L’ORIENT EST SON JARDIN

HOMMAGE À RÉMY BOUCHARLAT

textes réunis par

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Abstract: Building No. 15 with its 2500 m² extension is one of the largest buildings at Dahaneh-ye Qolaman and it has been excavated from 2000 to 2004. During the excavations, remains of a square shaped structure were unearthed. The building consists of 36 long and narrow rooms located around a central courtyard, four parallel corridors inside the courtyard, thirteen platforms inside the rooms and smaller architectural elements scattered inside of them. Small objects are rare but a considerable number of pottery fragments, mainly Buff Ware of different shapes, have been found. Standard shape beakers are among the most interesting pottery vessels found here. The pottery of Building 15 is not painted but beakers are decorated with engraved human designs that have no parallel in other Achaemenid settlements.

Keywords: Dahaneh-ye Qolaman, Building 15, platform, terracotta columns, pottery, standard shape beakers.
Fig. 1: a. New structure found in stable/garrison? ; b. Palace E of Barzan Jounubi; c. Structure F of Barzan Jounubi, southern structures of Persepolis (Mohammadkhani 2014: fig. 8).
Fig. 2: a. Building No. 15 (Sajjadi 2007b); b. Altyn depe 10 (Sarianidi 1976: fig. 7); c. Northern Gonur, fire temple (Sarianidi 1998: fig. 65).
as kilns, ovens, grinding stones, platforms, basins, beakers of standard shape and measure, traces of oily material inclusions inside the platform and querns bring to mind the presence of a manufacturing structure to produce some kind of liquids probably to be used in Building No. 3 described by Scerrato as a sacred building (Scerrato 1966b: 16-18).

Up to now a total of ca. 1800 m² of the building has been excavated, revealing 30 rooms, 4 vestibules and 10 smaller spaces. Both rooms and vestibules are long and narrow. The average length of the rooms is 10 m with a width of 2.5-3.5 m. Platforms, benches, small and large basins, pits and larger storage spaces are the principal architectonical elements found in these rooms, together with a great number of querns, grinding stones, small terracotta columns and beakers as well as some metal and stone fragments of different objects. Among other finds, a number of clay seal impressions, a bronze arrowhead and some clay female figurines are items of great significance; in particular a clay female figurine found together with an iron blade is worth mentioning. They were near a mud-brick altar, maybe a fireplace, similar to the small sanctuary found in room No. 6 of Building No. 2 (Scerrato 1966a: fig. 40). The small altar of room No. 25 of Building No. 15 was used for the consecration of probable rituals happening in this building. In the same room were found fragments of wall paintings. The attribution of this probable altar consecrated to Anahita appears credible, particularly if we accept Scerrato’s idea that one of the altars of Building No. 3 was attributed to this goddess (Scerrato 1966b: 17).

All excavated rooms have direct access to the central courtyard of the building. The walls of room No. 1, located in the southwestern part of the building, have a thickness varying between 1 and 1.75 m and the roof is vaulted. On the northern part of this room is a circular basin excavated in the ground. It was filled with ash and its walls were heavily charred. Near the circular basin a number of buff-orange pottery beakers with potter’s marks were found.

At the southeastern corner of this room, two small and narrow walls form a smaller room measuring 1.75 x 1.75 m. Inside, small tubular shaped terracotta columns were placed in the ground at a regular distance, 20-25 cm one from each other.

Room No. 2 was probably one of the most interesting of this building. In this room there is a low platform 60 cm high, 6.70 m long and 1.70 m wide (Fig. 3b). On the northern and southern part of the platform there are series of small canals with low parallel walls, whose length and width are equal to an arm’s length. On the platform’s surface were scattered fragments of terracotta columns. The presence of different shaped quern fragments on the surface of the platforms, in this room and in the others, suggests that the platform was used for grinding seeds or other vegetal materials. In the entire building a total of thirteen platforms have been found that might suggest manufactory function for this construction.

At the southeastern corner of the central courtyard four narrow and long roofed corridors, 18 m long and 80 cm wide, have been unearthed (Fig. 2a in red circle). Their walls are 110 cm thick by 130-140 cm high and are built in three different layers. The base, beginning from the floor and about 50-60 cm high, is made by unbaked mud-bricks. The second layer is made by four row of small terracotta columns almost 30 cm high are fixed on the upper part of the base layer, at a distance of ca. 20 cm one from each other. The third layer, ca. 50-60 cm, made again by mud-bricks, is built on top of these columns (Fig. 3d). The terracotta columns have a uniform tubular shape. They are 23 to 30 cm high and they have inside a cavity ranging from 7 to 27 cm long (Sajjadi 2007b).

Generally a manufactory building is not decorated but, beside different small ornamental objects, traces of some wall painting and incised images have been found in room 25 and on the threshold between the rooms No. 23 and 24 (Sajjadi 2007b).

Pottery fragments are numerous on the site. Bowls and jars represent a great part of the pottery commonly found in the Dahaneh-ye Qolaman site, while there are other different forms such as vats, beakers, basin, strainers, dishes, trumpet vessels, footed vases and trays. About 96% of the above-mentioned pottery is wheel made and 2% is handmade or maybe molded; the production technique of the 2% remaining vessels is unknown. 90% of the samples were well fired, indicating the expertise of potters in controlling kiln temperature. The fabric of the pottery is generally very dense and porous bodies are rarely seen. More than 57% of the items had on the outer surface a thick slip. Sometimes the clay used for the body of vessels and for the slip is
Fig. 3: Building No. 15. a. Room No. 14. To the right hollow spaces for placement of querns; b. Room No. 2 and rows of places of querns; c. Entrance of corridors of cool storage; d. Reconstruction of one of corridors of cool storage (Sajjadi 2007a).
different. Buff is the most common color for the paste and slip and ranges through light buff, pink buff, brown buff, orange buff, green buff and yellow buff. Other colors of the surface of the vessels are orange, red, brown, pink, gray and black. Inorganic material such as white particles, small grains of calcite, colorless, golden and silver-color grains of mica, small sand particles and grit were used as temper. However, some samples with organic temper were found as well. Finally, in some cases temper is a combination of organic and inorganic materials.

Various shapes of pottery have been found in Building No. 15, such as bowls, large jars, small jar, strainers, vats, beakers, trays and footed vessels (Fig. 4).

After small jars, standard-shaped beakers are the most common form in Building No. 15. All beakers are wheel made and are characterized by a fast and careless production, shown by rough and irregular body surfaces. The slanted rims of the beakers are another effect of fast production: sometimes the height difference (bottom to lip) between the opposite points of the rim is almost one cm. Most of the beakers are slipped both on the inner and the outer surface. The outer color of beakers ranged through 16 shades of buff color. The beakers of this building can be divided into two groups: plain and decorated. One uniform style is used for the decoration of the second group and it consists of incised anthropomorphic designs. Decorative designs of few vessels remain undefined.

Beakers of Dahaneh-ye Qolaman are locally made. Our evidences include:
- Uniformity in the production of beakers with the following characteristics, very uncommon for the region: statistics show that beakers were produced according to standard measurements, namely height 10 - 14.5 cm and a diameter of the mouth of 5.5 - 8 cm. Almost 50% of the beakers are an orange-buff color (5YR 6/6) and approximately 80% of their external surface is slipped. Less than half of the internal surface of the beakers is buff (7.5YR 7/4) and the exterior surface of almost one-third of the beakers is light buff (7.5YR 8/2-3). External and internal surfaces of almost 50% of the beakers are different in color from each other.
Fig. 5: Samples of different types of pottery vessels from Building No. 15. 1-5 carinated bowls; 6: deep bowl; 7-11: pots; 12: cylindrical footed jar; 13-14: small pots; 15: small cylindrical jar.

Comparisons are the following: 5.1. Nad-i Ali (Dales 1977: pl. 19, No. 12), Persepolis Plain (Sumner 1986: fig. III 1/L); 5.2. Nad-i Ali (Dales 1977: pl. 19, No. 12), Persepolis Plain (Sumner 1986: fig. III 1/L); 5.3. Persepolis Plain (Sumner 1986: fig. III 1/H), Persepolis (Schmidt 1957: pl. 72/3); 5.4. Nad-i Ali (Dales 1977: pl. 19, No. 12), Ville Royale of Susa II (Miroschedji 1987: fig. 7, No. 12), Godin II (Gopnik, 2000: pl. 4/72), Persepolis Plain (Sumner 1986: fig. III 1/L); 5.5. Susa (Boucharlat & Khatib Shahidi 1987: fig. 57/1), Nad-i Ali (Dales 1977: pl. 19, No. 12), Persepolis Plain (Sumner 1986: fig. III 1/L); 5.6 Susa (Boucharlat & Khatib Shahidi 1987: fig. 74/6), Charsada (Wheeler 1962: fig. 17, No. 65), Qaleh Kali (Potts et al. 2009: pl. 9/ QKC 1018); 5.7. Ville Royale of Susa II (Miroschedji 1987: fig. 7, No. 7), Ulug Depe (Boucharlat et al. 2005: fig. 15), Kandahar (Fleming 1996: fig. 269/13); 5.8. Hasanlu III (Dyson 1999: fig. 2/e); 5.9. Persepolis Plain (Atai 2004: pl. 40, No. 4); 5.10. Tol-e Spid (Petrie et al. 2006: fig. 4.106, TS 325), Tepe Yahya (Lamberg-Karlovsky 1970: fig. 8/B); 5.11. Susa (Boucharlat & Khatib Shahidi 1987: fig. 56/7), Tol-e Spid (Petrie et al. 2006, fig. 4.95, TS 440), Chogha Mish (Delougaz & Kantor 1996: pl. 75), Agrab Tepe (Muscarella 1973: fig. 16, No. 12); 5.12. Ville Royale of Susa II (Miroschedji 1987: fig. 12, No. 8); 5.14. Tol-e Spid (Petrie et al. 2006: fig. 4.106, TS 310) (Zehbari et al. 2014).

Fig. 6: Samples of different types of pottery vessels from Building No. 15. Nos. 16-17: large jars; 18-20 vats; 21: strainer; 22-33: beakers.5

Lack of handmade ware testifies to the existence of a certain norm for beaker production. In addition, beakers are the only type of vessel to be manufactured completely by wheel, while other shapes are made by a combination of hand and wheel technique.

Approximately 25% of the beakers are grooved. It is noticeable that string-cutting impressions on the base of beakers are well visible. Although this technique has been seen in other shapes (Zehbari et al., in press: fig. 11/A), it is more common in beakers.

There are a considerable number of finger and hand impressions on their surfaces.

A number of waste overfired fragments are scattered on the surface of the site while there are no traces of pottery kiln on the surface of the site or in the excavations.

Typological comparison shows that the beakers of Dahaneh-ye Qolaman are not reported from other contemporary sites⁶, not even from Nad-i Ali, the closest site of the Achaemenid period. (Ghirshman 1959; Dales 1977).

About 10% of the other pottery type of Building No. 15 is decorated, compared to 90% of plain ware vessels. Among decorated vessels, 75% is incised; therefore this was the favorite style of decoration. The main patterns used were geometric and naturalistic motives that seem to reproduce anthropomorphic figures, but these motifs are very abstract and could be interpreted in a different manner (Fig. 6.27, 6.29-30). These possible reproductions of the human body are designed without details; the legs are omitted while hands in the greatest majority of the cases are down. Some of the motifs are not distinguishable. The designs are not very carefully carved and do not seem to be drawn by professional artists, but probably by the potter himself (Zehbari 2012: 70). More than 90% of them are incised on the outer surface of vases and only 7% of them are on the inner surface of open mouth vessels, like bowls. An exceptional case is one design on the base of a large jar which finds parallel in Nad-i Ali (Ghirshman 1959: fig. G5). These anthropomorphic motifs can be seen on various seal impressions of Dahaneh-ye Qolaman as well (Sajjadi & Saber Moghadam 2003: fig. 12).

Other common vessels in the building 15 are carinated and lidded bowls, that are reported since first millennium B.C. Eggshell and “breast-shape” bowl ware are also present. Typological comparisons reveal that at Dahaneh-ye Qolaman the tulip-shaped bowls, usually considered as one of the typical pottery vessels of Achaemenid period, are rare.

Dahaneh-ye Qolaman is one of the Achaemenid sites with a rather large pottery collection. An in-depth study of the ceramics of this city can be one of the ways to resolve the questions regarding the pottery of the second half of the first millennium in southeast Iran and adjacent territories.

Bibliography


⁶ Examined sites are Pasargadae (Strochan 1978), Persepolis (Schmidt 1957), Persepolis fortification (Atai 2004), Tol-e Spid (Petrie et al. 2006), Tol-e Nurabad (Weeks et al. 2006), Qale Kali (Potts et al. 2009), Godin II (Gopnik 2000), Hasanlu IIIa (Dyson 1999), the Ville Royale of Susa II (Miroshchidji 1987), Chogha Mish (Delougaz & Kantor 1996; Alizadeh 2008), Myanab plain (Atai 2005), Yahya (Lamberg-Karlofksy & Magee 2004), Qandahar (Fleming 1996), Akra (Magee et al. 2005), Charsada (Wheeler 1962), Balambat (Dittmann 1984), Cimin Tepe II (Summers 1993).


DAHANEH-YE QOLAMAN: BUILDING NUMBER 15


