

Inner-Regional and Outer-Regional Commercial and Cultural Relationships of Shahr-e Sukhte (The Burnt City) in 3000 BC

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The area of Shahr-e Sukhte is one of the widest and most important settlements of the Bronze Age in Iran which played a significant role in enhancing the cultural interactions, commercial exchanges, and regional relationships in 3000 BC. The conducted archeological excavations at this site have yielded several artifacts such as ceramic and stonewares; seals and their impressions; decorative beads; cloth; jewelry; metal objects; mud, ceramic, and stone figures; wooden and wicker objects, and weaving tools. A careful study of the recovered objects and their comparison with those recovered at other contemporary ancient sites clearly demonstrates that this city had some direct or indirect cultural relationships with its neighboring regions from Indus Valley to Mesopotamia and from Persian Gulf regions to Central Asia. The present study was conducted to explore the extent of such cultural relationships in order to discover the process of cultural trends of that time through examining some of the recovered samples of this site and comparing them with some items found in other sites in the proximity of Shahr-e Sukhte in the same period. The findings of this study indicate that this settlement had established most of its cultural interactions and relationships with its northern (Baluchestan and Sistan) and western neighbors. As a permanent base, Shahr-e Sukhte functioned as the center of different interactions with its neighbors in the east (Indus Valley, Baluchestan, and Helmand Valley), south (Turkmenistan), and the west (Iran and Mesopotamia). It also mediated in the process of importing Lapis Lazuli from Badakhshan and then exporting it to the West and Mesopotamian regions.

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Key Terms

Shahr-e Sukhte

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commercial relationships

cultural interactions

adjacent regions