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#### Konferenz

Water and caves in Ancient Iranian religion: Aspects of archaeology, cultural history and religion. Workshop in the “Kunstsammlungen” at the University of Bochum, 2008. Edited by N. Bagherpour-Kashani and Th. Stöllner

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## Conference

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## Articles


Northern Fars in the Bakun period: archaeological evidence from the Eğlyd District

By Alireza Sardari, Hassan Fazeli Nashli, Alireza Hejebri Nobari, Hamid Khatib Shahidi and Azizollah Rezaei

Keywords: Bakun, Northern Fars, Eğlyd, Tappe Mehr ‘Ali

In contrast to Mesopotamia with its great river valleys and open plains, Iran is a complex geographical mosaic broken up into deserts, intermountain valleys, and coastal plains. This environmental diversity led to multiple cultural adaptations and developments in prehistoric times making cultural generalizations difficult.

Archaeologically, the most useful regionalization of Iran is that used by Sh. Malek Shahmirzadi who distinguished nine different cultural-environmental regions: southwest (Khuzestān and Deh Loran), west (Zagros highlands and their foothills), northwest (Azerbaijan), north (southern littoral of the Caspian Sea); Central Plateau, northeast (Korāsān and Gorgan), east (Sistān and Baločestān), southeast (Kermān and Makrān) and south (Fars and northern littoral of the Persian Gulf). For regional cultures pertaining to the Neolithic to Islamic era, this is the best framework outlined.

In this paper, the authors endeavor to elaborate on the importance of the probable cultural borders of the various regions and their interactions during the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods in Iran. These phases experienced significant developments in regional integration and the development of interregional exchange networks.

This paper focuses mainly on the cultural borders of northern Fars region during the Bakun period (Fig. 1) by using new evidence from an archaeological survey of the Eğlyd district and excavations at Tappe Mehr ‘Ali.

Fars Province is divided into four districts: Central Fars, Šabānkāreh, Kohgyluyeh and Larestān. We should now differentiate the various parts of the Marvdasht archaeologically: Sādātābād plain, the Širāz – Sanwestān area, Fasā and Dārāb (both in eastern Fars, 150 and 250 km to the southeast of Širāz respectively), and Kāzerun to the west. In addition, small intermontane valleys between the major agricultural plains contain evidence for various archaeological sites. The archaeological evidence indicates that the area to the northeast of the Marvdasht Plain was more densely populated during the prehistoric period than other parts of the province. The Marvdasht plain is circumscribed by northwest-southeast trending anticline ridges, which enclose a relatively flat alluvial basin at an elevation of about 1600 m above sea level.

Bakun Period: the Chronology

The Bakun period in Fars is marked by the emergence of a black-on-buff painted pottery, (hereafter: BOB), displaying sophisticated geometric and figural motives at several sites. This tradition largely replaced an existing late Neolithic tradition of handmade, vegetal-tempered plain wares, which were the late regional expression of the “Neolithic software horizon” referred to as Šams Ābād or Bakun B1 pottery. It is, however, notable that a tradition of chaff-tempered pottery continues together with BOB style in a couple of sites.

The Bakun, which dated mainly to the 5th mill. B.C.E., was a period of socio-economic transformation for the village-based societies of highland Fars and has been identified as the first great cycle of population growth in the region. W. Sumner argues that the Bakun period is marked by evidence for dramatic growth of a settled population engaging in subsistence agriculture, the appearance of a simple two-tiered settlement hierarchy, clear shift toward specialized production in certain crafts, the use of sophisticated administrative practices involving sealing, and an increased scale of socio-economic integration.

Among several sites with Bakun deposits, only two assemblages have provided radiocarbon dates for Bakun occupation: Tol-e Nur Ābād in the Mamasani district and the Kur River Basin (hereafter KRB). The datings of Mamasani span the per-
iod from 4800 B.C to 4000/3900 BCE\textsuperscript{10} while within KRB, it is placed between 5200 B.C to 4100 B.C.\textsuperscript{11}

The Bakun period is usually divided into three subphases of Early, Middle and Late.\textsuperscript{12} Although the boundaries between these phases are not clear-cut, there is a truly satisfactory distinction between Early and Middle Bakun, which must eventually be based on a study of changes in vessel forms and the grammar of designs as well as design frequency.

**Bakun pottery assemblages**

Bakun black-on-buff ware (BOB) was first described by E. Herzfeld\textsuperscript{13} and later reported from excavation at Tal-e Bakun.\textsuperscript{14} These wares are quite consistent with clean paste and no visible inclusions, painted in colors ranging from dark red through brown to black in a complex variety of patterns on a smooth surface. Many sherds are slightly green with shiny black paint as a result of over firing.\textsuperscript{15} Forms include a range of open ring based or flat based bowls, conical and straight sided beakers, and a variety of pots and storage jars.

Chemical-mineralogical analyses along with micro-structural studies of Bakun potsherds from Tappe Rahmat Åbäd showed the quite homogeneous nature of the sherds, and revealed the very fine, dense and uniform microstructures of the pottery, which were produced at temperatures of 950–1050°C.\textsuperscript{16}

The Early Bakun pottery is buff-slipped with a burnished or brush marked surface, represented at Tal-e ğari Al\textsuperscript{17} and Bakun B\textsuperscript{18} which coexist with coarse, chaff-tempered Sãms Åbäd ware, typical of the preceding period.\textsuperscript{19} In some cases, large jars with ovoid bodies and straight everted necks deco-

\textsuperscript{10} Potts/Roustaie 2006, 171; Weeks et al. 2010, 255.
\textsuperscript{11} Alizadeh 2006, 119.
\textsuperscript{12} Sumner 1994; Voigt/Dyson 1992.
\textsuperscript{13} Herzfeld 1932.
\textsuperscript{14} Langsdorff/McCown 1942.
\textsuperscript{15} Sumner 1972, 39–40.
\textsuperscript{16} Marghussian et al. 2009.
\textsuperscript{17} Egami et al. 1977.
\textsuperscript{18} Egami/Masuda 1962.
\textsuperscript{19} Voigt/Dyson 1992, 138.
routed with isolated motifs on the shoulder occur in Tal-e Gap as well.\textsuperscript{20} These wares have fine clay and are almost free of temper, the fine creamy or yellow buff slip of the Bakun A fine vessels cannot be observed on these pieces.\textsuperscript{21} The most prominent motifs are dot-centered circles, simple double zigzag bands with vertical strokes, horizontal rows of flying birds and rows of reversing checkered rectangles.\textsuperscript{22}

The Middle Bakun Pottery is defined by the earliest deposits in Bakun A, levels Al-II\textsuperscript{23} and Tal-e Gap IIA, level 12–10.\textsuperscript{24} Although A. Alizadeh argued that the contexts of Bakun A were disturbed and thus any dating of this material is speculative,\textsuperscript{25} this phase is considered as a transitional from Bakun B2 (Early Bakun) to Bakun A (Late Bakun).\textsuperscript{26} Motifs characteristic of the phase are mainly geometric, but highly stylized humans, caprins, ticks, flying birds, fish, and plants. There are a variety of circular Maltese cross patterns.\textsuperscript{27} The vessels carry designs composed of motifs set in one to three horizontal registers, covering one-half or more of the exterior.\textsuperscript{28}

The Late Bakun potteries are defined at Bakun mound A level III–IV\textsuperscript{29} and Tal-e Gap IIb–c.\textsuperscript{30} Late Bakun painted BOB wares are elaborately decorated with geometric and emblematic designs covering the entire vessel. Carefully formed by hand, they are sometimes extremely thin walled. At Bakun, a Red Burnished Coarse Ware that is chaff-tempered and poorly fired also occurs.\textsuperscript{31} Alizadeh has analyzed the Late Bakun ceramics of Tal-e Bakun and categorized them into open and closed forms include conical bowls, funnel-shaped vessels, deep bowls, tall beakers, barrel-shaped bowls, ring-based broad conical bowls, deep wide-wide mouth jars and cooking pots.\textsuperscript{32}

Archaeological Research

The most intensively investigated region characterized by the Bakun ceramic horizon is the KRB (hereafter KRB), where BOB painted ceramics have been recovered through excavation at the mounds of Tal-e Bakun A and B,\textsuperscript{33} Tal-e Jari A,\textsuperscript{34} Tal-e Gap,\textsuperscript{35} Tol-e Basii,\textsuperscript{36} and Tol-e Myanrud.\textsuperscript{37} A substantial amount of Bakun pottery has also been recovered through intensive and extensive surveys undertaken in the KRB, in particular by L. Vanden Berghe\textsuperscript{38} and Sumner.\textsuperscript{39}

Outside the KRB, Bakun or what might be described as Bakun-related pottery, has been found across large areas of Fars Province.\textsuperscript{40} This includes the Lamerd district adjacent to the Persian Gulf coast to the south;\textsuperscript{41} the valleys of Sarwestan, Fasa and Darab to the southeast;\textsuperscript{42} the Fyruz Abad plain;\textsuperscript{43} the Pasargadene region;\textsuperscript{44} and the Darre-ye Bolaghi to the east;\textsuperscript{45} some of the smaller valleys to the northwest;\textsuperscript{46} the Mamasani district\textsuperscript{47} and the Kazerun District\textsuperscript{48} on the west of Fars province.

Furthermore, this ceramic tradition of the Chalcolithic period has been identified in the neighbors of Fars province which consist of Busher hinterland on the Persian Gulf coastal region to the southwest,\textsuperscript{49} the Bastak district of Hormozgan province on the north coast of Persian Gulf;\textsuperscript{50} the Behbahane region\textsuperscript{51} and Zohreh valley\textsuperscript{52} in Khuzestan to the west of Fars, the Mehriz district\textsuperscript{53} and the Marvast District of Yazd province to the east of Fars.\textsuperscript{54}

The only archaeological research in northern Fars is limited to Alizadeh’s survey in northwestern valleys of KRB.\textsuperscript{55} Although some parts of the region had been already investigated by Sumner, the northern parts had never been surveyed.

Furthermore, some archaeological research has already been directed by A. Zagarell in the Baktyari region in upper northern area outside of Fars.

33 Alizadeh 2006; Egami/Masuda 1962; Herzfeld 1929; Langsdorf/McCown 1942; Schmidt 1937; Schmidt 1939.
34 Egami et al. 1977.
35 Egami/Sono 1962.
36 Bernbeck et al. 2003.
37 Zare/Abul Ahrar 2010.
38 Vanden Berghe 1952; Vanden Berghe 1954.
40 Alizadeh 2006, Fig. 5b.
41 Askari Chaverdi et al. 2008; Stein et al. 1937.
42 de Miroshchelji 1972; Stein 1936.
43 Nowruzi 2005.
44 Goff 1963; Sami 1971; Stein 1936; Zare-Kurdsholi 2004.
47 Potts/Rousaie 2006.
49 Carter et al. 2006.
50 Azadi 2007.
51 Abdi 2008.
52 Dittmann 1984.
53 Esfandiari 2006, 532.
54 Pers. comm. Ali reza Askari Chaverdi.
province.\textsuperscript{56} He and H. J. Nissen also excavated the two sites of Qal'a Rostam and Qal'a Goli in Lordegân District which yielded some information on the regional chronology. They also found some sherds similar to prehistoric Fars, especially the Bakun period.\textsuperscript{57}

Other archaeological research in northern Fars at Kohgyluyeh district has been devoted to excavations at Tol-e Kosrow in the south of Yasuj\textsuperscript{58} which led to the discovery of some evidence of Bakun and Lapui periods. Moreover, during excavations at another site near Tappe Lammâ in the Kohgyluyeh province, Bakun sherds were discovered.\textsuperscript{59} Some surveys have also been conducted in Semirom district, north of Esfahan province\textsuperscript{60} in which only two sites were attributed to Bakun period.

Northern Fars as a borderland

Northern Fars consists of several intermontane valleys and small plains situated to the north of the KRB. Administratively, the region includes the Eghyl, Abadeh and Safasahr districts of Fars, Semirom and Shahrzâ in Esfahân and some parts of southeastern Kohgyluyeh province (Fig. 3).

The Eghyl district is one of the most significant parts of Northern Fars consisting of the four plains including Ujân, Kosrow Sîryn, Konješt and Kušk-e Zard which are known as Sarhad-e Čâhâr Dângeh.\textsuperscript{61} These names originate from the Qasqâyi nomads who settle these plains and used them as summer pasture.

With regard to the regional and social borders, Northern Fars lies between the KRB and the adjacent plains in the other regions of Iran such as Bakhtyâri-Zagros Mountains and the Central plateau; on the contrary, they represent an evolving system of social relations.\textsuperscript{62} This borderland begins from

\textsuperscript{56} Nissen/Zagarell 1976; Zagarell 1982.
\textsuperscript{57} Nissen/Zagarell 1976, 166; Zagarell 1982.
\textsuperscript{58} Rajabi 2010.
\textsuperscript{59} Rezvani et al. 2007.
\textsuperscript{60} Pers. comm. Mohsen Javeri.
\textsuperscript{61} Hosseini Fassaei 1988.
\textsuperscript{62} Zagarell 1982.
the uppermost part of the KRB and continues even to some areas of the Baktyari Highlands, which had Bakun material culture in the Chalcolithic period.\footnote{Zagarelli 1982.}

This region is segmented, with each segment controlling its own section of the route. This segmented system resulted from because of the varied environmental conditions of each part. One of these routes that was used for exchange from the historic period in northern Fars runs from Eglyd to Yāsuj, connecting the two significant village-centers of Āsopās and Sede. The route may link some parts of the central plateau to the heartland of the Zagros Mountains. Other routes include the road from Marvdašt to Semirom which runs alongside northwest-southeast parallel valleys, still used by the Qašqa’i tribes as migratory routes.\footnote{Alizadeh 2003.}

Most of the northern Fars valleys are traditionally part of the pasture of the mobile tribes of Qašqa’i.\footnote{Alizadeh 2003.} These valleys vary from less than 1 km to more than 5 km in width. They also vary in the quality, quantity, and distribution of natural resources, including spring water, freshwater rivers, firewood, and arable land.\footnote{Alizadeh 2003.}

**Survey in the Eglyd District**

The archaeological survey of the Eglyd district took place from April to May 2009, and was aimed at discovering ancient sites and clarifying the settlement pattern of different periods in northern Fars. The surveyed area in western parts of Eglyd includes the Sede and Ujan plains, and small valleys to the West which led to the discovery of 82 sites, 8 of which were dated to the Bakun period (Fig. 3).\footnote{Rezaie et al. 2009.} The methodology involved the use of aerial photographs and detailed maps as well as talking with local people, especially nomads, because of their rich information about ancient sites.
Generally, the distribution of Bakun settlements in the region is different from earlier Neolithic periods while it is similar to the later Lapui period. No settlements from the Muški or Jari periods were found, and the evidence of Late Neolithic was limited to one settlement dating to the later Şams Ābād period. Seven out of eight sites attributed to Lapui period contain Bakun sherds and only one site was initially occupied during Lapui period. On the other hand, of the Bakun settlements, only one site (ES 53) had Bakun occupation.

Three Bakun settlements in the central part of the Sede plain show a linear settlement pattern. The most important Bakun settlement in the region is Tappe Mehr ‘Ali located on the northern bank of the Bālengān River facing Tappe Band-e Bāhrām (ES 73) on the southern bank of the river. To the north of Mehr ‘Ali, is Tol-e Neqareh Kāneh (ES 53) that possesses comparable occupation to Tappe Mehr ‘Ali. Tappe Band-e Bāhrām, with a height of one meter and area of half a hectare, is situated 270 m away from Tappe Mehr ‘Ali and contained only Bakun deposits. The surface material included pieces of pottery slag and over-fired pottery indicating the existence of a ceramic kiln on the site. Both Tappe Mehr ‘Ali and Neqareh-Kāneh have Bakun and Lapui occupation.

With regard to site formation, the three settlements are located on a large terrace of the Bālengān River, a good place for agriculture. The Bālengān River, as the main tributary of the Kur River, is very dynamic and has greatly changed its course, an old one ran close to Tappe Mehr ‘Ali, crossing its southern side and led to the abandonment of the site in late Lapui Phase. However, the site was a significant centre among the mentioned three sites.

The two other Bakun settlements in the survey are located in the northern Uţān plain near to Āsopās village. Tappe Āsopās (ES 14) is a high mound in the middle of village and at the moment has layers of Bakun, Lapui and Āsopās periods, previously identified by Sumner.68 The other site is the small tell-site of Tappe Sabz ‘Ali (ES 11) with Bakun and Lapui material.

Two other Bakun settlements discovered in the western parts of Eglid district are located in the narrow valleys with little available good arable and fertile land. One of them is Tal-e Kārestān (ES 3), previously identified during Alizadeh’s Survey (DK 149)69 and has been attributed to the Bakun A period. The mound is close to Kārestān village of Qaşqāyi Nomads.70 The other site is Tappe Ra’si (ES 18) in the middle of Dozkurd village by the side of the road running between Eglid and Yasuj. Dozkurd village is located in the centre of the valley and has rich water sources.

Finally the Şams Ābād period has been recognized at two settlements: Tappe Mehr ‘Ali in the lower levels of cultural deposits and at Tappe Şah ‘Ali in the Uţān plain which contains sherds of Şams Ābād, Middle Bakun and Lapui. It should be noted that Tappe Sabz ‘Ali is a very small mound maybe surrounded by abundant deposits on the plain.

**Excavations at Tappe Mehr ‘Ali**

In the north of the KRB on the junction of Bālengān River and KRB, there is a strait with a rich landscape called Tang-e Bolagi. The Mollā Sadrā-Dam is being constructed 2 km away from the strait, causing the submergence of several ancient sites including Tappe Mehr ‘Ali (Fig. 4).

The importance of the site was reported during the preliminary survey in the area and the excavations carried out during August-September 2006. Due to heavy rainfall in the winter the site was completely submerged after the excavation, but as a result of poor rainfall later it was exposed again two years later in 2008; thus providing a good opportunity to continue the excavation and reach virgin soil. Therefore, the second season of the excavation began in a step trench, 2 m in width, in October 2008.

Tappe Mehr ‘Ali is the largest mound site in the Sede plain. It is situated at c. 2098 m. a.s.l., rising to a height of c. 12 m. above the surrounding plain and covers an area of c. 1.2 ha. The mound is currently preserved to a length of 120 m and a width of 100 m.

Two stratigraphic soundings and six trenches were opened on the mound. These trenches included three 5 × 5 m trenches (E3-E4-E5)71 on the west side, three 5 × 5 m trenches (F10-F11-G11) in the centre, a small 2 × 2 m deep sounding in the north of the mound and one step trench in the eastern area in the squares G17-G18-G19-G20. The only trench opened during the second season was D11 established on the southern edge of the mound (Fig. 5).

Within the excavations at Tappe Mehr ‘Ali, four main occupational periods were exposed: Şams Ābād, Bakun, Lapui and Banes. Almost all of the cultural deposits of the site were attributed to Lapui period. Due to the significance of the Lapui period in the chronology of Fars and lack of archi-

68 Sumner 1972, 42.
69 Alizadeh 2006, Pl. 9.B.
70 Alizadeh 2006, Pl. 9.B.
71 During the first season, the nomination of trenches was based on a grid identified by a combination of letter and number on the topographic map of the site. During the second season, a UTM grid was used.
Fig. 4
Tappe Mehr ‘Ali, view from East

Fig. 5
Tappe Mehr ‘Ali, topography and excavated areas
Archaeological evidence of Bakun period at the site

During the first season, excavations in trenches J12, F10, E3 were continued to lower levels, but it was not possible to reach virgin soil with Bakun deposits. Moreover, in the second season, square D11 was excavated and evidence for Bakun occupation was exposed.

Trench J12, located in the centre and north of the site, contained 9.8 m of occupational deposits, in total containing 49 loci and 10 occupational levels (Fig. 6). Phases 10 and 9 belong to the Bakun period though a small, dispersed amounts of sherds from upper the Lapui phase were also found. The two occupational levels contain several layers and ashy layers with a total thickness of 1.5 m. No architectural remains from the Bakun phase were discovered although by the beginning of Lapui phase, the first architectural stage was founded. The architecture consisted of a mud brick wall with stone foundations dating to early Lapui, mixed together with lots of Bakun Sherds.

Trench F10 in the centre (5 x 5 m) was decreased to 2 x 2.5 m in order to reach the lower layers more quickly (Fig. 7). Excavation in this trench uncovered 7.30 m of cultural deposits, including 99 loci with 10 occupational levels. Phases 9, 8 and 7 within this trench belong to the Bakun period, totaling 2 m in thickness and some architecture remains.

D11 is the third trench at Tappe Mehr 'Ali in which Bakun and also earlier deposits were exposed before reaching virgin soil (Fig. 8). This trench has 8 m of cultural deposits, 103 loci and 11 phases were distinguished which contain the three periods of Sams Abad, Bakun and Lapui. The lowest level is divided into three sub-levels relating to the Sams Abad period with pottery assemblages known as Bakun B1, paralleled with Tal-e Bakun B in the KRB. The second occupational period is also Bakun, it contains five levels and is 4 m thick. These levels are numbered 10 to 6 and include some ancient residues including several garbage pits, ash pits, fills and two architectural phases.

Architecture in the Bakun Period

Architectural remains pertaining to the Bakun period at Tappe Mehr 'Ali were found in two small trenches: F10 and D11. In trench F10, several architectural stages were identified, one of which is phase 7 with three sub-phases. Phase 7a consists of two mud brick walls named loci 71 and 66, which are visible on the eastern section. One of the walls is aligned in a north-south direction with multicolored mud bricks of light brown, dark brown and green, solidified together by brown and green

Architectural remains pertaining to this period, it was necessary to extend the excavation in those layers which contained Lapui material culture. On the other hand, to identify the sequence between Bakun and Lapui and also the earliest occupational deposits in the site, the excavation was continued in small soundings.
mortar. It seems that this is deliberate, signifying a style of wall decoration. The mud bricks are rectangular with dimensions of 42 by 10 cm. The lower phase is 7b consisting of a row of brown mud bricks (locus 74) in the northern part of the trench running in an east-west direction. This wall is covered with green plaster and contains two rows of mud bricks with dimensions of 50 x 30 x 10 cm. The third subphase, 7c, was found in the southern part of the trench and contains a river stone foundation of wall and two nearby yellowish compact floors.
After excavating the remains of phase 7, we were confronted by a unique feature that extended across the entire trench. This is phase 8, formed from two parts including a row of mud brick wall separated by yellow plaster from an aligned mud brick mass (locus 85) (Fig. 9). This mass probably functioned as a platform, built with two rows and seven lines of rectangular mud brick toward northwest-southeast direction. The color of mud bricks vary from brown, light brown, dark brown to light green.

The last architectural phase in trench F10 is a complex of mud bricks and stone debris which contains a high number of Sams Ābād coarse ware mixed with Bakun ware. Locus 98 is an ashy layer on the southern side, but the last locus 99, has a mud brick texture, however we couldn't distinguish it due to the disturbance of soaked soils in the lower levels.

Bakun architectural remains in trench D11 consist of a mud brick wall, phase 8a, (locus 73) in which brown mud bricks with dimensions of $25 \times 20 \times 5$ cm and green mortar were identified (Fig. 10). Beneath the wall dispersed irregular river stones were observed, possibly belong to the same phase but there may be an occupational level earlier than the phase 8a wall. In addition, there is further Bakun structural debris in phase 9 which includes a large regular foundation and big stones (locus 80) indicating a significant building in this phase.

Bakun Period Pottery

Most of the Bakun period ceramics from the Eglyd survey derived from two sites: ES11 and ES73 (Fig. 11) and include painted and unpainted sherds. Almost all of the sherds date to the Late Bakun. Only site ES 11 has Early Bakun period occupation. Some sherds from ES 11 (Figs. 16–17) are similar to the ceramics of Bakun B with wavy horizontal lines near the rim. The most common vessel shapes in these sites are open mouthed jars and small bowls with an upright rim, some of which have ring-bases. There is a rim type belonging to a closed mouth jar decorated with solid black on the interior rim (Fig. 11.15). This is common in some other Bakun sites.

On the interior surface of some bases is one straight line (Fig. 11.9.22) or thick band. Other decoration includes horizontal wavy lines (Fig. 11.21) or complex geometric motifs such as upright cross-hatched triangles beside horizontal lines (Fig. 11.5). A diagnostic motif on the Bakun ceramic of Eglyd survey is a dotted motif (Fig. 11.13) which occurs

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Fig. 8
Tappe Mehr ‘Ali, Trench D11 Section

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72 Alizadeh 2006, Fig. 22.v.
73 Alizadeh 2006, Fig. 39.E; 41.C.D; 42.D.E; Egami/Sono 1962, Fig. 25.2–3; Goff 1963, Fig. 14.5.
in the Middle Bakun period\textsuperscript{74} and Late Bakun very much like a bowl from Tal-e Gap.\textsuperscript{75} A horizontal row of thin parallel chevrons on the potsherd (Fig. 11,18) compares to Tal-e Gap samples,\textsuperscript{76} Tal-e Bakun,\textsuperscript{77} and also Tappe Mehr ‘Ali.

Regarding the ceramic assemblage of Tappe Mehr ‘Ali there are several periods on the site that contain Sams Abad, Bakun, Lapui and historical sherds, distributed in all trenches. The Bakun ceramic collections were found on three stratified trenches with Bakun layers in J12, F10 and D11. Because of the small area excavated for the Bakun period, no complete vessels or even complete profiles were found.

The sherds from Bakun layers, contexts and separated phases are shown in Figs. 12–14. In addition, out-of-context residual Bakun sherds found in other layers of all the trenches are shown.

The Bakun pottery from trench J12 was found in three phases (Fig. 12), the two lower phases are entirely Bakun period and in phase 8 Bakun sherds were found mixed with a few Lapui ones. In phase 10, open mouthed jars and large bowls with both sides painted were also found. The best example is a large deep bowl with crosshatched triangles parallel to Bakun B.\textsuperscript{78} Other motifs assigned to early or Middle Bakun includes plant designs (Fig. 12,19) comparable with Tal-e Gap.\textsuperscript{79}

A horizontal row of thin parallel chevrons (Fig. 12,15) and horizontal crosshatched motifs with straight horizontal lines (Fig. 12,21) have close parallels with Bakun B and Tal-e Gap.\textsuperscript{80} Two examples of a horizontal row of strokes (Figs. 12,16,18) were paralleled to Tal-e Gap\textsuperscript{81} and Bakun B.\textsuperscript{82} Other motifs of phase 9 is horizontal thin lines with horizontal bordered panels filled with short vertical lines (Fig. 12,17) similar to the design at Tal-e Gap.\textsuperscript{83}

Ceramics of phase 8 compare more closely to late Bakun pottery, such as high-footed bases (Fig. 12,8) and cross-lines (Fig. 12,2,6). Altogether the form of vessels tends to include an open mouth with upright rim. Another common motifs is the Maltese cross (Fig. 12,12) related to Middle Bakun\textsuperscript{84} although it also continued into the late subphase.

Trench F10 located in the central area of the mound contains some Bakun sherds in its three lower phases. Phase 10 is defined by a form of shallow bowl decorated on the interior surface with a plant motif (Fig. 13,27). Other motifs include a horizontal row of thin parallel chevrons (Fig. 13,25,29) paralleled at Tal-e Gap I.

Phase 8 in trench F10 contains ring bases with a thick band around the outside and flat bases with an upright rim. Some designs include dotted-motifs (Fig. 13,21) and plants characterized by a mossy shape (Fig. 13,26) and vertical wavy lines on the interior surface (Fig. 13,17,19), popular in middle Bakun periods.\textsuperscript{85} The dotted-motif is initiated at in the early Bakun levels in Mamasani, Phase A18 at Tol-e Nur Abad.\textsuperscript{86}

Some vessel forms in phase 7 include open mouth jars and beakers. The simple double zigzag bands with vertical strokes (Fig. 13,14) with some cases straight or curved lines are common during the Early and Middle Bakun subphases\textsuperscript{87} but disappeared at Tal-e Bakun A.\textsuperscript{88} In this phase, some motifs appear on new surfaces such as rectangles painted all over in colour and rectangles filled with short lines arranged like a checkerboard (Fig. 13,2) are specific to Late Bakun periods.\textsuperscript{89}

The other trench which has contextual Bakun pottery at Mehr ‘Ali is Trench D11 which contains the beginning and end of Bakun period occupation

\textsuperscript{74} Voigt/Dyson 1992, 139.
\textsuperscript{75} Egami/Sono 1962, Fig. 17,7.
\textsuperscript{76} Egami/Sono 1962, Fig. 12.
\textsuperscript{77} Alizadeh 2006, Fig. 32.D.
\textsuperscript{78} Alizadeh 2006, Fig. 23,BB.
\textsuperscript{79} Egami/Sono 1962, Pl. 39b,5.
\textsuperscript{80} Egami/Sono 1962, Fig. 21,7.
\textsuperscript{81} Egami/Sono 1962, Fig. 19,8.
\textsuperscript{82} Alizadeh 2006, Fig. 23,X.T.
\textsuperscript{83} Egami/Sono 1962, Fig. 23,2–7.
\textsuperscript{84} Voigt/Dyson 1992, 138.
\textsuperscript{85} Egami/Sono 1962.
\textsuperscript{86} Weeks et al. 2010, Fig. 16,4,TNP 1325.
\textsuperscript{87} Egami/Sono 1962, Fig. 22,6.
\textsuperscript{88} Alizadeh 2006, 68.
\textsuperscript{89} Alizadeh 2006, Fig. 24,D; Egami/Sono 1962, 7 Fig. 13,5–8.
on the mound. It is important to identify the Bakun sequence on Mehr ‘Ali; in contrast to the two previous trenches (J12 and F10) which do not give access to the lower Prehistoric levels. Trench D11 has 4 metres of successive Bakun layers due to its almost central location, can be generalized its Bakun layers to all parts of mound.

The lowest level of the trench is Phase 11 which contains pottery typical of both the Sams Åbäd and Bakun periods. Sams Åbäd coarse plain wares include large spherical bowls with an uneven rim ledge (Fig. 14,27,30). Flat bases are also found in this period (Fig. 14,21). These sherds are straw-tempered and have rough surfaces. The Bakun sherds in this phase are characterized by geometric motifs composed of horizontal lines and bands with double horizontal wavy lines (Fig. 14,32), hatched and solid diamonds (Fig. 14,28,31), and also thick and thin bands with solid diamonds and triangles on the interior side of vessels (Fig. 14,22). The ceramics are accompanied by preceding Sams Åbäd wares are Early Bakun in date.  

Phase 10 is characterized by several varied motifs on body sherds which include horizontal thick and thin bands (Fig. 14,19), wavy lines and curved bands (Fig. 14,18), horizontal rows of flying birds (Fig. 14,17), stacked solid squares (Fig. 14,16) and a mossy motif (Fig. 14,15), all attributable to the Early Bakun subphase.

In Phases 8 and 7 there seems to be some sherds related to the Middle Bakun such as dotted-motif (Fig. 14,11) or wavy line (Fig. 14,9). The decorative style on pottery of Phase 6 is similar to the Late Bakun ceramic tradition.

Other materials
Archaeological excavations at Tappe Mehr ‘Ali provided a small number of various non-ceramic materials related to the Bakun period in the stratigraphic trenches like chipped stones, fauna and flora samples, shells, pottery slag, spindle whorls and grinding stones which can be assigned to many activities.

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90 Alizadeh 2006, Fig. 23,5; Egam/Sono 1962, Fig. 21; Voigt/Dyson 1992, 138.
91 Alizadeh 2006, Fig. 23,6.
92 Weeks et al. 2006 a, Fig. 3.83, TNP 1321.
such as agriculture, animal husbandry and also craft specialization for example weaving, stone tool making and pottery production.

Regarding pottery production, Bakun pottery slag, fragments of vessel wasters and pieces of kiln indicate the existence of pottery kilns. Bakun period kilns have been discovered at other sites such as Tal-e Bakun,93 Tappe Rahmat Ābād94 and the Darre-e Bolaği sites (sites DB73, DB91 and DB131).95

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93 Langsdorff/McCown 1942, 6.
The existence of cowrie shells in Bakun contexts at Mehr ‘Ali similar to other sites such as Tal-i Bakun\textsuperscript{96} point to contacts between the highlands of northern Fars and the Persian Gulf littoral in the fifth millennium B.C.E.\textsuperscript{97}

Although Tappe Mehr ‘Ali provided several samples of administrative evidence including 5 stamp seals and 15 sealings, all of them were discovered in Lapui contexts indicating that it was an important administrative centre in Northern Fars, perhaps even before the Bakun period.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Although the archaeological survey of the Eğlyd district was conducted for one season only in the western regions, we hope to extend it in the future to the rest of the plain of the district in order to get a

\textsuperscript{96} Langsdorff/McCown 1942.
\textsuperscript{97} Askari Chaverdi et al. 2008, 37.
Fig. 13
Tappe Mehr ‘Ali, Trench F10 phases 9 to 7: Bakun painted ceramics
comprehensive landscape and settlement pattern for the Chalcolithic period of northern Fars. Preliminary observations about the settlement pattern of the Egylid region are that there are relatively few Bakun settlements in the plains compared to the KRB. There is just one site related to Bakun period in each plain or valley; most of them actually belong to Late Bakun.

Given the high intensity of our survey, the low number of the Bakun settlements is problematic. It probably resulted from alluviation of the plains. Recent researches in the Darre-e Bolaki and Mamasani regions have shown that alluviation can have a dramatic impact on site preservation, which in turn disguises the nature of settlement distribution.

On the other hand, modern activities such as industry, agriculture, road and dam construction are major factors in the damage of ancient sites in recent years. Leveling of uneven ground for agriculture has been common in Iran since the prevalence of heavy machinery capable of causing significant damage and the total elimination of small ancient sites and even large mounds of several hectares. Thus, the elimination of some prehistoric settlements in this manner is likely in the Ujan, Sedeh and Bakhkan plains, which have fertile cultivable land. Nevertheless, the damage cannot be the main factor contributing to the lack of Bakun settlements. Only 8 out of the 82 recorded sites belong to the Bakun period, while many historical (Achaemenid and Sassanid) settlements have remained intact.

During the Sam Abad period only two sites were occupied in the Egylid region of which one is Tappe Mehr ‘Ali. The dates obtained by Alizadeh from Taj-e Jari indicate a major gap in the sequence, i.e., between the end of Jari phase (Archaic Fars) and the beginning of Sam Abad phase (Early Fars). But, recent evidence indicates a successive occupation between Phases 11 and 10 in Trench D11 of Tappe Mehr ‘Ali, contradicting the mentioned temporal gap between Sam Abad and the beginning of the Early Bakun. These wares also continued into the Bakun period proper in the lower phases (Phase 11 and 10) of Trench F10. In Mehr ‘Ali, the Sam Abad ceramic style represented by a primitive pottery that is mould-made using perishable baskets with their impression is visible on many pieces discovered at Bakun B and Taj-e Jari A. This technique was, in some cases combined with a layering technique where finer clay layers were applied to both surfaces after the core became solid.

Alizadeh believed that the Bakun B1 period which he described as the “Early Fars stage”, cannot be considered as a transitional phase between the early and late traditions of painted wares in Fars. Although Alizadeh suggested the time range for this period is 200 years (5400-5200 B.C.) given the new radiocarbon dates, he indicated a major gap in the sequence between the beginning and end of Bakun B1 period.

Recently several samples for calibrated C14 determinations from Tappe Mehr ‘Ali have been sent to Waikato laboratory in New Zealand. The two charcoal samples from Bakun deposits in the lower layers failed, while one sample relating to the Lapui period yielded an absolute date of 3950 B.C. The sample obtained from Locus 41 in Phase 8 Trench J12 is transitional phase from Late Bakun to Lapui. Indeed, the phase characterized by most Bakun sherds while latest in time go to the beginning of the Lapui, confirmed an overlap of the two wares that is a problem for the transition. The transition also exists in Phase 6 in Trench F10 and Phase 5 in Trench D11.

As yet there are no radiocarbon dates for the Bakun phases at Tappe Mehr ‘Ali, but the relative chronology of the phases confirmed the existence of all three subphases at Tappe Mehr ‘Ali. Early Bakun was represented in Phases 10 and 9 of Trench D11 and by some sherds found in Phase 11. Middle Bakun on the site related to deposits of three trenches based on Phase 8 and 7 in D11, Phases 10, 9 and 8 in Trench F10 and Phases 10 and 9 in Trench J12. Finally, Late Bakun belongs in Phase 6 of Trench D11, Phase 7 of F10 and Phase 8 of Trench J12.

The BOB ceramics are the only category of material that links together Bakun-related societies. We are able to outline the far away borders of Bakun period expansion in Fars province and its neighbors. Although it is tentatively uncertain, but it would be a background to future intensive surveys and best-controlled excavations related to Bakun periods.

Archaeological investigations relating to the Bakun period were begun by Herzfeld, A. Langs-

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98 These intensive surveys included even much foothills and mountain slopes to identify flat sites with potsherds or lithics.
99 Helwing/Seyedin 2010; Potts/Roustaie 2006.
100 Alizadeh 2006, 119.
101 Alizadeh et al. 2004, Fig. 4; Alizadeh 2006, 10.
102 Alizadeh 2006, 11.
103 Alizadeh 2006, 11.
104 Alizadeh 2006, 119.
105 Alizadeh 2006, 47.
doeff and D. McCown in Central Fars\textsuperscript{106} and A. Stein in Southern Fars\textsuperscript{107} and continued by Sumner’s full coverage surveys in Central Fars.\textsuperscript{108} These provided the fundamental framework to our knowledge about cultural processes of Bakun period societies in the heartland Fars and its borders. The next archaeological studies in Fars and other regions resulted in some new information about this period and its expansion in Iran.

Geographically, the southernmost Bakun sites have been confined to the Persian Gulf coastline and its littoral zones,\textsuperscript{109} with much of the coast between the Bašher Peninsula and the strait of Hormoz characterized by steep ridges that have little arable land along the coastal strip. The coastal zone in south-west and south of Iran is traversed by a series of trade routes that follow the coastal plains or the intermountain valleys in a broadly west to east trajectory.\textsuperscript{110} If we attribute these borders to the Bakun period, so we can assume the southernmost borders of this cultural expansion.

On the other hand, these borders in the west and east parts of Fars linked to Khuzestan and Kerman respectively where there are some surveyed plains and excavated sites similar to Bakun culture. Cultural interaction between both regions and Fars represents a BOB ceramic tradition of Khuzestan in Behbahān-Zohreh,\textsuperscript{111} Likāk-e Bahmaei\textsuperscript{112} and also Kerman in Tal-e Eblis\textsuperscript{113} as well as Tappe Yahyā.\textsuperscript{114} These similarities are primarily related to motifs, but there are broader differences in decorative schemes and vessel forms between the assemblages of these regions and the KRB. However, they can be supposed to be the possible western and eastern borders of Fars Bakun period. It must be noted that contrary to western side of Fars no comprehensive survey or excavation has yet been done between Fars, Kerman and Yazd in the east and northeast.

In contrast to its well established borders in western and southern Fars, there is little information about the northern areas. The markedly north-west-southeast orientation of the Zagros highlands seems to be a factor in directing this interaction which resulted in northern Fars having many interactions with several varied regions in the Chalcolithic period.

The Marv Dašt plain or the lower KRB situated almost in the centre of Fars, has the broadest plain in the province covering 3400 km\textsuperscript{2} including over 1000 sites.\textsuperscript{115} For the Bakun period, 148 sites have been identified.\textsuperscript{116} On the basis of investigations in other districts of Fars and also the distribution of Bakun painted ceramics, we can outline several peripheral districts in the areas surrounding the KRB as core during the Bakun period.

During the previous Neolithic period the level of integration, as reflected in the existence of unique regional ceramic styles, was considerably less.\textsuperscript{117} During the Bakun period, inter-regional integration grew\textsuperscript{118} concurrent with the appearance of complex social organization.\textsuperscript{119} A model of core and periphery interaction especially during Late Bakun could probably be proposed.

The Late Bakun subphase represents a remarkable jump from the apparent much simpler preceding societies in the Marv Dasht.\textsuperscript{120} This period, known as Bakun A, was also a period of artistic experimentation when the long tradition of painted ceramics reached its climax with the appearance of the classic Bakun A ceramics. The majority of the settlements dating to this phase were found on new sites.

Bakun painted pottery is attributed to Black-on-Buff painted ceramic tradition that stretched across Iran during the Chalcolithic. Some scholars parallel it to the Ubaid ceramic tradition in Mesopotamia.\textsuperscript{121} On the other hand, Alizadeh\textsuperscript{122} believes that Bakun painted ceramics in Fars have no antecedent in the region and may have been introduced from Susiana as a result of migration or increased contact among specialized potters.

The growth of new sites during the Late Bakun in some peripheral zones of Fars such as the Persian Gulf littoral (Askari Chaverdi et al 2008),\textsuperscript{123} Mamasani\textsuperscript{124} and Eğlyd\textsuperscript{125} was perhaps the result of this “expansion”.

The Eğlyd district as one of close peripheral sections of KRB has many parallels with that region. The similarity in ceramic style and relative chronology, administrative technology, architecture, settlement patterns, subsistence strategy and other evi-

\textsuperscript{106} Herzfeld 1929; Langsdorff/McCown 1942.
\textsuperscript{107} Stein 1934.
\textsuperscript{108} Sumner 1972.
\textsuperscript{109} Askari Chaverdi et al. 2008; Stein 1934.
\textsuperscript{110} Askari Chaverdi et al. 2008, 25.
\textsuperscript{111} Abdi 2008; Dittmann 1984.
\textsuperscript{112} Azadi 2007.
\textsuperscript{113} Caldwell 1967.
\textsuperscript{114} Beale 1986.
\textsuperscript{115} Sumner 1972; Sumner 1990; Vanden Berghe 1952; Vanden Berghe 1954.
\textsuperscript{116} Sumner 1990.
\textsuperscript{117} Weeks et al. 2006 b.
\textsuperscript{118} Sumner 2003, 62.
\textsuperscript{119} Alizadeh 1988; Alizadeh 2003; Alizadeh 2006.
\textsuperscript{120} Alizadeh 2006, 12.
\textsuperscript{121} Henrickson 1986; Weeks et al. 2010.
\textsuperscript{122} Alizadeh 2006, 97.
\textsuperscript{123} Askari Chaverdi et al. 2008.
\textsuperscript{124} Potts/Roustaie 2006.
\textsuperscript{125} Rezaie et al. 2009.
dence between two regions caused broader distribution of the Bakun material cultures to far away regions beyond the Eglyd; district on the Baštıryāri.

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Summary
The Bakun period is one of the most significant phases of socio-economic transformation in Fars province. It appears as a relatively homogenous culture throughout Fars. The Bakun phase shares basic characteristics, such as the usage of Black-on-Buff wares, with the neighboring regions. Northern Fars, also called Sarhad, is a borderland to the northern desert regions of South-Central Iran. Its 5th millennium BC population sustained relations with communities in the Central Fars Kur River Basin. Two seasons of rescue excavations at Tappeh Mehr ‘Ali in the district of Egîd in the years 2006 and 2008 uncovered Bakun phase remains. These provide the first Bakun period stratigraphic sequence in Northern Fars. The paper analyzes these remains from the point of view of chronology and cultural relations and provides new information regarding 5th millennium BC interaction with the South.
چکیده

دوره باکون به عنوان یکی از مهم‌ترین فرهنگ‌های عصر مس - سنگی ایران، مرحله مهمی در زمینه تغییرات اجتماعی- اقتصادی جوامع پیش‌ازتاریخ ایران در فارس به شمار می‌آید. با توجه به پژوهش‌های کشته‌ده انجام شده، این‌وهی از اطلاعات مفید از این دوره به واسطه بررسی‌ها و کاوش‌های باستان‌شناسی فراهم شده است. این داده‌ها نشان از گسترش یک فرهنگ نسبتاً همگون با سفال نخودی منقوش می‌دهد که پراکنش آن در سراسر فارس و استان‌های همجوار آن مشاهده شده است. شمال فارس نیز به عنوان یکی از مناطق حاشیه‌ای و سرحد، برهمنگی‌های فرهنگی با مناطق مرکزی حوضه رود کر و حوضه‌های همجوار آن در دوره‌های باکون داشته است. کاوش‌های باستان‌شناسی تیت مهرعلی در شهرستان اقلید، در سال‌های ١٣٨٩ و ١٣٨٧ مدارک قابل توجهی در رابطه با فرهنگ باکون آشکار ساخت که بررسی آن‌ها، موضوع این مقاله است. این مدارک چنین ارتباطات و توزیع‌های فرهنگی را در دوره باکون تقویت می‌نماید و توالی استقراری فرهنگ باکون را تا حدودی روش‌تر می‌سازد.