



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Major socioeconomic, behavioral and spiritual innovations in the southern Levantine arid margins during the Late PPNB. Mass hunting using Desert kites and the Ghassanian cultural entity

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Abstract

The development trajectories of human occupation in the nowadays arid environments outside of the Fertile Crescent and its initial stimulus – local to the “margins” or originating from the “center” – as well as its diffusion process remain debated. Recently, new data obtained in the South Eastern Badia of Jordan evidence hitherto unsuspected developments of human occupation, related to mass hunting using desert kites, as early as the Late PPNB, ca. 7000 cal BC. This is at best either contemporary, or rather even possibly earlier than the emergence of pastoral nomadism in these regions. The evidence including structural and architectural remains as well as a variety of material culture elements relates this human occupation to a specific, autochthonous and previously unknown cultural facies of specialized hunters. Major discoveries of ritual structures dedicated to the hunting using desert kites highlight the spiritual dimension accompanying these important innovations, reflecting a local, alternative trajectory of Neolithization. In view of these results, the Ghassanians were obviously not at the margins of the “Neolithic world”, neither economically, socially, or even culturally, but instead at the center of a range of innovations and changes occurring at a wider regional scale.

Keywords

Desert kites, Mass hunting, Margins, Ritual practice, Ghassanian

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