



THE IMPACT OF ROME IN THE EAST

CHANGE & CONTINUITY THROUGH THE LENS OF THE DEAD

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UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN

The influence of Rome on the eastern provinces of its Empire has long been a subject of debate, and it is only relatively recently that more methodical and nuanced assessments of change and continuity are being applied to the region. Between indigenous identities, Hellenization, Romanization and the impact of colonization, how did the different regions of the Roman East experience their incorporation into the Empire?

This symposium intends to explore this question by investigating evidence from a specific archaeological context – the burials. The mortuary record reflects the beliefs, customs and norms of the burying group, and as such offers insight into local culture and social organization. In addition, the funerary sphere was often used as a platform for the display of status, and the negotiation of power and social standing in the broader community. Within circumstances involving a new ruling entity and the emergence of local colonial elites, the examination of ancient graves sheds light on how foreign and local groups and individuals navigated this social restructuring.

The region in focus consists of the Near East and the Eastern Mediterranean during the period between the 1st c. BC and the 4th c. AD. Presentations will include case studies that tackle the osteological, material, epigraphic and historical evidence, and discussions will highlight how these different sources complement each other and provide a holistic understanding of the social and cultural characteristics of past populations in times of change.