



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Defining a Culture: A Comparative Study of the Darkveti-Meshoko Culture in the Chalcolithic Caucasus

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¹ Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia

² European University, Tbilisi, Georgia

*Corresponding author

Abstract

This paper challenges traditional notions of cultural boundaries by examining the Darkveti and Meshoko cultures, two Chalcolithic cultures situated in geographically adjacent areas: West Georgia and the North Caucasus. While historically classified as distinct entities, recent research by Dr Trifonov suggests they may represent a single cultural complex, termed the Darkveti-Meshoko culture. Both cultures share similar material culture, settlement patterns, and burial practices, raising questions about the validity of current cultural classifications. Through a comparative analysis of archaeological evidence, this study investigates the degree to which shared attributes can indicate cultural continuity across regions. It explores whether these similarities result from direct interactions or parallel developments, ultimately questioning the reliability of established criteria in defining distinct cultural entities. By reassessing the Darkveti-Meshoko culture, this paper encourages a broader discussion on the flexibility required in characterising prehistoric cultures. It emphasises the need for nuanced approaches that account for overlapping characteristics and the dynamic interactions of communities, offering new insights into the cultural landscape of the Chalcolithic period in the Caucasus.

Keywords

Culture, Chalcolithic, Caucasus, Darkveti, Meshoko

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