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2012 Supplementary Report of the Iran-Japan Joint Research Study of the Gorgan Material in the National Museum of Iran, Tehran

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I. *Hiroshima University Scientific Expedition to Iran* in the Gorgan Plain during 1970's

In 1971, the Department of Archaeology of Hiroshima University organized *the Hiroshima University Scientific Expedition to Iran* in order to make clear the spread of early agriculture from West Asia to East Asia. This investigation identified more than 200 archaeological sites in the northern part of Iran (Hiroshima University Scientific Expedition to Iran 1973), especially in the Gorgan Plain near the Caspian Sea (Hiroshima University Scientific Expedition to Iran 1976; 1978), in 1971, 1974, 1976.

In 1971, Prof. H. Matsuzaki started the archaeological investigation in the northern part of Iran. Because he estimated that this area could have been a corridor of early agricultural

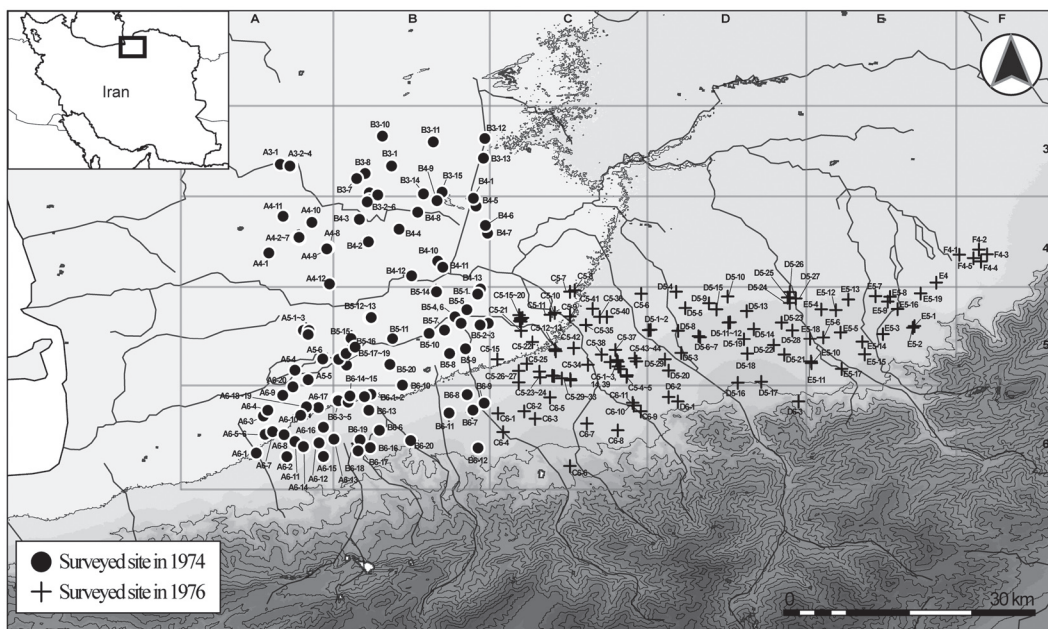


Fig.1 Surveyed sites by Hiroshima University Scientific Expedition to Iran in Gorgan

cultures toward the eastern Eurasian world. He carried out the first survey for three months, from October to November in 1971. They went around representative sites from Gilan to Khorasan (Hiroshima University Scientific Expedition to Iran 1973). In this season, they did also a sondage at the west tepe of Tappeh Sang-i Chaxmaq, near Bastam village in Semnan. As a result, they found a well-preserved early Neolithic settlement dated to PPNB at the site.

The second expedition directed by Prof. H. Shiomi lasted three months, from October to December in 1974. The purpose of this season was general reconnaissance for producing comprehensive site map of the Gorgan Plain. They surveyed approximately 2000 km² area in the western part of Gorgan (Fig. 1) and they registered 112 sites. During this season, they also did the sondages at Tappeh Anjirāb and at Tappeh Gorbag (Hiroshima University Scientific Expedition to Iran 1976).

The third expedition, directed again by professor Shiomi, was carried out in the Gorgan Plain for three months, from October to December in 1976. They found 112 sites from the range of 2000 km² in the eastern part of Gorgan Plain (Fig. 1). In this season, they did a sondage at Tappeh Hoseynābād (Hiroshima University Scientific Expedition to Iran 1978).

II. Purpose and Outline of the Research in the National Museum of Iran, 2012

During these three expeditions, the Hiroshima University Scientific Expedition gained more than 20,000 of pottery shards, stone tools, and other archaeological materials from

surveyed sites and excavated sites as Tappeh Sang-i Chaxmaq, Tappeh Anjirāb, and Tappeh Hoseynābād. Among these materials, about half of them collected in 1971 and 1974 were brought to Japan and have been kept in Hiroshima University. The other collection in 1976 have been kept in the National Museum of Iran.

However, unfortunately most of them had not yet been published. We have started the material study for publishing them since 2010. As a part of this activity, we have begun to study the material of the third season kept in Iran since February 2010. At first, from 27 February to 9 March, we study materials excavated at Tappeh Hoseynābād in the National Museum of Iran (Ohtsu et al. 2010).

Then, in this year, we have studied the rest of excavated material at Tappeh Hoseynābād and the surveyed materials in 1976. Our study in the National Museum of Iran lasted 31 days, from 28 January to 27 February. We collected basic data of them for publishing the final report. The principal work included washing, taking photos, drawing, counting and dating of them. Consequently, we have finished our study on most of the material collected in 1976.

III. Preliminary Report of the Material Prospected in the Gorgan Plain, 1976

1. Abstract of the survey material of 1976

In total 2,593 pottery shreds were kept in the National Museum of Iran: including 2,335 shards surveyed from 108 sites in Golestan and Khorasan, and 258 shards excavated at Tappeh Hoseynābād in Gorgan. In addition, we have studied stone tool, glass objects surveyed in Golestan. Most of the surveyed material in 1976 represents pottery shards. They appear to belong to multiple periods from Chalcolithic to Islamic. The majority of the collection can be assigned to the Bronze Age material (1,071 shards), followed by the Sassanian ceramics (537 shards). It is impossible to present all of these materials in this paper. In the next paragraph, we would like to focus on some representative sites and materials. More complete report is being prepared.

2. Representative sites investigated in 1976

i) Bronze Age: Tappeh Hoseynābād and Tappeh Anjirāb

As mentioned above, we found a lot of Bronze Age (about 3800 BC ~ 1600 BC) materials in this season (from 71 sites). We can say that this region could have been intensively settled in this period. Among them, these sites have especially many good examples of the Bronze Age material of Gorgan. The most characteristic one is burnished gray ware (Fig. 2-2~13, Fig. 3-4~10, Fig. 5-12~15). The surface color of this ware group ranges predominantly from gray to black. It is made of fine paste and usually well fired. Slight burnishing, elaborate burnishing,

or wet smoothing are typical treatments on surface (PL. I-5~8, PL. II-1, 6, PL. III-4~5, PL. IV-8). This ware group has been known as its uniform and broad distribution. Similar ware has been found in Mazandaran (Mahroozi & Piller 2009) and in Semnan as well (Dyson & Remsen 1989; Schmidt 1933, 1937).

We also found black painted pottery. This group is characterized by geometric black paint on red slipped surface (PL. I-4, PL. II-2~4, PL. III-8, PL. IV-7). It mainly consists of large jar (Fig. 2-1, Fig. 3-1~3) and sometimes small jar (Fig. 5-12). Different from the burnished gray ware, this ware had been found only in this area (Arne 1945; Deshayes 1966, 1967; Martinez 1990; Shahmirzadi & Nokandeh 1379/2001) and considered as geographically specific group. However, in recent years, it was found also in Mazandaran (Mahroozi & Piller 2009). It would be worth reconsidering the geographical position of this pottery.

ii) Iron Age: Tappeh Tapošt

The characteristic assemblage for the Iron Age was found at Tappeh Tapošt. Characteristic forms are simple bowl with tripod (Fig. 5-4, 5), cup with ledges, bowl with horizontal handle (Fig. 5-7), and decorative spouts (Fig. 5-9, 10). These shards are made of fine paste and show bright reddish brown or orange in color. Surfaces are well burnished and always carefully smoothed (PL. IV-2, 4~6). We can say that the pottery assemblage forms part of "Orange Ware Horizon" (Arimatsu 2012; Piller 2008). It is suggested that in the Late Iron Age (from the second half of the 8th century BC to the middle of the 6th century BC) this region was incorporated within the broad social/cultural network across the northern regions of Iranian Plateau. We have found this kind of pottery at 12 sites.

Among the pottery of Tappeh Tapošt, simple bowl with tripod is a peculiar form in Gorgan. The geographical distribution of this form of bowl may be confined to this region, showing some minor variations in terms of pottery shaping technique. The beginning of the Iron Age in this region has been discussed for a long time, but any archaeological evidence for the Early Iron Age has not yet been revealed. If this type of pottery could be considered as regional one, it would be useful for this discussion.

iii) Sassanian and Islamic Periods: Bibi Shirvan and Nishapour

A handful of glass ware was collected at Bibi Shirvan. All the glassware is transparent pale blue, made by free blown technique. The most significant material is a necked jar (Fig. 4-4, PL. V: 8-1). A similar example was reported from the Late Sassanian Fortress at Qasr-i Abu Nasr, Old Shiraz (Whitcomb 1985 Fig. 58: c, z). In the Gorgan Plain, Late Sassanian glass ware was reported only from Tureng tépé (Boucharlat et Lecomte 1987).

Islamic glazed pottery was collected at 53 sites in 1976 season. There are relatively few shards of lead glazed ware, such as green glazed and white slipped ware / underglaze black on white slip ware, dated to 10th- 11th centuries AD. Most of the glazed shards are alkaline glazed fragments colored in turquoise blue or cobalt blue, dated after 11th century AD. 10 sites yielded only lead glazed ware while 18 sites yielded only alkaline glazed shards, and other sites yielded both. The paste can be classified into two major class, clay and stone paste. It is noteworthy that stone paste ware are less in quantity than clay ware among turquoise blue glazed ware.

Though slipped ware is relatively rare in this region, underglaze black on white slip ware was recovered at only two sites (one of them: PL. V: 3-5, 9, 11~12). The latter ware has painted geometric pattern in manganese deep purple. Similar examples are known at Nishapour. Turquoise blue glazed ware has usually painted designs under glaze black; circles or lines, geometric pattern (PL. V: 7-1~3, 6~8, PL. V: 5-4, 5, PL. V: 7-5~9). Few are incised, plain blue glazed (PL. V: 1-5, 8, PL. V: 3-7, PL. V: 4-4, PL. V: 5-6). A specimen of the most elaborated cobalt glazed ware was found at QandilyTappeh. Fragments are molded fine stone paste (PL. V: 6-8, 9).

For the reasons above, it seems that the region was scarcely occupied until 10th century AD. Settlements increased after 11th century AD in the southern part of the Gorgan Plain. Goergin near Gonbad-e-Qabus is known as one of the glazed pottery kiln sites of the Gorgan Plain between 10th-14th centuries AD. The collected fragments show rich variations in ware: Celadon ware (Lung-chuan ware, PL. III: 7-1), White slip ware (PL. III: 7-4), Green glazed ware (PL. III: 7-5), Yellow glazed ware (PL. III: 7-8, 13), Cobalt blue glazed ware (PL. III: 7-6), Turquoise blue glazed ware (PL. III: 7-2, 9), Deep purple glazed ware (PL. III: 7-14), stone paste ware (PL. III: 7-7, 10~12).

The expedition also made a survey outside the Gorgan Plain. Nishapour is one of the most famous kiln sites in the Khorasan region, yielding pottery bowl (Fig. 4-10, PL. III: 1-1, 2), Turquoise blue glazed tile (Fig. 4-8, 9, PL. III: 2-5, 7), and kiln tools of three pronged shape (Fig. 4-5, 6, PL. III: 3-9, 10). The residue of turquoise blue glaze can be seen on the tip of kiln tools.

IV. Conclusion: Prospects of Archaeological Study in Gorgan

First, we would like to note that we have finished the whole material excavated from Tappeh Hoseynābād. We think that this site is very important for considering the Bronze Age of Iran (Ohtsu et al. 2010). In the near future, it would be possible to give new knowledge.

Second, it becomes possible to study settlement pattern in northeastern Iran in detail. We would reveal how people lived here and how people used this area. Gorgan is always an

interesting area as an important region which locates between Central Asia and the Near East. Study of Gorgan would be essential for clarifying the characteristics of each ancient period and each area, in the human history of the Eurasian world. Our study would be useful to tackle with this basic and important study.

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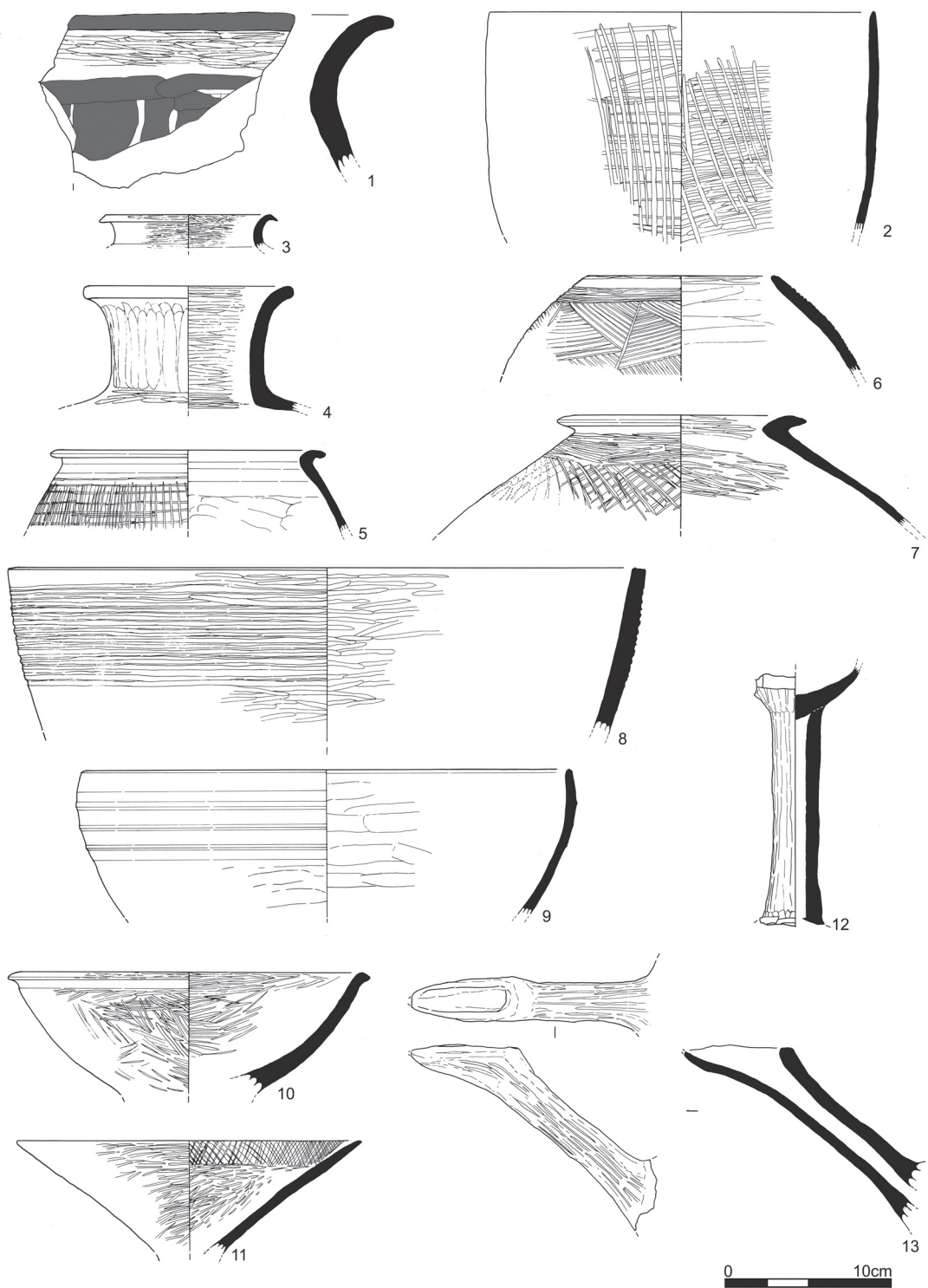


Fig.2 Pottery surveyed from Tappeh Anjirāb
1~13.B6-6 Tappeh Anjirāb

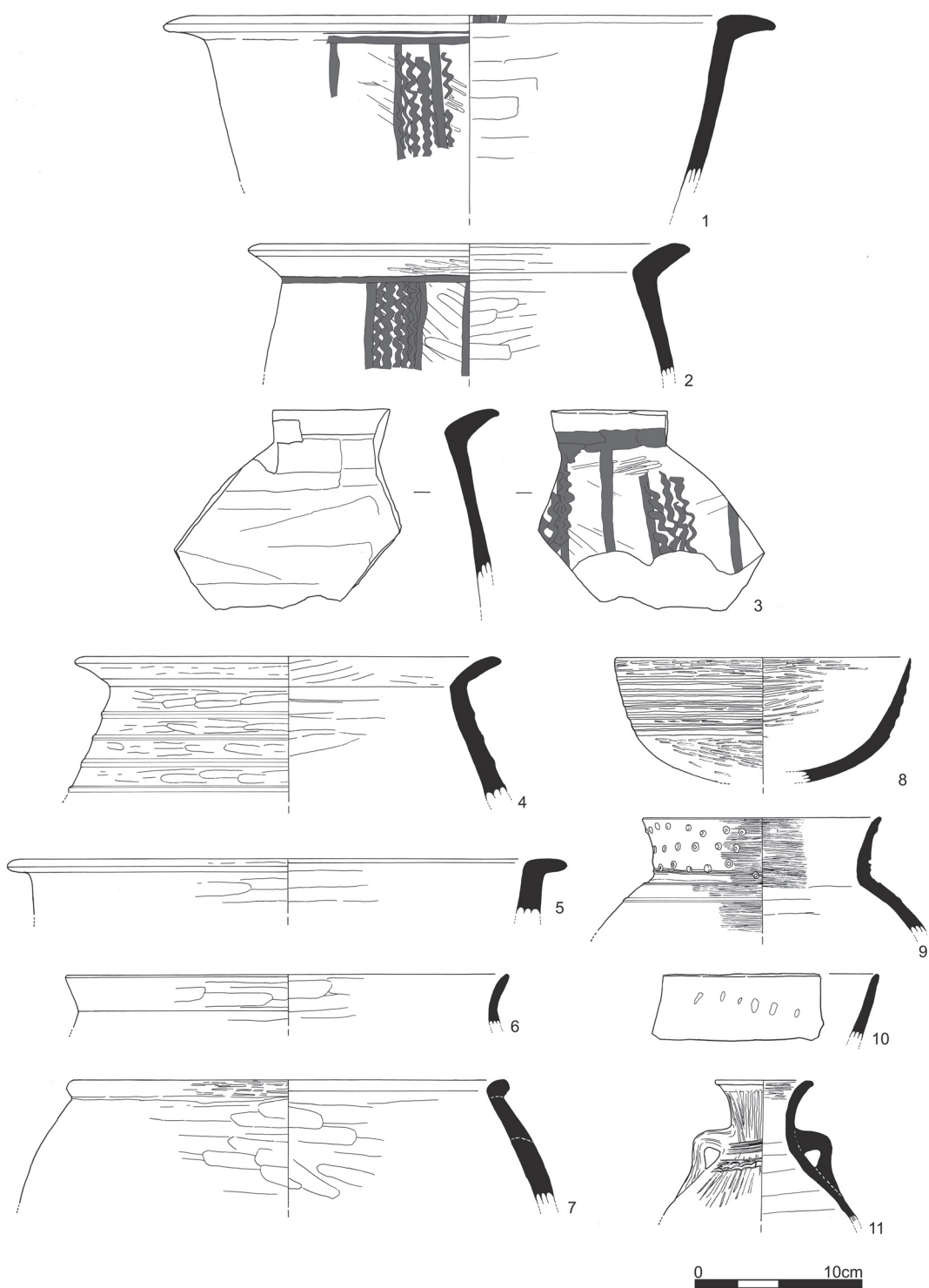


Fig.3 Pottery excavated from Tappeh Hoseynābād
1~11.C5-3 Tappeh Hoseynābād

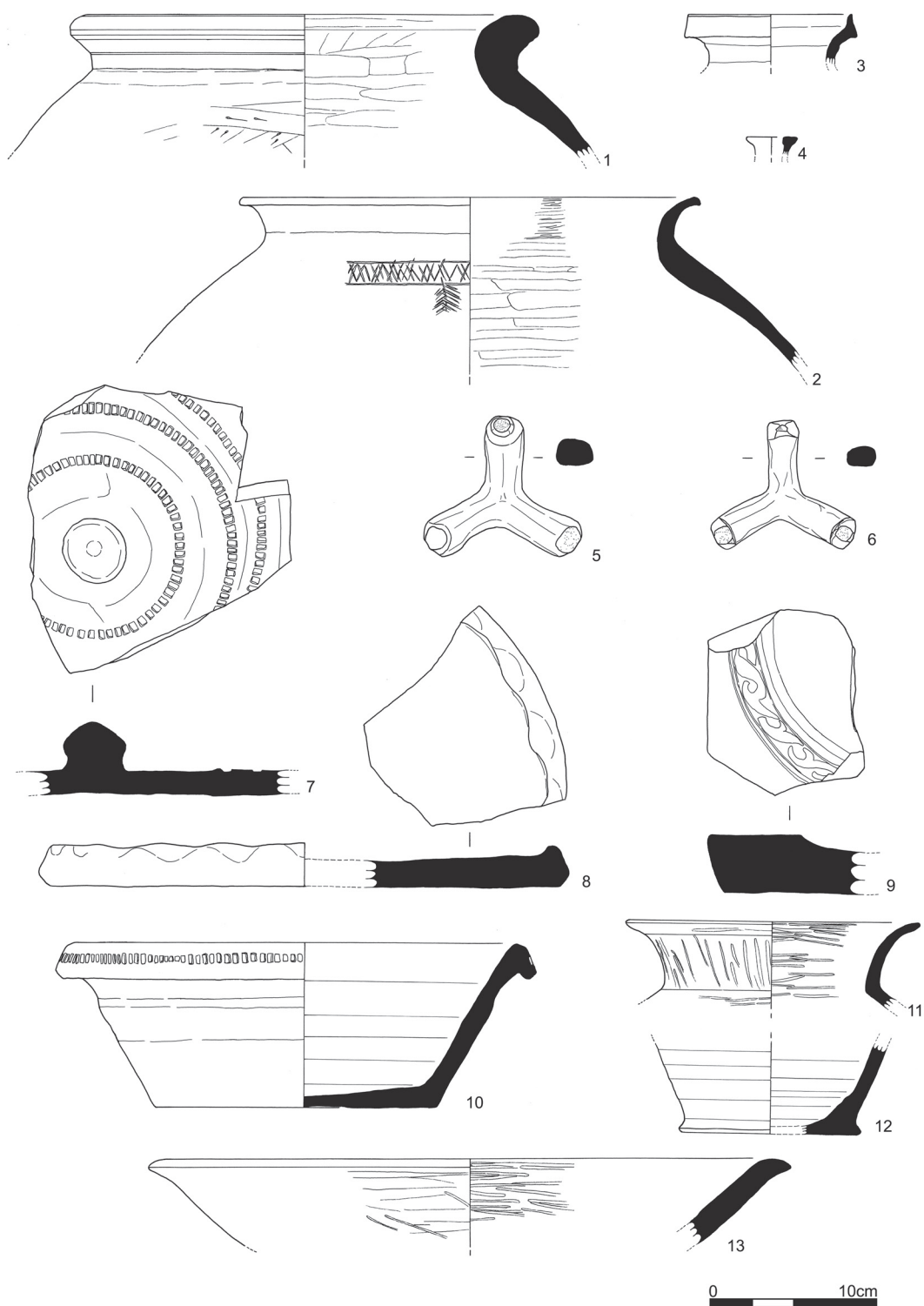


Fig.4 Pottery surveyed in the northeast of Iran
1~4.Bibi Shirvan (Part1), 5~10.Nishapour,11~13.Unnamed site (No.105)

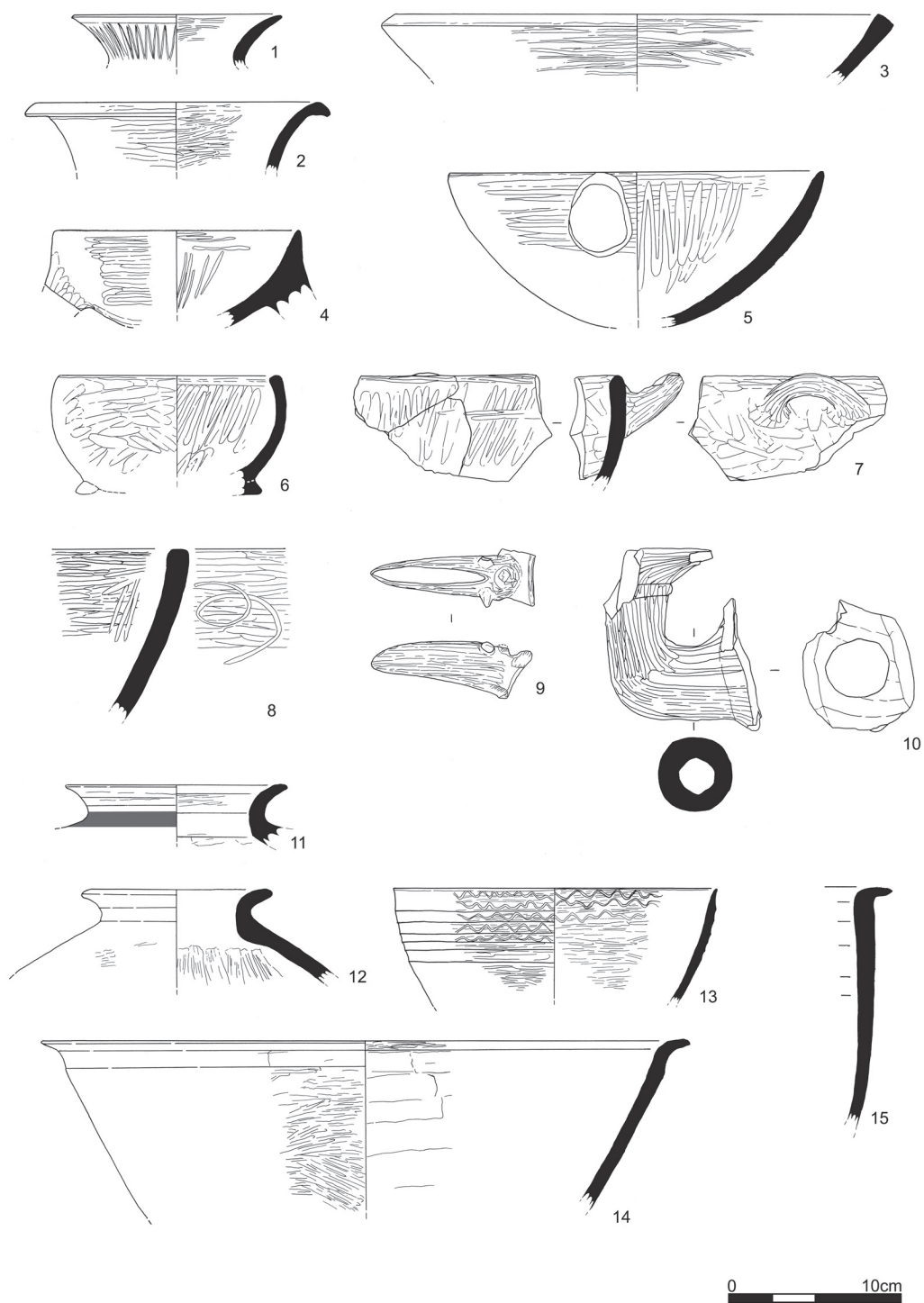


Fig.5 Pottery surveyed in Gorgan
 1~3.D5 Unnamed site,4~10.Tappeh Tapošt,11~14.North East of Shāh Mazra,eh,15.Qulah Māhmūd

Table:Pottery study

Fig.No.	Pl.No.	Site No.	Site name	Shape	Part	%	Color	Decoration and Technique			Temper	Method (H/W)	Period	Bag No.
								in	out	Clay				
2-1	I-(4)-24	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Jar	Rim	5	2.5YR4/8, 2.5YR3/1	2.5YR6/6	2.5YR4/8, 2.5YR3/1	2.5YR4/8, 2.5YR3/1	Wet smooth, Red slip on Red wash	H	BA	124
2-2	I-(8)-39	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Bowl	Rim	5	10YR2/1	10YR2/1	10YR2/1	10YR2/1	Burnish	H	BA	124
2-3	I-(6)-34	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Jar	Rim	5					Burnish	H	BA	124
2-4	I-(7)-38	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Jar	Rim	5	5Y3/1	5Y3/1	5Y3/1	5Y3/1	Burnish	H	BA	124
2-5	I-(6)-33	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Jar	Rim	5	2.5Y5/1	2.5Y6/2	2.5Y5/1	2.5Y5/1	Wet smooth	H	BA	200
2-6	I-(8)-41	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Bowl	Rim	5	5Y5/1	5Y5/1	5Y5/1	5Y4/1	Wet smooth	H	BA	124
2-7	I-(7)-36	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Jar	Rim	5	2.5Y4/1	2.5Y4/1	2.5Y4/1	2.5Y4/1	Burnish	H	BA	124
2-8	I-(5)-30	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Bowl	Rim	10	10YR3/1	5Y7/2	10YR3/1	10YR3/1	Burnish, 12 Incised lines	H	BA	200
2-9	I-(5)-29	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Bowl	Rim	10	10YR5/4	10YR5/1	10YR5/1	10YR5/1	Light Polish, 3 Ribbed lines	H	BA	200
2-10	I-(5)-32	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Chalice	Rim-Body	10	10YR4/1	10YR4/1	10YR4/1	10YR3/1	Burnish	H	BA	200
2-11	I-(5)-31	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Chalice	Rim-Body	20	10YR3/1	10YR3/1	10YR3/1	10YR3/1	Burnish, Pattern Burnish	H	BA	200
2-12	I-(8)-44	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	Chalice	Stand	5	5Y6/1	5Y6/1	5Y6/1	5Y5/1	Burnish	H	BA	124
2-13	II-(1)-49	B6-6	Tappah Anjarab	-	Spoul	10	2.5Y9/2	2.5Y9/2	2.5Y9/2	2.5Y9/2	Burnish	H	IA	200
3-1		C5-3	Tappah Hoseynabad (Test pit B Layer II)	Jar	Rim	15					Black paint on Red wash	H	TH IIA-IIB, ST	
3-2	II-(3)-7	C5-3	Tappah Hoseynabad (Test pit B Layer II)	Jar	Rim	5	Rim: 5YR4/4, 5YR3/1, Body: 7.5YR5/4	5YR4/4, 5YR3/1	5YR4/4, 5YR3/1	5YR4/4, 5YR3/1	Burnish, Black paint on Red wash	H	TH IIA-IIB, ST	117
3-3			Tappah Hoseynabad (Test pit B Layer II)		Rim	5	7.5YR5/4, 5YR3/1				Black paint on Red wash	H	TH IIA-IIB, ST	
3-4	II-(6)-28	C5-3	Tappah Hoseynabad (Test pit B Layer II)	Jar	Rim	5	10YR4/1	10YR5/2	5YR6/4	5YR6/4	Burnish, Ribbed lines	H	TH IIA-IIB, ST	117
3-5	II-(6)-29	C5-3	Tappah Hoseynabad (Test pit B Layer II)	Jar	Rim	5	5YR7/6				Wet smooth	H	TH IIA-IIB, ST	117
3-6	II-(7)-33	C5-3	Tappah Hoseynabad (Test pit B Layer II)	Jar	Rim	5	N4/	5YR4/2	5Y5/1	5Y5/1	Wet smooth	H	TH IIA-IIB, ST	118.1
3-7	II-(6)-32	C5-3	Tappah Hoseynabad (Test pit B Layer II)	Jar	Rim	5	5Y5/1	5YR5/4	5Y5/1	5Y5/1	Wet smooth	H	TH IIA-IIB, ST	117
3-8	II-(6)-29	C5-3	Tappah Hoseynabad (Test pit B Layer II)	Jar	Rim	5	2.5Y3/1	2.5Y6/1, Gray core 5Y6/1	2.5Y3/1	2.5Y3/1	Wet smooth Polish, Ribbed lines	H	TH IIA-IIB, ST	117
3-9		C5-3	Tappah Hoseynabad (Test pit B Layer II)	Jar	Rim	10					Burnish, Ribbed lines, Knots	H	TH IIA-IIB, ST	
3-10	II-(7)-33	C5-3	Tappah Hoseynabad (Test pit B Layer II)	Bowl	Rim	5	2.5Y6/2	2.5Y6/2	10YR5/2	10YR5/2	Light Polish	H	TH IIA-IIB, ST	118.1
3-11	II-(8)-41	C5-3	Tappah Hoseynabad (Test pit A Layer III)	Jar	Rim-Body with Handle	20	2.5YR6/6	2.5YR6/6	2.5YR6/6	2.5YR6/6	Light burnish 3-4 grooves, 4-5 incised wavy line	H	TH IIA-IIB, ST	None
4-1			Bibi Shirvan (Part2)	Jar	Rim	5	2.5YR6/8	2.5YR6/8	2.5YR6/8	2.5YR6/8	Wet smooth	W	PS	None
4-2			Bibi Shirvan (Part1)	Jar	Rim	5	2.5YR6/6	2.5YR6/6	2.5YR6/6	2.5YR6/6	Wet smooth, Indented pattern, incised line	W	PS	326.1
4-3			Bibi Shirvan (Part1)	Jar	Rim	5	2.5YR5/8	2.5YR6/8	2.5YR6/8	2.5YR6/8	Wet smooth	W	PS	326.1

Fig.No.	Pl.No.	Site No.	Site name	Shape	Part	%	Color	Clay			in		out		Decoration and Technique	Temper	Method (H/W)	Period	Bag No.
								in			in		out						
								Clay			in		out						
4-4			Bit Shivan (Part2)	Glass	Rim	5		7.5YR/4			Turkish Blue						W	PS	326.1
4-5	III-(3)-10		Nishapur	Pileup for pottery in kiln	Complete	100							Wet smooth				H	UN	
4-6	III-(3)-9		Nishapur	Pileup for pottery in kiln	Complete	100		7.5YR/4					Wet smooth				H	UN	
4-7	III-(1)-1		Nishapur	Rid	Rim-Body	50	10YR/72	7.5YR/3			10YR/72		Wet smooth, Indented pattern			Fine	H	IS	333.1
4-8	III-(2)-7		Nishapur	Tile		5	2.5Y/72	5YR/3			Turkish Blue		Wet smooth, Glazed			Stone paste	H	IS	333.1
4-9	III-(2)-6		Nishapur	Tile		5	5YR/63	5YR/3			Turkish Blue		Moulded, Glazed			Stone paste	H	IS	333.1
4-10	III-(1)-2		Nishapur	Bowl	Rim-Base	50	10YR/72	7.5YR/73			10YR/72		Wet smooth, Indented pattern			Fine	H	IS	333.1
4-11	III-(4)-2		Unnamed site(No.105)	Jar	Rim	5	5Y/41	5Y/41			Burnish		Polish, Pattern burnish				H	BA	333.1
4-12	III-(4)-6		Unnamed site(No.105)	-	Base	5											W	PS	333.1
4-13	III-(4)-3		Unnamed site(No.105)	Bowl	Rim	5	5Y/31	5Y/31			Wet smooth		Wet smooth				H	BA	333.1
5-1	III-(5)-2	D5	Unnamed site	Jar	Rim	5	5Y/61	5Y/61			Wet smooth, Light burnish		Wet smooth, Light burnish, Pattern burnish			Fine	H	BA	199
5-2	III-(5)-1	D5	Unnamed site	Jar	Rim	5	5Y/61	5Y/61			Wet smooth, Light burnish		Wet smooth, Light burnish			Fine	H	BA	199
5-3	III-(5)-3	D5	Unnamed site	Bowl	Rim	5	10YR/61	5Y/71			10YR/61		Wet smooth, Light burnish, Pattern burnish			Fine	H	BA	199
5-4	IV-(5)-9		Tappeh Taposht	Bowl	Rim-Leg	5	5YR/34	5Y/41			5YR/66		Burnish			Fine	H	IA	180
5-5	IV-(2)-1		Tappeh Taposht	Bowl	Bowl-Leg	50	5Y/51	5Y/51			7.5YR/66		Light burnish			Fine	H	IA	180
5-6	IV-(6)-13		Tappeh Taposht	Bowl	Rim-Base	5	5YR/66	5YR/66			2.5YR/56		Burnish			Fine	H	IA	180
5-7	IV-(6)-12		Tappeh Taposht	Bowl	Body with Handle	5	2.5YR/56	5YR/66			5YR/66		Burnish			Fine	H	IA	180
5-8	IV-(5)-8		Tappeh Taposht	Bowl	Rim	5	5YR/66	5YR/66			5YR/66		Burnish			Fine	H	IA	180
5-9	IV-(6)-18		Tappeh Taposht	-	Spout	5	5YR/64	5YR/33			5YR/56		Burnish			Fine	H	IA	180
5-10	IV-(5)-8		Tappeh Taposht	-	Spout	5	5YR/66	5YR/66			5YR/66		Burnish			Fine	H	IA	180
5-11	IV-(7)-5		North East of Shah Mazra, eh	Jar	Rim-Neck	5	5YR/56, 5YR/42	7.5YR/66			5YR/42		Wet smooth, Black paint			Fine	H	BA	166
5-12	IV-(8)-10		North East of Shah Mazra, eh	Jar	Rim	5	2.5Y/62	2.5Y/62			10YR/52		Wet smooth			Fine	H	BA	166
5-13	IV-(8)-13		North East of Shah Mazra, eh	Bowl	Rim	5	10YR/41	2.5Y/62			10YR/41		Light burnish, Incised wavy lines			Fine	H	BA	166
5-14	IV-(8)-12		North East of Shah Mazra, eh	Bowl	Rim	5	10YR/21	10YR/61			10YR/21		Burnish			Fine	H	BA	166
5-15			Quliah Mahmud	Bowl	Rim	10	7.5Y/51	7.5Y/51			Wet smooth		Light burnish				H	BA	150.2

※Burnish: with luster and appearing polishing line; **Light burnish**: no luster but appearing polishing line; **Polish**: with luster but no appearing polishing line; **Light polish**: no luster and no appearing polishing line.

※TH : Tepe Hesār; ST : Shah Tepe; TT : Tureng Təpə.

※W : Wheel made; H : Hand made; BA : Bronze age; IA : Iron Age; PS : Parthian/Sassanian; IS : Islamic; UN : Unknown



(1) B6-No. 6 Tappeh Anjirāb



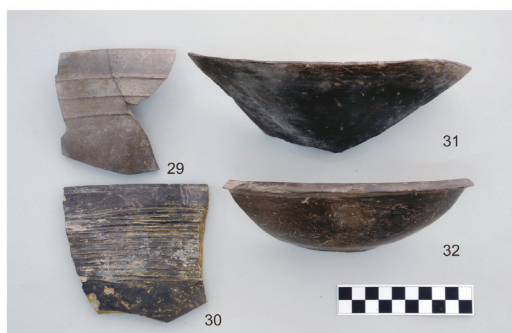
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(3) B6-No. 6 Tappeh Anjirāb



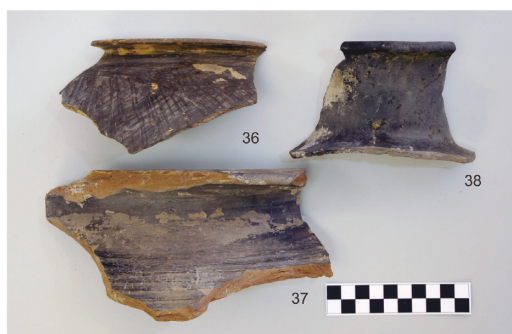
(4) B6-No. 6 Tappeh Anjirāb



(5) B6-No. 6 Tappeh Anjirāb



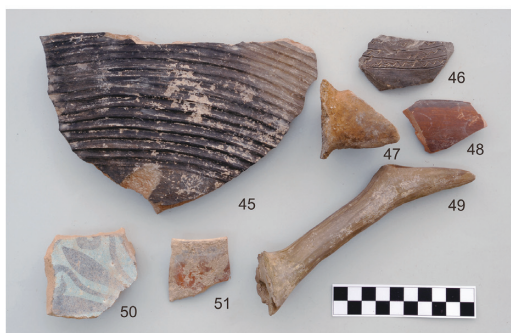
(6) B6-No. 6 Tappeh Anjirāb



(7) B6-No. 6 Tappeh Anjirāb



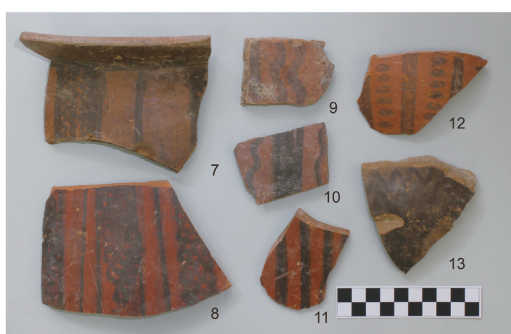
(8) B6-No. 6 Tappeh Anjirāb



(1) B6-No. 6 Tappeh Anjirāb



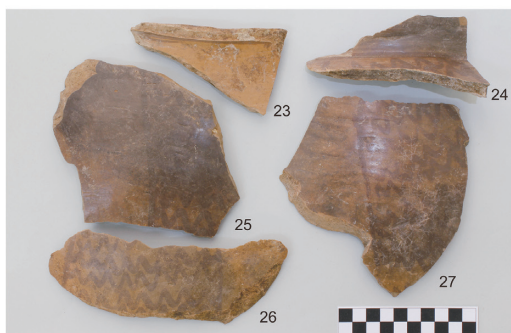
(2) C5-No. 3 Tappeh Hoseynābād



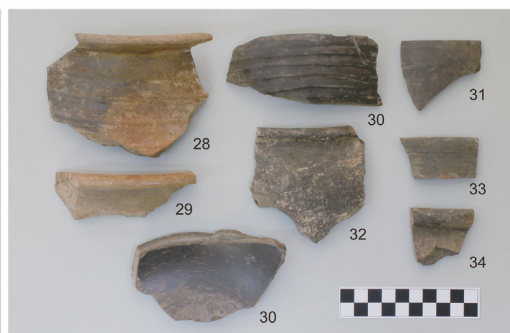
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(4) C5-No. 3 Tappeh Hoseynābād



(5) C5-No. 3 Tappeh Hoseynābād



(6) C5-No. 3 Tappeh Hoseynābād



(7) C5-No. 3 Tappeh Hoseynābād



(8) C5-No. 3 Tappeh Hoseynābād



(1) Nishapour



(2) Nishapour



(3) Nishapour



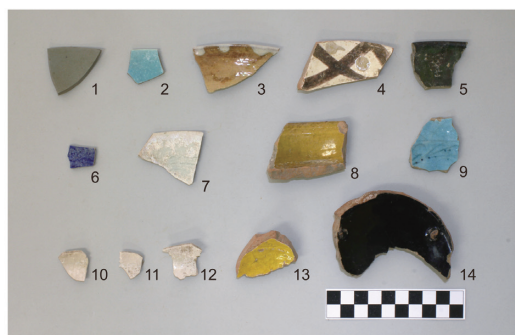
(4) Unnamed site (No.105)



(5) D5 Unnamed site



(6) D5 Unnamed site



(7) Gorgān



(8) Golbāğ Tappeh



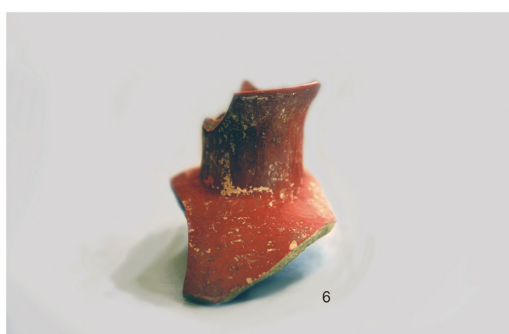
(1) C6-No. 11 Zāl Tappeh B



(2) Tappeh Tapošt



(3) Tappeh Tapošt



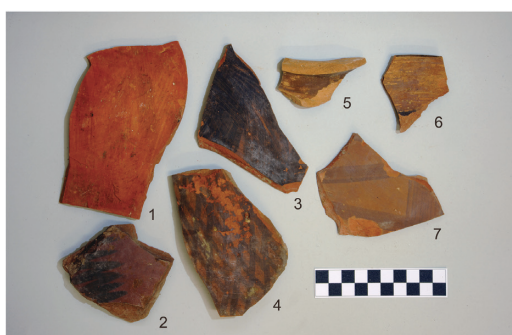
(4) Tappeh Tapošt



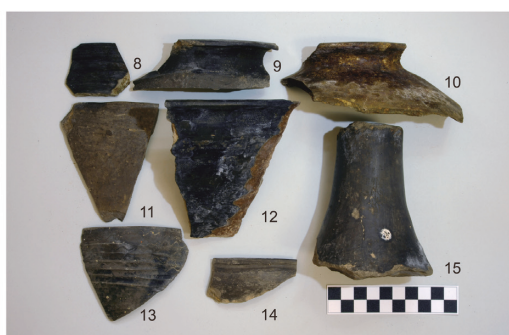
(5) Tappeh Tapošt



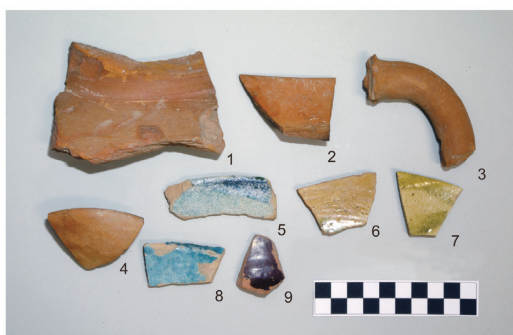
(6) Tappeh Tapošt



(7) North East of Shāh Mazra, eh



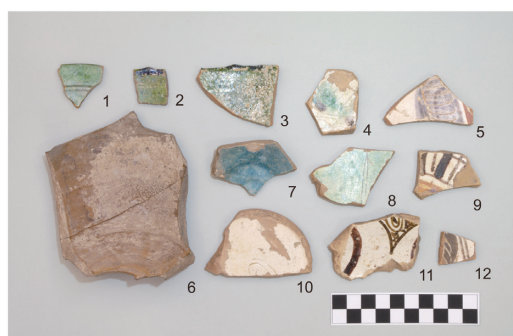
(8) North East of Shāh Mazra, eh



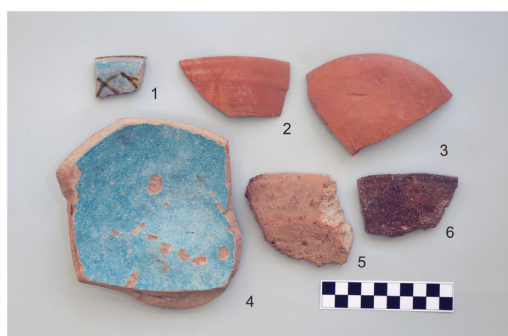
(1) C5-No.27 Unnamed site



(2) C5-No.38 Unnamed site



(3) D5-No.18 Unnamed site



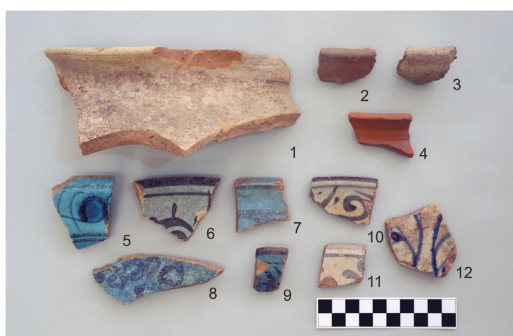
(4) D5-No.24 Siyah-Marz Tappeh Group



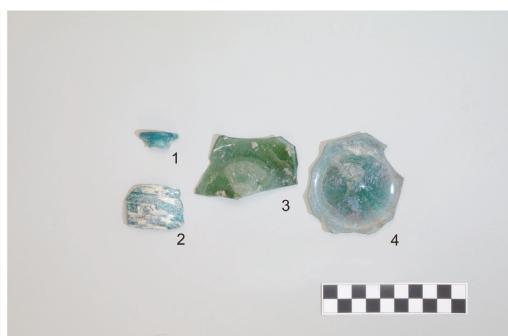
(5) E5-No.4 Kuh-khah Tappeh



(6) E5-No.16 Qandily Tappeh



(7) E5-No.18 Unnamed site



(8) Bibi Shirvan (Part1)