Glyptic evidence from Konar Sandal South in Jiroft (Iran)
Dr. Holly Pittman, University of Pennsylvania

Three seasons of excavation of the site of Konar Sandal South in the region of Jiroft in the province of Kerman in south central Iran have produced a rich and varied body of glyptic evidence both in the form of actual seals and their impressions on clay sealing devices. While the results are still preliminary, an analysis of the imagery and style suggests that there is remarkable cultural diversity represented among the seal users at the site at around 2500 BC. Seals were being used that suggest the presence of individuals from distant lands including Mesopotamia, the Iranian plateau, the Indus valley and perhaps Central Asia. The paper will summarize the evidence and argue that individuals were drawn to the region because of the extremely rich craft activities, in particular the processing of semi precious stones that come both from the surrounding mountains as well as from as far away as the sources of lapis lazuli.

Sohr Damb/Nal: new results from the excavations 2004 and 2005
Dr. Ute Franke-Vogt: DAI-Eurasienb-Abteilung

In 2004 and 2005, large-scale excavations were carried out at Sohr Damb/Nal. The cemetery dating to Period I was further excavated and several tombs exposed, providing us with insights into burial customs. Period II/Nal buildings were exposed in a number of trenches, shedding light for the first time on domestic architecture and the related assemblages. The stratigraphic relation to Period III levels and the study of the artefacts prove important information on continuity and change. Period III remains are horizontally exposed in two areas and 5 structural phases were defined. Extensive assemblages facilitate in-depth technological, typological and stylistical analyses (see paper St. Langer).

The results obtained throw new light on the cultural development in Central Balochistan from 4000 to 2000 BC and, in comparison with the data from Miri Qalat and Mehrgarh, lead to at a better understanding of the regional interaction and development.

New radiocarbon dates from Sohr Damb/Nal, Balochistan
Dr. Jochen Görsdorf: DAI-Eurasienb-Abteilung

Sohr Damb/Nal, the type site of the Nal complex, was excavated by H.Hargreaves in 1924. The Joint German-Pakistani Archaeological Mission to Kalat re-opened excavations in 2001 and has worked at Sohr Damb for three seasons. The sequence unearthed so far has pushed back the initial date of the settlement into the 4th millennium BC and brought to light a substantial post-Nal (Period II) occupation. The
well-preserved Period III settlement has several links to sites such as Miri Qalat, Mehrgarh, Nausharo, Mundigak and Shahr-e Sokhta. The calibration of earlier dating results in consideration of stratigraphic and archaeological information gave informations about the transition from phase II to III (Boundary B) as well as from phase III to IV (Boundary C). Due to the special form of the calibration curve, the time interval near boundary B is especially sensitive for the old wood effect. For the period II only one date was measured.

In this paper, a new series of 14C dates obtained from the site will be presented and their chronological implications will be discussed.

The pottery assemblage of Period III from Sohr Damb/ Nal, Balochistan
Stephanie Langer DAI-Eurasienb-Abteilung

The report introduces the pottery assemblage of period III from Sohr Damb/ Nal which originates from compact architectural structures and includes a large variety of shapes and motifs. The inventory from these levels shows stylistic parallels to cultural horizons in Northern Baluchistan (Damb Sadaat III, Rana-Ghundai III) and to Mundigak IV in Afghanistan, and is important not only for the local history but also for questions of the supra-regional chronology and cultural interactions in the 3rd millennium BC. Based on a selection of pottery from stratigraphically well determined contexts, an insight into the repertoire and preliminary results of the typological analysis will be provided.

Ceramic production and distribution during the Later Prehistoric Sheri Khan Tarakai and Tochi-Gomal Phases of the Bannu Region, NWFP, Pakistan
Dr. Cameron Petrie: Department of Archaeology, University of Cambridge. & Dr. Justin Morris: The British Museum

Excavations and surface surveys conducted in the Bannu region since 1986 have revealed evidence of a village based Neolithic occupation dating to the 5th and 4th millennia BC, generally referred to as the Sheri Khan Tarakai phase. This earliest phase of sedentary occupation in the region is characterised by a distinctive hand built ceramic assemblage, marked by a grit tempered fabric decorated with a distinctive range of zoomorphic and geometric motifs. The following Tochi-Gomal phase represents a marked shift in the approach to ceramic production, in particular the use of a wheel to produce bichrome or polychrome decorated vessels from well levigated clay.

Previous characterisations of these assemblages have drawn comparisons with the decorative schemes of contemporaneous assemblages in South Asia, in particular with the Gomal region to the south. This paper seeks to provide a more detailed explication of these relationships, and will contrast evidence for the mechanisms of ceramic production and distribution in the Bannu and neighbouring Gomal region, at the same time drawing on the evidence for the production of lithics in these regions during the same culture phases. The paper will also seek to address the nature of the stylistic and technological relationships between the Bannu region ceramic assemblages and contemporaneous material from the Indo-Iranian borderlands and Central Asia.
In conclusion the paper will seek to demonstrate the unique constraints imposed by the geomorphological and environmental nature of the Bannu region during the later prehistoric period. In particular the paper will demonstrate that the region acted both as a filter and a conduit for cultural contact and influence, thereby serving to alternately integrate or isolate the Bannu region from cultural and socio-economic developments that took place in neighbouring regions.

**Chalcolithic culture of Mewar, the Harappans and contemporary cultures of Western and Southern India: the nature and extent of their interactions and influences**

Shweta Sinha Deshpande: Deccan College, Pune & Vasant Shinde: Deccan College, Pune

The end of fourth and the beginning of third millennium BC witnessed a flurry of activities in western India, the major part of which falls in the semi arid region. The evidence from Bagor and Gilund indicates that the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers gradually developed into early farming communities. The Mesolithic people of this region introduced pottery and domestication activities in the middle of fifth millennium BC. As is evident at Gilund, there is a smooth transition from Mesolithic to Chalcolithic. Excavations at Balathal indicate local origin of the village life in the Mewar region, independent of the Harappan culture. Most of the characteristic features of Chalcolithic of this region were introduced by the people of this region from the very beginning around 3500 BC as is evident at Balathal and Gilund. The evidence further indicates gradual development in material culture that is best reflected in their structures and pottery. Around 2500 BC the culture is transformed into a prosperous and most developed phase. Small circular and rectangular structures in the beginning gave way to a well-planned fortified settlement consisting of roads, lanes and private and public structures of stone and mud and burnt bricks. The coarse and handmade pottery that was introduced by the first settlers gradually becomes refined and becomes classical in the middle phase of the Chalcolithic. There is also very elaborate evidence for craft manufacture and expansion of settlements at Balathal and Gilund. One of the most important reasons that we have identified for the flourishing of the Chalcolithic phase around 2500 BC is its trade contacts with Harappans and the contemporary cultures of central and south India. The Harappan influence is evident on their methods of construction, presence of Tan ware with typical Harappan shapes, and copper objects. The Reserve Slip Ware introduced by the Chalcolithic people of Mewar was later borrowed by the Harappans. The presence of Malwa, Jorwe and Southern Neolithic pottery pieces in the ceramic assemblage of the Ahar culture at Ahar, Balathal and Gilund indicates wide regional contacts. The copper from Khetri belt controlled by the Ganeshwar-Jodhpura people was supplied to not only the Harappans but also the cultures in the far off Deccan region. The painted pottery tradition of central India and the Deccan bears a lot of resemblance with the Harappan pottery tradition, indicating extensive influence. This paper deals with the evidence from recent excavations at Bagor, Balathal and Gilund related to regional trade contacts and extensive influences on each other.

**The seal impressions from Gilund: evidence of administration and contact in Chalcolithic Western India**

Marta Ameri: Institute of Fine Arts, New York University
The discovery of seal impressions at the Ahar-Banas site of Gilund in the winter 2002-2003 excavation season came as a surprise to many who had typically considered this area of western India a backwater, physically close to yet developmentally far removed from the great cultures of the Indus Valley and beyond. It placed the site squarely within an administrative tradition that existed throughout Asia as early as the 5th millennium B.C. For example, the use of seals as tools in an advanced administrative system is well known from sites in Mesopotamia, Turkey and Iran as early as the 5th millennium. During the 3rd millennium, square stamp seals with short inscriptions are one of the most typical artifacts of the Mature Harappan civilization.

What is unusual about the impressions from Gilund, however, is that rather than imitating the square seals of the Indus Valley, they strongly resemble material found at BMAC sites of Central Asia and generally associated with these oasis cultures. This raises important questions as to the nature of the external contacts of the inhabitants of Gilund as well as those of the Ahar-Banas cultures in general. This paper will attempt to place this material within the larger context of both its administrative function and its iconographical origins. I also hope to address some of the cultural mechanisms that may have let to the appearance of these artifacts in western India.

Networks outside of the Indus: re-defining the political economy of the Ganeshwar-Jodhpura Cultural Complex
Uzma Z. Rizvi: University of Pennsylvania

The preliminary studies of the material and data collected in the 2003 Survey season indicate that the Ganeshwar-Jodhpura Cultural Complex can effectively be understood within a copper artifact-producing context. This context is evident by the high percentage of vitrified metal waste products and furnace complexes in this region. The extraction and mining sites that have been mapped lend a complete picture of potential economic activities that were in place. The data suggest simultaneous active economic and political networks, peer-polity models of interaction emerging within the complex as a form of network strategies, with potential center-periphery type relationships between the Indus Civilization and the Ganeshwar-Jodhpura Cultural Complex.

This study enhances our understanding of the prehistoric development of settlements in an economically significant area and its role in the growth of complexity and networks between local and regional settlements, specifically between the Indus sites, the Ahar sites and the Ganeshwar-Jodhpura Cultural Complex. It will also enlighten arguments of political, economic and social networks that may have existed between individuals, agencies and/or community units. The mapping of networks allows the data to answer previously unasked questions about power, mediators and negotiated space opening archaeological research to new venues of inquiry.
This paper discusses the organization of iron production in southeastern Rajasthan during the late first millennium BC and addresses the possible economic and administrative frameworks that could have been in place. Understanding the organization of craft production provides an avenue through which the nature of administrative and economic systems can be explored, especially in the absence of other lines of evidence. This is the case with southeastern Rajasthan during the late first millennium BC, where fairly limited archaeological investigation has resulted in significant gaps in our knowledge of that society. Excavations thus far have revealed several sites that have been involved in the production of iron, although their role within local production systems has been unclear. Production evidence gathered through survey has revealed that these sites were part of a landscape that witnessed a variety of iron production related activities. Furthermore, these activities highlighted the two discrete stages of iron production and revealed different organizational principles for each. It is argued that, based on iron production debris, smelting activities were centered on fewer specific sites while smithing (or refining) activities were more ubiquitous across the landscape. This has implications for the possible economic and administrative systems that may have been in place: mechanisms of control may have been in place over only the smelting of iron, perhaps indicating difficulties in the procurement of ore. The actual fashioning of the artifacts may have been less contentious. Furthermore, it is evident that iron production cannot be discussed as a singular act; an explicit acknowledgement of the stages highlights the possibility of markedly differing modes of organization for each.