



GANJ-'ALĪ KHAN

GANJ-'ALĪ KHAN, a military leader and governor of Kermān, Sīstān, and Qandahār under Shah 'Abbās I (996-1038/1588-1629). He was present at the head of his Kermānī forces in many battles (e.g., against the Uzbeks in 1006/1597, in Khorasan in 1011/1602, against the Ottomans in 1013/1604). He also put down the rebellion in Baluchistan in 1020/1611 and captured the Bampūr stronghold. He is also reported to have participated in the Georgian campaign of 1025/1616 (*Ehyā' al-molūk*, p. 418).

Ganj-'Alī Khan is best remembered for his building activities that included the Zayn al-Dīn caravansary in Yazd, the Kabūtar-ḵān caravansary, and the rain-fed Ḵān cistern in the middle of Kavīr-e Lūt between Khorasan and Kermān. His major monument, however, is the Ganj-'Alī Khan complex in Kermān. The complex includes a large (31.5 x 23 m), rectangle caravansary with numerous chambers on two floors. A translucent marble on the entrance door bears Ganj-'Alī Khan's name in an inscription by the calligrapher 'Alī-Rezā 'Abbāsī, which is dated 1007/1598. The architect was Ostād Moḥammad Yazdī. A small mosque (5.25 x 5 m) was constructed in one corner of the caravansary; parts of its engaging plaster decorations are still in place. The caravansary faces a large open area (99 x 54 m).

There are three *bāzārs* in the complex. The Bāzār-e Mesgarī (98 x 6 m), formerly known as Ḵān Bāzār, stands before the mint (*ẓarrāb-ḵāna*) and borders the caravansary on the south, north, and west. Another large *bāzār* (93 x 5.75 m) with seventy-five shops is located in front of the bathhouse. The third *bāzār*, a small one (43 x 5.5 m), faces the cistern. The three *bāzārs* house



183 shops, most of which have back room storage and open entry space. The entire complex is around 3,500 square meters.

The bathhouse, considered a masterpiece of architecture, was completed in 1020/1611 and functioned principally as a public bathhouse until fifty years ago. It has six separate changing rooms for the various social classes: the *sayyeds*, clergy, khans, wealthy merchants, and the common people. From the changing rooms one enters the bath proper, an area of 46 x 30 m. The ceiling of the bath was originally covered with fine marble that admitted light from the outside. Later marble was replaced by glass. Water from an underground channel (*qanāt*), which the Khan himself twice excavated and was known as Šahrābād, flowed out in the city square and fed the city cistern. Although the cistern was built in the time of Ganj-‘Alī Khan, it is known by the name of his son ‘Alī-Morād Khan, whose name is in the inscription. The cistern (19.5 x 10 x 9 m) can hold some two million liters of water. The date of completion, 1029/1619, is recorded in the chronogram *lab-e jahān-ī az īn berka mišavad sīrāb*.

After the death of Ganj-‘Alī Khan in Qandahār in 1034/1625, the government of Kermān and Qandahār went to his son ‘Alī-Morād Khan, who remained in this post after the death of Shah ‘Abbās I (1038/1629) and the accession of Shah Šafī.