



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# From Heirlooms to Ad Hoc ornaments: Social events at Neolithic Nahal Hemar Cave

BAR-YOSEF D.<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel

\*Corresponding author

## Abstract

The Neolithic (PPNB ca. 9,900-9,400 BP) Cave of Nahal Hemar in the Judean desert was a locale of social gathering for performing rituals. The cave is not suitable for human habitation and is strewn with ceremonial paraphernalia, stone masks among them. Almost 700 shells and beads were recovered. The shells and wooden beads were studied in a preliminary way and require further investigation. Thirty-five stone and about 50 plaster beads were recently studied in detail and will be presented. The stone beads were made of 11 minerals brought from distant sources spanning the Northern Levant to Egypt and representing various technological approaches of production. One stone bead is a typical PPNA artifact with heavy wear marks, probably an heirloom. That beads were sewn onto clothes as evident by one that is still attached to fabric and not worn directly over the body. The plaster beads, though, many of which still have pieces of string inserted in them, bear no signs of wear. We interpret these as having been produced ad hoc on site for specific ceremonies, probably related to treatment of skulls that were identified along several lines of archaeological evidence.

## Keywords

stone beads, plaster beads, Neolithic, personal ornaments, ceremonies

## Session

7. Characterizing culture ?

## Workshop

A16293GT - Not Just Pretty Objects: Personal Adornments and the Social Persona

## Type of paper

Oral presentation