



JUBAN

JUBAN, village (“Jubon” in Razmārā, *Farhang* II, p. 71) and excavation site in the western part of the Sepid-rud valley in Gilan Province. It is located 54 km south of Rasht, 4 km south of Kalvarz, and 12 km from Rudbār. A small river divides the village and runs deep there. The surrounding land, on which the residents have built their houses, slopes slightly toward the river. Juban’s weather is mild and rainy, and its main agricultural products are olives, wheat, barley, pomegranates, and other fruits found in mild climates.

In 1966, after three months of excavations (mid-spring to mid-summer), the archeological association of Rudbār discovered here the remains of a civilization dating from the beginning to the middle of the first millennium BCE. The artifacts found, mostly buried in simple graves 1.8 to 2 m deep, included various black, gray, and red clay dishes, bronze objects such as knives, axes, daggers, and swords of different sizes, ornamental artifacts such as necklaces, earrings, bracelets, and rings. Women’s jewelry included necklaces made of agate, pearl, lapis lazuli, glass, black coral, and bronze. These objects were made with great skill and precision, including the clay dishware, which was extremely sturdy and durable. Gray tableware belonging to the civilizations of Gilān from the first millennium BCE was also discovered. These items matched those excavated in Kōrvin (Vanden Berghe, 1964; Hākemi and Rād, 1950b) and Hasanlu (Hākemi and Rād, 1950a), but they were older, dating from the ninth to the fifth century BCE. This civilization was therefore contemporary with that of the Medes and the Achaemenid Persians.

Cave-like tombs of the Arsacid period (ca. 250 BCE-226 CE) were also



discovered in Juban. In contrast to the earlier graves, these were round, elliptical, square, or polygonal rooms dug into the clay and limestone; low in height, they had dome-like ceilings. Some were dug 4 m below ground, and a slightly sloped path provided access from the surface. The entrances to the tombs all faced east and were fashioned to allow easy entry. The floors were level, and the dead were arranged around the rooms. From the artifacts discovered there, it appears that the dead were buried clothed, and after the burial ceremony, the entrances were closed off with one or two large boulder. These burial traditions were customary throughout the southern Caspian region at the time of the Parthians, and they indicate that the people were of the Zoroastrian faith (cf. [ARSACIDS iv. ARSACID RELIGION](#)). A few similar cave-like graves of the Arsacid period were also discovered in nearby Kalvarz and Šimām.

The Arsacid tombs of Juban, like the more ancient burials in Kalvarz (q.v.), were robbed by the gravediggers. Grave robbery was a simple matter, since the diggers opened up the graves multiple times to add new bodies. Although in Juban the sloped path to the entrance was filled in after each burial, the gravediggers still had adequate opportunity to steal. Despite the thefts, the tombs contained a variety of artifacts made of clay, bronze, silver, and gold, beads from necklaces, knives, daggers, arrows, long, iron swords with long spool-like handles, the buckle of a netted belt that was decorated with the shape of a bird with a human head, a round mirror, a belt buckle, a device used for the adjustment of the bowstring, and bronze statues of birds and animals. The archeologists also found gold and silver earrings and necklaces decorated with Sri Lankan rubies (Amandry, 1966), the cover of belt buckles, silver sword handles, and a variety of necklaces with colorful beads made of agate, glass, pearl, and black coral. The excavation also yielded such valuable Arsacid artifacts as glass dishware (Fukai, 1965, 1973).

[Figure 1](#). Gold cluster-like earrings embellished with rubies on each of their four sides.

[Figure 2](#). Gold earrings with pendant golden balls.

[Figure 3](#). Necklace with double-layered, square Figures.

[Figure 4](#). Bronze belt buckle embossed with a bird form having a human head.

[Figure 5](#). Round-based, glass goblet.



Figure 6. Gray clay, handled pitcher with open mouth, ovoid body, and flattened base.

Figure 7. Orange, conical, handled clay jug with a flat base and high-necked open mouth.

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