

Roma, 28/09/2020

All'attenzione dell'Ufficio Relazioni Europee e Internazionali  
del Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche  
Piazzale Aldo Moro 7,  
00185 Roma (RM)

**Laboratorio Archeologico Congiunto Iran. 0001466/2018 del 10/01/2018 (Lettera finanziamento Laboratori Archeologici Di Paolo). CUP: B71G18000240001**

**RELAZIONE SCIENTIFICA II ANNO DI ATTIVITA' (2019-2020)**

Responsabili Scientifici: Silvana Di Paolo (ISPC) and Ali Binandeh (Bu-Ali Sina University, Hamadan, Iran).



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCHES IN WESTERN IRAN. THE QANATES PROJECT: SURVEY AND TEST EXCAVATIONS IN THE MARIVAN VALLEY (IRANIAN KURDISTAN)**

Publications and Public Lectures concerning the QaNATES Project (2018-2020; listed in date order, newest first):

- in press* A. Binandeh & S. Di Paolo, New Archaeological Evidence from Western Iran (Kurdistan), *Iranica Antiqua* 54;
- in press* S. Di Paolo, The Cultural Spatiality in Antiquity. Some Remarks about the Ubaid Oikumene in Western Iran, presentazione su invito al 7<sup>th</sup> *International Congress of Young Archaeologists, Teheran, November 11-12, 2019*;



- 2020a Il Progetto QaNATES e il sistema adattivo-insediamentale nella piana di Marivan (Kurdistan iraniano), Lecture presented at the Seminar: Scientific Activities of ISPC-CNR, February 18-19, 2020- Conference Hall, CNR Research Area 1, Montelibretti;
- 2020b S. Di Paolo, Images of Ruins as Metaphorical Places of Transformation. The Case of Persepolis, in A. Garcia-Ventura & L. Verderame (eds), *Receptions of the Ancient Near East in Popular Culture and Beyond*, Atlanta, pp. 49-62.
- 2020c Archeologia: Kurdistan iraniano, Tappeh Qaleh Naneh, in *Mediterraneo. Ricerca e diplomazia scientifica*, CNR, Roma, Edizioni CNR, pp. 224-225;
- 2020d Diplomazia scientifica: Iran, in *Mediterraneo. Ricerca e diplomazia scientifica*, CNR, Roma, CNR Edizioni, p. 188 e fig. a p. 189;
- 2019a A. Binandeh, S. Di Paolo, & Y. Mohammadifar, Il Progetto QaNATES: un nuovo programma scientifico a Tappeh Qaleh Naneh, poster presentato alla Mostra *Iran & Italy: 60 Years of Collaboration on Cultural Heritage*, Teheran, November 17-November 1, 2019 (italiano-farsi), pp. 168-169.
- 2019b A. Binandeh, S. Di Paolo, & Y. Mohammadifar, Il Progetto QaNATES (Italia-Iran), in *Iran & Italy: 60 Years of Collaboration on Cultural Heritage*, Teheran, November 17-November 1, 2019, 126-27 (italiano-farsi), pp. 224-226.
- 2019c A. Binandeh & S. Di Paolo, Scavi in Iran. Storie di frontiera, *Archeo* 408, febbraio 2019, pp. 6-9;
- 2018a S. Di Paolo, Il Progetto Pilota italo-iraniano QaNATES: archeologia nella regione del Lago Zeribor (Iran occidentale), Lecture presented at the Seminar: Scientific Activities of ISMA-CNR, January 9, 2018. Conference Hall, CNR Research Area 1, Montelibretti;
- 2018b S. Di Paolo, Forms of Mobility an Acculturation between Mesopotamia and Luristan in a Diachronic Perspective, in *10<sup>th</sup> International Congress in the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East*, Vienna, April 25-29, 2016, Vienna, 65-73.

## Scientific Teams and Geographical Position



Fig. 1. The Italian and Iranian teams



QaNaTES = Qaleh Naneh: Text Excavations and Survey has began in 2017 in north-central Iranian Kurdistan. The excavations are carried out by ISPC-CNR (formerly ISMA-CNR) and the Bu-Ali Sina University (hereafter BASU) of Hamadan. It is only right to express sincere thanks to a series of institutions and authorities: CNR, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic Italian, the Bu-Ali Sina University of Hamadan which since 2002 has promoted an archaeological survey in this area and the start of an international collaboration (Y. Mohammadifar and A. Motarjem), the General Director of the RICHT B. Omrani, the Director of ICAR R. Shirazi, the Directorate of the Provincial Bureau of Antiquities, in particular M. Alavi, his assistant Mr. Rashedi, Z. Karemi and M. Sefpanahi, the Director of the Kurdistan Museum Mr. Azizi, the Director of the Antiquities Office of Marivan F. Hadadian, the members of the mission (M. Bayazedi, S. Della Giustina, A. Khaledian, M. Mancini, M. Masoumian, I. Mazzini, P. Naseri) and the villagers of Qaleh Naneh who are enthusiastic supporters of the project.

### **2018: First Excavation Campaign**

The QaNaTES Project started in 2017 and concerns the exploration of part of the Marivan plain in north-central Kurdistan. Tappeh Qaleh Naneh is a settlement located at 1327m s.l.m., 16 km. south-east of Marivan and at the southern edge of a river valley partly occupied by Lake Zeribar. Its dimensions are ca. 300x200 m. (an area of ca. 6 ha). Its maximum altitude is 35m.



Fig. 2. Tappeh Qaleh Naneh from north

It was listed by the Directorate of Antiquities of Kurdistan in 1999, included in the BASU 'Archaeological Survey of the Marivan region' in 2002 (Site 20) and described during a survey carried out in 2014 by A. Saed-Mochashi and in 2017 by of the Italian-Iranian team. The study of the geology of the area is due to a collaboration between IGAG-CNR and the University of

Hamadan (M. Mancini, I. Mazzini, R. Alipour): the area is made up of at least seven different morpho-stratigraphic units, distinguishable through sedimentological and micropaleontological analysis. These lithofacies outline a very complex history of the Zaribar hydrological system and the Qaleh Naneh basin. The first excavation campaign took place between August and September 2018. Based on the topography and distribution of the pottery, three different areas were identified along the external slopes of the tappeh where step-trenches were carried out, in order to define the stratigraphic sequence and, then, the chronology of the archaeological deposits. Trench A (east side): here, the remains of a north-south pisé structure associated with floor plans have been found. The pottery includes late Uruk material such as bevelled rim bowls in the upper layers and late Ubaid with material in both unpainted and painted versions. Trench B (north side): the materials date back to the Parthian period, the Iron Age, late Uruk and probably still late Ubaid. A pendant and two stone mace heads come from the earliest levels. Area C (west side): four construction phases dating back to the late Chalcolithic and early Bronze Age.



Fig. 3. Tappeh Qaleh Naneh. Pottery from Area A

### **2019: Field Research and Starting of Multidisciplinary Activities**

In 2019, the scientific program was aimed to use modern research perspectives and a multidisciplinary approach to understand the complexity of the cultures developed around the Lake Zeribar region and their role in the relationship between the Mesopotamian lowlands and Iranian highlands. The research concerning Tappeh Qaleh Naneh (Iranian Kurdistan) involved both actions developed in the field and activities for the enhancement and communication of the aforementioned archaeological site. With regard to the first aspect, the study focused on the study of topography thanks to the re-processing of the collected data on the GIS platform (from local cadastral maps to satellite maps) and the creation of the digital model of the site.



Fig. 4. Tappeh Qaleh Naneh. Scale 1:1500

The Iranian team worked on the numerous obsidian artefacts discovered during the 2018 campaign: some of them were chemically analysed in order to allow their petrographic classification. Such analyses demonstrated the Anatolian origin (Turkey) of the obsidian from Tappeh Qaleh Naneh; this result allows to study the dynamics of the circulation of objects in this material (exchange of finished artefacts or distribution raw material?). On this subject a study is being prepared in collaboration with Iranian colleagues. In the autumn 2019, a research stay in Iran allowed to begin the study of the materials (especially pottery) preserved in the National Museum of Teheran. Moreover, as required by the Italian Embassy at Teheran, the archaeological mission at Tappeh Qaleh Naneh participated in the exhibition dedicated to the Italian archaeological missions in Iran and intitled: *Iran and Italy: 60 Years of Collaboration on Cultural Heritage* inaugurated on November 17, 2019 at the National Museum of Tehran.

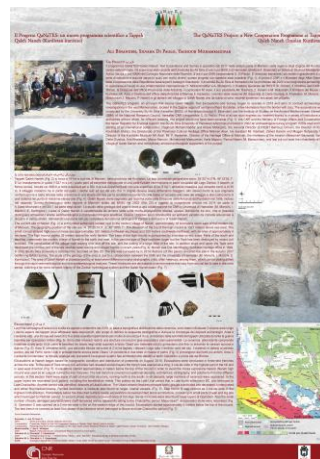


Fig. 5. Poster presented on the occasion of the exhibition *Iran and Italy: 60 Years of Collaboration on Cultural Heritage*



**2020: Planning of the Activities for Covid-19**

The second excavation campaign which should have taken place in the autumn 2019 had been postponed in the spring 2020 for a series of administrative problems due to the foundation of ISPC and appointment of a new Director. But the prorogation to June 30<sup>th</sup> 2020 requested by the Italian Responsible of the QaNATES Project (Prot. N. 0000130/2019 dated 14/10/2019) and approved by your Office has undergone a new postponement due to the pandemic Covid-19 that interested many regions of the world. A new excavation campaign was planned but with the worsening of the situation in Iran and on the advice of the Italian Embassy at Teheran, the field activities were canceled. Therefore, a new request of prorogation was sent to the CNR International Office on May 3, 2020 (Prot. N. 081565/2019) and approved by the same Office (Prot. N. 0033900/2020): the latter allowed a restructuring of budget with the possibility to use the amount previously established for missions in Iran for alternative scientific activities.

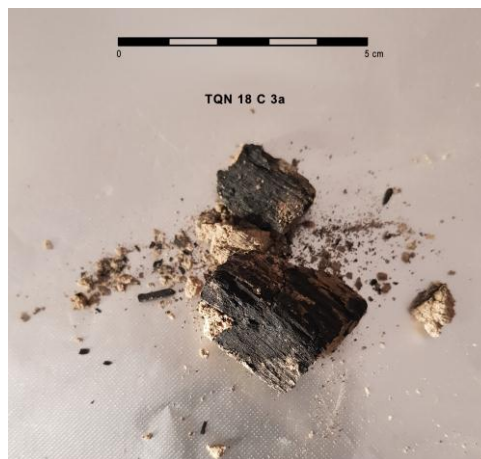


Fig. 6. Sample of charcoal from Tappeh Qaleh Naneh (TQN 18 C3)

For this reason, radiocarbon analyses (C-14) on a group of charcoals and bones were planned in order to place the archaeological strata in a chronological sequence and obtain absolute dating. Such analyses were commissioned to the Beta Analytic Laboratories (Miami, Florida) that guarantees fast high-quality AMS and dating results in 15 business days. At the same time, contacts have been made with some colleagues of IME and ISPC (Sesto Fiorentino) specialised in non-destructive techniques who have to carry out anthracological analyses on some samples of charcoal coming from Tappeh Qaleh Naneh. A part of funds was also used to implement the website of the archaeological mission: [www.qanates.isma.cnr.it](http://www.qanates.isma.cnr.it) (email address: [qanatesproject@gmail.com](mailto:qanatesproject@gmail.com)) where in occasion of an exhibition that will held on November 16-21, 2020, in Rome, Museo dei Gessi, 'Sapienza' University of Rome and entitled 'Advanced Technologies and Methodologies applied to the Cultural Heritage of the Islamic Republic of Iran', some results of the research program at Tappeh Qaleh Naneh will be presented.

*See D. Rub*