

Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at 13:15
Department of Man in the Desert Seminar Room

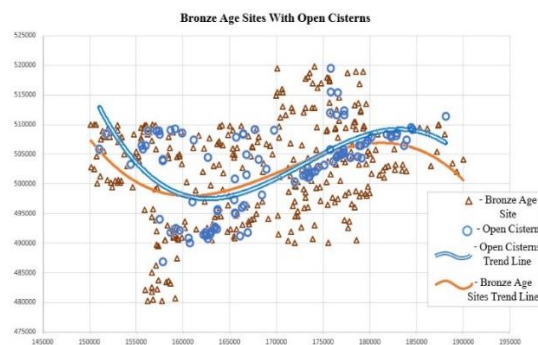
ES Seminar

"Ancient Cisterns in the Negev Highlands: features, layout and spatial comparisons to Bronze and Iron Age sites"

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Ph.D Thesis presentation

supervised by Prof. Isaac Meir (Sakis) and Prof. Hendrik Bruins



Archaeological surveys in the Negev highlands indicate an exceptional density of diachronic settlement sites. However, the multiplicity of sites is in complete contrast to the absence of permanent water sources except water cisterns. Based merely on spatial proximity, the open cisterns – one of three cisterns types – were chronologically connected to Iron Age settlements and fortresses. Nonetheless, ignored by most researchers, an unusual concentration of Bronze Age sites exists in the same area and presents a spatial pattern quite similar to that of the cisterns. The significance of correct dating of the cisterns is probably important in defining the stage of transition from nomadic to permanent settlement and the beginning of desert agriculture.

What can be learned from the spatial relationship between different sites? Can they teach us about the development of settlement in the Negev Highlands? What are the engineering rules according to which the cisterns were planned? Does the linear axis of the open cisterns across the Negev point to an ancient and unknown copper-trade road?

The major objective of this study was to undertake a new chronological assessment by means of a correlative spatial analysis and spatial distribution of cisterns, fortresses and settlement sites from different historical periods.