

## **New Sasanian Fortress found in Fars (Persis)**

Los Angeles, CA, April 1, 2005 - Project Sasanika is pleased to announce the discovery of a new fortress from the Sasanian era. This exciting new discovery and the impeccable state in which it stands would guarantee the widespread attention among Sasanian scholars and archaeologists.



General view of the A'elamu Castle

Spotted by chance during a visit to Fars province in the summer of 2004, the fortress, dubbed "A'elamu Castle" by its discoverer, has unique archeological features that make it worthy of a close attention by experts in the field. The discovery was made by a team of experts, consisting of Dr. Judith Lerner, Dr. Touraj Daryaee and Khodadad Rezakhani, who is credited with the initial discovery of this remarkable Sasanian building.

The A'elamu Castle stands on top of a hill near the main-road from Shiraz to Darabgerd, about 1.5 hours from Shiraz. The remains of an old trade route can still be seen at the foot of the hill, the existence of which can lead us to a clue to its function. Judging by the imposing presence of the fortress in relation to the main road, it seems that the fortress was used as either a toll-station or a patrol's garrison.



The plain in front of the fortress from inside the A'elamu Castle

The Sasanian origins of the A'elamu Castle is evident by its architectural peculiarities. The building is 100 m<sup>2</sup> and is consisted of four chambers. The doorway, built in the traditional Sasanian *ewān* style, leads to a waiting chamber, equipped with look-out holes for the guards inside the doorway. At both sides of the waiting chamber stand two rooms that were probably used by the stationed soldiers or patrols. The fourth, and the largest room, occupies half of the building and is located on the back of the building. This room might have been the headquarter of the commander of the fortress, and it is also equipped with windows and look-out holes for controlling the road at the other side of the hill.



Khodadad Rezakhani, the explorer credited with the discovery of the A'elamu Castle

Further excavation at the site of the A'elamu Castle has been planned, to be conducted under the leadership of Mr. Khodadad Rezakhani. More detailed information about this fortress, including a detailed map and initial surveys will be posted in the World Wide Web site of Project Sasanika and published in the leading Journals of the field.

End report, April 1, 2005 (otherwise known as the "April Fools Day"!)

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