

The Lambsar Castle: from Foundation until now

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Abstract

Since the earliest days, in the southern and northern foothills of the Alborz mountain, several castles were constructed, which the history of some of them is belonged to pre-Islam era. Local kings have built strong and impenetrable castles to protect their life and property. The importance of these historical monuments is obvious for everyone. The most important way of understanding the past of nations and people is to know their monuments. The Lambsar castle is the largest, strongest, and most beautiful castle of Sasanian in Iran, which is located in the center of eastern Alamut, about two kilometers northeast of Razmian. The access is impossible from east and west due to the deep valleys of Nineh river and "Lamme-dar", and the north and south fronts are the only possible ways to get into the castle. The castle area is about ninety thousand square meters. There are several opinions regarding the construction date of the Lambsar castle. Some believed that the main building of the castle was built at early Islam or goes back to pre-Islamic (Sassanian period) and some believed that at Ismailis Alamut era.

This research is carried out based on a combination of historical, documentary, and field study. The researchers has studied to find the Lambsar castle construction date, to know what happened on it during the history, and who have been living in it? What role did this castle play in the era of the Alamut Ismaili's? The castle's construction date is attributed to before the era of Ismailis of Alamut. Although the castle glory goes back to the age of Hasan Sabbah. Since the late fifth century until the middle of the seventh century, this castle was one of the development centers of Ismailis state.

Keywords: Lambsar castle, Alamut Castle, Ismailis, Seljuk period, Strong castle, Western Alamut.

Introduction

In Iran, it is hard to find the cities without fortifications. The castles of Balakh, Bukhara, Samarkand, Nishapour and Marv are probably the oldest fortifications of cities. The castles that were exist instead of "Arg" are located on the altitude of cities, and were the establishment place for the kings or place of governors and their children.

Since the oldest days, numerous fortresses were built in the southern and northern foothills of the Alborz mountain range, which the construction dates of some fortresses goes back to pre-Islamic era. The powerful kings and monarch that had local governments have tried to construct the inaccessible strong fortresses and strongholds for themselves and their followers, or to conceal their own precious treasure and to shelter their wealth.

Rebel, insurgents and the people who have new thoughts or have been opposed by the great kings, have been trying to get ready castles or to construct fortresses in suitable places and give shelter to use them. Ismailis should be considered from the last group, which got the old castle from their owners and re-built them to extend their idea and invitation¹.

The access is impossible from east and west due to the deep valleys of Nineh river and Lamme-dar, and the north and south fronts are the only possible ways to get into the fortress. The largest, firmest and most beautiful castle of Ismailis in Iran is the Lambsar castle, which is located in western Alamut, and the access is impossible from east and west due to the deep valleys of Nineh river and Lamme-Dar, and the north and south fronts are the only possible ways to get into the fortress. The foothill of the mountain with a difference of one hundred fifty meters on both levels is stretched from north to south with a length of four hundred eighty three meters and width of one hundred ninety two meters². The main building of castle is attributed to the pre-Islamic era. After seizing this castle on Wednesday night at twenty Dhū al-Qa‘dah at 489 AH¹, Kiya Buzurg Ummid reconstructed and developed it. The relics that left in the Lambsar castle are including massive stone walls more than two shells with a height of ten meters. The main building in the northern part of the fort with a thickness of one meter and twenty centimeters was made of carved stone walls, amazingly huge reservoirs of water and crops in the south and south-east of the castle, several towers and water supply system that every viewer is amazed.

The initial castle inhabitant in historical texts is unknown. Nevertheless, because Lambsar was a military fort and was known as the key of Gilan mountain, so its initial inhabitant were troops under the command of Sultan Deylam and Gilan. This castle was the first checkpoint from the south to Gilan and the traffic have been checked here. The soldiers were from the local inhabitant or Gilan. The king appointed castle commanders and all the inhabitants of the castle were under their commands.

In the reign of Hassan Sabbah, the castle inhabitants were people from Reshamog and Lamsalar races, which were mentioned in Jami' al-tawarikh, Tarikh-i Jahangushay Joveini and Tarikh-i guzida (Hamid Ullah Mustaufi). Perhaps the name of the castle came from the "Lamsalar" race, where they had been there. However, its inhabitants, Reshamog and Lamsalar and their relatives who were more obedient and subordinate have disobeyed at that

Islamic Calendar ¹

time and wanted to give the castle to Ali Nushtegin; Saiyedna (Hassan Sabbah) was satisfied that Rashamvaj asked the other fort and saved the Lambsar for himself, but he refused⁴. Kiya Buzurg Ummid sent Kia Bu Ali and Kia Karshasof. Both Reshamog and Kalkhadhad fought with weapons and were killed by Kiya Buzurg Ummid and the castle was conquered. The castle was on the ruins on the mountain with a few destroyed buildings, and had the hot climate. Saiyedna ordered to construct new building and some gardens in the castle. Then, the climate became well and the castle was strengthened, as it was the best castle in the entire world. Although, the people of Lambsar area were disobedient, finally all of them became obedient. Saiyedna devolved the castle to Kiya Buzurg Ummid, and he had lived for twenty years in the castle until Hassan Sabbah called him to the castle of Alamut⁵.

Historical geography of Rudbar Lambsar

According to nearness of the castle to Razmian, its longitude and latitude are 50.12 and 36.32, respectively. Razmian height from the sea level is 975 meters⁶ and a height of castle is approximately four hundred meters above Razmian, so the height of castle is almost one thousand three hundred seventy five meters above the sea level.

Rudbar like Alamut is the environs of Qazvin. It means this region is located in the west of Alamut and east of Ammarlou, and the Rudbar of Qazvin is for differentiating with Rudbar of Gilan, which is in the west of the Sefidrood in north of Manjil (in contrast, the Gilan-Rudbar is also called Rudbar-olive or Rudbar-Sefid). Shahrud was achieved by joining two major branches of the Alamut river and Abe-Taleghan, and Ammarlu passed through the middle of the here poured into the Üzan⁷. Until the seventh century, the entire region from east to west of central Alborz valley was called central Rudbar. From Anbuh to Picheh-Bon was called Rudbar. Since the eighth century, due to the popularity of Alamut castle, Rudbar name was changed to Alamut or Rudbar-Alamut⁸.

From ancient times until now, Rudbar people have access to Gilan through mountain roads. One of the factors that affects this traffic, except exchange of goods and employment, was existence of the Lambsar castle that has been always attracted the attention of the Gilan kings, since this castle was the key of Gilan mountain, as noted by Dr. Sotoudeh. The most important routes include:

(a) Hir and Viar rout: In the past, the most traveled ways from the castle to Gilan were Hir and Viar, Separ Deh, Lashkan Koshayi, Bargah Dasht, Garmab-Dasht, Jir-Kal, Sefid-Ab, Rahim Abadwhite and Rahim Abad, which connected Rudbar of Qazvin and Ashkvar of Gilan to each other.

(b) Anbuh-road rout: Zahiruddin Mar'ashi, the author of Gilan and Dylamstan book, has written about this rout; since evening praying time, we started to move from Lamsar and as the road was long and it was snowy, we arrived to the Anbuh at night praying time, to go Deilaman⁹.

Zahiruddin Mar'ashi mentioned several times about the Lamasar-Rudbar and Rudbar-Alamut. This showed that the Alamut region had two Rudbar in the past. The one that is now called western Alamut in the country subdivision, which was called lower Rudbar or Sefli or Rudbar-Lamasar. The other one was from Garmaroud-sefli to Shahrak, which was known

upper Rudbar or Olyia. The center of Rudbar-sefli was city and the one for Rudbar-Olyia was town¹⁰.

Rudbar-Lamsar area is the mountainous land and is the trail in a series of different Alborz range. The mentioned ranges are crossing the Talesh and Gilan and is extended parallel in both side of the Shahrud to each other from west to east and connected to the Taleghan and Alamut mountains and foothills. The Rudbar climate in the highlands and on the foothills is mild. The flat part that located on two sides of Shahrud has mild climate in winter, but in summer is hot and uncomfortable¹¹.

In the past, Rudbar was considered as a part of Deylam during the reign of the powerful Shia of Gilan and Tabarestan, as some historians have known the position of the Alamut castle on the highest hill of Daylam. According to the writings of geographers such as Mostowfi in *Nezhato-Al-Gholub*, the mentioned area with the Rudbar Alamut and Taleghan was called Rudbar-Shahrud until about the eighth century, but later, because of the importance and popularity of the Alamut castle¹², the Alamut name was given to all the current area. Until the sixth and seventh centuries, Rudbar was the entire area that is now referred to western and eastern Alamut¹³.

Seyed Zhyraldyn Ben Sydnsyraldyn Marashi that was the major general of Lambsar castle in the year 872 AH mentioned several time about Rudbar-Lambsar in a book of "Gilan and Dylamestan", and this indicated that during the glory time of Lambsar castle, this region was called Rudbar-Lambsar. While a large part of Tabarestan was called Ruyan, it was also part of this land. According to Istakhri (fourth century AH), a part of the Ruyan that stood on the southern Alborz range was administered from the Ray center, and the northern part of it from Tabarestan.

With this interpretation, the region of western and eastern Alamut was a part of the Ruyan¹⁴ on that time. In subsequent days, the southern part of the Ruyan, Rudbar and Taleghan were separated and have joined to the Qazvin and Tehran. Yaghut mentioned; Royan was the mountainous areas of Tabarestan, and Amol was the flat area and lowlands area of the beach. There were good buildings and orchards in the Ruyan¹⁵. After the defeat of the Ismailis from Holaku, this area has been under the authority of the local independent dynasty of Iran northern; i.e. Kia'I Hazaraspids.

During the Ismailis, Rudbar was seized. Then, Kiya Buzurg Ummid have been the governor of Lamasar, one of the three famous castle of Ismailis, and two other famous, Hassan castle and Meymon-Dezh castle (in the 495). Apart from these castles, many other castles were attributed to this region. Hamdallah Mustawfi in the book of *Nezhato-Al-Gholub* mentioned; Rudbar is the province that Shahrud passes through it and is located six miles north of Qazvin. About fifty strong castles are there and the best of them are Alamut castle, Meymon-Dezh and Lambsar. Although the Rudbar climate is mostly tropical, its cold climate is close. In one region barley have been harvesting and in another region have been planting. Rudbar people have considered themselves Muslims. The Divan salary was eight thousand dinars.

Bernard Lewis noted that, there was no governor in Rudbar town and city. People were living in townships and villages and have complied a local governor. Ismailis tried to get supporters among these elders and villagers¹⁷.

Review of History of Ismaili and Alamut castle

Prior to Hassan Sabbah, Batenian movement had been started in Iran and had influence on it. In Khorasan, Mohammad Nakhshabi invited people to this movement and most of the Nakhshab accepted the invitation. Then, Nakhshabi went to Bukhara and Hassan Malek, Ali Zarrad, and Ahmad Samani joined to the Batenain¹⁸. Bu Ali Simjur accepted his creed at the time of Sultan Mahmoud Ghaznavi¹⁹, and this creed created Naser Khosrow, Iranian enlightened poet.

In this region, missionaries such as Abdol Malek Atash Iraqi, Bunjem Seraj (Isfahan) and Amir Zarrab were existed, which all of them have been effective in changing the life of Hassan Sabbah²⁰. Ismaili followers called their leader Sheikh al-Jabal, which means the old man of mountain, and Marco Polo mentioned about him like this. The aim of Hasan Sabah from the foundation of the Nizari state, was to fight against the Seljuk. Because he knew that, the Fatimid caliphate of Egypt, which was dominated by Badrol Jamali, was not able to defend the Ismaili of eastern regions²¹.

Hasan was tactful and powerful man and he knew about geometry, arithmetic, medicine, astrology and the occult. His spiritualism and piety have been described. During the 35 years that he stayed in Alamut, no one was drinking wine in his property visibly. He was also the author and mastermind²². Here, we can point out his biography and summary of a theological treatise from his writings²³.

Hassan Sabbah was in Alamut castle in the year 483 AH and received the invitation from Egypt. Then with the help and assistance of Taj al-Mulk²⁴ have began to invite. Taj al-Mulk gave him money²⁵ with which to purchase the castle of Alamut. Hassan Sabbah claimed the Shia and assisting the Prophet's companions and promised his followers to dominate and circumfuse throughout the world²⁶. He stayed there anonymously and named himself headman of a village, and began his invitation and called it new invitation. From the terms of the treaty of peace of Sultan Sanjar with the Hasan-i Sabbah: after unsuccessful assassinate of Hasan-i Sabbah, the first condition was that not to construct new fortress, not to purchase military equipment and keep weapons, and the third one was that not to invite people to other belief. Instead, Sultan Sanjar stopped the Ismaili castles siege and the war²⁷.

Finally, Hassan Sultan Sanjar was languished during the month of Rabi al-awwal, year 518 AH (May of 1124 AD), and sent someone to the Lambsar castle and determined Buzurg Ummid as a succession and he died on Wednesday night, Rabi al-awwal 518 AH (1124 AD). This was the end of the life of a great and wonderful Arab²⁸.

After Ismailis were encamped in the Alamut castle, they selected governors for themselves and eighty of them governed from 483 AH to 654 AH, for one hundred and seventy years, as follows: Hassan Sabbah, Kiya Buzurg Ummid, Mohammad Kiya Ummid, Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Hassan, Jalal al-Din al-Nur al-Din, Aladdin ibn Jalaluddin and Rokneddin ibn Alaeddin²⁹.

The successors of Hasan-i Sabbah continued government until the attack on Alamut in 654 AH by Holakukhan, then the Nazaria were distributed in the different areas of Iran, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan, and the other duration of concealed Imams in this cult

began. Iranian Ismaili were known as new Ismaili or Nizari Shia. As they accepted the pontificate of Nizari, Khodavandan-Alamut or Kiya-Alamut state was founded³⁰.

Ismailis of Alamut at a glance

	Governor name	Accession (Hijri calendar AH)	Died
1	Hassan Sabbah	6 Rabī' al-awwal, 483	6 R, 2 year 518
2	Kiya Buzurg Ummid	518	26 J, 1 year 532
3	Muhammad ibn Buzurg Ummid	532	3 R, 1 year 557
4	Hassan ibn Muhammad ibn Buzurg Ummid (also known as Ali Zekr Al-Islam)	557	6 R, 1 year 561
5	Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Buzurg Ummid	561	10 R, 1 year 607
6	Jamaluddin Hassan bin Mohammad (New Muslim)	657	15 Ramadan, 618
7	Alaeddin Mohammed bin Jalaluddin Hassan saidmazkur	618	End of Shawwal, 653
8	Rokneddin Khurshah Ben Alaeddin Mohammed	653	After Shawwal 654

R: Rabī' al-awwal & - J: Jumādā

The history of the Alamut castle in the days of Hassan-i Sabbah and his successors

In history, whenever the army has besieged the Alamut castle, the Lambsar castle was often besieged too. These two castles were interdependent to each other. The history of Alamut gives us good information about the Lambsar. Thus, we give the following brief history of the Alamut castle.

Sultan Malek Shah sent Arsalan-Tash with the army to Hassan Sabbah. Arsalan-Tash made the war hard for Hassan due to the just seventy men in the castle. Abu Ali Ardestani sent three hundred men from Talegan and Ray to help Hasan to defeat Arslan-Tash army³³.

In the year 485, Bu Taheri Arani killed Nizam al-Mulk, the minister of Malekshah, and Sultan died in Baghdad shortly. After Sultan Malek Shah, his sons, Kiarag and Mohammad were disagreeing with each other on the throne, and did not follow Hasan. Finally, Muhammad ibn Malek Shah came to the throne and sent Ahmad Nizam with division to Rudbar to fight with Hassan. Sultan troops were fighting in the castles of Alamut and

Lambsar for a long time, and destroyed the grain and fired the castle until they were distracted and decided to return.

Atabak Nushtekin Shirgir in year 511 AH besieged the Lambsar and Alamut castles on the orders of Sultan Mohammad Malek Shah. The siege lasted ten months, which the death of Sultan ended it. Sultan troops were distributed and Hassan Sabah were got comfortable. Overall, during the reign of Sultan Mohammad Malekshah, Ismaili castles, especially the Hassan Sabah Castle, Lambsar, was under siege for eleven years³⁴. Hassan Sabah lived for thirty-five years in the castle of Alamut (from 483 to 518 AH) and he never went out from the castle more than two times. The rest of the time, he was reading books in his room and have governed the affairs³⁵. After Hassan, Kiya Buzurg Ummid has been the successor of Hassan Sabbah in Alamut, and then six of his children continued of Alamut government until the year 654 AH that Rokneddin Khurshah killed by Holaku Khan and the Alamut reign was ended.

Holaku appointed Bulgay to besiege the Alamut castle. Mogaddam, the head of the castle disobeyed of Khurshah and did not surrender the castle, but he finally made peace with Bulgay. After receiving safe-conduct from Holaku, Mogaddam gave the castle to them and Mongols went to the castle with Rokneddin and smashed the catapults and doors of the castle. The inhabitants of the Alamut castle requested three days to move out their property and assets, and in the fourth day, all of the Mongol armies came to the castle and plundered whatever they found³⁶.

Lamyshe Castle (Lamsar -Lambsar-Lame Sar)

This name is supposed to be composed of two components, "Lamb + Sar" and also have seen in the form of Lambsar and Lamsar between the two components, "Lamb+Sar". Lam means the flat land, so Lambsar or Lamsar must be meant hill or smooth and level height. Meanwhile, on the top of the Lambsar, there is a piece of flat land over four hundred and fifty meters and a width of one hundred and eighty meters³⁷.

This castle was one of the most extravagant castles in the world and still some relics are remained. The castle was built with stones, big stones that the weight of some them reached three hundred Kg. There were eight towers around the castle, which two of them remained, and each tower is eight meters height. Eight thousand horses and soldiers could live in the castle. The location of ammunition and food supplies are several arches were built like rooms next to each other, and all of them still remained³⁸.

The disadvantage of the castle during the attack was the north part, which Zard-Chal and Garm-chal Mountains are joined to this part. So one of the gates of the castles was built in this side of castle, and the guardsmen were protecting in the towers of the gate constantly to avoid the enemy attack. In the top of the castle, there is a piece of sloping land, which was a suitable place for the construction of high buildings. It is four hundred and eighty three meters from north to south and its width from east to west is one hundred ninety two meters, and from the east, south and west is ended to the dreaded abyss. Rising from this abyss is almost impossible even for expert climbers. The Nineh river has less slope from the east side. For this reason, there is the thick wall with large stones, which part of it remained until now, and the wall is almost twenty meters long and ten meters height.

About Lambsar castle and the construction date of first part of the building, Ata-Malik Juvayni has mentioned; Maluk-Daylam that was called Arjestan or Ale-Jestan, one of them in the year 246 AH began to build on the mountain (Alamut) and Daylam have been proud of it, and it was a support for Ismailis Shia³⁹. Its construction dates probably goes back to pre-Islamic and Sasanian era. The especial position of the castle versus the Deylam area fortifies the assumption that the castle construction has been began since Sasanian era, but the main development of the castle is belonged to the time of castle seizure by Ismailis. By Hassan Sabbah order, many constructions have been carried out. Gutter was built in the stone to deliver the water to the castle from the Nineh River at a fifteen kilometers distance, and then gardens were built inside the castle. All of these constructions have been done during twenty years after the castle conquest.

Joveini wrote, "Lambsar castle is the in Rudbar-Alamut and its inhabitants did not accepted the invitation of Hassan Sabah. He sent furtively one of his friends, Kiya Buzurg Ummid, with group of Molahedeh to the castle, on Wednesday night at twentieth Dhū al-Qa‘dah, year 495 AH, to kill the castle residents. Kiya Buzurg Ummid stayed twenty years in the castle until he was recalled"⁴⁰. Mostowfi mentioned that the castle seizure year was 489 AH. One of the success of Ismailis was the conquering of the Lambsar castle, which was done with attack and bloodshed. Lambsar castle has a strategic position and is located on the cliff, which is overlooking Rudbar. The conquering of the castle was strengthened the Ismailis throughout the Rudbar region⁴¹.

With a look from top of the castle, it can be realized its high stability and impregnability. The installation of catapults in deep canyons is impossible or, if possible, the long distance made its effect neutralized. Therefore, Lamasar and Gerd-Kuh have been able to withstand the enemies long time and did not surrender. Then, this castle was highly favored in all of the Ismailis war, Seljuq dynasty, and in the local battle of the Deylam and Gilan.

The method of water supply in the Lambsar castle:

The interesting part of the castle is the conduit that it can be clearly seen until now. The conduit entered from the north of the castle into water reservoir, which is a rectangular cube with a length of five meters and eighty centimeters and a width and deep of one meter and ninety centimeters. There are thirteen storages, which were used to store grain and water. The water storages have been dug in the rock. Three other water storages can be seen in the outside of northern and eastern walls of the castle. During the siege, roofed water reservoirs or those that have been dug in the stone, were the drinking water supply of the inhabitants of the castle. In the last sloped land of castle, in a stretched stone from east to west, few water storages were dug in the rock, and the largest water storage in this row is about twelve meters in length. In the distance between the water storages, the water track in the rock still can be seen clearly. The narrow streams of water is pouring from a warehouse to another; while the water was flowing in the north channel of the castle and then water reservoirs have filled one after another. These reservoirs were not only the water storage of Lambsar castle, because in the bottom of the eastern wall of the castle, where the water storage tanks have been dug in the rock, there is an covered channel with one meter and ninety centimeters height with uneven stairs that reached to the edge of the river. The width of the cover is ninety five centimeters and the diameter of vault (arc) is just over thirty centimeters. Now, this covered

area has been accumulated with soil and rock. The rural around there called this water rout “Wolf and Ewe”⁴². Overall, the Lambsar castle is the strangest fortress that I have ever seen. This is vital to repair it and keep one of the relic of past glory forever⁴³.

Ms. Freya Stark wrote about water reservoirs inside the castle: “By the time the castle has been inhabited, many other water storages were inside the castle to store the water. Some of them has a layer of mortar inside them and have arcuate cover on them. Others are only just a hole that was dug in the rock. Two types of water reservoirs around the Ismailis castle have been seen in sahyan in Syria.”⁴⁴ I counted the number of water reservoirs and found thirteen water reservoirs. The number of reservoirs may be more which is more likely to be filled gradually by natural climatic factors. Without a precise and scientific follow-up and drilling, one cannot understand the grandeur and mysteries of this castle. A world of unknowns about this ancient castle lied beneath the soil.

It seems that other characteristics of complex water systems are existed in Lambsar. It was mentioned that when Kiya Buzurg Ummid seized the castle, he repaired and constructed it. He ordered to construct the water channels to achieve better and more to the Nineh River. The channel was constructed from a distance of approximately sixteen km from the castle, which some part of it is still existed. This reflects the skill and ability of the Ismaili architects. The water supply, which was achieved later, was enabled Kiya Buzrug Ummid to irrigate many trees and gardens, and he prided himself for this. The water storages that described above are likely to meet the needs of the fortress even during one-year siege after the fall of Alamut⁴⁵.

Lambsar castle gates

The castle has two gates: (a) the South gate: the south gate floor is about one hundred and fifty meters below the north gate, and remained better. The gate includes two doors behind each other and the level difference is about six meters. The first door is opened to the west and there are two high towers on both sides of the gate, which over six meters of left tower is remained. By entering into this gate, the rout is meandered and leaded to second door that is beside the guardsmen room. The walls and arches are two carved cubic shape stones.

(B) North gate: The north gate is approximately one hundred fifty meters higher than the southern gateway, which was built in the worst point of Lambsar. Because Zard-Chal and Garm-chal Mountains are on the north side of the castle, while the southern, eastern and western foothills of the mountains are separated from the Lambsar castle. The guardsmen always have cared in the towers either side of the north gate to avoid the enemies attack. The important buildings of Lambsar are just below the north gate of the castle.

The building from the Quran view point and its relationship with Islamic architecture

The need for shelter is a material, spiritual and innate need. There is a need within humans and this is the self-motivation to build and create. God says in the Holy Qur'an: "And God has given you in your homes habitats for you, and has provided for you out of the hides of livestock portable homes for you, so you can use them when you travel, and when you camp; and from their wool, and fur, and hair, furnishings and comfort for a while⁴⁶. The following is also stated: And God has made for you shade out of what He has created, and has given you

resorts in the mountains, and has given you garments to protect you from the heat, and garments to protect you from your violence⁴⁷.

In the history, the construction of settlements over high mountains were to protect life and property of tribes, and religious groups that had similar beliefs. Looking at the history of architecture, the effect of person deviations from its nature can be seen in different forms such as arrogance, domineering, avarice, and desires in the architecture.

Roman made buildings for their enjoyment, which slaves were preyed by the lions. Egypt pyramids were built by the blood of thousands of slaves to be the tomb of the people knew it as their God. It is more interesting that these monuments are the eternal buildings of the human architectural history. Prophets of God were appointed to guide these people to achieve their goals, and those who have deviated from the right path, and to provide them with the righteous servants to fulfill their purpose. The human is involved with outside and inside of it to form his or her thought. Here, human using the revelation of holy thought and dealing with nature is starting to build, house, mosques, schools, markets and castles. Hence, we can say that the holy spirit prevailing in the Muslim architect revealed in any geographical area, and this gives them unity in different parts of the world from north Africa to east Asia.

The architectural of wall, defense towers of the castle

Although the defensive towers of the castle were damaged, they have preserved the control and superiority to the surrounding valley and south flatland and sloped land of the castle. The towers, the ruins of the castle wall and the dangerous cliff around the walls dazzled the audience eyes and got their admiration. Western rampart and its towers related to the eastern rampart has not enough strength, because the deep cliff of this side is the best defensive fence. On any sharp protrusions and small mountains, small towers were built and the average distance between the towers is about hundred meters. The southern and eastern ramparts are still remained. This rampart was built along the edge of the mountain with some rocks and because the volume of rocks is smaller in some parts of the rampart, it can be concluded that this rampart have been repaired and refurbished at different times. The eastern wall is very large, strong and has two shell and enormous gap between the two shells have been found that is likely to fall shortly. Access to the castle is very easy from the north, because Lambsar mountain is joined to the northern ranges and Zard-Chal is in this ranges, which the water stream were dug in the rock and the water of Nineh river is brought from near the Darband to the castle.

Logically, as this side of the castle is sensitive, there should be built strong wall or a deep ditch. Digging ditches avoided the flowing of water to the water reservoirs that were built in the lowest part of the castle, since there is sign of towers. Therefore, we can guess that the buildings in this area have been destroyed. In terms of architectural, the building of the castle is to the eastern. The rooms were built facing the east. The used materials to build the walls, battlements, buildings and towers are stone, rocks, mud, lime and gypsum. The roof was built of stones like walls. In many parts, the roof is made of the mortar. The windows are very small and there are doors across the room that opens to the corridors. The roof of the doors are also made of stone, which is a crescent-shaped, and the thickness of walls is over one meter. For this reason, this building has been able to be stable against the earthquakes and atmospheric changes.

Lambsar castle buildings

On the sloping and surrounded land of the castle, many ruins of buildings can be seen. Some of them were made of mud and brick and are very new. The main buildings of the Lambsar are just under the north of the castle. These buildings occupied a space as long as thirty-five meters and twenty-five meter. A tower was built at the area in the southeast angle. The remaining buildings in the southern part is remained better.

In this part of gate, the room is narrow, which was made to eastbound. Within the rooms, the doors are opened to the corridors. The broken crescent of roofs were built of carved stone and are still remained. The length of this room is five meters and seventy centimeters and the width is one meter and ninety centimeters. There are small windows and the sites of the hinges of the doors and windows still can be seen on the stones.

The thickness of the walls is one meter and twenty centimeters and were built of the large pieces of stones. At the outside of the rampart of the castle, there is no sign of the building, except the two ruin towers in the western part that was built with smaller stones. The windows and doors of the towers remained. The top of the niches in the inner building, which were made of single stone, was made of concrete in these two towers. The main floor of the castle has remained without changes, since the wastewater channels of the castle are still remained at a same level with the castle floor. Apart from the described buildings, there are other rooms that have multiplicative arches within the rampart of the castle, which half of them have been buried under a rock and the original map can be prepared by excavating⁴⁸.

Lambsar castle conquering by Holakukhan Mongols

In Rudbar Alamut, the two Alamut and Lambsar castles refused to surrender and ignored their king order, Rukn al-Din Khurshah, however, the governors of Alamut castle had changed their mind after a few days and were surrendered, but the Lambsar castle was resisted⁴⁹. All of the Ismaili castles in Rudbar and Alamut were surrendered and the Mongols have destroyed forty castle. The only castle that stood and did not surrender was the Lambsar castle. The strength of this castle and its strategic location helped it to resist against the Mongol army more than a year. Finally, the Mongols surrendered this castle. To capture the Lambsar castle, Holakukhan moved from the town to the Rudbar and encamped in the Mansour garden⁵⁰ in the south of the castle, which is located at a distance of almost one kilometer. Holakukhan with his army stayed in the Lambsar castle until the inhabitant of the castle may be surrendered without a fight, as it did not result, Tayer Buga with Mongol army besieged there, and Holakukhan went to Qazvin with Rukn al-Din Khurshah at the sixteenth day of Dhu al-Hijjah year 654 AH⁵¹.

Rukn al-Din Khurshah in year of 655 AH was killed in return from the Mongolian capital "Karakorum" to Iran⁵². The Lambsar castle has resisted another year, but it finally surrendered by Mongol in 656 AH (1258 AD)⁵³. In the most ancient books including the "Zebdo Al-Tavarikh" from Jamal al-Din Abul A. Kashani (736 AH), " Jami' al-tavarikh" from Rashid-al-Din Hamadani, it was written that the outbreaks of cholera was the reason of

the castle that was surrendered. This has two meanings; this disease has been naturally spread or happened unnatural. Some believed that the water castle was infected with cholera bacteria and due to the illness of the inhabitants; they have been forced to surrender the castle. However, I have not seen in original history books. Some European writers have expressed such legends.

Current situation of Lambsar castle

Peter Willey with a group of researchers visited the castle Lambsar in 1355 SH². He introduced the castle so; "the attractive drainage divide of Lamasar was in sight of groups and they immediately found that this castle is different with other castles that they previously had seen. Lambsar is one hundred forty meters higher than the Shahrud-bed, while the Meymon castle is among the rocks and the Alamut is in the cliff and the Nuyzer-Shah castle is on the great cliff. This castle has occupied too much area and is placed in circular rocks that is about thirty degrees slope, so it is possible to quickly write full details of its path. In addition, this castle is less in trouble than other castles by the Mongols. From the top city village can see the trench in end of north mountains, and on each side of a mountain foothill, the ruins of the towers, walls and other fortifications can be observed. The Lambsar castle protected the Alamut valley in an appropriate manner from the attack through the Shahrud valley, so it was important in the overall defensive system of Assassins."⁵⁴

He also wrote; "The main large door of the castle is located at the western and is relatively small and is two meters height and one meter width and is below the two large towers, which were probably used for informational purposes. The internal communication system required that there are two or three other similar towers beside the gate. Some small round holes have been dug beside the water reservoirs that the girder placed within them. Awnings were made with the help of these girders to avoid the evaporation of water by sunlight or to prevent contamination by dirt and dust. The reservoirs have five meters deep and sometimes are three or four times larger and the channels width is fifteen to twenty centimeters. Water was brought from the river, and there is a tiny tower beside the river, which protected a gigantic tunnel that has been dug inside the mountains approximately five hundred and forty meters. This tower overlooks the river and includes a vent at the top of it, which the water is rinsed with buckets."⁵⁶

In the north of the collecting water area and small guard's border, there are stables, which can be seen from any point in the castle. The current building was built on the ruins of the old stables and the new one has been built from mud and brick and its foundation is stone. Even, if larger dimensions can be considered for the main building, it cannot hold a large number of horses and mules.

The main trench is near the northern end, which is well maintained. This is the place that Kiya Buzurg Ummid lived in the simple style. The one-story buildings was made of stone and the walls were built with rubble. The entrance of building has a circular room, which there are two rooms inside it. The left room has a beautiful arch and has three meters height and two meters width, and four meters length, and the wall thickness is one meter and twenty centimeters. The floor of rooms were filled with brick and pottery in full. There are probably

other rooms or reservoirs behind the guarding building. The Lambsar castle is very large and vast, almost ninety thousands square meters. Unfortunately, the inattention has caused the massive castle and extensive relics Lambsar go into any more damage.

Around the castle mountain, pomegranate trees, grapes, local shrubs and numerous plants including the "fence" can be found in abundance. Razmian people believed that pomegranate and grapes trees has left since Kiya Buzurg Ummid era. As Juvayni has mentioned in *Tarikh-i Jahangushay*, in addition to the conquest of castle in 495 AH⁵⁷ by Kiya Buzurg Ummid, gardens were created in the castles and its climate has changed to fine weather from hot climate.

Most of the walls are large rocks. The used mortar between the stones are stucco. Some of the internal structures were made of stone and mud. In the northern part of the castle on several stone walls, mud brick walls can be seen. In the northeast of the castle, there is a wall with a length of ten meters and a height of more than three meters and in some part due to destruction of the wall, the height is less than three meters. Then, we reach to the rocky mountain and after it reaches to the double layer walls, which many authors have written about it. Currently, the walls are stood. The mountain of this part that is over the Nineh river has less slope, so huge and thick wall with a large rock were built that is about forty meters length and ten meters height. Most of the upper crust were collapsed, but from the middle of the walls, the two layers are quite evident. Namely, the wall was built, and then another wall behind it had created to prevent the destruction in enemies' attacks.

Most of the southern walls were collapsed. The southern gate tower is still remained and is very beautiful and attracts every viewer's attention to the past architecture. The west walls and towers strength is not great related to the eastern rampart, because the deep cliff of this side is the best defensive fence. On the other side, the small towers were built on every promontory, and the average distance of these towers is about hundred meters. The southern and eastern walls of castle still stands, and are along the edge of the mountain, which were built with some rocks. Therefore, it can be concluded that this castle has been repaired and refurbished at different times. From the north side, the walls trace are clear, but it was difficult to determine them. There is no sign of strong fortifications, towers and buildings in this part, as they have been completely eliminated. Although the battlements and walls of the castle are partly destroyed, it is not possible to enter the castle except the north and south of the castle.

From the inner walls of the castle can be understood three construction points. The first one is under the northeast gate, which two rooms are remained. These rooms' ceilings were covered with stone, plaster, and soil like anticline⁵⁸, and now regarding the several tons of soil and rock cover them still retains its strength. The remaining of carved stone indicated many buildings. The southern part of the building has remained well. At the southeast angle, a tower was built. The rooms were built eastbound. Within the rooms, there are doors that are opened to the corridors. Broken crescent of the vault that was built of stone is still remained. The length of this room is about six meters and a width of two meters, and has small windows. The thickness of the walls is one meter and twenty centimeters and it was made of large pieces of hewn stone.

The second part of buildings are in northeastern that have several rooms and all rooms have arches that are multiplicative arc. Length of these rooms are six meters and their width are a little more than two meters and has small windows that are wider than outside. Architecture and materials used in these buildings are same as the buildings of the north gate. There are multiple rooms, which have been located consecutively. Now, four or five dilapidated rooms are clear, which all of them were built facing the east, and the rest of rooms were buried and the original map can be prepared by excavating. In the east part, the traces of tower is remained. There is a Howz under the eastern wall of the gate, which has been excavated on the large slate.

The third part of the buildings are located in the south of the castle. Almost hundred meters above the southern gateway, several buildings are remained. In past times, the original castle's gateway was the southeast one, as the south route is smoother than the northern one. Due to the falling of walls of the southern route and lack of rout traffic, the sidewalk was destroyed. The southern buildings were stable⁵⁹ that was the place of horses, mules and donkeys, sheep and cows. The buildings of this part primarily are located in the entrance of the castle and secondly are in the lowest level of the castle. Logically, here was the animals keeping place. The area of this ruin is very large and now except several walls, mounds and stones on each other nothing are remained and the original map can be prepared by excavating.

Conclusion

In ancient times, monarchs and governors were building strong and impenetrable castles to protect their lives, property, family and friends. The inhabitant of cities have used the ramparts and towers to protect and shelter their life, and most of the fences were to protect their property and the lives of their wife and children. Villagers were sheltered to the fortress and castle in need of emergency case. The rural landowners were paid to build forts to protect their lives and properties. Rebellious and rebel were trying to catch fortresses in the impassable area, and to reach their political, social and religious goals. Hasan Sabbah and his successors should be considered among them. Hasan-i Sabbah has chosen the Alamut-Rudbar with study and evaluation of the different regions of Iran to accomplish his plans, which one of the most important one was religion advertisement. Rudbar and Alamut area inhabitants were ready to accept his religion, because Hasan Sadat and Zaydi have been already there before Hasan-i Sabbah, and people of this region had a special devotion to Imam Ali and his children.

By the study of valid historical source, it can be concluded that the construction of the Lambsar castle returns to the Sassanid era. As it is clear, buildings of Sassanid era were made of mud and clay. In examining the underlying structure of buildings and the remaining walls, the materials of Sassanid era have been observed, which proved that construction of the castles returns to the Sassanian era. Cultural heritage experts and researchers opinions are that the history of these castles returns to the pre-Islamic and early Islamic era. Now, the materials that can be seen in the castles building are stones, plaster and mortar. The remained materials and monuments of the castle indicate that the castle has been renovated several times in the different periods. The castles have been repaired in Daylamites and in the Ismailis era, while the Kiya Buzurg Ummid relieved the castle and renewed it. This indicated that the castle is

belonged to earlier years and perhaps Justanids, which have governed in Rudbar and Tabarestan. They repaired and restored the castle, and have built the Alamut castle, which later became known to Hassan Sabbah castle.

The Lambsar castle, that some called it the key of Gilan mountain, it protects the Alamut castle from the west side. Without this castle and soldiers, Hassan Sabbah could not resist against multiple attackers and made the government. Lambsar castle has a strategic position and is located above rocks, which is overlooking Shahrud city. Conquered of this castle strengthened the power of the Ismailis throughout the Alamut region, and played an important role in the establishment, perpetuation and propagation of the Ismailis at Alamut.

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