

# **Burial Cultures of Khorasan in Late Bronze Age**

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## **Abstract**

The burial process of the deceased is among the most tangible evidence for reconstruction and understanding the culture of human societies, which includes both material and spiritual dimensions. Study of material evidence in archaeological excavations can contribute to partial interpretation of ideological motifs. In this context, recognizing burial practices and interpretation of objects within the grave is a manifestation of human culture and philosophical ideas of the other world, customs, religious beliefs as well as social structure and complexities. There are a few studies available in this field with regard to Great Khorasan, with strategic importance and proximity of several cultural zones around Great Khorasan Ancient Road, although archeological excavations in recent years have resulted in specific material evidence. The current paper includes a structural study of burials in late Bronze Age with a comparative approach encompassing cenotaph, primary, secondary and common human-animal tombs as well as the origin of burial cultures. An assessment of evidences indicates similarity of burial practices of Khorasan in late Bronze period with the advanced culture of BMAC in Central Asia, which has been documented in Afghanistan, Pakistan, South East Iran, Caucasus and south Persian Gulf littoral zone.

**Keywords: Khorasan; Late Bronze Age; Burial Culture; Central Asia; BMAC.**

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## **Introduction**

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, funerary contexts have been extensively studied from an archeological perspective (Fazeli, 2011). The initial years of the nineteenth century also mark the first initiatives that were made to understand the social organization of past societies (Kroeber, 1927). Social character was then introduced as a combination of social identities, as well as a proper distinction to be considered after death (Binford, 1971:17). On this basis, Tinter (1978) suggested that burial practices may reflect the complexity of a society. He noted that a greater amount of energy had been devoted to individual class ranking in burial. This has also been supported by Frankenstein and Rowlands (1978) who stated that grave gifts might be a sign of strength and ranking. Various studies have been conducted on the spatial dimension in burial practices (e.g. Coles & Harding, 1979) as well as on the spatial distribution of artifacts and skeletons in graves (Pader, 1980).

The evolutionary school of thought considers death and its attributes as evolving cultural elements (Frazer, 1924; Bartel, 1982; Metcalf & Huntington, 1991). The sociological school regards death as a social process, not as an event (Hertz, 1907). According to the

functionalist school, death and its components have a function in the society. For example, shedding tears is a social relationship with the dead (Radcliff-Brown, 1964, 117; Metcalf & Huntington, 1991: 44), which, unlike many other burial ceremonies, is not archaeologically observable (Morris, 1987). The School of Symbolism suggests that death is a symbol of life, and building an ornamental tomb is a symbol of high status of its constructor (Morris, 1987). The new process-oriented archaeology is based on a scientific approach to study burial practices, and deal with the intercultural burial rites to extract a variety of burials and their function among the groups (Trigger, 1989, 302; Saxe, 1970: 49). The burial practices have been recently introduced by supporters of the process-oriented school (Carr, 1995; Pearson, 2000) as a direct cause and effect relationship between social structure and life with spatial organization of the dead, which might not have been practiced in several other societies (Larsson, 2003). Burials help recognize part of prehistoric culture, and reflect ideas as well as cultural and social structures of communities. Identification of material evidence of burials and their practices leads to non-material component of culture and specifies the social and economic status of the deceased (Masson, 1976: 57-156). An outlook of cognitive

archaeological studies, with an approach to burial, for the first time, formulates the two criteria of poverty and wealth to analyze burials and make grounds for the study of social classes in communities. Later, at a conference in Leningrad in 1972, in addition to motives and adding new approaches to this branch, the two factors of gender and age were also considered (Alekshin, 1983: 138). In this respect, some archaeologists in their qualitative, sociological and philosophical studies divided tombs into three categories: men, women and children, a classification with its own challenges. They believed that not only wealth and poverty indices should be considered to determine the social status of the deceased but the age and sex of the buried should be regarded since the burial objects are interconnected with both age and sex of the buried. Depending on sex, age and professional activities of the buried in their life, related objects were buried along with them (Binford, 1971: 13-15). It should be noted that several models can be drawn up to classify graves, with each bearing complementary information, in relation to social complexity and non-material dimensions of human societies. In funerary archaeology studies, elements such as the type and manner of burial, rituals and ceremonies, shape and structure of tomb and grave goods should be considered,

which sometimes have numerous subgroups including funerary objects, bearing data with practical and ritual aspects associated with specialized activity of the buried, personal ornaments and grave gifts.

The majority of data concerns western regions of Central Asia with respect to identification of the Bronze Age burial culture in the east zone such as Great Khorasan since from the beginning of excavations in early 1930s, Russian archaeologists analyzed and interpreted cultural materials through researches using sociological approach (Artamanov, 1968, Alekshin, 1983: 137) and then with new archaeological approaches from 1960s onwards (Firouzmandi and LabafKhaniki, 2006: 67). In contrast, these studies have never been conducted in the rich and vast zone of Khorasan and there was no clear framework for pre-Islamic cultures until the last decade. In this regard, the studies in this zone have been inevitably conducted with respect to patterns of neighboring cultures, especially Central Asia. In recent years, excavations in Shahrak-e Firoozeh from 2009 to 2014 and the historic site of QaraCheshmeh in 2015 in Neyshabur Plain by the author, the Chalo site in Sankhast (Vahdati, 2011; Vahdati and Biscione, 2014; 2015), TepeDamghani in Sabzevar (Vahdati et al. 2010), TepeQal'eh Khan

(Judi et al., 2011) and TepeEshgh (Vahdati, 2014: 19-27) in Bojnourd and Rازه-ye Ferdows site (Soroush and Rezai, 2014: 271-273), led to a new though insufficient definition of pre-historic patterns and cultures has.

Based on archaeological materials acquired during the aforementioned studies, several qualitative studies can be set in different fields, including burials of this cultural zone in the late Bronze period. The late Bronze Age which begins from late third millennium BC to early first millennium BC, a culture known as Bactria Margiana Archaeological Complex, has been designated in archaeological literature. This cultural period (2300- 1700 BC) emerged in Central Asia and extended to a large part of Iranian Plateau and its surroundings. Accordingly, in this paper that is the first of its kind, the burial practices of the late Bronze Age in Khorasan have been typified by a comparative approach and the effort was made to investigate the origin of burial practices there.

### **Structural Study of Burials**

In terms of structure, burials of the late Bronze Age in Khorasan region are divided to three types: pit graves, tombs with architectural and barrel structure and in a more specialized view include simple

pit graves with heated beds, tombs with architectural and barrel structure. In terms of burial practice, each of these types has subgroups such as cenotaph, primary, secondary and common human-animal. Further, there has also been several branches including primary and secondary pit graves, with some having simple and heated beds.

### **Pit Graves**

Pit graves have been used by societies and cultural zones for the time immemorial and account for the largest population. Their structure is composed of a pit irregularly excavated by hand. This has caused accelerated decomposition process due to contact of the buried with soil. There are a large number of pitgraves in the New Bronze Age in the Khorasan cultural zone, which are divided into simple pit graves and pit graves with heated or burnt bed according to funerary rituals. Examples of the graves with heated bed have been reported from Shahrak-e Firoozeh (Basafa, 2014) and the simple pit graves from Shahrak-e Firoozeh site (Basafa, 2014), Chalo (Vahdati and Biscione, 2015), Rازه (Soroush and Rezai, 2014), Qal'eh Khan (Judi and Rezaei, 2011) and Damghani (Vahdati et al., 2010).

### **Grave with Architectural Structure**

It emerged and prevailed during Bronze Age, especially the final phase of the Bronze Age and has been reported from sites such as Qal'eh Khan (Judi et al 2011: 5, 6, 12 and 13, Figure 2 and 3) from Khorasan. Such tombs have also been reported in numerous cultural zones, including Shahr-e Soukhteh in southeastern Iran (Keshavarz and Nezami 2015, SeyedSajjadi 2007: 481; Sajadi 2009), Pakistan (Danni and Duranni, 1964), GonurTepe in Central Asia (Sarianidi 2007, 2008) GoharTepe in Mazandaran (Moradi 2013: 101-103V Tables 4-30, 4-31 and 4-32) and TepeHissar in Damghan (Schmidt: 1933 P.CXI,P.CXLIX).

### **Barrel Grave**

Before the Bronze Age, this burial practice was used in the Middle East to bury children and babies. In the early Bronze Age, with the emergence of complexity in all aspects of human society, especially religious beliefs, this burial practice was used for all male and female adults as well as children and after the emergence of pit graves, a significant percentage of burial practices still were of barrel grave type (Ref. Alekshin, 1983: 139-151). Examples of this practice in the final phase of Bronze Age have been reported from the cultural zone of Khorasan and

neighboring regions, including ShahrakeFiroozeh site (Basafa, 2014: 257-266), GoharTepe (Moradi, 2013: 98-100 and Tables, 4-27, 4-28 and 4-29) and ShahreSukhteh, which are known as bowl graves (Keshavarz and Nezami, 2015; Sajadi, 2009: 138; SeyedSajjad, 2007).

### **Culture and Burial Practices**

According to archaeological researches in Khorasan, different burial cultures of the late Bronze period have been detected with close similarity with neighboring regions, including Central Asia (Bactria Margiana Archaeological Complex), the Sistan and Kerman zone in Southeastern Iran, South and Southeast of Caspian Sea, Pakistan and even the cultural zone of Makran. Funerary cultures of Khorasan in the late Bronze Age can be classified into four groups: 1) Primary; 2) Secondary; 3) Common human-animal and 4) Cenotaph; which have been detected in different structures.

### **Elementary Burial with Simple Pit Grave Structure**

It is among the most common practices reported from numerous sites in Khorasan, including ShahrakeFiroozeh (Basafa, 2014 : 257-266), QaraCheshmeh (Basafa, 2015),

Chalo (Vahdati and Bishuneh, 2015), Damghani (Vahdati et al., 2010), Qal'eh Khan (Judi et al., 2011), TepeEshgh (Vahdati, 2014), Razeh (Soroush and Yousefi, 2014) and neighboring areas such as Tepe Hissar (Schmidt, 1933), BazgirTepe (Abbasi, 2015), NargesTepe (Abbasi, 2012), TurengTepe (Deshayes, 1968, Boucharlat and Lecomte, 1987) and Shah Tepe (Arne, 1945) in the Gorgan Plain, GoharTepe of Mazandaran (Moradi, 2013), Shahdad (Hakemi, 2006) and TepeYahya (Karlovsky, 2009) in Kerman, ShahreSukhteh (Keshavarz and Nezami, 2015; Sajjadi, 2009), GonurTepe (Sarianidi, 2008, 2007) and NamazgaTepe (Aleksin, 1983) in Turkmenistan, DashliTepe and SapalliTepe of Afghanistan (Sarianidi, 1984), the Miri-Qalat site in Makran (Besenval, 1997) and Pakistan (Dani and Durrani, 1964).

### **Elementary Burial with Heated Grave Pit Structure**

Pit graves with burnt bed have been reported from the cultural zones of Central Asia in GonurTepeh (Sarianidi, 2007: 54) and Khorasan in Shahrak-e Firoozeh (Basafa, 2014:257-266) and are somewhat compatible with the tradition of cremation. Burial with the heated pit grave structure in the Khorasan zone in Shahrak-e Firoozeh site is of the cenotaph type (Basafa, 2014: 256-262) but includes

human skeletons in GonurTepe in Turkmenistan, which are often irregular, incomplete (secondary) and belong to people with physical defects and disability (Sarianidi, 2007: 36-38).

### **Secondary Burials**

This type of burial is considered a popular tradition in Great Khorasan and Central Asia and its examples have been reported from GonurTepe in Turkmenistan (Sarianidi, 2007: 31,50), and the Shahrak-e Firoozeh site in Neyshabur (Basafa 2014: 258-260) with two structures of pit grave and barrel.

### **Cenotaph**

This is a tomb lacking corpse and erected as a monument. This type of burial with the pit grave structure has been reported from Shahrak-e Firoozeh (Basafa, 2014: 262-264; Fig. 4 and 5), Chalo (Vahdati, 2014: 321 and 2015: 520), Shahdad<sup>5</sup> (Hakemi, 2006: 84-120), Sibri, Quetta (Santoni, 1981: 52-60) and in the tomb with crypt architecture from GonurTepe in Turkmenistan (Sarianidi, 2007: 31, Table VI). The leading Russian archaeologist, Sarianidi believes that burial practices of GonurTepe in Turkmenistan in the New Bronze period have been associated with Zoroastrian ideas (Sarianidi, 2007: 50). Based on the description of funeral in the Zoroastrian

belief, it has been mentioned that “after death, Dorjnasu gallops over the dead body like a fly during which the corpse turns foul and corrupt (Vandidad, 7/2; see Mehdizadeh, 2000: 359); then, after prayer, the corpse is taken into silence crypt or tower and waited for vultures and buzzards to strip the corpse of skin and flesh, after which the bones are dumped into the well in the middle of the Tower of Silence or buried (Mehdizadeh, 2000: 361)”. With this interpretation, the secondary burial, cenotaphs as well as secondary graves can be equaled to the aforementioned mentioned the Zoroastrian funerary traditions, since they are compatible with dumping the bones of the deceased into the well in the middle of the Tower of Silence in Zoroastrian burial rites or burial of bones after the decomposition of flesh and skin in the secondary burial.

### **Common Human-Animal Burial**

This is a burial practice of the late Bronze Age in Khorasan as well as areas under the influence of the BMAC culture. Basically, animals buried together with human corpses are domestic animals such as goats, sheep, dogs and horses. In some cases, individual animal burials have been found in cemeteries of the late Bronze Age, including Chalo site in Khorasan region (Vahdati and Biscione,

1394: 520). Examples of common human-animal burials have so far been retrieved from TepeEshgh (Vahdati, 2014), Chalo (Vahdati and Bishuneh, 2015: 520) and outside Khorasan from Shahr-e Soukhteh (Sajjad, 2007: grave number 1003; Sajjadi 2009; Tosi 2006) and areas under the influence of the BMAC culture, including GonurTepe in Turkmenistan (Sarianidi, 2007: 147), SapalliTepe (Sarianidi, 2001: 434), Jarkutan and one sample from Sarazam in Tajikistan.

In Vandidad, a special location known as Kata has been mentioned that is the house of dead and another place has been cited to be the most bitter grief house as a burial place of cadavers of dead people and dogs (Vandidad, 7/3-11). This section of Vandidad that refers to common burial place of human and animal cadavers (including dogs) represents the link between Zoroastrian ideas and funerary traditions of common human and animal burial. Typical examples include burial of human and dog from TepeEshgh in Bojnord (Vahdati, 2014,) ShahreSukhteh in Sistan (SeyedSajjad, 2007, 2009: grave number 1003) as well as human and goat burial from Chalo site (Vahdati and Bishuneh, 2015).

### **Discussion**

The growing culture of early urbanization in western Central Asia continued during

the Middle Bronze Age (2500-1800 BC) and the rising trend of cultural developments and economic relations with neighboring countries was expanded as early as the third millennium BC (Vahdati, 2015: 41). Expanding urban population in the foothills of the KopetDaghMountains during the Namazga V period resulted in the formation of a significant cultural phenomenon during the Late Bronze period, referred to as Bactria Margiana Archaeological Complex (Namazga VI). The materials of the BMAC culture were soon found their way out of the Oxus basin and northern foothills of KopetDagh and expanded to vast areas of the Iranian plateau and surrounding regions, which is considered the dominant culture of the Bronze Age in Central Asia and indicates an extensive exchange area the Oxus civilization has been associated with (Hiebert, 1988: 7-151).

There are two important points in the advanced BMAC culture. The first is the origin and formation of this culture and the second is its influence zone. Sarianidi, the Russian archaeologist who has explored many aspects of this culture, believes that the Iranian plateau is the origin of the BMAC culture (Sarianidi, 1998: 140). Other researchers rely on endogenous transformation (Hiebert, 1995: 199) while some others believe that raw materials entered into

Merv and turned into finished goods on a large scale (Ibid: 192). Before excavations of the past decade in Khorasan, typical cultural materials of BMAC were reported from sites of northeastern Iran, including Hissar, TurengTepe and Shah Tepe (TahmasebiZaveh, 2015: 3). Exploration of locations associated with the BMAC culture in Khorasan has addressed new data and assumptions on the indigenous nature of this culture in Khorasan and its expansion to surrounding areas and the result of this research also reinforces some aspects of this hypothesis.

The most important cultural materials indicating the expansion of the BMAC culture to neighboring areas have been obtained from funerary contexts. Burial and its requirements, including cultural materials and structure, are effective data to reconstruct the social fabric of communities. For the first time, Alekshin dealt with the study of burial cultures of Central Asia with a new approach. He believes that during late Bronze Age in Turkmenistan corresponding with cultural phase of Namazga VI, a new burial tradition emerges and funerary objects also take a more modern nature, so that new ornaments like bronze bracelets, rings, earrings and hairpins replace bronze blades and other accessories of previous periods, and he attributes this innovation to



new cultural influence from western regions of Turkmenistan (Alekhin, 1983: 138). This is while bronze bracelets that are the most important funerary objects of the BMAC culture have been reported from the Middle Bronze Age culture in North East of Iran (Hissar) as well as South and South East of the Caspian Sea (GoharTepe and NargesTepe) (Moradi, 2013: 38 and Table 4.3; Abbasi, 2011: 122; Schmidt, 1933: P.IV), and such objects probably continued and spread as a traditional symbol in burials of the late Bronze Age in Khorasan and the region under the influence of the BMAC culture. In addition, secondary burials have been found in GonurTepe, and their explorer Sariandi believes that these burial cultures are associated with customs and traditions of the Zoroastrian burial (Sarianidi, 2007: 50). This hypothesis is somewhat reliable according to the late Bronze Age iconography of East Iran and Central Asian works (Sarianidi, 1998 and 1987). Secondary burials of GonurTepe in Turkmenistan and Shahr-e Soukhteh in Sistan (SeyedSajjad, 2007, 2009, Grave 609) have the structure of pit graves and some have architecture. Barrel burials were prevalent before the new Bronze Age in different places and regions, especially in the foothills of KopetDagh.

The secondary burial practices in GonurTepe are limited (3 types) and not a common funerary tradition of this culture (Sarianidi, 2007: 31) and the explorer of this culture believes that the importation of this practice in GonurTepe and Togolok site can be justified (Sarianidi, 1990: 160, N.2). The barrel graves with a different structure as bowl burials in Shahr-e Soukhteh first appeared in the new Bronze Age and barrel burials of South and South East of Caspian Sea also first emerged in late Bronze Age (Moradi, 2013: 43). This is despite the fact that the secondary burials in Khorasan region (ShahrakeFiroozeh) is of barrel grave type and reflects continued burial practices before the new Bronze Age, which is considered an innovation in funerary traditions of Central Asia.

On the other hand, the human-animal burial is among the most common funerary practices of the BMAC culture. With regard to the proposed date of common human-animal burial in the Sarzam region of Tajikistan, which dates back to the end of the fourth millennium and the early third millennium BC according to explorer of this culture, highlighting the history of this burial culture in Tajikistan, it could be inferred that the origin of this burial tradition was cultural regions of southern Tajikistan. It is most likely that this burial tradition continued and spread in the late

Bronze Age to neighboring regions, especially Great Khorasan, the region influenced by the BMAC culture and Central Asia.

Cenotaphs with a variety of structures have been found in GonurTepe in Central Asia but show only the pit grave structure in Khorasan region and Shahrak-e Firoozeh site in Neyshabur. Some archaeologists believe that the tombs without skeleton have been dedicated to people with a special social status; however, Shahrak-e Firoozeh is an exception since no dignity goods have been found, which can contribute to proper understanding of the social status of that type of burial. It should be noted that burials of this type retrieved from GonurTepe in graves with a pit structure were probably related to lower classes of the society. Given the number and pit structure of cenotaphs of the Shahrak-e Firoozeh site relative to archaeological sites in Central Asia, it is clear that the basic structure of this burial tradition (pit graves) has been used in Shahrak-e Firoozeh, indicating a universally prevalent tradition in the Shahrak-e Firoozeh community. Accordingly, this burial tradition cannot be limited to the people with a high social status, but burials of this type with a variety of structures (including chest and crypt) in GonurTepe can be considered an innovation to

cenotaphs, which have emerged with different structures in burial cultures of the GonurTepe community in more recent periods. In addition, in the Chalo site, a cenotaph with local objects of Gorgan Plain gray clay and Hissar IIIC type (Vahdati, 2014: 321) has been found, which implies the indigenous nature of this burial tradition in the Khorasan region.

### **Results**

The late Bronze Age burials in the Khorasan region indicate a close cultural homogeneity of burial traditions of this zone with areas under the influence of the BMAC culture as well as cultural zones of South and South East of the Caspian Sea. Some of these cultural traditions have been common in Great Khorasan from the Early Bronze Age and have influenced the surrounding regions, including Central Asia and southeast of Caspian Sea in a later period (late Bronze Age) during communication processes, cultural ties, spread of communities, individuals, ideas and beliefs. Among burial cultures which can be currently mentioned to have been disseminated into surrounding areas from Great Khorasan based on the bulk of recent studies a) is barrel graves appearing in the late Bronze Age in sites such as EshghTepe in Mazandaran and NargesTepe in Gorgan Plain for the first time as a new tradition b) according to

results of absolute chronology and funerary findings of Shahrak-e Firoozeh site in Neyshabur Plain indicating older age of some phases of this site relative to GonurTepe in Turkmenistan. Moreover, by comparing the size of explorations in Shahrak-e Firoozeh and GonurTepe, it can be said that secondary burial traditions as well as cenotaphs in the burial context of Shahrak-e Firoozeh with overall initial structure of burial pits represented by tombs containing local objects of Gorgan Plain gray clay and Hissar IIIC in the Chalo site penetrated in late Bronze Age during communication and dissemination process in areas under the influence of the BMAC culture- especially GonurTepe in Turkmenistan and merged with indigenous-local burial structures of these areas and eventually led to burial innovations such as cenotaph with chest and crypt (catacomb) structure and secondary burials with diverse structures. This is while the interaction between BMAC cultures with neighboring areas has always been deemed unidirectional from Central Asia to other cultural points while absolute chronology and cultural materials of Shahrak-e Firoozeh indicate older age of some phases relative to GonurTepe and BMAC sites of Central Asia.

Given that the interaction between the BMAC culture and neighboring regions

has always been assumed to be unidirectional; the current qualitative and quantitative archaeological studies in cultural sphere of Great Khorasan have paved the way to revise the assumption that interactions of the late Bronze Age have originated from Central Asia. Up to now, studies on dissemination, interaction and cultural ties of Central Asia during the late Bronze Age (BMAC culture) with neighboring regions have been based on iconography and homogeneity of dignity and luxury objects while a majority of these objects have been retrieved from funerary contexts and are considered the most important and typical findings bearing cultural, social and even economic and political data. What can be concluded from this research is the indigenous source of some burial cultures of Khorasan in the late Bronze Age that penetrated into neighboring areas, especially Central Asia and West Khorasan cultural zones such as Gorgan Plain and southern regions of the Caspian Sea through dissemination and communication processes in material (funerary structures) and spiritual (funerary customs and ideologies) dimensions.

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## فرهنگ‌های تدفینی خراسان در مراحل پایانی دوره مفرغ

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### چکیده

نحوه خاکسپاری مردگان از ملموس‌ترین مدارک جهت بازسازی و شناخت فرهنگ اجتماعات انسانی محسوب شده که دارای ابعاد مادی و غیرمادی است. با مطالعه مدارک مادی کاوش‌های باستان‌شناسان تا حدودی می‌توان بن‌مایه‌های ایدئولوژیک را تفسیر کرد. در این زمینه شناخت شیوه‌های تدفین و تفسیر اشیاء درون گور تبلور فرهنگ و تصورات فلسفی بشری نسبت به جهان دیگر، آداب و رسوم، باورهای مذهبی و همچنین ساختارها و پیچیدگی‌های اجتماعی است. حوزه فرهنگی خراسان بزرگ به‌عنوان یک هسته و منطقه فرهنگی ویژه با داشتن اهمیت استراتژیک (همسایگی با مناطق فرهنگی متعدد با محوریت جاده باستانی خراسان بزرگ) با کمبود پژوهش‌ها در این زمینه روبه‌رو است هر چند که در سال‌های اخیر با کاوش‌های باستان‌شناسی انجام‌شده مدارک مادی ویژه‌ای کشف شده است. نوشتار حاضر شامل دو بخش مطالعه ساختاری تدفین‌ها در مراحل پایانی دوره مفرغ با رویکرد مقایسه است که در نگاه کلی شامل تهی‌گور، اولیه، ثانویه و مشترک انسانی-حیوانی می‌شوند و ریشه‌شناسی و منشا فرهنگ‌های تدفینی است. ارزیابی مدارک نشان از همگونی شیوه‌های تدفین خراسان در دوره مفرغ پایانی با فرهنگ پیشرفته بلخی-مرویی در آسیای میانه دارد که حوزه پراکنش آن علاوه بر خراسان در افغانستان، پاکستان، جنوب شرق ایران، قفقاز و مناطق جنوب خلیج فارس مستند شده است.

واژه‌های کلیدی: خراسان، دوره مفرغ پایانی، فرهنگ‌های تدفینی، آسیای میانه، فرهنگ بلخی-مرویی.

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