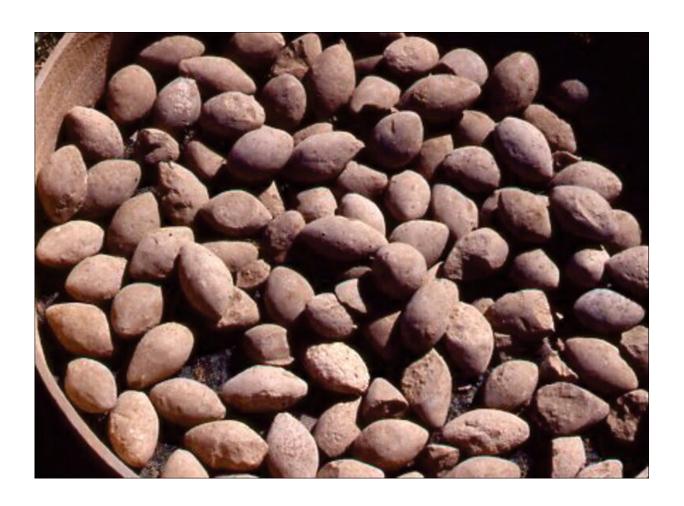


White Monument in Syria could be oldest known war memorial

June 3 2021, by Bob Yirka



Biconical pellets from Tell Banat North (figure courtesy of the Euphrates Salvage Project). Credit: *Antiquity* (2021). DOI: 10.15184/aqy.2021.58

A team of researchers from the University of Toronto, the Euphrates



Salvage Project and the University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology has found evidence that suggests the White Monument in Syria could be the oldest known war memorial. In their paper published in Cambridge University Press's, *Antiquity*, the group describes their study of material found in the earth mound before it disappeared beneath the water when the area was permanently flooded due to construction of the Tishrin Dam.

Back in the 1980s and 1990s, archeologists were allowed to excavate the White Monument, located near the Euphrates River in Syria—prior to flooding. In so doing, they found evidence of approximately 30 bodies buried thousands of years ago along with other artifacts. In this new effort, the researchers took a new look at what had been found in the monument and found patterns that had not been noticed before.

In looking at the arrangement of the bones and other artifacts in the monument, the researchers found there were some patterns—clusters of bones were paired with certain artifacts. Some groups, for example, were paired with collections of pellets (ammunition for slingshots). Other clusters were made up of human bones placed near bones from donkey-like animals (paintings of the time showed they were used to pull carts or



chariots.)

Taken together, the researchers suggest the mound had been created by the Mesopotamian people to serve as a large war memorial, though it was not clear if those interred were friends or foes.

More information: Anne Porter et al, "Their corpses will reach the base of heaven": a third-millennium BC war memorial in northern Mesopotamia?, *Antiquity* (2021). DOI: 10.15184/aqy.2021.58

© 2021 Science X Network

Citation: White Monument in Syria could be oldest known war memorial (2021, June 3) retrieved 23 June 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2021-06-white-monument-syria-oldest-war.html

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.