

Cultural and social complexities of Bronze Age sites in southeast Iran

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Abstract

Today, every scholar knows that complexity is generally used to characterize something with many parts where those parts interact with each other in multiple ways, therefore a complex society could be considered as a system with many sub-systems. On the other hand, “system” may be described as a complex of interacting components together with the relationships among them that permit the identification of a boundary-maintaining entity or process. Role and importance of sub-systems, which are directly or indirectly related to each other, are different in a system, but all of them are organized to support the whole system.

Complex societies of southeast Iran such as Shahr-i-Sokhta, Jiroft, Tepe Yahya, Shahdad and Bampur, which were separately functioned as a system, could be considered as a whole system in southeast Iran during the third millennium BC. The main aim of this paper is to examine why and how of cultural and social complexities of these societies during the mentioned period.

At first glance, scholars are not able to examine the above aim, because southeast of Iran and especially the above sites are located in a fragile environment and in the vicinity of the famous desert named as Dasht-i-Lut with 80 000 sq km., it is believed that the same environmental conditions were active during the prehistoric times, or at least few changes have been occurred. In this paper, it is attempted to explain that Dasht-i-Lut was the main factor for the complexity of the above societies. It seems that these sites were located close to this huge desert to function as intermediary between different areas. However, they should had some regional capabilities such as metal and semi precious stone mines to support them.

Keywords

Complexity; social; cultural; southeast Iran; Bronze Age; system; environment.

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