



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# Buried in the steppe: Complex research of Iskandartepa, Bekat and Qurbaqatepa burial sites in southern Uzbekistan

*STANCO L.*<sup>1\*</sup>, *KYSELA J.*<sup>1</sup>, *TENCER T.*<sup>2</sup>, *MILO P.*<sup>2</sup>, *SHAYDULLAEV S.*<sup>3</sup>, *TOSHALIEV K.*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Classical Archaeology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague, Czechia

<sup>2</sup> Department of Archaeology and Museology, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno, Czechia

<sup>3</sup> Faculty of History, Termez State University, Termez, Uzbekistan

\*Corresponding author

## Abstract

The Czech-Uzbek archaeological expedition studying the historical landscape of southern Central Asia has identified a remarkable micro-region in the Loylagan River basin (Surkhandarya region). This area provides valuable new data on settlement dynamics during protohistoric times. The newly discovered settlement area, dating from the Hellenistic to Late Antiquity period, includes a group of burial sites situated on natural plateaus around an agricultural valley. These settlements span from the 2nd century BCE to the 5th century CE.

Between 2021 and 2024, three burial sites were subjected to magnetic survey followed by targeted GPR survey and subsequent archaeological excavations. Additionally, extensive metal detector survey provided valuable supplementary data. This paper will present the research objectives, methods, and preliminary results. The primary hypothesis explores whether the burials align with the chronological framework established by the dating of the associated settlements. Furthermore, the spatial relationships between these sites were also investigated.

Initial findings from the excavations of approximately twenty graves suggest that some burials date to the transitional period between the decline of Greek rule in the region and the formation of the Kushan Empire, known as the Yuezhi period

## Keywords

burial sites, geophysical survey, Yuezhi, excavations, Uzbekistan

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