

# Maragheh's architectural legacy are five domes

## Iranica Desk

The city of Maragheh in East Azarbaijan Province, with its five-tomb tower dating back to both pre-Islamic and post-Islamic civilizations, boast a rich history, playing a pivotal role in

the architectural history of its time. Comprising the five towers named Sorkh Dome, Modavvar Dome, Kabud Dome, Ghaffariyeh Dome, and Gooy Burj Dome, along with other historical monuments, Maragheh was once renowned as the city of towers.



## Sorkh Dome

● [1sajar.com](#)

Sorkh Dome (Red Dome) stands in south-western Maragheh. It was constructed in 1147 CE, in the Razi architectural style, by Bani Bakr Mohammad ibn Bandan ibn Mohsen during the Seljuk period. The dome features two inscriptions — one on the north side and another on the west side. The north side inscription bears the name of its constructor, while the west side inscription narrates the story of its construction.

Following the conclusion of the Razi architectural period in Iran, the Azari style emerged, marking the beginning of Sorkh Dome's construction. Consequently, the influence of Razi architecture is evident in its design. The structure, a square cube-

shaped complex, consists of a basement, a main chamber, and several steps, constructed using a combination of brick and tile, reflecting the fusion of Razi and Azari architectural styles.

The inscriptions on the north and west sides each hold specific meanings, while the east and south sides feature verses from the Holy Qur'an. Cultural heritage experts have suggested that the cavities on the dome's edges indicate its previous use as an observatory. This distinguished building has been registered on Iran's National Heritage List. Adjacent to Sorkh Dome, an ancient and valuable sundial, though now only serving a display function, has lost its original technical purpose.

## Kabud Dome

Kabud Dome (Blue Dome) is a structure dating back to the Seljuk and Ilkhanid periods. There are varying opinions regarding its construction period, with some attributing it to the Mongols. It is estimated that the construction of the Kabud Dome took place around the year 1196 CE. In contrast to the Red Dome, which features four sides, the Blue Dome is a ten-sided conical structure

comprising a basement and a main chamber. An inscription in the basement has led some to believe it was the tomb of Mongol ruler Hulagu Khan's mother, although this theory has been dismissed by cultural heritage experts. The basement walls are adorned with engravings of words such as "Allah" and "Al-hamd," with turquoise-colored bricks.



● [hotelbashee.com](#)

## Modavvar Dome

Modavvar Dome (Round Tower), dating back to the Seljuk period, stands about 10 meters from the Red Dome, allowing for easy visitation of both structures. This tower, serving as a personal mausoleum, with an unknown identity, has not had any theory about its purpose confirmed. Historically, the tower had a defensive function and, therefore, its exterior decoration was not a focal point. Similarities between this tower and the Red Dome are evident in the inscriptions adorning the door frames of both buildings.



● [kojaro.com](#)

## Ghaffariyeh Dome

Ghaffariyeh Dome is situated adjacent to the Sufi Chay River, northwest of Maragheh. During the Ilkhanid period, Sultan Abu Sa'id Bahadur Khan commissioned the construction of this two-story building. The dome, a square-shaped structure, is embellished with bricks and features a large dome adorned with black, white, and turquoise tiles. Inside, brick columns in the shape of diamonds are significantly visible.



● [iranicultura.it](#)

## Gooy Burj Dome

Gooy Burj Dome, located in the Atabak neighborhood within the alley of Sabzichiha, stands in the fifth cemetery of Maragheh. Regrettably, over time, this edifice has fallen to ruin, and no inscriptions or signs have been found to help determine its historical significance.

Like other edifices, this tower is built with a shabestan (an underground space found in traditional Iranian buildings), a domed structure erected on a high stone foundation.

The exterior facade showcases large lozenge-shaped patterns crafted from bricks. The raised patterns at the entrance, made with plaster and inlaid tiles, stand in stark contrast to the expansive ornamentation of the Ghaffariyeh Dome, indicating that the tower is notably more contemporary.

# Resumption of archaeological excavation in Konar Sandal Hills



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Archaeological survey has commenced in the Konar Sandal Hills in Jiroft after a 17-year hiatus under the supervision of the prominent archaeologist, Seyyed Mansour Seyyed Sajjadi, known as the savior of the Shahr-e Sookhteh (Burnt City) of Sistan and Baluchestan Province, announced by Saeed Shahrokhi, the director general of Kerman Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization. Shahrokhi emphasized the significance of the Konar Sandal Hills, noting that the pause in studies had resulted in the deterioration of certain parts of the hills and the artifacts discovered there, following excavations conducted in 2001 and 2007. The primary objective of the new phase of excavation is to rescue, assess, and preserve the artifacts found at the site, IRNA wrote. Furthermore, Shahrokhi highlighted the need to document and create a database for

the artifacts unearthed in previous phases, as many of them have not yet been studied. He stressed that this is a top priority for those involved in the project.

Shahrokhi also lauded Seyyed Sajjadi as a distinguished Iranian archaeologist, whose extensive years of excavation and dedication have contributed to the global recognition of Shahr-e Sookhteh.

The historical sites of Jiroft, housing valuable artifacts dating back to the third millennium BCE, are among the most significant historical sites in the world.

Located 30 kilometers from Jiroft, the Konar Sandal Hill comprises southern and northern hills, with heights of 13 and 21 meters, respectively, situated a few kilometers apart. The hills have yielded numerous historical artifacts, including clay sculptures, engraved pottery, and jewelry, all of which are preserved in the Jiroft Archaeological Museum.