



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# The rural landscape of the Land of Ugarit: Archaeological excavations at Tell Semhani, 2024

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## Abstract

In April 2024 a Syro-Italian team led by M. Radwan and L. d'Alfonso started excavating Tell Semhani near Latakia (Syria). Between 2015-2018, Radwan had already excavated some soundings at the site, known from 1977 thanks to Abu-Assaf's and later archeological surveys. Radwan identified three periods of occupations: MBA II, LBA, and Byzantine. The campaign 2024 could confirm the occupational sequence identified by Radwan's team correcting the early surveys claims of IA and Classical occupations: intensive survey and collection could also define dimensions and function of the site as a small village community devoted to agriculture. The site has a distinctive geographical location; lying very close to the coast, and on the southern shore of the Great Northern River, it overlooks a wide and rich agricultural plain. With three major LBA phases of occupation, excavations offer the first archaeological evidence of socioeconomical conditions of rural communities in the Land of Ugarit, signaling a strong contrast with the life conditions at the capital known through almost a century of activities of the French and Syrian archaeologists at Tell Ras Shamra. Besides preliminary data on stratigraphy and architecture, the paper will focus on socio-economic data derived from traditional and compositional ceramic analyses.

## Keywords

Rurality, Late Bronze Age, Ugarit, Ceramic analysis, Village

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