

Early urbanism on the fringes of Mesopotamia

Dr Carlo Colantoni

Working on the Rania plain (Sulveymaniyah Province, Iraq), the Danish Archaeological Expedition to Iraq (DAEI) is an innovative investigation of the trajectory, anatomy - settlement patterns, urban sprawl, industrialised landscapes and trash dumping - and temporal development of early urbanism in northeastern Iraq during the Late Chalcolithic period (c.4400-3100 BC). In the autumn of 2016 the project undertook research in the field, with a particular focus on the unexpected phenomenon of urban sprawl on the plain. In support of our wider research goals, we explored the evidence and nature of this radical transformation of communities, dateable material and what commonalities are shared with urbanism across the region and beyond.