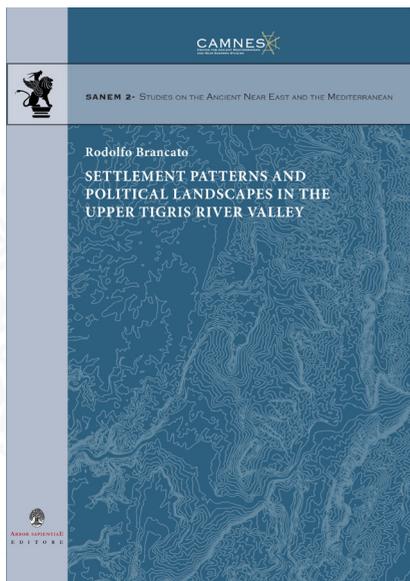




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RODOLFO BRANCATO

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPES IN THE UPPER TIGRIS RIVER VALLEY

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Located between the Caucasus, the Syrian-Iraqi border, south-eastern Anatolia and western Iran, the upper Tigris River region lies at a crucial intersection between Anatolia and Mesopotamia and became, since the early Holocene, a focal point in human history. There, communities during the Neolithic period experienced vibrant local developments. During the Uruk expansion in the 4th millennium BCE, the region played a key role in the relations between southern Mesopotamian societies and Anatolian people. The region served as a site of contact between commercial and imperial forces throughout the Bronze and the Iron Ages when it was highly affected by the contacts led by the Assyrians with the northern local political entities. By the end of the 1st millennium BCE, the region had become the location where “East” and “West” met. Despite its central role in the evolution and history of the Near East, until the late 1980’s the valley was terra incognita in terms of archaeological research. The start of archaeological projects in the region was due to the planned construction of a series of dams along the upper course of the Tigris. The aim of this study is to connect all the data collected from the rescue survey projects carried out in the last decades with those available from the archaeological excavations and to focus on the changes in settlement patterns throughout the millennia. This volume is an attempt to organize our knowledge over the upper Tigris River valley, in light of the last decades of research, and as a reassessment of the available archaeological data according to the topographic method, under a diachronic perspective.

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