

FURTHER INVESTIGATION OF THE HUMAN SKELETAL REMAINS FROM THE HIPPODROME AT JARASH

by

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Introduction

During the spring 1997 the author undertook further analysis of the human skeletal remains excavated from the Hippodrome, Jarash.¹ This report deals with a portion of material from Chamber W2⁶⁴⁰ (Fig 1).

Results

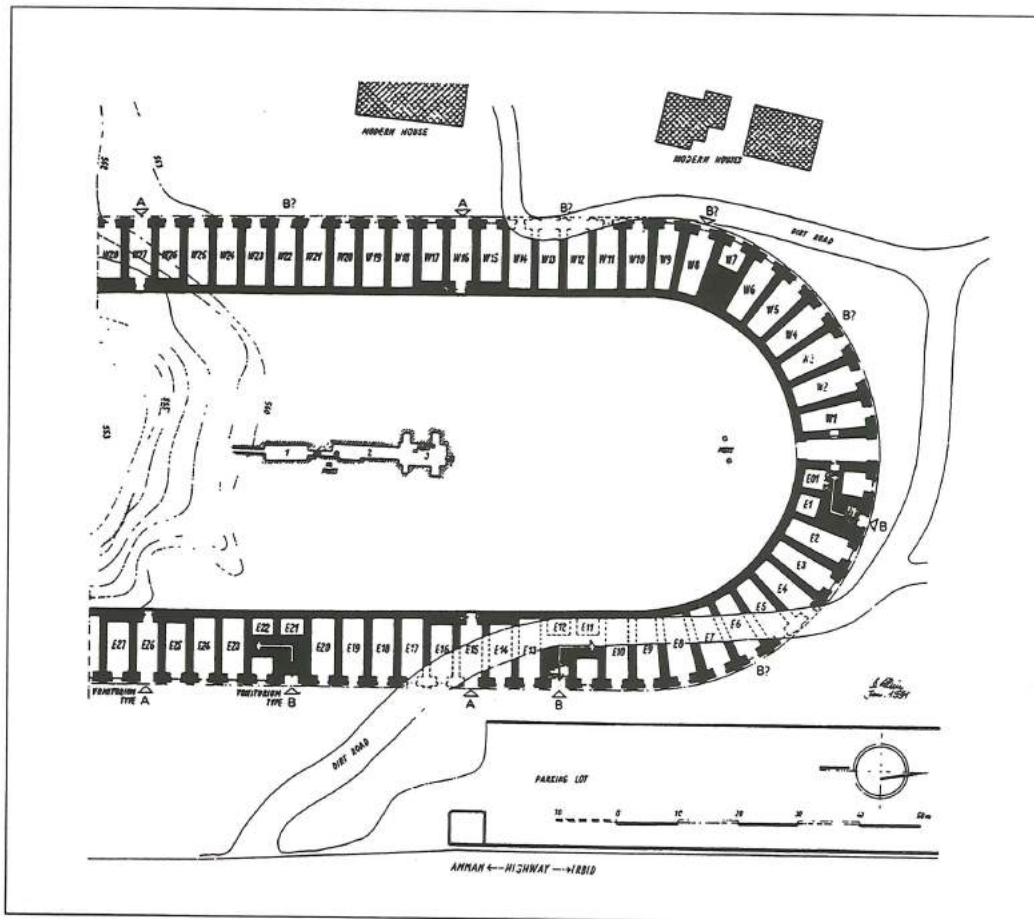
Minimum Number of Individuals (MNI)

Table 1 indicates an MNI for adults of 47

based on the highest incidence of a sided bone (clavicle). Approximately 30 immature individuals were identified.

Demography

In relation to the demographic profile, similar results were observed in this chamber to those of W3, with a slight bias towards older males.³ As was the case in chamber W3, there were several examples of very ro-



1. Hippodrome. Plan of north part (A.A. Ostrasz).

1. The first preliminary report appeared in *ADAJ* 1995 in which information regarding the excavations and the methodology employed in this investigation can be found. I would like to thank the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, Abdul Majeed Mjelli and Ina Kehrberg for their support

during this second investigation.
2. Chamber W2 contains approximately twice as much material as W3. Due to constraints of time, only half of the material was analyzed. Further study of the material is planned for 1999.

Table 1. Adults only.

Box	Patellae		Clavicle		Femora		Axial Vert
	L	R	L	R	L	R	
100	1	2	6	5			2
101					1		
102	1				1		
103			1	1			
104	2	2					
105		1					
106/7			1	2	3	3	
108/9	2	2	1	2			
110		4	3	2			4
111	2			2	1	1	3
112			1	1			2
113	2		2	2			1
114		1	1	1			
115			5	3	1		3
116	2	1	2	1	2	1	3
117	1	2	1		2		2
118	2		5	5			
119	1	2					
120	2		2	1	2		
121	3	4	4	4	3	4	
122		1	7	6			4
123	1						
124	1						
125			1	2	1	1	6
126							7
127	4	2	2	2	4	4	2
128	3	2			2	2	
129	6	4	3	3	3	3	
130	5	8			5	5	1
131	2	2	1	2	2	1	1
132	3	5	1		2	2	1
Total	46	45	50	47	35	28	42

bust males. All ages of classes were present for adults with an observable imbalance in relation to immature individuals.

Pathologies

A number of pathologies were recog-

Bibliography

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3. This information was collected from fragmented crania and femoral head measurements.
 4. This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that the collapse of the *cavea* was less severe above chamber W3, keeping several stepped arches in-

nized including joint disease (osteoarthritis), infectious disease (tuberculosis), metabolic disease (porotic hyperostosis) and several fractures. Dental analysis evidenced many examples of severe attrition and resorption, as well as several examples of enamel hypoplasia and possible periodontal disease.

General Observations

Chamber W3 yielded more intact bone than W2, with several examples from the axial skeleton, including sacrum, sternum and vertebrae.⁴ A rare example of a complete articulated right arm was recorded, providing (so far) the only example of articulated bones. The majority of intact bone lay in the bottom levels of the chamber, indicating that they were less disturbed by the falling *cavea* stones, further supporting the theory that the *cavea* collapsed some time after the bodies were placed in the chambers.⁵

Summary

The results from chamber W2 are similar to those observed in the investigation of W3. No evidence was observed that identified a cause of death. Further investigations on the pathologies from both chambers and DNA analysis is projected for the future.

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tact at the podium end of the chamber (pers. comm. I. Kehrberg).
 5. See Hendrix 1995:561 for an explanation of the time-lapse between death of the individuals and the collapse of the chamber.