Settlement Dynamics and Human-Landscape Interaction in the Dry Steppes of Syria

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DESCRIPTION:
This volume is the result of a workshop convened in Warsaw on May 3-4, 2012 as part of the 8th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, with the aim of reinvigorating discussion on agro-pastoralist and specialised hunter societies living at the semi-arid and dry fringes of Syria's stable, long-term settlement zone. The seventeen papers gathered here present the results of the most important international field research projects of recent decades dedicated to the interdisciplinary exploration of the dry steppe regions of Syria: the arid margins of northern Syria, the Palmyra, Jebel Bishri, and the Middle Euphrates and Khabur regions. At the core of the articles are crucial issues discussed in a longue durée perspective ranging from the Neolithic to the Early Islamic period, such as the chronology of steppe cultures in Syria, the emergence of specialized mobile pastoral and hunting communities and their social organization, the management of water, the adaptation of subsistence strategies to increasing aridity, landscape change and its interaction with human activity, and the urban narrative on pastoral societies offered by Bronze and Iron Age cuneiform sources.