



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Iron Age settlement patterns and land development in the northern area of the Alborz Mountains

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Abstract

In Iran, agricultural intensification, woodland development, and increasing settlements around the 8th century BCE have been observed in certain areas. These developments were possibly influenced by climate change and have attracted attention as continuous changes during the Achaemenid Period. While the Gorgan Plain is the main study area in the northern Alborz Mountains, there is room for accumulating further archaeological data. Subsequently, this study re-examined comprehensive surveys of the Gorgan Plain conducted in the 1970s. Although these surveys have been cited in previous studies, pottery shard dating has not yet been considered. I analysed the pottery to date at each site and ascertained the chronological changes in settlement patterns. The results were compared with settlement patterns along the Sefid Rud in the northern Alborz Mountains, which differ in geographical and environmental conditions. In both regions, significant increases in sedentary settlements and the expansion of habitat zones to non-farming suitable land with saline soil or Hyrcanian forest were confirmed from the 8th century BCE onwards, indicating that new patterns of occupation and exploitation developed over a wide area across the northern Alborz Mountains during this period. Regional trends likely reflected differences in the economy and modes of life were identified.

Keywords

saline soil, farming suitability, sedentary, Hyrcanian Forest, Achaemenid

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