



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

The Lead-Silver-Zinc Mines of Shakin, Iran

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Abstract

The mines of Shakin have been studied archaeologically since the early 2000s and are among the oldest silver sources on the Iranian plateau. Evidence indicates that mining in Shakin dates back to prehistoric times, marking a long history of resource exploitation. Silver extraction continued through the Iron Age and into the Sassanian and Islamic periods, highlighting the region's importance in ancient metallurgy.

Numerous mines and extensive galleries in the area reveal sophisticated mining techniques used by past miners. This development correlates with an increase in settlements in the Shakin Valley, suggesting that silver availability influenced local economies and social structures.

Settlement mounds from the Iron Age, as well as the Parthian and Sassanian periods, indicate a thriving mining and settlement-supported landscape. This was enhanced by millstone quarries and extensive qanat systems, showcasing advanced water management practices essential for sustaining communities in highland Iran.

As part of a field campaign in 2021, the mine and the Shakin Valley were thoroughly investigated, yielding valuable insights into the region's historical significance. The initial results of this research are presented here.

Keywords

Early Silver Production, Prehistoric Mining, Historic Mining, Ore processing, Settlement Landscape

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