

Edom East and West of the Arabah Valley and in the Negev

Workshop EABS Annual Conference 2022, Toulouse, 4th-7th July 2022

Chairs:

Erez Ben-Yosef, Tel Aviv University
Benedikt Hensel, Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg

Session 1: New Venues in Hebrew Bible Research

Tuesday 5th July, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Chair: Erez Ben-Yosef, Tel Aviv University

1.) *Edom, Seir and Esau in the Postexilic Literature of the Bible*

Yigal Levin Bar-Ilan University (20 min) - Discussion (10 min)

2.) *Think Positive! On the Positive Portrayal of Edom in Late Biblical Traditions (Chronicles; Deuteronomy, and the Patriarchal Narratives) and Their Historical Background*

Benedikt Hensel, University of Oldenburg (20 min) - Discussion (10 min)

3.) *The 'Edom' of Memory of the Jerusalem-centered Literati of the Late Persian/Early Hellenistic Period*

Ehud Ben Zvi, University of Alberta (20 min) - Discussion (10 min)

Break (30 Min)

4.) *Reflections of Edom in the Persian Period in the Biblical Prophetic Corpus*

Diana Edelman, Oslo University (20 min) - Discussion (10 min)

5.) *Edom and Seir in the Book of Ezekiel*

Reettakaisa Sofia Salo, Georg August University of Göttingen (20 min) - Discussion (10 min)

Session 2: New Venues in Archaeology

Wednesday 6th July, 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Chair: Benedikt Hensel, University of Oldenburg

1.) *The Formation of Edom: Faynan and 'Early Edom'*

Piotr Bienkowski, University of Manchester (30 min) - Discussion (10 min)

2.) *Avoiding the Snare of the Positive: Prevailing Methodological Flaws in the Research on Early Edom*

Erez Ben-Yosef, Tel Aviv University (30 min) - Discussion (10 min)

6.) *Nudes with a Veil: Figurines as Agents of Group Identity in Southern Transjordan*

Régine Hunziker-Rodewald, University of Strasbourg and Andrei Aioanei, University of Strasbourg (30 min) - Discussion (10 min)

Aims and Focus of the Workshop

This workshop aim is to advance our knowledge of historical Iron-Age Edom, Persian and Hellenistic Idumea, and Judean constructions of both, as attested in the books that ended up in the Hebrew Bible. The workshop is meant to foster dialogue among historians, archaeologists, and scholars of the Hebrew Bible on these matters.

The study of Edom has experienced an immense upswing in recent years, with particularly high interest in its historical and archaeological aspects as well as its place within larger Near Eastern studies. Meanwhile, its importance for the fate of the Southern Levant in antiquity is becoming increasingly clear. This is especially true for the Edom of the Iron Age: Here, Edom was a rather influential polity, and despite lying on the fringes of the Southern Levant, both its copper mining activities in the early stages of its nomadic tribal organization as well as the later Edomite trade and economic systems proved rather impactful for the entire eastern Mediterranean. New research and findings raise questions with certain historical cultural-historical, religious-historical, and geo-political aspects which the workshop plans to address and discuss.

Additionally, there is the question of the “after-history” of the monarchy of Edom after 552 BCE. Contrary to the prevailing line of research in both the recent and more distant past, Edom did not completely disappear. Overall, recent findings strongly suggest, that there was a significant decline in settlement history after the Babylonian interventions, but there was also *continuity of settlement* at several key sites in Cis- and Transjordanian sites in the Persian period, as well as a continuation of nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoralism that had been a characteristic of this landscape for centuries. Biblical research has also since identified the Persian period as a decisive phase for the

formation of the Hebrew Bible and has become sensitized to possibility that specific texts that reference Transjordan may have stemmed from that time and do also depict or reflect contemporary “Transjordanian realities.”

The workshop will deal with three main *fields of research*: (a) The Question of an Early Iron Age Edomite “Polity” and the Transregional Organization of Semi-Pastoral and Pastoral groups in the Iron Age Southern Jordan regions against the Background of Empires; (b) Trans- and Cisjordanian “Edom”; Interactions - Similarities and Differences; and (c) The Biblical Reflection of Edom Through the Ages.