AN EARLY BRONZE AGE TOMB
NEAR KHORRAMABAD (W-IRAN)
HERZFELD’S GILVIRAN REVISITED

BY
Ernie HAERINCK* & Bruno OVERLAET**
(*Ghent University; **Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels)

Abstract: Ernst Herzfeld made mention of the discovery in 1928 of a Bronze Age tomb at Gilviran, some 5 km from Khorramabad in Luristan. He discussed the site briefly and illustrated some of the finds; two of the bronze vases were later acquired by the British Museum. Since it was one of the few tombs in Pish-i Kuh, Luristan on which some reliable information was known, the Gilviran discovery is mentioned in most studies on Luristan. Nevertheless, little more than a description and a few illustrations of some of the finds were available. A more complete picture of the Gilviran tomb is now presented based on Herzfeld’s original notes and the identification of a preserved section of the tomb on the outskirts of present day Khorramabad.

Keywords: Bronze Age tomb, Ernst Herzfeld, Gilviran, Gilweran, Khorramabad, Luristan, Iran

In 1928 Ernst Herzfeld accompanied Reza Shah Pahlavi on his trip between Borudjird, Khorramabad and Khuzistan. On 16 November 1928 the party left at 7 o’clock Pul-i Zal, to the North of Andimeshk, reached Pul-i Dokhtar (Herzfeld 1929/30: Taf. IX, bottom) some 100 km South of Khorramabad by 9:30, Pul-i Kalhur (Herzfeld 1929/30: Taf. IX, top) by 11:45 and eventually arrived at Khorramabad by 1:35 in the afternoon (Pl. 8). It was probably the same day that Ernst Herzfeld paid a visit to the site of Gilviran where a megalithic tomb had been accidentally discovered. It is unknown when exactly this discovery took place, but since it was set in a slope bordering the road it was probably exposed by erosion or stumbled upon during roadwork.

Herzfeld reported on Gilviran in his article “Bericht über archäologische Beobachtungen im südlichen Kurdistan und in Luristan” (Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran I, 1929/30: particularly pp. 70-71, Taf. VI & VII). Later he also mentioned the site and provided illustrations of two
bronze vessels in his “Iran and the Ancient East” (Herzfeld 1941: 114, fig. 226, Pl. XXV). These two decorated bronze vessels with long open spout remained in Herzfeld’s possession and were eventually acquired by the British Museum in 1936. Calmeyer discussed the two vessels together with several similar specimens in his groundbreaking “Datierbare Bronzen aus Luristan und Kirmanshah” and called the type “Schnabeltöpfe vom Typ Gilviran” (Calmeyer 1969: 14-17, Abb. 10-14), a label still in use for this type of vessel (see Müller-Karpe 1993: 27).

Although Gilviran could only be vaguely located and only a small selection of the finds was known, the rarity of first hand information on Luristan and the exceptional quality of the bronze vessels explain why the site remains a key reference in Luristan research (Vanden Berghe 1959: 87; Nagel 1964: 18, 93-102, Taf. 70, 4-5; Calmeyer 1968; 1969: 14-17, Abb. 10-14; Goff 1971: 147, fig. 8; Hennessy 1993: 133; Belleli 2002: 15-16, 8). It is, however, now possible to gain a much more complete and accurate picture of the Gilviran tomb using Herzfeld’s original notes and sketchbooks. Furthermore, Herzfeld’s unpublished drawing of the tomb allowed us to identify what is left of the actual tomb during our survey in Luristan in September 2003.

Although he does not specifically state it in his report, it seems likely that Herzfeld arrived at the Gilviran Bronze Age tomb shortly after it had been discovered and that the excavation had already started or had even been finished. Emptying a 5.20 m long corridor shaped tomb of 1.20-1.50 m wide and 1.50-1.80 m high takes time and Herzfeld only passed through Khorramabad, probably staying just one night. His diary states that he arrived in Khorramabad at 13:35 on November 16 and all the entries on the tomb and all drawings are listed under this date. Furthermore, his trip

---

1 Herzfeld’s notes and sketchbooks are kept at the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. For a survey see Hennessy 1993. An online inventory and research tool is available at: http://www.asia.si.edu/archives/finding_aids/herzfeld.html. The relevant pages for Gilviran are: Travel Journals N-47 pages 57-62 / Sketchbooks – SK-XI Pasargadae III, 1928 pages 44-47 / Drawings and Maps [1903-1947], drawing N° D-680 / Subseries 4.1.2: Vol. 2 Print N° 19 / Photo File 3 “Pre-Achaemenian Objects” – Image N° 98-104. The site is mentioned in the files as Gilweran-Khurramabad, Gilviran, Gilweran, Gilwerān or Gilwerān. We are indebted to Dr. Ann Gunter, Mrs Linda M. Raditz, Mr. David Hogge, Mrs. Betsy Kohut and the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives for assistance in locating and obtaining the documents and permission to reproduce them in the present paper.
with Reza Shah had ended by November 19 (the journal bears the caption “Trip to Khurramābād and Ahwaz”. 1928 October 25–November 19). This idea is further confirmed by the lack of precision in Herzfeld’s notes, which stands in contradiction with his usual practice. Herzfeld does not mention anything about the original location of the finds in the tomb; he

Fig. 1. Herzfeld’s sketch of the Gilviran tomb
only provides sketches of the tomb and of a selection of the finds. He did not know the exact number of small pottery vessels and includes some hearsay in his comments (small vessels were said to have contained grain “kleinerer Töpfe, in denen Überbleibsel von Korn gewesen sein sollen” Herzfeld 1929/30: 70). He also wrote that the burial contained several inhumations, but that he could “no longer” see bones (“mehrere gleichzeitige Beisetzung, aber Knochenreste habe ich nicht mehr beobachtet”), a remark that further supports the idea that he was not present when the tomb was emptied.

Herzfeld stated that the tomb was situated along the “old” road, which is still in use for traffic going from Khorramabad to Kuh-i Dasht, to the West. He placed Gilviran at approx. 4 to 5 km from Khorramabad. Due to the expansion of the city it is now much closer to the western part but it is ca. 5 km in a straight line from the dominant Falak-o Aflak castle in the centre of town (Pl. 1). On Google Earth the grave can be plotted at 33°27’47.93” N and 48°18’06.77” E. The tomb is located on the lower slopes of Yafteh Mountain, in the prolongation of Kuh-i Sefid, some 3.6 km to the NNE of Khorramabad airport. The grave can now be seen in a steep bank at some two meters above the present day level of the road. The site is locally referred to as “Sarab-i Nilufar” (information provided by Mirath-i Ferhengi, Khorramabad), which is to be translated as “Spring of the water-lily”. Nenuphars or water-lilies have always been abundant in this area as appears from Jacques de Morgan’s travel journal: “Enfin, le lendemain tout étant prêt, ma caravane s’ébranlait vers dix heures du matin, sortait de la ville (de Khorramabad) et s’allongeait en un long ruban entre Tâfta-Kouh, montagne abrupte d’une grande hauteur et les ruisseaux remplis de nénuphars,...” (Jaunay 1997: 444). There are no other Bronze Age remains visible in the immediate vicinity but there is a circular tepe (base approx. 120 m in diam.) some 2.4 km to the ESE (Pl. 1; 7). The mound was recorded by Claire Goff who identified it as a site with a Giyan IV-II occupation (Goff 1971: 147, fig. 8).

The Gilviran tomb is of the “pitched roof type”, basically a corridor shaped tomb built with large stones and covered with pitched capstones. When Herzfeld saw it in 1928, it was still completely preserved. His sketch shows that only the tip of the roof was exposed (Fig. 1, Pl. 9) and the tomb must have been entered from that point possibly by removing one or two stones from the upper short side. The drawing shows that only two stones remained on the short side, on the same level as the vertical side walls. The
side walls were each made of 8 large upright standing stone slabs. At what was considered to be the rear end of the tomb he observed no stones. This was confirmed during our visit and one could wonder whether this side may have been the original entrance. Eventual stones at that side may of course also have been removed at some later stage, e.g. when an additional inhumation took place. It can not be excluded that the tomb is in fact longer and that the rear part of it remained unexcavated.

When seen by Herzfeld the total length was 17 feet (approx. 5.20 m), with a width between four and five feet (approx. 1.20 to 1.50 m) and a height of 5 to 6 feet (approx. 1.50 to 1.80 m). By the time we visited the site in 2003, 75 years after Herzfeld, half of the tomb-structure had disappeared. The road was widened and the adjoining slope cut away, effectively removing the front half of the tomb. Only four of the eighth wall-stones of the sides are still preserved, but the roof of this half with some smaller filling stones remains intact. It is not excluded that more tombs are to be found on this mountain slope since usually such large Early Bronze Age tombs appear in clusters (see e.g. Bani Surmah and Kalleh Nisar in Pusht-i Kuh: Haerinck & Overlaet 2006 & 2008). Tombs with pitched roofs are mainly to be found to the East of the Kabir Kuh (e.g. Mir Khair & Dar Tanha in Pusht-i Kuh), but mainly in the Pish-i Kuh, south of Khorramabad (e.g. Tepe Jarali, Kamtarlan, Mir Vali, Gar Zore, see Goff 1971: 146; Thrane 1965: 165-167, fig. 10, 12-13; Vanden Berghe 1979: 42-44; Schmidt, Van Loon & Curvers 1989: Pl. 8, 13, 19, 24; Haerinck 2011: Pl. 17). Similar tombs of mid 2nd millennium date are also to be found at e.g. Lama Cemetery, near Yasuy, in Kohgilouye va Boyerahmad, further South in the Zagros (Rezvani, Roustaei, Azadi & Ghezelbash 2007: fig. 18, 25, 31, 35; Pl. 57, 61, 63, 64, 71, 80).

Up to now, little was known about the burial goods from Gilviran. Herzfeld only published photographs of the two bronze vessels and a comment on the other burial goods from the Gilviran tomb. In the following survey of respectively the pottery, the stone and the metal artefacts his comments are linked to his original drawings and notes.

**Pottery**

Herzfeld’s report (1929/30: 70) stated that there were 15 large jars of which he recovered only two. Furthermore there were an unknown number of smaller vessels (supposed to have contained grain) of which he recovered
four. The remainder had all disappeared. He continues to describe the pottery as being of various shapes and techniques: there were monochrome and bichrome vessels and pottery with “a relief decoration that he had not observed in the region of Nehavand”. Herzfeld also mentions a jug (infra Cer. 2) that was “fully identical” to one from Susa II.

In his notes Herzfeld documented these 6 pottery vessels and photos of three of them were present in his files. Most of the drawings are only sketches with a very short description and sometimes with an indication of measurements.

**Cer. 1.** (Pl. 10, 18). Deep unpainted bowl with incised lines (no measurements given but note the scale on Pl. 18). It can be compared to a vessel from Qabr Nahi tomb 3 n° 21 (Abdan region, Pusht-i Kuh: unpublished: Haerinck & Overlaet forthcoming: Pl. 73 n° 21), a large communal tomb attributed to Early Dynastic II and III(A). It contained polychrome and monochrome wares (for the types see Haerinck 2011: Pl. 5 & 6, 12), as well as sherds and bases with rope decorations. The latter type of vessels can be compared to Susa Ville Royale I (Carter 1980: 63, fig. 16-7, level 14; 81-84, figs. 25-27, levels 12 to 9), as well as to Godin III:6 pottery (Henrickson 1987: 44, 91, fig. 9 n° 2).

**Cer. 2.** (Pl. 10). Painted jar with tubular spout, which Herzfeld describes as handmade (no dimensions given). This monochrome painted vessel is perfectly comparable to Godin III:6 pottery, that can broadly be dated to Early Dynastic IIIA (Henrickson 1987: fig. 4-8; Haerinck 2011: 73-78).
Herzfeld stated the vessel was identical to one from Susa II (here fig. 3; Pottier 1912: Pl. XXV, 7.) A second one from Susa was discovered in a tomb together with a bronze axe, mirror and dressing case (de Mecquenem 1943: Tomb 319, p. 103, fig. 72:26). Another similar spouted vessel was excavated at Mirvali in Rumishgan (fig. 3; Schmidt, van Loon & Curvers 1989: Pl. 86b-c; Haerinck 2011: Pl. 13 n° 8).

Cer. 3. (Pl. 10). Jar with carinated shoulder and rounded base, painted red and black (no dimensions given). The vessel may be comparable to vessels from Susa Db (Le Breton 1957: fig. 35), Mirvali (Tomb 4, MV 29; Schmidt, van Loon & Curvers 1989: Pl. 81-l), Kish (Y-Friedhof/Wagengrab III, see Müller-Karpe 1993: Taf. 147: 2nd object left on bottom row) or Ahmad al-Hattu (Eickhoff 1993: Abb. 39 n° 39-46). The type was seemingly long living.

Cer. 4-5. (Pl. 11, 16, 17). Large unpainted jars with vertical ribs as decorations on the shoulder; a double ridge on transition from neck to shoulder; a single ridge on transition from neck to body (H. 42 cm / 43.5 cm). The shape is comparable to the so called “Mussian” painted vessels from the Deh Luran-Abdanan-Rumishgan area, which were produced for several centuries in the first half of the 3rd millennium (Haerinck 2011: 63-66, Pl. 5:5,7,8; Pl. 6-7, Pl. 9:1). Lime deposit on some of the vessels might hide painted decoration. As already said, E. Herzfeld stated that this type of vessel was not recovered in the region of Nehavand. Seemingly, this type of decoration (for a discussion on the type of rib-decoration:
see Haerinck 2011: 63-66, Pl. 5-9) is mainly to be found between Deh Luran & Abadan and in the Pish-i Kuh, up to the area of Khorramabad. This coincides largely with the distribution of the pitched roof type of burial (however, the tombs in the Abdan region have a flat roof).

**Cer. 6.** (Pl. 12, 18). Another unpainted jar has a ridge on the transition from neck to shoulder and a carination at the transition from shoulder to body. H. 37 cm (at Susa: Gautier & Lampre 1905: Pl. VII; Carter 1987: 77, fig. 2; compare also to painted vessels at Mirvali: Schmidt, van Loon & Curvers 1989: Pl. 90; and Godin Tepe: Henrickson 1987: fig. 8 / Haerinck 2011: Pl. 13 n° 7 = Godin III:6; and also to Pusht-i Qaleh Abdanan: Haerinck 2011: Pl. 6 n° 1),

**Stone Artefacts**

**Stone 1. Alabaster vessels** (Pl. 16).

Herzfeld mentions to have seen “drei flache kleine Alabasterschalen urtümlicher Form und Technik die verschwunden sind”, three small low bowls of alabaster (Herzfeld 1929/30: 70). He was not able to retrieve them but he did make a sketch of one of them (Pl. 16). It is a very simple low bowl with a flat base, a diameter of approx. 9 cm and a height of 4 cm.

**Stone 2. Agate beads** (Pl. 16).

On Pl. 16 there are sketches of two agate beads, unfortunately without measurements, which Herzfeld described as “… einige schöne grosse Achat-Platten und doppelkonische Perlen, wie in Nihawand und wie die grossen Lapis-Perlen der Königliche Gräber von Ur” (Herzfeld 1929/30: 70). What Herzfeld called “large agate plates” are flat beads; the longitudinal perforation is clearly indicated on the drawing. Similar beads are present at numerous Early Bronze Age sites. Several such beads were discovered at Susa, including in tomb A322, in association with one of the wagons that can be dated to Early Dynastic III B (de Mecquenem 1943: 103, fig. 84:6; Tallon 1987: vol. I, 297, Vol. II, 114-115, 315, 317, nr. 1164 and 1172). Others were excavated at Shahdad’s cemetery A, dating from the second half of the 3rd millennium (Hakemi 1997, 328, 655, nrs. Ha.17 and 18). The second sketch shows what seems to be half of a large biconical or rounded bead.
Large agate biconical or rounded beads are common finds in tombs of Iran and Mesopotamia, particularly during the Early Dynastic II/III and Akkadian periods. They have been found in Luristan Bronze Age tombs at Nurabad (1 bead; Sajjadi & Samani 1999: Pl. 22:4), Kalleh Nisar (4 beads; Haerinck & Overlaet 2008: 52-57, fig. 27B, Pl. 72), Bani Surmah (1 bead; Haerinck & Overlaet 2006: 55-60, fig. 29B, Pl. 72) and Takht-i Khan Tomb 2 n° 29 (Haerinck & Overlaet forthcoming).

Metal Artefacts

Herzfeld mentions bronze (or more accurately copper alloy) spearheads, arrowheads, gauges and chisels, an axe head and two spouted vessels. He was able to acquire both vessels and these are the only metal artefacts that were documented in more detail and with photographs. Both vessels are currently in the British Museum.

Met. 1-3. bronze spearheads and arrowheads (Pl. 16).

The notes on the drawings identify them as a “spear” (Lanze), a “javelin” (Wurfspeer) and an “arrow” (Pfeil), identifications apparently based on their size. There are, however, no exact measurements indicated. Blades that could be used for daggers, spears or javelins are very common in the Early Bronze Age tombs in the Pusht-i Kuh but they generally have perforations in the tang for rivets (Haerinck & Overlaet 2006: 30-33, fig. 13-14; 2008: 33-35, fig. 14; 2010: 19-20, 128-132, fig. 9, fig. 33-35). Since Herzfeld only made a rough sketch of the uncleaned objects, it is now impossible to ascertain the presence or absence of rivet perforations. It remains tentative to go beyond the general observation that tanged blades were a common feature in the Early Bronze Age tombs in Luristan. This is, however, not the case for the arrowhead, a type of object that is not attested in any of the EBA tombs from the Pusht-i Kuh. They are, however, occasionally found in Middle Bronze Age tombs, e.g. at Nurabad (Sajjadi & Samani 1999: Pl. 17) and Tepe Guran (Thrane 2001: Pl. 9) and are very common in the Early Iron Age tombs (Overlaet 2003: 172-179, fig. 140-145, 184). The presence of an arrowhead may be an indication for a later re-use of the tomb, assuming the item was indeed part of the tomb’s content. Since Herzfeld was apparently shown a number of the objects as from the tomb — without actually witnessing their unearthing — one must remain prudent on this point.
Met. 4. Bronze axe head (fig. 4; Pl. 16).

The copper alloy axe head is of an unusual type. The short socket has strengthening mouldings at its top and bottom and is positioned below the upper edge of the blade. The blade itself is straight and keeps the same height to the nearly vertical cutting edge. There is no direct parallel for this type of axe head but it can be compared to a group of axe heads with sockets that are cut away at both top and bottom and with a protuberance on the butt because of the positioning of its blade versus the socket (Fig. 4 right). Some of these axe heads are lavishly decorated with lions on the blade or socket and the blade is sometimes slightly tilted downwards. A plain specimen was discovered at Susa (Tallon 1987, vol. I, 93 sous-type C1, vol. II, 148 nr. 68) and several others are claimed to come from Luristan. The group can be dated to the late third millennium and early second millennium (Calmeyer 1969: 39-41, Abb. 40-42; Muscarella 1988: 388-389, nr. 514). The Gilviran axe head with its plain socket and horizontal blade is of a much simpler, less developed shape, however. It is likely to predate the group and a mid third millennium date could be tentatively ascribed to it.

Met. 5. Bronze gouges and chisels (fig. 5; Pl. 16).

Herzfeld mentions in his report bronze “Bohrer und Meissel”, what would have to be translated as “drills and chisels”. However, from his sketch it appears that his “Bohrer” are in fact gouges or wood chisels. His “Meissel” or chisels are not illustrated but are most likely to be chisels with a straight cutting edge, in contrast with the rounded cutting edge of
the gouge. There are two main groups of chisels, those with a flat/rectangular and those with a square cross-section. Again it is impossible to know which type Herzfeld saw but both types are well documented in Early Bronze Age I-III tombs of the Pusht-i Kuh region in Luristan, i.e. tombs dating from the early and mid third millennium. They were discovered at Mir Khair, Dar Tanha, Cheshmeh Takht-i Khan, Mehr War Kabud and Bani Surmah, often in combination with a bronze saw (Vanden Berghe 1979: 28-30, fig. 18, Pl. X1a; Haerinck & Overlaet 2006: 32-35, fig. 15, Pl. 11, 13, 41; 2010: 22-23, fig. 10, Pl. 2-3, 23, VIII). Most of the Luristan tombs were disturbed but in Bani Surmah tomb A2 there was a set of six bronze chisels and a saw that compared to a gold set from the “royal” tomb of Pu-Abi in Ur (Woolley 1934: 81, 309, 556, Pl. 158) and to a bronze set from Tell Gubba (Fujii 1981: fig. 23, Pl. 14). It is thus not surprising that Herzfeld spoke in plural and several chisels and gouges must have been among the burial goods.

Herzfeld’s drawing of the gouge is fairly detailed, although measurements are lacking. The hollowed-out tip is about 1/3rd to 1/4th of the total length and a small part at the back where the handle fitted on is delineated. Whereas chisels are well documented, gouges seem to be much more rare in these sets of utensils. A gouge was found in an Early Dynastic/Akkadian grave at Tell Khazne in Jordan (Munchaev, Merpert & Bader 1990: 12, fig. 4); another found at Susa was published by de Mecquenem as from the Ur III level of the Donjon, possibly also from a tomb (de Mecquenem 1934: 232, fig. 81:2; Tallon 1987: vol. I, 171). Several others were
discovered at Susa but for these a more exact provenance is unknown (Tallon 1987: vol. I, 170-171, vol. II, 53, 225, nr. 515-521). At other sites gouges were found in various hoards or deposits, e.g. at Byblos, Tell Taya, Ur and Tell Brak (for extensive references see McDonald, Curtis & Maxwell-Hyslop 2001: 239, 568-569, Fig. 252).

_Met. 6-7. Bronze spouted vessels_

Herzfeld acquired the two copper alloy vessels from the tomb and sold them in 1936 as part of a large collection of antiquities to the British Museum. He reproduced photographs in his original report and later in his general book on Iran (Herzfeld 1929/30: 70-71, Taf. VI-VII; 1941: 114, fig. 226, Pl. XXV).

_Spouted vase with globular body_ (fig. 6; Pl. 12-13, 15 & 19).

British Museum Inv. BM.128804 (1936,0613.199)
Height 12.5 cm (without spout) / Diam. rim 12.5 cm / Diam. base 4 cm.
Hammered sheet metal; engraved decoration

Fig. 6. Spouted vase with globular body from Gilviran (after Bellelli 2002: Tav. 28, nr. 160 - a pair of lightly engraved concentric lines around the base, mentioned on the BM collection database website, is not indicated on the drawing).
Spouted vase with cylindrical body (fig. 7, Pl. 13, 14 & 20).

British Museum Inv. BM.128600 (1936,0613.200)
Height 13.5 cm (without spout) / Diam. rim 9.3 cm / Diam. base 8.8 cm.
Hammered sheet metal; repoussé with engraved and punched decoration

Peter Calmeyer discussed both vases in his “Datierbare Bronzen aus Luristan und Kirmanshah” in which he tried to date the many unprovenanced Luristan bronzes using excavated comparisons. He assembled a series of 11 such vessels, 5 strays and 6 “excavated” and called them “Schnabeltöpfe vom Typ Gilviran” (Calmeyer 1969: 14-17, Abb. 10-14). He distinguished two subgroups, represented by the two specimens from Gilviran.

The spouted vases with globular body and a concave rim are well attested at Susa throughout the Early Dynastic periods. Their analysis confirmed that body and spout were hammered from a single copper alloy sheet (Tallon 1987: vol. I, 216, variante E3b, vol. II, 280, nr. 780-783). A parallel from Ur can be dated to the Early Dynastic III period (tomb PG.560: Müller-Karpe 1993: 27, Taf. 8 nr. 38 “variante 3IIa”). The Gilviran vessel is the only one of this sub-type which bears a more extensive decoration beyond simple horizontal lines.
The spouted vase with its cylindrical body is with four specimens well attested at Susa in an Early Dynastic III context (Tallon 1987: vol. I, 216-218, fig. 24). One of them is decorated with hammered and engraved pendent tufts (fig. 8; de Mecquenem 1924: 114, fig. 8; Amiet 1966: 208, fig. 154; Tallon 1987: vol. I, 217, fig. 24). Other “Luristan” vessels with this decoration are present in various collections (Calmeyer 1969: 14-15, nr. 5E, Abb. 11). Undecorated specimens were discovered in tombs from the A-cemetery at Shahdad, dating from the second half of the third...
millennium (Hakemi 1997: 630-631, Group Gf). Others are said to come from Bactria (Amiet 1986: 313, ill. 161). Several unprovenanced vessels claimed to come from Luristan bear “snakes” on the side (fig. 8; Calmeyer 1969: 14-15, nr. 5C-D-F, Abb. 12; Gubel & Overlaet, ed., 2007: 122-123, nr. 142). Peculiar with these vessels and probably indicating a unique workshop, is the strange phenomenon that the “intertwined and confronted snakes” are in fact a “snake” with two heads intertwined with a headless “snake” with two tails. One such vessel was excavated at Tello (fig. 8) (for extensive references see Müller-Karpe 1993: 28, Taf. 8-9 nr. 39 “variante 3IIb”).

Conclusion

Herzfeld’s presence at the excavation of the Early Bronze Age tomb at Gilviran remains problematic. His notes and sketches suggest that he not really witnessed the discovery. It seems most likely that he arrived at the site shortly after the tomb’s discovery, at the earliest during but most probably after the actual excavation. He was shown a selection of the burial goods, was able to acquire some of these and only had time to summarily sketch a few others. His information on the Gilviran tomb is thus certainly not complete but nevertheless, he presents a group of objects that — with the exception of a single arrowhead — fit well into the pattern we are familiar with from other Early Bronze Age tombs in Luristan. Proposing a date for the Gilviran tomb and the burial goods remains difficult. Such tombs were communal and were often used during many centuries, some of the Pusht-i Kuh tombs were even occasionally re-used after more than a millennium. With every re-use, objects could be displaced, burial goods could be mingled or items could simply be removed from the tomb and discarded. Without a precise plan of the finds in the tomb — something which is lacking — it is impossible to link individual objects to one another. The experience with the Pusht-i Kuh tombs demonstrated that even then it is only rarely possible to reconstruct individual interments within these Bronze Age communal tombs. Still, some general observations on Gilviran are possible. The pitched tomb type as well as the ribbing on some of the jars is characteristic for the area of the eastern Pusht-i Kuh and the Pish-i Kuh, up to the region of Khorammabad. The construction as well as most of the burial goods suggests that the tomb — and at least some of the interments — must be dated between 2700 and 2400 BC.
References


—, 1943. *Fouilles de Suse, 1933-1939, Mémoires de la Mission Archéologique en Iran* XXIX: 4-161.


—, forthcoming. *Early Bronze Age sites to the East, Southeast and North of the Kabir Kuh. Bronze Age Sites in Mishkas, Abadan, Badr and Shirvan–Char daval Regions (Luristan, Pusht-i Kuh) (=Luristan Excavation Documents IX)*.


NAGEL, W., 1964. *Djamdat Nasr-Kulturen und frühdynamische Buntkeramiker (= Berliner Jahrbuch für Vor- und Frühgeschichte vol. 8)*, Berlin.


Pl. 1. Top: Google Earth view of the Khorramabad area with the location of the Gilviran tomb, a tepe and Falak-o Aflak castle in the centre of town.
Bottom: detail with the location of the Gilviran tomb.
Pl. 2. The steep bank next to the road to Khorramabad with the remaining half of the Gilviran tomb. (photo by the authors Sept. 2003).
Pl. 3. Top: The steep bank next to the road to Khorramabad with the remaining half of the Gilviran tomb. Bottom: view towards Khorramabad from the slope above the tomb. (photo by the authors Sept. 2003).
Pl. 4. The authors at the remaining half of the Gilviran tomb.
(photo by the authors Sept. 2003).
Pl. 5. The remaining half of the Gilviran tomb.
(photo by the authors Sept. 2003).
Pl. 6. View inside the Gilviran tomb.  
(photo by the authors Sept. 2003).
Pl. 7. The Giyan IV-III tepe near Khorramabad.
Top: view towards the tepe from the slope above the Gilviran tomb
(photo by the authors Sept. 2003).
Bottom: Google Earth view of the tepe.
Pl. 11. Herzfeld’s sketch of a vessel from the Gilviran tomb. (Travel Journal N-47 page 60 ©Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.).
Pl. 12. Herzfeld’s sketches of a pottery vessel and a bronze vase from the Gilviran tomb. The drawing of the decoration of the vase continues on the next plate (Travel Journal N-47 page 61 ©Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.).
Pl. 14. Herzfeld’s photograph and sketch of a bronze vase from the Gilviran tomb. 
(Sketchbook – SK-XI Pasargadae III, 1928 page 44 and Photo File 3 
“Pre-Achaemenian Objects” – Image N° 103 ©Freer Gallery of Art 
Pl. 15. Herzfeld’s photograph and sketch of a bronze vase from the Gilviran tomb.
(Sketchbook – SK-XI Pasargadae III, 1928 page 44 and Photo File 3
“Pre-Achaemenian Objects” – Image N° 101 ©Freer Gallery of Art
Pl. 16. Herzfeld’s notes and sketches of burial goods from the Gilviran tomb.

©Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.)
Pl. 17. Herzfeld’s photograph of a pottery vessel from the Gilviran tomb.
Pl. 19. Spouted vase with globular body from Gilviran.
(Photo © Trustees of the British Museum; inv. BM. 128804;
drawing after Bellelli 2002: Tav. 28, nr. 160 - a pair of lightly engraved concentric lines around the base, mentioned on the BM collection database website, is not indicated on the drawing).
Pl. 20. Spouted vase with cylindrical body from Gilviran (Photo © Trustees of the British Museum; inv. BM. 128600; drawing after Bellelli 2002: Tav. 28, nr. 161).