



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Gender in Prehistoric Cyprus: A View from the Chalcolithic

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Abstract

The cultural elaboration of biological differences between men and women is often perceived as a cross-culturally universal, in which specific activities and roles are held appropriate for either men or women and in which one or the other of the sexes is dominant. However, in many Neolithic and Chalcolithic societies in West Asia the evidence for the cultural elaboration of biological differences is actually scanty, and this is a remarkable absence that warrants more serious scrutiny than it has so far. Are such differences played down in the activities that we can reconstruct archaeologically, or were gender distinctions less crucial than we have generally postulated? Using data from burials, figurative objects, and domestic contexts, this paper reviews the evidence for Chalcolithic Cyprus, and reflects on the broader question of gender in prehistoric West Asia.

Keywords

gender, Chalcolithic, Cyprus

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