

Chalcolithic and Bronze Ages of Ahven in Bashkard County, Hormozgan, Iran

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Abstract

Bashkard is a mountainous hinterland in south-eastern Iran where the two cultural regions -HalilRūd and Jāzmūriyān-, make it outstanding. In addition to their location, surface finds around the village of Ahven in this county -in particular, the site numbered 044- indicate a chronicle of human settlements and the existence of cultural-trade interactions with HalilRūd and Jāzmūriyān. The sampled surface potsherds and a few other cultural materials (decorative beads and shells and bronze objects -especially, round and quadrangle stamp seals) there belong to Chalcolithic and Bronze Ages. In terms of the paste colors, the potsherds represent two main groups: orange and gray. The other colors (buff, brown, and reddish gray) are less common. They are decorated with geometrical, plant, and animal motives as well as bold horizontal wavy and straight bands, and incised/scratched lines (perhaps with a sharp item such as a comb); often, one of these techniques and in some cases, both are applied on the potsherds. In terms of form (rim, neck, shoulder, handle, spout, wall/body, pedestal, and bottom) they are classified into commonly used vessels such as bowls, small jugs and jars, tumblers/beakers, and small pots. Exceptionally, a shallow tray and gray pottery of rectangular shape (probably a mold) have been recovered from the surface. Their comparison with well-known southeastern sites shows that Ahven could have predominantly acted as the trade-cultural route of between southeastern establishments and the northern and southern coasts of the Persian Gulf. The author's archaeological survey of the region is the first attempt to ascertain Chalcolithic and the Bronze Age cultural materials as presented in this article.

Keywords: Bashkard; Ahven; Chalcolithic Age; Bronze Age; Potsherds; Typology.

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Introduction

In 2007, only a few archaeological sites in Bashkard were identified by the author in her official mission to the region on behalf of the Office of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism of Hormozgān Province. The survey, which was carried out in some parts of the districts of Gowharān and Sardasht, produced the first hand knowledge of the region i.e. its topographical and geomorphological characteristics, climate, language, handicraft, customs, distribution, and the state of Islamic, historical and prehistoric sites. This initial survey, which helped identify about 20 sites - but only led to the registration few in the list of national heritage in 2008 (Poodat, 2007-2008), showed the need for more surveys and a precise identification of the region.

In the years 2010-2011, sporadic archaeological investigations were carried out under the supervision of the author in two seasons during official missions to the newly established governorate of Bashkard.

Also, the author assigned her master's dissertation to this region with the topic entitled *The Surface Finds of the 3rd Millennium BC Sites of Sardasht, Bashkard*. In this, the location of the Bashkard region in the southeast of Iran in the 3rd millennium BC was investigated and its intra-and extra-regional connections were discussed. The historical-cultural sites around Ahven village were identified in the same period and the site numbered 044, one of the valuable archaeological sites, was discussed in the study (Poodat, 2011).

Bashkard becoming an independent governorate with the town Sardasht as

its center, brought about changes to political divisions, and construction projects were kicked off in order to expand and develop Sardasht. But those projects stoked fear in the author that they could impact or destroy historical-cultural settlements of the region.

Tepe Sardasht - another important site related to prehistoric, historical, and Islamic periods in the middle of Sardasht town, was identified in 2007 by the author and registered in the list of national heritage in 2008 (Poodat, 2007-2008; Poodat, 2011). To detect the ancient settlement and be able to protect it legally, it was excavated by the author in the spring of 2011 with the formal permission of ICAR (Poodat, 2012).

To identify cultural-historical settlements and periods in the region before the damage incurred by construction projects and natural hazards (erosion, floods, earthquakes, etc.), systematic archaeological surveys were conducted by the author with the formal permission of ICAR in the district of Sardasht in 2017.

While investigating Ahven village during the survey, Chalcolithic and Bronze Age sites were identified there. In 2016, the Ahven site was re-examined and more surface samples were collected - which were thrown out by locals to get their fields cultivated. The trend showed more and more cultural values of the disturbed site. The surface samples prove the cultural connections and their role in the southeast of Iran. This article tries to introduce and discuss these sites in detail.

Research Importance and Necessity

Bashkard, with its geographical location



Fig. 1. Ahven Village and Tape Sardasht.

in the neighborhood of the two important cultural regions in the southeast of Iran -Halil-Rūd and Jāzmūriyān- is of utmost interest and importance. The location of Ahven is particularly noteworthy as it connects the northern and southern parts on the other side of the Āhverī/Ahvīrī Mountain and the eastern and western parts of Bashkard with each other (Fig. 1). Ahven is on a geographical corridor from Baluchistan to Mināb-Rūdān and then Soghān Valley (south of Kermān) link east and west and lead them to northern and southern coasts of the Persian Gulf.

In addition to the location, the surface finds around this village especially site 044 show the chronology of cultural settlements and the existence of cultural connections with Halil-Rūd and Jāzmūriyān. Comparing them with similar samples from other important sites in the

southeast (Shahr-i Sukhta, Bampur, Tepe Yahya, Tal-i Iblis, and Shahdad) shows that Ahven could have acted impressively in the connection between Halil-Rūd and Jāzmūriyān and those of the settlements in the southeast with the northern and southern shores of the Persian Gulf (Poodat, 2010 and 2011).

Investigating, identifying, and introducing the settlements and cultural materials of this region can help complement the archaeological studies of different periods - especially pre-historic and proto-historic. Therefore, for the first time, the cultural materials related to Chalcolithic and the Bronze Ages of this region - with the efforts of the author- are being introduced through this article.

Geographical Location of Ahven Village

Ahven village is located at 50° 57' E and



Fig. 2. The Location of Site 044 at the West of the Fields of the Village Ahven on a hill-surface at the Northern Side of the Mountain Ahviri.

22' 26" N at an approximate height of 800 meters from the sea level. The Ahviri Mountain range, with a height of 1655 meters is located three kilometers to the south; The Darsū Mountain with a height of 1142 meters can be seen two kilometers to the southeast; The Varsakh Mountain with a height of 1235 meters stands five kilometers away and the BonKam cave is reachable at 20 kilometers east of this settlement (Annual reports of Hormozgān, 2013).

Location and State of the Site (at Identification Time)

Site No. 044 is located at 26° 20' 51" N and 57° 49' 13" E, approximately 912 meters above sea level, on a natural hill on the northern side of the Ahviri Mountain at a distance of approximately 2 kilometers south of Ahven village and in the west of forest and farms (Fig. 2). The nearest sources of drinkable water to the site are two springs, less than 200 meters at the south. The direction of the area is south-east-northwest; with approximately 400

meters long and varies in its width according to the shape of the hill. From the south, which leads to agricultural lands and mountains, its width is about 100 meters, gradually decreases toward the north, and finally slopes to the valley. Unfortunately, due to the lack of arable land, the surface of the hill has been flattened in the form of steps to prepare for cultivation.¹ The

¹ Such a farming method is common in the region; Bashkard is mountainous and the land for settlement and agriculture is scarce. The problem of lack of flat land in Bashkard has not only affected settlement but also cultivation. In Bashkard, to create a flat land for agriculture and to prevent the soil from being washed away by flowing water and floods, the mouth of narrow valleys facing larger valleys (where flowing spring water to main rivers) and also river banks get purposely blocked with stone-made walls. In this way, in addition to preventing the soil from washing away and stabilizing the soil, it is also considered a type of rain-fed agriculture. Since it reduces the speed of the rainwater flowing from steep slopes of the hills and mountains, it keeps the water on the surface for a while, and in this



Fig. 3. The Site 044-Ahven.

height of steps is different with the third to fourth being the highest, measuring a little more than one meter. The lowest height is the first to the second step, which is less than 50 cm. The grave, which is located on the fourth step on the northern side of the hill, was severely damaged. The grave is rectangular in shape and is made of stone-slabs and mortar. In the second step, in the southeast corner, there is a not-so-noticeable extrusion (± 10 cm) with a different color (reddish) soil (Fig. 3) (Poodat, 2011 and 2017).

Historical-Cultural Relics at the Periphery of the Site

Among the other relics identified around the village, the nearest to site 044, can be mentioned: The closest one is an Islamic cemetery (No. 043) at a distance of approximately 200 meters and a historical site (No.

way, it prevents the wastage of the seasonal fluent water. In Bashkard, the structure created in this way is called Darband and Kash-band (kash: hill/mound side/slope, band: closure) (Poodat, 2011 and 2017).

045) at about 400 meters to the east. Also, sites 041 and the Islamic cemetery 042 are about 800 meters to the east. Site 046 from the late Islamic era is located 390 meters to its southeast on the Piedmont and some other graves of the Islamic era (with one No. 047) are located nearly one kilometer to its south (Poodat, 2011 and 2017).

Dangers and Damage

Among the damage done to the site, one can see step leveling the surface of the hill for cultivation, looting the grave at the northern side, the growth of trees and shrubs all over the surface, especially in and around the disturbed grave. Heavy flood rains that washed the surface of the hill and split the eastern and western sides facing the valleys, the effects of digging the soil by animals can be the cause of concern as well (Poodat, 2011 and 2017).

Surface Level (Portable and Non-Portable) Cultural Materials

No pottery or other cultural remains were found on the first step on the south of the

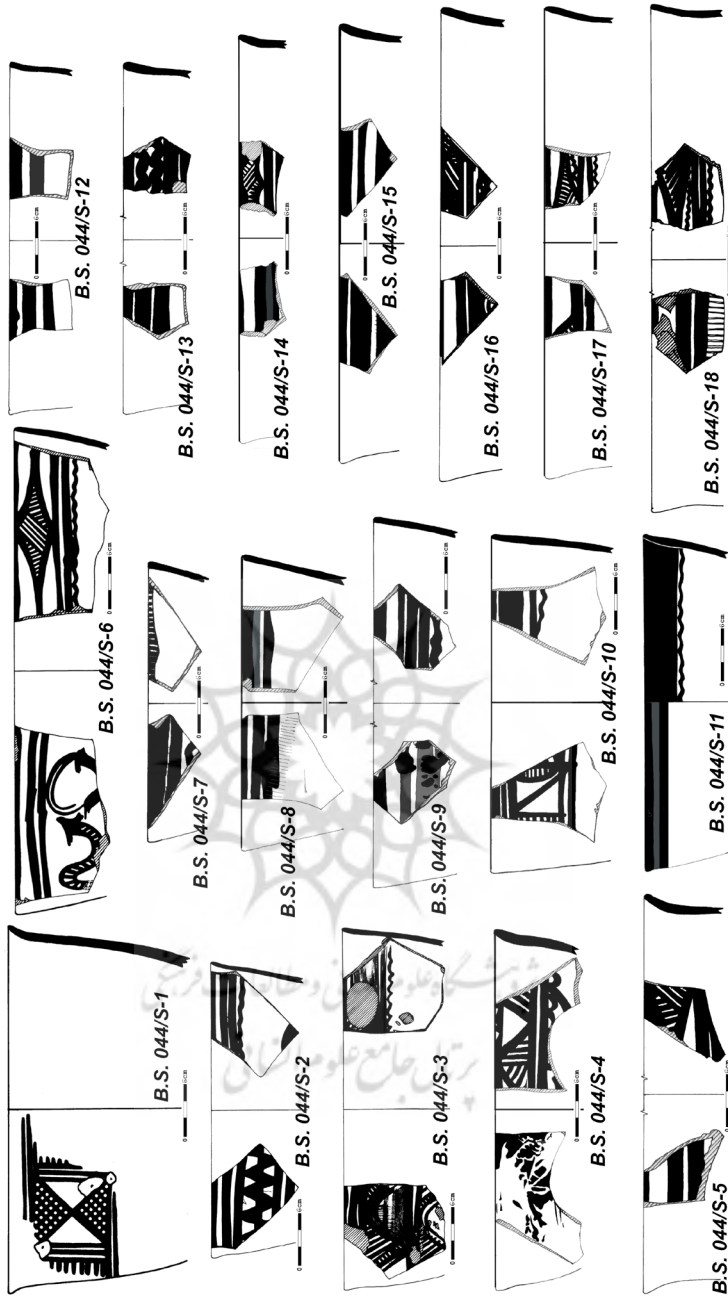


Fig. 4. The Rims Belonged to Flaring-Rim Bowls, Carinated Bowls, and Conical Deep Bowls.

site. In the second and third steps, pottery was rarely seen on the surface; but on the second, at the northeast corner, some potsherds could be seen (Fig. 3). This part had

the highest density of pottery all around the surface, which cannot be fully trusted; because they might be deliberately moved there from another place; probably

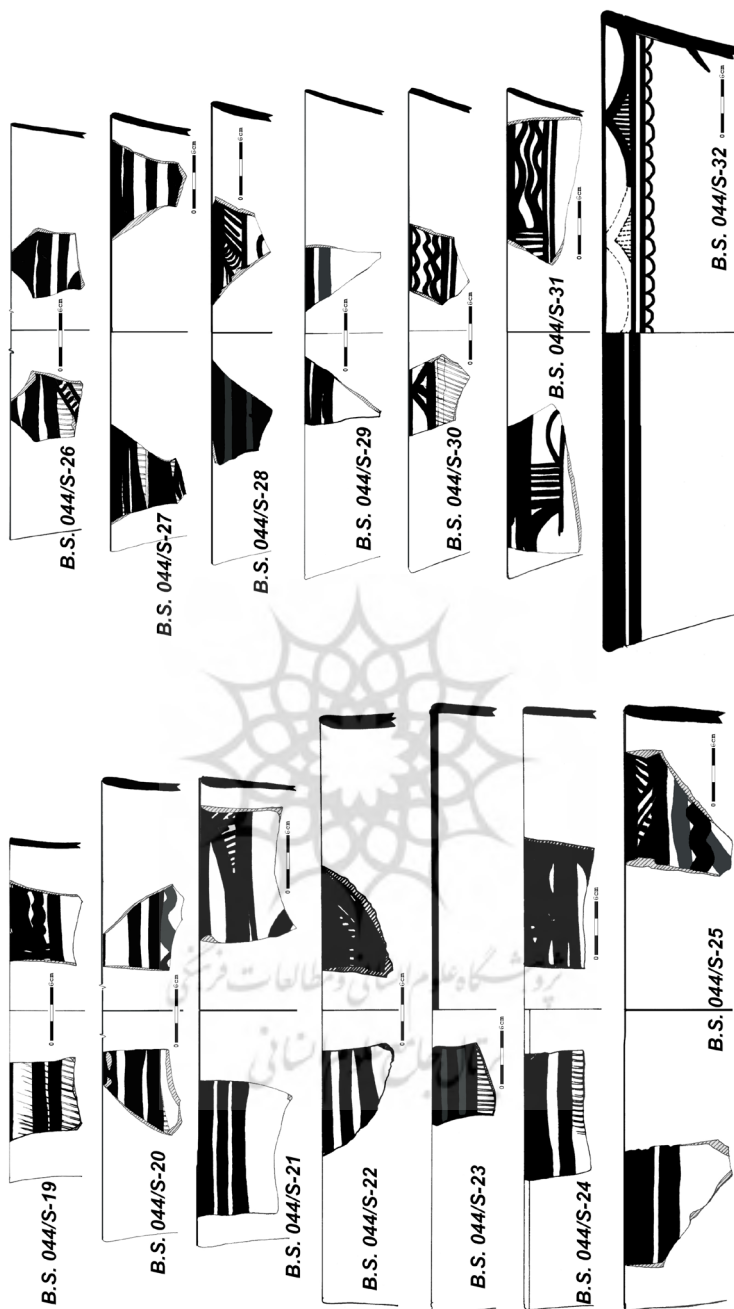


Fig. 5. The Rims Belonged to Conical Bowls and Cylindrical Bowls.

from the grave at the north side (Fig. 3). In any case, to be sure, the surface samples were collected and classified separately

from the samples of the grave. The finds from the surface level were marked with sub-number S.044 ("S" refers to the sur-

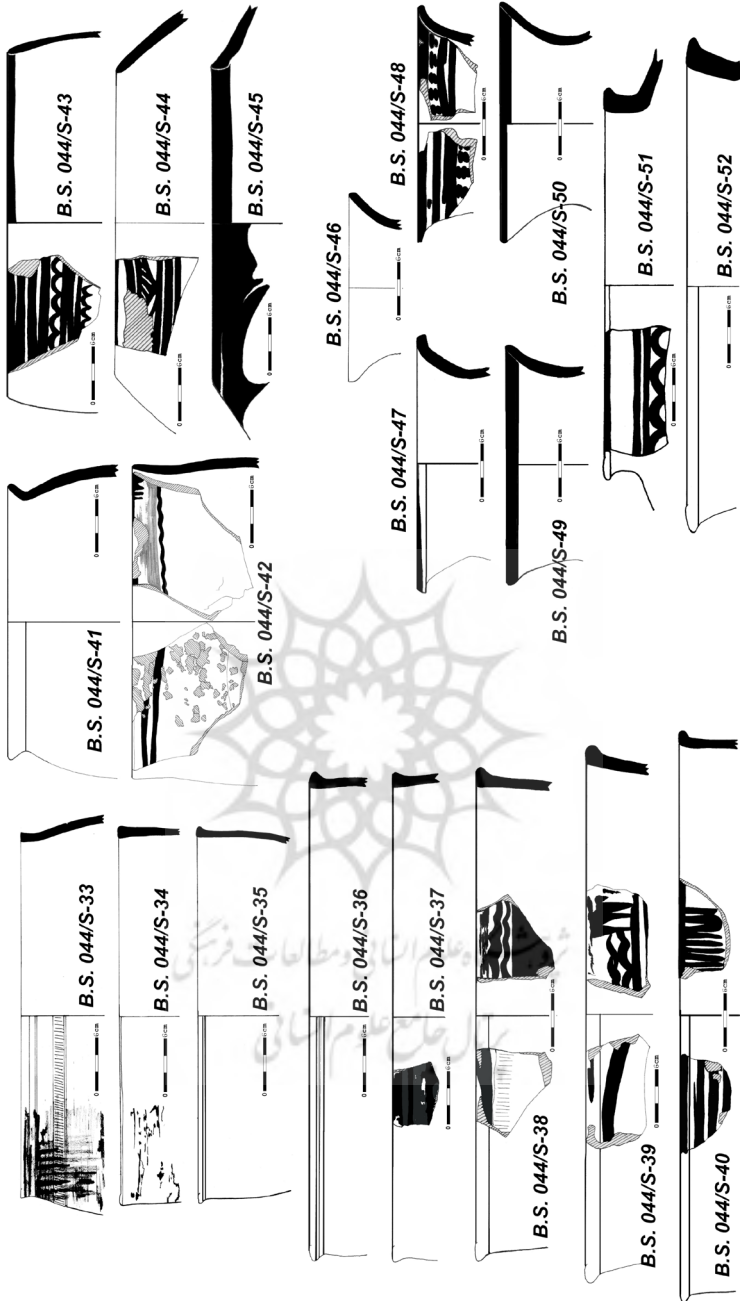


Fig. 6. Short-Neck Orange and Gray Jugs; Globular Body and Wide-Mouth Gray, Brown and Orange Jars and Gray and Orange Pots and Tumblers.

face) and the samples collected from the grave were marked as G.044 ("G" refers to grave). From the surface of the second

step, a number of potsherds, beads, a rectangular container of gray pottery, a few pieces of bronze - one of which is part of

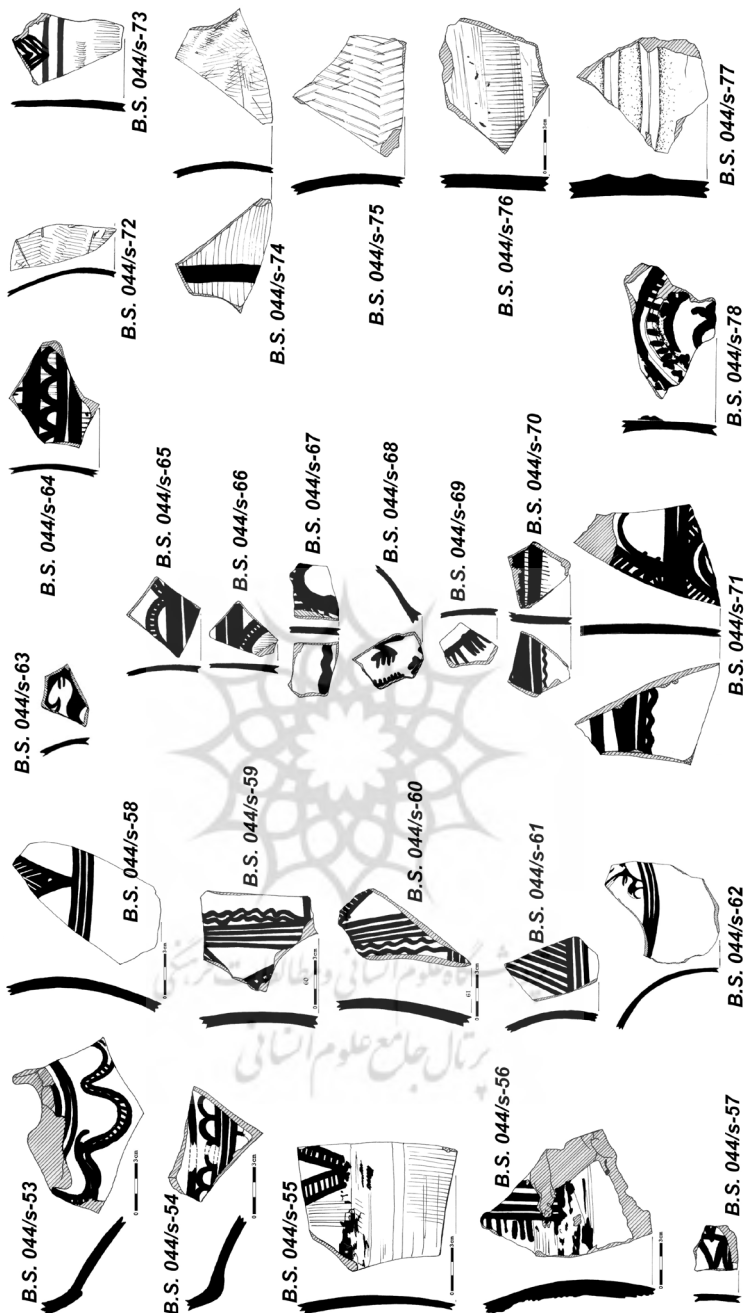


Fig. 7. The Wall Potsherds are Decorated with Geometrical and Probably Animal (Maybe a Snake Motif on Piece 53) Motives by Painting, Braiding, and Scratching.

a bronze seal - and a pierced shell were collected in 2011. In the revised investigation in 2017, some potsherds, small broken

pieces of bronze, shells, and another bead were found (Poodat, 2011 and 2017).

As mentioned above, in order to recog-

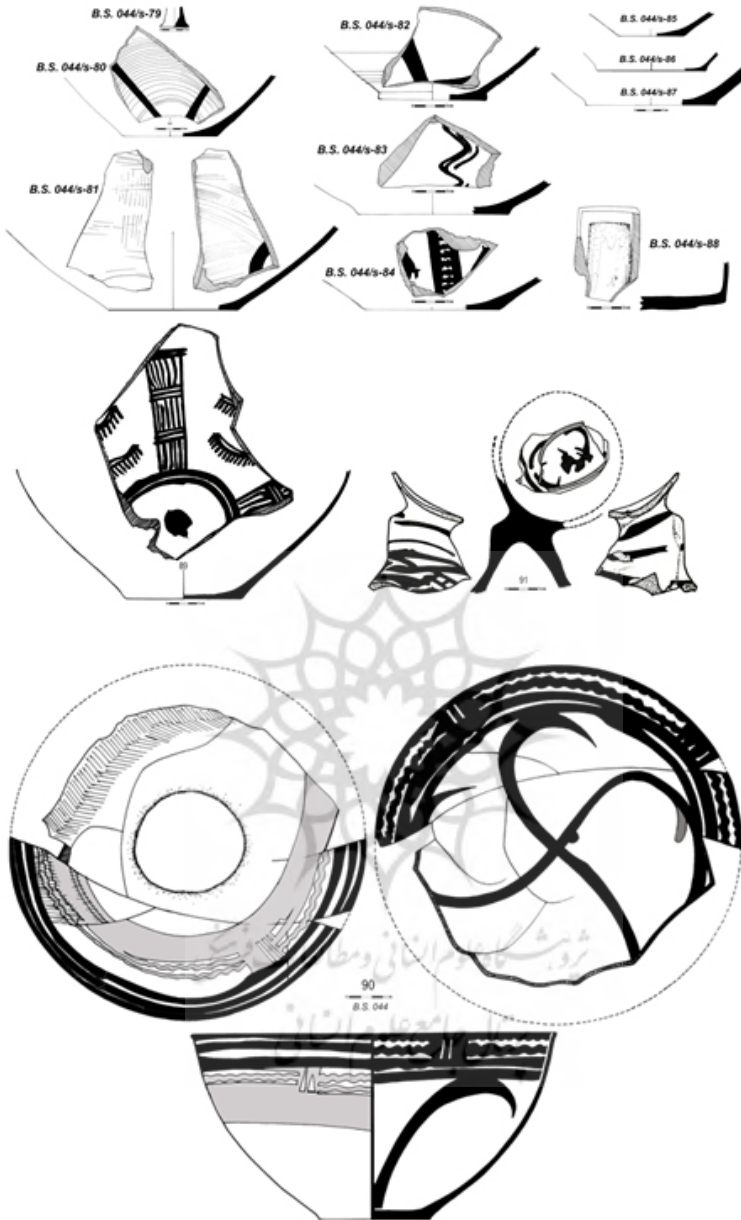


Fig. 8. Potsherds (No. 88)

nize more precisely and ensure that those surface samples were transferred from the grave or do not belong to that place, two sets of surface and grave materials were collected studied separately, and introduced.

Studying Potsherds Collected from Surface

The Volume of Study Materials

91 surface potsherds are presented here: 52 pieces belonged to rims, 26 pieces be-

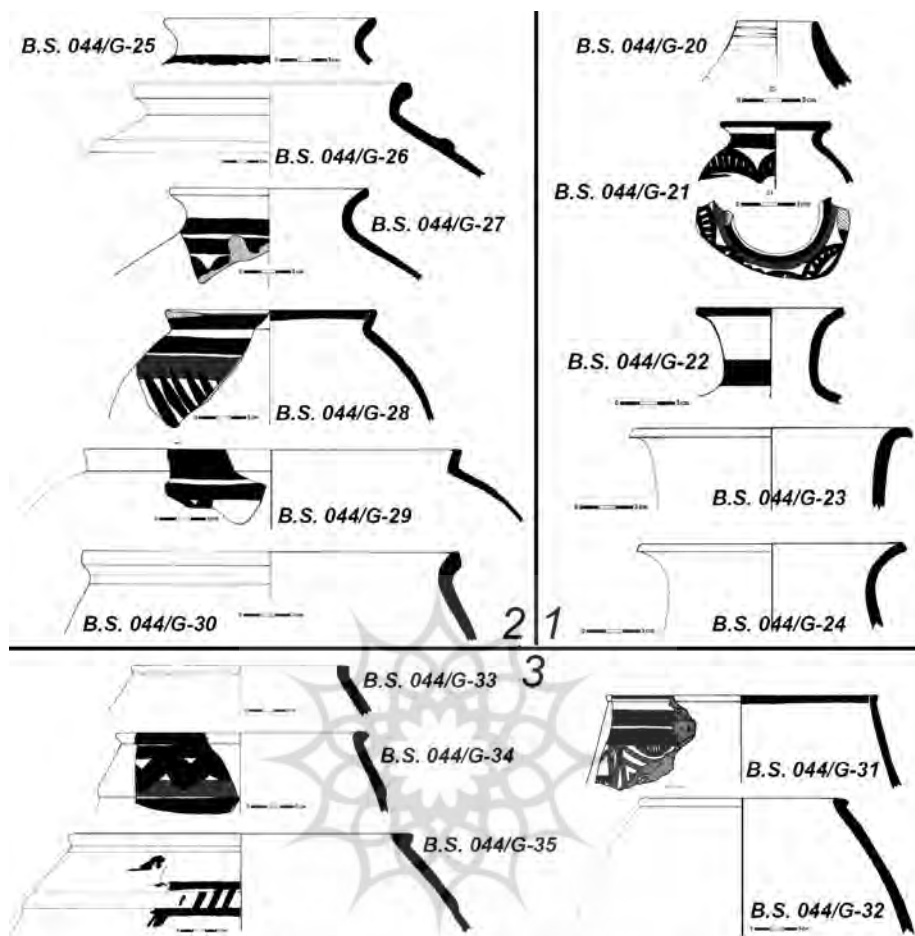


Fig. 9. Category 1: Orange (Left) And Gray (Right) Band-Rim Bowls; Category 2: The Gray Club-Rim Bowls; Category 3: The Gray Flaring Bowls; Category 4: The Conical and Concave Bowls; Category 5: The Convex Deep Bowls.

longed to bodies/walls of vessels, 10 pieces belonged to bottoms, one along with a pedestal (No. 91), one complete but broken vessel (No. 90) and a broken and incomplete rectangular vessel (No. 88) are among the assemblage samples from the surface of this site.

Structural Characteristics of Samples

In terms of the color of the paste, the potsherds of this collection show two main groups: gray and orange, while other colors

(buff, brown, brown-gray, and ochre-gray) are less common. In almost all the pieces, one can see that their exterior is covered with a thin slip of the same color as paste, and in some cases, both interior and exterior are covered. Out of the entire assemblage, 12 gray potsherds of the collection (some on their interior surfaces and some others on their exterior surfaces -depending on the surface exposed to the viewer) have been thin layered with an ochre-colored slip. On these pieces, the motives are

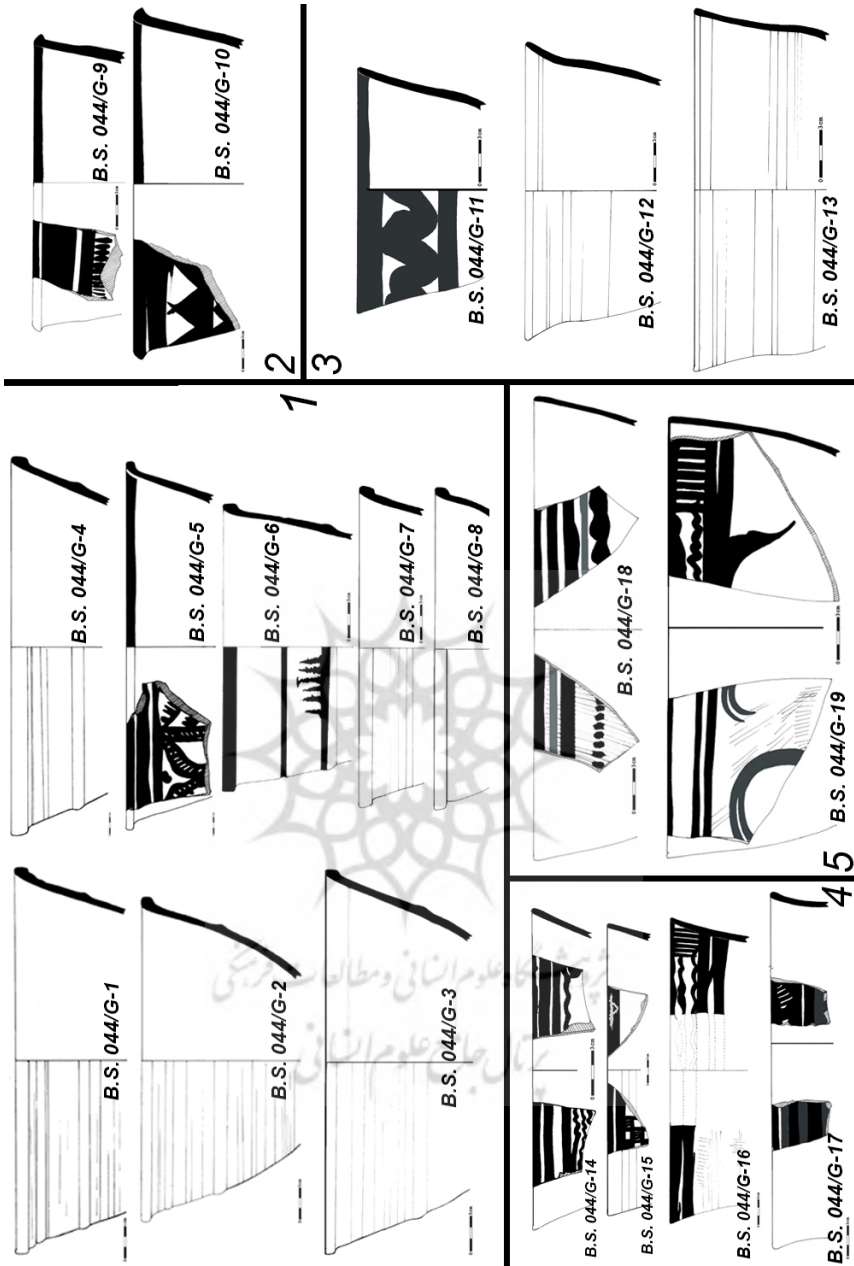


Fig. 10. Category 1: Tight-Mouth Everted-Rim Necked Jugs (Exception of the Number 20 with Simple Rim); Category 2: Wide-Mouth Band-Rim and Tight-Mouth Everted-Rim Globular Jars; Category 3: Globular Pots and Jars.

in red color (specimens Nos. 6, 46, and 89 from the surface of the site and Nos. 1, 4, 15, 27, and 28 from the grave). The theme of

the decorations is mostly geometric and, in a few cases, bearing plant motives (leaves) and animal motives (goat and snake). The

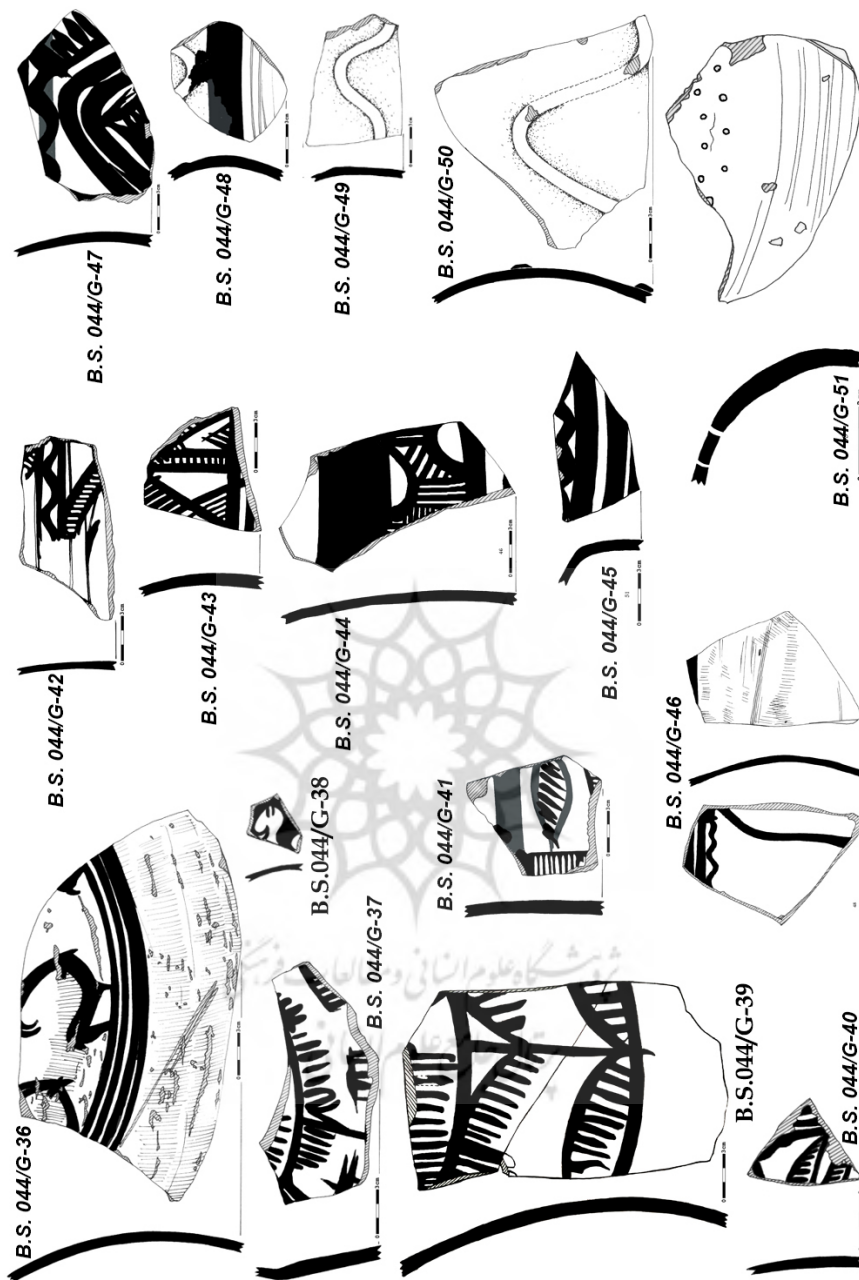


Fig. 11. Painted, Braided, Scratched, and Perforated Potsherds with Geometric, Plant and Animal Motifs.

decoration on the gray and orange pieces is similar: painting -mostly in black and a few in red- is the most important technique.

Furthermore, the braiding motives -horizontal straight and wavy ridges- alone or along with painting in black on/above the

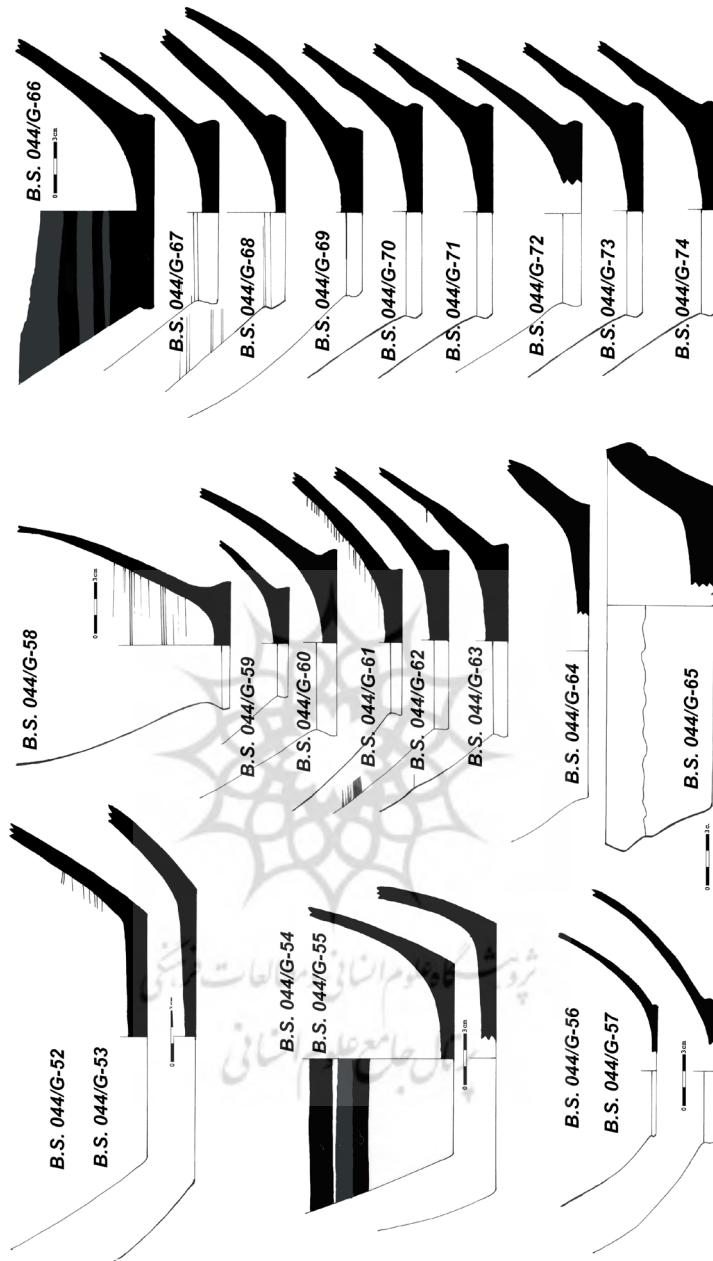


Fig. 12. The Bottom-Potsherds Belonged to Bowls, Beakers/Tumblers (No. 54, 55, And 58), Jugs and Jars, and a Shallow Tray (No. 65).

ridges can be seen. Scratching with a sharp object, alone or next to the black painting on the exterior surfaces may be considered a kind of decoration.

Ever Recognized Common Types

With respect to the typology of the potteries, they were first classified on the basis of the forms of the pieces (belonging

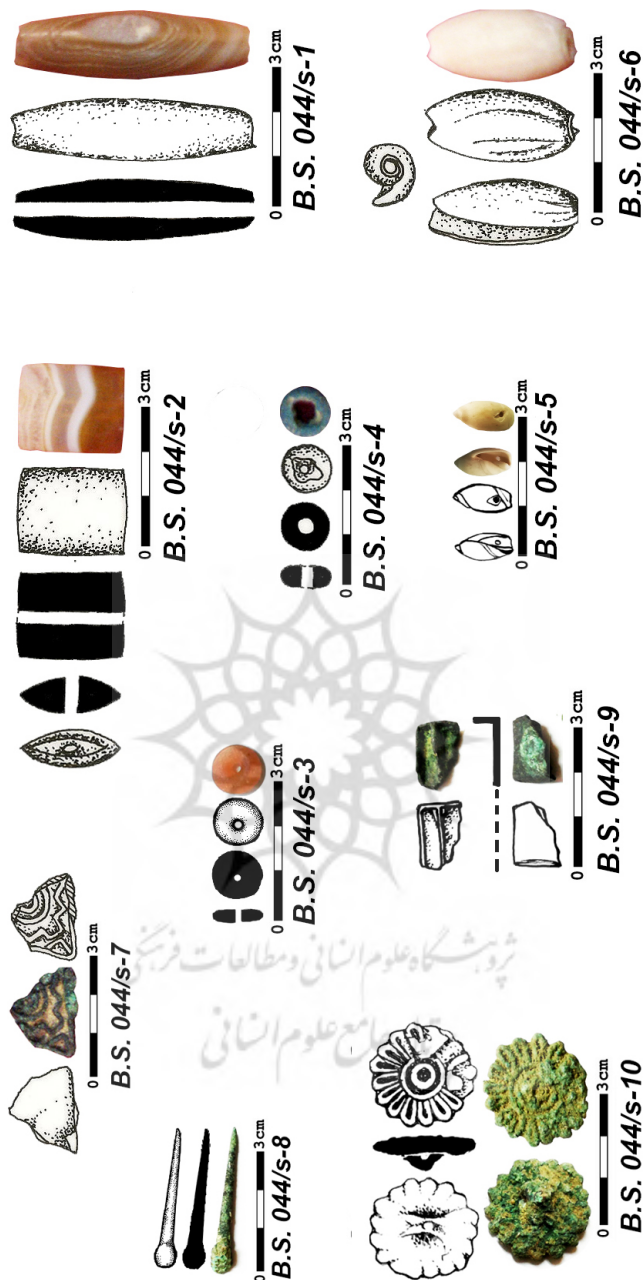


Fig. 13. The Small Finds from the Surface of The Site 044Ahven.

to the rim, neck, shoulder, handle/knob, tube/spout, body/wall, base/pedestal, and bottom of the vessel). Identifying the

type of vessel to which the piece belongs, the forms of the rims and bottoms have been taken into consideration, and based

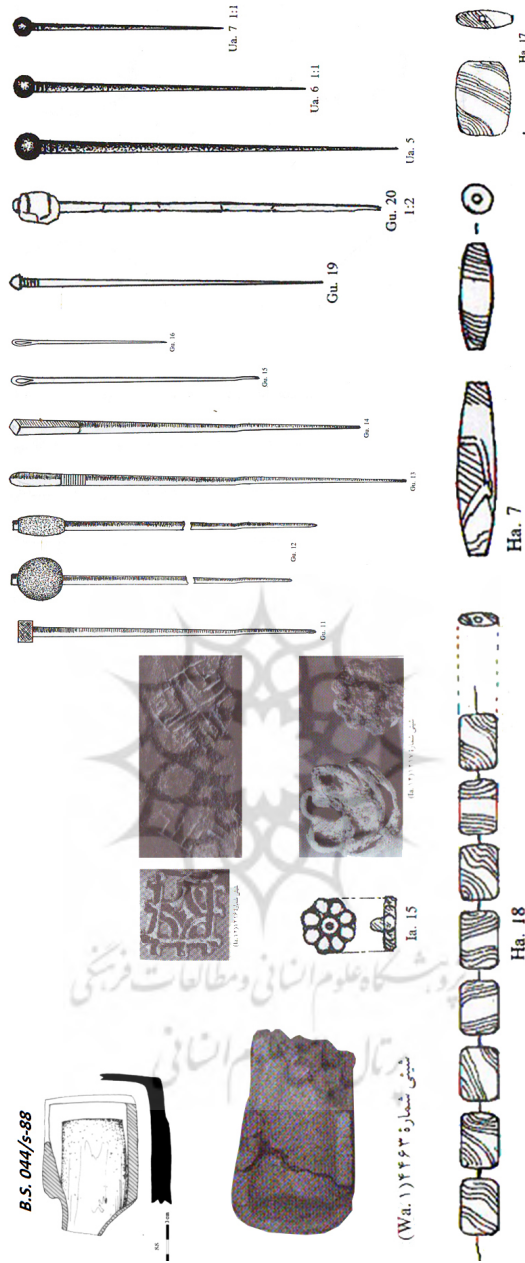


Fig. 14. The Agate Beads from the Graves of Shahdad (The Lowest Row) (Hakemi, 2007: 753-756); Bronze and Copper Needles and Pins from Shahdad (At The Right Side) (Hakemi, 2007: 773, 750 and 751); The Imprint of a Quadrangle Stamp Seal and a Metal Knobbed Seal with a Rosette Motif (In the Middle) (No. 1066.G.115, Excavation No. 302/50 and Drawing No. Ia.15) (Hakemi, 2007: 758); A Gray Pottery Item (Probably A Mold) from Ahven (At the Left Side, Above) and Its Parallel From Shahdad (At the Left Side, In The Middle) (No. 4463) (Hakemi, 2007: 659).

on that, four common types of vessels have been identified so far, which are: 1-

Bowls: Flaring rim bowls (Fig. 4), conical deep bowls with a simple rim (Fig. 4), ca-

rimated bowls and straight-wall (cylindrical) bowls (Fig. 5). Perhaps some of these rims belong to wide-mouthed conical flat-based beakers, not ring-based goblets; because bases belonged to goblets have been not seen in the collection; as the bases of wide-mouthed conical goblets have been reported from Kerman (for instant, Khajeh Askar Cemetery) (Mola Salehi *et al.*, 2014: 56-57), Tal-i Iblis, Qasimabad, ChahSardu, Fanuch, Mehrgarh and Shah-i Tump (Mutin, 2017: Fig. 14.11: 263), Bampur Valley, Shahr-e Sukhteh and Kech-Makran Valley, Pakistan Baluchistan (Mery *et al.*, 2013). The flat bottom samples from the surface of the site, more probably belong to vessels with a globular body (such as jars and small pots) or wide-mouthed deep bowls. 2- jars: short-necked and wide-mouthed jars with globular bodies in small sizes, in buff, orange, brown, and gray colors (Fig. 6). 3- jugs: orange and gray slightly long-neck jugs (Fig. 6) and 4- pots: with short necks or even no neck, mostly with wide mouths, in gray, orange, and brown colors, in small and medium sizes (Fig. 6).

Ceramic Parallels

The motif on the potsherd No.1 has similar instants in Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: Nos. 10 and 17, F. 191, P. 145 and N. 3, F. 188, P. 143) and the row of horizontal lines under the rim on the exterior of the vessel has been repeatedly found there (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: Nos. 1-7, F. 191, P. 145). Also, this motif is similar to a fragment of Chegerdak (Heidari *et al.*, 2015: N. 031ch 2011, F. 7, P. 141) and [horizontal and vertical lines] similar to a fragment from the site Z dated to Bampur II (De Cardi, 1968: N. 18, F.

5, P. 141). Similar to piece 2 (a row of upright and downward triangles between parallel horizontal strips at the top and bottom) has been reported by Shahdad (Hakemi, 2007: design xd.a and design xd.b of the object No.4504, p.788). It is also similar to a fragment of Zari-Damb, Surab, Pakistan Baluchistan (De Cardi, 1983: N. 6, F. 19, PP. 72-73). A row of goats between the horizontal strips under the rim is similar to the fragment reported by Chegerdak (Heidari *et al.*, 2015: N. 005ch 2011, F. 7, P. 141). A similar pattern to the snake (in the form of a hatched strip) on fragment 6 was reported from site Z related to Bampur II (De Cardi, 1968: N. 21, F. 5, P. 141). The pattern on the interior of this very piece and also the interior pattern of pieces 5, 14, 17, and 18 were presented at site Z from Bampur IV (De Cardi, 1968: N. 40, F. 8, P. 143) and the goat on a piece from Bampur II (De Cardi, 1968: Nos. 1, 5 and 7, P. 153). It is similar to the exterior motif of fragment 4 from site Z related to Bampur IV (De Cardi, 1968: N. 38, F. 8, P. 143). There is a similarity to the motif of piece No.5 in Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: N. 5, F. 188, P. 143 and N. 1, F. 188, P. 143 (for exterior motif) and N. 4, F. 85, P. 86 (for interior motif)) Examples similar to the interior motif of the fragments 5, 6 and 17 of this collection can also be seen in the Chegerdak collection (Heidari *et al.* 2015: N. 017ch 2011, F. 7, P. 141). Familiar to the rim sherd 18 and other pieces like this in the same collection were obtained from Tepe Yahya IVB5 (Potts, 2001: N. A, F. 4.35, P. 138). The interior pattern of piece 6 (a lozenge cross-hatched in different directions) is similar to a piece from the site GardanReg 6 in the south of Sistan (Fairservis, 1952: N. G,

F. 5, P. 29) and the goat motif is also similar to the goat on a piece reported from the same site (Fairservis, 1952: N. A, F. 5, P. 29). The pattern of the piece 8 is similar to Chegerdak (Heidari *et al.* 2015: N. 021 ch 2011, F. 6, P. 139). In general, the motif of straight and wavy parallel horizontal lines under the exterior and interior rims has some instants in the Chegerdak collection (Heidari *et al.* 2015: F. 6, P. 139) and the motif of parallel straight horizontal lines under the interior and exterior rims as well (Heidari *et al.* 2015: Nos. 013-015-022-050ch 2011, F. 10, P. 144). The pattern under the interior rim of piece 10 is the same as in the Chegerdak collection (Heidari *et al.* 2015: N. 005ch 2011, F. 7, P. 141). The pattern under the rim of pieces 17, 18, and 21 is similar to the pieces from phases 7-8 of Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: N. 4, F. 85, P. 86) and can also be seen on the pieces from the phase 6 of Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: N. 4, F. 103, P. 95; N. 4, F. 105, P. 96; N. 5, F. 106, P. 97 and N. 3, F. 107, P. 97). Also, the pattern of the fragment 21 (like fragment 5 of the same collection) is similar to a fragment of the Chegerdak collection (Heidari *et al.*, 2015: N. D, F. 5, P. 138).

The motif under the exterior rim of fragment 30 is similar to a fragment from phases 7-8 of Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: N. 5, F. 82, P. 84). This pattern has also been seen in phase 6 of Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: N. 4, F. 96, P. 92). The motif on the fragments 30 and 38 is similar to a fragment from the Chegerdak collection (Heidari *et al.*, 2015: No. 037ch 2011, F.6, p. 139) and has similar examples from the phase 6 of Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvato-

ri and Vidale, 1997: Nos. 1 and 2, F. 115, p. 101 and Nos. 2 and 3. F. 116, p. 102). Some parallels to these wavy lines between parallel horizontal lines are repeated in phase 6 of Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: Nos. 4 and 5, F. 119, p. 103). A similar motif on fragment 31 has been represented in site Z from period Bampur II (De Cardi, 1968: No.14, F. 5, p. 141) and from phase 6 of Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: No. 4, F. 106 and No. 4, F. 107, p. 97) and also an instant from the phase 5B has been reported (the same: No. 3, F. 165, p. 128). A bowl similar to pieces 32 and 21 of this collection was reported by De Cardi from Bampur II at site Z (De Cardi, 1968: No. 6, F. 5, p. 141), and a similar motif has been reported on a wide-mouthed jar from the same collection (No. 3, F. 5, p. 141).

The form of the rims 34 and 35 is reminiscent of samples from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Karlovsky and Potts, 2001: No. A and B, F. 1.6, p. 15). The form of pieces 36 to 40 is similar to a fragment from Tepe Yahya IVC1 (the same: No. B, F. 2.15, p. 69). The form and pattern of pieces 38, 39, and 40 are similar to a piece from Chegerdak (Heidari *et al.*, 2015: No. 039ch 2011 in picture 12 p. 147). Fragments 36-40, inverted rims, probably belong to deep bowls with straight walls (cylindrical bodies). Similar to them have been reported as imported pottery from the Kalbā⁹ site in Sharjah (Eddisford and Phillips, 2009: Nos. 9 and 11, F. 10, p. 118) and have similar examples in Tepe Yahya IVB5 as well (Karlovsky and Potts, 2001: No. D, Fig. 4.19, p. 127). The shape of the rim of jug No. 41 is similar to the samples from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (the same: Nos. D and E, Fig. 1.6, p.15), and similar samples

were obtained from the context BW. 69. T5.5 of Tepe Yahya (Nos. E and G, Fig. 7. 3, p. 185). The form of the rim of jar 43 is similar to a sample from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (the same: No. 6.4.C, Fig. 1.57, p. 52). The rim of jar 44 is similar to a sample from Tepe Yahya IVC (the same: No. 2.14.A, Fig. 1. 57, p. 52), the rim of jar 45 is similar to Tepe Yahya IVC (the same: No. 2.3.D, Fig. 1.57, p. 52) and the pattern and form of small jar 48 is similar to Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: Nos. 7 and 10, Fig. 184, p. 139). Similar to the vertical Ξ pattern was also found in phase 5B of Shahr-e Sukhteh (the same: Nos. 7 and 10, Fig. 154, p. 139, No. 3, Fig. 187, p.142). The form of pieces 46-50 belong to long-necked, narrow-mouthed jugs and are similar to pieces -as imported pottery- at the Kalbā site of Sharjah (Eddisford and Phillips, 2009: Figs. 4 and 5, Fig. 9, p. 118). Especially, the shape of rim 47 is similar to a fragment from Tepe Yahya IVB5 (Karlovsy and Potts, 2001: No. E, Fig. 4.28, p. 131). The painting on [jar] No. 48 is similar to the painting on jars from the period Bampur II in the site Z collection (De Cardi, 1968: Nos. 4 and 5, Fig. 5, p. 141) and from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Karlovsy and Potts, 2001: No. A, Fig. 1.58, p. 53). A similar to fragment 49 was obtained from phase 6 of Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: No. 3, Fig. 124, p. 106). The shape of the rim of jug No. 52 is like examples from Bampur II at site Z (De Cardi, 1968: No. 20, Fig. 5, p. 141), Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Karlovsy and Potts, 2001: No. D, Fig. 1.19, p. 27) and Tepe Yahya IVB5 (the same: No. G, Fig. 4.33, p. 137). The pattern on the exterior surfaces of pieces 43, 51, 64, and 54 is exposed on the interior surface of a piece from period Bampur

II at site Z (De Cardi, 1968: No.16, Fig. 5, p. 141) and the pattern on the piece 51 is on the one piece from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Karlovsy and Potts, 2001: No. D, Fig. 1.18, p. 26) and Tell Abraq as well (Potts, 2003: No. TA 2833, Fig. 12, p. 18).

Similar to the pattern of fragment 56 was reported on a sample from Chegerdak (Heidari *et al.*, 2015: No. 031ch 2011, Fig. 7, p. 140), some samples from the site Z dated to Bampur II (De Cardi, 1968: No. 18, Fig. 5, p. 141) and Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: No. 17, Fig. 191, p. 145). The motives on pieces 51, 54, and 64 are similar to pieces from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Karlovsy and Potts, 2001: No. D, Fig. 1.18) and Tell Abraq (Potts, 2003: TA 2833, Fig. 12, p. 18). Similar to pieces 59 and 60 have been reported from Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: No.10, Fig. 191, p. 145 and Nos. 5 and 8, Fig. 184, p. 139). In general, vertical wavy lines next to straight vertical lines have been common in phase 5B of Shahr-e Sukhteh (Nos. 3, 6, and 8, Fig. 184, p. 139) and also, painting a group of vertical lines between horizontal strips reported from the phase 5A of Shahr-e Sukhteh as well (the same: Fig. 153, p. 120 and Nos. 5 and 8, Fig. 154, p. 121). The pattern on the fragment 58 has been found on a fragment from Shahr-e Sukhteh (the same: No. 9, Fig. 191, p. 145) and similar to the pattern of the fragment 69 (a comb-like pattern) has been obtained from phase 6 of Shahr-e Sukhteh (the same: No. 5, Fig. 97, p. 92). The motives on pieces 68 and 69 (W design with lines at both two sides) have been reported from Khurab as a burial vessel (Stein, 1934: Nos. Bii151, Bii155, Bii157 and Bii159, Fig. 1, p. 197) and from Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidaleh, 1997: Nos. 4 and 9,

Fig. 188, p. 143 and No. 3, Fig. 141 and No. 2, Fig. 140, p.143, Nos. 4 and 9, Fig. 191, p. 145). For the motif on piece 73, there are some similarities in the site Z collection related to the Period Bampur I (De Cardi, 1968: No. 11, Fig. 5, p. 141) and from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Karlovsy and Potts, 2001: No. J, Fig. 1.6, p. 15). The pattern of fragment 78 is similar to a fragment from Period Bampur II (De Cardi, 1968: No. 6, p. 153) and to a fragment from Damin (Tuzi and Karlovsy, 1989: Fig. 66, p. 71).

Fragment 83 is similar to a fragment from the site Z of Bampur II (De Cardi, 1968: No. 10, Fig. 5, p. 141) and to a fragment from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Karlovsy and Potts, 2001: No. K, Fig. 1.6, p. 15). Fragment 88 is similar to a vessel from Shahdad (Hakemi and Mousavi, 2007: No. 4463 from collection c, p. 659) (Figure 14). This gray rectangular pottery might have been used as a mold.

The Vessel 89 is a hand-made wide-mouthed bowl with gray paste; its fabrication is well mastered; its interior and exterior have been smoothed and slightly burnished; its interior has been exquisitely layered with a thin light brown slip and the geometric motives in brown have been illustrated on the interior. A fragment with a nearly similar motif -but black on gray- from the site Gardan Reg 6 in southern Sistan (Fairservis, 1952: No. c, Fig. 5, p. 29) can be compared to it. It is reminiscent of the burial vessels of Shah-i Tump (Kech-Makran II-III).

Some pieces of a gray vessel with black geometric motives were collected from the surface of the site (No. 90). Attaching them together, a relatively complete vessel (including the rim, body, and bottom) that reveals the general shape of

the vessel to us: a deep bowl with a convex body. Under the exterior rim, parallel lines have been illustrated, and under the interior rim, in addition to parallel horizontal lines, parallel wavy lines have been depicted, which are divided into four parts by three short vertical lines. A matte and irregular impression exactly like the exterior motif can be easily seen on its exterior. The hasty and sloppy drawing of the motifs shows the mass production of this type of vessel (perhaps for export). Apparently, from this shape, pattern, and color, vessels were massively produced; they were inter-loaded and transferred to kilns and stacked there during baking; as a result of firing and spreading the color, the impression of the interior motif of another vessel has been left on the exterior surface. In the middle of the bowl, two curved lines intersect each other and divide the interior surface of the bowl into four parts: the so-called swastika, which is said that: "the usage of curved lines instead of curved bands for the representation of the swastika corresponds to a later evolution of this type of decoration that is also observed in Makran in period IIIb (2800-2600 BC; Didier 2007, Vol. II: Fig. 108)" (Mutin, 2017: 266).

Perhaps the acceleration in the mass production of these bowls for export has reduced the precision and elegance in drawing the complicated motifs and made motives simpler and depict them easier.

The pattern under its interior rim is similar to a piece from site Z dated to Bampur II (De Cardi, 1968: No. 14, Fig. 5, p. 141) and similar to the pattern of pieces 31 and 39 of this very collection. Vertical lines between horizontal stripes and

wavy lines can also be seen on samples from Shahdad (Hakemi, 2007: No. 0853 Ba.2 from grave 090, p. 375 and No. Ed.13 from cemetery A, p. 684). They are also similar to Fragments 31, 38, and 39 here and are similar to a fragment from Chegerdak as well (Heidari *et al.*, 2015: No. 057ch 2011, Fig. 8, p. 142).

Among the similar examples of crossed curved lines on the interior of bowls, the following ones can be mentioned: from period Kech-Makran IIIa (3000 BC) (Didier and Mutin, 2013: Nos. 4, 3, 1 and 5, Fig. 4, p. 469) (Didier and Mutin, 2015: pp. 319-321), an instant from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Karlovsy and Potts, 2001: No. K, Fig. 1.6, p. 15), Tepe Yahya IVB6 (the same: No. H, Fig. 3.17, p. 87), a burial vessel from Shah-i Tump (Stein, 1934: Fig. 4 in p. 186) and from Tell Abraq (Potts, 2003: Fig. 5, p. 15). Some samples exactly similar to this one have been unearthed from Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: Fig. 189 p. 143 and more similar samples from phase 6, Fig. 112 and No. 2, Fig. 113, p. 100).

The fragment No. 91 is a unique one in this collection: a gray pottery base, decorated with a small stylized goat in black on the floor and some hasty and clumsy lines in black as well around the base. The base/pedestal has gotten deformed; as it's already discussed, it is related to processes of mass production of gray vessels: having inter-loaded transferred to and getting stacked fired in kilns, not having control on firing, hasty and clumsily drawing,

All ceramic parallels mentioned above- to this very collection indicate the corresponding with Chegerdak, Khurab, Bampur II, Shahr-e Sukhteh I, Tepe Yahya

IVC2-IVB6, Shahdad, Kech-Makran II-III and Shah-i Tump. Consequently, all these correspondences and characteristically having conical wide-mouthed beakers and bowls and generally burial vessels emphasize being a Proto-Elamite site related to the late 4th millennium BC and the early 3rd millennium BC (3200-2600 BC.).

Studying Potsherds Collected from Grave

The Volume of Study Materials

In relics collected from around the grave -which had been looted and disintegrated- 73 pieces of surface-level potsherds have been examined in terms of form and decoration: 35 pieces belonged to rims, 15 pieces belonged to bodies/walls of vessels, 22 pieces belonged to bottoms of vessels and a complete vessel (with rim, body, and bottom whose general shape is visible and recognizable) but broken (a shallow tray No. 65).

Structural Characteristics of Samples

In terms of the color of the paste, the potsherds of this collection show two main groups: orange and gray, and a few pieces are brown-colored or in a spectrum of orange with a thick red and ochre-gray slip can be observed as has been already seen at some sites of Sardasht from the same period. In almost all the pieces, the exterior surface is covered with a thin slip of the same color of the paste, and in some cases, both the interior and exterior are covered. As mentioned earlier, some fragments have been slipped onto their interior surface and some others on their exterior surface - depending on the ground where the motives are depicted and are

visible (inner and outer surface of bowls or outer surface/back of pots, jars, and jugs). A thin cover of ocher-colored slip has been executed. On these pieces, the pattern is in red color (for example, pieces 1, 4, 15, 27, and 28 in this collection). The fabrication is well-manufactured and well-fired with sufficient heat (controllable kilns). In general, in both gray and orange pieces (and of course a spectrum of these two colors), the texture is dense and has enough strength. The theme of decorations is mostly geometric and in a few cases, there are plant motives (leaves and palm branches) and animal motives (goat). The methods of decoration on gray and orange pieces are the same: mostly in black and a few in red - is the most common decoration technique, and in addition, braiding - added straight and wavy/curved ridges - alone or along with painting in black, adjacent or/and directly above the ridged strips are other methods. Like the collection from the surface of the very site, the collection from the grave, scratching with a sharp object can be seen as well - alone or next to the painting in black color on the exterior of some pieces; as mentioned, it can be considered as a decoration technique or it was the effect of using a basket to shape the handmade vessels.

Ever-recognized Common Types

Like the previous group, rims and bottoms were used to identify the type of vessels and here are the consequences: 1- Bowls: gray and orange band-rim bowls, club-rim bowls, flaring deep bowls, carinated bowls, simple-rim bowls with a concave body, simple-rim deep bowls with a convex body (Fig. 9); 2- Long-

necked and short-necked jugs with narrow mouths and inverted rims (Fig. 10); 3- narrow-mouthed and wide-mouthed jars (Fig. 10); 4- Pots (fig. 10); 5- tumblers/beakers (Nos. 54, 55 and 58) (Fig. 12); 6- a shallow tray (No. 65) (Fig. 12).

Ceramic Parallels

Fragments 1 to 8 belong to band-rim bowls and have similarities in Tepe Yahya IVC-IVB; some instances similar to rims 7 and 8 have been reported from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Karlovsky and Potts, 2001: No. B, Fig. 1.36, p. 39). The rims 9 and 10, which belonged to club-rim bowls, are similar to some examples from Tepe Yahya (Fig. 1.8 pp. 17-18) and from IVC1 period (No. H, Fig. 2.17, p. 70) as well as some from IVB5 (No. D, Fig. 4.33, p. 136). The rims 12 and 13 are fairly similar to an example from Tepe Yahya IVC1 (the same: No. C, Fig. 2.10, p. 64), the rims 14 and 15 are similar to some fragments from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Nos. 1.46.A, 1.37.C and 1.55.C, Fig. 1.38, p.40), the rim 17-like the piece 18 from the surface collection of Ahven (Fig. 4) and other familiar pieces in the same collection- is similar to a piece from Tepe Yahya IVB5 (No. A, Fig. 4.35, p. 138). The motives on fragments 14, 16, and 19 resemble the pattern under the interior rim of the complete vessel and fragment 31 from the surface collection of Ahven (Fig. 8), to some fragments from phase 6 of Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: No. 4, Fig. 106, No. 4, Fig. 107, p. 97, Nos. 2, 3, 7 and 8, Fig. 190, p. 144). A similar piece has been reported from Bampur II in the site Z collection (De Cardi, 1968: No. 14, Fig. 5, p. 141). The fragment 18 is similar to an example from Makran (Mery *et al.*, 2003: No. A1504, Fig. 3, p.

176). Examples very similar to the external pattern of piece 19 have been presented in the Chagerdak collection (Heidari *et al.*, 2015: Nos. 001ch 2011, 009ch 2011 and 024ch 2011, Fig. 11, p. 146).

The jugs, jars, pots/cauldrons of this collection have similar patterns and shapes in Tepe Yahya IVC-IVB: the pattern on jug No. 21 and the rim of jug No. 22 are similar to some fragments from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Karlovsy and Potts, 2001: No. I, Fig. 1.13, p. 22 and No. 4.28.A, Fig. 1.17, p. 25). Also, the rim of the narrow-necked jug No. 23 is similar to some instances from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (the same: Fig. 1.21, p. 28). To the rim 24, a similar sample was reported from Tepe Yahya IVB1 (No. G, Fig. 6.5, p. 168), samples similar to the rims 25 to 30 have been obtained from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Nos. A and B, Fig. 1.7, p. 16 and No. A, Fig. 1.36, p. 39) and Tepe Yahya IVB6 (No. 3.11, p. 91). Similar to the form of the rim 26 with an added strip on the shoulder of the vessel, some pieces have been unearthed from Tepe Yahya IVB5 (Fig. 4.31 and 4.32, pp. 135 and 136). A sample similar to the shape of the rims 26 and 30 has been reported from Tepe Yahya IVC1 (No. A, Fig. 2.3, p. 61 and No. C, Fig. 2.17, p. 70). Also, there is a piece similar to the form of rim 31 in Tepe Yahya IVC1 (No. C, Fig. 2.6, p. 63), a piece similar to rim 32 in Tepe Yahya IVC1 (No. 4.31.C, Fig. 2.18, p. 71) and a fragment from Tepe Yahya IVB5 (No. A, Fig. 4.29, p. 132). Similar to the rim 33, there is an instance from Tepe Yahya IVB1 (: No. 6.22.G, Fig. 1.28, p. 33), similar to the rims 34 and 35, there is an example from Tepe Yahya IVC (No. 6.22.E, Fig. 1.28, p. 33).

The goats in fragment 36 are similar to the goat in a few pieces from Bam-

pur II (De Cardi, 1968: Nos. 1, 5 and 7, p. 153) and similar to a piece reported from GardanReg 6 in the south of Sistan (Fairervis, 1952: No. A, Fig. 5, p. 29). The fragment 37 is similar to a fragment reported by Shahdad (Hakemi, 2007: No. a, p. 786). Fragment 38 is similar to a fragment of site Z from Bampur II (De Cardi, 1968: No. 12, Fig. 5, p. 141). The tiny goat on the very delicate fragment 38 is like some examples from Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: No. 8, Fig. 190, p. 144 and No. 5, Fig. 188, p. 143).

Fragment 39 with the motif of palm/palm leaf has many similarities in Bampur, Shahdad, Shahr-e Sukhteh, and gray-earthenware pottery in the period Kech-Makran IIIb (2800-2600 BC.) (Didier and Mutin, 2015: p. 324).

Also, the leaf pattern on piece 41 is similar to the leaf pattern on samples from Shahdad (Hakemi, 2005: object no. 0992 from grave no. 108, p. 386; object no. 3370 from grave no. 279, p. 557; vessel no. 0842 from grave 089, p. 374; object 3370 from grave 279, p. 557; object 4094 from grave 340, p. 619; object 4473 from the room 11, p. 660; object Bb.4 from the eastern part of cemetery A, p. 670) and similar to a fragment from the site GardanReg 6 in the south of Sistan (Fairervis, 1952: fragment E, Fig. 5, p. 29) and it is a bit similar to Mehi leaves (Stein, 1934: fragment Mehi 11.4.5, Fig. 4, p. 189). There are many patterns of palm leaves (one and two branches, one- and two-sided symmetrically) on Shahdad vessels (Hakemi, 2007: Nos. 0118 and 0119, p. 300; No. 0182, p. 307; vessels from the eastern part of Shahdad Cemetery, pp. 669-670, drawings Nos. Bc.2, Bc.3 and Bc.4, p. 671). Also, in Shahdad, a single-hatched leaf

and symmetric one pair of two pairs of similar leaves are seen on both sides of a branch (Nos. Bc.6, Bc.7 and Bc.8, p. 671).

Some fragments like the pattern on piece 43 have been reported from Bampur IV at site Z (De Cardi, 1968: No. 36, Fig. 8, p. 143) and from Bampur V at sites Z and Y (Nos. 55 and 70, Fig. 10, p. 145) and the pattern of palm leaves from the same period was reported from the same sites (Nos. 61, 62 and 65, Fig. 10, p. 145). The pattern on fragment 44 is similar to a fragment from Bampur IV at site Z (De Cardi, 1968: No. 38, Fig. 8, p. 143) and similar to a fragment from Chegerdak (Heidari *et al.*, 2015: No.003ch 2011, Fig. 4, p. 137) and similar to a piece from Zari Damb Surab, Pakistan Baluchistan (De Cardi, 1983: No. 5, Fig. 19, p. 72) and a similar fragment from the GardanReg 6 in the south of Sistan (Fairservis, 1952: No. G, Fig. 5, p. 29) and Shahr-e Sukhteh (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: Nos. 4 and 5, Fig.185, p. 140 and Nos. 4 and 5, Fig. 185, p. 140).

In general, pieces 42, 43, and 44 with hatched bands and triangles are similar to the vessels of Shahdad, which are decorated with horizontal straight and wavy stripes (Hakemi, 2007: object 0923 from grave 099, p. 380; objects 1205 and 1599, p. 427). The fragment 46 is similar to a piece of Chegerdak (Haidari *et al.*, 2015: No. 017ch 2011, Fig. 7, p. 141). Pieces 47 and 48 with black painting on the ridged wavy bands are similar to a sample of Chegerdak (No. 034ch 2011, Fig. 12, p. 147). Fragment 51 is similar to a sample from the sites Z and Y of Bampur VI (De Cardi, 1968: No. 86, Fig. 1, p. 146) and the perforated fragment No. 51 is like that from Tepe Yahya IVB1 (Karlovsky and Potts, 2001: No. E, Fig. 6.13, p. 174).

Bottoms similar to pieces 64 and 65 have been presented from Bampur VI at the sites Z and Y (De Cardi, 1968: No. 83, Fig. 1, p. 146), from Tepe Yahya IVC2 (Karlovsky and Potts, 2001: No. E, Fig. 1.22, p. 29), Tepe Yahya IVC1 (No. E, Fig. 2.19, p. 72). In general, they are similar to the shallow trays obtained from Tepe Yahya IVC-IVB (Fig. 1.24, p. 30).

Similar examples of motives and drawings of this collection - which have also been reported from the southeastern cultural region are helpful for the relative dating of the collection (the site): wavy vertical stripes between rows of straight horizontal stripes from Bampur I-V (S. Sajjadi, 2005), Tepe Yahya IVB (Karlovsky, 1970: No. E, Fig. 24, p. 72; No. E, Fig. 28, p. 76), Shahr-e Sukhteh (S. Sajjadi, 2009: No. 1615/53, Fig. 54, p. 218); The letter M or W with horizontal lines on both sides from Khurab (Stein, 1934: Nos. B.ii.151, B.ii.155, B.ii.157, Fig.1, p. 196); Wavy lines from Bampur II (S. Sajjadi, 2005: No. 13, Fig.113, p. 301); narrow and wide horizontal straight stripes and festoons are seen very often in Bampur I-IV (S. Sajjadi, 2005: Fig. 113, p. 301; Fig. 114, p. 302) and phases 6, 7 and 8 of Shahr-e Sukhteh. Parallel vertical lines between the rows of parallel horizontal lines at the top and bottom, as well as parallel wavy lines - which fill the space between vertical lines, have also been reported from Nundara in Pakistan's Baluchistan (Stein, 1934: No.12, Fig. 2, p. 189). Hatched festoons from Tomb A of the northern Hili -known as Iranian pottery (Mery, 1997: No. 5, Fig. 10, p. 184); hatched triangles and lozenges enclosed between horizontal strips from Shahr-e Sukhteh Phases 5-8 (Salvatori and Vidaleh, 1997: No.4, Fig. 85, p. 86;

No. 2, Fig. 139, p. 113; No. 3, Fig. 110, p. 99; No. 5, Fig. 106, P. 97; No. 4, Fig. 103, p. 95; No. 4, Fig. 96, p.92; No. 5, Fig. 82, p. 84; No.1, Fig. 127, p.107); diagonal or crossed hatched triangles along with horizontal and vertical lines on the sides or top and bottom from Choghamish, middle Susiana period (Alizadeh, 1992: No. G, Fig. 59), Shahr-e Sukhteh, phase 4 (Salvatori and Vidaleh, 1997: No. 10, Fig. 191, p. 145) (S. Sajjadi, 2009: Nos. 13/1605 and 9/1615, Fig. 47, p. 210), Yahya IVB and Bampur V₁ (S. Sajjadi, 2005: No. 14, Fig. 121, p. 309); two rows of opposite solid triangles, upright and downward, enclosed between two horizontal bands –known as painted Bardsir-type pottery from Tal-i Iblis (Caldwell, 1976: Fig. 10, top left, p. 127), Iblis IV (Caldwell, 1976: Fig. 32, bottom right side, p. 139), on painted Aliabad-type pottery (the same: fig. 23, second row on the left, p. 140), Bampur V₁ (S. Sajjadi, 2005: No. 16, Fig. 121, p. 309), Shahr-e Sukhteh (S. Sajjadi, 2009: No. 1615/39, Fig. 54, p. 218), Choghamish, middle Susiana period (Alizadeh, 1992: No. A, fig. 59), Shah-i Tump (Stein, 1934: fragment of the lower middle row of picture 4, p. 185); triangles hatched in the opposite directions from Iblis IV (Caldwell, 1976: p. 140, Fig. 23, painted Aliabad-type pottery); Triangles hatched in different directions also from Bampur V₂ (S. Sajjadi, 2005: No. 6, Fig. 122, p. 310). These samples, in addition to the ones mentioned above, indicate a date between 3800-2000 BC.

Small Finds at Surface Level

Among the surface finds of this site - as can be seen in Figure 13, two agate beads -one cylindrical shaped (No. 1) and another almost square shaped (No. 2)- and

two round small beads (Nos. 3 and 4) as well as pierced shells (Nos. 5 and 6) are considerable as decorative pendants. A few metal pieces (probably bronze) are of the important items: an object similar to a pin or needle (No. 8), an unidentified broken object (No. 9) and two stamp seals (Nos. 7 and 10) are among the surface bronze pieces. One of the seals (No. 10) is button-like, with a perforated tiny knob on the back for easy hanging or holding.

Some Parallels

Similar to the finds of this site, especially the agate and shell beads, have been unearthed from the graves of Shahdad (Hakemi, 2007: pp. 756-753). For instance, object B.S.044/s-1 is similar to the object No. 4303 -necklace of agate and shell beads- from Shahdad grave No. 363 (P. 641) and necklaces No. 4310 and 4311 from grave 365 (P. 642) and linear agate bead (P. 753); object B.S.044/s-2 like object 0431 from grave 050 (P. 337); object B.S.044/s-3 and object B.S.044/s-4 are also similar to the examples reported from Shahdad (Object No. Xx.9 p.793); Objects B.S.044/s-5 and B.S.044/s-6 like shell pendant 0948 from the grave of 102 Shahdad (P. 380) and like the object 3586 (shell necklace) are from grave 296 (P. 581). In general, these finds show a great similarity with the burial gifts of Shahdad (P. 793).

Also, object B.S.044/s-8 is similar to copper and bronze pins obtained from Shahdad; like object 0389 from grave 045 of Shahdad (P. 332), object 0407 from grave 048 (P. 335), object 0428 from grave 050 (P. 337), object 0438 from grave 051 (P. 338), object 0459 from grave 055 (P. 343), object 0554 from grave 061 (P. 351), object

0573 from grave 063 (P. 354), object 0630 from grave 069 (P. 358), object 0808 from grave 083 (P. 371) and object 1280 from grave 126 of Shahdad (P. 408) or similar to decorative copper rods (P. 748). Object B.S.044/s-7 is generally similar to the bronze stamp seals that were reported from Shahdad (P. 791); For example, similar to object 1216 from grave 122 (P. 404, left picture); object 1791 from grave 163 (P. 438), objects 2806 (copper/bronze seal) from grave 226 (P. 509) and 1050 (P. 393, right side). Object No. B.S.044/s-10 is also a stamped seal with a perforated knob on the back, making it look like a button. In fact, it has been common in stamp seals for hanging or for ease of holding while using it (stamping something); It is like the stamp seals obtained from some graves of Shahdad. Such as object 1217 from grave 122 (P. 404) and object number 1830 (copper/bronze seal) from grave no. 166 (P. 440), seal no. 1933 from grave 171 (P. 447 and p. 791) and a metal seal with a handle with an eight-pointed flower pattern around a circle (No. 1066.G.115 (excavation number 50/302 and design number Ia. 15 on p. 758). It is also reported similar to it from the cultures of Geuxor and Quetta Valley (Damb Sadat period II-III) (Karlovsy and Tuzi, 1997: p. 56) and similar to the round Stamp seal from Shahr-e Sukhteh period II-III (Salvatori and Vidale, 1997: Fig. 255, p. 174 and Fig. 253, p. 173).

Conclusion

Comparing similar samples in the south-east of Iran, Pakistan Baluchistan, and the southern parts of the Persian Gulf, it is consequently inferred a relative dating can't be devoid of errors.

As seen, among the collection from

the surface of the site, the number of Emir gray pottery and general pieces datable to the 4th millennium BC is impressive and they are mostly bowls (simple rim, inverted rim, flaring and carinated), and jars (hole-mouth and inverted-rim). Only two light orange-paste pieces may have related to black on Buff pottery (exterior surfaces covered with buff slip) with geometric motives (one belongs to a hole-mouthed jar), three light brown pieces (two pieces with red/ochre-color geometric paintings), and ten earthenware and brownish-gray pieces among the surface collection were seen. The rest of the pieces belong mostly to the first half of the 3rd millennium BC. Although, in the assemblage from the looted grave at the north of the site, the majority of the samples are datable to the 3rd millennium BC and vary in type, shape, decoration technique, and size. In this collection, gray, ochre-gray, orange, and two light brown pieces can be seen. By collecting and studying these two separately, it can be concluded that the site doesn't belong to one period rather it experienced both the transitional Chalcolithic period to/ and the Bronze Age. It's apparent that the grave belongs to the Bronze Age in a Chalcolithic site transitional to the Bronze Age. Based on the comparison of similar finds known as burial gifts, perhaps this grave belongs to the 1st half of the 3rd millennium BC. A few potsherds from the 4th millennium BC (Emir gray ware) probably have intruded and been found in this collection as a result of layer disturbance -to create the grave in the 3rd millennium BC or their looting in the previous decade.

In general, the most common Chal-

colithic types of pottery ever known in this collection are fine gray ware known as Emir gray ware (corresponding to Kech-Makran III), a few pieces of gray-ochre and earthenware painted pottery, and brown pottery. Two light orange-paste pieces with black paintings on a buff exterior that if they could be counted as "black on buff", their existence extends the range of controversial «black on buff» pottery to the mountainous region of Bashkard. Also, bowls, hole-mouth, and wide-mouth short-necked jars are common forms among the finds of the Chalcolithic Age. Black on orange, black on gray, red-slip orange, and gray pottery are the most common types of Bronze Age pottery on this site; the type of fine gray and delicate orange bowls in different sizes and shapes, the type of small gray and orange jugs and jars, small brown and gray pots and cauldrons, gray tumblers/beakers and a shallow gray tray. One of the most common decoration methods is monochrome painting (black and a few in brown/red), braiding, and scratching on the exterior of potteries.

With the preliminary and superficial comparisons of the finds of the two periods, it appears that the number and variety of potteries in the first half and perhaps even until the middle of the 3rd millennium BC has been increasing. It also seems that although decoration techniques have been more diverse and almost all the pieces have been decorated - sometimes with more than one method has been used on some pieces, the quality of execution has decreased and it can be seen that the majority of motives on the 3rd millennium BC pieces have been drawn hastily and negligently. One can assume that the increase in population,

increase in demand and flourishing business have eventuated mass production and upshot haste and decrease in quality.

Examining the ceramic parallels -in decoration and form- from the Halil-Rud region, Sistan and Bampur Valley, Kech-Makran Valley (Pakistan's Baluchistan), and the southern parts of the Persian Gulf (Um-Al-Nar, Kalbā', Hili, ...) the site 044 Ahven can be relatively dated between 3800-2000 B.C. For example, small finds at the surface level (bronze items -including needles/pins/bars, round and quadrangle stamp seals- and ornamental pendants made of agate stones, shells, and other semi-precious materials) have similarities with the Halil-Rūd-Jāzmūriyān cultural region (Shahdad and Shahr-e Sukhteh), or potsherds 36 to 40 with inverted rims -probably belonged to wide-mouth deep bowls, and pieces 46-50 belonged to narrow-mouth necked jugs in the assemblage of the site 044 Ahven which have similar examples in Tepe Yahya and in Kalbā' Sharjah -where these instants were reported as imported pottery; can identify Bashkard as an important ring in the trade chain of southeastern Iran and, far away, show that it is a possible communication route from Halil-Rud and Jazmuriyan to the north and south of the Persian Gulf during the 2nd half of the 4th millennium BC onward to the end of the 3rd millennium BC.

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