



14<sup>th</sup> International Congress on the Archaeology  
of the Ancient Near East

## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# Connecting Socio-Economic Spheres in the Early Bronze Age Southern Levant

*HANDZIUK N.<sup>1\*</sup>, ERFTENBECK H.<sup>2</sup>, CHESSON M.<sup>1</sup>*

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

<sup>2</sup> Colgate University, Hamilton, United States of America

\*Corresponding author

# Abstract

This workshop aims to discuss how different socio-economic spheres of Early Bronze Age Southern Levantine communities connected residents within and between settlements, thereby shaping life during the third millennium BCE. The topic will be analyzed from three different perspectives: (1) Resource Production, Extraction, and Consumption, to explore how peoples' everyday lives relied on staple goods (through agriculture, horticulture, pastoralism) and raw materials (including metals, clay, stone, bitumen etc.); (2) Placemaking in Settlements, to investigate infrastructure and use of space within public and domestic places, and the reworking of land and water resources surrounding walled communities; and (3) Relationships between Mortuary Practices and Peoples' Everyday Lives, to examine connections between mortuary contexts (i.e., structures, cemeteries, dolmen fields), economic structures (including craft production, exchange networks) and socio-political organization (such as household, neighborhood, settlement).

These three perspectives focus on varying aspects that influenced and structured each other, creating Early Bronze Age lifeways. The third millennium BCE in the southern Levant is the first region-wide phenomenon of coalescence into urbanizing centers, wherein people came together and stayed together in walled communities for centuries. With this new way of life, communities needed to craft and maintain novel built environments, reconfigure relationships with resource production and develop new rituals of mourning. We will discuss how these spheres mutually constituted each other to transform and create the region's earliest urban society.

Building on preceding research and scholarship, this workshop articulates each of the three main perspectives – resource production and consumption, placemaking in settlements, and mortuary practices – to interrogate how spheres influenced each other. The workshop aims to foster critical discussion among specialists, focused on different yet mutually constitutive elements of the Early Bronze Age Southern Levant, by focusing on cultural and economic integration among differing spheres in EBA communities.

## Keywords

Southern Levant, Early Bronze Age, Mortuary Practices, Everyday Life, 5. Socio-economic Spheres

## Program

### Slot 1

**1. Andrea Polcaro** (Università degli Studi di Perugia)

The Mega-Sites of the "Dark" Age in the South-Eastern Levant: Alternative Urban Models and Social-Economic Organizations at the Early Beginning of the Bronze Age (EB I)

**2. Graham Philip** (Durham University)

Tell esh-Shuna and developments in the North Jordan Valley in the 4th millennium BC

**3. Christophe Nicolle** (CNRS, Collège de France, Institut des Civilisations)

Of lava and water, land development, and site organisation of the Leja (Southern Syria) during the Third Millennium

**4. Natalia Handziuk** (University of Notre Dame)

How Elites Became Elite – Socioeconomic Pre-Eminence and Mortuary Placemaking at B?b adh-Dhr?' During the Early Third Millennium BCE (EB II)

**5. Tucker Deady** (University of Toronto)

Social and Spatial Networks of Early Bronze IV Mortuary Landscapes

**6. Meredith Chesson** (University of Notre Dame)

Discussant

### Slot 2

**1. James Fraser** (W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research)

Between the valley and the hills: mobile horticultural communities in the Jordan rift escarpment in the late 3rd millennium BCE

**2. Hanna Erftenbeck** (Colgate University)

Connecting people, places, and landscapes: Daily food practices during the EB II-III in the southern Levant

**3. Susanne Kerner** (University of Copenhagen)

Eating and Rituals. The connection between burial practices and social performance

**4. Alessandra Caselli** (Università degli Studi di Perugia)

Exploring food production and consumption in cultic settings: revisiting the socio-economic development of Southern Levant communities from Late Chalcolithic to Early Bronze Age II through a ritual perspective

**5. Raphael Greenberg** (Tel Aviv University)

Discussant

*\*All listed participants are confirmed. An additional talk may be added in Session 2.*

## Type of paper

Workshop