



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# The God's Land of Pella: Temple and Society in the MBA Jordan Valley

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## Abstract

The MBA city-state of Pella spanned much of the north Jordan valley, east of the river and west of the escarpment, stretching from the Wadi Rayyan north to the Wadi Ziqlab, encompassing both valleys. The city-state was crossed by a number of major north/south roadways, while several less important east/west routes linked the valley floor with the uplands. On each of these major through-routes small temples were positioned at all major exit/entry points to the city-state territory. These echo the central state-aligned city temple located at the highest point on the main mound of Khirbet Fahl in both design and material assemblages. Thus, the 'god's-land' is both contained within and guarded without by the god's temple/fortresses. This central mechanism of control and protection is arguably a feature of south Levantine MBA urbanism more generally, as it places religion and cult practice at the heart of state function, both as unifying force and exclusionary authority. It marks a profound change from the 'staple and secular' urbanism of the preceding EBA, and to some extent hearkens back to the symbolic world of deeper prehistory. This presentation will outline the archaeological evidence for this state of affairs at Pella.

## Keywords

urbanism, Levant, MBA, temple, cult

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