



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# Highlighting the Symbolic World of the First Pottery-Bearing Societies in the Southern Levant (6400-5800 cal. BC): New Insights from Pottery Decoration

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## Abstract

In the Southern Levant, the Early Pottery Neolithic (EPN) represents a period of significant changes, marking a major step in the evolution of ideological systems. The introduction of pottery vessels launched a new way of symbolic and social expression through their decorations. The earliest pottery ornaments feature a distinctive geometric style incorporating horizontal bands, oblique zigzags, and triangles. Despite the abundance of decorated pottery from this period, its symbolic meaning has often been overlooked, and only limited research has considered pottery decorations as the mode of visual expression of the beliefs and thoughts of the EPN communities.

This presentation will illuminate the symbolic universe of early pottery-making societies in the Southern Levant by reconstructing the geometric motives of pottery decorations.

A typo-functional study and a structural analysis of painted and incised motives have highlighted various geometric representations in the form of circles and stars. These representations can be framed within a core set of a few recurring patterns that emerged as the most prevalent patterns. Such recurring themes highlight self-identification among different EPN groups. This study further demonstrates a relative chronological continuity and regional homogeneity of these symbols, as represented across diverse artifacts, showcasing their strong integration across time and space.

## Keywords

Early Pottery Neolithic, 7-6th millennium cal. BC, Pottery design, Geometric symbols, Southern Levant

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5. Neolithic paths

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# Type of paper

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