

# DEFENSIVE FORTIFICATIONS IN SOME OF THE EASTERN ISLAMIC COUNTRIES

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## ABSTRACT

*Eastern Islamic Countries had a great importance in various fields to the Islamic State in the Abbasid Era in general because they represented the eastern side for the Abbasid State which was five centuries and a half old. Those countries were represented by towns that contained fortresses and citadels that protected them from external dangers and attacks. For this reason those fortresses and citadels had been rehabilitated and developed from time to time. The fortresses that surrounded those cities differed from each other, from a town to another, in thickness, strange and nature of the building and this made them more important in a way or another.*

## PREFACE

The country is blessed with great political, economic, social and cultural importance. The country was surrounded by numerous fortresses and fortresses of great importance, which had a clear impact on many aspects. It was necessary that these cities, which had fortifications that needed to be preserved or repaired, The city in various aspects was also talc defensive means that surround the city several types of buildings and weapons, and those are the towers were towers of great importance in the means of fortification of the city were those towers beside the fortress or fortress was most of the fortresses that surround the cities equipped with Towers and those cities that had towers in, the fortresses is the city of Bukhara in the country beyond the river in the Islamic East was Tek city eight hundred and eighty towers even if the Ibayaj equipped with supplies and equipment and weapons and soldiers in addition to this was here the city of Samarkand, which was around the fortification of the interior There were many towers of war, and there were not only the towers in the cities of Bahari and Smarkand there was the city of Isfahan, where there is the most exciting towers protected protection and those towers were one hundred and four tower was a Brugge turn with the rotation of the fence as well as the city of Ji in the Islamic Levant, T near the city of Isfahan was around eighteen towers .....

The second thing in fortifying the city which comes after the tower is the ditch and ditch of the defensive means of the fortified cities in the Islamic Levant. This trench surrounded the city or castle. These trenches

protected the city and the citadel from any future military attack on the city. The Islamic was Adaya and prevent the city of Zanzj province of Sjestan was surrounded by a trench protected from external aggressions, for example the sudden attack on the city as well as the city of a mosque in the two mosques, which was also a trench, in addition there was the city of Bouching a trench which was also protecting the The city of Estradad, the city of Jirjan, which had a trench, was of great military importance, and the trenches were limited to the above. There were also trenches around the cities, and from those cities it was a city in Taborstan, which had a trench and bridges. The city of Darabjard in the province of Persia is surrounded by a trench of great importance and the city of Vasa. The cities surrounded by trenches in the country beyond the river in the Islamic Levant are numerous and from the trenches that surround the cities in the Islamic country of Amashah, in the country of the river Maher, it is the city of Bukhara, which was surrounded by a great trench surrounded by it as well as the city of Samarkand, Khadlha was a great trench, as well as several cities there surrounded by Khandaq and those cities are Berchchi, Goldman, Aihan, Rosende and Jazz .....

The third, which was to protect the cities with fortresses and castles, is the walls. The walls surround the city to protect them from enemy attacks and it was of great importance to defend the city. The walls of these cities were thick and packed with materials that increased their strength against the attack in general. Or Aradat and the like. Most of the cities of the Islamic Levant were surrounded by walls and from those cities

with the walls of Bukhara, the river in the Islamic Levant. In addition, the city of Samarkand was also the city with walls, and not only the country of the river, Bukhara and Samarkand There're several cities and those cities are the city and blow up reneging on the Nodgkt and Aspija and Ferghana and Osrushana ..kzlk There were walls on many in Fars province and the cities that sews the walls are Darabjrd city. As well as the walls of the city of Ardabil Kasbah province of Azerbaijan, the cities with walls in the province of Azerbaijan were several, including the city of Marawaga and Tabriz and Ruthan and door doors and Tbilisi and Dbil and mix ... Ambakip cities in the Islamic Levant, which has walls, they are many and those cities are the city Hamzan, Asban, Qom, Bosheng and Balch.

1. Towers: a tower is used in defense and attack and thus attacking towers face defensive towers. The Asfahani says (and meet towers with towers)<sup>1</sup>. In addition to that, fortified towns were supplied with towers to protects the fortress of the town. The fortress of the city of Bukhara which had two hundred and eighty towers to protect it<sup>2</sup>. Al-Masudi pointed out to this fortress saying: (And there is a tight tower for every half of mile of it that contains soldiers, weapons and supplements)<sup>3</sup>. While the fortress of the city of Samarkand was mentioned by Al-Maqdisi as : (and above the fortress there were towers prepared for war)<sup>4</sup>. On the fortress of Asfahan city there were many towers (one hundred and four towers) and those towers turn with the turning of the fortress and the distance between the Baba Khor gate and the small Jewish gate was 100 cubits that contained 18 towers. And between the small Jewish gate and Tera gate there was another 100 cubits that contained 33 towers. Between Tera gate and Baba Khorgate the distance was 1400 cubits containing 35 towers<sup>5</sup>. In Gee, one of the Eastern Islamic cities, IbnRiste said: ( In Gee there were eighteen towers)<sup>6</sup>.

During the era of Ghaznavids one of the Eastern Islamic Countries, the Gaznavi sultans were interested in building towers. One of those towers was the tower located in the north of Gazna city fortress which was built by Masud III son of Ibrahim son of SaadMasud son of Mahmoud son of Sabaktikin <sup>7</sup>. The height of the tower was forty four meters<sup>8</sup>. Those towers were important in defending fortified cities and citadels of the Ghaznavids against enemies so they were charged with fighters who had a group of weapons to face the enemy attacks and make the greatest loses in the enemy side<sup>9</sup>. In the Seljuk era, Seljuks built towers to

weaken the surrounded cities in addition to the duties of monitoring and safeguard. That was during the rule of Tagrlbek, AlbArsalan and Mulkshah <sup>10</sup>.

2- T2- Trenches: a trench is one of the defensive means for the fortified cities and cidatels. The trench was diggedaround the city or citadel and the dust and stones were removed to the side of the city to make a dust cover that is safe from being distroyed. One of the cities that were protected by a trench in addition to a wall and a fortress in the Eastern Islamic Countries is Zaranj in Sajistan described by the Astakhri as (the city has a fortress and a trench)<sup>13</sup>, and AlMaqdisi mentioned it (Razanj of Sajistan.... And it has an enormous fortress with a trench around it)<sup>14</sup>. Qashfa, of Sajistan is also referred to by Al-Maqdisi as (A city that had a fortress and a trench)<sup>15</sup>. IbnHawqalreferred to Boshing saying (Boshing has a fortress with a trench)<sup>16</sup>. Astrabad of Jarjan was mentioned by Al-Maqdisi saying (It's fortress had been distroyed and its trench had been filled with dust)<sup>17</sup>, and that was a prove that the city had a trench wich has been distroyed as well as its fortress due to the wars that had been between the Buwehis and the Ziyars in the third hijri century (the ninth A. D.)<sup>18</sup>

The city of Sariya in Tabristan is referred to by Al-Maqdisi who said (Sariya is a city that is fortified by trench and huge bridges)<sup>19</sup>. The city of Darabgurd in Faris was mentioned by IbnHawqal as (Darabgurd had a new well-built wall ..... and it has a trench)<sup>20</sup>. Fesa city of Faris is referred to by IbnHawqal who said (It was an old city, on which is a fortress and a trench)<sup>21</sup>. The city of Balkh in Kurasan had a wall surrounded by a deep trench<sup>22</sup>.

The fortified cities beyond the river are too much including Bukhara which was mentioned by Alistakhri as (The city wall was surrounded by a great trench)<sup>23</sup>, and the city of Samarkand mentioned by IbnHawqal saying (Samarkand.... the wall of the city ... a great trench)<sup>24</sup>.

The other cities fortified by trenches and mentioned by Al-Maqdisi were Barkhashi, he said (Barkhashi... a big city which had a fortress and a trench)<sup>25</sup>, and the city of Gurduman(it had a fortress and a trench)<sup>26</sup>, Ikhan (it had a fortress and a trench)<sup>27</sup>, Rozand (fortified by a trench)<sup>28</sup>, Jaz, (Jaz is a big city with a fortress and a trench)<sup>29</sup>, and there was a city near Kabul which was a part of Ghuri, which is the same city of Araba mentioned by Al-Himyari who said (The city of Araba ... a fortified city which had a wall, dust and a trench)<sup>30</sup>.

### 3. Defensive Walls

Defensive Walls were walls that surrounded the cities to protect them from enemy attacks and they were of great importance in defending cities 31. Defensive walls were built thick and made of strong material and filled up with wood in order to be resistant against heavy attacking weapons. The gates and other parts of the wall that enemies can penetrate from were fortified with catapults and big slingshots that threw stones on those who tried to attack the wall fortified cities.<sup>32</sup> Taking care of the Defensive walls was one of the most important duties of the prince or the prefect. Kings and princes were used to fortify cities with fortresses, citadels and high defensive walls.<sup>33</sup> The aim behind that was to protect the cities during peace and war times. <sup>34</sup> There were many wall fortified cities in Eastern Islamic Countries such as Bukhara that IbnJawqal pointed to in saying: (Bukhara is surrounded with a great defensive wall)<sup>35</sup>. During the era of the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mahdi (158-169 A.H. / 774-785 A.D), the Abbasid prefect AlFadhil bin Suleiman had rehabilitated the defensive wall in (166 A.H - 772 A.D) <sup>36</sup>. Samarkand, during the reign of the Abbasid prefect Jibreel Bin Yahya, he rehabilitated the defensive wall of Samarkand in (159 A.H/ 775 A.D). IbnAtheer mentions in actions of the year (159 A.H/ 775 A.D) that (And it had a ruler ..... Jibreel Bin Yahya in Samarkand and built up its defensive wall and dug its trench)<sup>37</sup>

The other cities beyond the river that had a defensive wall included the city of Nasf pointed to by Al-Istakhri who said (Nasf had a defensive wall and four gates)<sup>38</sup>, and the city of Bankath mentioned by IbnHawqal who said: (and the city had a defensive wall)<sup>41</sup>. the city of Farghana was pointed to by Al-Istakhri: (it is a city ..... surrounded by a defensive wall). The city of Ashrusna was mentioned by IbnHawqal as (it had a defensive wall)<sup>43</sup>. The city of Turmuth, referred to by Al-Istakhri as ( and Turmuth in the valey of Gehun ..... surrounded by a defensive wall)<sup>44</sup>

Faris was pointed to by IbnHawqal as (Most of the cities of faris were fortified with strong fortresses and steady and very high defensive walls)<sup>45</sup>. The city of Darabjurd referred to by Al-Istakhri as (Darabjurd had a well-built defensive wall)<sup>46</sup>.

The cities in Azerbaijan in the Eastern Islamic countries included Ardbill which was pointed to by Al-Istakhri : (Ardbill had a defensive wall)<sup>47</sup>. The city of Marawgha was mentioned by IbnHawqal (Al-Marawgha had a defensive wall)<sup>48</sup>. The city of Tabriz is mentioned by the auther of the book (The borders of the world) saying : (A great city that had an

invulnerable defensive wall)<sup>49</sup> and he refers also to the city of Warthan saying: (... it had a defensive wall)<sup>50</sup>. The city of Bab AlAbuab was mentioned by Al-Istakhri as : (Bab AlAbuab is a city that had a defensive wall on it)<sup>51</sup>. The city of Taflis was mentioned by IbnHawqal who said: (Taflis had two defensive walls made of clay)<sup>52</sup> and he also mentioned the city of Dabill saying: (Dabill... and it had a defensive wall)<sup>53</sup> and the city of Akhlat as: (and it had a defensive wall)<sup>54</sup>

The rest of the cities of the Eastern Islamic Countries that had defensive walls are Hamthan that was mentioned by IbnHawqal as ( and Hamthan .... had a defensive wall)<sup>55</sup>. The city of Asbahan was mentioned by IbnHawqal who said: (and Asbahan is two cities one is know by the Jewish and the other is Sharistan.... and it is said that Alexander has built the defensive wall of Shahristan)<sup>56</sup>, and he mentioned the city of Qum and said: (and Qum is a city that had a defensive wall)<sup>57</sup> The city of Harat is mentioned by Al-Istakhri who said: (Harat is acity with a defensive wall)<sup>58</sup>. He also mentioned the city of Boshing saying: (Boshing had a defensive wall)<sup>59</sup> and he also pointed to the city of Balkh: Balkh was a city .... it had a defensive wall)<sup>60</sup>

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