



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

How Elites Became Elite Socioeconomic Pre-Eminence and Mortuary Placemaking at B?b adh-Dhr? During the Early Third Millennium BCE

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Abstract

The mortuary sphere is an arena for socio-political expression, navigation, legitimization, and change. This discussion investigates how Charnel Houses at B?b adh-Dhr? acted as a stage for and reflection of increasing community complexity on the Dead Sea Plain during the Early Bronze II-III period. During the EB II increasing material differentiation emerges within the Charnel Houses. Furthermore, people made long-term investments in these spaces as they continued to use Houses established during the EB II through the late EB IIIb/EB IV. Therefore, these places capture the trajectory of "urban" life on the Dead Sea Plain embodying both continuity and discontinuity in mortuary practices and broader socio-political practices.

By combining published data from excavations directed by Paul Lapp (1965-67) and unpublished data from the Expedition to the Dead Sea Plain (1975-79) I will consider the establishment, longevity, and contents of Charnel Houses that were active during the EB II. In so doing, I aim to highlight how increasing differentiation in the EB II, represented by and navigated through material in the mortuary sphere, influenced communities on the Dead Sea Plain during the Early Bronze Age.

Keywords

Southern Levant, Mortuary Practices, Urbanization, Social Differentiation, Socio-Political Practices

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