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Pit Graves of Bronze and Iron Cultural Period of Khaneqah Cemetery in Gilavan

Navidgabalo, A.¹; Hajizadeh, K.²; Afkhami, B.³

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Abstract

Khaneqah Cemetery, located in Gilavan village in Khalkhal County of Ardabil Province, is one of the most unique cemeteries in the country. Based on burial findings, this cemetery is one of the most significant cemeteries in northwestern Iran, because it presents graves from the three cultural periods of the Middle Bronze Age, Iron Age and Parthian period. Four-season scientific excavations have been carried out in Gilvan cemetery. In the present study, the graves excavated in the third season have been studied. During this season, four ancient graves have been excavated and identified by numbers 30, 33, 34 and 35. Graves 30 and 33 has been dated to the Middle Bronze Age and graves 34 and 35 has been dated to the Iron Age I. The graves of this cemetery are of the type of pit graves in which burials have been done as single and double person in grave pit. The present study has been studied qualitatively in a descriptive-analytical manner and with a comparative approach, and has been compared with the works of other simultaneous sites in the north and northwest of Iran in terms of burial data. The results indicate the cultural relationship with the sites of Middle and New Bronze Age and Iron Age I and II. There is a lot of evidence to date the tombs of Khaneqah Cemetery. The burial method, shape and structure of the graves and the typology of the pottery and objects obtained indicate that this cemetery belongs to the Middle Bronze Age to the Iron Age I and II.

Keywords: Northwest of Iran, Gilavan Cemetery, Pit Graves, Bronze Age, Iron Age.

1. PhD student of Archaeology, Department of Archeology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardabil, Iran

2. Associate Professor, Department of Archeology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardabil, Iran (Corresponding Author)

Email: k_hajizadeh@uma.ac.ir

3. Associate Professor, Department of Archeology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardabil, Iran

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Introduction

Graves and burial traditions of prehistoric societies is one of the most important archaeological knowledge that can provide archaeologists with the most information on various aspects of prehistoric cultures. In addition, graves and burial styles provide researchers with valuable information in the fields of chronology, ethnography, anthropology, social and economic relations, and social classes. The chronology of northwest Iran has been applied in the shadow of surveys and excavations of several key areas of the Urmia Lake basin (which is a more or less floodplain basin) and inadvertently the results of these excavations have been applied to the entire region. The northwest of Iran has been extended. Considering that the north-west of Iran has different faces, such as plains, low water and mountainous areas. Therefore, a lot of fundamental questions in this regard still remain unanswered. In the leading research, in addition to the structural identity of the studied graves, attention has been paid to determining the extent of the cultural area under study and inferring cultural connections by considering the types of graves and burial data, including pottery and decorative objects. The owners of these graves will be of great help. The main purpose of this research is to investigate and compare these graves with the examples obtained from the same sites and to provide a chronological index based on these graves in this time frame, and in fact this research can be a starting point for studying and proving the relationship or Lack of cultural communication between neighboring regions in the Bronze Age and Iron Age. In line with the primary studies on the topic of the article, two main questions are raised: 1- Is it possible to present a chronology of the culture and history of the owners of these graves according to the archaeological evidence? 2- How can the similarities and differences between these graves and their data be interpreted at the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age? According to archaeological documents, this cemetery can be dated to the Middle Bronze Age to the Iron I and II periods. One of the unique features of this cemetery compared to other prehistoric sites at the same time is the cultural sequence (from the Middle Bronze Age to the Iron Age I and II). The method of the current research was descriptive-analytical and approach to field surveys and archaeological scientific explorations.

Record research

For the first time between the years 1899 and 1901, Jacques Demorgan explored several cemeteries around the city of Nemin in Ardabil province,

which had four-layered graves and graves with circular stones. He excavated in the Khoja Davud Kupro cemeteries on the road from Nemin to Astara and the Qala Bey cemetery in the southwest of Astara, and in the Khalkhal and Talesh regions in the Agh Oler, Dokhalian and Ganjkhaneh cemeteries (Demorgan, 1905: 267-305). According to the cylinder seals obtained from Hasan-Zamini and Agh-Oler cemeteries and comparing them with similar samples obtained from Mesopotamia, Shaffer suggested the dates of 15 and 14 BC for these cemeteries (Schaeffer, 1948: 408). The German archeological team that during many years (1967, 1968, 1971 and 1978) in East Azerbaijan (in areas such as Jolfa plain, Marand, Tabriz, Maragheh, Mianeh, Sarab, Ardabil, Garimi, Ahar and Mashginshahr) They studied archeology and according to the pottery data obtained from these cemeteries, they proposed the New Bronze Age, Middle and Old Iron Age for these cemeteries (Kleiss, 1969: 188-191). During the archeological investigations of the English team under the supervision of Charles Burney in Meshkin Shahr city, numerous four-layered graves with round stones were pointed out, but due to time constraints, only 16 examples of these graves were recorded. One of the sites investigated at this time was the Pirazmian site (Ingraham and Summers, 1979: 68-69). Seifullah Kambakhshfard in his investigations in parts of Nair and Sarab villages mentions two sites, one of these sites is Tikili Dash cemetery, one kilometer north of Normiq village and at the foot of Bezghoosh Mountain, and the other one is the cemetery Qara Shiran Ardabil. These cemeteries were looted in ancient times (Kambakhsh Fard, 1370: 123). In 1382, Vida Ebtahaj studied the collection of tombs of Pirazmian area in line with his master's thesis (Ebtahaj, 1383), after which excavations of Nobri excavations started in the area in question. Countless number of megalithic graves with circular stones have been identified. Between the years 1382-1379, Reza Rezaloo conducted surveys in East Azarbaijan and Ardabil provinces. Was studied and investigated. Beside these castles, there are cemeteries with their graves of the four-layered stone graves with circular stones (Rezaloo, 2016: 2). In May of 2015, in the village of Khanqah, in Ardabil province, during the road construction operation, the remains of some ancient graves were discovered. For this purpose, a team of archaeologists from Ardabil province started to speculate in this place, as a result of which the remains of several ancient graves were found. In August of 2015, a delegation led by Reza Rezaloo was commissioned to explore this site, and a total of 16 graves were identified, of which 2 graves belong to the Middle Bronze Age, 1 to the Iron Age I, 9 to the Iron Age II and 4

Gore belongs to the Parthian period (see: Rezaloo, 1386; Rezaloo et al, 2015, Rezaloo & Ayramloo, 2016) in the second season, two workshops called workshop E with dimensions of 10×10 and workshop D with dimensions of 5×5 meters were explored. As a result of these excavations, the remains of 5 ancient graves were found. One of these graves belongs to the Parthian period, three graves belong to the Iron Age I, and one grave belongs to the Middle Bronze Age. The third season of excavation was continued in workshop C, and as a result of these excavations, the remains of 4 ancient graves were obtained. Two of the excavated graves belong to the Iron Age I and the other two belong to the Middle Bronze Age. The fourth season of excavation in the Khangah cemetery began with the excavation of grave 38 from workshop E.

Khaneqah Cemetery of Gilavan

Khaneqah Cemetery is located in the coordinates of 37 degrees, 17 minutes, 39 seconds, 9 hundredths of a second longitude and 48 degrees and 49 minutes and 46 seconds and 7 hundredths of a second latitude. It is located in the northwestern part of Khaneqah village and attached to it. This site is located 60 km southeast of Khalkhal city, in Shahroud District of Khalkhal County and 180 km south of Ardabil city (Fig. 1). Khaneqah Cemetery is located on a high natural hill with a maximum height of 1675 meters above sea level and 54 meters above the asphalt road that passes through the north of the hill (Fig. 2). This cemetery is one of the most unique cemeteries in the country, which contains various burial periods. Therefore, the study of this cemetery can help us to understand the culture, living patterns and beliefs of the inhabitants of this region from the Bronze and Iron Ages, as well as their cultural communication with neighboring areas. We hope that we can more accurately identify the migration routes of tribes and their connections with neighboring cultures in northern and northwestern Iran in the late second millennium BC by further scientific studying. In general, the graves of this cemetery are of the types of circular cairn. Grave pits have been dug inside this circular structure and burial has been done inside it after digging the Grave pit (Fig. 3). The dimensions of the Grave pit have been dug according to the person's height and the space required to place the gifts inside the grave. In some cases, a type of surface flake has been done in order to create smooth surfaces in the outer wall of this circular cairn. The stone materials were limestone and sandstone and their color can be seen in the range of gray, purple, and beige. Also, a kind of basic substructure has been done to create suitable surfaces for



▲ Fig. 1: Geographical location of Khaneqah cemetery of Gilavan (Authors, 2017).

placing larger stones using pebbles and rubbles. After the construction of the circular cairn, the builders of the grave filled the inside of this stone structure with stones including rubbles, cobblestones and pebbles and created it in the form of small mounds.

Burials in Khaneqah cemetery of Gilavan are mostly single burial, but in some cases double burial are also seen in it. The burial form and position of the body inside the graves of Khaneqah Cemetery was on the left or right shoulder. The burial was done in a semi-crouched form and the burial direction was on west-east side and in some cases on east-west side. The direction of the face was to the south and in some cases to the north. It seems that a specific direction was not observed in the burial.

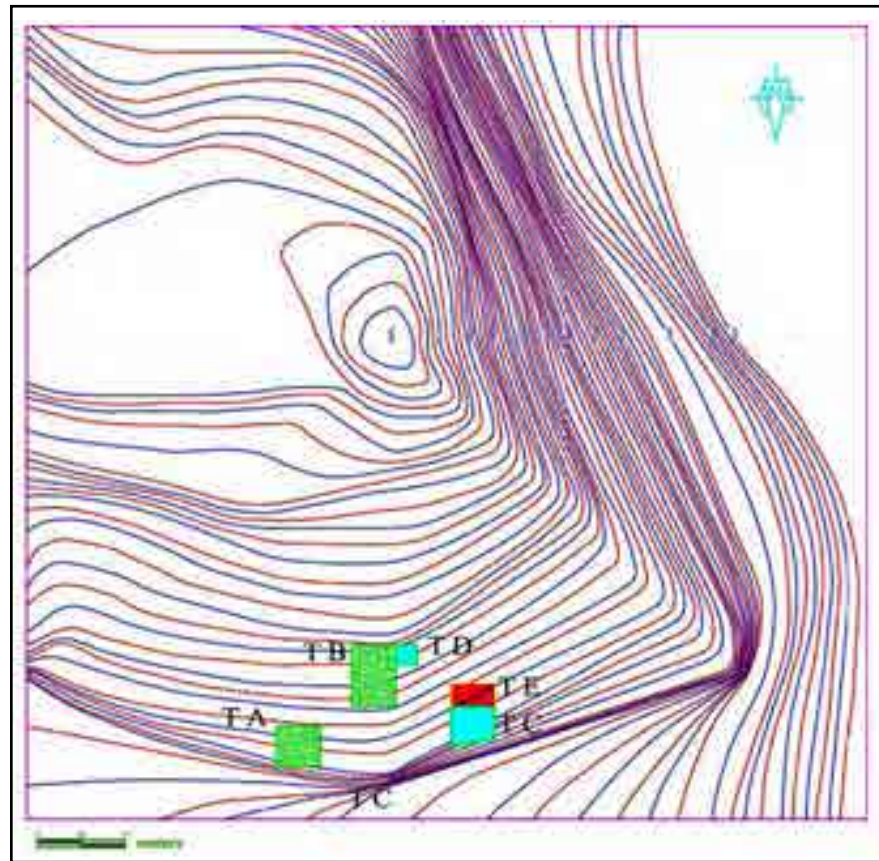


Fig. 2: Topographic map of Khaneqah cemetery of Gilavan and the location of excavated trenches (Authors, 2017). ▶

Grave 30

Grave 30 is located in the northeastern part of Trench C. It has a circular cairn in the middle of which a stone mound was formed. The east-west diameter of this wall is 450 cm and its north-south outer diameter is 462 cm. This grave is a circular structure type and can be named as pit graves. In this type of grave, burial was done in the grave pit. In this way, burial took place inside the grave pit after digging it. The dimensions of the grave



pit have been dug according to the person's height and the space required to place the gifts inside the grave.

The burial was single and belongs to a woman aged 45 to 50 years old. It was done in a semi-crouched form and the direction of burial was on the west (slightly to the southwest in the head area) - east (slightly to the northeast at the bottom of the body) side. Due to the large size of this circular cairn, 67 pieces of pottery have been found inside the stone mound created on the grave, which can be seen in orange, brown, gray and red colors. 95.5% of these pottery pieces is made of the body, 1.5% the rim and 3% are the handle. In this grave, 98 burial objects were placed as gifts next to the corpse, which includes 45 pottery vessels, 2 copper daggers, 1 copper ax, 45 bronze decorative beads and 4 bronze earrings (Plan 1). These objects are comparable to samples obtained from the Bronze and Iron Age sites of northern and northwestern Iran (Tables 1 and 2).

▲ Fig. 3: A view of Trench C before excavation and view of graves with circular cairn (Authors, 2017).

Plan 1: Pottery and burial objects of Grave 30 (Authors, 2017). ▶

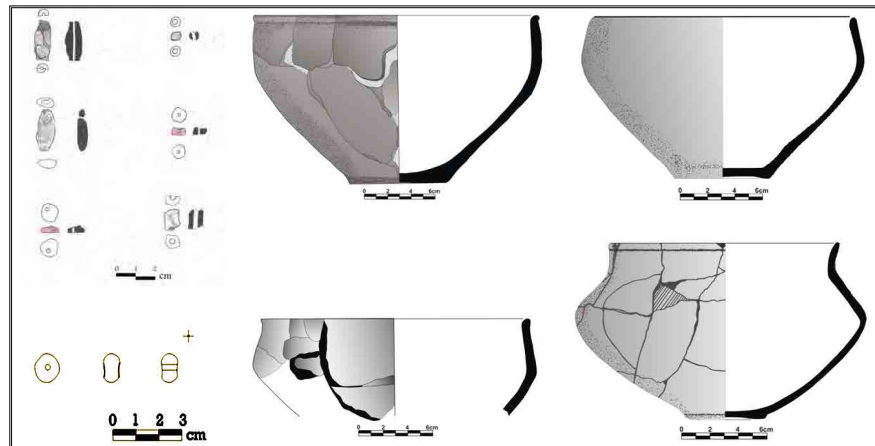
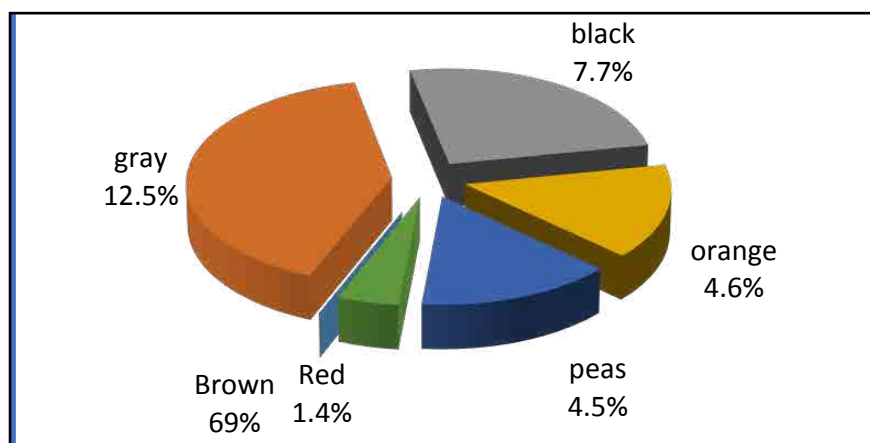


Table 1: Comparison of burial pottery in Grave 30 (Authors, 2017). ▼

Object Number	Color	Construction type	Firing	Temper	Inner wall covering	Outer wall covering	Comparable site	Period
N.10	Dark gray	Hand made	Good	Fine sand	Polished	Thick clay	Goy Tepe, (Negahban, 1996: Fig. 27); Lasolkan (Egami et al., 1960: plan XLVIIa)	Iron I
N.11	Dark gray	Hand made	Good	Fine sand	Polished	Fine	Haftvan VIB (Edwards, 1983: Fig. 82/14) Dinkhah D (Hamlin, 1974: fig.4/I) Khosrow castle (Rezalou, 2007: 95: plan 3-18)	Middle Bronze Iron I
N.12	Dark gray	Hand made	Good	Fine sand	Polished	Thin clay	Haftvan VIB (Edwards, 1983: Fig.82/16) Goy Tepe B (Brown, 1951: Fig.33/1004) Haftvan V (Talai, 2005: Fig. f/1) Haftvan IV (Talai, 2007: pl.4/a)	Middle and New Bronze Iron I Iron I Iron II
N.13	Dark gray	Hand made	Good	Fine sand	Polished	Thick clay	Goy Tepe (Brown, 1948: Fig.38/203) Khosrow castle (Rezalou, 2007: plan 3-4) Haftvan VIB (Edwards, 1981: Fig.16:19)	Iron I Iron II Middle Bronze
N.14	Brown	Hand made	Poor	Medium sand	Medium	Thin clay	Maryan (Khalatbari, 2004: plaque 1/12) Guti castle (Egami et al., 1965, plan XLVIIa)	Iron II Iron III

Table 2: Comparison of decorative objects of Grave 30 (Authors, 2017). ▼

Object Number	Sample	Paste	Shape	Construction type	Color	Comparable site	Period
N.1	Dagger	Cooper	-	Hammering	Green	Marlik (Negahban, 1996: Fig. 33); Guti (Egami et al., 1960, plan LXIV, tombAVIII)	Iron I
N.2	Dagger	Cooper	-	Hammering	Gold coating	-	Middle Bronze Iron I
N.3	Ax	Cooper	-	Molding	Gold coating	-	Middle and New Bronze Iron I Iron I Iron II
N.4/1	Bead	Quartz	pyramid	Carving	White quartz	Dinkhah III (Muscarella, 1974: fig.6/1052h)	Iron I Iron II Middle Bronze
N.4/2	Bead	agate	Discus	Carving	Orange	Dinkhah III (Muscarella, 1974: fig.7/833h) Hassanlu V (Dyson, 1974: fig.2/1580)	Iron II Iron III
N.4/3	Bead	Ferrite	Discus	Carving	Silver coating		-
N.5/1	Earring	Silver	Two open-ended circular	Hammering	Silver coating	Lasolkan (Egami, 1965: pl. LXXXVII 14a) Tul Gilan (Khalatbari, 2004, plaque 10:9)	Iron II Iron II
N.5/2	Earring	Silver	Two open-ended circular	Hammering	Silver coating	Lasolkan (Egami, 1965: pl.LXXXVII 14a) Tul Gilan (Khalatbari, 2004, plaque 10:9)	Iron II Iron II
N.5/3	Earring	Bronze	Spring-shaped	Hammering	Green	Guti castle (Egami et al., 1965: pl.LVII/87) Lasolkan (Egami al, 1965: pl.XXXVIII/14a) Dinkhah III (Muscarella, 1974: fig.6/1008)	Iron II Iron II Iron I



◀ Chart 1: Color abundance percentage of the pottery pieces of Grave No. 30.

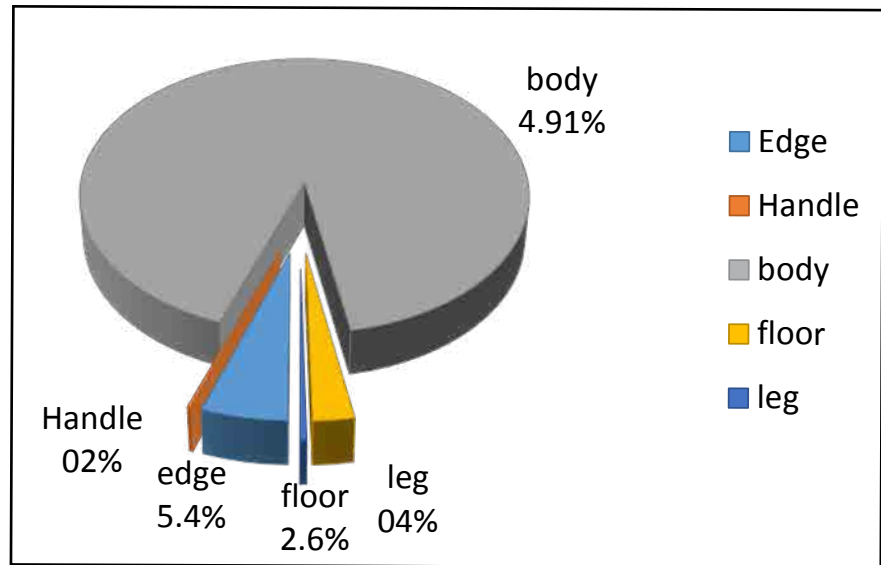


Chart 2: Frequency percentage of the type of clay pieces of grave No. 30 (Authors, 2017). ▶

Grave 33

In this grave, the burial is single and belongs to a man of 15 to 20 years old. It was done in a semi-crouched form and its direction was on east-west side. The head is on the east side and the legs are on the west side. The skull is placed on the left side. The head is to the southeast and the part connected to the neck is to the northwest. Given that the orientation of the upper body is on the east-west side, it seems that buriers deliberately placed the skull in such a way that the direction of the face to the west is slightly inclined to the southwest, and in order to achieve this goal, a part of the skull was placed on the left shoulder. Choosing the direction of the face to the west direction (to the sunset) seems to have been very important to the buriers. The legs were fully crouched and the left foot was placed under the right foot. In the author's opinion, the creation of this open arched position at the top of the skeleton was very important for the buriers (Fig. 4). The gifts placed in Grave No. 33 included: 15 pottery vessels, 1 bronze earring, 1 copper dagger, 2 ferrite beads and 1 gold bead. The interesting point about the gifts placed in the graves of Gilavan Cemetery is that many of these gifts are completely similar. In order to avoid duplication of contents and to reduce the volume of them, the author avoids describing similar data and the comparisons made for each grave (if any) are presented in a separate table.

Grave 34

Grave 34 is located in the eastern part, close to the southeast of Trench C. The tomb has an oval cairn, in the middle of which there is probably a stone mound. The north-south outer diameter of this cairn is 246 cm



▲ Fig. 4: How to bury burial gifts in Grave 33 (Authors, 2017).

and its east-west diameter is 186 cm. This oval cairn consists of 19 stone pieces including boulders, stone pieces and rubbles (Fig. 5). Unlike graves 30 and 33, it seems that no effort had been made to create a circular cairn for the construction of the oval cairn, and also the stones used are not of high quality. It seems that the builders of the grave filled the inside of this stone structure with stones including stone pieces, rubble, and boulders after the construction of this oval cairn. Archaeological data obtained from the inside soil poured on the grave include: 1-pottery pieces and pottery accumulation related to complete vessels; 2- Animal bone pieces; and 3- Charcoal pieces. In general, the skeletal condition of this grave is very chaotic, and only small, crushed and broken parts of the skull belonged to the forehead has left of its skeleton. There is nothing left of the other parts of the skull and face, etc. In general, according to the remaining parts, it can be said that the direction of burial was on the west-east side, the head was located in the western part and the direction of the face was to the north.

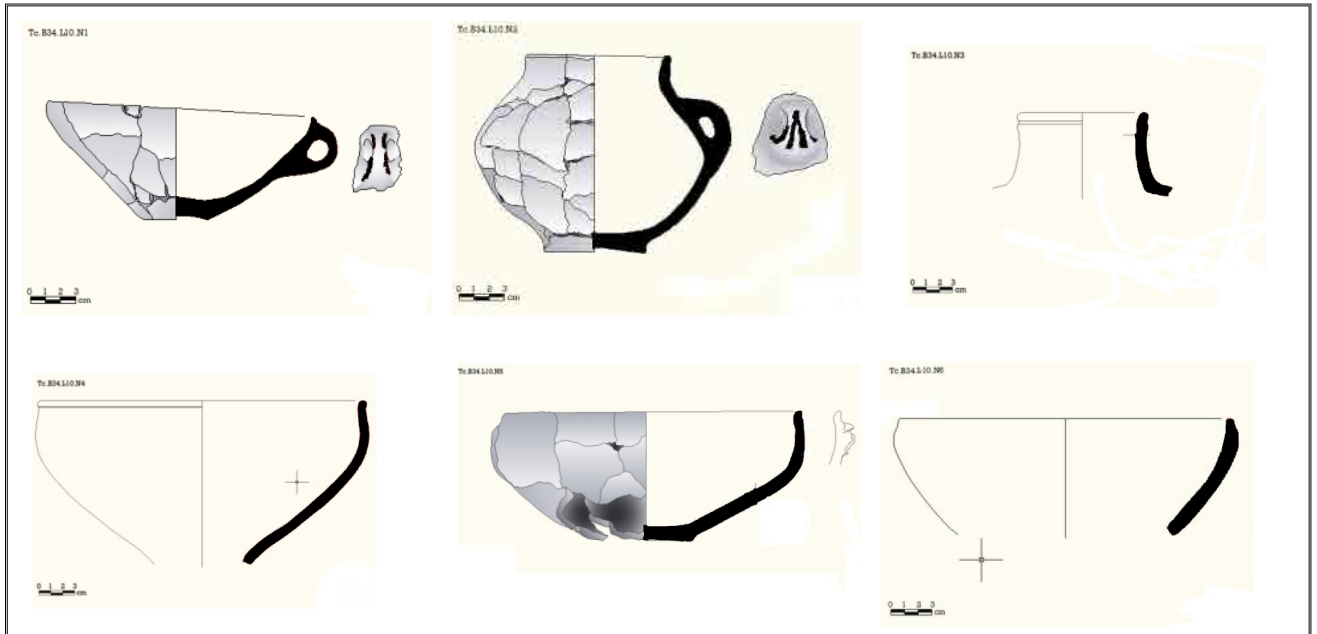


▲ Fig. 5: Gifts of Grave 34 (Authors, 2017).

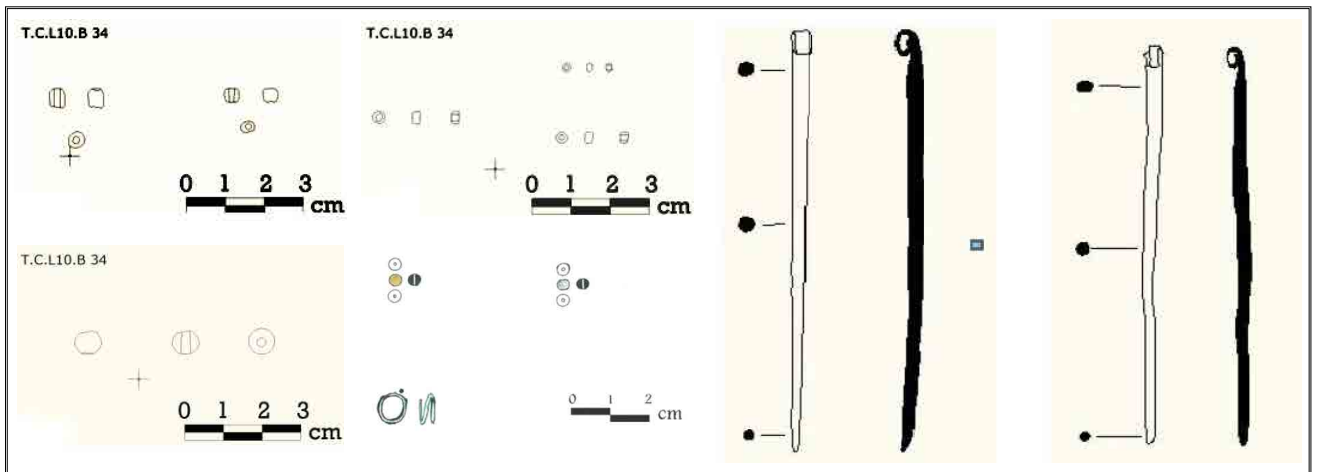
Regarding the small remains of this grave, no comment can be made regarding the sex and age of this burial. Of course, it was not out of the question that this burial could have belonged to a child or infant.

One of the remarkable points in the graves with circular cairn of this cemetery is the presence of pottery pieces and sometimes complete pottery vessels among the soil poured on the graves. One of these graves is Grave 34, which contained three intact pottery vessels. In addition to these pottery vessels, 320 pieces of pottery pieces have been obtained. According to the author, the placement of these pottery pieces could not be happened accidentally. They most likely belonged to the vessels containing the vows that were distributed among the participants in the funeral ceremony, whose vessels were broken after consuming these vows or safely placed in the soil. The number and type of color of pottery pieces in each grave was different. The pottery pieces found inside the grave soil is 99.1% handmade, 0.3% wheel made and the rest is unknown due to damage and sedimentation. Gifts placed inside Grave 34 include 11 earthenware, 2 copper head pins, 90 decorative beads made of gold, bronze, ferrite, jet (gemstone), agate,

white marble stone (plans 2 and 3). These objects are comparable to samples obtained from Iron Age sites in northern and northwestern Iran. In this section, samples of these burial objects are compared (Tables 3 and 4).



▲ Plan 2: Pottery of Grave 34 (Keshvari, 2011: 80).



▲ Plan 3: Burial Gifts of Grave 34 (Ibid., 2011: 90).

Grave 35

Grave 35 is located in the southern part of Trench C. This grave is a type of pit grave in which burial was taken place inside the grave after digging a pit (Fig. 6). It is single burial and belongs to a man aged 15 to 20 years old. The burial was done in a semi-crouched form and burial direction was on east-west side. The head is on the east side and the legs are on the west side. The skull was placed on the left side. The crown is to the southeast and the part connected to the neck is to the northwest. Given that the orientation

Table 3: Comparison of burial pottery in Grave 34 (Authors, 2017). ▼

Object Number	Color	Construction type	Firing	Temper	Inner wall covering	Outer wall covering	Comparable site	Period
N.1	Dark gray Brown	Hand made	Poor	Medium sand	Polished	Thin clay	Goy Tepe, (Negahban, 1996: Fig. 27); Lasolkan (Egami et al., 1960: plan XLVIIa)	Iron I
N.2	Dark gray and brown	Hand made	Good	Fine sand	Polished	Thin clay	Khosrow castle (Rezalou, 2007: 95: plan 3-18) Marlik (Negahban, 1996: 557: Fig. 23)	Iron I
N.3	Dark gray	Hand made	Good	Medium sand	Polished	Thick clay	Haftvan VIB (Edwards, 1983: Fig.82/16) Goy Tepe B (Brown, 1951: Fig.33/1004) Haftvan IV (Talai, 2007: pl.4/a)	Iron I
N.4	Light gray	Hand made	Good	Fine sand	Polished	Thick clay	Khosrow castle (Rezalou, 2007: plan 3-4) Egami, et al., 1960: plan XC Haftvan VIB (Edwards, 1981: Fig.16:19)	Iron I Iron II
N.5	Dark gray	Hand made	Poor	Medium sand	Polished	Thin clay	Goy Tepe (Brown, 1948: 203: Fig.38) Khosrow castle (Rezalou, 2007: plan 3-4) Haftvan VIB (Edwards, 1981: Fig.16:19) Haftvan VIC (Edwards, 1983: Fig. 82:14)	Iron II Iron III New Bronze
N.6	Brown	Hand made	Poor	Coarse sand	Partial polishing	Thick clay	Marlik (Negahban, 1996: 337: Fig. 35) Goy Tepe (Brown, 1948: 337: Fig.35)	Iron I Iron II

Table 4: Comparison of decorative objects of Grave 34 (Authors, 2017). ▼

Object Number	Sample	Paste	Shape	Construction type	Color	Comparable site	Period
N.12	Head pin	Cooper	Oval	Hammering	Green	-	-
N.13	Head pin	Cooper	Circular	Hammering	Green	-	-
N.14	Gold bead	Gold	Hollow sphere	Molding	Gold coating	Lasolkan (Egami, 1965:pl. LXXXVII)	Iron I
N.15	Bead	Ferrite	Cylindrical	Carving	White green turquoise	Lasolkan (Egami, 1965:pl. LXXXVIII,stone circle II)	Iron I
N.16	Bead	Bronze	Discus	Hammering	Green	-	-
N.17	Bead	Jet (gemstone)	Carving	Carving	Light gray	Lasolkan (Egami, 1965:pl. LXXXVIII,stone circle II)	-
N.18	Bead	Agate	Carving	Carving	Orange	Dinkhah III (Muscarella, 1974: fig.6/1052h) Lasolkan (Egami, 1965:pl. LXXXVIII) Guti castle (Egami et al., 1965, plan XLVIIa)	Iron I Iron I Iron I
N.19	Bead	Agate	Cylindrical	Carving	Reddish brown	Lasolkan (Egami, 1965:pl. LXXXVIII) Guti castle (Egami et al., 1960: LXXXIII tomb II) Dinkhah III (Muscarella, 1974: 2: 1580) Hassanlu V (Dyson,1965: fig. 2/1580)	Iron I Iron I Iron I
N.20	Bead	Agate	spherical	Carving	Red orange	Guti castle (Egami et al., 1965: pl.LVII/87) Lasolkan (Egami, et al., 1965: pl.XXXVIII/14) Dinkhah III (Muscarella, 1974: fig 6: 1008)	Iron I Iron I Iron I

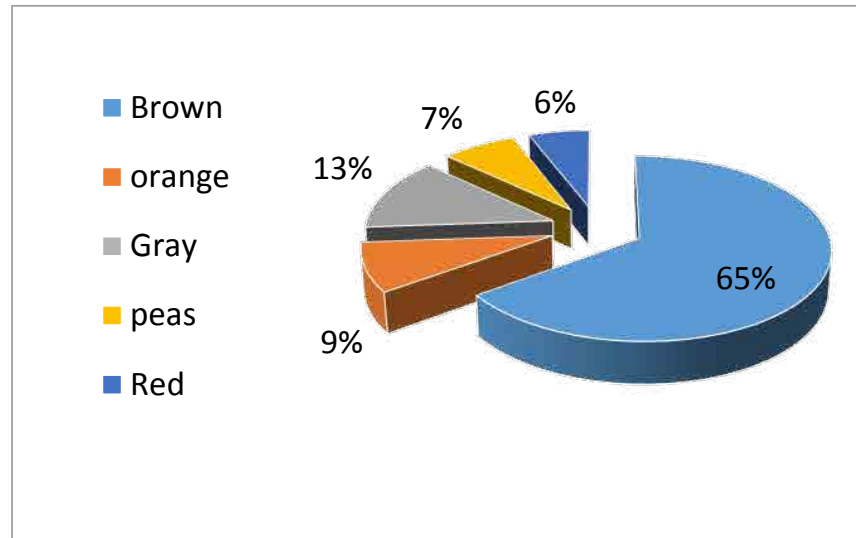


Chart 3: The abundance percentage of pottery in the soil on grave 34 (Authors, 2017). ▶

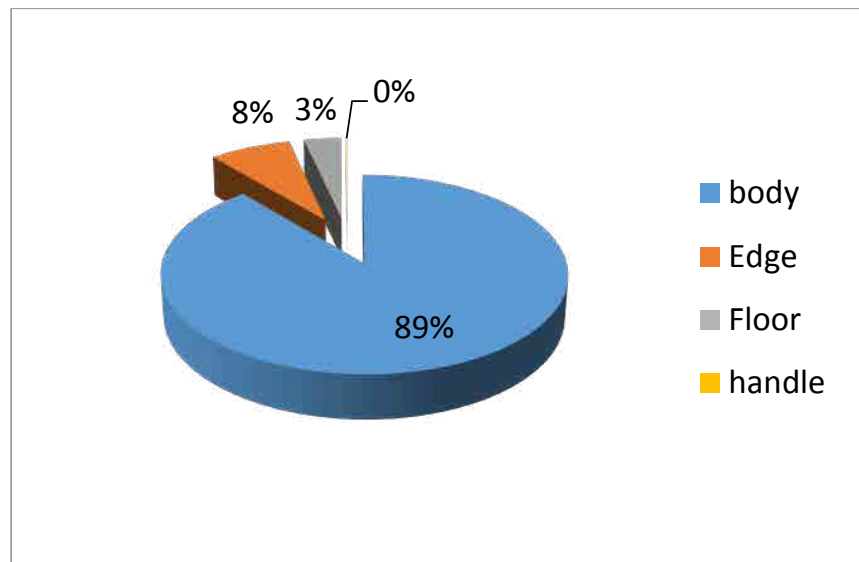


Chart 4: The frequency percentage of the types of clay pieces found in the soil on grave 34 (Authors, 2017). ▶

of the upper body is east-west, it seems that the buriers deliberately placed the skull in such a way that the direction of the face is slightly inclined to the southwest. In order to achieve this goal, a part of the skull was placed on the left shoulder, because to create this situation, the left shoulder was slightly raised upwards to fix the position of the face toward west.

Gifts placed inside Grave 35 include 9 earthenware, 1 copper dagger, 1 decorative bead made of marble (Plan 4). These objects are comparable to samples obtained from Iron Age sites in northwestern Iran. In this section, samples of these burial objects are described and compared (Table 5).

Sites and cultures comparable to Khaneqah Cemetery

The Scythians had graves of the Kurgan type consisting of a rectangular



▲ Fig. 6: How to bury burial gifts in Grave 35 (Authors, 2017).

grave with megalithic structure in the middle and a circular arrangement of stones around them that defined its boundaries. The first Scythian graves were also on the same level of ground and a circular stonework was made around them; but around 1200 BC, this burial method changed and the Scythians began to build hills on the graves. These circular cairns around the graves have long been used to build graves. In large areas of the Altai Mountains and the ancient sites of Dejazato and Justide, traces of this type of burial can be seen, which consists of a round or oval circumference of large circular stones with a predominantly rectangular graves (Bourgeois and Gheyle, 2005: 11).

These graves were sometimes made in different shapes and forms. They had stratified or stone structures with different plans such as horseshoe, L-shaped, triangular and rectangular. This type of grave (Kurgan) consists of a rectangular grave with megalithic structure in the middle and a circular arrangement of stones around them that defined its boundaries. The diameter of these stone arrangements varies. These graves have been built

Plan 4: Pottery and Funeral Gifts of Grave 35
(Keshvari, 2011: 102). ▶

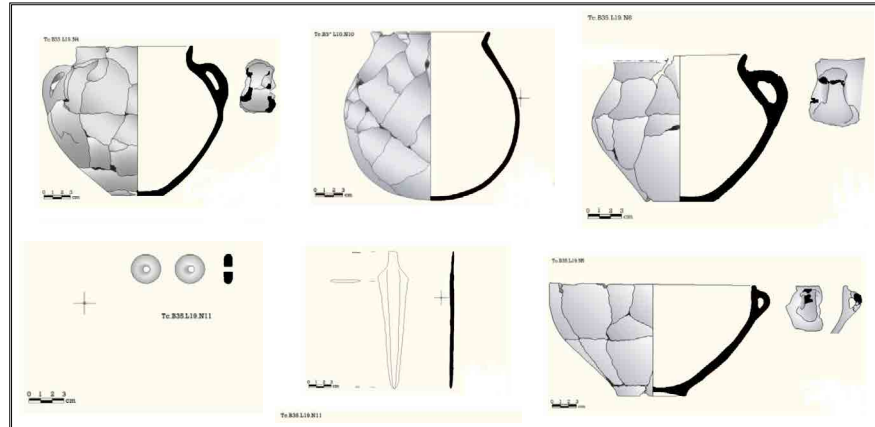
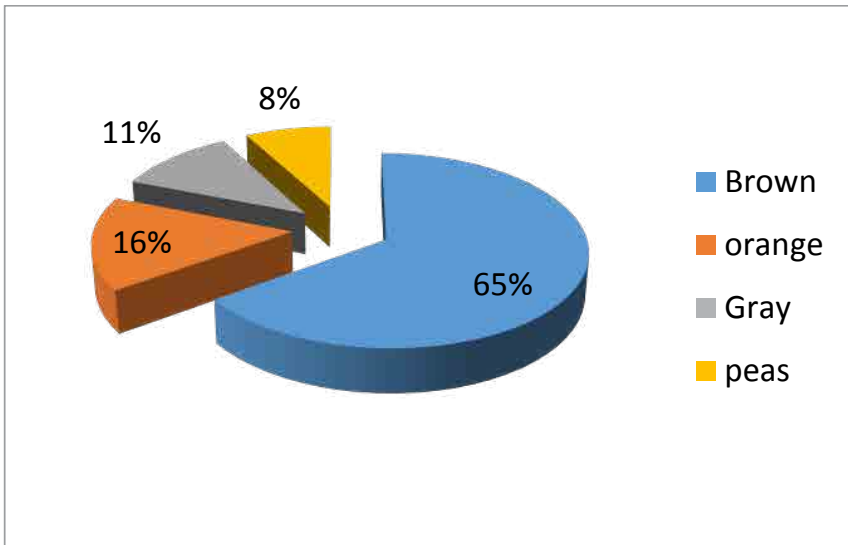
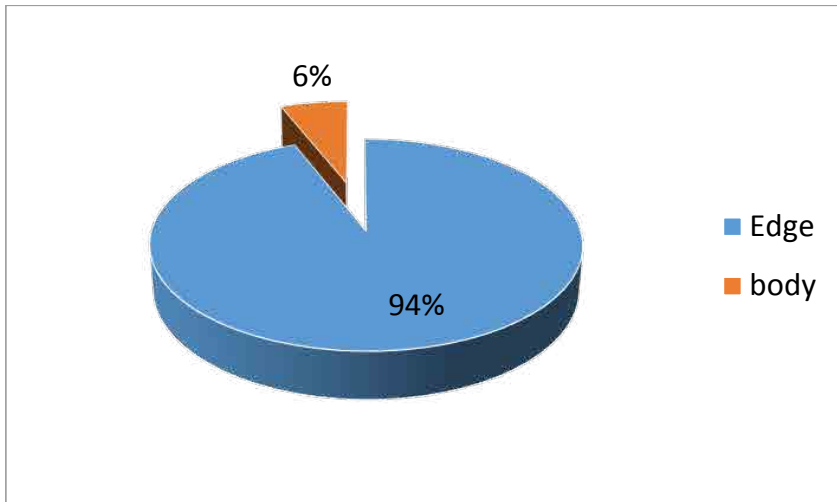


Table 5: Comparison of pottery and burial objects of Grave 35 (Authors, 2017). ▼

Object Number	Color	Construction type	Firing	Temper	Inner wall covering	Outer wall covering	Comparable site	Period
N.1	Dark gray and brown	Hand made	Poor	Medium sand	Polished	Thin clay	Haftvan VI b (Edwards, 1983: fig. 82/14) Dinkhah D (Hamlin, 1974: fig. 4/I) Khosrow castle (Rezalou, 2007: 95: plan 3-18)	Iron I Iron I Iron I
N.2	Dark gray and brown	Hand made	Good	Fine sand	Polished	Thin clay	Haftvan VIB (Edwards, 1983: fig. 82/16) Goy Tepe B (Brown, 1951: Fig.33/1004) Haftvan V (Talai, 2007: pl. 4/a) Guti castle (Egami, et al., 1960: LXXIV tomb CI)	Iron I Iron I Iron I Iron I
N.3	Orange	Hand made	Poor	Medium sand	Polished	Thin clay	Guti castle (Egami et al., 1965: pl.LII/15)	Iron I
N.4	Light and dark gray	Hand made	Good	Fine sand	Fine	Thin clay	Khosrow castle (Rezalou, 2007: plan 3-4) Egami, et al., 1960: plan XC Haftvan VIB (Edwards, 1981: Fig.16:19)	Iron I Iron I Iron I
N.5	Dark gray and brown	Hand made	Poor	Coarse sand	Polished	Thin clay	Goy Tepe (Brown, 1948: 203: Fig.38) Khosrow castle (Rezalou, 2007: plan 3-4) Lasolkan (Egami, et al., 1960: pl. XLVIIa)	Iron I Iron II Iron I
N.6	Brown	Hand made	Poor	Medium sand	Partial polishing	Thin clay	Goy Tepe (Brown, 1948: 337: Fig.35) Marlik (Negahban, 1996: 337: Fig. 35)	Iron I Iron I
N.1	Cooper dagger	Hammering	-	-	-	-	Guti castle (Egami et al, 1986: pl. LXXXIII/2Aa) Dinkhah III (Muscarella, 1974: fig.6/1052h) (Negahban, 1996: fig.33: 847)	Iron I Iron I Iron I
N.2	Decorative bead, white marble	Carving	-	-	Polished	-	Haftvan VIB (Edwards, 1981: Fig.14:151) Guti castle (Egami et al, 1960: LXXIV tomb CII)	New Bronze Iron I



◀ Chart 5: Percentage of colors of pottery on grave 35 (Authors, 2017).



◀ Chart 6: Frequency percentage of the types of pottery pieces on grave 35 (Authors, 2017).

on top of natural mounds or have changed into mound due to their structural shape. Within the borders of present-day Iran, these graves can be seen abundantly around satellite castles belonging to the New Bronze Age and Iron I in East Azerbaijan (Niknami and Kazempour, 2011) (Fig. 7), Ardabil province (Rezalu, 2007) and Garabaghlar in Meshkinshahr (Kambakhsh Fard 2001: 328). Samples comparable to the graves of Khaneqah Cemetery in Gilavan have been obtained in sites such as Khosrow Castle, Zino, Shender Shami, Gol Nesa, Kichik Yordi, Shitan Dashi and Yeri Castle. One of the most important common features of all of them was the existence of large stone cemeteries with circular stones next to them (Rezaloo, 2007: 2). Cromelchs have stone rooms (Fig. 8), whose walls are usually composed of several large stones and very large stones have been used to cover their roofs. Around these graves have been changed into circular forms by

relatively small stones in one or two rows. All known cromlechs of Shahar Yeri have a stone room (Pourfaraj, 2007). Also, during Mrs. Khorraheh's surveys in Nir county of Ardabil Province, about 9 graves were found in the studied area, but throughout the area, a number of other graves are seen scattered. It shows that these graves are scattered in a wide area and need to study the area more and more carefully to identify more of them (Khorahe, 2013: 80). This site was studied during De Morgan's Surveys in 1900 (Kroll, 1984: 48). Dr. Pourfaraj has excavated several graves in



Fig. 7: Grave with circular cairn, Ahar, East Azerbaijan (Niknami, 2011: 138). ►

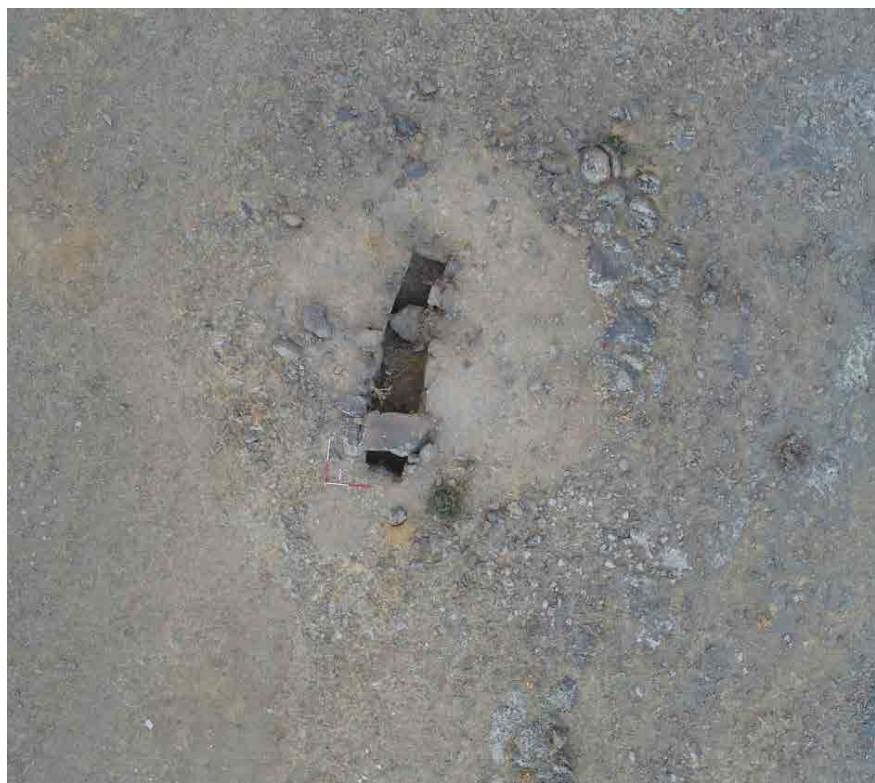


Fig. 8: Cromlech-type graves with stone cinquefoils of Pirazmian Meshkin-shahr (Authors, 2016). ►

Nir area and considers the pottery with a burnish design similar to the pottery of the Iron Age of Hato and Marlik (Pourfaraj, 2007: 531). The difference between this grave collections and the other areas mentioned is in the shape of the stones and the relatively regular carving that has been done on them. The grave collections here have either been erected individually or several burials have been made on the high natural mounds. The shape of the tombs is of the box type, which is surrounded by a stone ring (Khorahe, 2013: 80). Also in 2015, during the studies of Mr. Alizadeh Sola, the sample of graves with circular stone in larger dimensions was studied to complete his doctoral dissertation in Namin region of Ardabil province in the areas of Cheheltanan, Aghdash, Amin Chai, Chay Qushan and Chelleh Khaneh (Alizadeh Sola, 2015).

Sites and cultures comparable to Khaneghah Cemetery outside the current borders of Iran

In northwest Iran, as a result of scientific archaeological excavations, cemeteries have been identified which, from the point of view of the structure of the graves, burial methods and grave gifts, can be compared with the samples obtained from the Middle Bronze Age regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. Are comparisons. Of course, the chronology of the above regions is different from Iran. The New Bronze Age in these regions coincides with the Iron Age I of Iran, and a part of the Middle Bronze Age of these countries coincides with the New Bronze Age of Iran. Systematic surveys and excavations by archaeologists in North-West Iran, Caucasus and East Anatolia show different aspects of homogeneous and extensive cultures of the Bronze Age. The geographical scope of these cultures includes today's political borders and forms the largest cultural and geographical territory in the third millennium BC. The homogenous development of the mentioned regions changed in the Middle Bronze Age and smaller regional cultures emerged. In a general view, it can be acknowledged that the graves of the Bronze and Iron Age in the northwest of Iran appear in different regions with different forms and characteristics, although they are related to each other, they have unique characteristics. They are also individual, and these features are quite tangible both in terms of the structure and appearance of the graves, and in the way they are scattered. Regarding the structure of the graves, we see different forms of grave covering that were built according to the geography of the region and the stone resources that were available. The first examples of four-layer stone graves can be seen in the

sites belonging to the Old Bronze Age (Transcaucasia). With the passage of time and gradually during the Middle Bronze Age, the New Bronze Age, and the Iron Age, these types of graves were widely built in different areas of northwest Iran in different forms (such as round stone), dimensions and sizes. . In the northwest of Iran, the first examples of the construction of four-layer stone graves have been identified in Goi-Tepe layer D area, four graves and two graves in Dinkhah-Tepe in the IV period. At the end of the Bronze Age, due to various reasons and perhaps due to the pressure of the local residents of the region (especially the mountainous areas), settlement in hills such as Hasanlu and Dinkhah hills ended, and the culture of the Iron Age, which was native to the mountainous regions of northwestern Iran, and itself rooted in the culture The Bronze Age has become popular in these areas.

In 1901, Jacques and Henri DeMorgan continued the studies they had conducted in the years 1888-1890 in the valley of Lalwar and De Bideh in the Caucasus and in Talash, Russia (Lankaran) in prehistoric cemeteries. Located in the northeast of Azerbaijan, they explored. One of the cemeteries that was studied was Veja Lalik (Khoraha, 2012: 86). In general, they described graves of big stones with a pile of earth on them with a stone circle (Vandenberg, 1345: 119-120). This type of graves (circular stonework) has been identified in the Republic of Azerbaijan from the Middle and New Bronze Age and in Armenia from the Middle Bronze Age to the Iron Age I (Smith et al, 2003) and in Georgia and South Russia. Shah Takhti Cemetery is located near the settlements of Shah Takhti. These graves have works from the Middle Bronze Age to the Iron Age. In all periods, simple, patterned, single-colored and multi-colored pottery has been obtained. The structure of the kurgans was made of stone and had a chamber with circular stones. This type of graves is one of the most common graves in the east and northwest of Iran, especially in the area of Yeri city of Ardabil (Porfaraj, 2016: 263). In Karabaghlar Cemetery I and II, the graves are built in the form of stone squares with circular stones. Human skeletons were not found in these graves and the clay vessels found are gray and pink in the shape of bowls, pots and teapots. Sidaf has presented the date of the 14th to 9th century BC for the cemetery. In the ancient site of Nahjir, the shape of the graves is a four-layer stone with a circular stone layer around the grave. From inside the graves, gray and pink clay pots that have been polished and sometimes have brown motifs in the form of wavy and straight lines have been found. The date provided for the induction site

and cemetery is early to the Middle Bronze Age. In the cemetery of Qizil Burun area, the structure of the graves is in the form of stone squares, with circular stones around it. The burials were mass and the skeletons were chaotically placed on top of each other. Inside the graves, clay pots in pink colors with monochromatic and multi-color motifs and gray pots were placed along with bronze objects including war tools and decorative objects. Aliyev suggests a Middle Bronze Age date for this site (Belli and Bakhshaliyev: 2002: 143). The cemetery of the ancient site of Arich in Armenia is a hole dug in the ground in square and oval shapes. Its structure is stacks and round stones can be seen around the stacks. The burials were done individually and in a gathered position and on the side (Kushnareva, 1997: 7-124). Prominent examples of this type of graves in Iran are in Zardkhaneh grounds in Ahar city, Khanqah and Kichig-Yordi cemeteries in the northwest of Ardabil province, Shahriri grounds in Meshkinshahr city of Ardabil province, Niarq cemetery, Chehltanan. And Agh Dash cemetery can be seen from the grounds of Nemin city, which is part of Ardabil province.

Conclusion

The excavations carried out in Khanqah Cemetery showed that the pottery culture of the Middle and New Bronze Age continued in the Iron Age and no cultural break can be seen between these two cultural periods. In other words, the graves and burial objects of this cemetery can be compared with many sites of the Middle Bronze Age, New Bronze Age, and Iron Age I and II in the north and northwest of Iran in Hasanlu, Goi-Tepe, Haftavan, Dinkhah sites, Goti Castle, Marlik, Khosrow Castle, Vej Lelik, Chehltanan, Kichik-Yordi, Zardkhaneh and Pirazmian, and outside the political borders of Iran, examples of this type of graves and their burial objects can be found in the Republic of Azerbaijan with He compared the sites of Shahtakhti, Karabaghar, Nahjir, Qizil Burun and in Armenia with the sites of Arich, Alar, Tsakvit and in Georgia with the site of Trialti and in Anatolia with the site of Sas Hoyuk. According to the structure of the graves, pottery and decorative objects obtained from the graves of the monastery cemetery and comparing it with the sites mentioned above, a relative chronology can be imagined for the Gilvan monastery cemetery and the graves of this cemetery belong to the Middle Bronze Age. New and Iron Age I and II attributed. Of course, this point should also be taken into account that along with the burial data, special attention should also be paid to the data obtained from the settlements in the region in order

to have a better and comprehensive view of the developments and He studied the cultural developments of the region. In the study and analysis of the pottery of the two cultural periods of the Bronze Age and the Iron Age, the pottery of the Gilvan area has less variety in terms of color than the Iron Age I, and the majority of the pottery is gray pottery, but in In the Iron Age I, the majority of pottery is made of brown pottery, and the variety of different types of pottery is greater than in the Bronze Age. In the comparative comparison of the pottery of Khanqah cemetery with the pottery of sites such as Haftavan VIB, Goitepe D and C, Dinkhah IV, Godin III, Qizil Boron, Arich, Sas-Hoyuk and Trialti, many similarities can be seen. These similarities are more significant in the Middle Bronze Age of these sites. Also, the results of the research indicate that in the investigation of the pottery of the Khangah cemetery, examples of two-colored vessels, which are common in the Koraras culture, especially in the eastern regions of Anatolia, known as Karaz vessels, and are characteristic of this culture, can be seen in the graves of this cemetery. to be Also, the example of the handles that became common in the Old Bronze Age called the Nakhchivan handle, the same type of handle is quite evident in the Iron Age graves of Khanqah cemetery with minor changes. An example of these handles with the same shape and form has been reported in the Middle Bronze Age of Sashoyuk Hill in Anatolia. In addition to the clay vessels, there are many similarities in the structure of the graves between the monastery and Sas Hoyuk. It should be noted that absolute chronology has been provided for the samples tested in Sas-Hoyuk site.

Endnote

1. This article has taken from Mr. Ali Navid Gablou's dissertation entitled "Typology and study of the structure of large stone graves in northwestern Iran", which has been done in Mohaghegh Ardabili University.

2. In this section, due to the limitations of the pages of the article and the high volume of burial objects in each grave, a number of them have been studied and compared comparatively.

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قبور چاله‌ای دوران فرهنگی مفرغ و آهن گورستان خانقاه

علی نویدگیلو^۱، کریم حاجی‌زاده^۲، بهروز افخمی^۳

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چکیده

گورستان خانقاه در روستای خانقاه در شهرستان خلخال از توابع استان اردبیل، که از نظر یافته‌های تدفینی یکی از شاخص‌ترین محوطه‌های گورستانی شمال غرب ایران به‌شمار می‌آید؛ زیرا گورهایی از سه دوره فرهنگی عصر مفرغ میانی، عصر آهن و دوره پارتی را ارائه داده است. در گورستان خانقاه، چهار فصل کاوش علمی صورت گرفته، که در پژوهش حاضر به گورهای کاوش شده در فصل سوم به دلیل تنوع دوره‌های فرهنگی، پرداخته شده است. در طی این فصل، چهار گور باستانی مورد کاوش قرار گرفته که با شماره‌های ۳، ۳۳، ۳۴ و ۳۵ مشخص گردیده‌اند. گورهای شماره ۳ و ۳۳ در عصر مفرغ میانی و گورهای شماره ۳۴ و ۳۵ در عصر آهن I تاریخ‌گذاری شده‌اند. گورهای این گورستان از نوع قبور چاله‌ای بوده که تدفین به صورت تک نفره و دونفره در چاله گور صورت گرفته است. ابعاد چاله گور با توجه به قامت شخص و نیز فضای موردنیاز برای قرار دادن هدایا در داخل گور، کنده شده است. این پژوهش، ضمن دسته‌بندی و گونه‌شناسی سفال‌ها، به دنبال پاسخ‌گویی به این پرسش مهم است که همانندی این سفال‌ها با محوطه‌های هم‌زمان در شمال و شمال غرب ایران و محوطه‌های خارج از مرزهای کنونی ایران را چگونه می‌توان تفسیر و تبیین نمود؟ پژوهش حاضر به لحاظ کیفی به شیوه توصیفی-تحلیلی و با رویکرد مقایسه‌ای مورد مطالعه و از منظر داده‌های تدفینی با آثار سایر محوطه‌های هم‌زمان در شمال و شمال غرب ایران و محوطه‌های خارج از مرزهای سیاسی ایران مورد مقایسه قرار گرفته است. نتایج حاصل، روشن‌گر ارتباط فرهنگی گورستان خانقاه با محوطه‌های عصر مفرغ میانی و جدید و عصر آهن I و II است. برای تاریخ‌گذاری گورهای گورستان خانقاه مدارک و شواهد بسیاری در دست است. نحوه تدفین، شکل و ساختار گورها و گونه‌شناسی سفال‌ها و اشیای به دست آمده، تعلق این گورستان به عصر مفرغ میانی تا دوره آهن I و II را اثبات می‌کند.

کلیدواژگان: شمال غرب، گورستان خانقاه، قبور چاله‌ای، عصر مفرغ، عصر آهن.

I. دکتری باستان‌شناسی، گروه باستان‌شناسی، دانشکده علوم اجتماعی، دانشگاه محقق اردبیلی، اردبیل، ایران.

II. دانشیار گروه باستان‌شناسی، دانشکده علوم اجتماعی، دانشگاه محقق اردبیلی، اردبیل، ایران. (نویسنده مسئول).

Email: ak_hajizadeh@uma.ac.ir

III. دانشیار گروه باستان‌شناسی، دانشکده علوم اجتماعی، دانشگاه محقق اردبیلی، اردبیل، ایران.

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