



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Drawing the line: ceramic studies in Sasanian borderlands and the concept of imperial space

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Abstract

The present paper examines ceramic material from ongoing excavations of rural sites and surface collections in Iraqi Kurdistan and southern Uzbekistan. Gird-i Qalrakh (Iraqi Kurdistan) and Kulal Tepa (Uzbekistan) are small sites of less than 1 ha in area and show multi-period occupation including levels that date to Sasanian times. In my presentation, I will attempt a first characterization of each pottery assemblage and will select vessel shapes representative for the Sasanian-period occupation at the individual sites. What can these ceramics tell us about activities at the sites? Ceramic assemblages from both sites provide an insight into rural life in an imperial context, albeit viewed from the opposite margins of the Sasanian empire.

Singling out Qalrakh and its wider geographical context, I will then correlate the site's pottery with surface material from the Sirvan Regional Project to see, if and to what extent the ceramics reflect any integration into the wider regional economic and social network?

Looking at its analytical potential, I will discuss what contribution the study of pottery from rural sites together with survey material can make to Sasanian archaeology and if/how theoretical concepts such as that of imperial space might impact our approach or shape our expectations.

Keywords

Ceramics, Sasanian period, rural sites

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