



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# Evaluating Patterns of Cranial Trauma at Bab adh-Dhra

PORTER K. 1\*

<sup>1</sup> University of Notre Dame, South Bend, United States

\*Corresponding author

### Abstract

Within the southern Levant, Bab adh-Dhra' represents one of the few large cemeteries from the Early Bronze Age, making the site significant for understanding nascent urbanization in the region. This research focused on cranial injury in humans buried in the A22 charnel house dating to occupation of the walled towns site. Burial practices at the site resulted in fragmentation and commingling of the skeletons, presenting challenges in interpreting violence. Complete reconstruction of a single person's injuries is often impossible, and not all trauma results from violence. Cranial injuries tend to be the most indicative of conflict, though fragmented skulls complicate analysis. This research addresses this problem by using a zonal approach to examine complete and incomplete cranial bones, maximize sample size, and reveal patterns of cranial trauma. Results showed that females, males, and children were all recipients of cranial trauma with approximately 20% of individuals having an injury to the head. In cases where sex could not be determined, cranial injuries were most likely to occur to the right frontal bone or back of the head. While these results are suggestive of violent conflict, accidents from livestock or movement in the rocky terrain may have resulted in injury at Bab adh-Dhra'.

### Keywords

urbanization, violence, bioarchaeology, osteoarchaeology, early bronze age

### Session

6. Life and death: Human behaviour and practices

### Type of paper

Poster session