



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

The Rapid Success and Failure of a Self-Provisioning Food System at Early Bronze Age III Tell el-Hesi

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Abstract

The site of Tell el-Hesi, located on the edge of the Northern Negev desert in the Southern Levant, presents an alternative view on food procurement strategies for urban centers during the Early Bronze Age III. While most urban sites in the Levant are argued to be externally provisioned by nearby rural settlements, new data from previous and renewed excavations at Tell el-Hesi suggest a self-provisioning system was in place during the site's Early Bronze Age III occupational period. Recent faunal, archaeobotanical, and isotopic evidence (carbon, nitrogen, and oxygen from faunal remains; carbon and nitrogen from charred seeds), when analyzed in conjunction with temporal and spatial comparisons across the site and its occupational layers, suggest notably increased buffering strategies to combat issues of food security during periods of environmental and social stress. However, this new evidence suggests these efforts, all based within the site's self-provisioning system, failed in the final EB III occupation period at Hesi. This talk highlights the diverse nature of urban provisioning strategies practiced during the Early Bronze Age III in the Southern Levant and emphasizes the critical role land use and environmental shifts played in the resiliency of these food provisioning choices.

Keywords

Fauna, Archaeobotany, Isotopic Analyses, Early Bronze Age, Food Procurement

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