



EMĀM ŠĀḤEB

EMĀMŠĀḤEB, two archeological sites in Afghanistan.

1. A village near the south bank of the Amū Daryā (q.v.), about 50 km north of Qondūz, 37° 11' N, 68° 55' E. At the north of the village stand the ruins of an octagonal mud brick fort over 220 m in diameter, built over a massive octagonal rampart rising about 20 m above the plain. The site may be of ancient origin and the rampart itself Sasanian or earlier, but what remains above the rampart dates mainly from the 9-11th/15-17th centuries. Parts of the mud brick walls remain, and ruinous circular towers, probably of the Timurid period, rise to about 8 m. The towers had chambers on at least two levels, with wooden floors and flat roofs protected by battlements. The main entrance to the fort is on the west and is flanked by two of the better preserved towers. Inside the fort there were a number of large buildings, some probably covered with Timurid glazed tiles, whose sherds litter the surface. A number of the buildings had two or more stories, and some had double shelled domes, common in Timurid and post-Timurid architecture.

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2. A village in the Jōzjān region, south of the river Balkāb (q.v.), halfway between Balk and Āqča (q.v.), 36° 40' N, 66° 30' E. Near the village are several archeological mounds, the remains of Sasanian and Islamic settlements. Only a few have been investigated and none excavated. The most outstanding monument is the early Islamic tomb of Bābā Ḥātem (q.v.). About 5 km northwest of the village is Qūš Tappa, also known as Gobaklī Tappa, a circular mound with a square fort to its east. The mound, about 10 m above the level of the plain, seems to have been walled and may have been a Sasanian town, with the fort, apparently detached from the town, functioning as the citadel. While the rampart of the fort appears to be Sasanian, the upper parts, now mostly in ruins, seem to have been reconstructed during the Ghaznavid and Ghurid periods. Inside the town and the citadel are ruins of mud brick walls of early Islamic buildings. About 3 km west of the village is Tappa Ṣalā or Tappa Kōš, a site that seems to be of Islamic origin, dating from the 2nd-3rd/8-9th century. The settlement may have been abandoned for some time but was re-occupied briefly in the Timurid period. The site is a large and irregular mound about 10 m above the level of the plain, with sherds of all periods of occupation scattered on the surface. Some of its pottery has been studied by the Délégation archéologique française en Afghanistan, but no report has been published.

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