



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Farming and empire in the southern Levant during the Bronze and Iron Ages

VERMEERSCH S. 1*

¹ University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom

*Corresponding author

Abstract

The Bronze and Iron Ages (3,600 – 586 BCE) in the southern Levant are characterised by the rise of complex urban-based societies and domination and colonisation by empires such as Assyria and Ancient Egypt. The farming and urbanisation processes of such empires—and their relationship to inequality—have been assumed to apply to the southern Levant, but this is untested. The region's heterarchically organised settlements, lack of overarching social identity, and absence of centralised administrative institutions are in stark contrast to these neighbouring empires. The impact of taxation and the collapse of empires on local farming, and its effects on inequality, are also largely unknown.

I use stable carbon and nitrogen isotope analysis on faunal and botanical remains, economics, zooarchaeology, and archaeobotany to investigate the extent of past empires' influence and their impact on southern Levantine farming. Changes in farming are also thought to coincide with changes in inequality and urbanisation. I combine published and original data to determine the extent of this impact and whether regional and supra-regional differences can be found. The original data comes from four Jordanian sites: Khirbet Umm al-Ghozlan (Early Bronze Age IV), Tall Zira'a, Amman Citadel, Tell Bleibil, and Tell Ushayer (Iron Age II).

Keywords

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