The United Monarchy - the famed kingdom of David and Solomon - is at the center of a heated debate. While until 25 years ago there was a consensus that David and Solomon were historical figures who ruled over fairly large territories, it is now questioned by many who believe either that these kings were either petty chiefs controlling a limited territory around Jerusalem or that they did not even exist. Given these doubts, the archaeological evidence has come to the center of discussion stage. A broad examination of the nature of the Iron I-II transition, however, reveals major changes in practically every aspect of life, from settlement patterns to various aspects of material culture, including pottery form and decoration, and architectural developments. While each change could, in theory, be a result of a number of causes, a broad analysis of all the processes and transformations, and especially their sequencing in time and space, greatly narrows down the possible options. It is therefore the aim of the present lecture to briefly present the sweeping changes that accompanied the Iron I-II transition, to reconstruct (temporally and spatially) the processes of growing social complexity that they reflect, and subsequently to examine the implications of this analysis on the debate over the historicity of the so-called United Monarchy.

Moderated by:
Dr. Aaron Burke (NELC)

Sponsored by:
Kershaw Chair for Ancient Eastern Mediterranean Studies

Co-Sponsored by:
Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures
Cotson Institute of Archaeology
Alan D. Leve Center for Jewish Studies

For more information, please email nreast@humnet.ucla.edu