



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Surviving the Crisis Years: Investigations of an Early Iron Age Fortress at Dmanisis Gora

ERB-SATULLO N. 1*

¹ Cranfield University, Cranfield, United Kingdom

*Corresponding author

Abstract

In contrast to much of the rest of the Near East, the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age in the South Caucasus lacks obvious signs of collapse. Was the region insulated from the collapse cascading through the wider region, or were its social and economic systems resilient to the stresses caused by the crises in adjacent areas? These questions are difficult to answer given the relative absence of research on Late Bronze and Early Iron Age communities in the South Caucasus.

This paper presents the results of new survey and excavation on the Early Iron Age site of Dmanisis Gora. Aerial survey documented a very large outer enclosure with numerous stone structures but minimal stratification, suggesting regular but episodic occupation. Meanwhile excavations in the inner fortress discovered a multi-phase settlement with substantial occupation in the Late 2nd and Early 1st millennium BC. Despite massive stone fortifications requiring significant labor investment, excavations of interior structures suggest the settlement consisted of modest households. The paper closes with some reflections on how the social and economic structure of Late Bronze and Early Iron Age communities in South Caucasus may have contributed to its atypical resilience.

Keywords

Resilience, Collapse, Photogrammetry, Fortress, Georgia

Session

1. Advances in Near Eastern Archaeology

Type of paper

Oral presentation