

ARWA AAA lectures - Levant - 2024 programme

Organisers: Pascal Flohr and Laith Alshboul

February-March, 4 lectures (shortened programme by exception), Wednesday 4PM CET

21.02.2024

Nathalie Kallas (Freie Universität Berlin) - Excavating in the Digital Age: the fortification system of Tell Ushayer

28.02.2024

Bill Finlayson (University of Oxford) - No rest for the dead: an active afterlife in the Neolithic.

21.03.2024

Lucas Petit (Museum of Antiquities in Leiden) - Excavations at Tell Damiyah: remarkable and uncomfortable.

28.03.2024

Maysoon al-Nahar (University of Jordan, Amman) - Title TBA

Abstracts and image information

21.02.2024, 4pm CET

Excavating in the Digital Age: the fortification system of Tell Ushayer

Nathalie Kallas

This talk presents the ongoing archaeological project at Tell Ushayer in Jordan, by a team from the Freie Universität Berlin. Situated west of Irbid, the mound is characterized by an almost round shape and visible remnants of a fortification wall. Recent excavation findings reveal the construction of a substantial fortification system during the early Iron Age, significantly altering the site's morphology. Evidence suggests continuous occupation throughout the Iron Age period. The talk also highlights the documentation methodology, which combines traditional analog methods with digital solutions for recording excavation progress and findings. The work emphasizes the importance of integrating technology in both fieldwork and post-excavation analysis to advance research results effectively. Through its balanced approach, the project aims to fill gaps in understanding the region's history during the Iron Age, specifically the socio-political situation of the north Jordanian plateau.

28.02.2024, 4pm CET

No rest for the dead: an active afterlife in the Neolithic

Bill Finlayson

Patterns of secondary burial and other forms of skeletal modification have been recognised as part of the Neolithic of the southern Levant since early days of research. The dead were clearly not static and continued to play important roles in Neolithic lives. While some practices, especially those involving skull removal and the iconic plastering of skulls, are treated as Neolithic commonalities there is much variation between treatments at different sites. Various proposals have been made regarding the purpose of these behaviours, but they have tended to regard the dead as objects for instrumentalist interventions, with the dead being used to fulfil the needs of the living. I will suggest that the dead were understood to have much more active agency, even if not the same as living individuals.

21.03.2024, 4pm CET

Excavations at Tell Damiyah: remarkable and uncomfortable

Lucas Petit

The small settlement mound of Tell Damiyah, situated in the Central Jordan Valley near the River Jordan, has been subject to excavations over the past two decades. These excavations have revealed the burnt remains of a large mudbrick complex dating back to around 700 BCE. While these discoveries initially generated excitement within the archaeological community, they

have also stirred some unease among scholars studying ancient cult. In this lecture, Petit, one of the leaders of the excavation team, will present an overview of two significant phases at Tell Damiyah and will challenge the validity of our conventional theories regarding religious structures and cult practices.

Image: ©The Damiyah Project

28.03.2024, 4pm CET

Title TBA

Maysoon al-Nahar