



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Exploring Ancient Landscapes: Archaeological Surveys and Excavations in Lebanon's Central Bekaa

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Abstract

The Central Bekaa Valley represents a pivotal corridor for understanding the settlement and mobility dynamics of Lebanon's interior regions from prehistory to the medieval period. Since 2019, the Franco-Lebanese archaeological mission, 'Mission archéologique de la Bekaa Centrale', has focused on the region's rich yet under-explored archaeological landscape of Lebanon. Combining surveys, excavations, and landscape archaeology, our research examines key sites, including Tell Deir Zanoun (Neolithic to Iron Age) and Tell Salhiye/Shamsine (Chalcolithic to Umayyad). Geophysical surveys, stratigraphic excavations, architectural recording and material culture analyses have yielded insights into settlement pattern, resource management, landscape exploitation, and trade networks. Preliminary findings reveal densely occupied zones during the third and the second millennium BC, with transitions to religious centres and rural settlements in later periods. The integration of archaeological and environmental data through GIS highlights the valley's role as a hub of connectivity between coastal/inland and northern/southern Levant settlements. This interdisciplinary initiative not only enhances our understanding of settlement patterns but focuses on the economy and resources exploitation and influences and cultural interactions between regions. The project also supports capacity-building, research development and cultural Heritage preservation through student training, international collaboration and innovative recording techniques.

Keywords

Bekaa Valley, Settlement patterns, Neolithic to Medieval, GIS, Lebanon

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