



A Typology of Genre of Luristan Ware, Based on New Archaeological Surveys in Luristan

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(141-160)

Abstract

The genre of Luristan ware, which was first emerged in the early first millennium BC, was distributed in the Pish-Koh region. The typology of this ware was not clear because of the lack of excavation and surveys on the first millennium BC site of the region. Only painted ceramics of genre of Luristan ware, known as Baba-Jan III, had been well introduced. Regarding the lack of comprehensive typology for the genre of Luristan ware, many suggested pottery typologies and relative dating for the first millennium BC sites of Luristan were unreliable. According to the results of the several new-excavated sites containing genre of Luristan ware and the author's survey in the Pish-Koh region, it is possible to suggest a comprehensive typology for the genre of Luristan ware for the first time. Based on some factors such as manufacturing, forms, paintings, and hardness, genre of Luristan ware can be divided into three groups: rough ware, medium ware, and fine ware. These wares are mostly in simple and painted forms and some with application decorations. The result of the research showed that the tradition of genre of Luristan ware was common in the early first millennium BC in the Pish-Koh region. This research also indicated that the genre of Luristan ware was distributed on a broad scale. In this type of pottery, the shape, size and smallness of the designs best match the shape of the container. Hand-lit tea pots are found only in cemeteries that seem to have a ritual application. Jars are found in government areas such as Baba-Jan tape. Ordinary simple dishes are also more common in nomadic villages. Since the main and largest amount of the genre of Luristan ware has been documented from the royal place of Baba-Jan, it seems that this place was a center for distribution of this ware. The appearance of this ware may indicate a political-cultural unity in Pish-Koh during the early first millennium BC.

Keywords : Pish-Koh, 1st millennium B.C, Genre of Luristan wares, typology, pottery of Baba-Jan III.

Received: 12, July, 2019; Accepted: 11, March, 2022

doi
10.22059/jarcs.2019.282333.142723
Print ISSN: 2676-4288- Online ISSN: 2251-9297
<https://jarcs.ut.ac.ir>

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Introduction

The genre of Luristan ware, which was first emerged in the early first millennium BC, during the Iron Age IIB(950–800BC)& IIIA (800-650BC), was distributed in the settlement and graveyards of Pish-Koh region(Adachi, 2004: 81). The pottery is often called by Roman Ghirshman «Genre Luristan», that were found from Tape Giyan(Contenau&Ghirshman, 1935). Although after excavation at Baba Jan tape by Clare Goff, she named them «Baba Jan III painted ware»(Goff, 1978 : 29). Baba Jan III painted wares, decorated with the bow-tie designs, which has called the kite design(Fig 1).

But the appearance for about 300 years of genre of Luristan ware or Baba Jan III painted wares, can be divided into two phases old style and new style. Old style of genre of Luristan ware (Baba Jan III) is mostly handmade or thrown on a slow wheel. But the new style of this pottery (Baba Jan IIB) is made entirely by wheel. In addition to the Pish-Koh area, the new style of genre of luristan ware has been obtained in the south of Hersin(Goudarzi, 2017 : 226). This phenomenon is the result of the expansion of cultural relations and has led to the evolution of technology and wheel maker genre of Luristan ware.

Moorey suggested that genre of Luristan ware in the Iron Age Luristan can be generally attributed to invader from outside of this region(Moorey,1974:19). The invaders have been considered to be Kassites, Cimmerians, Median or Elamite people. Goff thinks that the culture of Baba Jan III was mist probably Median(Goff, 1968: 131). Medvedskaya believes that Baba Jan III painted ware belongs to the Ellipian kingdom. She says it cannot be Median, because it is quite different from the pottery found at Nush-I Jan tape.

The typology of this ware was not clear because of the lack of excavation and surveys on the first millennium BC site of the region. Only painted ceramics of genre of Luristan ware, known as Baba-Jan III, had been well introduced. Regarding the lack of comprehensive typology for the genre of Luristan ware, many suggested pottery typologies and relative dating for the first millennium BC sites of Luristan were unreliable. According to the results of the several new-excavated sites containing genre of Luristan ware includes Baba-Jan tape and Baba-Jilan graveyard (Hassanpor, 2008) and Froud-Gah tape(Sajadi, 2015), and also the author's survey in the Pish-Koh region, it is possible to suggest a comprehensive typology for the genre of Luristan ware for the first time. Therefore, the basis of study and relative chronology of the studied pottery and the samples obtained from the survey, based on the comparison with the pottery, these index sites have been excavated, which have a valid stratigraphy. Based on some factors such as manufacturing, forms, paintings, and hardness, genre of Luristan ware can be divided into three groups: coarse ware, medium ware, and fine ware. These wares are mostly in simple and painted forms and some with application decorations. Fine ware is a medium thickness 7-8 mm, hard, string, well levigated, with inclusions which range from barely visible sand particles grits. The colour varies from off-white through cream to peach, pale orange and a light reddish brown, though a warm buff is the shade most frequently occurring. The surface is normally wet smoothed, and often several shades lighter than the interior due to firing processes. Based on author's field and studies, fine ware of Genre of Luristan can be classified into three types: painted, decorated and simple. A pattern of kite design on the painted pottery of genre of luristan ware. In this type, the usual designs are hatch and bow-tie pattern. Typology of fine painted pottery of genre of Luristan ware included jar, tea-pot and small bowl forms. The most prominent form of this pottery type is the jar without handles in different sizes. These jars can be seen in most of the study areas, northwest of Pish-Koh from Sefid-Koh to Garin mountain, in Delfan area. It has been found in central sites such as Baba Jan tape and graveyards such as Baba Jilan(Hassanpur&et.al, 2015 :205). These vessels are always elaborately decorated with variations on the kite theme. also small bowls with no handles, fine type of genre of

Luristan ware (Table 1&2). Medium wares are made from a light brown, medium-textured clay with large, black grits give the surface a speckled appearance, rather like a hen's egg. Medium ware of genre Luristan ware included the large storage vessels and pithoi. Due to daily use of Medium ware, this type of pottery has made the largest number. The outside is smoothed but the interior is often untreated and rather friable and flaky. Buff or reddish brown fabrics are most common (Goff, 1978 : 31). The jars are normally decorated with applied cordons and impressed motifs. The most common forms are jars with a handle, glass and pitchers with a handle (Fig 4), jugs and vats (Fig 5), pots and large bowls with a handle (Fig 8&9). Small bowls usually with a slightly inverted rim and horizontal handle, decorated with ladders or varieties on the pendent triangle theme, are found in their hundreds throughout the central mound of Baba Jan tape. Small bowls with spouts sometimes occur in private collections but are not definitely attested at Baba Jan tape. Coarse wares are invariably dark and friable with closely-packed, black or brown grits. They range in colour from reddish brown to black, and the exterior is often patchy and smoke-blackened. The most common forms of coarse type of genre of Luristan ware are cups, pots and storage pithos. In fact, their use has been used as kitchen utensils. Cups normally with a single and horizontal handle, occur in a variety of forms (Fig 14). The storage pithos are made in large dimension (Fig 15). Due to the large volume of these jars, they were made thick and been installed on the floor of storage rooms and kitchens.

The Analysis and the results

The result of the research showed that the tradition of genre of Luristan ware was common in the early first millennium BC in the Pish-Koh region. This research also indicated that the genre of Luristan ware was distributed on a broad scale. In this type of pottery, the shape, size and smallness of the designs best match the shape of the container. Hand-lit tea pots are found only in cemeteries that seem to have a ritual application. Jars are found in government areas such as Baba-Jan tape. Ordinary simple dishes are also more common in nomadic villages. Since the main and largest amount of the genre of Luristan ware has been documented from the royal place of Baba-Jan, it seems that this place was a center for distribution of this ware. The appearance of this ware may indicate a political-cultural unity in Pish-Koh during the early first millennium BC. The long tradition of the bow-tie designs suggests that the indigenous pottery culture survived despite repeated invasions by various ethnic groups into Luristan (Chart 1). This might explain how Bronze Age motifs, notably the kite and the Kassite cross came to adorn Iron Age II pottery. According to studies, Caspian people that living in the Eastern Luristan at the beginning of the first millennium BC, likely has been able to establish the kingdom of Ellipi (Mollazah&Goudarzi, 2016: 93-94). A great achievement for this people, that even earlier of the Medes and Persians and contemporary with Mannea, were achieved.