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ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Cultural Interactions in a Colonial Encounter: A Pottery Study of the Egyptian Outpost in the Early Bronze Age I Settlement at Tel Erani, Israel

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Abstract

During the late fourth millennium BC, Tel Erani, a southwest Levantine fortified settlement, was characterized by Egyptian colonization, based on the dense deposits of the Egyptian material culture. Excavations at Area D3H from 2013 to 2019 produced a plethora of potsherds, including contemporaneous Egyptian vessels. Quantitative analyses of the pottery assemblages across a stratigraphic continuum revealed a sequential change in the proportion of Egyptian vessels and their functional profile throughout the layers. The Egyptian vessel predominated in Building H4 of Layer 6, although mainly due to exclusion of the local vessels from the interior space. The spatial analyses of vessel functions revealed that the earlier Layer 8 horizon, characterized by undifferentiated functions of interior and exterior spaces, underwent a complete overhaul in layout, with establishment of the storage space of Building H4 surrounded by a multi-functional external area in Layer 6. Hybridization of pottery technology was well-represented in the interior space, where the ratio of hybrid vessels gradually increased in Layer 6. These results imply that the Egyptians intended to establish an exclusive and centralized storage facility in Layer 6, under the direction of First Dynasty administrators, although the Egyptians and locals culturally interacted even after the spatial demarcation.

Keywords

Egyptian colonization, Tel Erani, Cultural interaction, Early Bronze IB, Southern Levant

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