Reaching the Persian Gulf from the Kur River Basin: Patterns of an Intermittent Connectivity

by Emad Matin*

L'articolo in oggetto esplora le connessioni tra il Fars Centrale e il Golfo Persico in un lungo arco di tempo, dalla protostoria all'inizio dell'era islamica, ricostruendole con ricorso a fonti di natura storica e archeologica. Si concentra sulle tre aree del bacino del fiume Kura, del Dashtestan e della penisola di Bushehr, esaminando l'ascesa e il declino degli insediamenti in queste aree, entro i limiti della bibliografia esistente. Il contributo dimostra che queste aree, ovvero l'altopiano, l'entroterra e la costa, hanno svolto un ruolo significativo nella suddetta rete di comunicazione per secoli. La conclusione più innovativa è che per la prima volta è possibile confermare l'esistenza di connessioni intermittenti con una struttura molto simile tra queste aree, soprattutto in epoca elamita, achemenide e sasanide.

The paper at hand explores the connectivity between Central Fars and the Persian Gulf over a long period of time from protohistory to the Early Islamic era. In doing so, it focuses on the three areas of the Kur River Basin, Dashtestan and the Bushehr Peninsula and reviews the rise and fall of settlements in these areas—within the limits of the existing bibliography. The paper thus demonstrates that these areas, i.e. the Highland, the Hinterland and the Coastline, had played a significant role in the aforesaid communication network for centuries. Furthermore, the pattern of this connectivity is reconstructed using archaeological and historical sources. The most innovative conclusion put forth is that for the first time it is possible to confirm the existence of intermittent connectivity with a very similar pattern among these areas, especially in the Elamite, Achaemenid and Sasanian eras.

Introduction

Connectivity has been the subject of many archaeological and historical studies and projects in the current century and especially in recent years (e.g. LaBianca, Scham 2006; Leidwanger, Knappet 2018; Collar 2020; Cereti, Callieri, Messina forthcoming).[1] Despite the possibility of being investigated in different ways, the actual effects of connectivity are not always visible archaeologically speaking (Colburn

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[1] For network science in archaeology see Collar et al. 2015