

Human remains from Menjaq Tepe 2, Iran, 2017

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Menjaq Tepe 2 is a small archaeological site c. 1 km east of Qareh-Bil village, within Garmeh county, North Khorasan province (37°21'21"N, 56°20'44"E, 1312masl), being located close to a small alluvial fan at the foot of the easternmost range of the Alborz Mountains (**Figure 1**). The site was excavated in July and August 2017 by an archaeological team directed by Reza Naseri (**Figure 2**). A series of test trenches revealed that the site was inhabited during the Late Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age (c. 3500–3000 BCE); the pottery shows affinities with Tepe Hissar 2, Tureng



Figure 1. Location of Menjaq Tepe 2. Map data: Google, CNES / Airbus.



Figure 2. General view of Menjaq Tepe 2 from the north. Photograph by Reza Naseri.



Figure 3. Burial 3009 during excavations. Photograph by Reza Naseri.

Tape 2a, Yarim Tape and Shah Tape. In the eastern part of the hill, four human burials were found in simple pits intrusive to the settlement strata, being occasionally delimited with stones (**Figure 3**) and having no associated artifacts, except one bronze ring (Naseri et al. 2019). Human collagen from one of these skeletons (3076) was dated (Poz-112421) roughly to the Ilkhanid period (1281–1396 cal. AD) and it is likely that the whole cemetery was used during that time.

The human remains from Menjaq Tepe 2 were studied in October 2017 in the facilities of the Department of Archaeology, University of Kashan, using the standard protocols presented by Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994) with some modifications (see Sołtysiak et al. 2019). All skeletons were very well preserved, though incomplete



Figure 4. Healed trauma on right parietal, female individual 3026. Scale bar 1cm. Photograph by Arkadiusz Sołtysiak.

and occasionally having some excavation related damage. In total, two adult and two subadult individuals have been identified during excavations (Table 1), but it is possible that the contexts 3026 and 3076 contained disarticulated elements from a single individual.

The female individual was relatively short (152cm, using Trotter & Gleser 1952 formula for femur) and her skull exhibited massive well healed trauma on the right parietal (Figure 4), measuring c. 5×8cm. Her anterior teeth were covered by thick

Table 1. Basic characteristics of human remains from Menjaq Tepe 2, season 2017.

Context	Register	Sex	Age-at-death	Completeness
3026	3178	F	young adult	cranium, ulnae, femora, right clavicle and fibula, one rib
3076	3286	F	young adult	mandible, humeri, sacrum and five ribs
3010	3042	–	3–7	lower part of the body
3009	3039	–	2–2.5	all parts of the body were present

deposits of calculus and some initial caries on the occlusal side were present in 2 of 7 preserved molars. On both lower canines very clear linear enamel hypoplasia (four lines) was noted. No degenerative joint disease was observed.

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