 Five pottery vessels (three platters, a carinated cup and a butt beaker) were found with the partial skeleton of a neonatal pig. Cremation 555 This cremation was covered in charcoal likely from wood planks, suggesting a small wooden chamber. Two samian platters, a two-handled flagon, and an everted-rim beaker were found. There was also a complete chicken skeleton and the right side of a young male pig skull which had been cleaved in half. Cremation 313 Similar to cremation 555 in grave goods and date, this cremation was within a wooden casket as well. Inside was also a toiletry set, an everted-rim beaker, a flagon, and other vessels. The right half of a chicken skeleton and the right side of a young female pig skull were also found.

Stanway	Essex	Burials	Pottery, Animal Bones, Metalwork, Glass Vessels	This burial site had four large wooden funerary chambers all with ritually broken objects and dating from the 1st century BC to AD 60. Each chamber was within a large ditched enclosure up to 80m across and each may have been covered by an earthen mound. There were five such enclosures, although only four contained burial chambers. The largest of the burial chambers included 24 pottery vessels, all imports. These seem to have been a set of cups, bowls, and plates of similar design which could be 'nested', suggesting they were a dining set. Another 'warrior' grave included a gaming board, shield boss, spear, and glass bowl from Italy, along with a copper alloy pan with a ram's head handle and a copper alloy jug with a lion shaped handle. This burial also included a 'dinner service' set of pots as well as an amphora, beaker, flagon, and cup, all imported. Another burial included at least 20 vessels again part of a nested dining set. The final burial contained medical instruments as well as a gaming board, an upright amphora, a dining set imported from northern Gaul, a samian bowl from souther Gaul, and a flagon. There was also a copper alloy pan from Italy and a copper alloy straining bowl, possibly for serving alcohol.
Folly Lane	Hertfordshire	Burial	Amphorae, Pottery, Metalwork	This burial, which dates to c. AD 55, was located within a ritual enclosure on top of a hill. In the center of this enclosure was a large shaft and a shallow grave. The shaft contained a timber-lined chamber with the remains of at least 40 vessels scattered across the floor. These include 15 south Gaulish samian wares, 5 Gaulish imports including a butt-beaker and flagon, 14 imitation terra nigra, 4-6 Italian amphorae, 4 'native' vessels. All of these vessels were broken. There was also metalwork scraps which included a small silver handle possibly to a cup. The grave pit, located outside the shaft, contained the cremated remains of the individual as well as melted metal likely from jewelry.
Harpenden	Hertfordshire	Burial	Shale Vessels, Metalwork	This LIA 'chieftain' burial was discovered in the 1850's and contained two lathe-turned shale vessels in the shape of pedestal urns, a large circular bronze bowl, two bronze bucket escutcheons in the shape of ram's heads (similar to the anthropomorphic fittings from the Baldock and Aylesford buckets) with two bronze ring-handles, and a bronze chest handle.
Hertford Heath	Hertfordshire	Burial	Amphorae, Pottery, Metalwork, Glass Vessels	A cremation pit containing three iron bands on which was a decorated bronze sheet with a glass roundel, a Dressel 1B amphora, more iron bands, and bronze-covered iron ring. There were also 11 native wheel-turned pots and a ribbed glass bowl.

King Harry Lane, St. Alblans	Hertfordshire	Cemetery	Amphorae, Pottery, Animal Bone	This cremation cemetery had a series of ditched enclosures which contained prominent burials in the center with less extravagant burials surrounding them. The first phase of burials dates from AD 1-40 and some even as early as 15 BC. The burials contained feasting equipment such as tableware, flagons, amphorae and food remains. There were 309 burials, 156 of which contained cremated animal bones. 64 of these were pig bones. However, only parts of the pig were cremated, usually a single left or right limb or a limb and head. In general, pig heads were the preferred part of the body.
St. Stephens, St. Albans	Hertfordshire	Burial, Cemetery	Amphorae, Pottery, Animal Bone	This cemetery lies only 500m east of the King Harry Lane cemetery and includes six enclosures. Some of the enclosures did not contain burials, but had small fire pits, too small to be funerary pyres but possibly hearths used for feasting. Numerous amphorae sherds and nearly complete beakers were found in a large shaft across from the cemetery, along with a large number of horse bones.
Baldock	Hertfordshire	Cemetery	Amphorae, Pottery, Metalwork, Animal Bone	The original rich cremation burial was found in 1968 and contained two iron firedogs, a bronze cauldron, a pair of imported shallow bronze dishes, a pair of bronze-bound wooden buckets, and a Dressel 1A amphora. There was also a pig vertebrae. Further excavations in 1980 discovered six urned cremation burials surrounding another rich burial. The burial included two pits, the first containing the cremated remains as well as possible bronze jewelry, a bronze vessel, and a bronze-bound bucket. Animals bones from horse, cattle, pig, sheep, and fowl were also found. The second pit contained the remains of food and drink, including two sides of pork and a small wooden vessel with bronze and iron fittings.
Welwyn Garden City	Hertfordshire	Cemetery	Amphorae, Pottery, Metalwork	Of these three cremation burials, one is particularly extravagant and is the basis for the term ‘Welwyn type’ burials. This grave contained two sections with a wooden ‘partition’, one section being for the cremated remains and the other for grave goods. These included 5 amphorae, 7 pedestal urns, 7 bowls, 4 cups, 5 beakers, 3 platters, 3 flagons, and a tripod vessel. There was also a Roman silver drinking vessel and a bronze strainer and dish. The other two grave contained amphorae, pedestal urns, cups, a bronze bowl, bronze jugs, iron firedogs, and silver cups.

Stanfordbury	Bedfordshire	Burials	Amphorae, Pottery, Metalwork, Glass Vessels	Two large burial vaults, both 4.5m long, 3.6m wide and 1.5m deep, discovered in 1832 and 1934. Burial ‘A’ contained cremated remains along with 6 amphorae, three samian cups, a shallow bronze bowl, a bronze jug, a bronze shield boss, two pairs of iron fire-dogs, iron spits, an iron tripod, a bone flute and possible gaming pieces. Burial ‘B’ contained two amphorae, samian pottery, glass vessels, glass bowls, and other assorted grave goods.
Aylesford	Kent	Cemetery	Pottery, Metalwork	This cremation cemetery was excavated from 1886-90 and poorly recorded. In addition to three rich graves (X, Y, and Z), there are six simpler graves. Burial X contained a large wooden bucket with iron bands and a handle, as well as five pottery vessels. Burial Y also contained a bronze-bound wooden bucket and four pottery vessels. Burial Z contained a bronze-plated wooden tankard with bronze handles and five or six pottery vessels. The simpler graves contained cinerary vessels or one to three other vessels.
				(after Ralph 2007; Whimster 1981)