

CERASTONE PROJECT

WORKSHOP n°3

ECONOMIC OR SOCIAL FACTORS? The causes underlying the emergence of pottery in the Southern Levant

On Thursday 18th November 2021 at the French Research Centre in Jerusalem
10 am-1.30 pm (Jerusalem time)/9am-12.30 am (Paris time)

ABSTRACT:

The reason(s) why the Neolithic populations of the Southern Levant start to use pottery remain unclear. In the 1990s, some specialists invoked social factors to explain the emergence of pottery in this region insofar as the earliest ceramic vessels would have been mainly used as prestige goods. Others have argued for economic factors because the first fired-clay containers would have been widely used as kitchen utensils. However, the hypotheses put forward so far on the causes for the late adoption of pottery in the Southern Levant remain highly speculative, due to the lack of consistent data on the use of the earliest pottery in the region.

This workshop aims to review the state of our research regarding the function of pottery coming from the major EPN sites of Sha'ar Hagolan and Munhata, while setting up the analyses of organic residue trapped into the porous walls of ceramic vessels. It brings together specialists from different disciplines (traceology, chemistry, botany) who will discuss about the sampling strategy and multi-proxi analytical protocol (lipids, phytoliths, starch, C14 dating) of these residues in order to better characterize the various substances contained inside the Neolithic pots. This high-risk research component of the CERASTONE project will undoubtedly shed new light on the role of ceramic vessels in the socio-economic world of the first pottery-making societies in the Southern Levant.

PROGRAM:

10.00-10.10: Vincent LEMIRE (Director, CRFJ) & Julien VIEUGUE (PI CERASTONE project, CRFJ) -
"Welcome to the workshop"

10.10-10.40: Julien VIEUGUE (CRFJ, UMIFRE 7) -
"The use of the earliest pottery in the Southern Levant: first conclusions based on typology and use-wear"

10.40-10.55: Monica RAMSEY & Lindsay DUCAN (Mc Donald institute, University of Cambridge) -
"Informative potential of phytoliths & starch analysis".

10.55-11.10: Martine REGERT & Arnaud MAZUY (CEPAM, UMR 7264) -
"Informative potential of Lipid analysis"

Coffee break

11.30-11.45: Lucile BECK (CEA, UMR 8212), Emmanuelle DELQUE-KOLIC (CEA, UMR 8212), Matthieu LEBON (MNHN, UMR 7194), Christine OBERLIN (ARAR, UMR 5128) & Philippe LANOS (IRAMAT, UMR 5060) -
"C14 dating of carbonized residues of pottery".

11.45-13.30: Discussions about the sampling strategy and the analytical protocol.

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