

Long Sequence of Red Slipped Potteries in the Prehistory of Western Iran: Investigation form Late Neolithic to the End of Chalcolithic Period

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Abstract

In the prehistory of western Iran, from the Late Neolithic to the end of the Chalcolithic period, there are some red-slipped potteries that continued to exist with minimal or even without any changes, despite the change in periods and the subsequent change in pottery styles and traditions. This has led to ambiguities and errors in distinguishing these types, and as a result, incorrect identification of the cultural periods of some sites of the Late Neolithic period, especially the Chalcolithic period. Are the red-slipped potteries of the Neolithic period to the end of the Chalcolithic period in western Iran really a special type of pottery that continued to exist without any changes despite the changes of cultural periods? What are the differences between the red-coated potteries of the Neolithic period and the Chalcolithic period? The failure of some researchers to distinguish the Red-Slipped potteries of the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods creates the assumption that these types of pottery are not mutually exclusive. The present article, using an analytical-comparative method, attempts to answer the questions and hypotheses raised by closely examining the Red-Slipped potteries obtained from the excavations of some significant sites of the Late Neolithic and the Chalcolithic period in the western regions of Iran, such as Siahbid, Genail, Ghazanchi, Saha Chai Tepe, and Tepe Gheshlagh. The results of this research show that although there are undeniable similarities at first glance between the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic period to the end of Chalcolithic, there are subtle differences in the form of the pottery, the degree of firing, temper, and the type and color of the coating, which a careful study will help distinguish the pottery of the mentioned periods from each other. The findings of this research show that the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic period has burnished slip, a feature that is not seen in the later period, especially in the J and Dalma period. Also, in the late Chalcolithic period, in addition to changes in the color of the pottery's coating, carved decorations are seen on the outer body of red pottery, which has not been reported for Red-Slipped potteries from previous periods.

Keywords: Red-Slipped, Saha Chai Tepe, Western Iran, Late Neolithic, Chalcolithic.

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Introduction

The time span of prehistoric pottery traditions in western Iran, especially from the Late Neolithic to the end of the Chalcolithic, is usually a short span of 300-400 years. As one period ends and a new period begins, we witness changes in pottery style. Apart from the fundamental changes between the Neolithic and Chalcolithic pottery cultures, which are essentially two separate periods, these changes are clearly visible within the Chalcolithic cultures themselves and between their Early, Middle and Late periods. For example, with the end of the Early Chalcolithic period, characterized by the Dalma pottery tradition in large areas of western and northwestern Iran, a new period called the Seh Gabi replaces it, the pottery style of which bears the least resemblance to the Dalma period. The main characteristic of the Seh Gabi tradition is the buff-colored pottery, the outer body of which is decorated with black paints (Henrickson, 1985; 1983; Young & Levine, 1987). It should be noted that there is no affinity between this tradition and the pottery collection of the Dalma period (Dalma painted, Dalma streaky, Dalma Impressed, Dalma-Ubaid, etc.).

The aforementioned feature is seen in nearly all prehistoric cultures of western Iran. There is one exception in this regard, and that is the Red-Slipped potteries, which despite the end of a period, continues to exist in the new period. The beginning of these Red-Slipped potteries in the prehistory of western Iran is from the Late Neolithic period. With the end of the Neolithic period, we continue to witness the continuation of this tradition from the beginning of the Chalcolithic period until its end at the end of the 4th millennium BC. In other words, this pottery tradition has a long sequence in the prehistory of western Iran from the late 6th millennium to the end of the 4th millennium BC. This long sequence and its continuity from one period to another one without any changes or with minimal changes has caused ambiguities and questions in the correct identification of this species pottery in archaeological projects, especially survey projects. There are cases of incorrect identification of the aforementioned Red-Slipped potteries, which has caused errors in the dating of prehistoric sites, especially the sites of the Chalcolithic period in western Iran. The author has addressed these errors elsewhere and we do not intend to repeat them here (Mohammadi Ghasrain, 2023). Are the red-slipped potteries from the Late Neolithic period to the end of the Chalcolithic period in western Iran really a special type of pottery that continues to exist without any changes despite the beginning and end of cultural periods? What are the differences between the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic period and the Chalcolithic period? According to studies conducted so far, it is assumed that the Red-Slipped potteries of the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods in vast areas of western Iran follows a long-term tradition that is continued from one period to the next without any

specific changes. In answering the questions and hypotheses raised, the present article attempts to closely examine and study the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods in the western regions of Iran with an analytical-comparative approach. The samples of the Late Neolithic and Chalcolithic pottery used in this study are from the excavated sites in different parts of western Iran. In this regard, the samples of Red-Slipped potteries from the Late Neolithic period examined in this study belong to the Siahbid (Levine & McDonald, 1977), Genail (Smith & Mortensen, 1980), Tepe Posht-e Forudgah (Biek Mohammadi & Javanmardzadeh, 2020; Biek Mohammadi *et al.*, 2018). In addition, Red-Slipped potteries from other excavated sites of the Late Neolithic period, such as Tepe Sarab (Mc Donald, 1979), Tepe Guran (Meldgaard *et al.*, 1964: 117) also considered. The Chalcolithic period Red-Slipped ceramics are from the sites like Tepe Ghazanchi (Mashkour *et al.*, 2023), Tepe Dalma (Hamlin, 1975), Tepe Gheshlagh in Bijar (Sharifi & Motarjem, 2018) and Saha Chai Tepe in Zanjan (Rahimi, 2010), (Fig. 1). The results obtained in this article show that despite the undeniable similarities between the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic period and the different phases of the Chalcolithic period, which sometimes lead to their failure to recognize or misidentification from each other, there are very minor and subtle differences in the type and color of the coating, pottery forms, the color of the core, the texture of the pottery, etc. The findings of this study show that the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic period are usually burnished, a feature that is not seen in the later period, especially the Chalcolithic period. Also, in the Chalcolithic period, in addition to changes in the color of the coating of the pottery, carved decorations are seen on the outer body of the red pottery, which has not been reported for the Red-Slipped potteries of the previous period. Listing of these differences in this article will certainly lead to a better understanding of this type of pottery.

Questions and Hypotheses: As mentioned, Red-Slipped potteries has a long sequence in the prehistoric chronology of western Iran (Late Neolithic to the end of the Chalcolithic). In this context, the main questions are: What are the differences between the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic period and the pottery of the Chalcolithic period? What are the characteristic features of the Red-Slipped potteries of the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods? According to the studies conducted so far, the main assumption is that the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods in large areas of western Iran follows a long tradition that is transferred from one period to the next without any specific changes. However, the observations and detailed studies conducted in the present study show that despite some common characteristics, the Red-Slipped potteries of each period has its own characteristics and features, which, by considering these characteristics, can be distinguished from the pottery of each period before or after it.

Research Methodology: The research method of this article is based on analytical and comparative studies. Considering the questions and hypotheses raised regarding the red-slipped potteries of the Neolithic and Chalcolithic period of western Iran, a number of potteries from excavated sites in western Iran, such as Tepe Genail, Saha Chai Tepe, Tepe Ghazanchi, and Tepe Siahbid, were closely examined and studied.

Late Neolithic

As mentioned in the introduction, Red-Slipped potteries has a long history from the Late Neolithic to the late Chalcolithic in western Iran. The beginning of this pottery dates back to the Late Neolithic in prehistory of western Iran. Among the Late Neolithic excavated sites in western Iran that contain Red-Slipped potteries is the Siahbid on the outskirts of Kermanshah city. The first studies at Siahbid were conducted by F. Mattson, a member of Iranian Prehistoric Project under the direction of Braidwood, but the results were not published. Subsequently, members of the Mahidasht Project under the direction of Lewis Levine also conducted excavations at this site (Hole, 1987). As a result of the excavation in the Southern Siahbid, it was determined that this mound contains deposits from the Late Neolithic, the Early and Middle Chalcolithic period (Henrickson, 1985: 69). In the northern mound of Siahbid, unlike the southern one, there is no evidence of Late Neolithic remains, and all the excavated deposits belong to the Chalcolithic period (Early and Middle phases). It should be noted that the Mahidasht project remained unfinished due to the political conditions at the time of the project (the Islamic Revolution) and the delegation was unable to fully publish the data from this project. The data collected by the Mahidasht project, of which the data from the Siahbid excavation is a part, is currently stored in the National Museum of Iran. By decision of the National Museum of Iran, a team is reviewing the studies of this project (Renette *et al.*, 2021).

As a member of the review team, the author had the opportunity to closely examine and study the project data, including the Red-Slipped potteries from the Late Neolithic period obtained from the excavations at Tepe Siahbid. A detailed study of the Red-Slipped potteries from the Neolithic period at Tepe Siahbid shows a thick red coating on the outer and inner body of the pottery. This coating is so thick that it is reminiscent of the glazes on pottery from the Historic-Islamic period (Fig. 2). The red coating on the Late Neolithic pottery from Tepe Siahbid is shiny and polished. This polished slip is one of the characteristic features of the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic period, which has also been observed in the Red-Slipped potteries of Tepe Guran (Meldgaard *et al.*, 1964: 11). The core of this group of pottery is mostly dark, which indicates insufficient firing of the pottery. However, in some cases, the core is buff colored means

sufficiently fired. Like most of the pottery from the prehistoric period of western Iran, the mixture used in the paste is a vegetable temper (straw).

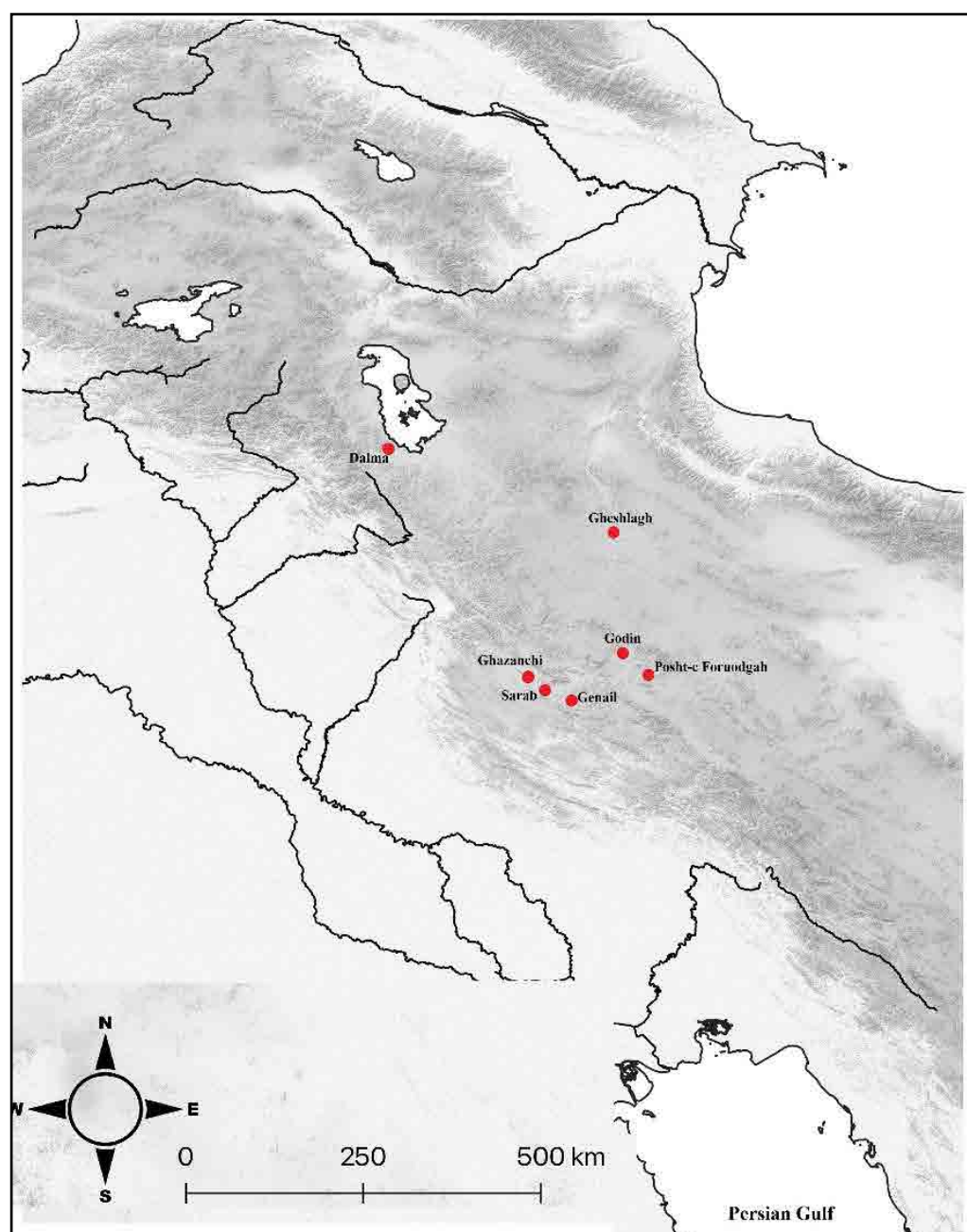


Fig. 1: The location of some of the mentioned sites in western Iran (plain map by: [Rennete, 2020](#)).

Another site where the author was able to see the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic period is Tepe Genail near Harsin, Kermanshah. Genail, along with two adjacent sites called Ghasemi and Ghalakamandbag, are among the Neolithic sites around Harsin that were investigated and excavated by Smith and Mortensen ([Smith & Mortensen, 1980](#)). The author, who worked at the Bisotun World Heritage Site for 5 years, visited the Genail on several occasions and studied several pieces of Red-Slipped potteries of the site in details. The Red-Slipped potteries of the Genail is similar in every



Fig. 2: Late Neolithic period of Tepe Siahbid excavation stored at National Museum of Iran now. The red- slipped one can be seen in detail (Author, 2022).

way to the Red-Slipped potteries of Siahbid. Most of their cores is dark, in other words, the pottery is insufficiently fired. Like the pottery of the Siahbid, the surface of some pieces is burnished and seems shiny. The form of the Genail pottery is open-mouthed bowls with a convex wall (Fig. 3). The aforementioned form is the common form of pottery from the Late Neolithic period sites in western Iran, which has been reported at Tepe Sarab (McDonald, 1979) and Tepe Guran also (Meldgaard *et al.*, 1964: 117).



Fig. 3: late Neolithic burnished red-slipped ceramic collected at the surface of Tepe Genail (Author, 2023).

In addition to Genail and Siahid, both of which are located in the western parts of the Central Zagros, a site called Tepe Posht-e-Foroudgah from the Late Neolithic period has recently been excavated in the eastern parts of the Central Zagros and near Malayer, from which characteristic Red-Slipped potteries has been reported (Beik Mohammadi & Javanmardzadeh, 2018), (Fig. 4). Although Tepe Posht-e-Foroudgah is located in the eastern parts of the Central Zagros, its Red-Slipped potteries has no different from the Red-Slipped potteries of the western Zagros and other parts of western Iran. Apart from the aforementioned sites, Red-Slipped potteries has also been reported from other sites in western Iran, such as Tepe Sarab (Mc Donald, 1979: 173) and Guran (layer H-D), (Meldgaard *et al.*, 1964: 117).

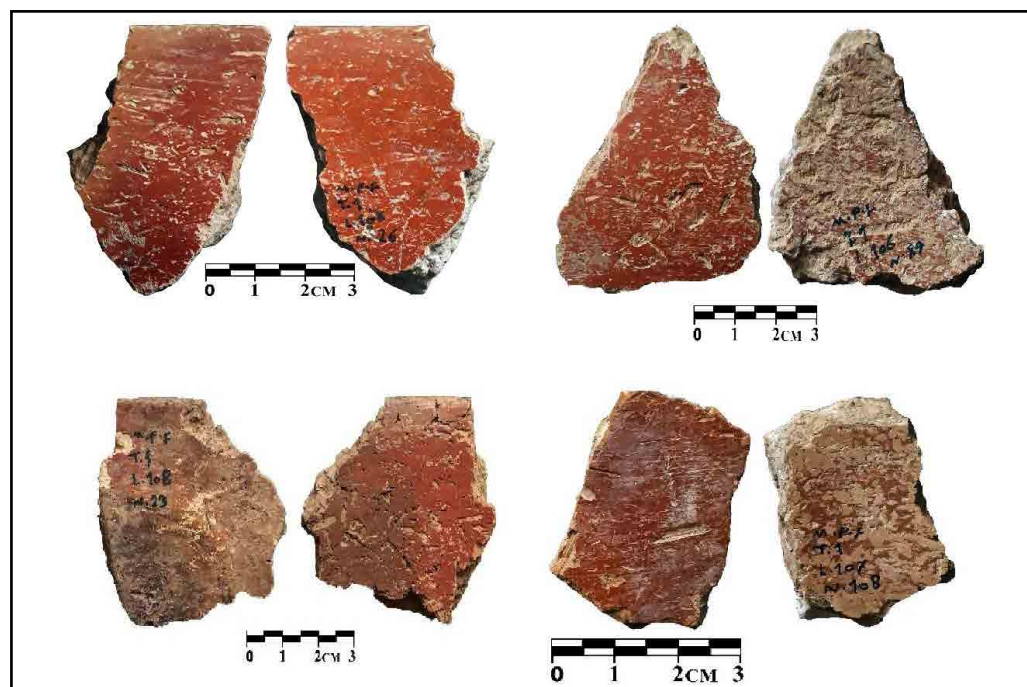


Fig. 4: Late Neolithic red-slipped ceramics of Tepe Posht-e-Foroudgah (Beik Mohammadi & Javanmardzadeh, 2020).

Transitional Chalcolithic

The Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic period continued to exist after the end of this period and in the early stages of the Chalcolithic (Transitional Chalcolithic). Among the pottery cultures of the Transitional Chalcolithic, which are widespread in large parts of western Iran, especially in the western regions of the central Zagros, is the so-called J ware. It should be noted that in the early stage of prehistoric archaeological studies of the western Iran, J type pottery has been dated as Early Chalcolithic (Henrickson, 1985). However, new studies and evidence of relative and absolute dating of Dalma pottery (Renette, 2022; Abedi, 2017; Saed Mucheshi, 2021; Bahranipour, 2021) indicate that Dalma pottery is placed in the Early Chalcolithic (Renette & Mohammadi Ghasrian, 2020: Table 1). As a result, the J type pottery horizon has been proposed as a transient and transitional stage between the final stages of the late Neolithic and the initial stages of the Chalcolithic (Transitional Chalcolithic) in the final centuries of the 6th millennium BC (Mohammadi Ghasrian, 2021; Renette *et al.*, 2020: 91). In terms of pottery style and tradition, as well as decorations and coatings on the pottery, J ware is considered a culture influenced by the late Halaf pottery culture (Levine & McDonald, 1977), or more precisely, the transitional stage from Halaf to Ubaid in the final centuries of the 6th millennium BC (Mohammadi Ghasrian, 2021). Revisions made to the J type pottery show that this pottery culture consists of some painted pottery along with Slipped pottery. Among these, Red-Slipped potteries is considered to be the most common type J pottery (Mohammadi Ghasrian, 2021). Among the excavated sites in western Iran that have Red-Slipped potteries of J ware is the Siahbid site. As mentioned above, the author had the opportunity to closely examine the excavated data of this site. In addition to the evidence of the Late Neolithic period of the site described above, the J ware and its red-slipped ones were also examined. A detailed study of the Red-Slipped J ware does not show much difference from the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic period. As in the Late Neolithic period, the red coating covers both the inner and outer surfaces of the pottery. The core of the pottery is also dark, as in the Neolithic period. The common forms of Red-Slipped potteries of the J ware are open-mouthed bowls with a convex body, which are the same forms of the Late Neolithic period, and from this perspective, there is no difference between the two periods. The main difference between the Red-Slipped potteries of the J period and the Late Neolithic period is the different type of Red-Slipped coating of the pottery. In this period, unlike the Neolithic period, we see the use of different colors of red (burnished red, brownish red, etc.) on the inside and outside of the pottery (Figs. 5 & 6).

Early Chalcolithic

The most prominent pottery culture of the Early Chalcolithic period, which covered

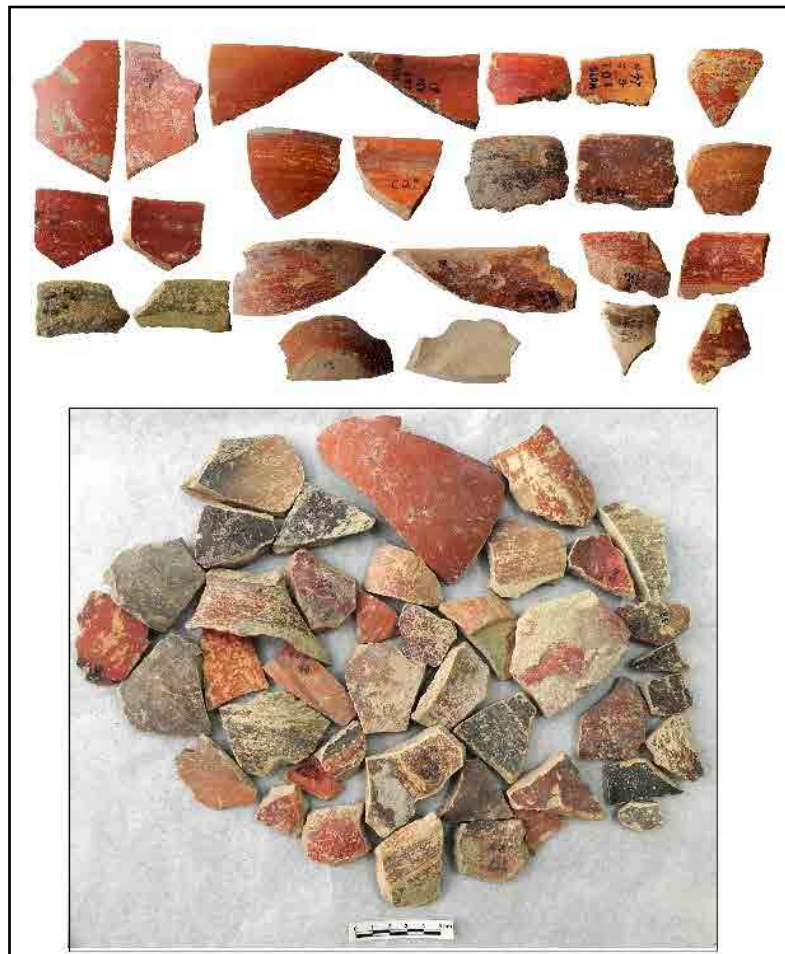


Fig. 5: Transitional chalcolithic slipped ware of Siahbid excavation (J ware) stored at national Museum of Iran (Author, 2022).



Fig. 6: red-slipped ceramics of J ware of Tepe Siahbid (Author, 2022).

large parts of western and northwestern Iran in the first half of the 5th millennium BC, is the Dalma tradition. Like many Iranian prehistoric pottery cultures, the Dalma culture takes its name from the site of the same name from which this pottery was first recovered. The pottery known as Dalma first entered Iranian archaeological literature after the excavations of the Dalma mound in 1958. The Dalma Tepe is located in the Solduz valley, 5 km southwest of the Tepe Hassanlou, south of Lake Urmia, and was excavated in two stages by the Hassanlou project team between 1958 and 1961 (Hamlin, 1975: 111). Further information about this pottery culture came to light after excavations at other sites in western Iran, including the Godin and especially the Seh Gabi (Mound B) in the central Zagros. Although the term Dalma pottery entered Iranian archaeological literature after the excavations at Dalma Tepe in the northwest, it is actually the excavations at Mound B of Seh Gabi and Trench XYZ of Tepe Godin that form the basis for the stratigraphic sequence of various types of Dalma pottery in western Iran (Levine & Young, 1987: 21; Henrickson, 1985: 69). The Dalma pottery culture is a collection of various plain and painted pottery and is therefore considered a completely different pottery culture in the archaeology of the Chalcolithic period of Iran. Dalma Plain, Dalma Red-Slipped, Dalma with various types of carved decorations (punching, Impressed...), and various types of painted pottery (monochrome, bicolor, streaky and Dalma-Ubaid) are considered to be the pottery collection of the Dalma tradition (Henrickson, 1983: 1985).

As mentioned, the Dalma Red-Slipped type is considered to be among the traditional Dalma pottery. This type has been obtained from excavations at Godin and Seh Gabi in the central Zagros, as well as from excavations at Dalma Tepe itself in northwestern Iran (Hamlin, 1975: 119). The Red-Slipped potteries of Tepe Dalma has compact fabric and has a more cohesive texture than other types of Dalma pottery. The red coating of this type is thick and covers both the inner and outer surfaces of the pottery. The temper of this type of pottery is straw particles with white grains of sand (Hamlin, 1975: 119). The form of the Red-Slipped ceramics of Dalma Tepe is close to 10 types of forms, ranging from short-necked vessels to vessels with holes in the shoulder (Hamlin, 1975: Figs. 7-10), (Fig. 7). This feature is in contrast to the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Neolithic and the Late Chalcolithic, most of which are Red-Slipped potteries with open mouths and convex walls. There are other differences between the Red-Slipped ceramics of Dalma Tepe and the red-slipped of the Late Neolithic and Late Chalcolithic period. It should be noted that these differences that will be discussed below are the result of the author's experience of several seasons of excavation and investigation in the Neolithic and Chalcolithic sites in western Iran and have not been mentioned in previously published articles and books. As mentioned earlier, the red coating on the pottery of

the Late Neolithic and Late Chalcolithic has a shiny and burnished appearance, and this feature is not seen in the red-slipped of the Dalma type. In addition, the Red-Slipped potteries of the Dalma type are soft and more fragile than the previous period. The coating inside and outside of the Red-Slipped potteries of the Dalma type is not as dense as the coatings of the Late Neolithic period. Also, a lower percentage of the Red-Slipped potteries of the Dalma period has dark cores than that of its two older periods (Late Neolithic and Transitional Chalcolithic period).

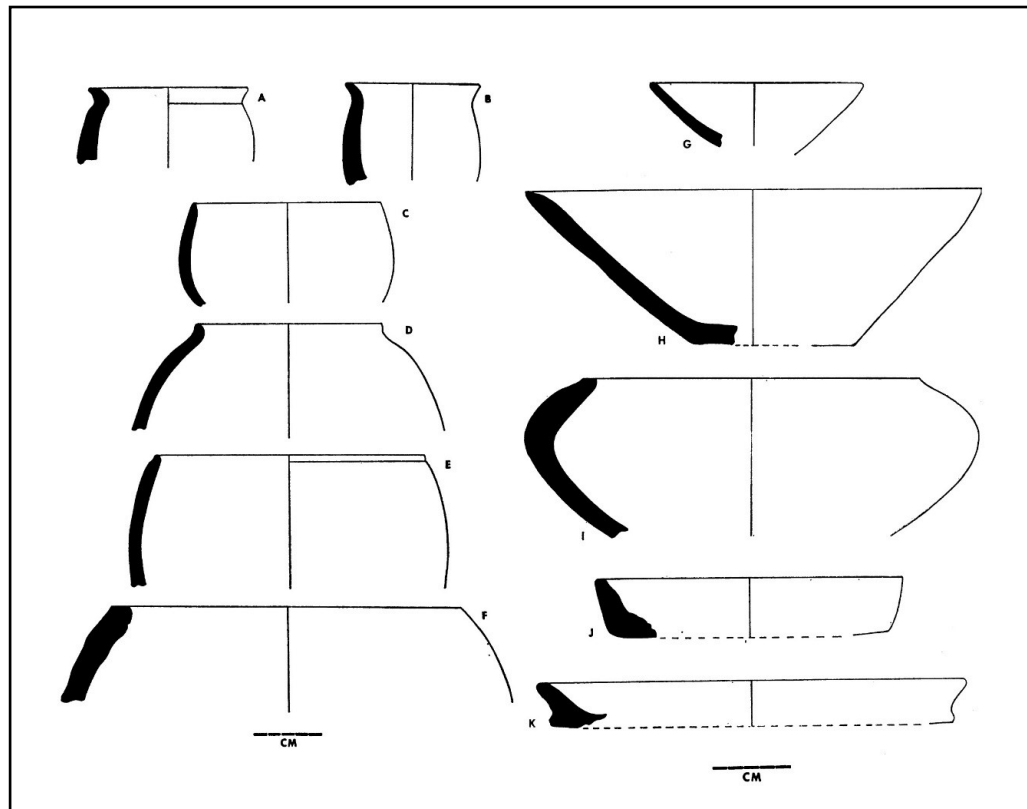


Fig. 7: Different type of Dalma red-slipped potteries of Dalma Tepe (Hamlin, 1975: Fig. 9).

Middle Chalcolithic

In the Middle Chalcolithic period based on previous chronological table (Henrickson, 1985) and new table in which this period placed as Late Chalcolithic 1(LC1), (Renette & Mohammadi Ghasrian, 2020), a new culture called the Seh Gabi replaced the Dalma culture in large areas of western Iran (Henrickson, 1983). The main characteristic of the Seh Gabi period is a painted pottery called Black On Buff/BOB, and these pottery replaces the Dalma type pottery. However, two types of Dalma period (Dalma Red-Slipped and Dalma Impressed) continue to exist in this period. The issue of Dalma Impressed is outside the scope of this article and we have nothing to do with it. There is not much information about the Red-Slipped ceramics of the Middle Chalcolithic period (Seh Gabi phase) and it is only mentioned that Red-Slipped potteries is one of the pottery types of the Seh Gabi period (Henrickson, 1985). Fortunately, recent

excavations of Tepe Ghazanchi at the northern part of Kermanshah city have yielded red-slipped pottery from this period with an absolute date of 4252-4445 BC (Mashkour *et al.*, 1402: 20), which are considered suitable examples for introducing this type (Fig. 8 and 9). The red coating of the Ghazanchi pottery covers both the outer and inner surfaces of the pottery. The mixture used in the clay paste is straw particles. Among the samples are pieces with incomplete firing and with oxidized and dark cores. Some of the Dalma Red-Slipped forms are also seen in the Ghazanchi assemblage. Like the Dalma Red-Slipped type pottery, the inner and outer coating of the Ghazanchi pottery is not as dense as that of the Late Neolithic pottery such as the Genail or Siahbid mounds. Further study of the details of the Red-Slipped potteries of the Ghazanchi does not show any difference from the Dalma Red-Slipped pottery. In other words, it seems that the Red-Slipped potteries of the Dalma period continues without any changes in the Seh Gabi period.



Fig. 8: Seh Gabi period red-slipped ceramics from Ghazanchi excavation (archives: H. Davoodi, 2024).



Fig. 9: more Red-Slipped ceramics of Tepe Ghazanchi (archives: H. Davoodi, 2024).

Late Chalcolithic

As mentioned above, Red-Slipped potteries began in the Late Neolithic period and continued until the end of Chalcolithic period. Before the Chalcolithic period, Red-Slipped potteries was only one of the pottery types, and apart from this type of pottery, there were other types of pottery, but in the Chalcolithic period, and especially in some well-known and widespread cultures of the early part of this period called Godin VII, Red-Slipped potteries became the main and common type. So that the main characteristic of the Godin VII culture, which covers vast areas of western Iran (Kurdistan, Zanjan, Hamedan and Kermanshah), is these Red-Slipped potteries (Mohammadi Ghasrian, 2022). In other words, with the beginning of the Late Chalcolithic period in the final centuries of the 5th millennium BC, the different types of painted pottery of previous periods, such as the Black On Buff of Seh Gabi, disappeared and replaced by plain Red-Slipped potteries of the Godin VII type (Levine & Young, 1987). Fortunately, more sites from the Godin VII period have been excavated than in previous periods, and as a result, more information is available in this field. In addition to the Godin mound itself (Young, 1965; Levine & Young, 1974), excavations of the three sites of Gheshlagh (Sharifi & Motarjem, 2018), Kalnan (Saed Mucheshi *et al.*, 2011), and Saha Chai Tepe (Rahimi Sorkhani, 2008) have also been reported. A detailed study of the Godin VII type pottery shows that in addition to the red coating, there are also plum(salmon)-colored slip covered the inside and outside surfaces of the pottery (Sharifi & Motarjem, 2018: Fig. 15; Saed Mucheshi *et al.*, 2011: fig. 19). Some of the plum(Salmon)-colored Godin VII ceramic style have been reported from Saha Chai Tepe (Fig. 10). In addition to plain Godin VII Red-Slipped potteries, some pottery with carved decorations of the Godin VII type period also reported. Noted that engraved decoration around the rims of Godin VII period ceramics is not seen in previous period (Fig. 11).

As mentioned, the tradition of Red-Slipped potteries is more prevalent in the early phases of the Late Chalcolithic periods, and by the end of the early phases of this period at the beginning of the 4th millennium BC, the Red-Slipped potteries also began to fade and was no longer considered the dominant type. By the end of the Godin VII period and during the Godin VI/2 and VI/1 periods, most of the pottery was of the plain buff and orange type (Rothman & Badler, 2011: 89-90). Of course, we also see some Red-Slipped potteries in this period, but the concentration of the red coating on the pottery of this period is in no way comparable to that of previous periods. The red coating on the pottery of later phases of Late Chalcolithic period (Godin VI/2 and VI/1) is mostly wet-handed, so that in some cases the red color of the coating on the pottery cannot be distinguished from the clay itself. It should be noted that at the end of the Chalcolithic and in the Bronze Age (especially the Early Bronze Age), Red-Slipped potteries continued to exist, which is beyond the scope of our discussion.

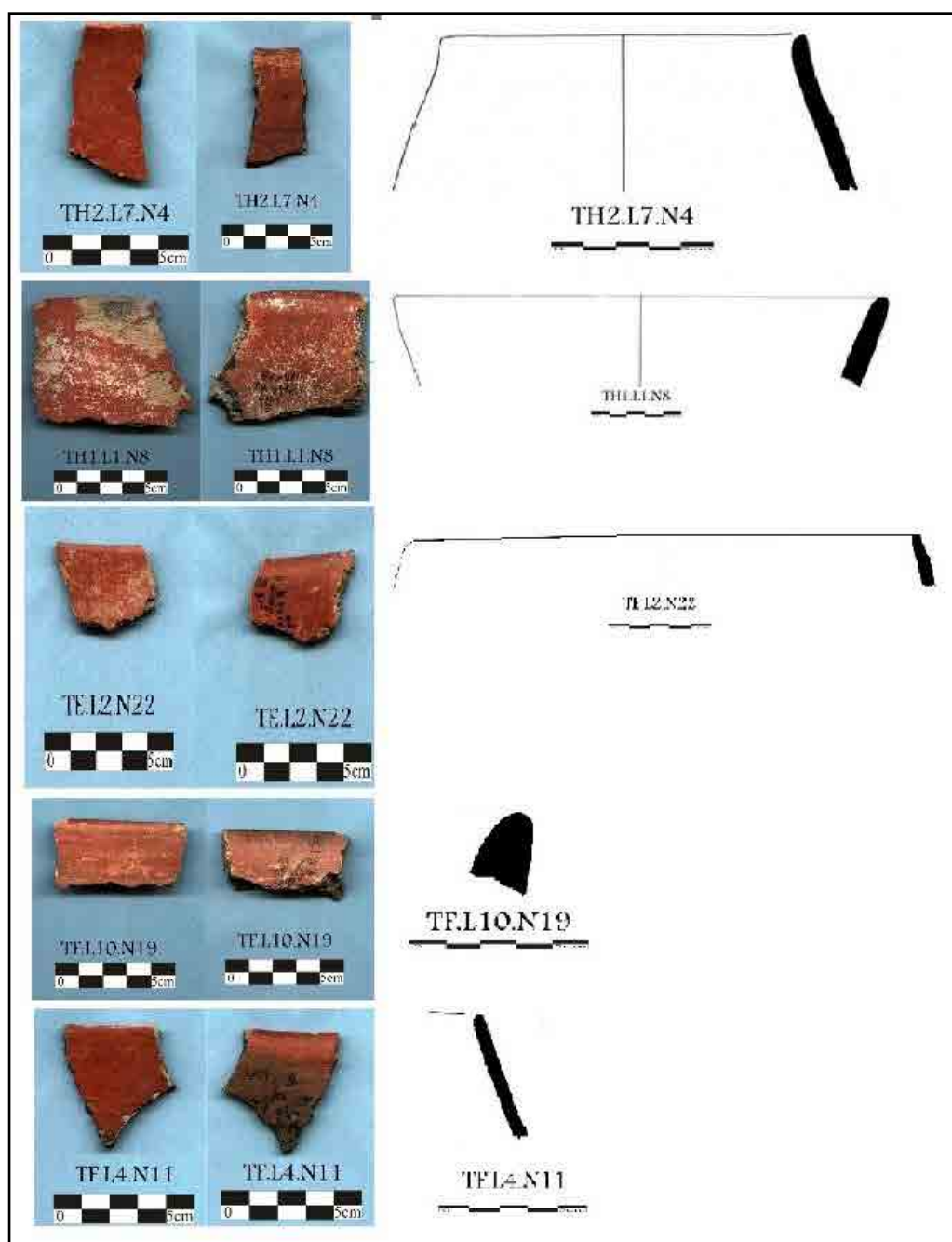


Fig. 10: Late chalcolithic (Godin VII) Red-Slipped ceramics of Saha Chai Tepe (Rahimi, 2010).

Conclusion

As noted above, Red-Slipped potteries began in the late Neolithic period and continued to exist until the end of the Chalcolithic. The Red-Slipped ceramic types of the aforementioned periods are so similar in some cases that it is not possible to correctly identify and distinguish them from each other. There are many cases in this regard in which pottery has not been correctly identified, and as a result, the chronology of a site has been mistaken. For this reason, the present study attempts to lead to a better understanding of the Red-Slipped pottery of each period by carefully

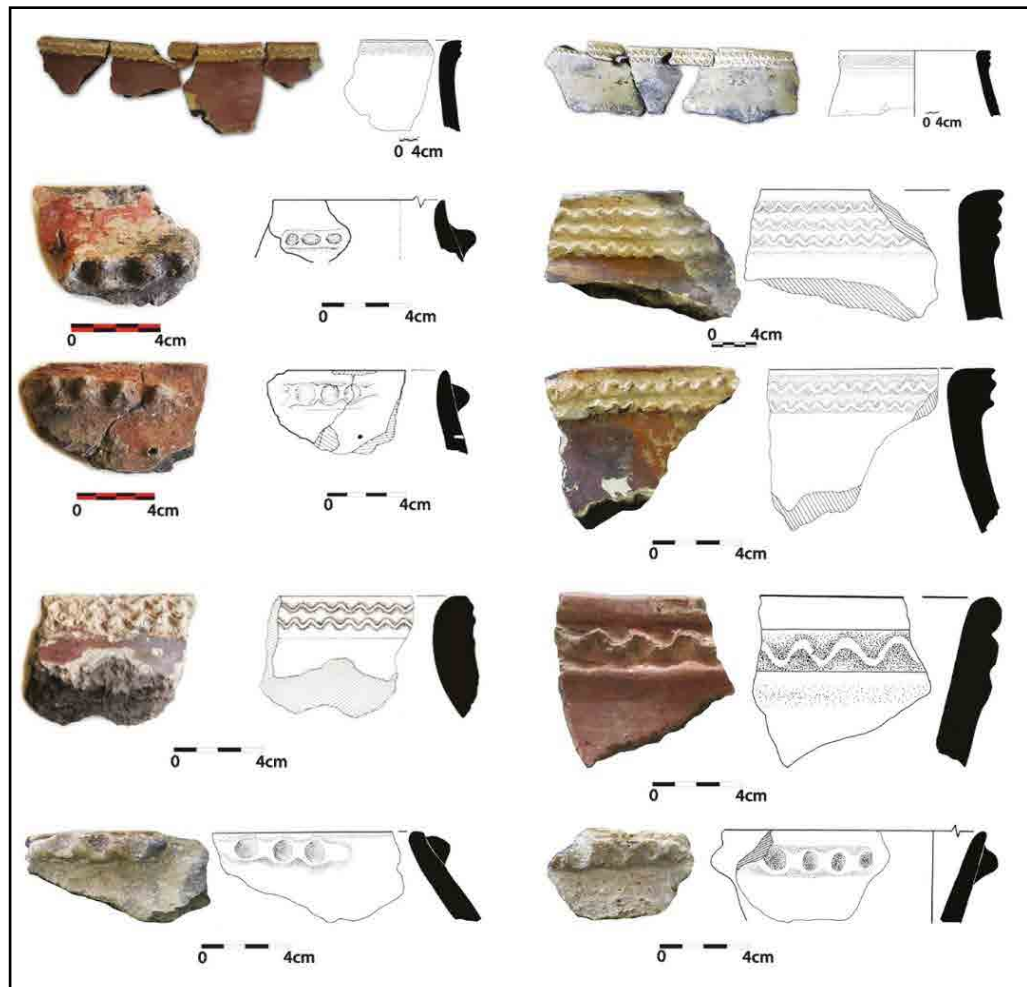


Fig. 11: Slipped (Salmon) and decorated Godin VII style of Tepe Geshlagh (Sharifi & Motarjem, 2018: Fig. 15).

examining the pottery obtained from the excavated sites of the Late Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods in western Iran. The oldest Red-Slipped potteries of western Iran in the Late Neolithic period has features that can be distinguished from pottery of later periods. The first case is about the limited forms of this pottery in this period. The most common form of Red-Slipped potteries of this period is plain bowls with a static (vertical) or convex wall. This is while in the later period, and especially in the Dalma and Late Chalcolithic period, different forms other than the aforementioned form have been reported. The next issue is related to the polished and shiny coating of the Red-Slipped potteries of the Neolithic period. This feature is not common in the Red-Slipped potteries of the J, Dalma and Seh Gabi periods, and there is less pottery found in this period that has a polished and shiny surface. However, in the early stage of the Late Chalcolithic (Godin VII), we witness the resurgence of the tradition of polishing and shining pottery. In addition, the red slip coating of the pottery of the Late Chalcolithic period (the early stages of this period) has become thicker again, the same as Late Neolithic and unlike the Dalma

and Seh Gabi periods. From this perspective, the red-slipped ceramics of the Late Neolithic period is very similar to the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Chalcolithic, especially the Godin VII type pottery, and at first glance, they are indistinguishable. In these cases, other evidence and data such as lithic can be helpful in distinguishing these two types of Red-Slipped potteries from each other. Undoubtedly, the tool-making techniques and the types of stone artifacts of the two periods are completely different. In addition, the presence of some decorations in the Godin VII pottery, especially on the rim and neck of the vessel, can help distinguish these two types. In addition, the temper of the Godin VII Red-Slipped potteries contains a combination of coarse sand particles with straw grains, a feature that is not seen in the pottery of the Late Neolithic period.

Returning to the study of these pottery in terms of chronological sequence from the Late Neolithic to the Chalcolithic period, investigation of pottery from the late Neolithic and early Chalcolithic periods (transitional Chalcolithic) does not show much difference between the Red-Slipped potteries of these two periods. Due to the small number of red-slipped pottery samples from this period, more cannot be said in this regard. But in the Chalcolithic period, more sites have been excavated and further information is available also. In the Early Chalcolithic period (Dalma), various forms of the Red-Slipped ceramics is recognized, which is a significant change from the previous period. Also, Dalma Red-Slipped ceramics are not burnished against Late Neolithic and Transitional Chalcolithic (J ware). Compared to the Late Neolithic period, a smaller percentage of the Dalma Red-Slipped potteries has incomplete firing and, as a result, has a dark core. It seems that the Red-Slipped potteries of the Early Chalcolithic (Dalma) periods is transferred to Middle Chalcolithic periods (Seh Gabi) without any specific changes. Therefore, the only way to distinguish the Red-Slipped potteries of the Dalma type from the Seh Gabi type in archaeological studies is the presence or absence of other pottery types of the mentioned periods. In other words, if other types of Dalma pottery (Dalma plain, Dalma painted, Dalma streaky, Dalma-Ubaid) or Black on Buff (BOB) of the Seh Gabi type are seen at the site surface, the Red-Slipped potteries on the site surface belongs to the Dalma or Seh Gabi period. But if both other types of pottery mentioned are present on the surface of the site along with the Red-Slipped potteries (both types of Dalma and black on buff pottery), then the Red-Slipped potteries of the Dalma and Seh Gabi type can only be identified if the site is excavated and placed in a recognizable layer. With the end of the Dalma and Seh Gabi periods and the beginning of the Late Chalcolithic period, we no longer witness this problem. Because in the Late Chalcolithic period, and especially the early phases of this

period, we witness the disappearing of the painted pottery of the Dalma and Seh Gabi types, and the Red-Slipped potteries alone begins to rule. The best way to identify the Red-Slipped potteries of the Late Chalcolithic period on the surface of the site is to pay attention to this issue. In addition, some other features, such as the presence of engraved decorations on the rim and neck of the vessel, plum(salmon)-colored coatings and core consisting of coarse particles of sand and straw, are only seen in the Late Chalcolithic periods (early stages), and the Red-Slipped potteries of the Dalma, Seh Gabi and the Late Neolithic period lack such features. Finally, these Red-Slipped ceramics came to cease after Godin VII period replaced by well fired buff and pale red ceramics of late 4th millennium b.c.

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Conflict of Interest

In adherence to ethical publication standards, the authors affirm that there are no conflicts of interest, either personal or financial, that could have influenced the content or conclusions presented in this research.

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سفال با پوشش قرمز در پیش‌ازتاریخ مناطق غرب ایران: بررسی توالی طولانی مدت از دوره نوسنگی جدید تا اواخر مس‌وسنگ

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چکیده

در پیش‌ازتاریخ مناطق غربی ایران از دوره نوسنگی جدید تا پایان دوره مس‌وسنگ سفال‌های با پوشش قرمز رنگی وجود دارند که باوجود تغییر دوره‌ها و به‌دنبال آن تغییر در سبک و سنت‌های سفالی، بدون تغییر با حداقل تغییرات به حیات خود ادامه می‌دهند. همین موضوع باعث بروز ابهامات و اشتباهاتی در تمیز دادن این گونه‌ها و در نتیجه تشخیص نادرست دوره‌های فرهنگی برخی محوطه‌های دوره نوسنگی جدید و به‌ویژه دوران مس‌وسنگ شده است. آیا به‌راستی سفال‌های با پوشش قرمز دوران نوسنگی جدید تا پایان مس‌وسنگ مناطق غرب ایران یک نوع سفال خاص است که باوجود شروع و پایان دوره‌های فرهنگی بدون هیچ‌گونه تغییراتی به حیات خود ادامه می‌دهند؟ سفال‌های با پوشش قرمز دوره نوسنگی جدید چه تفاوت‌هایی با سفال‌های دوران مس‌وسنگ دارند؟ عدم تمیز و تشخیص سفال‌های قرمز رنگ دوران نوسنگی و مس‌وسنگ از سوی برخی پژوهشگران، این فرض را ایجاد می‌کند که این نوع سفال‌های تفاوتی با هم ندارند. مقاله حاضر با روش تحلیلی-مقایسه‌ای سعی دارد که با بررسی از نزدیک سفال‌های قرمز به‌دست آمده از کاوش و بررسی برخی محوطه‌های شاخص دوران نوسنگی جدید و مس‌وسنگ مناطق غربی ایران مانند: سیاه‌بید، گنیل، قازانچی، سه‌چای تپه و تپه قشلاق به پرسش‌ها و فرضیات مطرح شده پاسخ دهد. نتایج این تحقیق نشان می‌دهد که هرچند شباهت‌های انکارناپذیری در نگاه اول بین سفال‌های قرمز دوران نوسنگی جدید تا پایان دوره مس‌وسنگ وجود دارد، اما تفاوت‌های ریز و جزئی در ارتباط با فرم سفال، میزان پخت، نوع آمیزه و نوع و رنگ پوشش وجود دارد که مطالعه دقیق آن باعث تمیز سفال‌های دوران یاد شده از هم خواهد شد. یافته‌های این تحقیق نشان می‌دهد که سفال‌های قرمز رنگ دوران نوسنگی جدید صیقلی و دارای پرداخت هستند، ویژگی که در دوران بعد و به‌ویژه دوره مس‌وسنگ قدیم دیده نمی‌شود. هم‌چنین در دوره مس‌وسنگ جدید علاوه بر تغییراتی در ارتباط با رنگ پوشش سفال، تزئینات کنده و برجسته‌ای بر بدنه بیرونی سفال‌های قرمز رنگ دیده می‌شوند که درمورد سفال‌های قرمز دوران قبل گزارش نشده است.

کلیدواژگان: سفال با پوشش قرمز، سه‌چای تپه، غرب ایران، نوسنگی جدید، مس‌وسنگ.

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