



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Nahal Efe: Nature, chronology and organization of the largest hunter-gatherer settlement in the Negev during the PPNB

BORRELL F.^{1*}, *VARDI J.*²

¹ Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), Barcelona, Spain

² Israel Antiquities Authority, Jerusalem, Israel

*Corresponding author

Abstract

Nahal Efe is located in the north-eastern fringes of the Negev (Israel) at approximately 320 masl and barely 8 km west of the Dead Sea. Seven field seasons have been undertaken since 2015, revealing the largest and best preserved PPNB settlement in the Negev and Sinai, thus constituting a privileged data source for the study of hunter-gatherer communities in the region 10,000 years ago. The main occupation of the site corresponds to the Middle PPNB (ca. 8100-7600 cal. BCE), with an estimated size of 2000 m². The extensive excavation of ca. 350 m² has revealed eight sub-circular semi-subterranean buildings. In addition, several circular structures are partly visible on the surface of the slope. All this constitutes what seems to be a large residential area structured on different levels of the slope of the hill. In this contribution we will focus on those aspects that provide relevant data on the nature, chronology and internal organization of the settlement, as well as on its role at a regional scale in that particular region, the northern Negev, that constituted at that time the border between hunter-gatherers and the expanding farming communities.

Keywords

Neolithic, PPNB, Negev, Levant, arid regions

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