"Yarmouk University"
"Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology"

EARLY BRONZE AGE I MORTUARY PRACTICES IN THE SOUTHERN GHORS OF JORDAN (BAB EDH-DHRA', AN-NAQE' AND FEIFA)

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Abstract

Archaeological field works conducted in the southern Ghors area have brought to light copious funerary remains dating from the EBI Phase. This study proposes to cast light on EBI (ca 3500-3100 B.C.) society of the SGJ from a mortuary perspective. Interestingly, EBI in the concerned area is known mainly from tombs. The area presents an unprecedented and unparalleled concentration of funerary evidence in a spatial range of ca 45-km long. Three vast EBI necropolises are known in the SGJ: Bab edh-Dhra', an-Naqe' and Feifa.

The fact that the area is known mainly from tombs bestows some ambiguity on the people responsible for this phase. This makes graves and their contents the sole means to approaching the people of the Ghor during the period that preceded the emergence of the phenomena of urbanization.

The study consists of an introduction and five main chapters. Chapter one presents a general description for the area of the SGJ. Also it includes a survey of the history of archaeological research on EBI sites and the chronology of EBI cemeteries discovered hitherto in this region.

Chapters two through four describe and discuss the main elements of mortuary practices available so far from the SGJ. These chapters deal with the mortuary facilities (i.e., tomb architecture), mortuary gifts and interment patterns. Parallel examples for these components from elsewhere in southern Bilad ash-Sham have been cited.

Chapter five is a discussion and conclusion. Three main issues pertaining to the EBI society in the SGJ have been discussed in this chapter. These are 1) the relationships between people responsible for the EBI phase in the SGJ and their primogenitors elsewhere in southern Bilad ash-Sham, 2) the socio-economic background of EBI people in the SGJ and 3) their social structure.