

~~ABBĀSĀBĀD~~, flourishing caravan station of the Safavid period. It was located 92 km southeast of Varāmīn in the Sīāh-kūh, and it lay on the Safavid royal highway which led from Isfahan to the Safavid fortresses in Māzandarān. The itinerary was: Isfahan - Dombī - Čahārābād - Sardahān - Qal'a-ye Sangī - Kāledābād - Āb-e Garm - Safidāb - 'Abbāsābād - Rāh-e Sangfarš (a causeway across the salt desert) - Rasma - Aminābād - Firūzkūh (Gadök) - Pol-e Safid - Sārī - the fortresses of Farahābād and Ašraf. 'Abbāsābād is notable for the remains of four constructions of the Safavid period.

1. The Kārvānsarāy-e Šāh 'Abbāsī is a freestone building with brick dome, strongly fortified with angle towers (thirteen-sided) and wall towers (nine-sided). It is a caravansery of medium size, 67 m along its principal (north-south) axis, 73.5 m along the transverse axis. The principal axis is terminated by a gateway at each end. The building has twenty-two guest rooms, each entered through a small front *ayvān*; these rooms are oriented toward the central, four-*ayvān* court (38.5 by 30.5 m). One of the rooms in the west *ayvān* is a more elaborate, two-storey space for special guests. There are three extensive stables with domes above their main entrance (on the north) and corner areas. The structure has no preserved inscriptions. Judged from its plan, however, and on the basis of the masons' marks used by Shah 'Abbās I's court architects in Isfahan, the caravansery may have been built at the beginning of the 17th century.

2. Kārvānsarāy-e 'Ayn-e Rašīd lies on the caravan route 3 km southwest of Kārvānsarāy-e Šāh 'Abbāsī, on the way to Safidāb. (There is also an older brick building, heavily damaged by earthquakes, near a saline spring.) This caravansery was built before the Šāh 'Abbāsī. It is of average size: 52 m along its principal, west-east, axis; 56.5 m along the transverse axis; and it forms a court (25 by 20 m) with four *ayvāns*. Round towers fortify the walls and their angles. Inside, stables run continuously around the building. There are twenty-four guest rooms fronted by small *ayvāns* and facing the court. Again there are two gateways at opposite ends of the principal axis. The site is watered by a sweet water spring in the Sīāh Kūh. The building can be assigned to the early Safavid period on the basis of architectural details.

3. The Ḥaramsarāy is about one km south of the Šāh 'Abbāsī. On three sides (covering an area of 52 by 50 m) it encloses a square court (37 m on a side), while on the north side two great halls flank an *ayvān* which opens into the court. The west and south sides of the building open only onto the outside. Water is brought in along the principal (north-south) axis through canals from, ultimately, a spring in the Sīāh

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