

and, in spite of the debris which has fallen in from its domed roof, is still 17 feet deep. Its sides show courses of cut slabs where the layer of soft sandstone needed strengthening. At one of the cisterns still retaining their domes, channels neatly cut into the adjacent rock surface show the care taken to collect all rain-water. At the north-eastern corner of the plateau an isolated rocky knoll contains a roughly cut small chamber, and at its foot on the east a row of small quarters cut into the rock extends for a length of 40 feet. Their outer wall is formed by live rock standing to a height of 4 feet and above this by rough masonry set in mortar. The end room has a shelf cut into the rock and two small windows splayed inwards.

A narrow rocky ridge close to the eastern edge of the ravine bears a small Muhammadan burial-ground. The graves, all orientated from north-north-west to south-south-east, are cut into the rock surface after the fashion observed at the Tīz cemeteries,³ or else they are practically superterranean, being formed by long slabs of sandstone placed along the sides and by others rising slightly higher at the head and foot. A second small cemetery adjoins the rocky knoll above mentioned, and a third is found close to the south of a ruined dome, of which the walls, 3 feet thick, still rise to a height of about 12 feet. This dome stands above the large cistern near the gate, and has an internal diameter of 21 feet. It can scarcely have been anything but a Muhammadan tomb. I may add that in the vicinity of the same cistern masses of shattered rock show where the walls of a complex of small quasi-troglodyte rooms have been thrown down in confusion, perhaps by an earthquake.

The evidence of the broken pottery plentifully found all over the plateau and particularly near the gate agrees with that of burial-grounds in pointing to prolonged occupation probably from early Islamic times. Besides glazed ware in plain blue and dark green, it comprises pieces showing incised scroll patterns under a mottled green glaze, such as found at Tīz and Gīti. There are numerous fragments of a hard cream-coloured fabric showing coarsely painted patterns in a dark reddish brown (Lesh. 11, 13-15; Pl. XXVI), or else flat ribbing. Fragments of fine porcelain decorated in blue are obviously Chinese. Among the pieces of glass bangles, Lesh. 4 (Pl. XXVI), with small raised spots of yellow and green, deserves mention as recalling fragments similarly decorated from early sites in British Makrān.⁴ The elaborate construction of so large a number of cisterns makes permanent occupation certain during earlier times. But the previously noted coarse repairs of the defences point to the natural strength of the site having caused it to serve at a later period also as a temporary place of refuge for the inhabitants of the small hamlets scattered along the edge of the Mihrakān marsh.

³ Cf. above, p. 89.

⁴ Cf. *Tour in Gedrosia*, pp. 63, 94, 123, &c.