



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

## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# Is there really anything to be found there? Researching beyond the Established Frameworks of Near Eastern Archaeology

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# Abstract

As researchers, we are expected to propose cutting-edge projects that break new ground by operating within the "unexplored" areas of a given discipline. However, it can be challenging to successfully implant such investigations into academic discourse, especially in the face of longstanding traditions of research. This is a clear issue in much of Near Eastern Archaeology, where research narratives are often extremely well established and conclusions held very firmly by the academic community. This situation facilitates the proposing, conducting, and disseminating of novel research within already recognised frameworks, but hinders work that seeks to investigate geographically, chronologically, or methodologically underrepresented aspects of the discipline.

Starting already at the funding stage, it is difficult to position the merits and potentials of truly groundbreaking proposals in a readily comprehensible manner, leading to reduced chances of successful grant applications. During investigation, research protocols may have to be formulated from scratch, with little to no existing work to draw on and with the additional challenge of integrating this into existing parameters. Meanwhile dissemination can be impeded by a lack of appropriate high-impact journals or applicable conference sessions beyond "Field Reports". At a broader level, researchers face the practical consideration of whether carrying out potentially trailblazing research, which carries with it a higher risk of failure, is perhaps not as beneficial to a career as conducting additional research on well-established subjects, often within existing research groups.

This workshop addresses the challenges of conducting research in Near Eastern Archaeology that is not only innovative but takes place on the edge of or beyond the standard frameworks of geography, chronology, or methodology. These include problems and solutions surrounding the inception of such projects, integration into well-established research narratives, dissemination amongst colleagues and with the general public, and effects on academic careers.

## Keywords

groundbreaking research, unexplored regions and methods, dissemination, funding bodies, academic career

## Program

### Slot 1

#### **Opening Remarks and Introduction to the Workshop**

Stefan L. Smith, Freie Universität Berlin

#### **To Be or Not To Be...at the Margins: How to Cope with Non-Marketable Research Choices?**

Marie-Laure Chambrade, Université Côte d'Azur, CEPAM – UMR 7264 CNRS

#### **"I'm glad I don't have to work in the desert" – On the Complexities of Engaging Various Interest Groups with Research in Remoter Regions of the Near East**

Stefan L. Smith, Freie Universität Berlin

#### **From Code to Context: Mapping the Confluence of AI Curiosity and Near Eastern Archaeological Practice and Theory**

Selin Nugent, Oxford Brookes University

#### **The Challenges of Developing a Curriculum of Archaeology in Iraqi Universities: Ten Years of Experience in Implementing the Landscape Archaeology Module**

Jaafar Jotheri, University of al-Qadisiyah

#### **Breaking New Ground in Research and Practice in Iraq**

Kristen Hopper, Durham University

### Slot 2

#### **Distant in Both Time and Space: Geomorphological and Palaeolithic Survey in the Western Desert of Iraq**

Ella Egberts, Vrije Universiteit Brussel; Jaafar Jotheri, University of al-Qadisiyah; Andreas Nymark, Harvard University; Stefan L. Smith, Freie Universität Berlin

#### **Unprovenanced in the Provinces: The Unique Challenges and Rewards of Working with Objects from Akhmim, Egypt**

Kea Johnston, University of Chicago

#### **Pre- and Early Historic Fossil Landscapes in Iraqi Kurdistan: Considerations from Point Zero**

Karel Nováček, Palacký University Olomouc; Lenka Starková, University of West Bohemia Plzeň

#### **Highland Pastoralists as Unseen Actors in Geopolitical Landscapes: Case Studies from the Central Zagros**

Michael Brown, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg

## Type of paper

Workshop