



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Ceramic Economy in the Selevani Plain and Beyond: The Role of Pot Marks and their Motives in the Middle Assyrian Period

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the role of pot marks in the ceramic economy of the Middle Assyrian Period and to investigate the choice of motives used and their possible meanings. Through a combined analysis of motives and vessel types, it can be shown that the main function of Middle Assyrian pot marks was to distinguish different economic units involved in pottery production, which confirms observations made by K. Duistermaat for Tell Sabi Abyad. Furthermore, pot marks from the Selevani Plain were not only connected to individual potters but could also represent specific workshops, where different potters applied the same motives either by impressing stamp seals or by incising the same motives in differing styles. The pot marks found at Bassetki and other sites of the region are usually not encountered as simple markings but mostly consist of elaborate figurative images such as animal and astral motives or a combination of both. The analysis and comparison of the motives shows an additional function for the more elaborate pot marks beyond pottery production and might indicate an expression of personal dedication of single potters or whole workshops to the divine sphere.

Keywords

Middle Assyrian Period, Ceramic Economy, Pot Marks, Pottery

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