



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Thinking through and beyond the hinterland

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Abstract

Archaeologists working in the Late Chalcolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age periods in western Asia have been addressing the multi-scalar aspects of the earliest cities and states in Western Asia for decades. An enduring concern has been the relationship between urban centres and the landscapes of their hinterland, including rural settlements in the hinterland. In this paper I take up the rural-urban dichotomy by scrutinizing a subtle semantic and paradigmatic shift from a systemic 'processual' to an ontological 'process' archaeology, with a specific focus on possible entanglement/entrapment scenarios between the two types of settlement in a given landscape. While it remains to be seen whether an ontological interest in the existence of a rural settlement, or its process of becoming, can be reconciled with an empathetic concern for the experience of a rural farmer, the analysis assesses the state of the field of rural archaeology in Western Asia, including many of its digitalised aspects, to arrive at a more critical and nuanced approach to this problem.

Keywords

rural, critical, Bronze Age

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