



## DARVĀZA TEPE

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**DARVĀZATEPE** (or Tall-e Darvāza), a village site in the southeastern Kor river basin, in Fārs province, occupied in three stages from 1800 B.C.E. to 800 B.C.E., according to radiocarbon dates of the finds, and characterized by an essential continuity in both architecture and other aspects of material culture. Above virgin soil three levels of occupation have been discovered; in each small irregularly shaped rooms are situated around large, open courtyards. In the most extensively excavated level (phase III) two perpendicular streets divide the settlement into quadrants. Several kilns and what are thought to be “drying racks” are evidence for pottery manufacturing at the site.

Of the ceramic assemblage 93 percent is Shogha (Šoḡā) ware, apparently made at the site (Vanden Berghe, pp. 42-44; Sumner), and a little less than 7 percent Taimuran (Teymūrān) ware. The former is a coarse, handmade ware, probably formed around other pots, as many of the interiors show fabric impressions. The limited corpus of shapes includes bowls and jars with plain or slightly everted rims, handled cups with plain rims, spouted “teapots,” and scoops or trays. Freehand designs are painted in black. Major motifs include geometric (cross-hatched diamonds) or naturalistic (birds, fish, goats on mountains) designs painted on an empty field on the body of the vessel; they are enclosed by successive bands of geometric minor motifs, for example, horizontal lines, garlands, and zigzags, which begin at the top of the vessel. Taimuran ware is wheelmade and high-fired; distinctive carinated bowls and jars are coated with a buff slip and carefully painted with horizontal lines, probably applied while the pots were on the wheel. Although Louis Vanden



Berghe considered Taimuran ware a late development from Shogha ware, it occurs in all three levels at Darvāza, decreasing slightly in frequency over time.

From the radiocarbon dates Darvāza seems to have been contemporary with the Qaleh (Qal'a) levels at Tal-e Malyan (Malīān) 80 km to the northwest (see [CERAMICS viii](#)). A few Qaleh sherds have also been found in the later two occupation levels at Darvāza. No Kaftari (Kaftari) pottery (found below the Qaleh levels at Tal-e Malyan) has been found at the site. There is, however, a broad resemblance between the Malyan and Darvāza corpuses: Shogha and Kaftari pottery are roughly similar to each other in motifs and shapes, though Kaftari pottery is almost certainly wheelmade; more important, each bears a similar stylistic relations to associated Taimuran and Qaleh wares respectively. The latter two are finer than their Shogha and Kaftari counterparts, with a much more limited range of motifs, among which horizontal lines predominate, and each constitutes a very small percentage of the overall corpus.

Surface surveys in the Kor basin indicate that Shogha sites are located mainly east of the river, whereas Qaleh sites are clustered in the west. Kaftari pottery is found at sites throughout the basin; the Qaleh and Shogha sites are fewer and smaller, indicating a declining population. Imported goods from the Persian lowlands, epigraphic material, and such luxury items as copper and bronze decorations, so common in the preceding Kaftari period, are almost absent from Qaleh and Shogha sites. Whether the provincialism of these sites relative to Kaftari sites is diachronic, representing a “contraction” or adaptation to self-sufficiency; synchronic, representing a shift in population from village to city; or both is unclear. It was breached but not broken by the establishment of a Middle Elamite outpost at Malyan in 1200 B.C.E. Darvāza, however, remained an isolated village until the first influx of Indo-Europeans in the 1st millennium B.C.E.



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