



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Rethinking Power in Antiquity: Power Relations, Social Space and the Habitus in the Iron Age of the Ancient Near East.

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Abstract

The issue of power structures in antiquity is a subject that has not been studied exhaustively through archaeological lenses. In my thesis, I examine the way power manifested itself in the urban layout of cities and through the monuments that the ruling elite constructed. I focus on two societies of the Iron Age of Western Asia, the Neo-Assyrian empire and the city-state of Carchemish. I propose a theoretical framework based on the research aims of the burgeoning field of anarchist archaeology and the works of political philosophers of the 20th century, particularly Michel Foucault, Henri Bourdieu and Pierre Lefebvre. By combining the theory of power relations of Foucault to the habitus of Bourdieu and the concept of social space brought forward by Lefebvre, I will apply this framework to three case studies: the cities of Kal?u, Nineveh, and Carchemish, three important cities and capitals of their states. The application of this framework to these case studies allows us to examine the nature of power, analyzed not as an abstract concept, but as a set of power relations. These power relations were exercised by the elite on the governed people through the creation of monuments, which form their own social spaces.

Keywords

Western Asia, Iron Age, Power relations, Habitus, Social Space

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