



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Neolithic Skeletal Remains and Burial Practices at Tepe Guran, Luristan.

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Abstract

This study revisits the skeletal remains and burial customs of the early Neolithic site of Tepe Guran, located in the Zagros Mountains, Iran. Initially excavated in the 1960s by a Danish Archaeological Mission, the site revealed burial practices associated with early village-farming communities from the seventh millennium BCE. The early Neolithic sounding in the central part of the mound, directed by Peder Mortensen, provided valuable insights into the mortuary traditions of this period. Using bioarchaeological techniques, this analysis examines skeletal markers of stress, nutrition, and activity patterns in six individuals, including adults, a child, and an infant. Findings indicate a community characterized by physical labour, with evidence of degenerative joint disease, enamel hypoplasia, and nutritional deficiencies likely associated with subsistence practices. Burial customs reflect a mix of inhumation styles, including flexed burials under floors and collective disarticulated burials, suggesting complex mortuary traditions and symbolic ties to place. Grave goods, such as beads and tools, highlight possible ritual or social significance attached to the deceased. These results provide insights into the health conditions of early agricultural communities and the evolving burial traditions in Neolithic Iran, hence contributing to our understanding of the Neolithic transition to sedentism in the Zagros region.

Keywords

Skeletal remains, Burial Customs, Bioarchaeological analysis, Neolithic period, Luristan

Session

6. Life and death: Human behaviour and practices

Type of paper

Oral presentation