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Melissa Chowning

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Change in Nonspecific Disease through Time in Durres, Albania

Melissa Chowning, *Anthropology*

Faculty Sponsor: Britney Kyle

This study addresses changing levels of skeletal stress in a population from Durres, Albania during periods of Greek and Roman occupation. We test the hypothesis that levels of nonspecific stress, evidenced by cribra orbitalia, porotic hyperostosis, and linear enamel hypoplasia, increased through time. To test this hypothesis, 116 skeletons from Durres, Albania were observed for evidence of cribra orbitalia, porotic hyperostosis, and linear enamel hypoplasia using standard data collection protocols. The skeletons were observed from the Greek to the Late Roman periods. Skeletal stress increased from the Greek to the Late Roman period (40% to 45.8% for cribra orbitalia (n=39), 27.8% to 28.6% for porotic hyperostosis (n=46), and 57.1% to 74.4% for linear enamel hypoplasia (n=57)). However, none of these differences were statistically significant. Although skeletal stress did increase somewhat through time, lack of statistical significance means that we cannot support our hypothesis with these data. The slightly higher levels of physiological stress we observed could have been caused by larger populations living in one area or increasing migration that introduced new diseases into the area. Small sample sizes make interpretation of these data difficult.