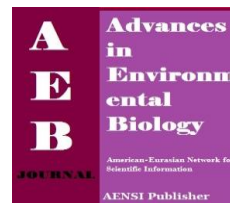




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### Urban Settlements Ardabil Region in the Early and Middle Islamic Period

Habib Shahbazi Shiran

*DS in Archeology (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences) Faculty member in Archeology (Department of Archaeology, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili)*

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#### ABSTRACT

According to the evidence and the proof of archeology, Ardebil area has been being located since 1th millennium before the Christ. All over the area covered up by old hills or in the other words residential areas which have been used to be village or town. According to the quality civilization of ancient this part of the country not only has been played a key role as connective area, but also as available primeval, this area has been continued in historical early days. As far as the information and historical evidence shows that, this area in attracting civilizations from one hand and transferring to the other hand and also distributing the civilization to the neighbor area has performed a vial role and in Tasmanian era period has been one of the most prominent centers and has get into high level success. Although, the found evidences and witnesses that is not adequate, there is no doubt that today the entire various ancient works due to previous civilization, has covered all the dessert and it seems Ardebil zone has been a connection between the obvious events and also has been the thorough and unique page of Iran history. Bajarvan, a town in the medieval Islamic province of Mūgān (q.v.), i.e., the area southwest of the Caspian Sea and south of the Kor (Kura) and Aras (Araxes; qq.v.) rivers. Its site is unknown, but it must have lain in what is now the extreme northeastern tip of the modern Iranian province of Azerbaijan, to the south of the Aras (the modern frontier with the Azerbaijan SSR) and in the Korūslūdāg region, for the medieval geographers place it 20 farsaks north of Ardabil and 4 farsaks north of Barzand, the other main town of Mūgān. In this study, we have considered the identity and archeological of residential locations of Ardebil area which has been totally disappeared at the moment and also try to analyze and dig into the specific facet of this area, therefore the present article is based on the deep discussion and investigation of vague and unclear events and discuss the topic with novel information which will be criticized and interpreted thoroughly and scientifically.

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#### INTRODUCTION

This is historical and sociology point that basically city in Iran has been political issue and the effect of geographical elements and factors have been lees important.

To the witness of History, all the cities of Iran has been blended with political features and have mixed with governmental organization, in a way that refers to the military- official colonies.

Studying on design of city residential of Ardabil in Islamic period has emphasized the integrity of urban design system and it indicates that in urban design there will be used all the systemic and engineering plans which is been popular in creating the cities of ancient Iran.

All the sociologist and scientists has discussed on the standards of city residing and also in designing of the residential condominiums which will be discussed further. And also some works of city designing which has been left behind could be example of iron and pottery and as well as the religious fundamentals of city buildings and developments.

Due to the random appearance of old cities of civilization, hidden discipline which is for maintaining of houses and towns and freedom of all the cities, all this interior complexities is the squares, alleys, mosques and markets that has the view and scenery of the city. The Islamic city which is followed and matched by the interpretation and movement has shaped up the organized overall. All these have polished the Muslim life with engineering structure and in cooperation with general sketching. The criteria and feature which is the most important of Islamic city designing of Ardabil (the farfetched annihilation) has been noticed.

**Corresponding Author:** Habib Shahbazi Shiran, DS in Archeology (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences) Faculty member in Archeology (Department of Archaeology, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili)  
E-mail: shahbazihabib@yahoo.com

Ardabil has been on focus of attention in and after Islam. The presence of religious leaders before Islam in this area and also the presence of different fire temples which specifies the importance of political- religious and military. Establishing Shea religion in Iran which is arising of SAFAVIYEH, has discussed moved forward the importance of Ardabil in establishing National Government SAFAVIYAH.

After establishing of Shea SAFAVIYEH Government, Ardabil has been emphasized dramatically.

From one hand, sovereignty of emperor TORKAN OSMANI and from the other hand the sovereignty. The presence of rural of Turkish GHEZELBASH and also organizing the association of SHASAVAN by first ABBAS King, the coalition has been shaped up strongly.

Ardebil that is holy city or cold city which is the capital of Ardabil has slept with old civilization and SABALAN which concerned the focus of attention and attraction spot.

Ardabil city from the led to GERMI and Mūgān plain from the east to the jungles of ASTARA and TALESH and part of KHALKHAL, from the south to KHALKHAL and part of MIANEH and from the west MESHGINSHAHR and SARAB. Ardebil is an old city with a lot of secrets like "Patient Old" which is looking for an adventurous human to disclose the secrets and talk about the truth. Although the unique and traditional context of the city has been sabotaged, still the beauty and city design of old cities of Iran could be seen (Fig. 1)



**Fig. 1:** Map of Ardabil Province.

#### *Bajarvan:*

Bajarvan is an old city in Azerbaijan, which is located on the road to Ardabil to BARDA and its name basically has been blending of Market and Van (place suffix), MINOURASKI call Van Market. Today there are some villages which is called VAJARGAH (Place of Market) located 16 Kilometer far from south eastern of ROODSAR City and 20 Kilometers far from south eastern of SIAHKAL City which is the meaning of Market Place. BAJARVAN was located in 20 miles far from Ardebil [1], one the road of Barzand Road, which had been built by AFSHIN, The commander of Chief Iran [1].

In the south of ARAS river and the north of TALESH Mountains there is a wide plain which is called Mūgān which is extended from SABALAN mountain to the MAZANDARAN sea shore; This area used to be independent and once has been part of Azerbaijan. The capital of Mūgān in 4<sup>th</sup> century was called the same city which needs to mention [2].

MAGHADASI has talked a lot about the city which is located between two rivers and positioned among the garden and it is considered as large as TABRIZ [3].

By considering all the details which is obtained by the information, can be interpreted that this city is the same Bajarvan which is called the capital of Mūgān by HAMDOLLAH MOSTOUFI and it was destroyed in his period. This writer has mentioned the location of the city in 4 miles away of the north of Barzand [which is residential and located on map] [2]. According to HAMDOLLAH MOSTOUFI in Mūgān, there are three cities, in the name of BILESAVAR, MAHMOUDABAD, and HAMSHAHREH. Among those, BILESAVAR was built by one of the leaders of OMAVI and at the moment there is no trace of that [4]. MAHMOUD ABAD was built on the command GHAZANKHAN, and HAMSHAHRE was built on between Caspian Sea [2].

There is no reliable information about the history of BAJARVAN. According to the historical legend, BAJARVAN equivalence of Arabic term BASHRAVAN which is build by SHERVIN BARNIAN in BAHRAM 4<sup>th</sup> Kingdom (389-399 after Christ). In the period of OMAREBNE KHATTAB Kingdom [5, 6] written by BELAZARI sent to KHODAYFE BENE YAMAN. Boarder man of Azerbaijan in Ardebil with the

assistance of Bajarvan and MIAYNEH and other parts which is led to the peacefulness. According to the other narration, after the striking of Azerbaijan People, ASHAS KENDI for suppressing the strikers made a peaceful relationship with them and had a quarrel. In the time of leadership in Azerbaijan and also attacked them and JARIAR ABDOLLAH sent to ARAMANEH and Azerbaijan. After defeating the strikers, he hanged the responsible of striking in BLOVANKRAH [7, 8]. And also there will be caused a big quarrel between Arab and KHEZRAN [9]. The writings BALADHURI [8] in the second MARVAN Period, Bajarvan People they would continue their strong disagreement with the kingdom system. TABRI in 220 events write that BABAK KHORRAMDIN in the war with AFSHIN, after surrounding ARSHAG and lack of success in entering (basically BAJARVAN) went there and stayed there for a while [10]. In the third century, IBNE KHORADBEH BAJARVAN from the cities of Azerbaijan and this group of Cerographer and wrote that: "The field of Azerbaijan as follows: Ardabil, MARAND, Bajarvan, and VARSAN & MARAGHEH" [7, 11].

According to SOHRAB [12], Bajarvan was included one of the cities of DEYLAM and the northern mountains (TEYLASAN, JILAN, BAJARVAN, & Mūgān). YAGHOOT HAMAVI has registered Bajarvan as part of BABALABVAB (DARBAND) and HAMZEYE ESFAHANI has called BASHRAVAN [13, 5]. From the description of HAMZEYE ESFAHANI [5], BELAZARI [8] GHODAMEBNE JAFAR [14] and others interpreted that BAJARVAN has been considered as a city in SASANIAN Kingdom and specially in YAZDGERD Kingdom. Since KHOSRO PARVIZ Get afraid of his father's madness, then he decided to come back Mūgān and BAJARVAN [15]. This city has been located in part of ARAS south and because of deviation of the path of the river which is led to ARMANIYEH zone [16, 17]. Some of the writers have emphasized and specified that the same location in ARMANIYEH [18]. In 1237 AH, ESKANDAR SHIRVANI [19] has called BAJARVAN as built up village and he writes that this city, capital of ARRN was built up first, yet gradually get annihilated and destroyed. In 704 AH, Mr. YORT OJAN while back from BILESAVAR, he stayed for a while in Bajarvan [20]. In 8<sup>th</sup> century, HAMDOLLAH MOSTOUFI [1] talks about the width of Azerbaijan from BAJARVAN to SINA Mountain and five miles and its length from BAKOO to KHALKHAL will be 95 miles [1]. This kind of description shows that BAJARVAN has been located in Eastern part of Azerbaijan.

According to the findings of SARIHOLMOLK, IN 977, Bajarvan was limited to the "POSHTI HOLPOF" and YENGIJEH was almost nearby Barzand village.

According to the information and proofs, Bajarvan was dedicated as the tomb of SAFIYADINE ARDEBILI in SAFAVIYEH Kingdom. And according to the other narration it was owned by Barzand SHEYKH SAFI [5].

In SAFAVIYEH Kingdom, the connection of the cities from the other hand of ARAS River (SHIRVAN) with Azerbaijan will be led to Bajarvan. HAMDOLLAH MOSTOUFI [1] the distance of SOLTANIYEH city which was the capital of that period mentioned in his own book to describe Bajarvan as follow: "... From SOLTANIYEH to Ardabil will be thirty seven miles, from GARABAGH to ROBAT will be eight miles, from there to VAZANG will be eight miles considered the neighborhood. From Ardabil to Bajarvan will be four miles and from there to MAHMOUD ABAD will be a bit far distance. That's why will be eight miles to MAHMOUDABAD. The member of German Association which is already built up there and it is nearby SHIRVAN path, and they called the end of Mūgān hill [21]. February 1828, Due to the 4<sup>th</sup> article TORKAMANCHAI Oath, part of Mugan will be included from Iran [22].

Based on the story of HAZRAT KHIDR and his achievement to the water of life, they will have considered there, and also will be called this city in QURAN [KAHF/18/60] [7, 13, 23]. Due to the Bajarvan establishment which is already come up in the list must be call the resident of grandfather must be in neighbor of rage [24]. This fact has already acknowledged Ibn KHORDADBEH and QDAMH BEN JAFAR [7].

#### *Varsan:*

Varsan to the first fathe and sokun of the second letter, after the second letter is three point "saa" and the word is according to faalan rhythm [25]. And according to the other narration, Varsan to maftuh "vaav", then to the Quiet "raa" and the rest is like movement of two previous letters, and is one of the cities of Azerbaijan; and [26] Abufaraj Varsani and other scientists are belonged to this city. Yaghout Hamavy has said: Varsan to the "vaav" fathe, and then quiet of the second letter, and the noon of its letter that has caused Salafi for movement, is a city in a border area of Azerbaijan, that there is two farsakh distance between it and Aras river. The distance between Varsan and Bilgaan is seven farsakh. According to the narration in the ketab almaftuh: "Varsan is one of the cities of Azerbaijan, and its architecture is like "Khesh" and "Arshag" tht in the period of commander Babak has been considered. Marvan ebn mohammad ebn Marvan ebn Hakam has build it has structured it completely and has considered it as its property; then it has been considered as property of Om Jaafar Zabideh, daughter of Jaafar Ebn Mansur, and agents have been acted to rebuilding it and have fenced around it. "Varsani" has been from its responsables [27, 8]. According to Ebn Kalbi: "Varsan is the same Azerbaijan". Abufaraj Abdolvahed Ebn Varsani Sufi (deceased in 372 qamari) that is popular for collecting the Hadis, is belonged to this place; this narration is from popular scholars such as: Hafez Abubakr Esmaeeli, Aliebn Alsari Ebn Alsafar Ebn Hammad Alvarsani Abu Alhasan, Abolghasem Abdollah Ebn Mohammad Ebne Albaghavi and abubakr Mohammad Ebne Ghasem Esfahani and Jaafar Ebne Eisaa Halvani and Abubakr Mohammad Ebne Hasan Ebn

Darid. And also, Ebn Belal and Ebn Barkan have said that these narrations belongs to Shiruye that has brought in his book [27, 8]. According to the written work of Enayatollah Reza [28], Varsan is a form of persian name of Vardan that has been brought in Armenia language in the form of Vartan; as so Markuart [29] that is from German, and is Iran knower, in his book, Iran shahr, that has been published in 1901 A.D/ 1280 shamsi, in Berlin: Armenia called "Varsan" as "Vardaneh Kart"; that means "made Varsan or Vartan".

Unknown author Hodud Alalam men Almashreg elallmaghreb [30], has remembered Varsan as a city that has numerous bounties; and Abolghasem Mahmoud ebn Amro ebn Ahmad, Zemakhshari [31], has considered it as the name of palace (city). According to Ebn Vazeh Yaghoubi [32], Varsan is a city near Azerbaijan and in seven farsakhi of Bilghan, and according to the narration of Moghaddasi [3] it is in Dashti Abaad, and bazaar is in the back of city, and the river is far from the city.

Ebn Faghiih in translation of Mokhtaserol baladan [33], Varsan is considered as the end of realm of Azerbaijan and the distance between Barzand and Varsan distance, and it has been identified twelve farsang. Also he has recited the border of Azerbaijan till to Ras (Aras) and Kor river (Kur river; the present place of ghare bagh Azerbaijan) [33].

Book Alalagh Alnafiseh that has been written with the year 290 or 310 Hejir, has considered Varsan as Azerbaijan cities. And in this century, it has written the border of Azerbaijan in this way: "Ardabil, Marand, B Bajarvan, Varsan and Maragheh" [11]. Also Estakhri in his geographical work with drawing separately plans of three area of Armenia, Aran and Azerbaijan, he has separated Aran from Azerbaijan. And he has considered Varsan as one of the small cities but numerous bounties of Aran. according to his writing, Barda has been the capital of Azerbaijan, and Ardabil has been the center of Azerbaijan [34]. Ebn Khardabeh has considered Khardan at the end area of Azerbaijan, and in the related district with northern news and under the title of Azerbaijan way to Armenia, it draws a road that is resulted from Baghdad- Khorasan Highway, and after passing the different cities such as after passing from Varsan, it continues towards Armenia.

He has written: "... this way passes from the way of khorasan, from San Samireh, from the San Samireh to Dinavar is fifteen farsakh( two accommodations), from Dinavar to Zanjan is twenty nine accommodations, then to Maragheh is eleven accommodations, and from there to Mianj, two accommodations, then to Ardabil is eleven accommodations, and from Ardabil to Varsan that is the latest district of Azerbaijan is eleven accommodations."

Then, he has remembered from the cities and villages of Azerbaijan states. And he named Varsan as a city in the district of Azerbaijan, and he has recited the cities and villages such athis: "Maragheh, Mianj, Ardabil, Varsan, Siser, Barzeh, Saberkhast and Tabriz that is in the realm of Mohammad ebn Alravvad Azdi, and Marand that was in the realm of ebn Baees, and Khoy, Kulsareh and Mughan that is in the realm of Lashkaleh, and Barzandeh, Janreh shahr of Abarviz[ Parviz], Jabravan and Nariz that is in the hand of Ali ebn Mar, and Armieh (Orumieh), the city of Zardosht, Shiz, that there is Azar Jesnes fireplace in it, and before Zardoshtian has high degree, and if a king attained to power, he passes on foot from Madayen to preying tht fireplace, and Bajarvan, Rastagh Orm, Balvankaraj, Rastagh sarah( Sarah), Dastkiavar and Rastagh Mayanharaj" [7].

According to Ebn Khardadbeh: 'from Maragheh to Kursareh, ten farsakh and to Sarah (Sarah) also ten farsakh, after that to Nil is five farsakh, and also to Ardabil is ten farsakh, from Ardabil to mughan is ten farsakh, and from Ardabil to khoshn is eight farsakh distance. Then to Barzand is six farsakh, from Barzand to Sader Asb that in it, there is Afshin's first ditch that there is the second ditch, also two farsakh, from there to Daval river, that there is the third ditch over there, two farsakh, and from that point to Baz, Babak city, one farsakh... and the way from Barzand to the desert of belasobhan and to Varsan of the latest realm of Azerbaijan, is twelve farsakh [7]. As Ebn khardadbeh Varsan has been called the latest district of Azerbaijan, Ebn faghiih [33] has called it the end realm of Azerbaijan" and he writes:" from the end realm of Azerbaijan that is Varsan, to the beginning of the realm of Armenia, eight Sekkeh".

Ebn Hughal, has registerd Varsan in the row of cities like Mianj, Khonj, Dakhergan, Khoy, Salmas, Marand, Tabriz, Barzand, Ragan, Bilgan and Jabravan and he writes: "these cities are small cities, and they are near to each other in vast and economy. Also the area belonged to Abi Hija ebn Ravvad from Ahar and Varzaghan. In all of these there are numerous trees and fruits, and in all over its areas, it is observable springs, gardens, flowers and rivers and also farmers. And the land is fruitful. According to his statements, in the next of Aras River, Varsan city has been situated, and in the near of Rast River, Barzand city has been situated. According to his statements, under part of Aras River, is Azerbaijan and Aras River became two branches ion "Varsan": a branch was going towards Kor River, and a branch towards Tabarestan sea; this meaning approves "ghantareh" or being bridge of Varsan [35]. Varsan, according to BALADHURI narration [8], at first has been a military base (landscape, in a narration) of a bridge (Ghantareh, in other narration) and Marvan ebn Mohammad Omavi made buildings in it and closed its around. Being its military base, emphasizes its being border. Abudalf considers Varsan from Blashgan [13]. Also Estakhri has cited Varsan in the row of small cites like Salmas, Tabriz and Barzand [34].

*Oltan:*

Oltan qalasi is a large, flat and one of fortified site of Mughan stepe, covering more than 70 hectares. It is located on the south bank of Araxes River, between Parsabad and Aslandouz town, Ardabil province, Northwestern Iran. The location of Oltan Qalasi was no doubt influenced by the Araxes River.

Regional survey indicates that Oltan qalasi is the largest settlement in the Mughan steppe. Its citadel is rectilinear and about 400 by 800 m.

Excavations in this site determined 4 phases. Phase one: lower or old fort and related layers. Phase two upper or new fort and phase three inner structures and phase 4 surface deposits [36]. Small ceramic assemblage attests a period of occupation of the site from Sassanid (6 century A.D) in the first phase to early Islamic period (possibly 9-10centuries A.D) in the next phase (Figs. 2-7).



**Fig. 2:** General Landscape Oltan.

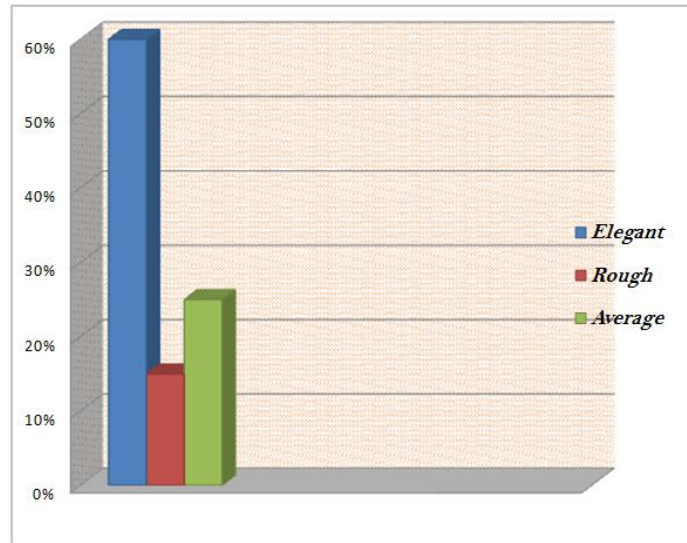


Fig. 3: Diagram of the build quality obtained shard.

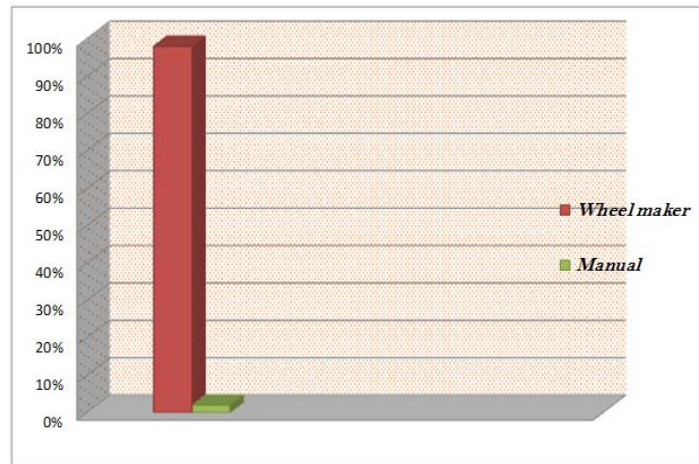


Fig. 4: Diagram of the construction manner obtained shard.

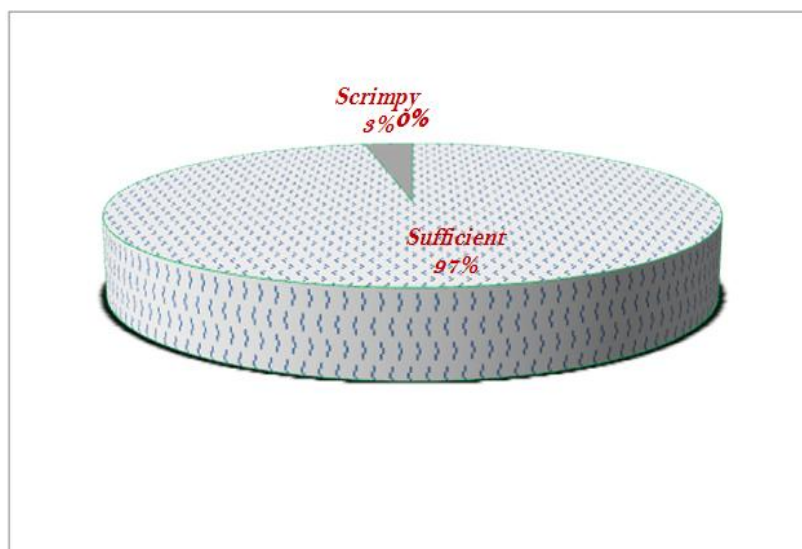
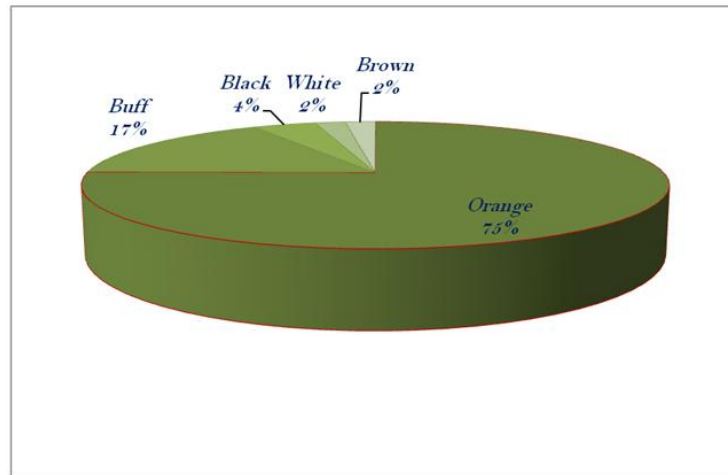
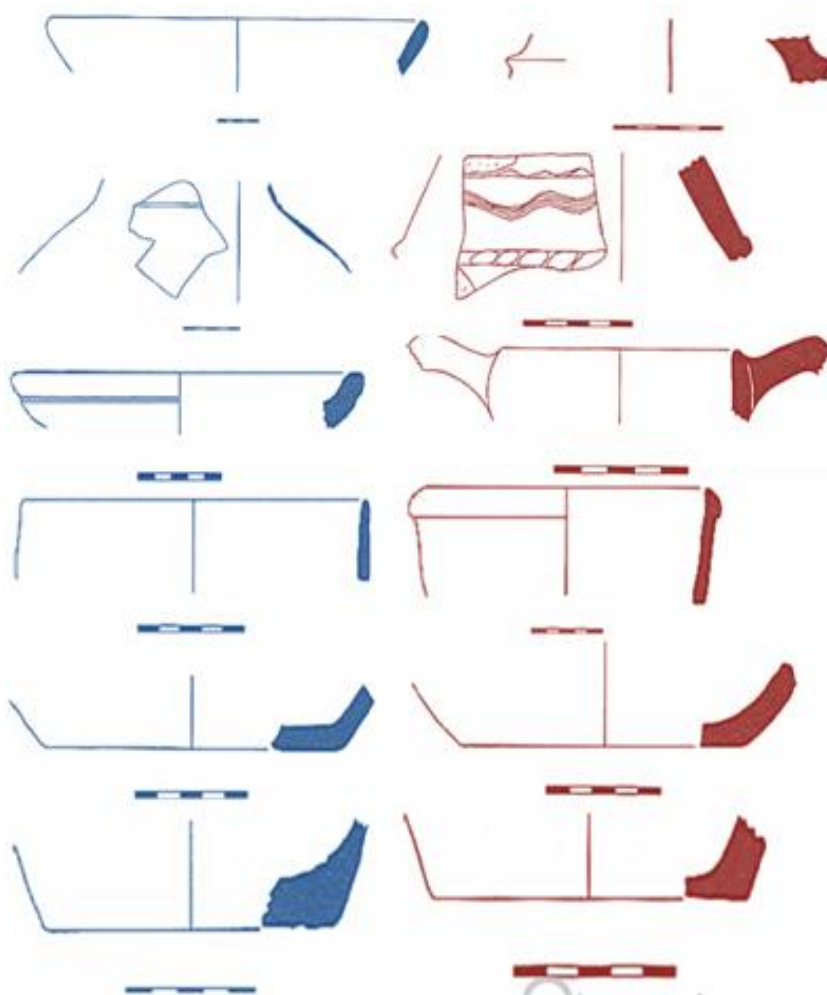


Fig. 5: Diagram of the cooking quality obtained shard.



**Fig. 6:** Diagram of the exterior color obtained shard.



**Fig. 7:** Oltan. Shard obtained [36].

*Conclusions:*

Anyhow, the natural position of this area not only has been played a key role because of it's the quality and significance of old civilization, but also this kind of situation will be continued in the early of historical, As far as all the information and historical proofs show that this plain in SASANIAN periods has been one of the most prominent civilization centre and it has been considered special position. The special position of this

geographical is based on Mugan from one hand and its transfer to the other hand will be highly highlighted and VARSAN City has been called as revolutionized from this civilization to the another one.

According to the complete devastation Bajarvan, Barzand and Oltan and also for the reason of drilling, there is clear condition, however according to the presented description in historical texts we can figure out its exact position. According to the presented information and also the discoveries that is done by the author, all the found that the remains generally is from the same works and pots which is utilized in the late kingdom of SASSANI and in the early period of Islam. Like these examples we can find in Oltan Castle, but the factor and elements of the area and local has affected in the industry.

Due to the studies and findings that already obtained from the old hills and also based on the writings of former historians we will conclude that Bajarvan, Barzand and VARSAN were large and rich cities, and apart from the natural and local position, is the reflexive of economical political, cultural and social structures which is newly established. Also we can mention the cultural and religious beliefs, which is the separation of private and public life and also organize the different cities.

In conclusion, the city planning will be included public and private territories, therefore any kind of economical activities which is dealing with social network such as personal works and all their activities will be focused and centralized in the streets.

To sum up our discussion, although the proof and the evidence which is obtained from the cities is not adequate, with a little attention to the geographical position of this area, we will conclude that Bajarvan, Barzand and Varsan were considered the most important cities of Azerbaijan which were located in Mūgān and it is troubleshooter of all the vague events and as well as the connection of the clear event.

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