

Typology and Chronology of the Pottery Findings of Shah Firooz Tepe in Sirjan (Kerman Province)

Type of Study: Original Research

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Abstract

Sirjan plain in southeastern Iran has a good communication position. There are many settlements from different eras in this plain, including Shah Firooz Tepe. Different opinions have been expressed about the chronology of the building called Shah Firooz, located on top of this tepe. During the archeological study carried out in the above site in 2018, several pottery pieces were sampled and studied. The purpose of this study is to chronology and typology of pottery obtained from the Shah Firooz site and seeks to answer these questions: Pottery findings in this site include which types of pottery? What period does pottery belong to in terms of chronology? According to the comparison of pottery findings, what are regional and transregional interactions with other neighboring and remote sites? This is a field and library research with a descriptive-analytical and comparative approach. The results of the studies showed that the pottery findings of this site included unglazed and glazed pottery, which are divided into normal, grooved, patterned unglazed, monochrome glazed (plain and painted), and multicolored glazed (Sgraffito, blue, white, Splashed Glazed, and Slip Painted). According to the comparisons, these findings can be dated to the Sassanid era, the early Islamic and Safavid centuries. The homogeneity of potteries with the sites of the ancient city of Jiroft, Ghubayra, Rayen, Narmashir, and Sirjan plain, in addition to the using regional pottery patterns and traditions, indicates the trans-regional interactions of this site with the culture of the west, southwest, northeast of Iran, and the edge of the Persian Gulf.

Key Words: Sirjan plain, Archaeological survey, Shah Firooz Tepe, Pottery findings, Chronology

Introduction & Method

Sirjan plain has played a great role in the political, economic and cultural development of southeastern Iran due to its convenient geographical location and location on the east-west and north-south communication highways. Sirjan, in the first centuries of Islam, was one of the five Kore (Kore) of Kerman province. With the selection of the old city of Sirjan as the seat of this province, the above region enjoyed great prosperity and importance. In 2018, archaeological excavations were carried out in the central part of Sirjan plain, during which many artifacts were examined and identified, including the Shah Firooz site. One hundred and

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twenty two pieces of pottery were sampled from the surface of this rocky hill and the surrounding lands, and in this research, their typology and chronology have been studied. By studying pottery findings, besides the relative identification of the period or periods of settlement in site, other information such as commercial and cultural connections with near and far regions, local or non-local pottery, etc., are provided to researchers. Accordingly, by comparing the pottery of the Shah Firooz site of Sirjan with other places, the chronology and typology of the pottery of this area is the purpose of this study. The questions raised in this research are: What types of pottery are there in the pottery collection of the Shah-Firooz site? What period can pottery be dated? Based on the comparison of the pottery findings of the Shah Firooz site, what are the cultural relations of this site with other peripheral and trans-regional areas? The above research was conducted by field and library methods with a descriptive-analytical and comparative approach, aiming at the typology of the pottery in the site and comparing with samples from other regions for chronology. For relative chronology and classification of pottery, technical characteristics such as coating, mixture, form, paste, decoration, and the construction technique and quality were considered. Then, each type was compared with the pottery samples of other areas based on its form and decoration, and thus the chronology of these findings was relatively determined.

Identified Traces

Archaeological studies conducted in the Sirjan plain show that we are facing an increase in settlements in this plain in the Sassanid period. Areas such as Shah Firooz site, Tall Qaleh - Ostur, and Kafriz site are among the ones formed in the Sassanid period. Based on the coins obtained with Sirjan minting, it is clear that this plain was important in the Sassanid period. Shah Firooz site is one of the landmarks of this plain, located 14 km southeast of Sirjan city and 1200 meters east of Shahabad village. The rock on which the Shah Firooz building is located is 285 meters long in the east-west direction, 120 meters wide, and nearly 20 meters high in the north-south direction. This building is built on the highest part of the rock. It is a brick building with an octagonal plan whose length of each of its sides is two meters. Pottery findings are one of the valuable cultural data of this site, distributed from the rock and around it on its sloping surfaces and flatlands up to a radius of one kilometer.

In terms of diversity and periodization, they are divided into different groups, including the parts of the edge, body, floor, hands, and cap, and the most abundance belongs to the edge. Different types of plain and patterned unglazed pottery and monochromatic and multicolored glazed pottery were found in this collection, which are divided into other subgroups. Sassanid period pottery of Shah Firooz site is divided into two main types, normal and grooved, including gray, pea and red-orange. According to the history of these potteries, they cover the Sassanid period to the Safavid period. The pottery of the Sassanid period has the highest number in the Shah Firooz pottery collection.

Conclusion

The results of the studies showed that the pottery findings of this site included unglazed and glazed pottery, which are divided into normal, grooved, patterned unglazed, monochromatic glazed (plain and painted), and multicolored glazed (sgraffito, blue and white, splashed glaze, and slip painted). Unglazed pottery belonging to the Sassanid period to the early Islamic period includes normal and grooved types. Some parts are decorated with carved, pressed and added and mixed (carved and added) that are very similar to the pottery of Sirjan plain (the old city of Sirjan and Tall Qaleh -Ostur), Narmashir plain, Rayen, and the old city of Jiroft. Glazed pottery is divided into two monochrome types (plain and patterned), and the patterned type includes the incised decoration and applied decoration. According to the comparisons, these findings can be dated to the Sassanid era, the early Islamic and Safavid centuries. The

typological comparison of the pottery samples of the d shows site well the similarity of different types of pottery with distant and near sites.

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