

A Note on the Location of Raxā/Rakkan


Mohammad T. Atayi¹

Abstract

A number of candidates in the Kor River Basin, Fars, Iran, have previously been proposed for the location of the ancient Raxā/Rakkan a town mentioned in the Bisotūn Inscription and in the Persepolis Fortification Tablets. None of these suggestions, however, is convincing. Based on textual evidence, archaeological observations, and the local environmental conditions, the present study suggests that ancient Rakkan should be identified with the archaeological site of Kal Abdi in the southern part of the Baizā Plain.

Keywords: Achaemenid; Fars; Kor River Basin; Baizā; Rakkan.



¹ Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Germany.  mohammad.t.atayi@gmail.com

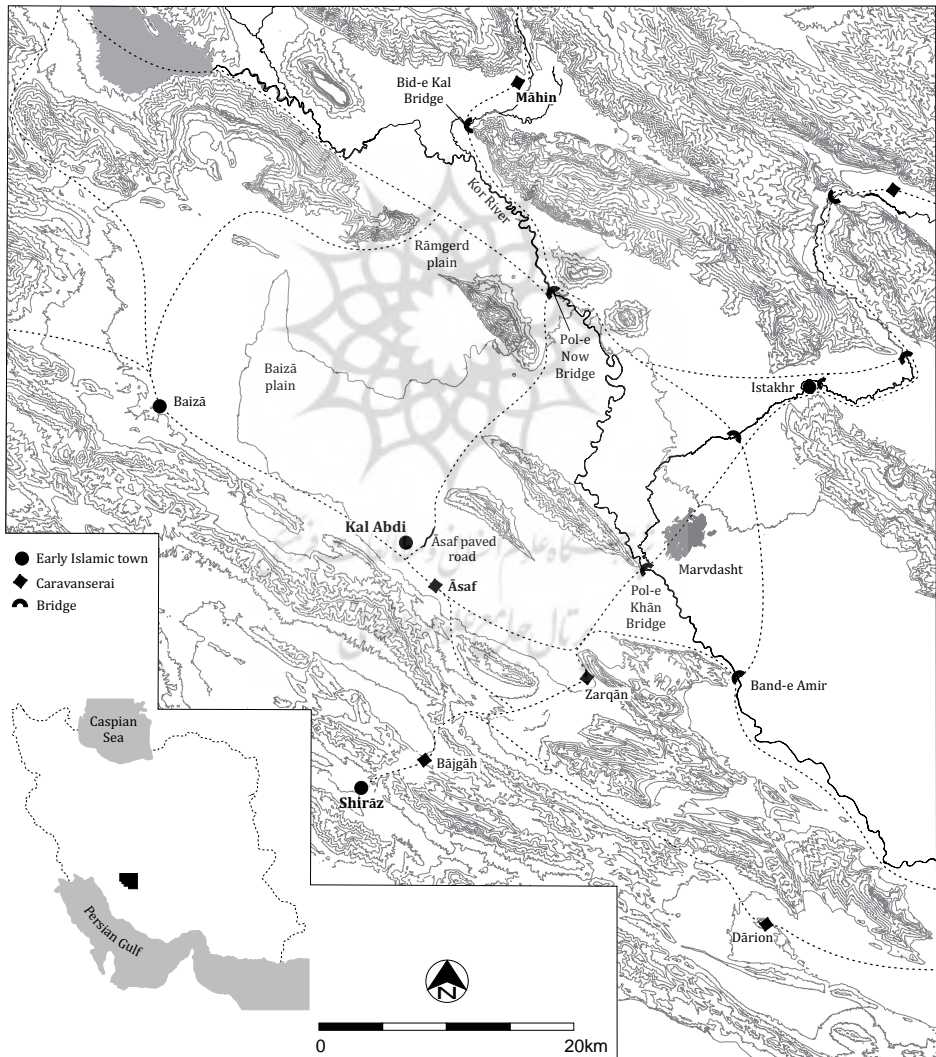
Article info: Received: 25 February 2023 | Accepted: 6 November 2023 | Published: 1 January 2024

Citation: Atayi, Mohammad T. (2024). "A Note on the Location of Raxā/Rakkan". *Persica Antiqua*, Vol. 4 (6): 17-31.
<https://doi.org/10.22034/pa.2023.387298.1041>

Raxā/Rakkan/Ra[ha]' in the Bisotūn Inscription

According to the Bisotūn Inscription, Darius I faced a rebellion in Pārsa (Fars) soon after he claimed the throne in 522 BC. Vahyazdāta a native of the town of Tāravā in the district of Yutiya, rose against the new king, claiming to be Bardiyā, the younger son of Cyrus the Great. His uprising was supported by the Persians who were in the palace, whose location is not recorded in the Old Persian and Babylonian versions

but may have been in Anzan according to the Elamite version. Darius sent a Persian and Median army led by Artavardiya to Fars, which fought Vahyazdāta at the city of Raxā (Old Persian *r-x-a*, Elamite ^{AS}*ra-ak-ka-an*, Babylonian ^{URU}*ra-[ha]-'a*). Vahyazdāta was defeated and fled with a few horsemen to Paišiyāuvādā where he mobilized an army and fought Artavardiya at a mountain named Parga. Defeated once again, he was captured along with his chief followers. They were sent to the town of Uvadaiçaya



Map 1. The Islamic Road System in the Kor River Basin.

to be executed (DB OP iii 21-52: §40-45).

None of these places can be identified with absolute certainty but Anzan was probably either at Tol-e Malyan (Sumner 1972b: 176; Reiner, 1972: 177; Reiner, 1973: 62; 1974: 176; Reiner, 1974) or nearby (Atayi 2019: 538-539) and Uvādaičaya (Elamite Matezziš, Babylonian Ubadasaya) (Sumner 1986: 23) must have been in the neighbourhood of Persepolis. A recent proposal (Atayi & Zare, 2014-2015) has argued that Paišiyāvādā¹ (Elamite *na-áš-i[r-ma]*, Babylonian *pi-ši-'hu-ma-du*) was located at Arg-e Bam². The present note

¹ According to Henkelman (2012b; 2017: 50), the town of Paišiyāvādā “is likely to have been situated in south-eastern Fārs (along with Mt. Parga and Tāravā) and proposed that it might be identical with the imposing Achaemenid-site of Tal-e Zohāk/Pasā near present-day Fasā”. Koch (1993: 19-20) argued that Sirjān was the location of Paišiyāvādā. The suggestion that Paišiyāvādā should be identified with Pasargadae (Doroodi and Hajiani, 2018) cannot be accepted and therefore their suggested identification of Parga with Abarj is not correct. Paišiyāvādā is mentioned as Naširma in the Elamite version of Bisotūn Inscription (Tavernier, 2007: 74-75). Unlike Kent, who connected Paišiyāvādā with Pasargadae (Kent, 1950: 194), later studies demonstrated that the Elamite version of Pasargadae was Batrakataš (Stronach, 1978: 281; Tavernier, 2007: 3). It is clear that one place could not have two Elamite names (Batrakataš and Naširma). Nowadays, Paišiyāvādā is generally assumed to be located in the east of Fars (see f. n. 2 in present paper).

² The Elamite version of Paišiyāvādā namely *Na-áš-i[r-ma]* resembles the name of the town Narmāshir situated forty kilometres south-east of Bam. The etymology of *Narmāshir* is unclear but it is possible that the ostensibly Iranian name was derived from an originally Elamite name. It was mentioned in early Islamic texts (*Muqqadasi* 'Aḥsan al-taqāsīm: 680-81, 684, 717

discusses the possible location of Raxā/Rakkan.

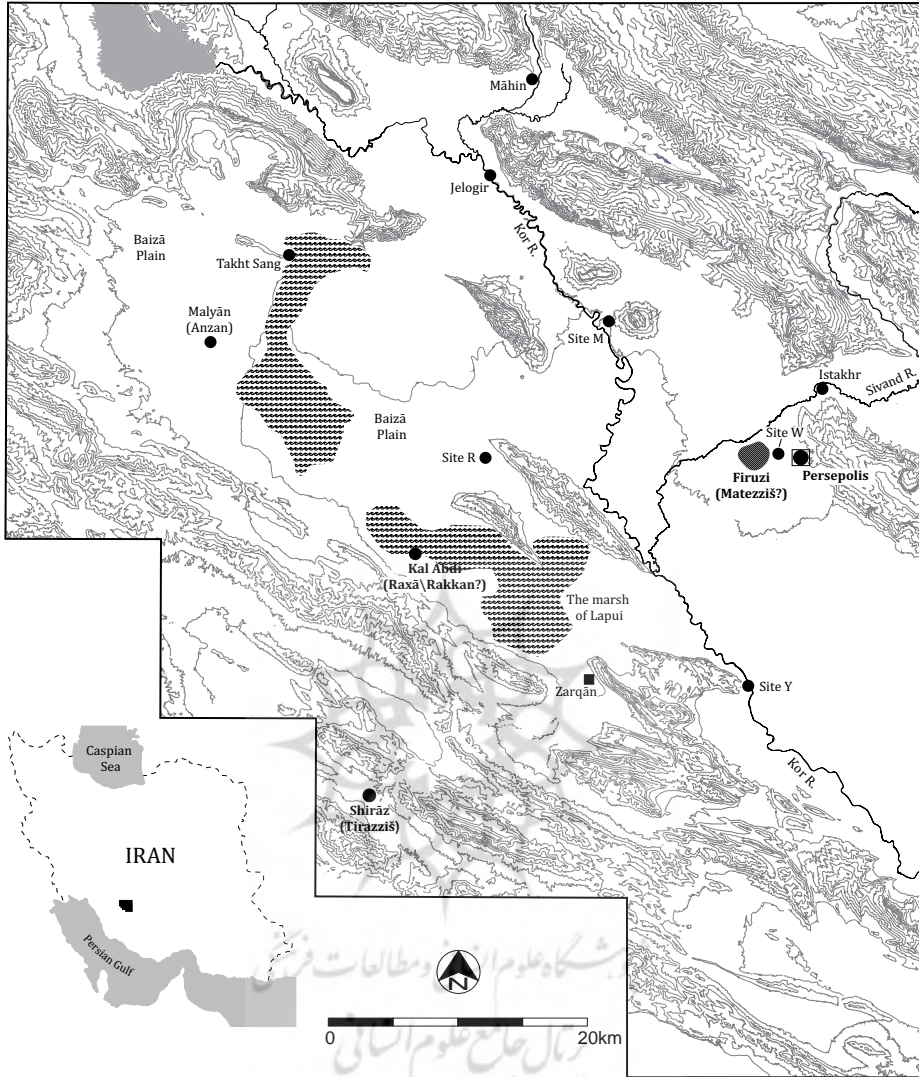
Rakkan in Elamite texts

Aside from the Bisotūn Inscription, the toponym appears in a number of cuneiform sources, the earliest of which are found in the Acropole texts found in Susa that mention the Rakabera (the

& 724) and may have been the site of the mint labelled NAL (for Narmashir) and KLMAN-NAL (for Kirman-Narmashir) in the late Sassanian and early Islamic periods (Mochiri, 1985: 115-116; Malek, 1993: 89 and Malek, 2013: 480-481).

Furthermore, in the Bisotūn Inscription (Schmitt, 2009: 42 DB OP i 36-37 § 11) Mt. *Arākādri* is said to be in *Paišiyāvādā*. Arg-e Bam sits on a low mountain that may be identified with Mt. *Arakadri*. The large site of Afrāz, with an area of over 400 ha. is located next to Narmāshir and the Arg-e Bam is 10 km to its north. Based on absolute dating, the foundation of Arg-e Bam dates back to the 7th-6th centuries BC. We are unaware of any other sites with absolute dates from pre-Achaemenid times in eastern Fars and Kerman (except for Tepe Yahya and Konar-Sandal North). The stronghold of Arg of Bam could have been established before the turmoil following the death of Cambyses and perhaps was used by Gaumāta the Megian as a stronghold during his uprising (see Atayi & Zare, 2014-2015).

It may be interesting to note that in the later eighteenth century Aghā Mohammad Khān (the first king of the Qajar dynasty) invaded Shiraz to destroy the authority of the Zands. The last of the Zands, Lotf'ali Khān, being unable to face the Qajar contender, fled to the east. He first went to Kerman, and from there to Bam where there was a fortress strong enough to stand against Aghā Mohammad Khān's forces. Thus Lotf'ali Khān may have taken the same route as Vahyazdāta in Achaemenid times.



Map 2. Map of the Western Part of the Kor River Basin Showing the Locations of the Sites Mentioned in the Text. Note the Marsh of Lapui Near Kal Abdi and the Marsh East of Malyān.

meaning is “he of the Raka-people”) and Rakabebbe (plural) (Scheil, 1907: MDP 9: 61, 93, 101, 134, 147, and 295). Scheil suggested that these referred to the people of Rakkan. The precise date of the Acropole texts is debated but there is a consensus that they date to between c. 625 and 560 BC (Henkelman, 2008a: 5-6; Gorris and Wicks, 2018: 256).

Rakkan is mentioned in several Persepolis Fortification Tablets (Haddock, 1969: PF 64, 657, 906, 907, 1136, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1971, 2072; Fort. 8864, & Haddock, 1978: PFa. 30). According to these texts Rakkan lay in the region administered by the regional directors Karkiš and Šuddayauda as is shown by the use of the seal PFS 0001* on tablets concerning



Map. 3. The Site of Kal Abdi on a Corona Satellite Image, 1970s.

Rakkan (Henkelman, 2008a: fig. 2.27 on p. 132, 112, 118, 129, n. 1128 on p. 489). This district included Parsā, Matezziš, Tirazziš (Shiraz), Batrakataš (Pasargadae), and Narezzaš (probably Niriz).

Arfaee (2008: 43-44) argued that, since an official called Maraza disbursed “regular rations for workers at Rakkan (e.g., PF 906, PF 907)”, it “seems safe to assume that he is located at Rakkan and that, when he supplies wine at other places he supplies it from Rakkan. The fact that he also supplies wine at Matezzis (e.g., PF 760), Anshan (PF 1112) and Antarrantis (NN 1330), which has a connection with Shiraz, . . . suggests that Rakkan is approximately equidistant

from those three places, thus, perhaps, about 28 or 32 kilometers (about 18 or 20 miles) south of Matezzis and Persepolis.”

The texts refer to hundreds of workers who received their rations at Rakkan (e.g. PF 1946 and 1947). It is not certain what these workers were doing in Rakkan but they included men, boys, women and girls and some were Bactrians, Lycians and Skudrians. Hides of sheep, goats, and cattle were delivered to the *kapnuški* at Rakkan (PF 64 and PF 65).¹ Grain and flour were also provided for sheep and cattle as well as “horses traveling the road

¹ *Kapnuški* is often translated as “treasury” but it may be a “centre of craft activities” (Henkelman, 2008a: 120).



Fig. 1. General View of the Site of Kal Abdi (Ellipse Line) with the Village of Shaikh 'Aboud in the Background, Seen from the West (Photo: Ali Eghr'a 2019).

maintained at Rakkan” (e.g. PF 1946: 48-51, 57-60; PF 1947: 78-79). This suggests that Rakkan lay on an important route and this is confirmed by PFa 30 (lines 11-15 Hallock, 1978: 130-132), where rations for 980 Cappadocian and 303 Lycian (Turmiriyan) workers travelling from Rakkan to Tamukkan: this document was probably written and authorised in Matezziš (Hallock 1978: 115; Arfae 2008: 27).¹

¹ According to Henkelman (2008a: 116-117 & 426 n. 980; 2008b: 304-310; 2012a), two different places called *Tamukkan* are mentioned in the Persepolis Fortification Texts: coastal *Tamukkan* near the Persian Gulf shore, which could be located at Borāzjān near Būšehr (Henkelman, 2008b: 304-306) and the other inland *Tamukkan*, which Henkelman suggested might have been situated northeast of Persepolis (Henkelman, 2008a: 426, fn. 980). He assumed that the

Rakān in Islamic Texts

Muqqadasi writing in the tenth century referred to Rakān (رکان) as the first stop after Shiraz on the road to the north (Muqqadasi, *ʿAḥsan al-taqāsīm*: 455). There were two main routes from Shiraz to Isfahan (Map 1): one went via Zarqan, Persepolis, and Pasargadae and the other passed by the Āsaf and Māhin caravanserais (Curzon, 1892 vol. 2: 68). This route was described by geographers of the Islamic period such as Ibn Khordādhbeh (*Al-masālik wāl mamālik*: 50), Ibn Balkhī (*Fārsnāma*: 160), and Ibn Howqal (*Šurat al-arḍ*: 283).

Jean Chardin (1811, vol. 8: 237-240) also described this road which was the more direct route from Isfahan to Shiraz via

mention of workers at *Tamukkan* in PFa 30 refers to coastal *Tamukkan* (Henkelman, 2009: 302).



Fig. 2. Selected Pottery Sherds from the Site of Kal Abdi: 1. Glazed Pottery (Islamic Period), 2 & 3. Mottled Hand-Made Ware (Pre-Achaemenid), 4. A Fragment of Large Storage Ware with Raised Parallel Horizontal Ribs on the Body (Achaemenid Period), 5 & 6. Burnished Orange Ware (Pre-Achaemenid), and 7. Grit-Tempered Ware (Banesh Phase?)

Yazdikhāst: after leaving the caravanserai at Māhin, the traveller crossed the Pol-e Now bridge over the Kor river and then

reached a stone paved road and several bridges (Kleiss, 1992: 243-244, Taf 64, 1-2). This paved road is known to locals as the



Fig. 3. A Photo Showing the Marsh of Lapui in 1968 (after Jafari and Jafari 2007: fig. 59).

Āsaf road and was constructed on an embankment so that when the marshland of Lapui was flooded in winter it was still passable. The construction of the Āsaf road, probably in the Safavid period, which allowed it to be used throughout the year shows how important this route was. This is also confirmed by the fact that it was regularly followed by European travellers including Thévenot, Tavernier, Buckingham, Ker Porter, and Fraser (Curzon, 1892 vol. 2: 68).

The Location of Rakkan

There have been previous attempts to identify the location of Raxā/Rakkan. According to Sumner, “Rakkan, the second large town in the hinterland of Matezziš, is tentatively located at site R in Ramjerd” in the eastern part of the plain of Baizā (Sumner, 1986: 23, and ill. 3).¹ Koch thought that Raxā/Rakkan was

¹ Sumner thought that *Rakkan* and *Tamukkan* were two days’ journey distant from each other and both of them were one day’s

at Istakhr (Koch, 1992: 39) and Arfaee situated it at the city of Zarqān (Arfaee, 2008: 44; Arfaee, 2008: 283; 2013; 2017: 44 & 927). In my view, none of these identifications is convincing.

Based on the textual evidence, we know that:

1. People of Rakkan may be mentioned in the Acropole Tablets found in Susa and Rakkan may therefore have been inhabited in the Neo-Elamite period;²

journey distant from *Matezziš*, He therefore suggested that Rakkan was on the other side of *Matezziš* from *Tamukkan* which he located east of *Matezziš* between *Narezzaš* (*Niriz*) and *Batrakatuš* (*Pasargadae*) stating that *Tamukkan* was often associated these two sites. Arfaee (2008: 27), agreeing with Sumner that “*Matezziš* was on the route between” *Rakkan* and *Tamukkan* and that *Tamukkan* lay east of *Matezziš*, stated that *Matezziš* was “perhaps one day’s journey from *Rakkan* and four or five days’ journey from *Tamukkan*” (see above).

² Michael Roaf has suggested to me that the references to *Rakabebbe* and *Rakabera* in the

2. Darius the Great (DB OP iii 34 §41 referred to it as being a town¹ and

Acropole Texts that Scheil and Henkelman associated with the inhabitants of Rakkan but might be an indication of membership of a tribal group whose name was similar but not identical to the town of Rakkan. This is unlikely because the tablets refer to members of tribes in a different way (e.g., *puhu samatibbe*: members (lit. “sons”) of the Samati tribe). Secondly, the relation between the town and the tribe is complex: tribes usually have a central tribal town, especially in the first millennium BC (Personal communication with W. Henkelman). Even if they did not refer to the town of Rakkan, it is probable that the town was founded in pre-Achaemenid times.

¹ In the Babylonian version of Bisotūn Inscription *uru* determinative is used for all toponyms. Thus from the Babylonian text one can not conclude that the toponym refers to a town or a village (for example for these two toponyms (e.g. DBB § 23 *uru zu-ú-zu* (ville [...] nommée Zūzu, Labat, 1994) or DBB § 34 *uru ra-[ha-]* (ville [...] nommée Raha, Labat, 1994).

In the Elamite version of Bisotūn Inscription, adding determinatives to place names, makes it possible to differentiate some toponyms to some extent. (for the same locations in the previous example DBE ^{as}*hu-ma-nu-iš* ^{as}*su-iz-za*, the word ^{as}*hu-ma-nu-iš* is translated to village (Hinz & Koch, 1987: 694). While the other location is defined as DBE ^{as}*hal-*_{mes} ^{as}*rak-ka-a*. «*hal*» in middle and Neo-Elamite refers to land and sometime to city (Hinz and Koch, 1987: 594). HAL means a district with a homonymic central city (Personal communication with W. Henkelman).

However in Old Persian the differentiation of toponyms is more possible:

1. *dahyāuš* (land/district): for example, DBOP § 13 U Nisāya nāmā *dahyāuš* (in Media); DBOP § 25 W Kampanda nāma

dahyāuš (in Media); DBOP § 29 L Izalā nāma *dahyāuš* (in Assyria); DBOP § 32 C Ragā nāma *dahyāuš* (in Media); DBOP § 30 D Aḫtiyāra nāma *dahyāuš* (in Armenia); DBOP § 38 B Marguš nāmā *dahyāuš* (Margiana); DBOP § 40 D Yutiya nāmā *dahyāuš* (in Pārsa); DBOP § 46 D Gandutava nāmā *dahyāuš* (probably in Arachosia); DBOP § 49 F Dubāla nāmā *dahyāuš* (in Babylon) (Schmitt, 2009).

2. *didā* (fort): for example, DBOP § 13 U Sikayuvatiš nāmā *didā* (in Media); DBOP § 27 D Tigra nāmā *didā* (in Armenia); DBOP § 28 D Uyavā nāmā *didā* (in Armenia); DBOP § 45 K Kāpišakāniš nāmā *didā* (probably in Arachosia) and DBOP § 47 F Ršādā nāmā *didā* (in Arachosia) (Schmitt, 2009).

3- Big and well-known cities are mention alone: for example, DBOP § 19 C Bābirum (Babylon); DBOP § 32 K & M Hagmatānai (Ecbatana); DBOP § 33 W Arbairā (Arbela); DBOP § 40 I Yadāyā (Anshan) and DBOP § 11 C Pāišiyāuvādā [Bam?] (Schmitt, 2009).

4. *āvahanam* (village): for example, DBOP § 26 L Zūzahya nāma *āvahanam* (in Armenia) and DSf § 12 C Abirāduš nāma *āvahanam* (in Elam) (Schmitt, 2009). *Āvahanam* is translated to settlement/village: (Kent, 1950:173 (village), Henning, 1952: 520 (settlement, village), Zadok, 1976: 72 (settlement), Tavernier 2007: 519 (settlement), Schmitt, 2009: 55 (Dorf)).

5. *vṛdanam* (town): for example, DBOP § 19 D Zāzāna nāma *vṛdanam* (beside the Euphrates); DBOP § 22 C Kuganakā nāma *vṛdanam* (in Pārsa); DBOP § 25 M Māruš nāma *vṛdanam* (in Media); DBOP § 31 E Kunduruš nāma *vṛdanam* (in Media); DBOP § 35 J Višpaūzātiš nāma *vṛdanam* (in Parthia); DBOP § 36 F Patigrabanā nāma *vṛdanam* (in Parthia); DBOP § 40 C Tāravā nāma *vṛdanam* (in Pārsa); DBOP § 41 I Raxā nāma *vṛdanam* (in Pārsa); DBOP § 43 D Uvādaicaya nāma *vṛdanam* (in Pārsa) (Schmitt, 2009).

Now the question is what kind of settlement *vṛdanam* referred to? Many toponyms are identified with *vṛdanam*.

therefore it must be a large site (larger than a village). This is confirmed by the Persepolis Fortification texts.

3. Rakkan lay in the region administered by the regional directors Karkiš and Šuddayauda which included Parsā, Matezziš, Tirazziš (Shiraz), Batrakataš (Pasargadae), and Narezzaš (probably Niriz).

4. Rakkan was a centre for the distribution of wine to Matezzis, Anzan, and Antarrantiš (probably near Shiraz) and wine may have been produced nearby.

5. Hundreds of workers were stationed in Rakkan.

6. Grain and flour were delivered to Rakkan to feed cattle, sheep, goats, and horses which were kept there. This might suggest that Rakkan was not located in an area that supplied a surplus of grain.

7. There were “horses traveling the road maintained at Rakkan” and hundreds of travellers passed through

Some linguists have translated it as neutron (place name) (Schmitt, 2009: DBOP § 19 D), but some others have translated it as town (Kent, 1950:55, 82,98 & Tavernier 2007: 30, 391, 399). Henkelman agrees with this translation (Henkelman, 2008: 59 & 489). Historically and archeologically, it can be argued that *vṛdanam* could have been a town. It is noteworthy that important events and important figures involved in the events of 520 to 518 BCE often were connected with places related to *vṛdanam*. One can conclude that these places were important settlements (larger than villages). One of these toponyms is *Uvādaicaya*. This toponym has been identified with the large site of Firuzi in the west of Persepolis. Therefore, the probable translation of *vṛdanam* could be proposed as town.

Rakkan suggesting that it lay on an important trade route.

8. Islamic Rakān was still inhabited centuries after the Islamic conquest of Fars and was one stage distant from Shiraz on the road to Yazdikhāst, which may have passed by the Āsaf caravanserai.

Given these considerations the possible choices for the location of Rakkan are limited. Sumner identified as towns only six of the 44 Achaemenid settlements in the Kor River Basin that he surveyed (Sumner, 1986: 9 and ill. 3, Firuzi (perhaps to be identified with Matezziš), Persepolis West, and Sites M, R, W, and Y).¹ It is not surprising that he did not date any of them to the pre-Achaemenid period because it is only recently that research in the region of Persepolis has identified a pottery assemblage that immediately predates the Achaemenid period (Atayi and Roaf, 2019; Atayi, 2021).

It had been thought that the latest pottery style before the Achaemenid period was that of the Taimurān pottery phase and most scholars assumed that there was a gap of 300 years between the end of the Taimurān pottery phase and the beginning of the Achaemenid period.² But results obtained from recent

¹ The author revisited Sumner's sites. Firuzi, Persepolis West, and Site W are too close to Persepolis to be candidates for Rakkan. Site Y consists of several (4 or 6) Achaemenid stone buildings. No Achaemenid potsherds were collected in the area. So, these buildings could be the remains of an estate/economic unit/'paradise' and not a town. Site R is not as big as Sumner estimated. It is a small, village site (less than 5 ha.).

² There is a similar hiatus in the Mamasani

surveys and excavations at Tappeh Qasrdasht now fill the gap (Atayi *et al.*, 2016; Atayi *et al.* 2016; Atayi *et al.*, 2016) and several previously unknown ceramic types, including 'Burnished Orange Ware' and 'Mottled Hand-made Ware', have been recognised as typical of the missing period.¹

A new survey of Achaemenid sites in the Kor River Basin conducted by the author has shown that there were only five towns other than Firuzi: Persepolis West, Miyān Qal'eh (Sumner's site M), Kal Abdi and two large walled sites, Takht Sang (over than 20 ha.) located in the northern part of the Baizā plain and Jelogir (ca. 10 ha.) located in north-east part of the Rāmgerd plain.² No pre-

¹ For a summary of the results of these investigations in English see Atayi and Roaf 2019.

² Although pre-Achaemenid Qasrdasht pottery types were found at the site of Takht Sang, it is an isolated site, not located near to

Achaemenid pottery was found on the first two sites; besides, Persepolis West being in the vicinity of the site of Firuzi, is too close to the city of Matezziš to be a candidate for Rakkan. The site of Miyān Qal'eh is located near the Miyān Qal'eh ridge, at the foot of which there are the remains of a paved road that Sumner (1986: 9 and 17) and Kleiss (1981) have suggested was part of the Royal Road from Persepolis to Susa. If the large site of Miyān Qal'eh was a candidate for Rakkan, one would expect it to have been one of the stations on this road. Since the other town sites in the Kor River Basin are not suitable candidates for Achaemenid Raxā/Rakkan and since pre-Achaemenid pottery has been found at the site of Kal Abdi, it is worth examining the site in more detail.

The Site of Kal Abdi

The site of Kal Abdi is located in the middle of the southern edge of the Baizā plain (Map 2), 1.7 km north-east of the modern village of Shaikh 'Aboud at latitude 29°51'80"N and longitude 52°34'83"E and UTM 39 R, northing 3304690, easting 652660. The site is a cluster of low mounds, the highest of which rises less than 2 m above the surrounding plain (1592 m above sea

the main Achaemenid routes in the Kor River Basin. In the author's view, this site more probably corresponds with Achaemenid Anzan. The walled site Jelogir is at a suitable distance from Persepolis (32 km) and it could be interpreted as the first royal station after Persepolis, where routes to Media and Susa split off. However, no pre-Achaemenid pottery sherds are reported from the site. The author will publish further details about these sites in a future article.

level). The site measures 750 m east-west and 800 m north-south, covering an area of 60 hectares (Map 3). On one of the northern mounds of the site are the remains of what might have been a small square fortress measuring ca. 70×70 m. The density of surface sherds is relatively low, but among the disturbed soil, around a long pool that was dug at the middle of the southern part of the site numerous sherds were revealed. Some unworked light limestone blocks are scattered across the site. The whole of the site has been ploughed and some canals and a local road run across the site (Fig. 1).

In the course of his survey, Sumner visited the site and registered it as “6085 5030” and stated that the site had been occupied in the Bākun, Lapui, and Achaemenid periods and perhaps in the early Islamic period (Sumner *Gazette*). On August 2, 2010 and May 20, 2013, the author visited the site. Among the disturbed soil around a pool, there were a lot of ceramic sherds reminiscent of ‘Burnished Orange Ware’ sherds (Fig. 2: 5 & 6). We also collected two samples of hand-made ware sherds (Fig. 2: 2 & 3), identical to ‘Mottled Hand-made Ware’ sherds recently reported from the Qasrdasht excavations (see report of Trench A and B, Qasrdasht, Atayi, Abdi, *et al.*, 2016; Atayi, Ghezlbash, *et al.*, 2016 & Atayi, 2021). Moreover, we found Achaemenid common ware sherds, a fragment of a large storage vessel with raised parallel horizontal ribs on the body (Fig. 2: 4), dated to the Achaemenid/post-Achaemenid periods, early Islamic glazed ceramics (Fig. 2: 1), and a potsherd of possible Bānesh date (Fig. 2: 7).

Kal Abdi is situated close to the Āsaf Road and the Āsaf caravanserai which was the first stop on the road from Shiraz to Yazdikhast. Today, grapes can be grown in the foothills of the mountains to the south of Kal Abdi, which could have provided the main ingredient for wine production. It is near the marshland of Lapui (Fig. 3) and the land surrounding Rakkan is flat and it is not very suitable for arable agriculture and grain would have had to be imported to supply the needs of the large population of a town. The references to sheep and cattle as well as horses being kept at Rakkan suggest that herding was practised in Rakkan. Kal Abdi is not in a particularly fertile region but the surrounding land would have been suitable for pasture, but this would not prohibit the import of grains for the sheep, cattle and horses. Even today, in villages of Fars, aside from usual foraging, the diet of sheep is supplemented by grain.

To summarise the previous discussion: 1. The site of Kal Abdi was occupied in the pre-Achaemenid period; 2. The site, covering an area of 60 hectares, was a town in the Achaemenid period; 3. Its distance from the urban region of Matezziš (probably the site of Firuzi) is about 35 km (one-day’s travel) and was almost equidistant from Shiraz, Matezziš, and Anzan, sites to which wine was probably delivered from Rakkan; 4. The site was occupied in the early Islamic period when Rakan is recorded as being the first stop after Shiraz (35 km) on the main summer road to Isfahan. Thus, the site of Kal Abdi is a convincing candidate for being the town of Raxā/Rakkan.

Acknowledgment

The author is grateful to Prof. Dr. Michael Roaf, Dr. Ali Mousavi and Prof.

Dr. Wouter Henkelman who read several times the draft of this paper with critical eyes and made useful suggestions.

Bibliography

- Arfaee, A. (2008). *The Geographical Background of the Persepolis Tablets*. A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the division of the humanities in candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Chicago, Illinois, Unpublished.
- Arfaee, A. (2008). *Gelnebeshtehāye Bārou-ye Takht-e Jamshid: Matnhā-ye Fort. wa The.*, Majmoye Pazhsheshhāye Irān-e Bastān (5), Publication: Markaz-e Dāyeratolmaāref-e Bozorg-e Eslami (Markaz-e Pazhsheshhāye Irāni-Eslāmi), Tehran (=Persepolis Fortification Tablets: FORT and THE. Texts, Ancient Iranian Studies Series (5), Publication: The centre for the Great Islamic Encyclopaedia (Centre for Iranian and Islamic Studies)), Tehran (in Persian).
- Arfaee, A. (2013). *Rakān dar Gelnebeshtehāye Takht-e Jamshid: Zarghān-e Bastani (Rakan in the Persepolis Fortification Tablets: Ancient Zarghan)*, Hodhod Publication, Zarghan (in Persian).
- Arfaee, A. (2017). *Gelnebeshtehāye Bārou-ye Takht-e Jamshid: Matnhā-ye A-G*, Majmoye Pazhsheshhāye Irān-e Bastān (10), Khānesh: R. T. Hallock, Tarjomeh va Virāyesh: A. Arfaee, Publication: Markaz-e Dāyeratolmaāref-e Bozorg-e Eslāmi (Markaz-e Pazhsheshhāye Irāni-Eslāmi va Pazhsheshgā-e Mirās-e Farhangī), Jelde Dovoum/Bakhshe Dovoum, Tehran (*Persepolis Fortification Tablets: A-G Texts*, Transliterated by R. T. Hallock, Translated and Edition A. Arfaee, Ancient Iranian Studies Series (10), Vol. II, Part 2, Publication: The centre for the Great Islamic Encyclopaedia (Centre for Iranian and Islamic Studies) and ICHTO), Tehran (in Persian).
- Atayi, M. T. (2019). "Nazariyei bar sheklgiriye shahanshāhiye Hakhāmaneshi: az Parsua be Pārsa." (A theory on the formation of the Achaemenid empire: from Parsua to Parsa), In Yousef Hassanzadeh, Ali A. Vahdati and Zahed Karimi (eds.), *Majmoeh Maghālāt Hamāyesh-e Bainolmelali Asr-e Ahan dar Gharb-e Iran va Manātegh-e Hamjavār (Proceedings of the International conference on The Iron Age in Western Iran and Neighbouring Regions)*, National Museum of Iran / Kurdistan ICHHTO, vol. I (2019): 521-593 (in Persian).
- Atayi, M. T. (2021). "Tabaghehbandei wa gouneshshenāsi-ye sofalha-ye Gomāne-ye Alef wa Be, Tappeh Qasrdasht (Fars)." ("Classification and typology of potteries from Trench A & B at Tappeh Qasrdasht (Fars)"), *Majale-ye Jāmeḥ-ye Bāstānshenāsi-ye Iran (Journal of the Society for Iranian Archaeology)* 2 (2021): 25-83 (in Persian).
- Atayi, M. T.; Tavakoli, Ariobarzan; Azizi, Akbar; Karami, Hamidrezā; Zāre Kordshuli, Farhād; Mosavi, Mohsen and Ghezelbāsh, Ebrāhim. (2016a). "Barasi-ye bāstānshenākhti dar Tappeh-ye Qasrdasht-Fars; Gozāresh-e yekom." (Archaeological Survey at Tappe-ye Qasrdasht, Kamin Plain-Fars: First Report), *Majale-ye Jāmeḥ-ye Bāstānshenāsi-ye Iran=Journal of the Society for Iranian Archaeology*, 1 (2016): 87-131 (in Persian).
- Atayi, M. T.; Ghezelbāsh, Ebrāhim; Zāre, Yones; Tavakoli, Ariobarzan; Rostā Fārsi, Ebrāhim; Fātehi, Gholamrezā; Karami, Hamidrezā and Zāre Kordshuli, Farhād. (2016b). "Kāvosh-e layenegāri dar gomāne-ye pelekāni (Gonāne-ye Alef), Tappeh-ye Qasrdasht-Fars; Gozāresh-e dovom." (Excavation in Step Trench A, Qasrdasht-Fars; Second Report), *Majale-ye Jāmeḥ-ye Bāstānshenāsi-ye Iran (Journal of the Society for Iranian Archaeology)* 1 (2016): 132-158 (in Persian).
- Atayi, M. T.; Abdi, Kāmyār; Ghezelbāsh, Ebrāhim; Zāre, Yones; Tavakoli, Ariobarzan; Rostā Fārsi, Ebrāhim; Fātehi, Gholamrezā; Karami, Hamidrezā; Shokripur, Meysam and Zāre Kordshuli, Farhād. (2016c). "Kāvosh-e layenegāri dar gomāne-ye pishro (Gonāne-ye Be), Tappeh-ye Qasrdasht-Fars; Gozāresh-e sewom." (Excavation in Deep Trench B, Qasrdasht-Fars; Third Report), *Majale-ye Jāmeḥ-ye Bāstānshenāsi-ye Iran (Journal of the Society for Iranian Archaeology)* 1 (2016): 159-180 (in Persian).
- Atayi, M. T., & Roaf, M. (2019). "The arrival of the Persians into Fars." In *Proceedings of the international Conference on The Iron Age in Western*

- Iran and Neighbouring Regions, 2-3 Nov. 2019, Kurdistan University, Sanandaj, Iran*, edited by Yousef Hassanzadeh, Ali A. Vahdati and Zahed Karimi National Museum of Iran / Kurdistan ICHHTO, vol II, 175-190.
- Atayi, M. T., & . Zare, Sh. (2014-2015). "Bam dar nimeye nokhost-e Hezare-ye yekom-e pish az milād; Neshānehāyi az Takvin-e Ghodrat dar Iran-e Sharghi." (Bam in the first half of the first millennium B.C.: Archaeological evidence for the state formation in eastern Iran), *Bastanpazhuhi*, New Series, 9th year, nos. 18-19: 4-5 (English summary), (2014-2015): 76-92 (in Persian).
- Chardin, J. (1811). *Voyages du Chevalier Chardin, en Perse, et autres lieux de L'Orient*, Nouvelle édition par L. Langlès, vol. 8, Le Normant, Imprimeur-Libraire, Paris.
- Curzon, G. (1892). *Persia and the Persian Question*, vol. 2, London, New York, Longmans, Green & co.
- Doroodi, M., & Hajiani, F. (2018). "Revisiting the Location of Prga in the Behistun Inscription." *The Journal of Indo-European Studies* 46, Number 3 & 4: 265-289.
- Gorris, E., & Wicks, Y. (2018). "Neo-Elamite period. Last centuries of Elam", In J. Álvarez-Mon, G.P. Basello, & Y. Wicks (eds.), *The Elamite World*, Abingdon, 2018: 249-272.
- Hallock, R. (1969). *Persepolis Fortification Tablets*, University of Chicago Press.
- Hallock, R. (1978). "Selected Fortification Texts." *Cahiers de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Iran* 8: 109-136.
- Henning, B. (1952). "A Farewell to the Khagan of the Aq-Aqatārān." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 14| 3: 501-522.
- Henkelman, W. (2006-2008). "Rak(k)an." *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 11, Berlin-New York: 232-233.
- Henkelman, W. (2008a). *The Other Gods Who Are: Studies in Elamite-Iranian Acculturation based on the Persepolis Fortification Texts (Achaemenid History XIV)*. Leiden, Netherlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten. Henkelman, W. (2008b). "From Gabae to Taoce: the geography of the central administrative province." In *L'archive des Fortifications de Persépolis. État des questions et perspectives de recherches (Persika 12)*, edited by P. Briant, W. Henkelman & M. Stolper, Paris: 303-316.
- Henkelman, W. (2012a). "Tamukkan/Taḥ(u)makka." *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 13.5/6 Berlin-New York: 440-441.
- Henkelman, W. (2012b). "Tāravā." *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 13, Berlin-New York: 453.
- Henkelman, W. (2017). "Imperial Signature and Imperial Paradigm: Achaemenid administrative structure and system across and beyond the Iranian plateau." In *Die Verwaltung im Achämenidenreich Imperiale Muster und Strukturen Administration in the Achaemenid Empire Tracing the Imperial Signature*, Akten des 6. Internationalen Kolloquiums zum Thema »Vorderasien im Spannungsfeld klassischer und altorientalischer Überlieferungen« aus Anlass der 80-Jahr-Feier der Entdeckung des Festungsarchivs von Persepolis, edited by B. Jacobs, W. Henkelman & M. Stolper, Landgut Castelen bei Basel, 14–17. Mai 2013, Harrasowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden: 45-256.
- Henkelman, W., and M. Stolper. (2009). "Ethnic identity and ethnic labelling at Persepolis: the case of the Skudrians." In *Organisation des pouvoirs et contacts culturels dans les pays de l'empire achéménide (Persika, 14)*, edited by P. Briant & M. Chauveau, Paris: 271-329.
- Ibn Balkhī, Aḥmad. (1921). *Fārs-nāma of Ibnu l-Balkhī* (Gibb Memorial Trust Persian Studies). Edited by Guy Le Strange and R. A. Nicholson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ibn Hawqal, Abu'l Qāsim. (1967). *Kitāb ṣurat al-arḍ*, 3rd edition. Edited by J. H. Kramers, Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- Ibn Khordādhbeh, Abu 'l Qasim 'Ubaidallah ibn Abdallah. (1967). *Kitāb al-masālik wāl mamālik*, Edited by M. J. de Goeje, Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum, 2nd edition, Leiden Brill.
- Jafari, B., & Jafari, R. (2007). *Lapui Setare-ye Derakhshan Fars (Lapui: Shining Star of Fars)*, Shiraz, Ilaf Publication (in Persian).
- Kent, R. (1950). *Old Persian: grammar, texts, lexicon*, American Oriental Series 33, New Haven, Connecticut.
- Kleiss, W. (1981). "Ein Abschnitt der Achaemenidischen Königsstrasse von Pasargadae und Persepolis nach Susa, bei Naqsh-i Rostam", *Ar-*

- chaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 14: 45-53.
- Kleiss, W. (1992). "Brücken aus Zentral- und Sudiran – IV", *Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran* 25: 235-245.
- Koch, H. (1992). *Es Kündet Dareios der könig Vom Leben im Persischen Großreich*, Verlag Philipp von Zabern. Mainz/Rhein.
- Koch, H. (1993). *Achämeniden–Studien*, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden.
- Malek, H. M. (1993). "A Seventh Century Hoard of Sasanian Drachms." *Iran* 31: 77-93.
- Malek, H. M. (2013). "Late Sasanian Coinage and the Collection in the Muzeh Melli Iran." *Numismatic Chronicle* 173: 457-199.
- Mochiri, M. I. (1985). "Garmkirmān: A Sasanian and Early Islamic Mint in Kirman Province." *Numismatic Chronicle* 145: 109-122.
- Muqaddasī, Abū-'Abd-Allāh Muḥammad. (1877). *'Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fi ma'rafat al-Aqālīm*, Edited by M. J. de Goeje, Bibliotheca Geographorum Iranicorum. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- Zadok, R. (1976). "On the Connections between Iran and Babylonia in the Sixth Century B.C." *Iran* 14: 61-78.
- Reiner, E. (1972). "Tall-i Malyan-Inscribed material." *Iran* 10: 177.
- Reiner, E. (1973). "The location of Anšan." *Revue d'Assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale* 67, no 1: 57–62.
- Reiner, E. (1974). "Tall-i Malyan, Epigraphic finds, 1971-72." *Iran* 12: 176.
- Scheil, V. (1907). *Textes Élamites-Anzanites, troisième série*, Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse 9, Paris.
- Schmitt, R. (2009). *Die altpersischen Inschriften der Achämeniden: Editio minor mit deutscher Übersetzung*, Reichert Verlag Wiesbaden.
- Sumner, W. (1972). "Tall-i Malyān." *Iran* 10: 167.
- Sumner, W. (1986). "Achaemenid settlement pattern in the Persepolis plain." *American Journal of Archaeology* 90, No. 1: 3-31.
- Sumner, W. (n.d). *Settlement History of the Kur River Basin, Iran and an Archaeological Gazetteer*, Unpublished.
- Tavernier, J. (2007). *Iranica in the Achaemenid Period (ca. 550-330 BC): Lexicon of Old Iranian Proper Names and Loanwords, Attested in Non-Iranian Texts* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 158). Peeters Publishers.

