



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# They are there, but nobody has seen them yet: the intensive irrigation canal network in southern Mesopotamia

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## Abstract

Archaeologists can easily spot ancient rivers and large irrigation canals using remote sensing techniques to reconstruct landscape archaeology. However, they seemed satisfied when they traced the main natural rivers and a few long canals associated with them. They assumed these rivers and canals were the only landscape features that survived long periods of abandonment. In other words, they did not think about looking deeper and seeing if these areas had minor canals. They thought, and I was among them, that these areas were empty and nothing could be found. However, suppose we return to these areas and spend a reasonable amount of time on high-resolution satellite images. In that case, we will discover hundreds of intensive small irrigation canals and farms filling the so-called (empty) area among the rivers and canals. Now, my students are doing this and are finding more canals and farms in these areas. The best example of this area is the region between Uruk and Eridu. All the previous works traced the main ancient Euphrates and less than ten of the main canals. However, recent studies have shown that thousands of canals and farms in this region can be found once closer looks have been taken.

## Keywords

Canals, Farms , Water management , Remote sensing , Eridu

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