

Mehdi DEHGHANI * (University of Jiroft, Iran)

Parviz HOSSEIN TALAEI ✉** (Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, Iran)

Explanation and comparison of the security position of castles in the development of the Zandiyeh period (with emphasis on Kermanshah Castle)

<https://doi.org/10.34739/his.2024.13.10>

Abstract: *During the Zand period (1751-1794), the spread of firearms, especially cannons, did not have much impact on the conquest of strong fortresses. Given the lack of comprehensive research on fortresses during the Zandiyeh period, the research findings indicate that urban and rural fortresses were the most important sites for the accumulation of resources and political power, attracting pretenders to the throne. Kermanshah Fortress was considered the most valuable fortress in the country due to its rich military stores, which led to the longest period of siege and field battles.*

Key words: Iran, Zand Period, Kermanshah Castle, Fortress, Security, Cannon

Introduction

Throughout Iranian history, the widespread lack of security, especially after the death of rulers or the collapse of the central government, led to the construction or fortification of fortresses around various cities and villages. The constant turmoil from the collapse of Safavid rule to the Zand period (1751-1794) made fortresses the most prominent centres of security; therefore, the present research attempts to examine the various and influential features of Zandiye period castles in the form of urban and rural fortresses, focusing on the military fortress of Kermanshah. On this basis, the above question is posed: What was the role and impact of Kermanshah Castle in the military-political events of the Zandiye period compared to other castles? During the Zandiye period, as in other eras, fortresses played a prominent role in ensuring the comprehensive security of population centres, while at the same time expanding aggressive and defensive methods against pretenders to the throne. The Zand

* ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7944-0030>. mehdidehghani@ujiroft.ac.ir

** Corresponding Author. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8846-9617>. parviztalaei@uk.ac.ir

government built and repaired other castles, including Kashan and Hamedan, to provide security and development.¹ It is also said that Karim Khan did not allow English merchants to build a fort in Bushehr because of European colonial attitudes.² The construction of the Khark fort was also such a failure for the Dutch that they gave up trying to conquer it again.³

The medieval castle was the residence of the king or lord of a particular country. The development of firearms in the 15th and 16th centuries CE led to the beginning of modern military fortification, with artillery defending the low walls of castles. Most castles were built on steep or rocky slopes, so natural barriers were the best defence.⁴ To date, little research has been carried out specifically on the Zand period, but there have been relatively similar and concurrent studies. In this context, the article by Mohammad Ibrahim Zarei should be mentioned, who wrote that after the destruction of Seneh Dezh, which occurred due to the conflict between the governor of Kurdistan and Karim Khan Zand, the people of this area settled in Hasanabad Castle.⁵ In the study by Mehdi Dehghani, attention was paid to categories such as Mawtan and Aqmari castles, each of which provided a suitable refuge to ensure comprehensive security for its inhabitants.⁶ In another study by Mohammad Ibrahim Zarei and Maryam Dehghan, the location of the ruined castle of Kermanshah was briefly mentioned in different historical and archaeological periods, sometimes based on speculation. According to aerial photo-graphs, the fort had three-cornered fortifications for the placement of artillery and its dimensions were 870 x 650 metres.⁷ In addition, Karimian Sardashti, in a study, based on speculation, examined a map of this castle kept in the archives of the Records and History Centre of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He considered the possible date of the map to be the Qajar period. This map is used in the present research.⁸ The author of *Iran at War: From Chaldaran to Imposed War* has discussed the importance of the artillery production and ammunition stores of the fortress of Kermanshah in guarding the western borders during the period of Nader Shah Afshar and its destruction by Mohammad Khan Zand. While noting the lack of heavy artillery in the Zandiyeh period, he also points to its limited use in the Nader Shah Afshar period due to problems of transport and troop formation.⁹ In this context, the study *Performance of Nader Shah Afshar Artillery Unit* examines the efficiency of Nader Shah's heavy artillery and its ineffectiveness in capturing the castle due to the rapid

¹ Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 374, 542.

² Chick, 2002: 126.

³ Niebuhr, 1975: 187.

⁴ Kleiss, 1990.

⁵ Zarei, 2013: 61-62.

⁶ Dehghani, 2019: 85-86.

⁷ Zarei & Dehghan, 2018: 209-225.

⁸ Karimian Sardashti, 2014: 85-92.

⁹ Farrokh, 2017: 120, 158, 168, 184.

restoration of the destroyed walls, the lack of skill of Iranian artillerymen and the presence of artillery.¹⁰ The lack of adequate research indicates the need for a historical study of the security role of fortresses during the Zand period, focusing on Kermanshah Castle.¹¹ In the present study, the historical research method is applied along with the use of primary library sources to describe the various characteristics of the deterrent function of the castle during the Zand period, followed by a detailed analysis and investigation of its multiple effects.

The security position of the Kermanshah Castle

In the last half of his reign, Nader Shah kept military equipment in strategic fortresses, the most important of which were Merv and Kermanshah, to face the neighbouring countries. The Afshar commanders used the artillery of Marv for the campaign to the Trans-Nahr and the fortress of Kermanshah for the campaign against the Ottomans.¹² Nader Shah's greatest effort was to reserve artillery equipment for a military confrontation with the Ottoman government, as the Ottoman army had the largest and best artillery to destroy the fortress. For this reason, Nader Shah built a strong fort on the slopes of Biston Mountain. The fort has a Jabkhaneh (ammunition store), a Quorkhaneh (weapons house), 1,500 large, medium and small cannons, badledges (a type of cannon) and nearly six hundred large mortars with a sixty-man bullet and six thousand Charwār of gunpowder.¹³ They fired the cannons that destroyed the castle with twenty-five grenades and black money, killing a large number of people at the same time.¹⁴

In 1746, Nader Shah appointed Amir Khan Topchi Bashi as commander of the fortress and ruler of Kermanshah with twelve thousand men.¹⁵ This appointment shows the central importance of artillery in mobilizing the population and collecting war supplies in Kermanshah. According to Rahmi Tatar, an envoy from the Ottoman court, the people were right to say that the ruler of Kermanshah was in fact Nader Shah's artilleryman.¹⁶

¹⁰ Dehghani, 2021: 31-33.

¹¹ In the first-hand sources of the Zandiyeh period, this castle is referred to as Kermanshah Castle, but in a later period this castle is referred to as Qal'a-ye Kohne or Ancient Fortress (Mar'ashī, 1983: 88; Golestaneh, 1965: 24-132).

¹² Marvi, 1985: 3/936, 966.

¹³ Each Charwār weighs 300 kg. The traditional unit of measurement of weight, equal to the amount of load that a donkey can carry.

¹⁴ Golestaneh, 1965: 24, 132, 225, 236.

¹⁵ Marvi, 1985: 3/1180. In his article on castles, Kleiss (1990) wrote about Kermanshah Castle: "Qal'a-ye Kohna is nevertheless considered to be an example of Iranian fortress architecture constructed according to modern, that is, imported, ideas, in contrast to the Portuguese fortresses on the road from Hormoz and the Dutch fort on Kārg island".

¹⁶ Riahi, 1989: 223.



Fig. 1. Kermanshah Castle / Qal' a-ye Kohne. Photo after Schmidt, 1940: 269, Pl. 111

Kermanshah Castle played an important role in the local conflicts and subsequent claimants to the kingdom, due to its ammunition stores, almost entirely non-native (Khorasani) soldiers and survivors of Afsharid rule. The fort's strategic location, close to Eilat Vand, Zandiyeh's main allies, meant that the Zandites took it seriously and maintained regional stability. Despite this, the night attack by the besieging army failed due to the fort's strength and the vigilance of its sentries and gunners. Mohammad Khan Zand launched an unsuccessful attack from three ambushes near the moat during the night, when most of the guards were on leave.¹⁷ The construction of successive and sometimes spiralling trenches with cannons was one of the strategies used to attack the gate of the fort, increasing the range of operations while blocking the defenders' supply routes. For example, Mohammad Khan Zand fired the artillery of the third trench, but the defenders prevented the gate from collapsing by building a similar embankment.¹⁸ The fort, with its long-range artillery, kept the inhabitants' herds at a safe distance for grazing, but night raids by trench gunners often succeeded in confiscating the defenders' cattle and supply convoys, leading to famine. For example,

¹⁷ Golestaneh, 1965: 229-230.

¹⁸ Vaziri, 1961: 362; Golestaneh, 1965: 232, 241, 252. With the siege of Shiraz Castle, Sadiq Khan blocked and embanked all the other gates except Baghshah Gate. Shirazi, 1986: 43.

by confiscating the castle's cattle, the invading horsemen rationed the supplies in the castle's stores.¹⁹ The lack of supplies led the Qala tribal leaders to ally with other local powers. For example, they asked Hassan Ali Khan, the governor of Kurdistan, Mehr Ali Khan, the governor of Hamadan, and Salim Khan, the sardar of Afshar, for help in confronting Eilat Vand, Kalhor and Zanganeh.²⁰

Kermanshah Castle's main allies in its conflicts with the Zandiyeh chieftains were royal claimants such as Azad Khan Afghan and Ali Mardan Khan Bakhtiari. These officials considered themselves superior to the Zandiyeh family because of their lineage and political and military status. However, all these alliances, including Ali Mardan Khan Bakhtiari's alliance with Mohammad Hasan Khan Qajar, failed due to inconsistency, lack of proper procedural coherence and fear of potential rivals coming to power. The failure of the military alliances and the prolongation of the siege led to the peaceful surrender of the castle to Karim Khan Zand. Karim Khan appointed agents for the peaceful expropriation so that the soldiers would not harm the people.²¹ The Turkmen clans were united around the fortress of Estrabad. The Turkmen and Qajar troops used night raids to starve the invading camp of supplies and livestock, and because they had no clear headquarters, they were safe from persecution.²²

The security position of Kermanshah Castle compared to other castles

Kermanshah, the richest fortress, took many years to surrender. The variety of its artillery made the defenders Maneuverable. In military formation, heavy artillery was placed in front of the gate outside the moat, with medium and small cannons in each tower.²³ However, some castles did not have proper defences and the defenders used whatever means were available. In Kerman, for example, they used slings and stones against the Lar camp. The weakness of the gunmen's weapons was addressed by the ruler of Taqi Durani, who hired a gunmaker (Qoli Tofang saz) and a gunpowder crusher (Mulaqli Baraut koub), which led to more accurate targeting. They were even able to assassinate Ali Khan Shahsavan, Karim Khan's commander.²⁴ The attacking camp used siege equipment, especially cannons, but due to a lack of technical skill and

¹⁹ The people of Kohmera used to deliver food to the residents of Shiraz Castle, but they were arrested and punished after Ali Murad Khan Zand informed them (Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 612).

²⁰ Golestaneh, 1965: 144-145, 153, 161, 216-217. Karim Khan placed guards at the gate of the castle of Urmia to prevent the soldiers from harming the people (Golestaneh, 1965: 329).

²¹ Mousavi, 1984: 34; Golestaneh, 1965: 185, 193, 198, 264, 266.

²² Golestaneh, 1965: 209; Mousavi, 1984: 28. The rulers of other castles also used allied forces to break sieges. For example, in 1755, Khosrow Khan Ardalan called on neighbouring tribes to gather at Senneh Castle to counter Agha Khan, an Afghan ruler (Sanandji, 1987: 149).

²³ Golestaneh, 1965: 225.

²⁴ Vaziri, 1961: 320 and 327; Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 265; Mousavi, 1984: 143. Taqi Khan Mustofi of Yazd, with the support of Bafqi gunmen, killed Mir Rafi Khan Arab Ameri, the commander of the attackers (Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 95).

the presence of similar weapons in the fortress, it was not very effective. For example, Lutf Ali Khan was unable to take Kerman Castle.²⁵

The immediate mobilisation of the inhabitants of fortresses such as Kermanshah, especially the master builders, as servants of the artillery, would result in the temporary repair of the bullet hole in the wall with earth pits.²⁶ As a result, cannon fire was more frightening and sometimes led to the surrender of defenders without cannons, a prominent example being the surrender of Lar Castle to Karim Khan Zand.²⁷

In the Zandiyeh government, it was customary for governors and their staff to live in urban houses, which was one of the reasons for the destruction of the citadel, but the ruler also destroyed the fortress to prevent the enemy from settling there. The most important example was the castle of Shiraz, which was destroyed by Agha Mohammad Khan to prevent the authority of the Zandiyeh dynasty. In 1755, Khosro Khan Ardalan also destroyed the fortress of Hassan Abad to prevent the establishment of Sheikh Ali Khan.²⁸ The construction, development and destruction of the castle depended on the establishment of security, and the rulers and inhabitants were involved in its construction and repair. For example, several hundred Arab families built a fortress in Ahvaz.²⁹ In 1784, Khosro Khan Ardalan repaired the fortifications at the beginning of the political chaos.³⁰ With the continuation of the period of peace and the increase in population, sometimes a wider wall was built for a castle like Kermanshah.³¹

Castles were built on the banks of rivers to provide water and essential supplies and to facilitate communication with allies, thus increasing resistance and aiding allies. For example, the inhabitants of Kermanshah Castle sent two swimmers from the Qarasu Gate to seek help from Ali Mardan Khan Bakhtiari.³² Estrabad Castle was on the banks of the Gorgan River and could not be fortified, so Karim Khan demanded peace talks with Mohammad Hasan Khan Qajar.³³

²⁵ Mousavi, 1984: 91; Shirazi, 1986: 76-77.

²⁶ Golestaneh, 1965: 257-258.

²⁷ Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 273; Azar Bigdeli, 1999: 482; Mousavi, 1984: 148-149.

²⁸ Shirvani, 1960: 533; Shushtari, 1984: 61; Mardukh Kurdestani, 2000: 356. Mohammad Khan Zand destroyed the castle of Kermanshah in three days to prevent the establishment of the Afghan Azad Khan (Golestaneh, 1965: 302). Zaki Khan Zand wanted to destroy Izadkhasht Castle on the pretext of not paying taxes (Franklin, 1979, 94; Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 479).

²⁹ Shushtari, 1984: 67.

³⁰ Mardukh Kurdestani, 2000: 365.

³¹ Kermanshahi, 1994: 1/187.

³² Golestaneh, 1965: 232.

³³ Azar Bigdeli, 1999: 119; Golestaneh, 1965: 207.

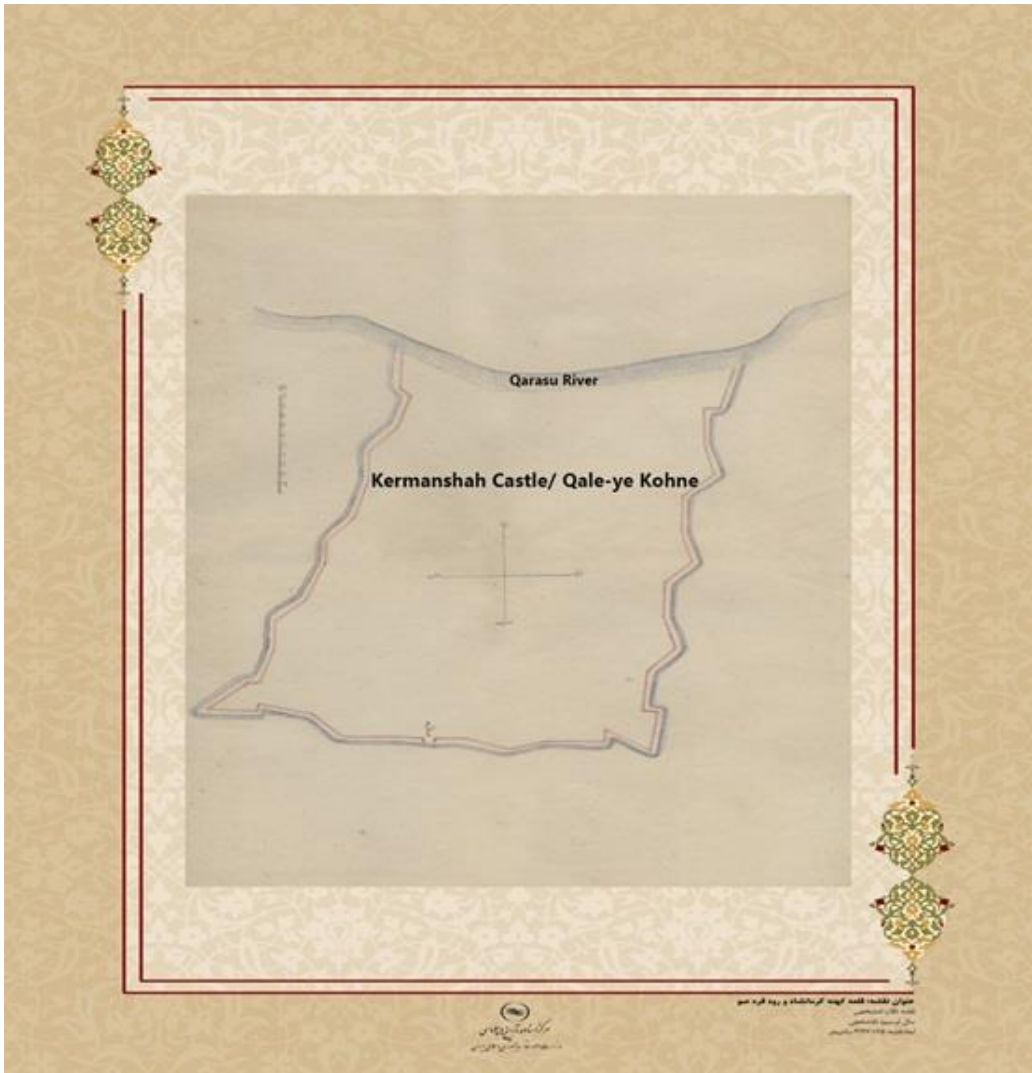


Fig. 2. Kermanshah Castle / Qal'a-ye Kohne (Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Diplomatic History and Documents Centre)

One of the effective functions of the proximity of the river is that it is easy to direct the water into the moats of castles such as Kermanshah and Shiraz. The waters of the river at Shiraz were diverted by a shotor galu³⁴ under the deep moats of the castle and citadel.³⁵

³⁴ This conduit is part (a branch) of the water supply system situated below the castles.

³⁵ Mousavi, 1984: 160; Golestaneh, 1965: 202; Olivier, 1992: 68. The Darian River (Do Dange) was a natural moat for Shushtar Castle (Sushtari, 1966: 22; Shushtari, 1984: 59). On each of the two islands in the De Jareh river there was a fortress (Niebuhr, 1975: 59).

Due to the height of Kermanshah Castle and the full fire of the artillery, it was not possible to use a ladder to capture it, so the efforts of the attackers led to a compromise; however, Kermanshah Castle, backed by its powerful artillery, was not willing to surrender to any of the claimants to the kingdom, including Karim Khan Zand.³⁶ These ladders were used to conquer the not so high castles in the central regions of the country, which had been destroyed due to their lack of strength and height and the movement of hostile armies, and there was no possibility of their complete restoration. Although direct attacks showed the bravery of the attackers, they often suffered heavy casualties from the bullets of the defenders. For example, Mohammad Khan Zand used a ladder to capture and destroy Valashjerd Castle in Hamedan.³⁷ Although the fortress was rebuilt, it was destroyed again a few decades later.³⁸ In 1750 and 1779, the castle of Tabre in Isfahan was easily conquered.³⁹ Another method of taking castles was to build an expensive and huge wooden ramp, which allowed them to dominate the castles and fire cannonballs into the walls. One of the limited instances of this was the siege of the castle of Mahmudabad in Yazd.⁴⁰

During long sieges, attackers sought refuge in safe places. The costliest of these was to build a city-like fortress. In 1761, for example, Karim Khan Zand surrounded the castle of Urmia with fortifications and moats, and placed his soldiers in castles with towers and various gates. From the towers and from the cannons on the hills, the riflemen targeted the houses of the defenders.⁴¹ However, due to the proximity of the city of Kermanshah to the headquarters of besieging commanders such as Mohammad Khan Zand and his artillery fire, a large fort was not built to besiege Kermanshah Castle.⁴² There was no separate prison during the Zandiye period. One of the peculiarities of the castle was the use of towers to hold disgruntled officials. For example, in 1752, Abdul Ali Khan brought the Kodkhodayans and elders of the city of Kermanshah to the fort as prisoners in a massacre.⁴³ During the time of Karim Khan's

³⁶ Golestaneh, 1965: 178, 186. For instance, Jupar Castle's location atop a hundred-meter hill forced the Afghan army to negotiate (Vaziri, 1961: 339).

³⁷ Golestaneh, 1965: 302-303. In 1764, Taqi Durrani conquered Kerman Castle using a ladder (Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 259; Mousavi, 1984: 141). In a similar incident in 1757, Karim Khan's army captured the fortress of Qaid Il Rachi in the middle of Ramhormuz and Jaizan using a ladder (Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 72).

³⁸ Rostam al-Hokama, 2003: 459.

³⁹ Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 613; Golestaneh, 1965: 172; Khatun Abadi, 1973: 575-576.

⁴⁰ Nāini, 1974: 420.

⁴¹ Golestaneh, 1965: 328; Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 179. For the long siege of Basra Castle, Sadiq Khan built a fortress with many bastions, similar to that which he built around Shiraz Castle many years later (Kohmarei, 2005: 20; Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 328, 581, 620; Mousavi, 1984: 188-189).

⁴² Golestaneh, 1965: 253.

⁴³ Golestaneh, 1965: 219.

successors, many officials were imprisoned in the towers of Shiraz Citadel.⁴⁴ Castles were also used to house the ruler's relatives and treasures. For example, Azad Khan settled the Afghan and Afshar families in the Urmia fortress, and Karim Khan organised a similar action by building the Pary Castle.⁴⁵

The fortress guards were organised into ethnic groups to protect personal and group interests. The links and shared interests between the groups were therefore transient. Their discontent during the famine led to collaboration with the besieging commander, a return to the tribal district, and sometimes a change in fortress rule. For example, with the announcement of Nazar Ali Khan's amnesty, the Bloc soldiers separated from the ruler, Taqi Khan. Some time later, the Mashizi guards, who were in charge of the government citadel and gates, blocked the Gebri Gate and arrested the ruler in front of Kerman Castle.⁴⁶

After the defeat of Amir Khan, the commander of the Kermanshah fortress, by Muhammad Khan Afshar, his generals sent him to Ibrahim Shah Afshar to express his obedience.⁴⁷ As the siege of Muhammad Khan Zand dragged on, one of the gunners of the Kermanshah fortress from the Zanganeh tribe, because of famine and his good service to Khan Zand, set fire to the gunpowder house. This caused the collapse of three towers and weakened the morale of the inhabitants.⁴⁸ Personal attraction and affiliation with the Ahl al-Bayt led to the legitimacy of the castle's ruler being linked to military groups. For example, the Khorasani and Attaullahi gunmen of Shahrbabak had a master-disciple relationship with the family of Seyyed Abul Hasan Khan and regarded him as an imam.⁴⁹ The commanders of the Kermanshah castle were able to maintain their independence on several occasions through political-military alliances, supported by the political and social influence of Mirza Mohammad Taghi, who was considered one of the Sadats of Golestan.⁵⁰

The mediation of scholars to peacefully relinquish power has long been a common method of capturing strongholds, especially in the face of public discontent and the domination of the victorious commander. For example, Zaki Khan, with the help of the widely respected Mirza Muhammad Ali Sadr, captured the castle of Yazd after

⁴⁴ Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 486; Golestaneh, 1965: 351; Franklin, 1979: 18. A similar example: Mirza Ebrahim, the sheriff, arrested and imprisoned the commander of Shiraz Castle, Barkhordar Khan (Jones-Brydges, 1977: 26-27).

⁴⁵ Golestaneh, 1965: 184, 273, 276; Mousavi, 1984: 34, 36-37. Shah Ismail III was kept under surveillance by Karim Khan at Abadeh Castle (Mar'ashī, 1983: 145; Chick, 2002: 124).

⁴⁶ Vaziri, 1961: 328; Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 267-268; Mousavi, 1984: 152. In 1752 AD, Mehr Ali Khan became the ruler of Dezful with the help of his followers and through the mediation of Haj Hosseini Agha (Shushitari, 1966: 153). Rais Ali Reza of Kodkhodayan Behbahan opened the Gate of Kasegaran after allying with Karim Khan and gained power (Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 73-74).

⁴⁷ Golestaneh, 1965: 26.

⁴⁸ Golestaneh, 1965: 251-253.

⁴⁹ Vaziri, 1961: 341-342.

⁵⁰ Golestaneh, 1965: 132-143-144.

the guards surrendered.⁵¹ The resentment of the elders of Hamadan, especially Seyyed Abdul Baqi Hosseini, against the ruler Masoum Khan led to their alliance with Ali Murad Khan Zand, and as a result the ruler surrendered.⁵² Abdul Ali Khan, the commander of the fortress of Kermanshah, handed over the captured women of the enemy to the Shaykh al-Islam and the Qazi of Kermanshah at the entrance to the fortress, to be joined by their families.⁵³

Strong and inexpensive materials such as stone and brick were used to build military fortresses such as Kermanshah and large cities. Rural fortresses such as Lawar, Tangsir, Khanik, Jarreh, Bushgan and Borazjan were built in the early Zand period. They were built mainly of mud, with less brick and stone.⁵⁴ They were square in shape with four round towers, and each tower, similar to a wall, had holes in two or three rows for shooting, which had only one gate because of the small population. Fortresses such as Tangsir and Khormooj were built close to villages so that the inhabitants could take refuge with their livestock and supplies during bandit raids.⁵⁵

In the event of defeat, the rulers of the central seats sought refuge in rural fortresses. For example, Mohammad Taqi Khan, the ruler of Yazd, fled to the fort at Mahmudabad.⁵⁶ Similarly, Nasir Khan Lari took refuge in the rural fort of Grash.⁵⁷ Abdul Ali Khan, the ruler of Kermanshah, fled to Kermanshah Castle after defeating Imam Qoli Khan Zanganeh.⁵⁸ Kermanshah Castle was located on the Hamedan-Kermanshah road, as were the fortresses of the great villages of the Zandiyeh period, which were built around towns or along the main roads.⁵⁹

The fortresses on the roads were of military and logistical importance and allowed the conquerors to dominate large areas. For example, in 1792, Lotf Ali Khan settled first in Joym Fortress and then in the larger Zarqan Fortress on the way to the supply blocks (Bayza, Khafarak, Maroodasht, Ramjard, Karbal and Rashmaiyan) and the city of Shiraz.⁶⁰ Kermanshah Castle was military in nature, and although it had the advan-

⁵¹ Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 96-97.

⁵² Ghaffari-ye Kashani, 1990: 543. The scholars of Yazd, led by Mulla Naeem and Mirza Alireza Qala Kahnei, were the mediators in the negotiations between Taqi Khan Hakim and Jafar Khan Zand (Nāini, 1974: 444).

⁵³ Golestaneh, 1965: 224.

⁵⁴ Niebuhr, 1975: 52, 57, 59, 168; Franklin, 1979: 15. The fort of Band Qir village was located near Shushtar (Shushtari, 1984: 65). During the chaos, the tribes of Azerbaijan settled in strong castles (Azar Bigdeli, 1999: 478).

⁵⁵ Drouville, 1991: 72; Niebuhr, 1975: 43, 47-48.

⁵⁶ Nāini, 1974: 420.

⁵⁷ Vaziri, 1961: 320. Hassan Ali Khan, the governor of Ardalan, used to travel from Sane Dej to the strong and well-stocked fortress of Qaratore (Mardukh Kurdestani, 2000, 351; Sanandji, 1987, 145). Haj Ali Qoli Khan, the ruler of Kazeroon, was on his way to Pauskan Qala (Kalanter-e Fars, 1965: 49).

⁵⁸ Golestaneh, 1965: 152.

⁵⁹ Nobuaki, 2005: 171.

⁶⁰ Shirazi, 1986: 89, 91, 93, 96. Mustafa Khan Qajar camped in the strategic fortress of Abadeh, on the communication route between Fars and Iraq, to monitor military developments in Fars (Shirazi, 1986: 87).

tages of both urban and rural castles, it had no social or economic links with the surrounding villages. Unlike other castles, in the event of an invasion, the inhabitants of the surrounding areas would take refuge in the castle with their provisions, giving the attackers no chance to resupply. For example, during the attack of Azam Khan Afghan, the people of the surrounding gardens fled to Jopar Fort.⁶¹ As far as possible, the ruler will bring all the surrounding grain and fodder to the fort to prevent a prolonged siege and to provide supplies. For example, Abdul Ali Khan, commander of the fortress of Kermanshah, and Jafar Khan, ruler of the castle of Shiraz, took a similar action.⁶²

Tab. 1. The security position of the Kermanshah fortress compared to other fortresses in the developments of the Zandiyeh period

<p>The security position of the Kermanshah Fortress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Storage of artillery equipment for military confrontation with the Ottoman government - Almost non-indigenous troops (Khorasanis) and survivors of the Afsharid rule - The strategic location of the fort due to its proximity to Eilat-Vand - Construction of trenches by the attackers - Reciprocal night raids - Protecting the fort's artillery from defenders and livestock - Causing famine in a long siege - Alliance with local powers and pretenders to the monarchy
<p>The security position of Kermanshah Castle compared to other castles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of weapons of war such as cannons, ladders, hawalas and mortars. - Housing of relatives, prisoners and treasures in the fort. - Construction of a fort on the river bank. - Ethnic classification of the fortress guards. - The attraction and attribution to the Ahl al-Bayt is the reason for linking the legitimacy of the ruler with the guards of the castle. - The mediation of scholars for the peaceful surrender of the fortress. - Fortress-like villages. - Village fortresses are the shelters of the governors of the populated centres. - The importance and prosperity of military and logistical rural castles on busy roads. - Joining the people to the victorious commander.

⁶¹ Vaziri, 1961: 339. Because of the space and wide enclosures of the Shushtar fort, villagers lived there with their livestock (Sushtari, 1966: 22; Shushtari, 1984: 59).

⁶² Kohmarei, 2005: 24; Golestaneh, 1965: 230. Amir Goneh Khan Afshar destroyed village houses and took their inhabitants and supplies to the fortress of Khormouj (Niebuhr, 1975: 47-48).

Conclusions

During the Zand period, political instability led to widespread insecurity in towns and villages. As a result, old forts were repaired or new ones built around densely populated centres. The fort at Kermanshah, however, was purely military in nature. The distance and proximity of the castle to the busy roads had a significant influence on the political and social fate of the inhabitants. The castle was the centre of the political establishment or the source of financial and military supplies, and was taken into consideration by royal and local claimants. Lack of sufficient strength or more destruction for the castles of the communication routes of the central cities of the country and more strength and political stability for the peripheral cities with less traffic. Tools of war (such as artillery, ladders, trenches, hawala and morchel) and methods such as night raids, alliances and coups were used to attack or protect fortresses. However, the presence of artillery in Kermanshah Castle was the most important factor in preventing its immediate capture and in tightening the siege ring. At the same time, the most important method of capturing a castle was the long-term siege of the invaders, especially by building city-like fortresses, which led to famine and betrayal of the guards. There were two ways to conquer castles: violently, through conquest, or peacefully, through the mediation of prominent scholars in the city. However, a strong bond between the ruler and the guards, as well as collaboration with allied factions, sometimes led to famine and the retreat of the invaders. The distinguishing features of the Kermanshah Fortress compared to other fortresses in the country were its purely military nature, the political and personal influence of Mirza Mohammad Taqi Khan Golestane in forging military alliances, and the cohesion of the army, which was loyal, almost non-native, and survived the Afsharid period. It also had a powerful artillery, which withstood the attacks of Zandiyeh's generals for a long time. In general, despite the destruction of the Kermanshah fortress and the decline in the production of heavy artillery, due to factors such as the existence of a harsh climate, poor communication routes and the lack of necessary skills among Iranian artillerymen. Even during the Afsharid period, the lack of heavy artillery did not have much effect on the future battles of the fortress.

Bibliography

Sources

- Azar Bigdeli, L. (1999). *Atashkadeh [Bibliographical Dictionary of Biographies and Works of Poets]*. vols. 2. Tehran: Amir Kabir. (in Persian)
- Ghaffari-ye Kashani, A. (1990). *Gulshan-i murad [History of the Zandiyeh Dynasty]*. Tehran: Zarrin. (in Persian)
- Golestaneh, A. (1965). *Mojmal al-Tavarikh [The Collection of Histories and Tales]*. Tehran: Ibn Sina. (in Persian)
- Kalantar-e Fars, M.M. (1965). *Ruznameh-ye Mirza Mohammad Kalantar-e Fars [Description of the events in Fars Province]*. Tehran: Sanayi and Tahouri. (in Persian)
- Kermanshahi, A.A. (1994). *Mir'at al-ahwal-i jahan-nama [A detailed travelogue to the cities of Iran, Iraq and India]*. vols. 2. Qom: Ansarian. (in Persian)
- Khatun Abadi, S.A. (1973). *Waq'a'i' al-sinin wa l-a'wam [Annual Reports on the History of Creation]*. Tehran: Eslamiye. (in Persian)
- Kohmarei, Z. (2005). *Risaleh-i Tadabir-i Shah va wazir [About Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar and his Minister]*. Tehran: Markaz-e Nashr-e Daneshgahi. (in Persian)
- Mar'ashī, M.M. (1983). *Majma' al-Tavarikh [The Collection of Histories and Tales]*. Tehran: Sanayi and Tahouri. (in Persian)
- Mardukh Kurdestani, Sh.M. (2000). *Tārīkh- i Mardoukh [About the history of Kurdistan and the Ardalan family]*. Tehran: Karang. (in Persian)
- Marvi, M.K. (1985). *Alam Arai Naderi [Life of Nadershah Afshar]*. vols. 3. Tehran: Elm. (in Persian)
- Mousavi Nami Isfahani, M.S. (1984). *Tarikh-e Giti Gusha dar Tarikh-e Khandan-e Zandiyeh [The most reliable historical documents of the Zandiyeh dynasty]*. Tehran: Eqbal. (in Persian)
- Nāini, M.H.(1974). *Jame'e Ja'afari [History of Yazd during the of Nadr, Zand and the Fath Ali Shah Qajar periods]*. Tehran: Anjoman-e Asar-e Melli. (in Persian)
- Rostam al-Hokama, M.H.A. (2003). *Rostam al-Tawarikh [The events of the era of the kings from the Safavids to the Qajars]*. Tehran: Donyaye Ketab. (in Persian)
- Sanandji, M.Sh. (1987). *Tohfe-ye Naseri [On the history and geography of the state of Kurdistan]*. Tehran: Amir Kabir. (in Persian)
- Shirazi, I.A. (1986). *Tarikh-e Zandiyeh [History of the Zand Dynasty]*. Tehran: Gostareh. (in Persian)
- Shirvani, M.Z. (1960). *Riyaz al-Siyaha [An Encyclopaedia of Sufism, Mysticism and History]*. Tehran: Saadi. (in Persian)
- Shushtari, M.A. (1984). *Tuhfat al-'ālam va zayl al-tuhfah [A historical and geographical travelogue of the countries of Iran, Iraq and India]*. Tehran: Tahouri. (in Persian)
- Shushtari, S.A. (1966). *Tazkirah-i Shushtar [About the history of the state of Shushtar]*. Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press. (in Persian)
- Vaziri, A.A. (1961). *Tarikh-e Kerman [About the history of Kerman State]*. Tehran: University of Tehran. (in Persian)

Literature

- Chick, H. (2002). *Gozareshe Carmelitha az Iran dar Doreye Afshariyan va Zandiyeh [A Chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia: The Safavids and the Papal Mission of the 17th and 18th Centuries]*. Tehran: Ney. (in Persian)

- Dehghani, M. (2019). Jaygah va Naqshe Siasi-Amniyatiye qelae Khorasan da Doreye Afsharian [The location and political-security role of Qala Khorasan in the Afsharian period]. *Journal of Police Historical Studies*, 6(20), 69–88. (in Persian)
- Dehghani, M. (2021). Amalkarde Vahede Toupkhane Nadershahe Afshar [Performance of Nader Shah Afshar Artillery Unit]. *War Historical Studies*, 5(2), 29–51. <https://doi.org/10.52547/HSOW.5.2.29> (in Persian)
- Drouville, G. (1991). *Safar dar Irān [Voyage en Perse]*. Tehran: Shabaviz. (in Persian)
- Farrokh, K. (2017). *Iran dar Jang: az Chaldoran ta Jange Tahmili [Iran at War: From Chaldaran to Imposed War]*. Tehran: Qaqnos. (in Persian)
- Franklin, W. (1979). *Moshahedate Safar az Bengal be Iran [Observations made in a tour from Bengal to Persia in the years 1786-7]*. Tehran: Boniad-e Farhang va Honar-e Iran. (in Persian)
- Jones-Brydges, S.H. (1977). *Ākarīn rūzhā-ye Lotf- 'Alī Kān Zand [History of the Kingdom of Lotf Ali Khan Zand]*. Tehran: Amir Kabir. (in Persian)
- Karimian Sardashti, N. (2014). Naqshe Tarikhiye Qale Kohneye Kermanshah [Historical Map of Qale-ye Kohne Kermanshah]. *Asar*, 71, 85–92. (in Persian)
- Kleiss, W. (1990). Castles. *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 5(1), 65–70.
- Niebuhr, C. (1975). *Safarnameye Carsten Niebuhr [Travels Through Arabia, and Other Countries in the East]*. vol. 1. Tehran: Tuka. (in Persian)
- Nobuaki, K. (2005). *Persian Documents (Social history of Iran and Turan in the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries)*. London: Routledge.
- Olivier, G.A. (1992). *Safarnamehye Olivier [Olivier Travelogue]*. Tehran: Etelaat. (in Persian)
- Riahi, M.A. (1989). *Sefaratnamehaye Iran [Seven reports on the travels and missions of seven Ottoman ambassadors to Iran]*. Tehran: Tous. (in Persian)
- Schmidt, E.F. (1940). *Flights Over Ancient Cities of Iran*. Chicago: The University of Chicago.
- Zarei, M.I. (2013). Baresiye Sakhtare Meamariye Dej-Shahr ya Qale Hasan Abad [Investigating the architectural structure of Dejshahr or Hasanabad Castle]. *Journal of Archaeological Studies*, 5(1), 49–68. (in Persian)
- Zarei, M.I.; Dehghan, M. (2018). Baresiye Tarikhi va Bastanshenasiye Qaleye Kohneye Kermanshah [Historical and Archaeological Survey of Qale-ye Kohneh Kermanshah] *Iranian Archaeological Research*, 21(9), 209–225. (in Persian)

To cite this article: Dehghani, M., Hossein Talae, P. (2024). Explanation and comparison of the security position of castles in the development of the Zandiyeh period (with emphasis on Kermanshah Castle). *Historia i Świat*, 13, 157–170. <https://doi.org/10.34739/his.2024.13.10>



© 2024 The Author(s). This open access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY-ND) 4.0 license.