



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Material Religion in Funerary Practices: The Role of Egyptian and Egyptianizing Amulets and Beads in the Eastern Mediterranean

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Abstract

This paper investigates the role and significance of Egyptian and Egyptianizing amulets and beads in funerary contexts from Cyprus and the Southern Levant during the first millennium BCE, focusing on sites such as Amathus and Lachish. Often figurative and sometimes inscribed or decorated, these artifacts conveyed layered meanings through their designs, materials, and spatial associations within burial settings, offering insight into the cultural and spiritual beliefs surrounding life, death, and the afterlife. By employing middle-range theory and cognitive archaeology, this study explores the cosmological meanings of amulets and beads, situating them as key artifacts within the broader framework of material religion and funerary practices. Through a pilot network analysis, the research examines their typology, material, and color, alongside choices involved in their conception and production, to identify cultural patterns and religious beliefs shaping Eastern Mediterranean mortuary practices. The findings may suggest that these objects represented tangible links to protective and regenerative forces, reflecting beliefs influenced by Egyptian notions of rebirth and renewal. By contextualizing amulets and beads within individual and collective funerary behavior, this study highlights the interplay between material religion, cultural memory, and mortuary practices, enriching our comprehension of life and death in the ancient Mediterranean and Near East.

Keywords

Material religion, Amulets, Beads, Egyptian or Egyptianizing, Funerary

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