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Study of the Architecture of Manor Houses in Kohgiluyeh

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Abstract

One of the common types of late historical architecture in Iran is the manor house, most of which were built during the Qajar period and attracted the attention of the rulers of cities and villages. Most manor houses in the Kohgiluyeh region are a type of lowland castle constructed during the later Islamic centuries—from the early Qajar period to the First Pahlavi period—because of the weakness of the central government and the resulting disorder, as well as for the residence and settlement of local khans and their entourages. During a systematic survey conducted by the authors in Kohgiluyeh between 1402 and 1404, 34 manor houses were identified. One of the principal aims of this research, in addition to analyzing the collected data and drawing on published studies of defensive fortifications and castles, is to examine the architecture of these buildings. The results indicate that, in geographical and defensive terms, natural hills and elevated locations received particular attention because they commanded the surrounding areas and offered greater defensive capacity. In terms of layout, the castles generally have central courtyards and introverted plans with comparable spatial relationships. Stucco and brickwork decoration incorporating vegetal (arabesque) and geometric motifs constitute the dominant decorative features of this group of buildings.

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1. Introduction

The manor castles of the Kohgiluyeh region were established by local khans in different parts of Kohgiluyeh County during the later centuries. Over time, this group of buildings became known as manor castles because local rulers resided in them. These castles were constructed according to predetermined plans and generally built in a single phase. In terms of their external form and appearance, they resemble other castles; however, their internal layouts have similarities to caravanserais.

Because of insecurity, the region's strategic and military significance, and its location along the communication route linking Isfahan, Fars, and Khuzestan, Kohgiluyeh possessed considerable potential for castles and defensive fortifications. These castles were constructed to accommodate local khans and their entourages. The construction of castles with strong towers and ramparts by powerful local rulers, together with the organization of strong military forces, helped establish security within territories under their control. It is also noteworthy that, during attacks by dominant states on different parts of the country, an important component of the country's central military forces was formed by the forces of these local rulers, who played a significant role in maintaining security and expelling invaders from the country's borders.

In the present study, the structural and artistic characteristics of the region's castles are identified, described, and analyzed for the first time. In general, the castles and defensive fortifications of the study area can be divided into two groups: (1) fortified manor houses and (2) mountain fortresses (Fig. 1). The present article focuses on the manor houses. The term "manor houses" refers to buildings belonging to local khans that are known by local inhabitants as "castles." All of these buildings functioned as residential and fortified places. The field survey identified 34 manor houses: Raisi Castle, Kalaye Castle, Tambi Castle, Zargham Abad Castle (Koshk Baraftab), Sarpari Castle, Kore Shahbazi Castle, Tal Babooneh Castle, Sanqarabad/ Changluva (Tal Kadkhodaei Castle and Mohammad Zaman Castle), Mir Mohammad Amin Castle in Boai Sofli village, Gio Castle (Gergio), Talwandi, Shotaver Castle, Lower Al-Qachin Castle, Dam Abbas Castle, Bani Castle, Dokhtar Castle, Central Moushmi Castle, Abol Village Castle, Jelav Castle, Koshk Tayyibi Castle, Olad Molla Sosan Castle, Al-Mor castles, Elgan, Grab, Kalat, Gul, Old Aidan Castle, Sokhta Castle, Kagenji Castle, Dishmok Castle, Landeh Castle, Shahrak Cheram Castle, Sardo, and Rak Mansion.

1-2. Manor Houses under Study

The Kohgiluyeh region, centered on the city of Dehdasht and covering approximately 4,850 km², lies in the southern Zagros and in the western and northwestern parts of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province (Fig. 1). Since the Sasanian period, when Shapur I founded a city in the area, the region became known as Baladshapur and remained an important region under this name until the Qajar period. Castles and military fortifications are among the most important material manifestations for understanding economic landscapes—including roads and communication routes—political-administrative boundaries, population centers, warfare, defense, and power. They were formed within geographical settings to ensure the political survival of states, defend

territorial sovereignty, and administer geographical regions (Mojtahedzadeh, 2013; Zaal, 2013). Given the mountainous character of Kohgiluyeh and its susceptibility to bandit activity, castles and defensive fortresses were essential to the administration of the region's geographical areas, and evidence of them is dispersed throughout present-day Kohgiluyeh. These castles, whether military or non-military fortifications, generally used the characteristics of the natural geography and were built at elevated locations to preserve security. They therefore constitute important manifestations of the former defensive system of settlements in Kohgiluyeh, displaying considerable diversity.

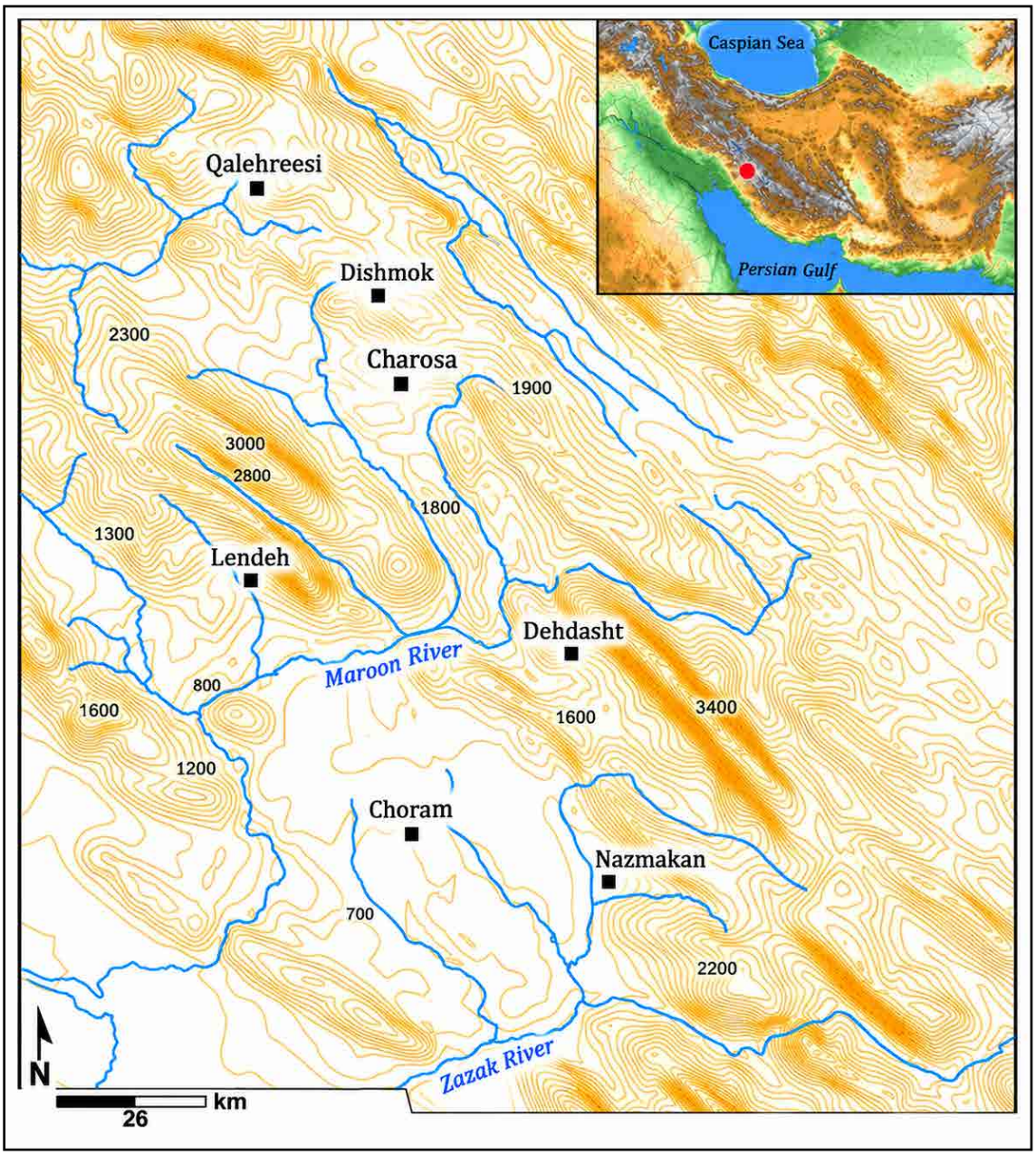


Fig. 1: Location of the study area (Dehdasht, Cheram, Landeh, Qaleh-Raisi, and Dishmok) (Authors, 2023–2024).

Following the Safavid period, the county became affected by internal unrest. In each locality, an individual who obtained a khan's appointment from the government constructed a castle at his place of residence (Fig. 2). Some of these castles were built over earlier historic structures. Across

Kohgiluyeh, towers can be observed on hills, elevated locations, and strategic sites. Most are now abandoned, although these towers remained in use until before 1342. In the region, watchtowers are more commonly known as "castles." They served as refuges for the nomadic groups of the surrounding area: wherever a watchtower was built, nomadic camps could be established without fear, livestock could graze safely, tribal trade could proceed, and political and local issues could be settled inside the castle in the presence of the khan and village headmen. Skilled and courageous riflemen took turns maintaining watch from the towers day and night and monitored the territory under their control (Safinejad, 1989: 593).

The towers or castles were usually constructed with two or three stories. Locally, the first floor was called zarin, meaning the lower or ground level, and the second was called balin, meaning the upper level. Each castle usually had a single door made by local carpenters from very thick oak wood. In cold regions, castles were generally built of mud brick in cylindrical forms and their interiors were coated with mud plaster. In warm regions, they were more often constructed of stone and gypsum. Niches were built inside the towers or castles, and each niche contained two types of openings: (1) close-range loopholes and (2) long-range loopholes. The close-range loopholes, also called rishah-zan, were placed at equal intervals around the castle, approximately one meter above the floor of the second story, and were shaped as inclined cylindrical openings. During group attacks, particularly raids, these openings were used for wall-to-wall firing. Their inclined form prevented attackers who reached the base of the castle wall from easily aiming the barrel of a rifle through the opening and shooting the defenders, thereby allowing the defenders to monitor the surroundings with greater security. The long-range openings were positioned approximately one meter above the close-range openings in a continuous row around the castle. They were not angled and were used for direct long-distance aiming, enabling the defenders to observe the surrounding area over considerable distances (Majidi, 1992: 179). The castles examined in this study include the following.

2-2. Dishmok Castle

Today, the remains of a castle survive in the southwestern part of Dishmok (Figs. 3–6). The structure is oriented east–west and covers more than 1,500 m². Its construction materials are stone, gypsum, and wood. The castle consists of an older and a newer section. Roman arches, pointed-arch niches, panj-o-haft vaults, rectangular windows, columnar and wall buttresses, niches, and geometric entrances (rectangular and square) are among the architectural features and techniques used in the building. Evidence of military construction—including towers at the northwestern corners—as well as a stable and an underground tunnel, is also visible.

2-3. Tal Babooneh Castle

This castle is located approximately 3 km south of Shirazi village and on the northern side of Tal Babooneh village in Cheram County. Its elevation is 705 m above sea level (Fig. 7). The castle has a square plan and measures approximately 10×25×25 m in length, width, and height. It is a two-story building consisting of a central courtyard and surrounding spaces. The construction

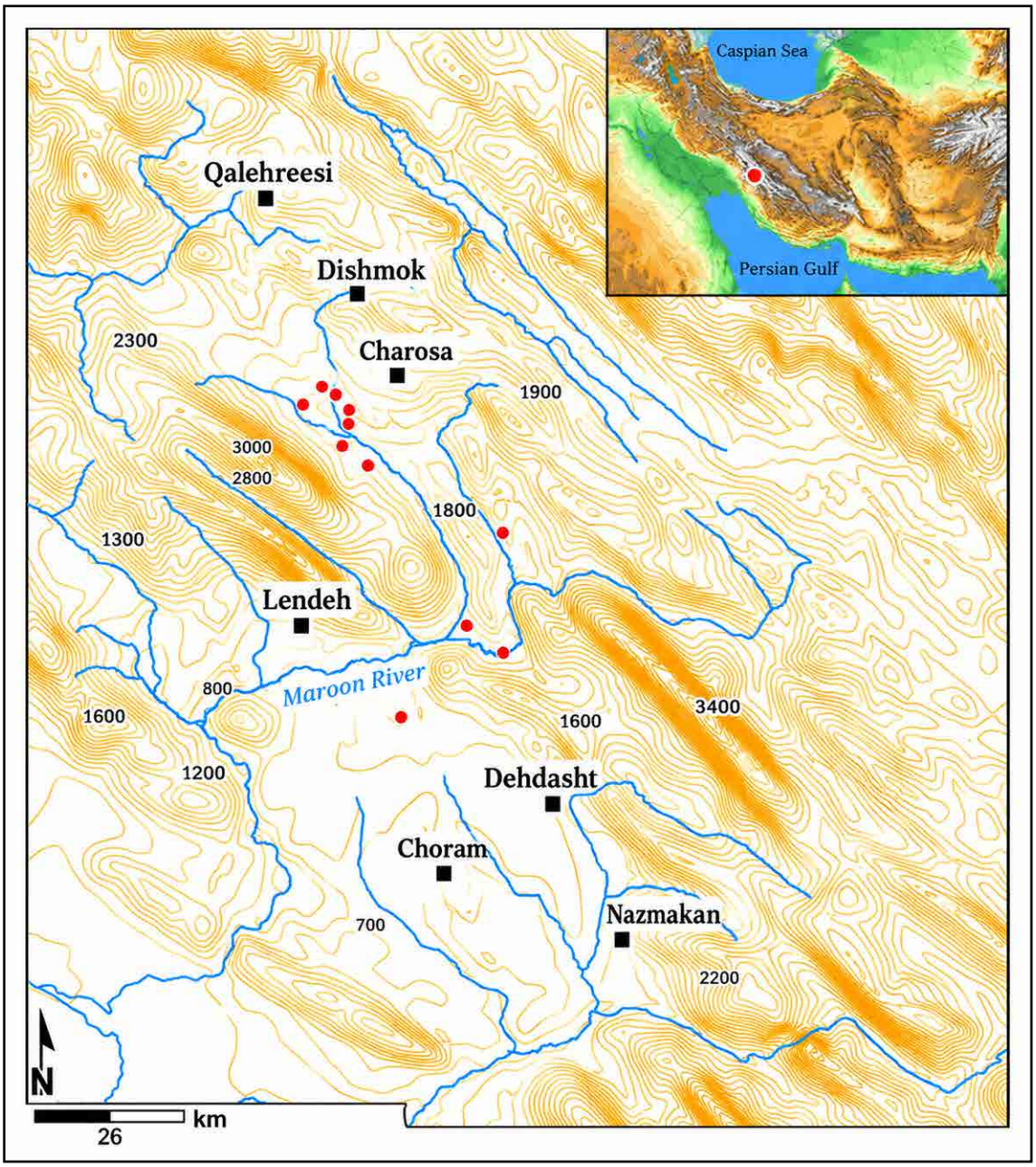


Fig. 2: Distribution map of fortified manor houses in Kohgiluyeh (Authors, 2023).

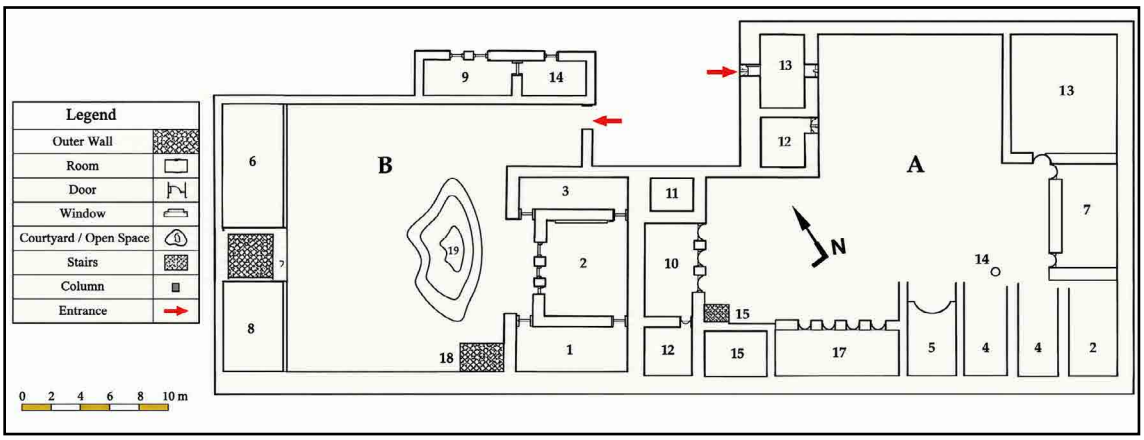


Fig. 3: Plan of the Dishmook Castle complex (Authors, 2024).

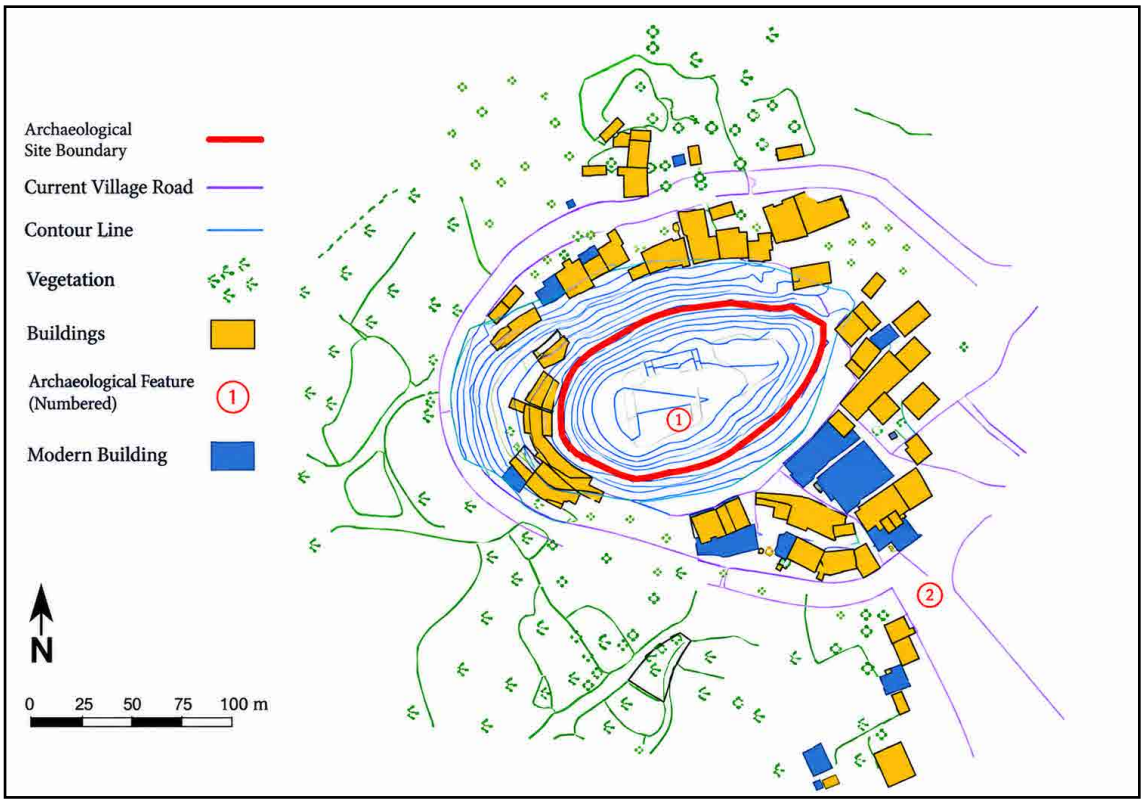


Fig. 4: Topography of the hill and the castle of Dishmok (Authors, 2024).

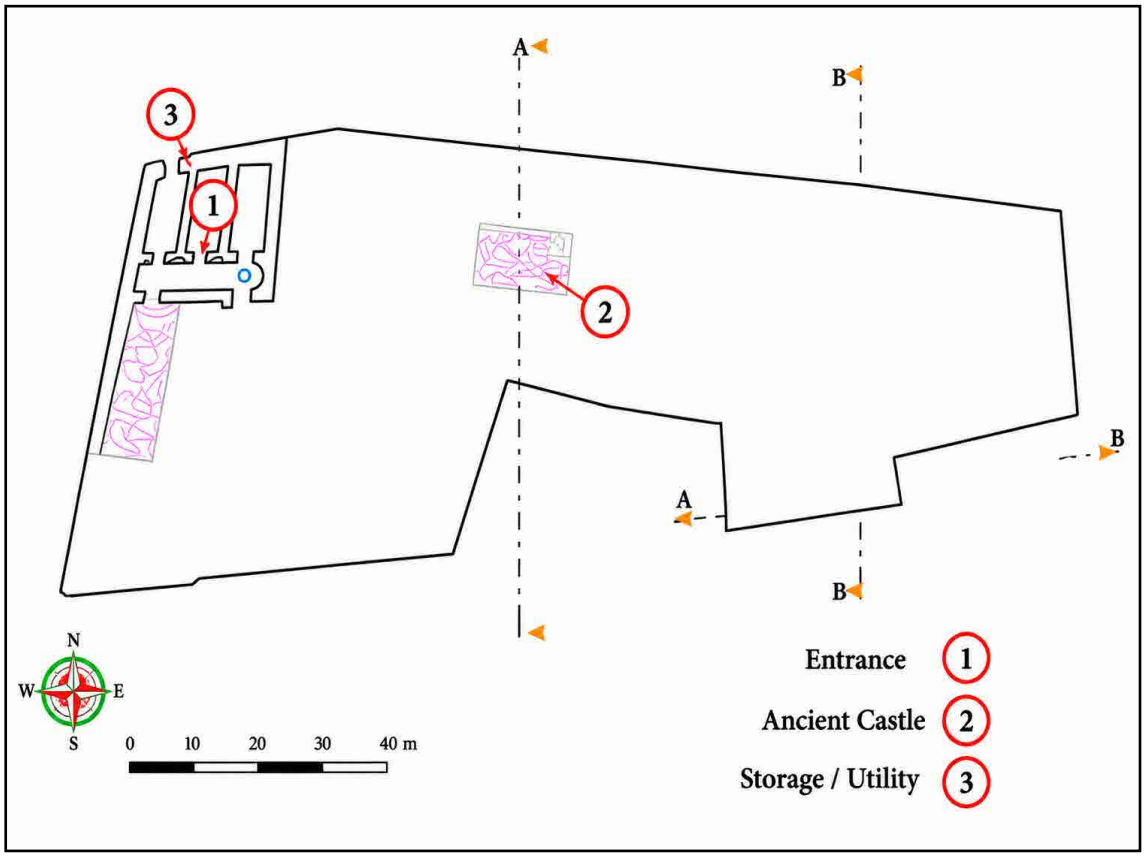


Fig. 5: Dishmock Castle, stable plan (Authors, 2024).

materials are small and large pieces of stone bonded with gypsum mortar, and both the interior and exterior surfaces are coated with a layer of gypsum plaster.

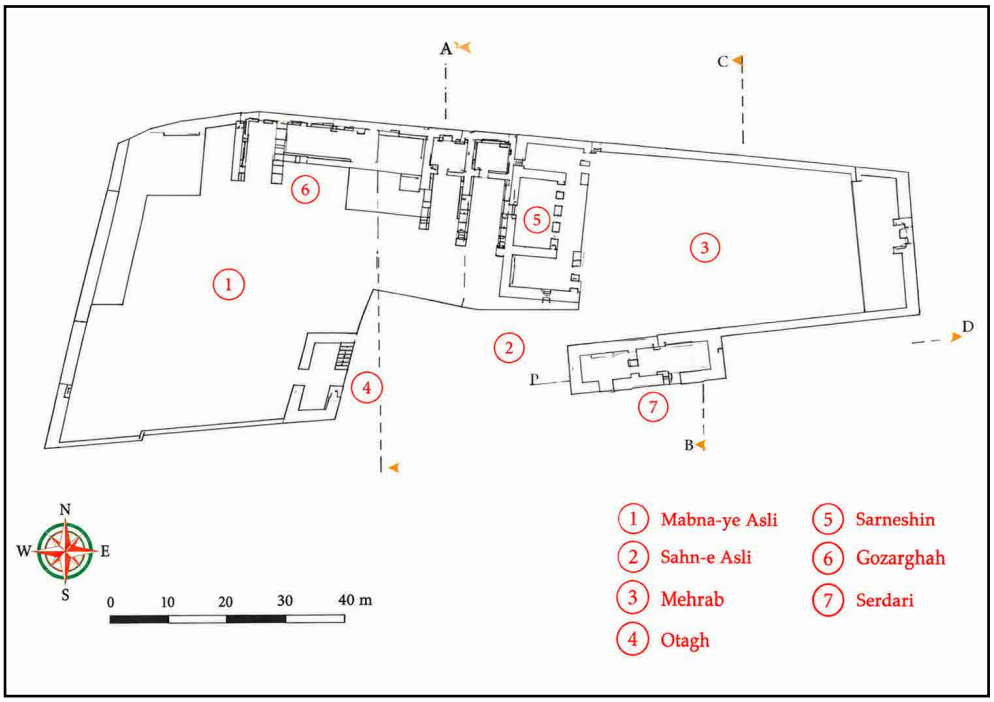


Fig. 6: Dishmock Castle, stable plan (Authors, 2025).

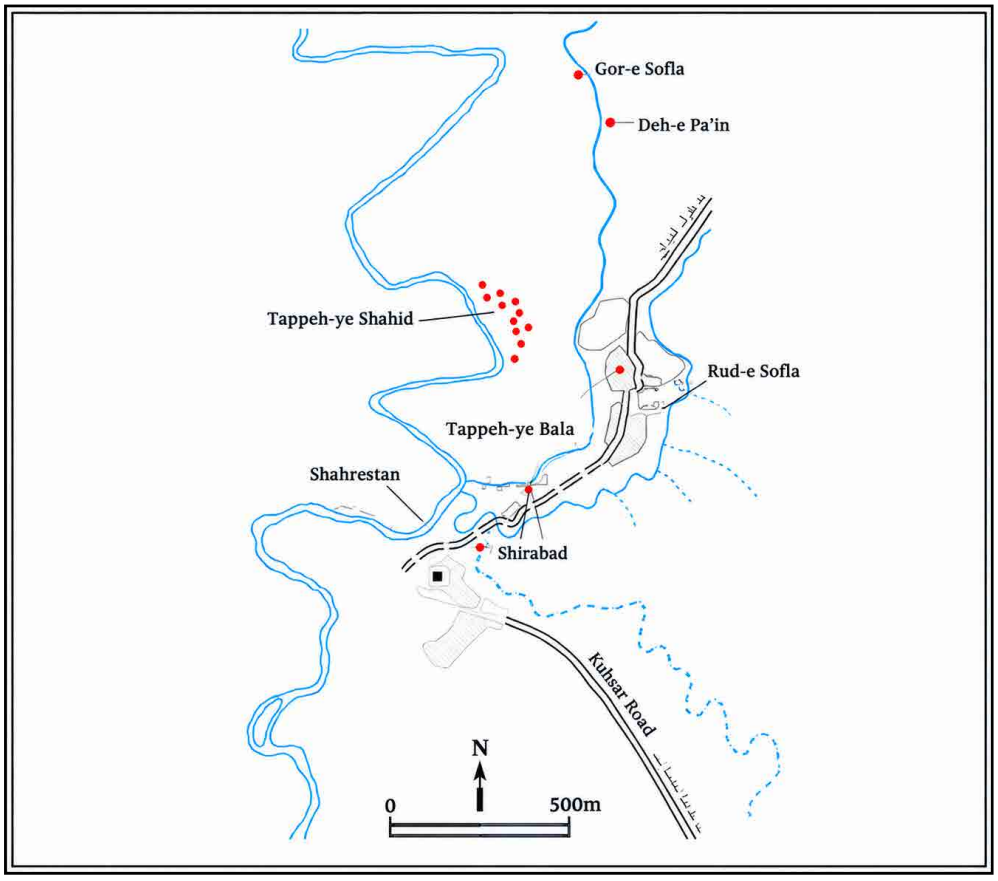


Fig. 7: Location of Tal Babooneh Castle on the regional map (Authors, 2022–2025).

2-4. Tal Kadkhodaei Castle, Changluva

This building stands on a hill overlooking Changluva village. It has two stories; the first story has been destroyed, and part of the ground floor, including its roof, has also collapsed. The building was constructed from small and large rubble stones with gypsum mortar. Its covering incorporates pointed arches and transverse arch ribs, which give the building a distinctive appearance.

2-5. Landeh Castle

The large castle built at Landeh was structurally and technically very strong for its time. A stable was constructed beneath the castle. The complex was circular and consisted of multiple towers, with the central "mother castle," or Hasan Ali Khan Castle, protected by the other towers. A mosque to the north outside the castle and a Hosseiniyeh to the east were associated with the complex. In addition to the four towers, another rampart was constructed opposite the central or mother castle; it was known as the Gate Tower. Trusted individuals, under the command of the khan's brother or son, lived there and protected the castle. Two water wells were located in the lower courtyard, providing drinking water for the inhabitants during enemy sieges (Majidi Karaei, 1992: 1393–1395).

2-6. Shambrakan Castle

This castle is located 45 km north of Gachsaran County, in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, on the foothills of elevations and rolling hills (Fig. 8). It is a two-story structure built of gypsum and stone. The building stands on a hill beside the Shiraz–Gachsaran transit road, 20 km from Basht. According to existing studies, it functioned as a ruler's residence. It has a central courtyard; the first floor served as the living quarters of the attendants, while the second floor was occupied by the khan. This imposing Qajar-period building was restored once.

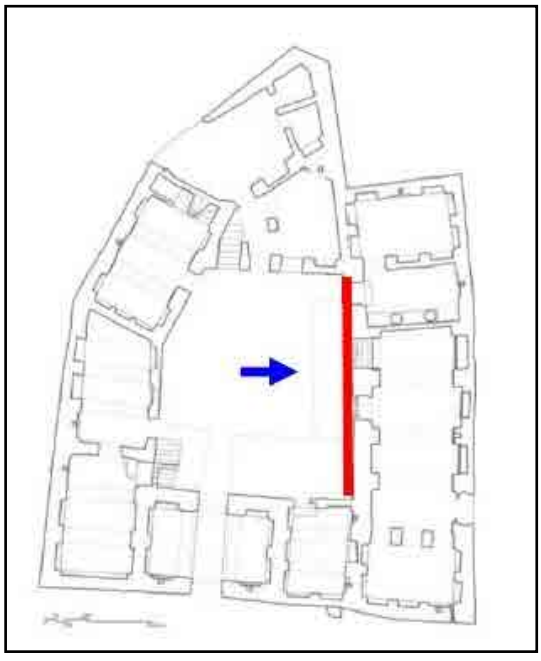


Fig. 8: Shambrakan Castle (Authors, 2022–2025).

2-7. Sarpari Castle

This castle is located 4 km from Dehdasht and 300 m northeast of Sarpari village (Figs. 9 and 10). The main structure is approximately square, apparently two stories high, with dimensions of about 200×200 m and a current height of approximately 10 m. It is built of stone and gypsum. Some sections are covered with pointed arches. The castle was built during the Qajar period on a hill overlooking the Sarpari plain. The structure was constructed in two phases: the first during the Qajar period and the second during the Pahlavi period. It has towers and ramparts, and loopholes are arranged around the castle so that it could be defended in times of danger.

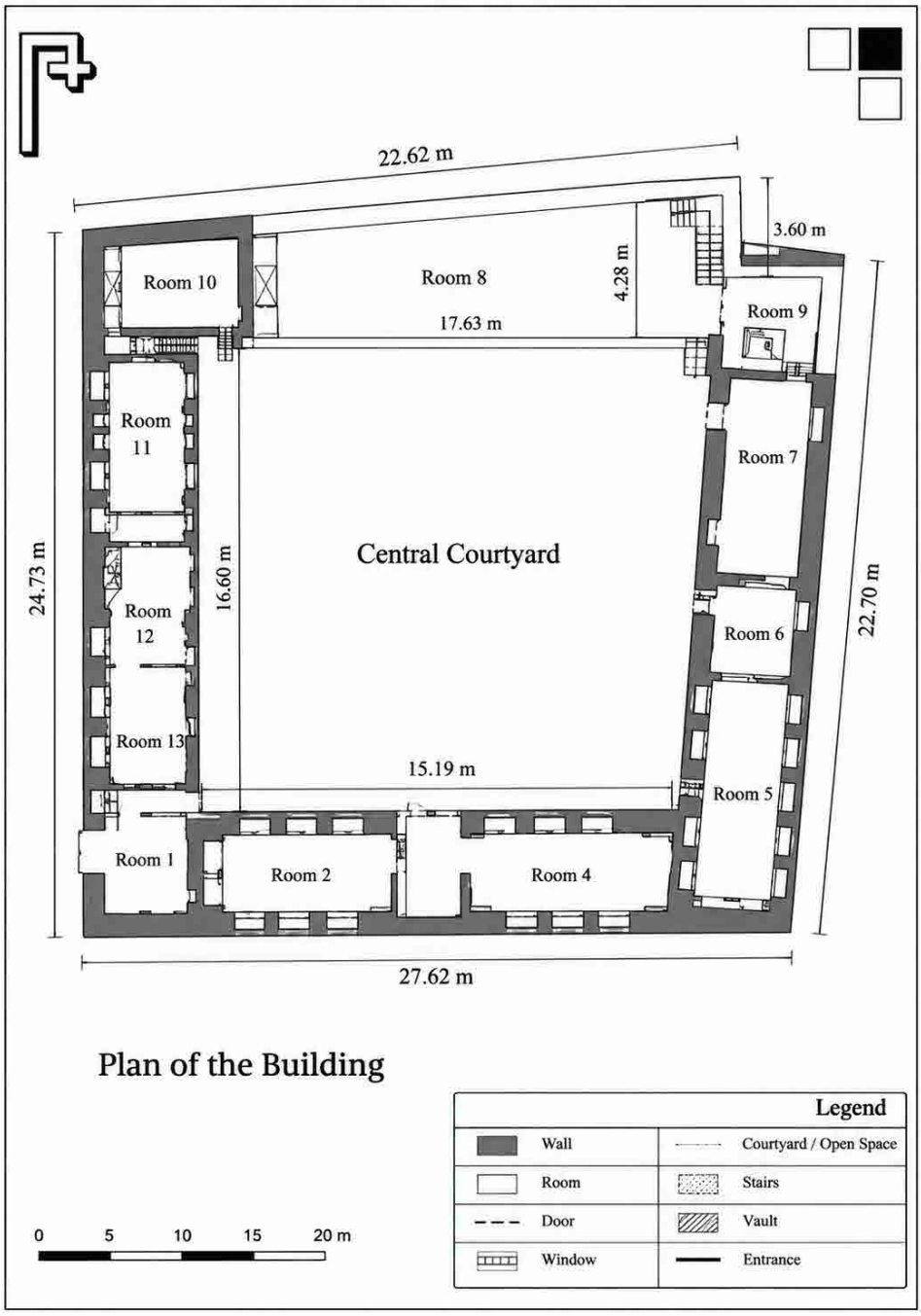


Fig. 9: Plan of Sarpari Castle (Authors, 2022–2025).

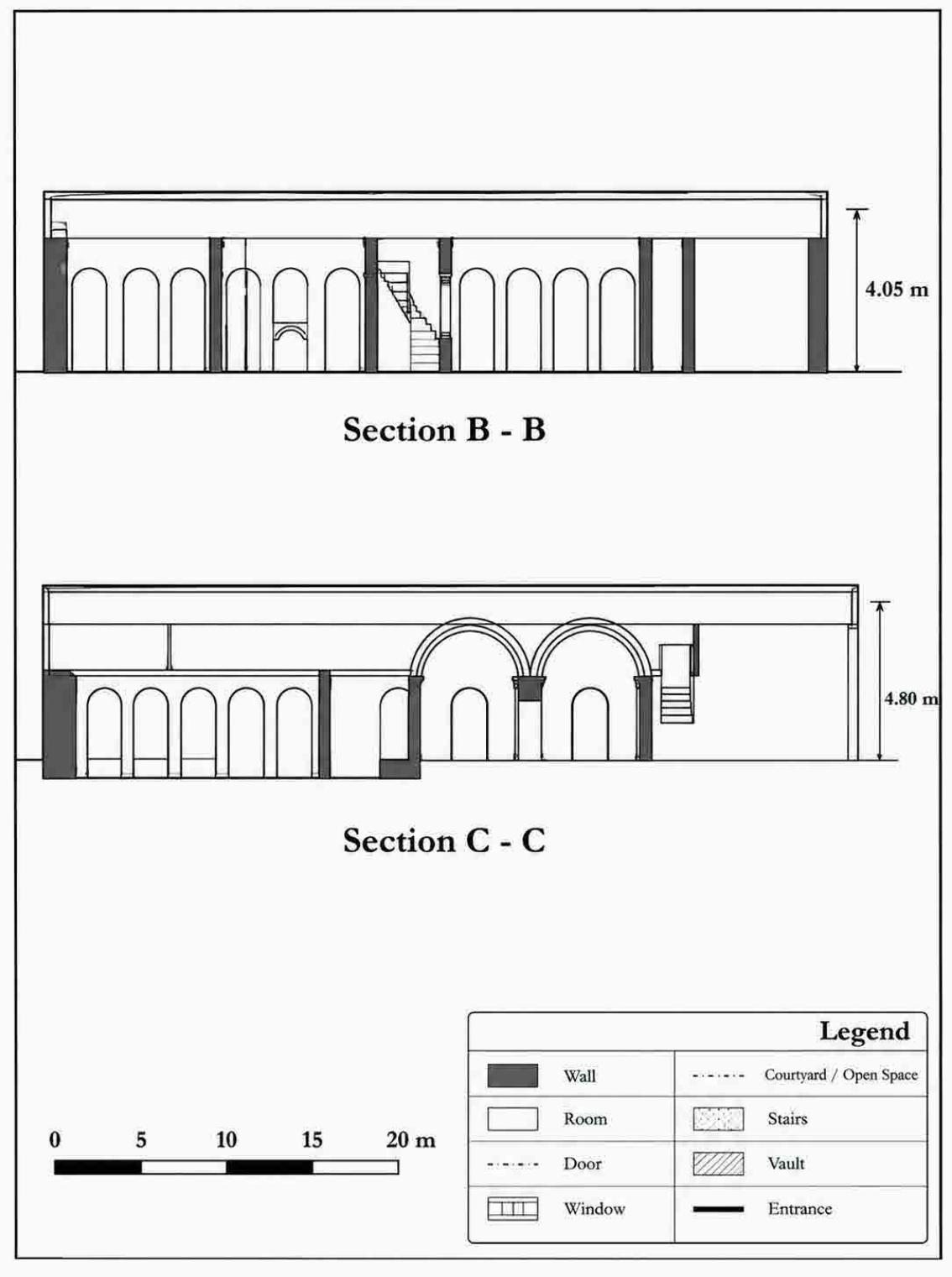


Fig. 10: Sarpari Castle, elevation and section (Authors, 2022–2025).

2-8. Kore Shahbazi Castle

The site is located approximately 2.5 km south of Cheram and 300 m south of Shirazi village (Figs. 11–14), at an elevation of 718 m above sea level. The castle measures approximately 10×10×15 m and has a rectangular plan. It contains various spaces connected by entrances with semicircular

arches, measuring approximately 12.50×1.50 m. The main building is two stories high and is enclosed by an almost square perimeter wall. The surviving wall is approximately 2 m high, and loopholes are incorporated into various sections of the castle walls. Different parts of the castle are covered by semicircular and pointed arches. The construction materials consist of small and large stone fragments bonded with gypsum mortar. The entire interior and exterior surfaces are coated with a layer of gypsum plaster. Based on the architectural structure of the site, a date in the later Islamic centuries, particularly the mid-Qajar period, is proposed.

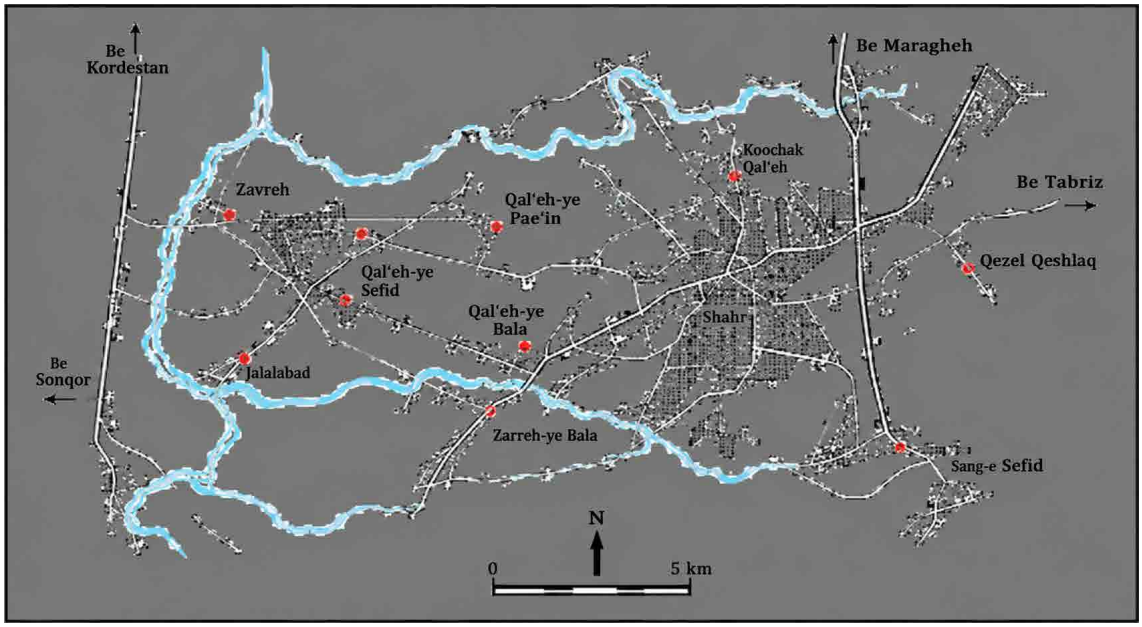


Fig. 11: Location of Kare Shahbazi Castle on the map of the region (Authors, 2025- 2022).

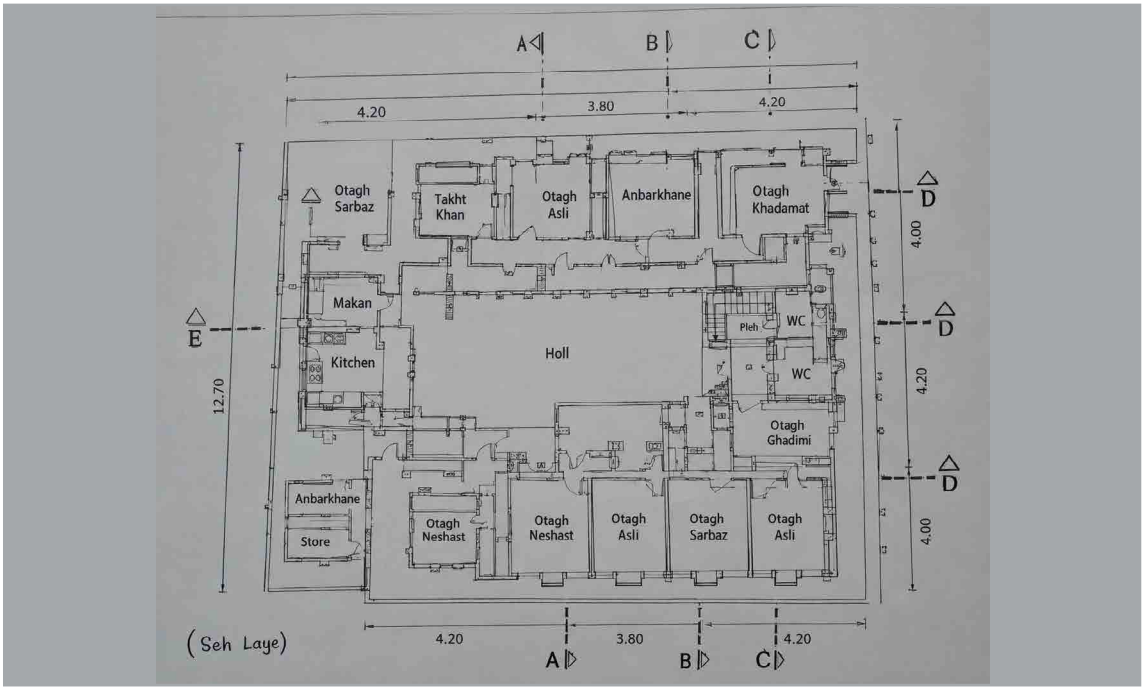


Fig. 12: Floor plan of Kore Shahbazi Castle (Authors, 2025- 2022).

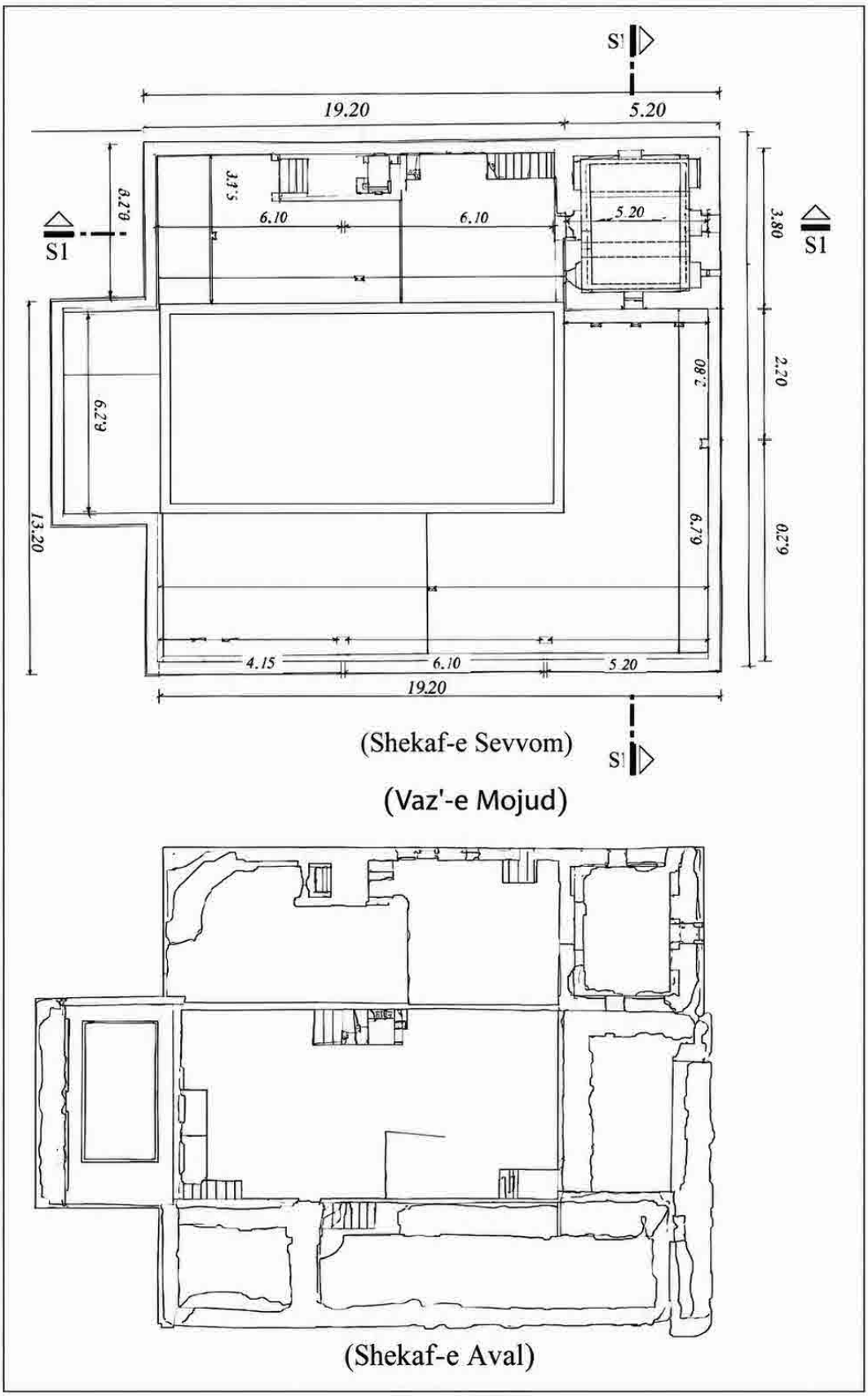


Fig. 13: Shahbazi Castle (Authors, 2025- 2022).



Fig. 14: Kore Shahbazi Castle: top) partial view of the almost square fence, bottom) stables (Authors, 2025-2022).

2-9. Rak Castle

The castle is rural in character and was constructed using a technique described in the source as a combination of reduced masonry and earthen construction. Its principal function was defensive, and it is currently in ruins. The construction materials are small and large stone fragments with gypsum mortar. The surviving section of Rak Castle is approximately square, measuring about 6×20×22 m, with its main entrance on the southeast side. The castle has two stories, and all interior and exterior surfaces are coated with a layer of gypsum. Some sections contain stucco decoration in the form of arches with semicircular profiles. The building was constructed on two levels using hand-tamped gypsum and appears to have undergone several repairs after the Qajar period.

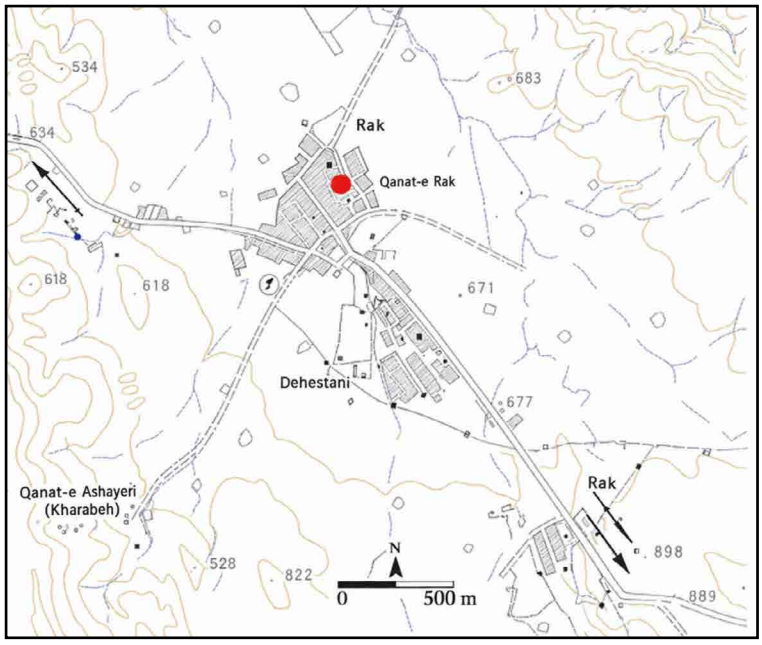


Fig. 15: Location of Rak Castle on the village map (Authors, 2022–2025).

2-10. Raisi Castle

This building was constructed during the Qajar period on the western side of Qaleh-Raisi, 70 km from Dehdasht. It appears to have served both defensive and residential functions, with an additional section added during the Pahlavi period. The four sides of the castle were built around a central courtyard as a two-story structure. The lower floor accommodated servants, fodder and grain storage, and the stable, while the upper floor contained the ruler's quarters, the family quarters, and spaces for guards and sentries.

2-11. Al-Mor Castle

This castle is located approximately 8 km south of Qaleh-Raisi, along the road from Qaleh-Raisi to Dehdasht, within Al-Mor village. Its overall form is approximately rectangular, measuring about 80 m in length, 50 m in width, and 7 m in height. The castle has two stories, with the main entrance on the southeast side. Remains of rooms and corridors, rectangular and square in plan, survive on both floors. The entrances to the rooms and corridors are covered by semicircular arches, and decorative elements in the form of shallow arches with semicircular profiles, functioning as niches, can be observed inside. Access to the second floor is provided by stairways constructed of stone and gypsum. Almost the entire interior and exterior surfaces are coated with a layer of gypsum plaster.

2-12. Zargham Abad (Pali) Castle

This monument is located northwest of Dehdasht in Zargham Abad village. It consists of a courtyard and adjoining rooms. The rooms occupy the north, east, and south sides of the building and are connected by corridors. The building is two stories high, and two stairways on the north and south sides provide access to the roof. The entrance portal was covered, and a guardroom was located in front of the castle. The building was constructed in the late Qajar period. It has a central courtyard around which the castle rooms were arranged. The castle served both military (governmental) and residential functions. The building materials consist of small and large stones with gypsum mortar, while the roofs are flat or covered by pointed arches.

2-13. Dam Abbas Castle

This castle (Fig. 16) is rural in character and its construction is described as a combined technique. Its principal function was defensive, and it is currently in ruins. The construction materials consist of small and large stone fragments with gypsum mortar. The surviving sections measure approximately 32×14 m. The principal surviving part is a square space approximately 14×14 m and about 5 m high, built on two floors; the covering of the first floor has disappeared. A rectangular space to the south has arches with pointed-arch coverings. Remains of loopholes are present in various parts of the main space. The building was constructed on two floors using hand-tamped gypsum. During its period of use, its sections were separated from one another, while niches, towers, and ramparts enhanced its appearance. No repairs have been carried out, and the castle flourished during the Pahlavi period. It dates to the late Qajar and early Pahlavi periods.

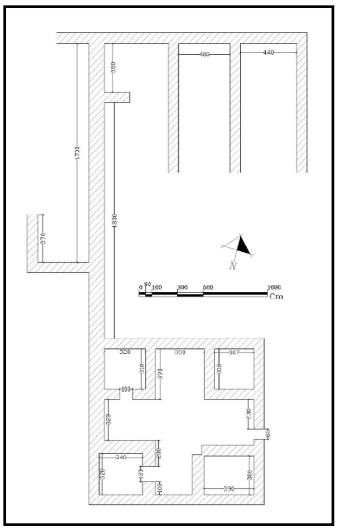


Fig. 16: Plan of Dam Abbas Castle (Authors, 2022–2025).

2-14. Gul Castle

A castle is located approximately 32 km southeast of Qaleh-Raisi and 18 km northeast of Dehdasht, within Qaleh-Gol village, which is itself named after the castle (Fig. 17). Its overall form is rectangular, and it has a similarly shaped perimeter wall with the remains of several circular towers. The exterior sections are decorated with arched niches and rectangular motifs. The towers around the perimeter, positioned at the corners, are circular and two stories high. The principal construction material is stone bonded with gypsum mortar. A hidden tunnel from inside the castle led to a spring or river and was used in emergencies.

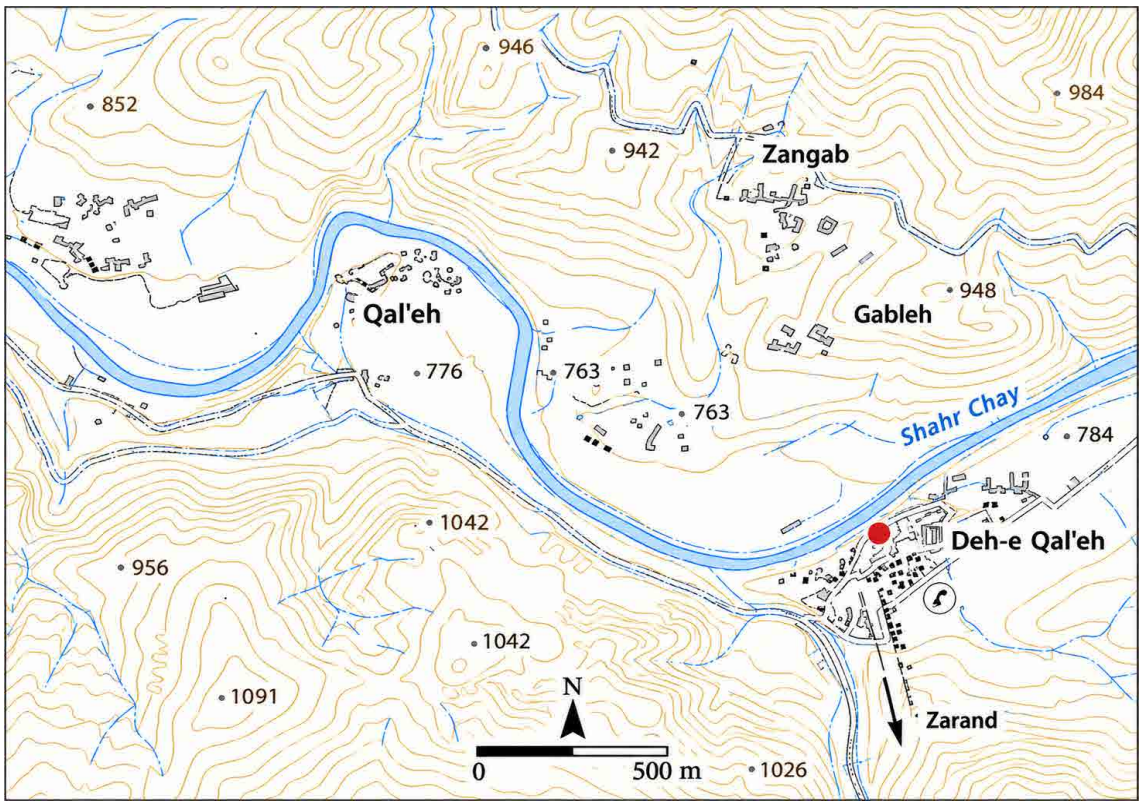


Fig. 17: Location of Gul Castle (Authors, 2022–2025).

2-15. Dokhtar Castle

The available evidence suggests that this castle has a Qajar architectural style with a relatively European character and probably dates to the late Qajar period. The vaulting technique, semi-broken stairways connecting to the guard towers, and flat roofs are reminiscent of European castle architecture. Numerous rooms, underground corridors, and the lavand-house section are features also observed in many castles in the region. The building has taken on a hall-like character through six arcaded bays on its northern façade, a feature that appears relatively unique. A front porch of the lavand-house faces these bays, with private interior rooms and living quarters for the castle's inhabitants behind the porch. The castle has a square-rectangular plan and appears to have been constructed in response to the needs of its residents. During a later period, probably the Second Pahlavi period, rooms in a modern style and with new materials (stone, cement, and steel beams) were built behind the northern façade's arcade. Overall, however, these additions did not substantially alter the building's general appearance and do not create a noticeable visual contradiction with the original structure.

Table 1: Characteristics of Kohgiluyeh manor houses (Authors, 2024).

No.	Castle Name	Location	Construction Date	Function	Plan	Materials	Construction / Architectural Features
1	Dashtak Castle	Southeast of Dehdasht	Qajar	Khan's residence	Square	Small and large stones, with plaster mortar	Two-way bonding technique; floral windows were used to connect and secure the walls with wooden elements. The northern and southern stone walls have decorative features. Corridors and pointed arches, pointed arches in the rooms, rectangular and circular coverings, openings arranged along the walls, and doors and windows are visible in the decorative spaces of the rooms. The roof was flat, and access to the upper floor was provided by small stone stairs. All interior and exterior surfaces were covered with a layer of plaster.
2	Paloonah Castle	7.5 km northwest of Cheram	Qajar	Khan's residence	Rectangular	Small and large stones with plaster mortar	Built on two floors, comprising a central courtyard and surrounding spaces. The interior and exterior surfaces were plastered. Pointed arches, rectangular and square vaults, and semicircular arches are present. The entire interior and exterior surfaces were finished with a layer of plaster.
3	Tel Castle	28.5 km south of Cheram, 200 m south of Shirazi village	Late Qajar	Khan's residence	Rectangular	Small stones	Pointed and semicircular arches and a two-story arrangement are present. The walls and all interior and exterior surfaces were finished with a layer of plaster.
4	Rak Castle	Rak village	Qajar	Primary non-residential function	Square	Small and large stones with mortar	Built on two floors using rammed plaster construction; all interior and exterior surfaces were finished with a layer of plaster. Plaster decoration includes full and semicircular arches. The castle served as the seat of the ruler, his family, and guards.
5	Lor Castle	8 km south of Qaleh-Ronisi district, on the Qaleh-Ronisi-Dehdasht road	Qajar	Khan's residence	Rectangular	Stone and plaster; two floors	Rooms and corridors are rectangular and square in plan. Semicircular arches are used as small vaults and arch coverings. The upper floor is accessed by stairs constructed with stone and plaster. Almost all interior and exterior surfaces of the castle were finished with a layer of plaster.
6	Zargham Castle	7.5 km northeast of Cheram	Late Qajar	Khan's residence	Square	Small and large stones with plaster mortar	The castle has a central courtyard. The defensive spaces on the ground floor use pointed vaults, pointed arches, semicircular and rectangular small vaults, and other vaulted elements.
7	Sefid Castle	4 km from Dehdasht	Qajar and Pahlavi	Khan's residence	Square	Stone and plaster	Two-story structure with pointed arches, a tower, and defensive walls with loopholes.
8	Kord Shahni Castle	Approximately 2 km southeast of Shirazi	Late Qajar	Khan's residence	Rectangular-squ	Small and large stones with plaster mortar	Semicircular and pointed arches; rectangular small vaults; interior and exterior surfaces finished with a layer of plaster.
9	Rak Castle	Rak village	Qajar	Primary defensive shelter	Square	Small and large stones with plaster mortar	Built on two floors with rammed plaster construction; all interior and exterior surfaces were finished with a layer of plaster. Plaster decoration includes arch motifs in the form of small vaults and semicircular arches.
10	Zeysi Castle	Western part of Qaleh-Ronisi and 70 km from Dehdasht	Late Qajar and Pahlavi	Defensive and residential castle	—	Stone and plaster	A central courtyard arranged over two floors. The lower floor served as accommodation for servants and storage, while the upper floor was occupied by the khan and his family and also included spaces for guards and watchmen.
11	Amour Castle	28 km south of Qaleh-Ronisi district, on the Qaleh-Ronisi-Dehdasht road	Qajar	Khan's residence	Rectangular-squ	Stone and plaster	Two-story structure with rooms and corridors arranged in rectangular and square forms. Semicircular arches occur on the first floor, while small vaults and arch coverings occur on the second floor.
12	Zorfaam Castle	Northeast of Dehdasht	Late Qajar	Military (governmental) and residential	—	Small and large stones with plaster mortar	Comprises a central courtyard and adjoining spaces. Two floors and two staircases are located on the northern and southern sides. They are connected by a passage behind the roof. The entrance corridor was covered and a guard post was located in front of the castle. On the northern side is the kitchen, consisting of two rooms connected by an interior door. On the western side are the residential rooms and the khan's living quarters, comprising five rooms. The roof coverings are rectangular and pointed-vaulted.
13	Kol Castle	—	Qajar	Primary defensive function	Square	Small and large stones with plaster mortar	—
14	Gol Castle	2 km northeast of Cheram and 18 km northeast of Dehdasht	Qajar	Khan's residence	Rectangular	All interior and exterior surfaces were plastered	The castle has circular defensive towers. Its architectural complex consists of two main sections, including a judicial section and a central courtyard. The northern and southern sections are each built on two floors. Pointed arches, pointed curved arches, semicircular arches, and rectangular forms carved in plaster and constructed beneath semicircular vaults are present.
15	Dokhtar Castle	Dokhtar village	Late Qajar–Pahlavi	—	Rectangular	Stone and plaster	Numerous rooms, underground corridors, and a bathhouse are present. The northern façade has a stepped/sloping character. The vaulting method and the use of half-turn stairways to connect with the guard towers and rectangular spaces recall the architectural style of the castle.

2-16. Comparative Analysis / Typology

Geographical distribution: Kohgiluyeh: 14 examples (Dam Abbas, Dokhtar Castle, Gul, Sarpari [Qaleh-ye Kī Mansur Hayounfar], Mohammad Amin, Mohammad Zaman, Qalandar, Zargham Abad [Pali / Agha Qeydar Qayd-e Givi Tower], Rak, Qaleh-Raisi, Al-Mor, Elgan, Shotaver, and

Tal Kadkhodaei); Landeh: 4 examples (Landeh Castle, Old Castle, Kagenji, and New Castle); Cheram: 4 examples (Al-Qachin, Tal Babooneh [Babineh/Bavineh/Qaleh-ye Ki Farajollah Azizi], Kore Shahbazi [Shahrak Castle/Tal Gard Castle/Khan Castle/Historic Cheram Castle], and Tambi); Bahmaei: 3 examples (Dishmok Castle, Sardo Mansion, and Masjedi Castle); and Gachsaran: 1 example (Shambrakan).

Strategic location: (1) on hills overlooking villages: 19 examples (Fig. 18); (2) on plains/level ground: 7 examples (Fig. 19).



Fig. 18: Top: right, Dishmok Castle; center, Tal Babooneh Castle; left, Tal Kadkhodaei; middle: right, Sarpari Castle; center, Kore Shahbazi; left, Rak Castle; bottom: right, Zargham Abad; center, Dokhtar Castle; left, Malaqalandar Castle (Authors, 2022–2025).

Materials: The materials used in the construction of these buildings are primarily stone and gypsum, with saruj mortar also used in some cases. At Dishmok Castle, substantial oak, poplar, and plane-tree timbers were used to tie and reinforce the walls. Wood was also used in the roof of Kore Shahbazi Castle (Fig. 20).

Function: The buildings had military/defensive (governmental) and residential functions. Most were constructed as two-story buildings (Dishmok, Babooneh, Tal Kadkhodaei, Landeh, Shambrakan, Sarpari, Kore Shahbazi, Rak, Qaleh-Raisi, Al-Mor, Shotaver, Elgan, Zargham Abad, Tambi, Mohammad Amin, New Castle, Dam Abbas, Gul, and Dokhtar). In these castles, the first floor served as accommodation for attendants and service functions, including the kitchen,



Fig. 19: Top: right, Landeh Castle; center, Raissi Castle; left, Al-Mor Castle; middle: right, Gul Castle; center, Elgan; left, Shotaver; bottom, Al-Qachin Castle (Authors, 2022–2025).



Fig. 20: Right: Dishmok Castle, wood used in the roof; left: Kore Shahbazi Castle, wood used in the roof (Authors, 2022–2025).

fodder and grain storage, stable, and sanitary facilities, while the second floor served as the ruler's quarters, including the family's accommodation and spaces for sentries and guards.

Decorative features and techniques: Loopholes, known as sarzan or tir-kesh, were used to prevent surprise attacks or the capture of the castle; crenellations were provided for observation

(Fig. 21); other features include towers (Fig. 22), ramparts, perimeter walls, fireplaces and wall heaters (Fig. 23), rectangular windows (Fig. 24), columnar and wall buttresses (Fig. 25), gates, stucco decoration (Fig. 26), vaults and niches (Fig. 27), and arches (Fig. 28).



Fig. 21: Right) Dishmok, triple windows or crossbars in the entrance building, left) Sarpari Castle, observation posts (Authors, 2022- 2025).



Fig. 22: Watchtower: right) Qale-e-Gol, middle) Al-Qachin, right) Qale-e-Dokhtar (Authors, 2022- 2025).



Fig. 23: Dishmock Castle, a room with two wall heaters and an air vent (Authors, 2022- 2025).



Fig. 24: Rectangular windows: right) Cheram Castle, middle) Tambi, left) Zargham Abad (Authors, 2022- 2025).



Fig. 25: Dishmook Castle: right) Column supports, Left) Gate (Authors, 2022- 2025).



Fig. 26: Stucco decorations: top, right) Dishmook Castle, entrance arch, meandering plaster veins between two layers of arch, middle) Dishmook Castle, inscriptions on the front of the building to support geometric entrances in the western courtyard, left) Rak Castle, stucco decorations, arches with crescent arches, bottom, right) Gol Castle, left) Cheram Castle (Authors, 2022- 2025).



Fig. 27: Top: Right) Dishmook Castle, niches, Middle) Cheram Castle, niche, Left, Zargham Abad, Middle: Right) Courtyard and Roman and pedimented arches, Middle) Dishmook Castle, entrance arch of the eastern part of the castle, Left) Zargham Abad, southwest side, view of the arches of the castle, Bottom: Right) Raissi Castle, arches of the castle, Middle) Shotavar, arches, Left) Grab, arch (Authors, 2022- 2025).

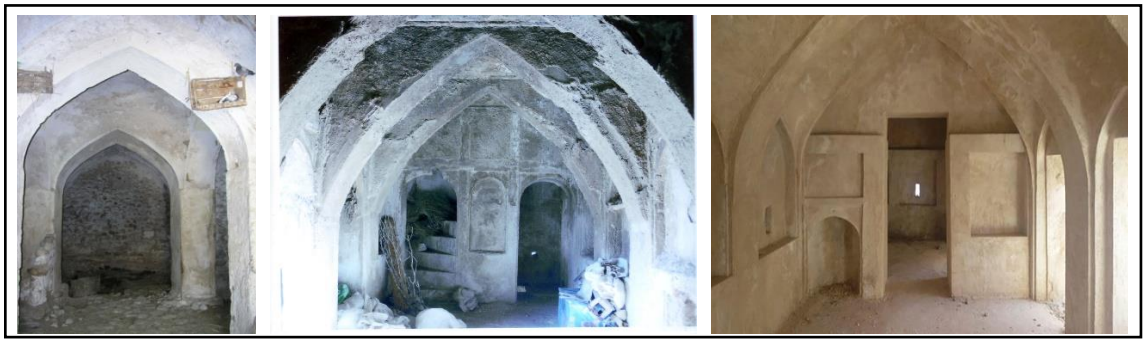


Fig. 28: Right) Cheram Castle (Shahbazi Palace), goat horn arches, middle) Elgan, left) Gul. (Authors, 2022- 2025).

3. Conclusion

Because of insecurity, the strategic and military significance of the Kohgiluyeh region, and its position on the communication route linking Isfahan, Fars, and Khuzestan, the region possessed

considerable potential for castles and defensive fortifications. These castles were built to accommodate local khans and their entourages. The construction of castles with strong towers and ramparts by powerful local rulers, together with the organization of strong military forces, provided an effective basis for security in the territories under their rule. It is noteworthy that, during attacks by dominant states on different parts of the country, an important component of the central military forces consisted of the armies of these local rulers, who played an important role in maintaining national security and expelling invaders from the country's borders.

The historical castles of late-period Kohgiluyeh can be regarded as manor structures in rural areas that were subject to central-government oversight for controlling local feudal authorities and exploiting agricultural and natural resources to meet the needs of the court. They also functioned as local ruler residences administered under the authority of the region's khans and were used as seasonal settlements for nomadic groups during spring and summer. As indicated by the functions of these rural complexes, one of their roles was also to collect dues and control movement between the plains and mountains by tribal and nomadic groups. The construction of such buildings from the Safavid period onward, particularly during the Qajar period, can be observed in different parts of Iran, with both similarities and differences.

It appears that the construction of such local and rural complexes in different parts of Iran received particular attention from the central government after the 1341 land reforms and the nationalization of water and land resources, as well as the relatively extensive growth of villages among the peasantry, with increased emphasis on governmental dominance, supervision, and control. Based on examination and analysis of the architectural, design, and physical characteristics of the castles under study and comparison among them, the results indicate that, in geographical and defensive terms, natural hills and elevated locations were given particular attention because they commanded the surrounding areas and offered greater defensive capability.

The principal reasons for the construction of these manor castles in different parts of the country during the later Islamic periods, especially the Qajar era, can be associated with weaknesses in the central governmental structure, repeated attacks by foreign occupying forces, and the increasing power of local rulers. As rulers gained power, they used existing circumstances to construct a castle, to the extent of their means, for themselves and the populations under their control. The scale and grandeur of a castle's structure were directly related to the power of the regional ruler; consequently, larger castles were constructed by powerful and influential lords with access to the country's ruling authorities. During the Qajar period, some of these castles became bases and refuges for rebels and dissidents because of insecurity in the region.

The castles incorporated measures intended to stop or at least slow attackers outside the castle, at the perimeter wall, and within the compound. One of the most important security measures was therefore the construction of high and thick perimeter walls, towers, and ramparts. Some powerful local rulers played an important role in maintaining security within their territories by establishing fortified castles and strong military forces. In terms of layout, these castles generally had central courtyards, introverted plans, and similar spatial relationships. The construction materials were

locally sourced, and the use of different materials displays a degree of consistency attributable to the prevalence of a common architectural tradition. Although the quantity of decorative elements varies according to the location and circumstances of each building, stucco and brickwork decoration featuring vegetal (arabesque) and geometric motifs appears to be dominant in this category of buildings.

The entrances to these buildings generally contain similar components, including a pishtaq, platform, doorway, and vestibule (hashti). Entry into the buildings through these spaces was indirect, resembling traditional Iranian architectural practice, in which spatial hierarchy, privacy, and separation between exterior and interior were taken into consideration. The precise histories of the castles are not known. Some were repaired and reused several times over the course of time; nevertheless, in terms of construction and repair dates, they generally span a period from the early Safavid era to the First Pahlavi period. In some cases, occupation continued until the late Second Pahlavi period, and in others it continues to the present day.

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Authors' Contribution
This research is derived from the first author's doctoral dissertation. The primary data collection, encompassing all observational and analytical components, was conducted by the first author under the direct supervision and mentorship of the second author.

Conflict of Interest
The Authors declare that they have no conflict of interest regarding the Authorship or publication of this article.

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مطالعهٔ معماری خانه‌های اربابی در کهگیلویه

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چکیده

از گونه‌های رایج معماری متأخر تاریخی ایران، خانه‌های اربابی هستند که بیشتر آن‌ها در دورهٔ قاجار ساخته شده و موردتوجه حاکمان شهرها و روستاهای این دوره قرار داشتند. بیشتر خانه‌های اربابی منطقهٔ کهگیلویه، نوعی قلعه‌های دشتی محسوب می‌گردند که طی سده‌های متأخر اسلامی (از اوایل دورهٔ قاجاریه تا پهلوی اول) به‌دلیل ضعف حکومت مرکزی و هرج و مرج‌های ناشی از آن و نیز با هدف اقامت و سکونت خان‌های محلی و اطرافیانشان، احداث شده‌اند. طی بررسی روشمندی که در منطقهٔ کهگیلویه طی سال‌های ۱۴۰۲ الی ۱۴۰۴ توسط نگارندگان انجام گرفت، ۳۴ خانهٔ اربابی شناسایی گردید. از مهم‌ترین اهداف این پژوهش، در کنار تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌های حاصل از آن و بهره‌گیری از نتایج انتشارات صورت‌گرفته درمورد استحکامات تدافعی و قلاع، مطالعهٔ معماری بناهای مذکور می‌باشد. نتایج حاصل‌شده نشان‌گر آن است که در این بناها، به‌لحاظ جغرافیایی و تدافعی تپه‌های طبیعی و بلندی‌ها به جهت اشراف به مناطق پیرامون و توان دفاعی بهتر موردتوجه خاص بوده است. به‌لحاظ طرح، این قلعه‌ها دارای نقشه‌هایی با حیاط مرکزی و به‌صورت درونگرا و با ارتباط فضایی مشابه ساخته شده‌اند. تزئینات گچبری و آجرکاری با نقوش اسلیمی و هندسی از تزئینات غالب در این دسته از بناهاست.

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