

## PRELIMINARY REPORT OF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY IN SARBAZ COUNTY (CENTRAL AND PISHIN PARTS)

Hossein SARHADDI-DADIAN 

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Art and Architecture, University of Zabol, Zabol, Iran, (hsarhaddi@uoz.ac.ir).

Received: 30 November 2023

Accepted: 25 April 2024

Available online: 20 June 2024

**Abstract:** This paper is the result of the report of the Sarbaz Archaeological Survey (Central and Pishin parts), which has been done based on license No. 81/208/862 of the Archaeological Research Institute of the country and the support of the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism of Sistan and Baluchistan Province. Sarbaz County with an area of 4900 km<sup>2</sup> is one of the newly established cities in Sistan and Baluchistan province. This county, next to the Sarbaz River, is one of the most important rivers in the Baluchistan region of Iran, which passes through the Makran Mountains of Iran and eventually flows into the Sea of Oman. During the study of the southern parts of Sarbaz, several sites have been identified, from the prehistoric era to the present. Studies in the southern parts of Sarbaz County showed that from the third millennium BC until now, two factors have been more effective than other factors in the formation and expansion of the area. First, it is the general factor of the natural environment that has acted as a deterrent in this region. In large parts of the Sarbaz River, especially in the central and southern parts, it has shown its impact on the area of the sites, the thickness of the ancient layers, and the quality of cultural materials on the surface of each site. The second factor is interregional trade in a large area of southeastern Iran, which during the third millennium as a dynamic factor in the whole region from Kerman to Sistan and Baluchistan has acted positively, and wherever there has been a relatively favorable natural environment, it has led to the creation and expansion of settlements in the region. On the southern bank of the Sarbaz River on the border between Iran and Pakistan, this factor has acted as an influential factor and has established relatively large sites. The diversity of cultural materials on the surface of some of them is remarkable. Recent studies in this area show that, during the third millennium, this area has been one of the dynamic areas in establishing prominent connections between the central regions of Baluchistan, Iran on the one hand and Makran Pakistan, and the southern margin of the Oman Sea and the Persian Gulf on the other. Currently, this region is on the transit route of goods from the very important port of Chabahar, located on the bank of the Makran Sea and it is trying to return to the important position and role of its economic and cultural relations as in the past. The above-mentioned archaeological study was performed with two important purposes: First, to identify and specify the scattered sites in this county to prepare an archaeological map, which is one of the important policies of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization. Second, identify and reconstruct the commercial role and regional and trans-regional cultural interactions based on archaeological evidence.

**Keywords:** Sarbaz County, Baluchistan, prehistoric era, historical era, Islamic era.

**چکیده:** این مقاله حاصل گزارش بررسی باستان‌شناسی سرباز (بخش مرکزی و پیشین) است که بر اساس مجوز شماره ۸۶۲/۲۰۸/۸۱ پژوهشکده باستان‌شناسی کشور و حمایت اداره کل میراث فرهنگی، صنایع دستی و گردشگری استان سیستان و بلوچستان انجام شده است. شهرستان سرباز با ۴۹۰۰ کیلومتر مربع وسعت یکی از شهرستان‌های تازه تاسیس استان سیستان و بلوچستان است. این شهرستان در کنار رودخانه سرباز یکی از رودخانه‌های مهم منطقه بلوچستان ایران است که از میان رشته کوه‌های مکران ایران می‌گذرد و در نهایت به دریای عمان می‌ریزد. طی بررسی قسمت‌های جنوبی سرباز، محوطه‌های متعددی از دوران پیش از تاریخ تا به امروز شناسایی شده است. مطالعات انجام شده در بخش‌های جنوبی شهرستان سرباز نشان داد که از هزاره سوم قبل از میلاد تا کنون دو عامل بیش از سایر عوامل در شکل‌گیری و گسترش منطقه موثر بوده است. اول اینکه عامل اصلی محیط طبیعی است که به عنوان یک عامل بازدارنده در این منطقه عمل کرده است. در بخش‌های وسیعی از رودخانه سرباز، به‌ویژه در بخش‌های مرکزی و جنوبی، تأثیر خود را بر مساحت محوطه‌ها، ضخامت لایه‌های باستانی و کیفیت مواد فرهنگی در سطح هر محوطه نشان داده است. عامل دوم تجارت بین منطقه‌ای در گستره وسیعی از جنوب شرق ایران است که در طول هزاره سوم ق.م به عنوان عاملی پویا در کل منطقه از کرمان تا سیستان و بلوچستان مثبت عمل کرده و هر جا که محیط طبیعی نسبتاً مساعدی وجود داشته است، سبب ایجاد و گسترش سکونتگاه‌ها در منطقه شده است. در کرانه جنوبی رودخانه سرباز در مرز ایران و پاکستان، این عامل به عنوان یک عامل تأثیرگذار عمل کرده و سکونتگاه‌های نسبتاً وسیعی را ایجاد کرده است. تنوع مواد فرهنگی در سطح برخی از آنها قابل توجه است. مطالعات اخیر در این زمینه نشان می‌دهد که در هزاره سوم ق.م، این منطقه یکی از مناطق پویا در ایجاد ارتباط برجسته بین مناطق مرکزی بلوچستان ایران از یک سو و مکران پاکستان و حاشیه جنوبی دریای عمان و خلیج فارس از سوی دیگر بوده است. در حال حاضر این منطقه در مسیر ترانزیتی کالا از بندر بسیار مهم چابهار واقع در کرانه دریای مکران قرار دارد و در تلاش است تا مانند گذشته به جایگاه و نقش مهم روابط اقتصادی و فرهنگی خود بازگردد. مطالعه باستان‌شناسی فوق با دو هدف مهم انجام شد: اول شناسایی و مشخص کردن محوطه‌های پراکنده در این شهرستان برای تهیه نقشه باستان‌شناسی که یکی از سیاست‌های مهم سازمان میراث فرهنگی، صنایع دستی و گردشگری است. دوم، شناسایی و بازسازی نقش تجاری و تعاملات فرهنگی منطقه‌ای و فرمانطقه‌ای بر اساس شواهد باستان‌شناسی.

**کلیدواژه:** شهرستان سرباز، بلوچستان، دوران پیش از تاریخ، دوران تاریخی، دوران اسلامی.

## I. Introduction

Sarbaz County is located in the southern half of Sistan and Baluchistan province. This county is bordered by Iranshahr County from the north, Pakistan from the east, Chabahar County from the south, and Nikshahr County from the west (Fig. 1). Sarbaz area is one of the mountainous areas of the province, which is known for its dense Makran mountain range. This compaction in this area is much higher than in other areas and continues to Dashtyari plain from Chabahar County in the south of the county (Seyed Sajjadi, 1995: 86). The density of mountains in this part has become one of the obstacles to the formation of large human settlements during different times in the region. Despite the permanent Sarbaz River, it has again had an increasing impact on the environment and geography, and how they are established (Fig. 1).

The Sarbaz River is the most important water source in the region and originates from the Khash Mountains in the north. The River flows through large parts of this county from north to south, to the southern part of the Pishin region, on the border of Chabahar. Then in this part, the density of mountains is reduced and the amount of flat land is increased. In this region, the seasonal River Lashar originates from the west and the valleys of Nikshahr (Soltani, 2010), and after its path to the east, it joins the Sarbaz River in this part and flows its way to the southeast. The River flows into the Sarbaz in the Hodar region of the Pishin section southwest of the county center (Fig. 1). This River crosses the mountains of the Sarbaz region and merges with the Kajo River, which also originates from the Nikshahr mountains in the west of Sarbaz, and takes a path to the southeast. Then, under the name of Bahu Qalat, it flows in the flat plain and fertile sediment of Dashtyari and finally flows into the Makran Sea (Oman) near Goater Bay in the east of Chabahar and the border of Iran and Pakistan (Fig. 1). This study was carried out as a survey along the Sarbaz River and collecting surface cultural materials from the sites has been randomly done. Based

on what has been said and the authors' regional observations, the southern half of the Sarbaz River can be divided into three parts or geographical areas according to the existing Bronze Age settlements:

1- The central region of the Sarbaz River, has dense mountains, the highest density of which is seen in the area of Sarbaz castle, and then in the central region or the central part, this density is slightly reduced and the amount of flatlands is increased. In this section, the bed of tributaries that flow from the east and west to the Sarbaz River can be seen (Fig. 2).

2- The southern part of the Sarbaz River, starts south of the town of Rask and continues to the Pishin basin. This basin has flat rocky lands on the banks of the Sarbaz River. Most of these flatlands are very high from the Riverbed, and only in some places is easy to access the Riverbed. In this section, the seasonal Ashar River in the Hodar region reaches the Sarbaz River and at this point forms a fertile agricultural area (Fig. 3).

3- The third region is geographically the southeastern region of the county on the border of Pishin and Pakistan. Unlike the central part, this region has flatlands, which are bordered by Chabahar County from the south, and flatlands of the Dashtyari region. This region is the end basin of the Sarbaz River. This area has more flat land and the water flow in it is softer and of course more controllable. In the southern part of this part, especially in the agricultural area along the Sarbaz River, flat lands with suitable water have helped to form human settlements in the prehistoric era. We are facing the highest density of prehistoric sites in this area, and even some of these monuments are hill-shaped and with a significant protrusion from the surface of the flat land. 121 ancient sites were identified, including mounds, grounds, cemeteries, and buildings in the two central parts and Pishin. Due to the large volume of findings, we try to deal with them briefly in two parts the Bronze Age, and the historical, and Islamic eras (Fig. 4).

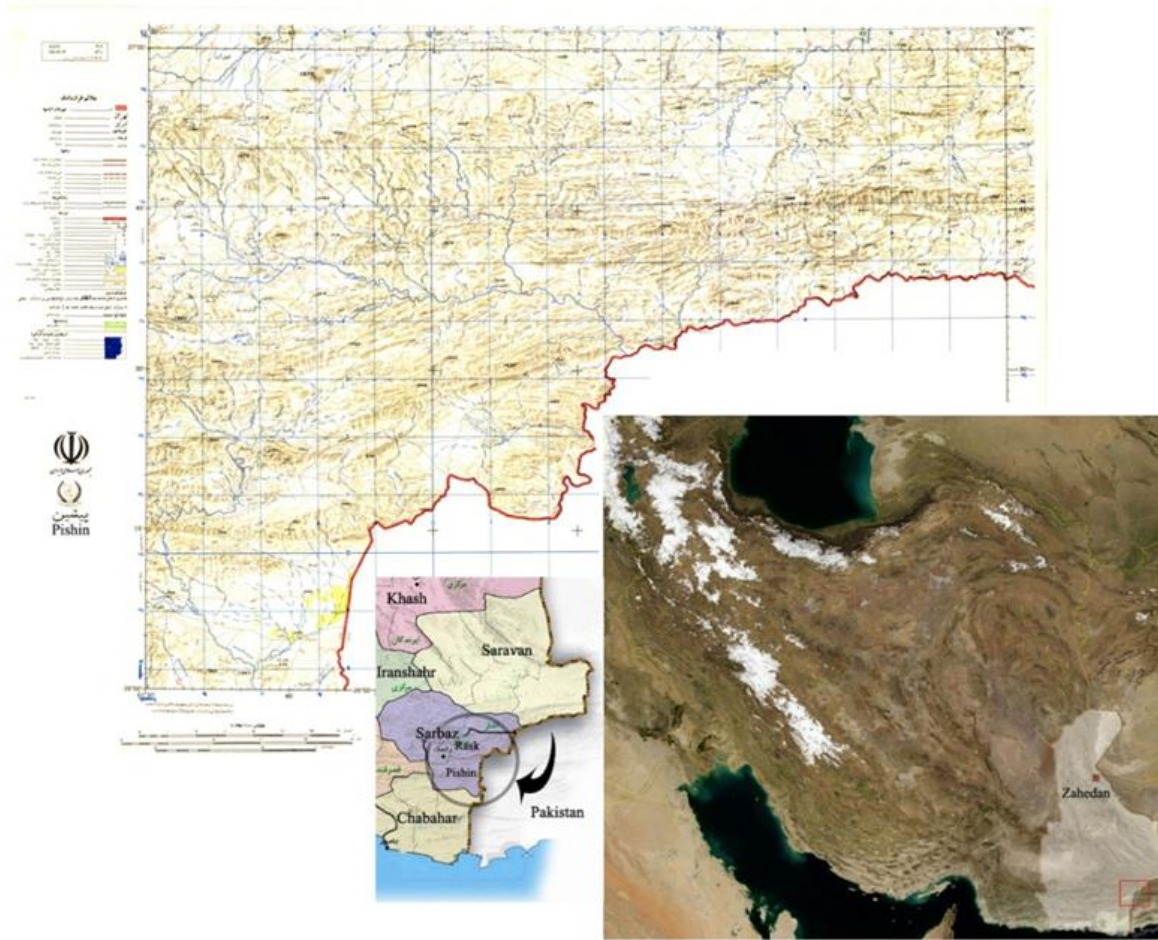


Figure 1. Satellite image of Iran and the study area along the Sarbaz River in Sistan and Baluchistan Province with a map of 1/250,000 of the Geographical Organization of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran.



Figure 2. Density of mountainous texture in the central part of Sarbaz River.



Figure 3. The deep bed of the Sarbaz River in parts of the southern basin.

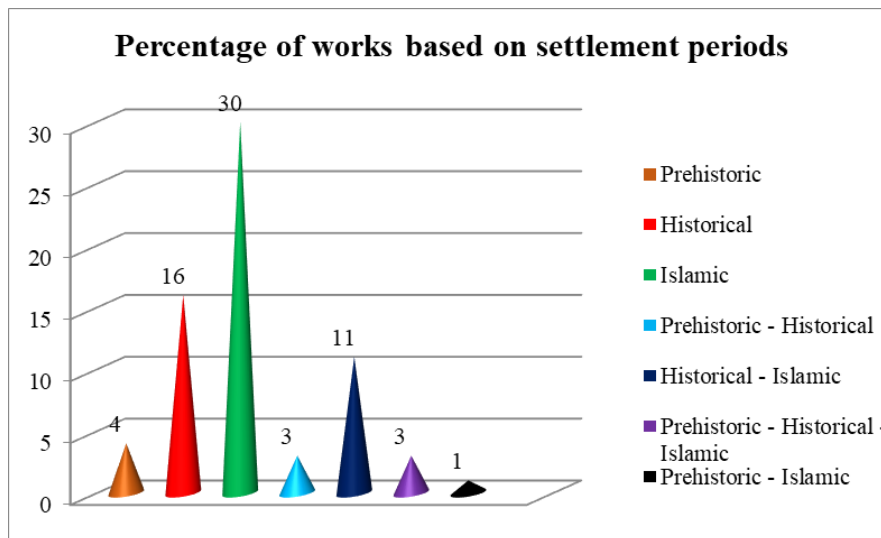


Figure 4. Percentage of scattering of cultural and historical monuments in the central part of Sarbaz County.

## II. Bronze Age sites along the Sarbaz River

Based on environmental characteristics, the concentration of Bronze Age areas along the Sarbaz River can be examined in two different areas, one is the Rask and Parud area or the central part of the Sarbaz County and the other is the Keshari area (Sarhaddi-Dadian, 2021) or Mola Abad area.

### 1. Rask and Parud areas (central part)

This part has flat and rocky lands on the banks of the permanent Sarbaz River. Most of the flatlands are

very high from the Riverbed and only in some places easy access to the Riverbed is possible. Perhaps, the constant flow of water has caused another area for the formation of Bronze Age settlements along the Sarbaz River, but not with much concentration in this area (about 4 sites) (Sarhaddi-Dadian & Moradi, 2008). This part has dense mountains with a rocky slope and except on the River bank, there is no flat land for farming. Prehistoric settlements have been formed on the terrace of the Sarbaz River (Seyed Sajjadi, 1995: 86). Here, unlike the central area, there are flat lands for agriculture.

**Hashem Abad site:** This site is located on the eastern bank of the Sarbaz River, 2 km south of Hashem Abad village (Fig. 5). On the ground, the remains of rooms made of large rubble in a regular quadrangle are quite visible, whose existing height is not more than a few centimeters, and they are comparable with the settlements on the outskirts of Mashkid (Moradi, 2007) and the center of Afghanistan (Davis & Dupree, 1997: fig.7). The dimensions of this area are about 50 × 50 m and simple gray and red wares are scattered on its surface. A piece of stone tool (a large black stone scythe) was also obtained from this area. Other available

cultural materials include contemporary red-ware related to nomads.

**Forest (Jangal) site:** This area is located on the eastern side of the Sarbaz River, 300 m south of Hashem Abad village. The dimensions of this area are 100 × 200 m and on its surface, stone ridges can be seen like the margin of Mashkid. Surface pottery is mostly red and gray wares. A piece of pottery with the role of nesting triangles comparable to Bampur I-IV was obtained (DeCardi, 1970: fig.20). In the southern corner of this site, there is an Islamic cemetery that belongs to the nomads of the region (Figs. 6 and 7).



Figure 5. Hashem Abad site, western view and along the Sarbaz River.



Figure 6. Forest site, along the Sarbaz River in the central area.

**Beris site:** This site is located 25 km north of Rask City and on the east side of Peshamag road. On the southern front is a valley that flows into a tributary of the Sarbaz River. The area consists of an impressive ridge 4 m high and 20 m in diameter. On the surface of this mound, there is evidence of stone architecture with mud mortar comparable to Shah Tomp and Miri Qalat

(Besenval, 2005: figs. 5-6). In addition, there are fine and patterned red and gray wares belonging to the third millennium, whose geometric patterns with Miri Qalat IIIb pottery (Didier 2007: fig. 30) and the goat motif with the Bampur IV style are comparable (DeCardi, 1970: fig. 30). Dambi tombs belonging to the Parthian period can be seen in and around this area (Fig. 8).

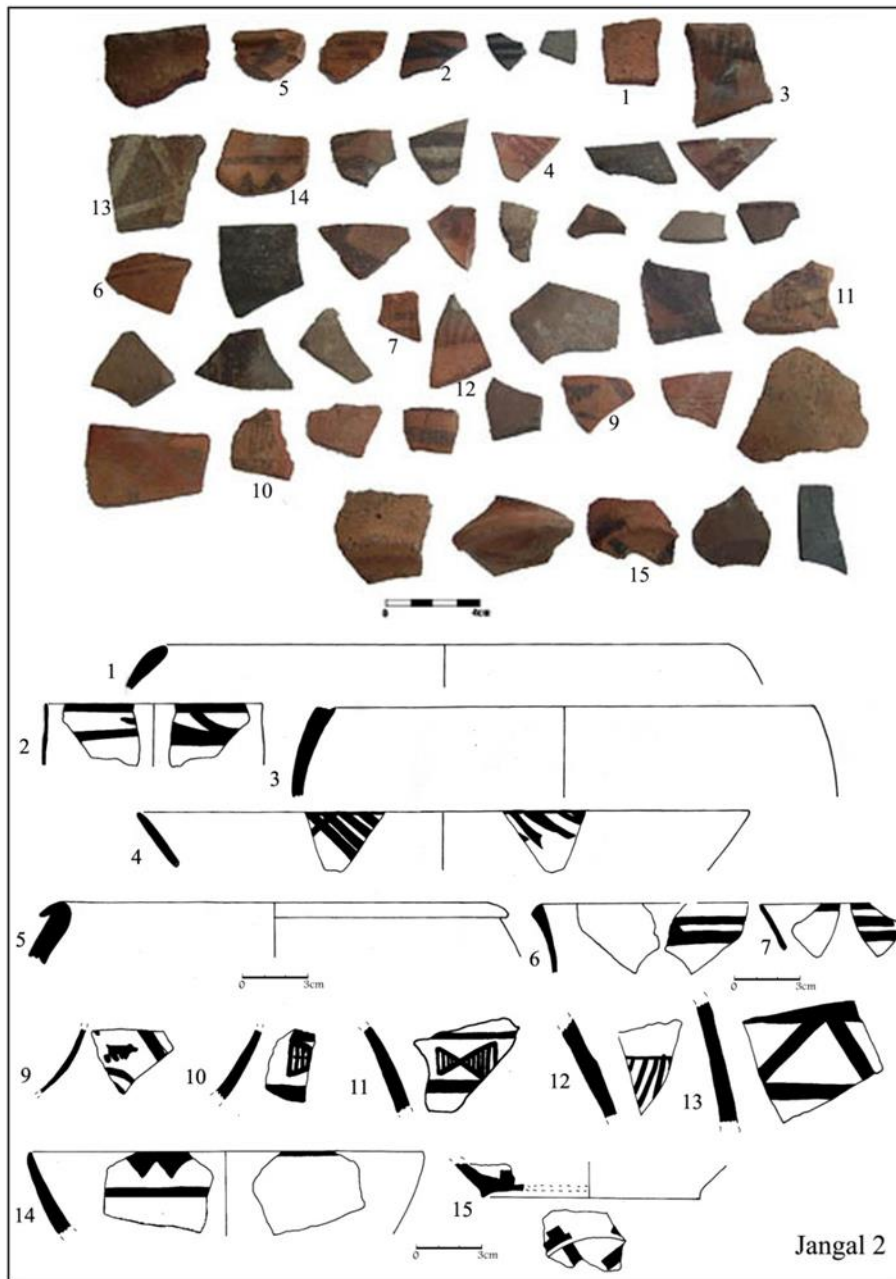


Figure 7. Surface pottery from the Forest site.

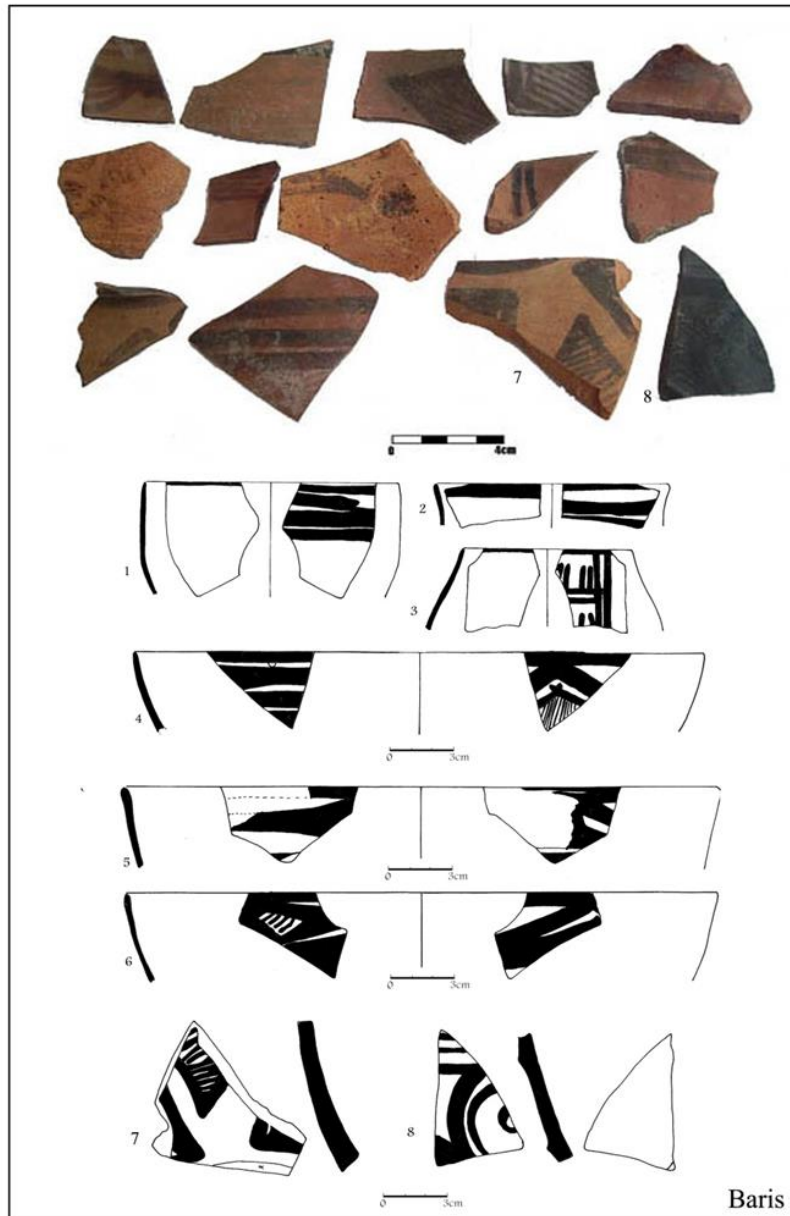


Figure 8. Surface pottery from the Beris site.

## 2. Pishin and Keshari areas

Pishin is one of the most important points of the province on the border with Pakistan. In fact, due to the flat plain, the border is one of the points and centers of trade with Pakistan. Evidence suggests that this plain is thought to have been a gateway for the exchange of goods and culture with the civilizations of the Indus Valley and Baluchistan among the impassable Sarbaz Mountains and that it played an important role in the past, especially in the Bronze Age (Sarhaddi-Dadian et al., 2020).

Keshari area is bordered by Chabahar County from the south and the flatlands of Dashtyari region and

borders with Pakistan from the east. It is the end basin of the Sarbaz River in the mountainous region. In the Keshari region along the Sarbaz River, flat lands with suitable water have helped to form human settlements in the prehistoric era, and we have the highest density of prehistoric sites (about 12) (Sarhaddi-Dadian & Moradi, 2008; Sarhaddi-Dadian, 2021) in the face of this area (Fig. 9). As mentioned before, all these conditions, in addition to the proximity to the sea, have led to the formation of Bronze Age settlements in this area, and in some cases, even in other places, have a significant advantage.

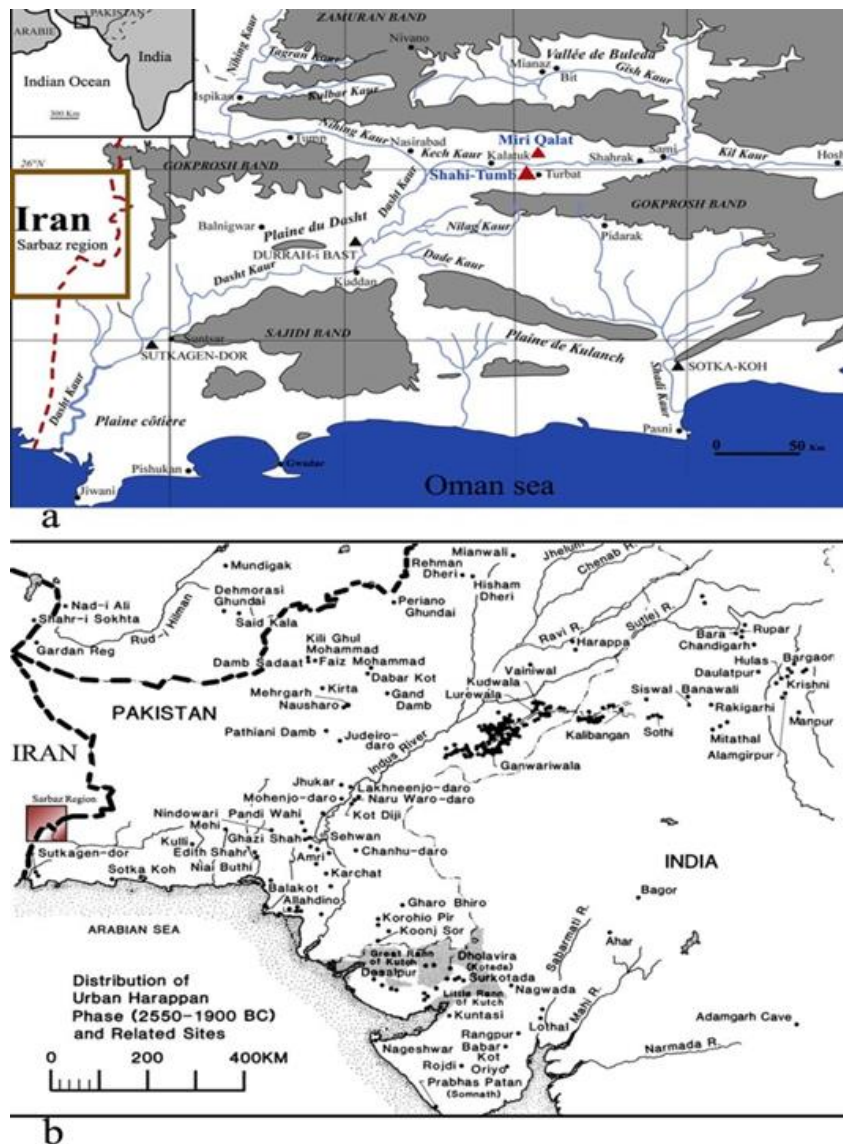


Figure 9. The distribution of important sites in the Indus Valley and Baluchistan of Pakistan along with the location of the basin has been studied; a: (after Besenval and Didier 2005: fig.2 and Didier 2007), b: (after Posshel 1998: fig.2 / 1).

**Tepe Keshari (Hassan):** This site is located in the Keshari plain (present Mola Abad) between two sedimentary mountains with a small height above sea level. This mound has a significant protrusion from the surrounding land surface. On the surface of this area, there is a scattering of red and gray pottery, plain and painted, and stone tools, including small blades and blades, as well as marble utensils and shells in abundance (Fig. 10) (Sarhaddi-Dadian, 2021). The pottery of this area is red and gray with geometric patterns including hatched triangles and triangles with parallel zigzags and opposite triangles, which is more comparable to Miri Qalat IIIb (Didier, 2007). On the other hand, it shows the similarities of clay with Bampur, although to a lesser extent (Fig. 11). On the surface of this area, pieces of marble utensils, two pieces

of soapstone vessels, and stone tools can be seen. The stone tools of this area include red stone blades for harvesting agricultural products, which are mixed tools (Fig. 12).

**Tepe Keshari 2:** The height of this mound reaches about 3 m and its surface is covered with anxious stone ridges. Most of the available pottery is red and decorated with geometric patterns. The pottery motifs include wavy bands, and horizontal and vertical parallel bands that are comparable to Miri Qalat IIIb. The surface of the mound is covered with anxious ridges as well as architectural works. Further, architectural works including rooms with a right corner can be seen, which seem to be comparable to the royal architecture of Shahi Tomp and Miri Qalat.



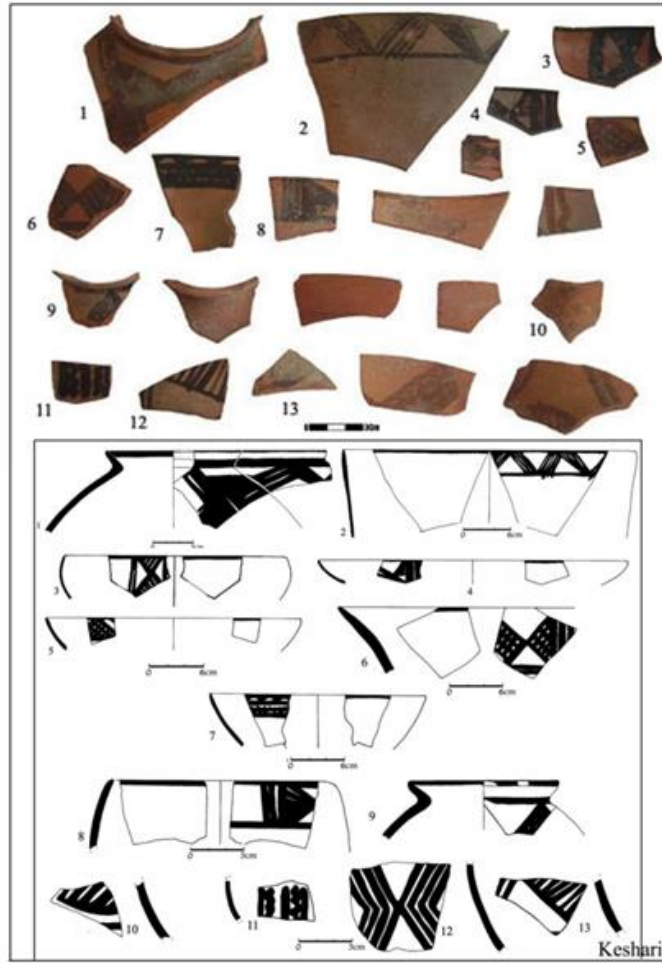


Figure 10. Surface pottery from the Keshari site.

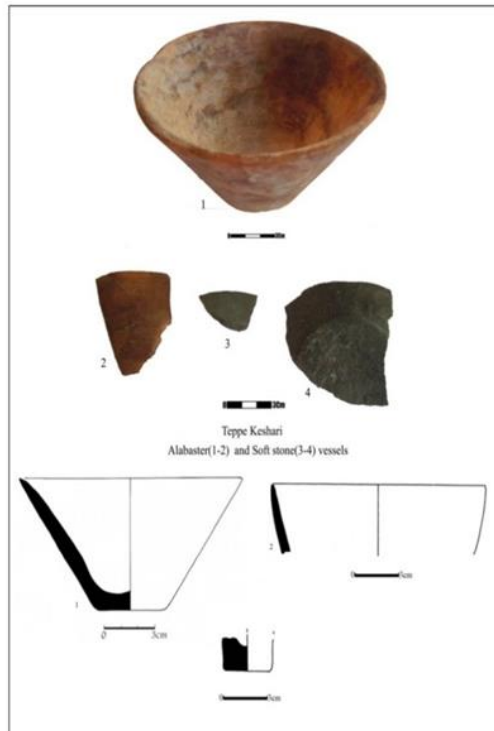


Figure 11. Marble dishes and soapstone obtained from the surface of Keshari site.

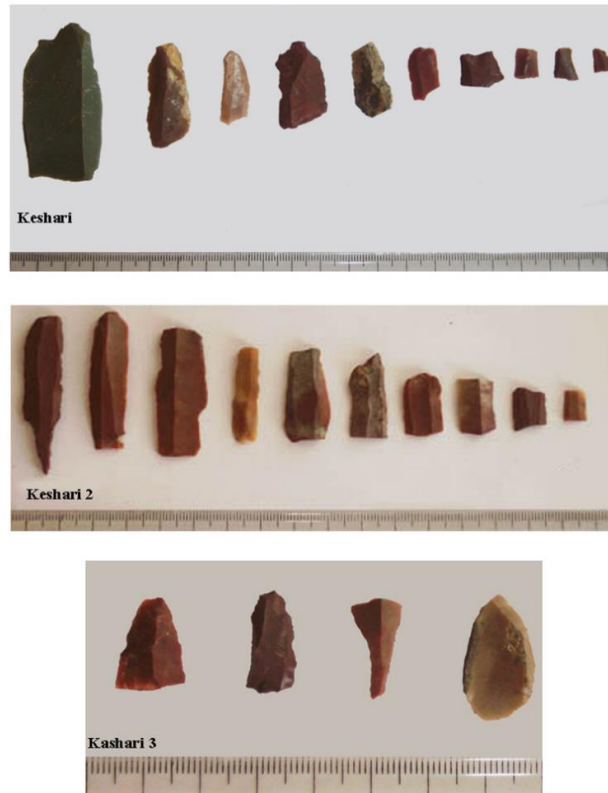


Figure 12. Stone tools of Tepe Keshari.

**Tepe Parud Qalat:** This mound has a significant retreat from the surrounding land surface and its surface is covered with anxious rock ridges (Fig. 13). On the surface of this area, scattered red and gray pottery can be seen in abundance and painted in abundance, and in fact, they are composed of two protrusions, which were one part in the past, but are now divided into two mounds due to the construction of agricultural land. Architectural works such as stone walls can be seen on

this mound. The pottery on this site is in two ranges of plain gray and patterned and simple red and patterned with simple geometric patterns such as hatched edges and parallel oblique lines around the edge (Fig. 14). Architectural works such as stone walls can be seen on this mound. The pottery on this site is in two ranges: plain gray and engraved and plain red and engraved with simple geometric patterns such as hashed edges and parallel oblique lines around the edge (Fig. 14).



Figure 13. The Parud Qalat site, south view of Sarbaz River and Keshari site.



Figure 14. Surface pottery from the Parud Qalat site.

**Tepe Qalat Pishin:** This site is located on a sedimentary and earthen bed in Pishin County. This site is a circular mound with dimensions of  $50 \times 50$  m and is one of the few mounds in Sarbaz County, which is noteworthy due to its location on sedimentary land with agricultural potential. The surrounding vegetation is also relatively green and palm and reed bushes can be seen. On the surface of this mound, local red pottery

with perforated motifs and also painted motifs that belong to the late Islamic era can be seen. Prehistoric pottery is found on the edge of the mound, especially in the cuts. The pottery of this area is painted red and gray, and the pottery pieces show the dual effect of the Indus Valley and Bampur. A piece of gray pottery with the head of a cow was also seen, as in the case of Mehy and Coli (Jarrige & Lechevallier, 1979: fig. 24.6) (Fig. 15).

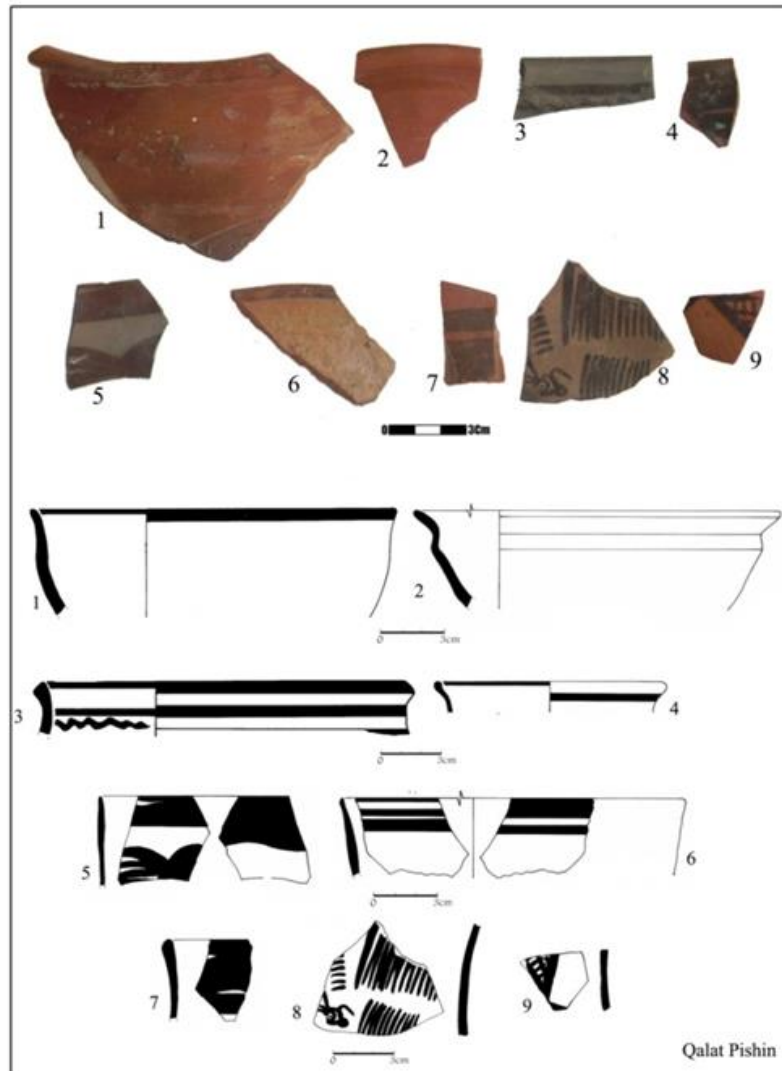


Figure 15. Surface pottery from Tepe Qalat Pishin.

### III. Historical and Islamic sites of Sarbaz County

Historical and Islamic sites, like the prehistoric era, are located along the Sariaz River or its catchments, which show the importance of this River in creating human settlements in different historical era. The tomb called Dambi, first named by Aurel Stein, is found in some places scattered in the highlands, most likely belonging to nomadic groups. Here some of them will be briefly discussed.

**Dambi Beris 2 Cemetery:** This cemetery is located in Parud village, 32 km north of Rask City, with a longitude of 61 22 421 and a width of 180 23 26 with an

area of 5000 m<sup>2</sup>. The surface of the cemetery consists of 6 to 7 dumb ridges, which according to the evidence, the number of dumb-shaped tombs in the past was more than today, which is probably due to the smoothness of this part and the reuse of dumb ridges by nomads in later periods. Has suffered from severe surface erosion (Fig. 16). The artifacts collected from the surface of the area include pottery, which is simple except for one piece called nomadic pottery. The pottery has red paste and mineral chamotte. Jar and bowl forms are the most common type of pottery. Also on the surface of this area, architectural works can be seen, which include a very simple stone wall (Fig. 17).

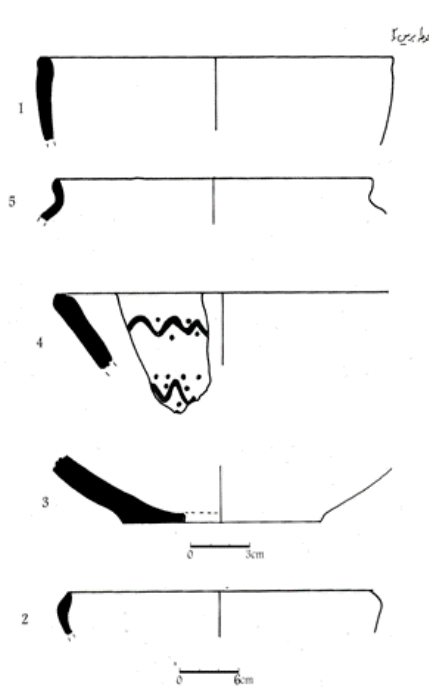


Figure 16. Surface Pottery from Dambi Beris 2 Cemetery.



Figure 17. Dambi Beris Cemetery.

**Dambi Hashem Abad:** This site is located in Parud district, 25 km north of Rask City, with a longitude of 61 21 278 and a latitude of 180 19 26. The number of Dambi in this area is 7 to 8. The Dambi of this area, like other Parthian Dambi sites in this area, have been destroyed due to atmospheric and human erosion in later periods, and only their plan can be seen on the ground (Fig. 18).

The materials collected from the surface of the site include a piece of furniture that 4 pieces were selected for the design. They have one piece of buff paste and the rest of the red paste. There are various decorations on the pottery. For example, one has added decoration and the other has carved. Besides, the grooved decoration can be seen on one piece. Glazed pottery can also be seen in this collection, on which black patterns can be seen. Pottery fireclay mortar is a mineral and has good cooking (Fig. 19).



Figure 18. Dambi Hashem Abad Cemetery.



Figure 19. Surface pottery from Dambi Hashem Abad Cemetery.

**Sirjan Site:** This site is located 25 km south of Jakigur village and 1 km east of Sirjan village on the western edge of Lashar Kahi River terrace and in length: 61 19 377 and latitude: 26 11 105. On the surface of the area, pottery from the historical (Parthian) period is very little scattered. Of course, it should be noted that this area has been inhabited for two periods, because apart

from the pottery of the historical era, late Islamic pottery can be seen, which shows the resettlement by local tribes. Parthian pottery, although slightly scattered on the surface of the area, according to their designs are the leading species of Londo pottery. This area is located on a bed of black pebbles. There is no vegetation on the surface of the cemetery (Fig. 20).



Figure 20. The Sirjan site, view from the north.

#### Description of findings:

The artifacts collected from the surface of the area are basalts that can be divided into two groups.

A- Simple pottery includes 1 piece of wheel buff ware with fireclay mortar mineral and sufficient baking that is part of the bottom of the dish.

B- Engraved pottery includes 4 pieces of the body with red paste and sufficient baking that has fireclay mortar mineral. On three pieces of pottery, patterns are drawn in black and in one case in brown. Except for the design of one of the potteries, which evokes animal branches in the mind, the rest are geometric patterns (Fig. 21).

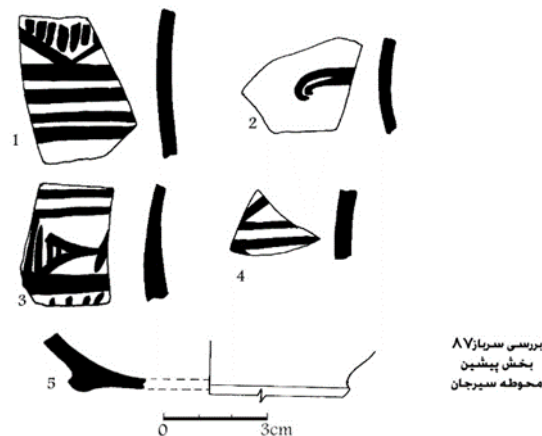


Figure 21. Surface pottery from Sirjan site.

**Hodar Dambi 1:** This site is located 30 km south of Rask, 3 km west of Hodar Banda village, and 300 m north of Hodar Castle at longitude: 61 26 339 and latitude: 26 09 280. This cemetery should be in a historical complex with an Islamic castle and cemetery. Considered. This cemetery, which is located on the edge of the Ashar River, has a large number of Dambi, the plan and prominence of some of which are visible. There are two types of graves on the surface of the cemetery in terms of appearance: A: Graves with

rectangular masonry, a significant percentage of which have a rectangular arrangement. B: Circular tombs that are very few in number and structurally similar to other Dambi in the region. Also on the surface of this cemetery, the remains of architectural works of stone walls with a right-angle plan can be identified, which indicates the establishment in the Islamic era, because several new Islamic tombs can be seen in the northern corner of the Parthian cemetery (Fig. 22).



Figure 22. Dambi Hodar 1 Cemetery.

In this cemetery, the scattering of pottery of the historical era (Parthian) can be seen, especially the type called Lundo pottery, which contributes significantly to the history of this cemetery, but in general, the discovered pottery can be divided into two groups, which are as follows:

A- Simple: It consists of 2 pieces of red edges with mineral chamotte that have the shape of a bowl and

their surface is covered with a thin slip and they have enough cooking.

B- Engraved: Consists of two pieces of red body with black geometric patterns consisting of parallel horizontal and vertical lines and wavy lines drawn on them (Fig. 23).

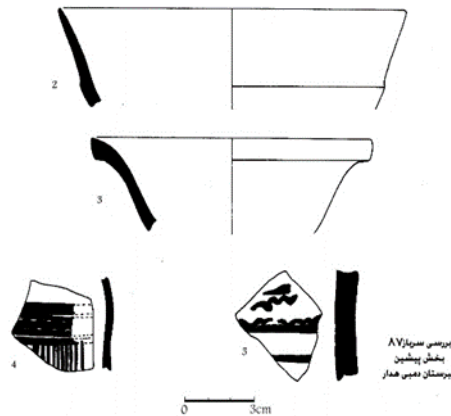


Figure 23. Surface pottery from Dambi Hodar 1 Cemetery.

**Gurshun Cemetery:** This site is located 55 km southeast of Rask, 3 km north of Pishin, at 61 44 189 longitude and 26 82 650 latitude. This 7000 square meter cemetery is one of the largest cemeteries in Pishin district. There are about 80 graves in this cemetery, according to studies and physical evidence, two types of graves can be identified, which are as follows:

A: Tombs with landmarks, this type of tombs are made of two stones that are buried longitudinally on

both sides of the grave and the distance between the two landmarks varies from 40 to 100 cm depending on the appearance of the tombs.

B: Stone ridge tombs that are very few in number. These tombs have a circular shape (Fig. 24) and the boundaries of the tombs are marked with natural rectangular stones. The ridges and crevices of these tombs are also so low that only the boundaries of the tombs can be identified.





Figure 24. Gurshun Cemetery surface.

No cultural items such as pottery were discovered on the surface of the cemetery to provide an accurate history. However, according to the tombstone of sign stone, type A, which is a common tradition in Baluchistan today, the history of this cemetery can be attributed to the late Islamic era.

**Kuhe Gerde site:** The Kuhe Gerde site is so named because it is located on a rocky mountain attributed to Gerde. This site is located 500 m south of Hodar, Jakigur village, along the length of 61 26 484 and the width 26 08 307 and the height of 1242 meters above sea level (Fig. 25).

This site is a large group shelter with an area of 30,000 m<sup>2</sup> on a mountain with an incomplete conical peak, the top of which can be seen as a flat surface. At the top of the mountain, a very large area can be seen, which is covered with single stone rooms, all of which are built in a very simple and rectangular shape without

any mortar, and no care has been required in their construction. The complex of this building does not show any geometric order that indicates a previous plan for construction and can be seen on the edge of the mountain in the eastern part of the stone fence, which was built to increase the safety of the complex. In addition, access to the site is very difficult and tedious. This mountain is very significant in terms of security due to its natural structure. Scattered pottery on this site is probably all storage containers due to its roughness, and no delicate utensils such as bowls, glasses, and painted plates were found. Due to the natural defense structure of the complex and the presence of rough storage pottery, it can be concluded that this area was used in emergencies such as war and conflict. Existence of similarity between the rough brick pottery of this area with most of the nomadic settlements of the region that belong to the late Islamic era can be considered as dating to the late Islamic era.



Figure 25. North view of Kuhe Gerde.

**Ziyarate Baftan Cemetery:** This site is located in Jakigur village, 25 km south of Rask, on the south bank of Sarbaz River, length: 61 30 134 and width: 26 74 140. This cemetery with different grave structures is naturally divided into two parts, west and east, by a dirt road, which is the way for the residents of Baftan village to travel to the groves. Due to the structure of the tombs and the erosion created in the tombs, the western part is older than the eastern part. The tombs in this section are located in the form of ridges and sign stones on both sides of the tomb in the west-east direction, and the border of the tomb is separated from the surrounding area in the form of an elliptical circle. The eastern part

of the cemetery is bounded by a stone strip with a height of about 30 cm. The tombs of this section have a better structure than the western section due to their newness. In this part, the tombs are almost similar to the tombs in the western part, with the difference that in some tombs, the stones arranged around the tombs in two or three rows in an oval shape indicate the area of the tomb. This section was probably used as a family tomb. In this cemetery, no significant cultural relics are observed in the area and according to the structure of the cemetery graves, its antiquity can be attributed to the late Islamic era (Fig. 26).



Figure 26. The western part of Baftan Cemetery.

**Hut Abad Cemetery:** This cemetery with an area of 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> and about 500 graves is located in Jakigur village, 16 km south of Rask, 1 km from Hut Abad village and length 61 27 256 and latitude 26 84 410 84, which is one of the largest cemeteries in Pishin County Sarbaz of Sistan and Baluchistan province. The tombs are similar to other Islamic tombs in the area, surrounded by a circular or oval stonework, with two vertical stones on either side. One of the most important features of this cemetery is the existence of inscribed tombs, which is unique in this county. The year of death and the name of the deceased and sometimes several poems have been engraved on them. Two tombs have been built inside the cemetery, which first created a square building with an entrance on the

east side, inside which is a tomb. It is noteworthy that in the western corner of the cemetery, an anxious Dambi tomb can also be seen (Fig. 27). There are also several Parthian pottery pieces on and around Dambi's tomb, which are probably Lundo pottery. The works collected from the surface of the area are pottery that can be divided into two general parts:

A- Simple: Includes a simple piece of pottery with red paste and mineral chamotte that is relatively well baked.

B- Engraved: Includes an edge piece with brown patterns on both sides and a body piece with black patterns. Parallel and checkered lines form the patterns on the pottery (Figs. 28 and 29).



Figure 27. Hut Abad Cemetery.

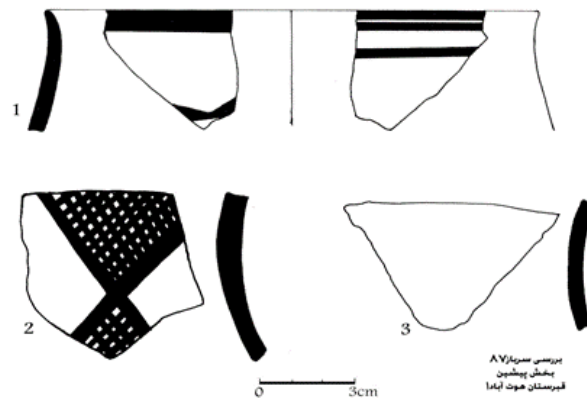


Figure 28. Surface pottery from Hut Abad Cemetery.



Figure 29. Surface pottery from Hut Abad Cemetery.

**Jakigur Cemetery:** This cemetery is located 25 km southeast of Rask and on a natural bed with a height of 5 m next to a small waterway with an area of 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> in length: 51 27 158 and latitude: 26 84 310 geographical. The north to the heights and the south to the River are limited. The southwestern part of the cemetery is heavily eroded, and the northern part is

bounded by a stone wall. The tombs on this cemetery, like other tombs of the Islamic era, are simple tombs with stone carvings around the grave. A unique feature of this cemetery that distinguishes it from other cemeteries in this area is the presence of inscriptions on the sign stones, which indicates the existence of literacy among the residents of this section (Fig. 30).



Figure 30. Inscribed tombstone, Jakigur Cemetery.

#### IV. Conclusion

Sarbaz River is one of the most important Rivers in Baluchistan, which has water in all seasons. However, this constant flow of water, unlike Bampur, has not led to the formation of significant human settlements with abundant archaeological evidence such as Tepe Bampur, and the dispersion of prehistoric sites in these areas is very small and can be seen only in these two areas.

The biggest cause of this event should be sought in the geological context of the region. Sarbaz region has a hot and humid climate due to its proximity to the Chabahar region and yet it is one of the mountainous parts of Baluchistan (southern Makran) (Seyed Sajjadi, 1995: 86). The ratio of flat to the mountainous terrain in this area is very small and the land has a rocky texture. Although in some places like Pishin, this ratio changes slightly, in most county areas the situation is more or less as described. In the northern part of the Sarbaz River, the geological context has influenced the formation of prehistoric settlements in a different way. This area is limited to the Bampur Valley from the north and has not had much contact with the cultures of Baluchistan, Pakistan, from the east. This has led to the lack of expansion and development of the settlements of the third millennium BC in the region, where trade has been one of the important factors for their development and prosperity (Baluchistan 1979: 80-84). This issue is taken from the cultural materials found in the areas, especially in Parud. They are limited to simple pottery and painted pottery with simple geometric patterns (Fig. 31).

In the southern regions of the River, and especially in the Keshari Plain, the proximity to the sea as a regional commercial center on the one hand (Porada, 1971: 291-338), facilitating communication with the more eastern regions of Pakistan through the flat Pishin plain. In addition, the existence of flat and arable lands through easy access to the water of the Sarbaz River have been three very important geographical factors in the formation of settlements in this region. On the mounds of Keshari plain, the variety of antiquities can be seen well. Near Pishin on Tepe Qalat, a piece of pottery with the design of the famous cows of Mehrgarh VI (Jarrige & Lechevallier, 1979: fig. 24.6) was found.

The latter hypothesis is confirmed by the following findings: (1) The existence of several pieces of soapstone container (Fig. 10). Mines of this stone are available in Kerman. Chlorite vessels are considered a key commodity in studying interregional trade in the second half of the third millennium BC (Baluchistan et al., 1978: 464; Baluchistan, 1979: 62-68). (2) The presence of many pieces of marble utensils and even a sample of a complete marble container (Fig. 10) as other Characteristics of interregional trade or transregional trade (Casanova, 2008: 380). (3) The various geometric patterns of pottery that are comparable to Miri Qalat IIIb (2700-2000 BC) and other cultures of the Indo-Iranian border.

As we know, a large part of materials and commercial objects were brought to the southern coasts from the Iranian plateau (Beals, 1973: 136-140). Regionally organized trade made Tepe Yahya an important place in the third millennium and found a

more direct connection with Mesopotamia (Lamberg Karlovski 1972: 227). There is little evidence of the marine trade in raw materials and luxury goods with Mesopotamia during the Yahya IV. At the beginning of the second millennium BC, Yahya's role in trade diminished and the centrality of this trade shifted to the shores of the Persian Gulf (Alden, 1982: 627-628), which was faster, less risky, and less expensive. In Bampur VI, the greatest impact is seen between the southern regions of the Persian Gulf and Bampur (Potts, 2003: 7-8) and it seems that the sea route is one of the largest routes for the transfer of raw materials and materials from Iran to Mesopotamia during the third millennium BC, especially the second millennium BC. (Alden, 1982: 627-628) (Fig. 31).

In Oman, Bahrain and the UAE, many sites of the mentioned examples have been excavated. The most important of which are Umm Al-Nar (Ferifelt, 1979), Ras Al-Janiz (Cleuziou & Tosi, 2000), Haley (Cleuziou & Tosi, 2007), etc. These sites are cemeteries with large circular mass graves (Cleuziou & Tosi, 2007: 139-146). Burial objects include pottery and gray cube-shaped jars with palm tree motifs similar to those of the Bampur VI (Potts, 2003: 7-8). Besides, pottery with motifs of the Indus Valley Culture (Cleuziou and Tosi, 2000: 48, fig. 9) is one of the most important cultural materials. This evidence indicates the extensive connection of these areas with northern regions such as Baluchistan, Makran, the Iranian plateau (Ibid: 26), and the Indus

Valley and Mesopotamia (Cleuziou, 2003: 147). The extent and variety of cultural materials indicate the existence of commercial activities and the presence of merchants in these areas who in the last centuries of the third millennium transported their goods to Mesopotamia by sea (Alden, 1982: 627) (Fig. 32).

The evidence of the historical and early Islamic era in this region is very weak. The historical era mainly includes Dambi-shaped tombs, which according to studies by Aurel Stein are related to the Parthian period and have different shapes circle, oval, square, and rectangle. Their height from the ground fluctuates between 30 to 50 cm, which rarely reaches 1 meter in some graves. It seems that this kind of burial tradition in Baluchistan lasted even in the Islamic era. With a slight change in the Islamic era and its integration with the teachings of Islam, this type of burial structure has been used. In the Islamic era, tombs have a special structure and are in the form of stonework with east and west orientation with markers on both sides, which facilitates the identification of tombs of the historical and Islamic eras. One of the unique features of the Islamic tombs of this county is the presence of inscriptions on the sign stones in Hut Abad and Jakigur cemeteries, which distinguishes it from other cemeteries in this area. It is a sign of literacy among the residents of this section that the year of death and the name of the deceased and sometimes several poems have been written on them.





















Sarbaz Sites	Bampur I-IV	Miri Qalat IIIb	Shahr i Sokhta
 1 Keshari	 Decardi 1970: fig.23,no.181	 Didier 2007: fig.62,no.57/22	 Salvatori and Vidale 1997: fig.191.no.11 II-III
 4 Keshari	 Sajjadi etal 2004: table108	 Didier 2007: fig.82.no.145/11	 Biscione 1984:fig.10.15.no.a I-II
 3 Keshari	 Decardi 1970: fig.23,no.187	 Didier 2007: fig.22.no.4	 Salvatori and Vidale 1997: fig.191.no.10
 6 Keshari	 Decardi 1970: fig.25,no.240	 Didier 2007: fig.7.no.3	 Sajjadi 2007:252.table.85.no.1400/59
 8 Qalat Pishin	 Stein 1937: PLXII	 Didier 2007: fig.8,no.7 Jarrige 1979:fig.24.no.6 Mehgrah VI	 Salvatori and Vidale 1997: fig.188.no.9 II-III

Figure 31. Table comparing the typology of Pishin and Keshari pottery with well-known sites.

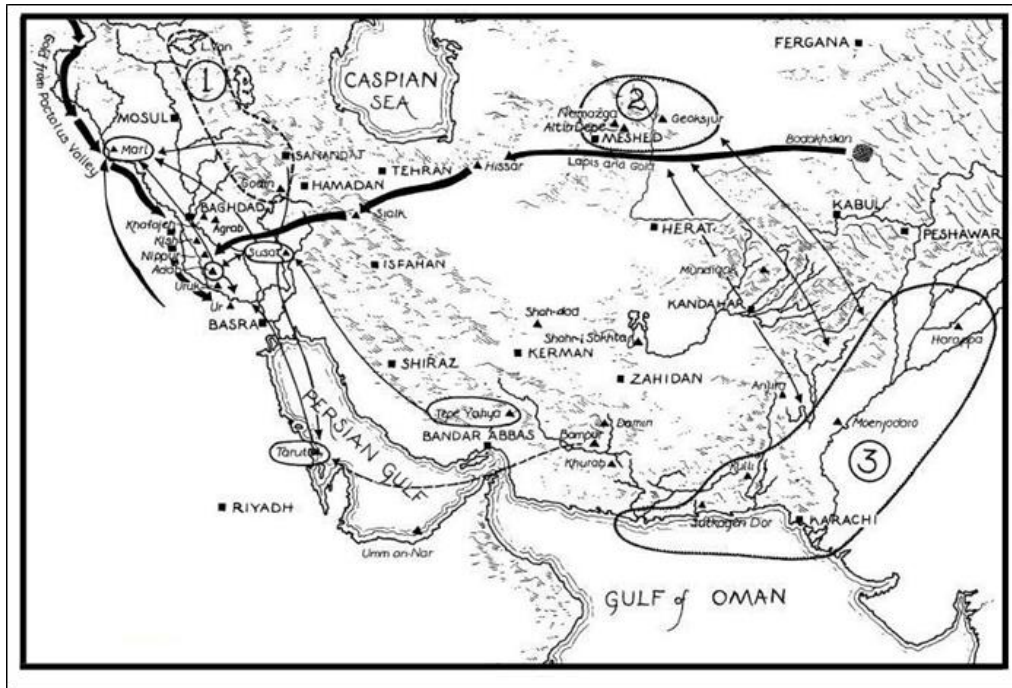


Figure 32. Map of Iran and areas of regional interaction in Iran based on trade relations (After Baluchistan, 1979).

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