

UDC 728(535)
UDC 39(535)
<https://doi.org/10.2298/ZMSDN2698235K>
ORIGINAL SCIENTIFIC PAPER
Received: 2026/5/5
Accepted: 2026/5/25

TRADITIONAL HOUSE OF THE JEBALLI PEOPLE IN THE SURROUNDINGS OF SALALAH CITY, DHO FAR GOVERNORATE, SULTANATE OF OMAN

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ABSTRACT: The traditional Jeballi house stands as a precious living example of vernacular architecture on the Arabian Peninsula. Its contemporary significance is in its continued use with minimal modifications for centuries. Modern life gradually draws people from the villages to cities, resulting in the abandonment of old houses. Just a few houses still preserve the original way of life today. Studying traditional architecture is essential for understanding Dhofar and Omani culture. Understanding traditional Jebally houses helps in the correct assessment of modern homes, recognizes family life patterns, enriches modern architectural design, and promotes Dhofar and Oman’s heritage.

KEY WORDS: The traditional house of the Jeballi people; Dhofar Vernacular Architecture; Oman Vernacular architecture; Traditional house of the Arabian Peninsula; Jeballi culture

INTRODUCTION

A small number of countries in the world can boast their own traditional house. All countries that have a significance in modern civilization have already explored and met their own traditional house. Simply, show me your traditional house, and I will tell you what you can do as a community! Knowing traditional architecture is necessary for many reasons: to understand its own architectural history, to understand the processes in architecture (especially in

housing), and to understand the needs in order to actively participate in shaping the future.

Our obligation is to study and preserve cultural heritage in architecture. In everyday life, it is obvious that there are significant changes in the distribution of the population in the Dhofar region, or in the Sultanate of Oman as a whole. There is an obvious change in the way buildings are built (construction, design, and materials) and in the organization of the house as well. The migration from the old to the new house, or from the village to the city, leads to the abandonment of old buildings. Losing their function, buildings are no longer maintained and disappear quickly. The disappearance of buildings also entails the loss of a significant part of the architectural and cultural heritage. Therefore, it is necessary to complete field research in the shortest possible time, through which the necessary documentation of the traditional house of the Jeballi people has to be collected.

Therefore, the main research gap lies in the lack of focused investigation into the traditional house of the Jeballi people. This paper will analyze the traditional houses of the Jeballi people in the area surrounding the city of Salalah in Dhofar Governorate. The houses belong to families from the Jeballi tribe. The documentation collected during 2017 and 2018, consisting of photographs, drawings, and interviews with the owners and builders of the houses, will be analyzed. The cave dwellings, houses, and auxiliary buildings will be analyzed. The goal is to understand the method of the organization of the house, the constructive solutions, and the materials used.



Figure 1. Dhofar Governorate in Sultanate of Oman
[Дhofар говернорат у Султанату Оман]

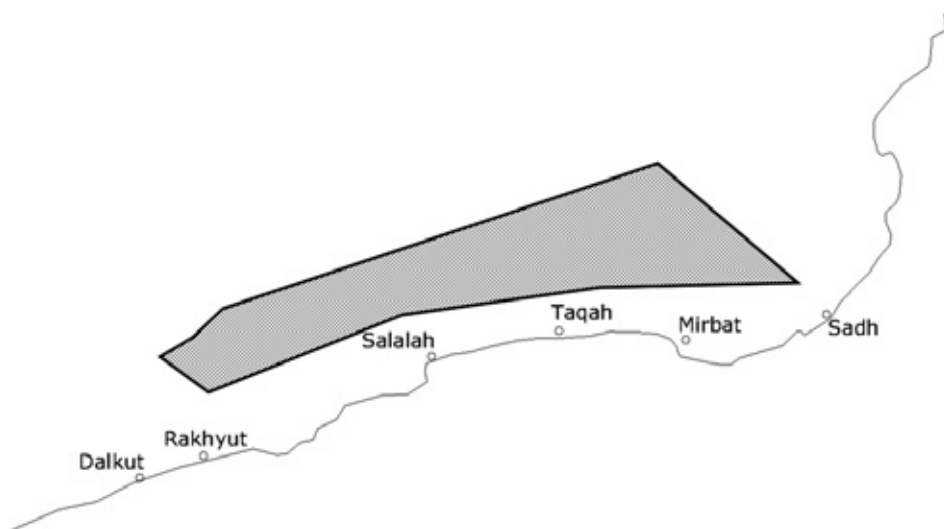


Figure 2. Coast cities of Dhofar Governorate with the area where the buildings are located [Насеља на обали и зона у којој су снимљени објекти]

LITERATURE REVIEW

The traditional houses of the Jeballi people have not yet been explored in published research. Studies on urban traditional architecture exist as part of a book, specifically as one chapter on several urban settlements in the Dhofar Governorate [Damlūjī, 1998].

One major work addresses traditional architecture in Oman broadly but omits discussion of the Jeballi house. Historical documentation includes travelogues that partially describe Dhofar [Hansman, 1985; General Staff, 1917; Bidwell, 1978; Costa and Kite, 1985; Marshall, 1994]. The travelogue “In the Land of Frankincense” describes in detail the traditional architecture and way of life of the Gebali people, as well as the architecture of the settlements of Salalah, Mirbat, Taqa, and Rakhyut in Dhofar, Sultanate of Oman [Kuzović, 2025].

Literature covering some archaeological sites and preserved monuments [Agius, 1999; Beeston, 1976; Hardy-Guilbert, 2001; Hardy-Guilbert, 2005; Haeser, 2000; Hillenbrand, 1994]. Societal and cultural analysis have to be mentioned [Al-Qasimi, 1996; Al-Salimi et al., 2008; Clements, 1994; Costa, 1983; Dinterman, 1993; Düster and Scholz, 1980; Ettinghausen et al., 2001; Hansman, 1985; Hardy-Guilbert, 2001; Hardy-Guilbert, 2005; King and Stevens, 1973; Landen, 1967; Miles, 1966; Phillips, 1967] offer insights on Oman tradition, but not specifically the Jeballi house.

Recent articles by N. Benkari [Benkari and AlHashim, 2015; Benkari, 2015a; Benkari, 2015b; Benkari, 2017a; Benkari, 2017b; Benkari, 2018] and papers exploring relationships between traditional and contemporary architecture [El-Arifi, 1986; Abdul Majid et al., 2018; Abdul-Wahab and Lea,

2008; Abdul-Wahab, 2003; Al-Hashim et al., 2014; Al-Hinai et al., 1993; Al-Mahrouqi, 2004; Ramadan, 2015; Taylor et al., 2009; Wippel, 2013; Zurigat et al., 2003] do not address the Jeballi house, as well.

CAVE DWELLINGS

Captain Stafford Haines [Haines, 1845] visited Dhofar between 1829 and 1835 and recorded that the Bedouins, who travel from place to place tending their livestock, live in caves during the monsoon season.

In 1894, Theodore Bent [Bent, 1900] described the cave dwellings of the Al-Qarā' Mountains¹:

“...in their cave dwellings, we found men, women and children living with their flocks and herds in happy harmony.”

Continuing, Theodore Bent notes that the floors of the caves are soft, covered with the dung of livestock that has accumulated over the years. The climate inside the caves is cooler than outside. In some caves, children can be left alone while their mothers go out into the countryside to gather fruit. In some caves, one can find huts for individual families or entire villages. On his way back from the mountains, about 19.3 km from Al Hafa or half a day's journey from Dhofar (now Salalah), he noted a cave, full of stalactites, containing abandoned huts of a Bedouin tribe. They inhabit it only during the rainy season. Beneath the cave, there were the remains of a settlement made of stone.

Bertram Thomas [Thomas, 1931] travelled through the Rub' al-Khali desert in 1929–1930, and published his travel notes in the *London Geographical Journal*. The journey began in Dhofar, and after crossing the plains he headed towards the Gara Mountains through the Jurbaib and Gurzaz wadis (river valleys). After spending the night in Naqah, they travelled through an area of caves, the entrances of which were marked with bundles of straw and grass, indirectly indicating that they were the homes of the Al-Khatiri² tribe. According to Thomas, the topographic structure of the Dhofar region consists of four belts that run parallel to the coast of the Arabian Sea: Jurhaib – a plain by the sea; Khutim – slopes oriented towards the sea, covered with low forest and meadows; Qatan – a divide at an altitude of 914.4 meters; Najd – a sandy steppe.

Cave dwelling in the village of Kazmim

In the village of Kazmim, next to an asphalt road and then along a narrow footpath there is a cave that was used as a habitat for humans and livestock until

¹ The Qarā' Mountains in Dhofar, the southern province of the sultanate of Oman, are about 914.4 meters high, with one peak higher than 1,524 meters. The monsoon keeps the seaward (southern) side of the mountains, as well as the coastal plain, fertile. A gradual slope leads northward from the water divide to the Rub' al-Khali; valleys from the slope converge on Ramlat Al-Mughshin at the desert's edge" [Source: Arabia Deserts, Bedouin, Oases | *Britannica*, 2026/5/2].

² The Al Kathiri family (Arabic: *الكلثري*) is a royal family with strong influence in the southern parts of the Arabian Peninsula. One of the largest tribes in eastern Yemen and Oman with representatives in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and East African countries such as Kenya and Tanzania.

recently. A deep canyon of Wadi Rashm, covered with low vegetation, appeared in front. The steep cliffs of the hill were covered with greenery from the river valley at the bottom to the top, although the last fifty meters of the cliffs are bare. After a narrow path barely one meter wide and about 50 meters long, which wraps around a prominent rock above the canyon several hundred meters deep, there is a cave that was once used for housing and sheltering livestock. The cave is about 20 meters long and about 10 meters deep, with the height of the opening facing the canyon being about 6 meters; this opening slowly narrows towards the side edges of the cave. The floor of the cave is level. In one place, a deeper pit was dug, which is additionally covered by a calotte of the roof structure.

In front of the cave, there is a shallow plateau, followed by the slopes of the canyon. The plateau in front of the cave has a slight fence made of existing and subsequently filled stone material. The cave was used for housing, as evidenced by traces of smoke on the ceiling, as well as for sheltering livestock. At the opposite end of the cave entrance, there is a narrowing that ends at a vertical rock, about 20 meters from the edge of the cave.

The cave was adapted for family life by building a stone wall along its entire length towards the canyon, about 120 centimetres high. Parts of the wall have been preserved, measuring 120 cm high on the upper side and 150 cm on the lower side, about 60 centimetres wide at the top and about 120 centimetres at the bottom. The wall is irregularly shaped, built of unhewn dry stone directly on the cave floor.

The stone wall has no foundation, and it was not necessary to dig because the cave floor is made of solid stone material, so the load-bearing surface is immediately on the surface. The stone wall extends irregularly along the entire length of the cave, while the entrance to the room thus formed is on the side of the cave facing the access path. The room thus formed is about 10 meters long, 3 to 6 meters wide, and 2.5 to 3 meters high on the lowest side, while the side facing the canyon gradually opens up to a height of about 6 meters.

In order to protect themselves from the weather, unprocessed columns, cut in the surrounding area, were placed towards the canyon, set back from the stone wall by 100 to 150 cm, resting on the ground without being buried. These columns, with a diameter of about 15 to 20 centimetres, support central wooden beams. In this way, a horizontal beam was formed on which vertical inclined wooden supports rested, touching the stone wall at one end and the horizontal beam at the other. Small material was placed over the primary roof structure, which acted as rafters, and hay was placed over it.

To form the entrance to the central room, the wall was interrupted by a width of about 1.20 meters. Beyond the door, it continues for a length of about 2 meters until it reaches the ceiling of the cave. The stone wall and wooden superstructure thus completely enclose the room, protecting it from the weather. The access path toward the canyon is paved with piled stones, forming a kind of protective fence. The ceiling of the cave extends far over the stone wall and the narrow path, providing secure protection from the elements.

Within the cave, there is also a smaller cell formed on three sides by a stone wall about 60 centimeters high, made of unworked stone, mostly built as dry stone. The cell had an entrance on the side opposite the access path. It was an extension of the cave from the outside of the stone wall, and its dimensions are about 2 x 2.5 meters. Thicker wooden branches of a rather irregular shape were placed across the perimeter wall formed in this way—built on three sides, while the fourth side is the main stone wall—over which smaller wooden materials were laid. A stone was placed on top to press down the resulting roof covering.

Next to the cave, there are several smaller niches that were used to house livestock, as indicated by traces of hay on the floor and the crossbeams that closed the niches. Within the built central wall, at the lowest point, there is an opening for draining liquids and water that might penetrate the interior of the room. The opening measures 30 x 20 cm and is bridged by two rows of wooden beams.



Figure 3. Access path [Пристапна стаза]



Figure 4. Cave entrance [Улаз у пећину]



*Figure 5. View of the cave from the entrance path
[Поглед на пећину из правца улазне стазе]*



Figure 6. Path in front of a stone wall with two members of the Gebali people
[Стаза испред каменог зида са два члана Гебали племена]



Figure 7. View of the cave from the opposite side of the access path, stone wall with remains of a wooden structure [Поглед на пећину са супротне стране од прилазне стазе, камени зид са остатцима дрвене конструкције]



Figure 8. The wooden structure rests on the stone wall at the bottom and on the cave ceiling at the top [Дрвена конструкција се доле ослања на камени зид а горе на пећинску таваницу]



Figure 9. Break in the stone wall – entrance to the room
[Прекид у каменом зиду – улаз у просторију]



Figure 10. A room formed by a cave wall and a stone wall. The entrance is in the foreground [Просторија формирана зидом пећине и каменим зидом. Улаз у предњем плану]



Figure 11. Interior of the cave [Унутрашња просторија у пећини]



Figure 12. Columns supporting the upper beam of a wooden structure resting on the cave floor [Ступци који носе горњу греду дрвене конструкције наслоњени на под пећине]



Figure 13. A hole in a stone wall to drain water from a room [Отвор у каменом зиду за испуштање воде из просторије]



Figure 14. A smaller room formed in the same way as the large one: a stone wall over which the roof cap is placed [Мања просторија формирана на исти начин као и велика: камени зид преко кога је постављена калота крова]

RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

General characteristics of houses

Houses are built on ridges, as high as possible above the valley. The reasons for this are better ventilation and smaller temperature fluctuations than in the valley. The house usually consists of two units: the house itself and the fenced yard in front. The main wall of the house and the fence of the front yard are built in the same way, using broken stone laid as dry stone or with a mixture of clay and grass. The height of the wall is about 120 cm, and the width varies from 120 to 200 cm at the bottom and 80–120 cm at the top. The wall does not have deep foundations because the bearing stone layer is very shallow relative to the ground surface. The wall enclosing the front yard has an identical cross-section. The floor of the house and yard are also treated in the same way: polished clay, or today, cement mortar. The house consists of two structural units: a stone wall and a roof cap.

The roof cap rests on two points: a beam supported by two columns placed in the center of the room, and the top of the stone wall. The two central columns are slightly embedded in the ground, and at the top, they have forks that support a horizontal roof beam. Both the columns and the beam are made of untreated wood from which the bark has been removed. Due to the specific climate, the

tree trunks are not straight but twisted and crooked, which gives the architecture of the house a unique atmosphere. Thick branches are placed on the central beam in the form of horns, side by side, without any particular rule or rhythm. Once the roof surface is covered with thick branches, smaller, finer branches are placed on top to fill the gaps. Over the roof formed in this way, long grass is placed in tied bundles, overlapping each other. The smoke from the hearth located in the house additionally chemically treats the roof and protects it against pests. The height of the room in the middle is 200 to 230 cm, gradually decreasing towards the perimeter to 140–160 cm.

The house consists of one oval-shaped room, measuring approximately 4 x 5 meters to 6 x 7 meters. In one corner, there is a reserved space for the hearth measuring 100 x 150 cm to 150 x 200 cm. The hearth is separated from the floor of the room by a small stone wall about 20 cm high. The floor of the house is covered with fabrics. The house is entered through two doors placed opposite each other; one door usually faces east and the other faces west. The door is as high as the stone wall (120–150 cm) and no more than 100 cm wide. Around the door are jambs made of hewn or scraped wood, which include a solid threshold. Above the door is a lintel made of solid wood, slightly raised in the middle compared to the supports to increase the height of the entrance space. The door leaf is made of solid wood, usually metal-framed, with two to three revolving hinges and a locking latch on the inside. In front of the main door is an oval-shaped fenced yard; there is no such yard behind the auxiliary door.

The house is divided into sections along customary lines. It is where food is prepared, meals are eaten, and where people spend their day, sleep, raise children, and receive guests. The area adjacent to the hearth is reserved for guests, who must not cross the imaginary line marked by the hearth. In the private section of the house, the wardrobe is kept, and family members sleep and reside. Shoes are removed upon entering the home.

Traditional house of the Al-Gara Tribe

In one of the state buildings, there is a photograph taken at the beginning of the 20th century, in which a member of the tribe is pictured in the Al-Gara mountain range. The territory occupied by the tribe was divided into several fiefdoms. In the photograph, the tribesman is barefoot, dressed in cloth, and carries a sword, a shield, and a club used for stabbing and striking during conflicts. In the background of the photograph, a part of a traditional house is visible.

Based on this portion of the image, one can conclude that it is constructed of unhewn stone up to a height of 150 cm, built using dry stone techniques and filled with mud and straw. The hut has a calotte-shaped roof covered with bundles of grass, interconnected by transverse rods to prevent them from spreading. The hut is clearly circular in shape, and the roof is domed, which reveals much about the foundations of traditional housing in this region.

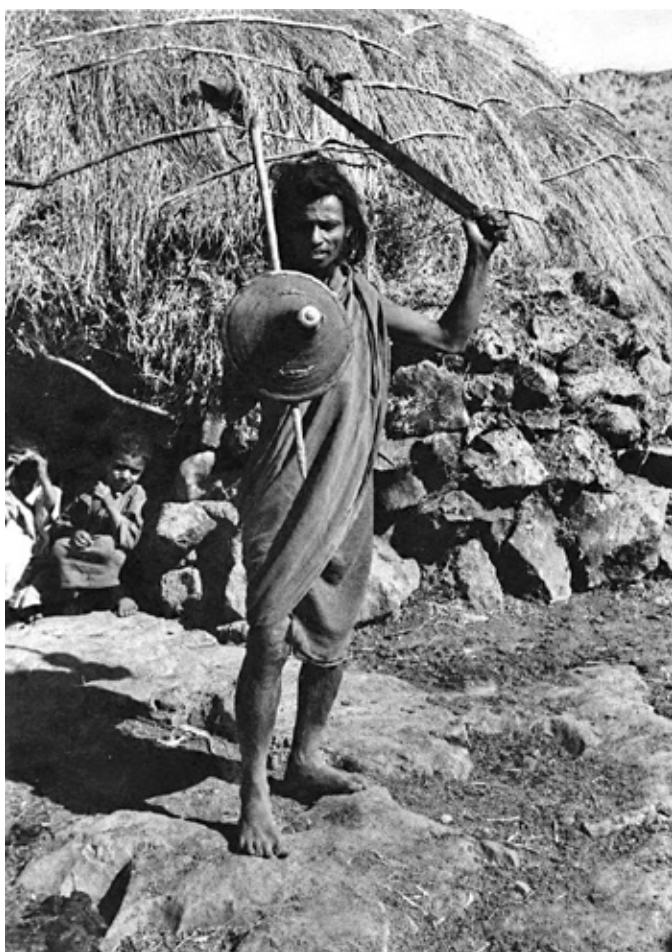


Figure 15. A member of the Gara tribe in front of a house. The house has a stone wall built in dry stone. The roof is in the form of a calotte covered with grass tied in bundles [Припадник племена Гара испред куће. Кућа у основи има зид од камена зиданог у сувозиду. Кров је у форми калоте покривене са травом повезаном у снопове]

Shepherd's Dwelling and Stone Cattle Shed

The shepherd's dwelling and cattle shed are located in a waterless area with sparse, low vegetation. In this area, the dwelling and shed were built from available wood and stone.

The cattle shed is located in a valley, while the shepherd's dwelling is situated on a slightly elevated ridge. The cattle shed is approximately 10 meters in diameter and oval in shape, tending towards a circle. It is built using dry stone masonry with 10 to 12 layers of stone. The stone wall is about 150 cm

wide at the base and narrows to about 1 meter at the top. It has one entrance, a gate, which faces the shepherd's dwelling.

The shepherd's dwelling is located on a sharp ridge above the valley in which the cattle shed was built, about 50 to 70 meters away. It consists of two parts: the antechamber (an area provisionally enclosed by a stone circle with a diameter of about 3 to 4 meters) and the covered section. The covered section comprises two components: a wooden structure and a stone structure. At ground level, there is a stone mound in the shape of a pyramid, less meticulously constructed than the cattle pen, about 1 meter high. The wooden roof structure consists of four wooden pillars, made from wood cut in the immediate vicinity, with forks at the top that support four beams.

The circular space is defined by these four beams, which are covered with thick branches and topped with smaller branches. A cloth carried by the shepherd is placed on top. The sides of the dwelling are enclosed with vertical stems placed 30 to 50 centimeters apart, with the spaces between them further filled with small branches. The dwelling has two doors: one facing the antechamber and the other opposite to it. The interior floor is leveled and covered with an old carpet.



Figure 16. A shepherd's house built on a ridge above a cattle shed. It consists of two parts: a covered one and an open one. Both parts are oval in shape and made of stone laid in dry stone [Чобанска кућа саграђен на гребену изнад обора за стоку. Састоји се из два дела: покривеног и отвореног. Оба дела су овалног облика формирана од камена сложеног у сувозиду]



Figure 17. The covered part of the house has a stone wall about 1 meter high. The roof structure is formed by wooden posts that support horizontal beams. A structure made of massive branches rests on them, and then the roof covering [Покривени део куће има камени зид висине око 1 метар. Кровну конструкцију формирају дрвени ступци који носе хоризонталне греде. На њих је наслоњена конструкција од масивних грана и потом кровни покривач]



Figure 18. A cattle pen in the valley below the shepherd's house [Обор за стоку у долини испод чобанске куће]



Figure 19. The massive stone wall of the cattle pen
[Масивни камени зид обора за стоку]

The house of the Al-Khatiri family

The house is located at the top of a ridge, overlooking a valley. It was inhabited as recently as 2018. The interior dimensions of the house are 5 x 6 meters, with a height of 160–200 centimeters at the center of the room.

The base of the house is oval; the central space is occupied by two massive wooden columns made of round logs with peeled bark, which support a central longitudinal beam. The house consists of a single room, but it is functionally divided into several units. The room is entered from two opposite sides through two entrance doors, one oriented to the east and one to the west. In one quarter of the foundation, there is a hearth measuring 150 x 200 centimeters, located right next to the wall. Relative to the floor, it is bordered by a low stone wall, about 30 centimeters wide and 20 centimeters high.

The house is constructed such that, after removing the surface layer of soil, a stable layer of stone is reached. A perimeter wall is built upon this stone layer. The wall is about 160 centimeters high and 160 to 200 centimeters wide. At the crown, the width of the wall is about 100 cm. The perimeter walls of the house slope on the outside and are vertical on the inside. The wall is made of unhewn stone connected to a mortar made of clay reinforced with grass. The main roof beams are placed on top of the perimeter wall. These beams extend from the perimeter wall to the longitudinal supporting beam, which is supported by the two central pillars. The roof beams are not placed in a special system but are strung side by side to support as much of the roof structure's load as possible. After that, cross beams made of untreated wood with only the bark removed are placed over the longitudinal beams. In this way, a second

layer is formed, over which a third layer of roofing material, consisting of small branches, is applied. The final roofing is made of dry grass tied into bundles. Stone weights and beams are placed over the grass roofing to prevent it from shifting due to the weather. There are no roof openings directly above the fireplace. The wood throughout the room is covered with a thick layer of smoke from the hearth, which serves as a protective layer against insects and pests. The smoke also helps bond the roof structure into a single whole. The two central pillars have ridges at the top in which a central horizontal beam is placed.

There are two doors in the house, both extremely low, requiring both the guest and the host to bend down significantly when entering. Since the wall is very deep, the doors are placed on the inner edge of the wall plane. The doors consist of a frame, threshold, and lintel made of scraped wood. The lintel is slightly raised in the middle of the span. Each door measures 100 x 150 centimeters. The door leaf is made of wood with metal hinges and a latch located on the inside. The door is surrounded by metal plates. In modern times, the house is covered with thick nylon, pressed old tires, blocks, and stones.

In front of the main eastern entrance, there is a small courtyard measuring 7 x 9 meters, which is fenced with concrete blocks and a gate about 110 centimeters high. A similar arrangement exists on the west side of the building's entrance area.



Figure 20. The first entrance and lobby of the Al-Khatiri family house. Standing Ahmed Al-Khatiri [Први улаз и предворје куће породице Ал Катири. Стоји Ахмет Ал Катири]



Figure 21. Second entrance to the house (located opposite the first entrance)
[Други улаз у кућу (постављен наспрамно у односу на први улаз)]



Figure 22. Entrance to the house with a lintel [Улаз у кућу са надвратном гредом]



Figure 23. The fireplace is immediately on the left after the front door from the fenced yard [Огњиште одмах са леве стране након улазних врата из ограђеног дворишта]



Figure 24. The perimeter plinth of the fireplace is used for seating also [Ободни сокл огњишта користи се и за седење]



Figure 25. Roof structure of the house at the top of the calotte: column, beam, massive branches and fine infill [Кровна конструкција куће при темену калоте: стубац, греда, масивне гране и ситна испуна]



Figure 26. Roof structure of a house supported on a stone wall [Кровна конструкција куће при ослонцу на каменом зиду]



Figure 27. The house has a well-proportioned height and provides an extremely pleasant living space. [Просторија куће има добро одмерену висину и даје изузетно пријатан простор за живот]



Figure 28. Entrance door to the lobby. Beneath the floor covering, a floor beam can be seen that supports the columns that support the roof structure [Улазна врата према предворју. Испод подног покривача назире се подна греда која учвршћује ступце који носе кровну конструкцију]



Figure 29. Back door to the house with a door frame, lintel and leaf encased in metal
[Задња врата у кућу са довратником, надвратником и крилом опточеним у метал]



Figure 30. Part of the house opposite the fireplace with a chest of clothes
[Део куће насупрот огњишту са шкрињом за одећу]



Figure 31. Central part of the house [Централни део куће]



Figure 32. Height of the door in relation to the person
[Висина врата у односу на човека]



Figure 33. Camel milk and sweet bread for guests
 [Камиље млеко и слатки хлеб за госте]

Sheikh Saeed Al-Khatiri's Old House

The house is located on the lowest of the terraces of the ridge on which the family lives. In order to provide a sufficiently flat surface, the ridge was manually levelled over a length of 30 meters and a width of about 10 meters. It consists of two units: one unit is an oval-shaped enclosure, about 10 meters in diameter, and the house itself, which is in ruins and difficult to fully reconstruct.

The vestibule is formed by a dry stone wall partly filled with clay and grass. The stone wall connected in this way becomes monolithic over time, as the grass later grows and connects the stone elements into a single unit. The stone wall is about 2 meters wide at the bottom and 1 meter at the top, and is about a meter and a half high. It has two entrances placed on opposite sides: one towards the house and one towards the courtyard.

The space of the house is defined by two stone ovals with a diameter of 4 to 5 meters. In one of the oval rooms, part of the roof structure has been preserved, consisting of two wooden columns, slightly buried in the ground, with forks at the top which support a massive roof beam on which the roof rafters rest. The roof supports are made of massive branches taken in the immediate vicinity; these are very gnarled and irregular in shape, which is characteristic of trees in this area with relatively little rain.

After the large branches, smaller branches are placed to support the roof covering. The wall of the old house is made of unhewn but selected stone, in

dry stone masonry with a filling of mud and straw, or clay mixed with straw. The height is about three meters, and the width at the bottom is about one and a half meters and about 80 cm at the top. At the bottom of the wall, there are large pieces of stone, and towards the top, the pieces of stone become smaller, although they are no smaller than thirty centimetres in diameter. The floor is flat, and the remains of the floor, namely a layer of clay, are visible.



Figure 34. The location of Sheikh Saeed Al-Khatiri's old house, on the lower terrace of the ridge. A new house has been built above this location
[Локација старе куће Шеика Саида Ал Катирија, на доњој тераси гребена.
Изнад ове локације је саграђена нова кућа]



Figure 35. The location of the old house complex with the place where the house was roofed and the vestibule. In the foreground is his son [Локација комплекса старе куће са местом где је била покривена кућа и предворје.
У предњем плану је његов син]



Figure 36. The entrance hall of an old house with an access path. The new house is visible above [Предворје старе куће са приступном стазом. Изнад се види нова кућа]



Figure 37. The space of the old house consists of several oval rooms that line up one after the other. On the left side, a handmade plateau can be seen [Простор старе куће који се састоји од неколико овалних просторија које се нижу једна за другом. Са леве стране се уочава ручно израђен плато]



Figure 38. Location of an old house with remains of the roof structure
[Локација старе куће са остацима кровне конструкције]



Figure 39. Remains of the roof structure: columns, beam and part of the massive branches instead of rafters [Остаци кровне конструкције: ступци, греда и део масивних грана уместо рогова]

The House No. 1

One of the largest recorded houses in this area; its base dimensions are 6 x 5 meters, and it was built according to the same construction principles as other traditional houses in the region. Along the perimeter, a massive wall reaching a height of 20 centimetres was erected, made of crushed stone bonded with clay mixed with grass. Later, the surface of the wall was plastered on both the exterior and the interior. Inside, along the perimeter, the wall has a plinth measuring 20 x 25 centimetres. The wall is massive, with a width of about 150 cm at the bottom, which is most visible at the openings where the doors are located. The doors are placed on opposite walls and share the same characteristics as those of other traditional houses: dimensions of 100 x 150 cm, single-leaf, made of solid wood, reinforced with metal, featuring three safety latches on the inside, and opening into the room rather than toward the wall. The roof structure is based on two massive columns with rafters at the top that support a massive beam made of two pieces of wood of the same cross-section. Massive branches were piled on this structural base in an irregular slope, with smaller branches placed over them. After several layers of substructure, a roof covering made of grass tied into bundles with wicker was added. Later, the entire building was covered with thick nylon. The space is approximately 160 cm high at the edges, while the centre is about 220 centimetres high.



Figure 40. Entrance to the house. Thick foil tied with ropes has recently been placed over the roof to protect it from precipitation. [Улаз у кућу. Преко крова је недавно стављена дебела фолија увезана са конопцима ради заштите од падавина]



Figure 41. The entrance to the house is placed opposite the previous one
[Улаз у кућу постављен наспрамно у односу на претходни]



Figure 42. Interior of the house. Plastered part of the wall with a plinth, massive branches extending from the wall to the central beam. In the foreground, a column with a fork at the top and a beam [Унутрашњост куће. Омалтерисан део зида са соклом, масивне гране које се пружају од зида до централне греде. У првом плану стубац са рачвом у врху и греда]



Figure 43. Part of a plastered stone wall and a roof structure directly next to the wall
[Део омалтерисаног каменог зида и кровна конструкција непосредно уз зид]



Figure 44. A section of the wall that was later plastered, a roof structure, a column and a beam. A beam that holds the column in place can be seen in the floor
[Део зида који је накадно омалтерисан, кровна конструкција, стубац и греда.
У поду се види греда која држи стубац у ослонцу]



Figure 45. Entrance door to the house, wall and roof structure
[Улазна врата у кућу, зид и кровна конструкција]

The House No. 2

The former residence, now an auxiliary building, was constructed according to the same principles as other residential buildings in the area. The structure is defined by a perimeter stone wall approximately 150 cm wide and 100 cm high, built as a drywall with stone elements partially bonded with a mixture of clay and grass. The central area of the room contains two soha that support the roof structure's central beam. The roof was constructed conventionally: large branches were placed atop the wooden framework, followed by smaller ones. These layers were stacked up to the roof covering, which originally consisted of bundled grass (now replaced by nylon). Although the building is in poor condition, it currently serves as a barn.



Figure 46. Entrance to the house with parts of the door frame
[Улаз у кућу са деловима довратника]



Figure 47. The extensive stone wall of the house (plastered), and the roof cap (covered with foil and pressed with a net, old car tires tied with ropes) [Обимни камени зид куће (омалтерисан), и калота крова (покривена фолијом и притиснута мрежом, старим аутомобилским гумама повезаним конопцима)]



Figure 48. The extensive stone wall of the house (plastered), and the roof cap (covered with foil and pressed with a net, old car tires tied with ropes) [Обимни камени зид куће (омалтерисан), и калота крова (покривена фолијом и притиснута мрежом, старим аутомобилским гумама повезаним конопцима)]



Figure 49. Extensive stone wall, roof structure, columns and cross beam [Обимни камени зид, кровна конструкција, ступци и попречна греда]



Figure 50. Roof structure: column, beam, massive branches and small branches. Everything is steamed with smoke from the hearth [Кровна конструкција: стубац, греда, масивне гране и ситне гране. Све је препарирано са димом са огњишта]

The House No. 3

This house is situated on a ridge. The base is circular, approximately 5.5 meters in diameter, and was built using the same method as most traditional houses in the region. A wall about one meter wide (tapering to 60 cm at the top) and 120 cm high surrounds the perimeter. The house wall connects to a fenced courtyard of similar dimensions in front of the dwelling. The outer wall is irregularly plastered, following the natural geometry of the stone, suggesting it was applied without tools. The central roof structure is supported by two columns that fork at the top to hold a central wooden beam; notably, these forks extend above the beam. Massive branches lean against the beam, topped by smaller ones, leading up to the roof covering, which was originally grass and is now thick nylon. The space lacked chimney openings; instead, smoke from the fireplace permeated the roof structure, protecting it from insects and fungi. The doors, measuring approximately 100 cm wide and 130 cm high, are positioned opposite each other, with one leading to the decorated front yard and the other to the backyard.



Figure 51. Entrance door, next to a stone wall (plastered), and part of the old and new roof covering [Улазна врата, део каменог зида (омалтерисан), и део старог и новог кровног покривача]



Figure 52. Exterior of the house [Спољашњи изглед куће]



Figure 53. Central columns, cross beam, and roof structure resting on a stone wall (plastered) [Централни ступци, попречна греда, и кровна конструкција која се ослања на камени зид (омалтерисан)]



Figure 54. Central columns, cross beam, and roof structure resting on a stone wall (plastered) [Централни ступци, попречна греда, и кровна конструкција која се ослања на камени зид (омалтерисан)]

The House No. 4

The remains of a building constructed on the same principle as the previously mentioned shepherd's dwelling. Four posts are driven into the ground, supporting a square base of horizontal beams, upon which large branches, then smaller branches, and finally the roof covering are supported. Along the perimeter of the base, dry stone is stacked without any binding material. The building is in very poor condition.



Figure 55. Remains of a stone wall built in drywall, columns and part of the roof covering [Остаци каменог зида зиданог у сувозиду, ступци и део кровног покривача]

AUXILIARY BUILDINGS

Auxiliary buildings have a construction concept similar to that of the houses. A dry stone wall is built around the perimeter of the room, up to 150 cm high and 100–150 cm wide. Rounded wooden posts with blue bark, featuring forks at the top, are placed in the room. Horizontal wooden beams are placed in these forks, creating a network of beams that serves as the basis for the roof covering. The basic structure consists of massive branches, which are placed according to their geometry rather than any specific rule. Smaller branches are placed over them, followed by a roof covering made of grass. There is a single door. Interestingly, the auxiliary buildings do not follow the rule of placing two columns in the middle; instead, the columns are placed in a geometrically irregular rhythm. The geometry of the auxiliary building is also not oval or circular like that of a house.

The stable of Sheikh Said Al-Khatiri

The building was constructed in the immediate vicinity of the new and old houses. It was built by carving a cut into one side; on the other side, using stone material excavated from the site, an irregularly shaped wall was erected, approximately 10–12 meters long and 4 to 5 meters apart. The space is about two meters high in the middle, while at the ends it is about 120 centimetres. The fence wall is about two meters wide at the bottom, one meter at the top, and approximately one meter high. It has two double doors for the passage of livestock, about 1.2 meters wide and 1.6 meters high. Each door has a lintel made of massive round wood supported on both sides by short columns with forks at the top.

The roof structure consists of vertical poles, slightly driven into the ground, which have forks at the top and support a central structure of interconnected beams. One row of columns is located next to the cut in the ground, and another row is placed between the cut and the perimeter stone wall. Irregular thick tree branches were placed on the primary structure as horizontal beams. Smaller branches and a roof covering, consisting mostly of earth mixed with grass, were placed over them. Later, thick nylon was added to some parts to protect the structure from rain.

The stone wall is made of crushed stone with a filling of clay mixed with grass, which has caused the structure to become homogenised over time. In some places, due to the weight of the structure, double columns were used, and double beams were placed through the middle of the space to absorb the pressure from the roof load, which was piled up rather than systematically stacked. In the middle of each of the two rooms formed in this way, there is a drain hole through the stone wall for liquids and water. This hole measures 50 × 30 centimetres, extends through the entire depth of the perimeter wall, and is bridged with massive wooden beams.

The space in front of the barn is partially cut into the ground, leveled, and enclosed with a stone fence and a fence made of piled-up wooden branches.



Figure 56. Double columns with ridgepoles at the top, horizontal wooden beams, massive branches of the hipped roof rafters and a stone wall with an entrance door
 [Удвојени ступци са ракљама у врху, хоризонталне дрвене греде, масивне гране куместо рогова крова и камени зид са улазним вратима]



Figure 57. Column, part of the roof structure and stone wall
 [Стубац, део кровне конструкције и камени зид]



Figure 58. A network of columns supporting horizontal beams and a roof structure
[Мрежа стубаца који носе хоризонталне греде и кровну конструкцију]



Figure 59. The height of the room relative to a person, a central column, and a subsequently added column that accepts the load in the span that the existing beam cannot carry [Висина просторије у односу на човека, централни стубац, и накнадно додати стубац који прихвата оптерећење у распону који не може да носи постојећа греда]

The stable Number 1

The building was constructed according to the same principles used for houses. An irregular oval-shaped wall, about 120 centimetres high, was built around the perimeter of the base, made of broken stone bound with clay and grass. The central space is covered by a roof supported by several columns made of logs shallowly dug into the ground, with a fork at the top. Horizontal beams are placed between the forks, supporting the basic frame of the roof structure. Large branches are piled onto this frame, followed by smaller ones, to finally complete the roof covering.



Figure 60. Stone wall, part of the roof structure, two central columns and a horizontal beam [Камени зид, део кровне конструкције, два централна ступца и хоризонтална греда]



Figure 61. Part of the roof structure charred by smoke from a fireplace
[Део кровне конструкције препариран димом са огњишта]



Figure 62. Stone wall with entrance door, two central columns, and part of the roof structure [Камени зид са улазним вратима, два централна ступца, и део кровне конструкције]



Figure 63. A network of columns that support beams and then massive branches like horns, smaller branches, and a roof covering [Мрежа стубаца који носе греде и потом масивне гране као рогове, ситније гране и кровни покривач]



Figure 64. A network of columns that support beams and then massive branches like horns, smaller branches, and a roof covering [Мрежа стубаца који носе греде и потом масивне гране као рогове, ситније гране и кровни покривач]

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Houses in the area around Salalah in Dhofar, Sultanate of Oman, are built very similarly to a Mediterranean building type called the “teza”, and to types found in the continental Balkans known as “dubirog” and “kulaca”. A “teza” consists of a dry-stone wall approximately 100 cm high, built around a single wooden pillar with a rake at the top if it has a circular base. If it features two or four columns, it takes an oval shape. Thick branches are placed upon the stone wall and the central beam, followed by thinner ones until the roof is covered. A “teza” usually has a single door.

A “dubirog” is a structure built in the mountainous regions of the Balkan Peninsula. Its construction is very similar: first, a low stone wall is erected, upon which massive round wooden beams are placed. Smaller branches are laid crosswise over this structure, which is then covered with ferns and grass. To prevent the roof covering from being blown away by the wind, wooden beams are placed on top. A ring of twisted rope is positioned just below the ridge, connecting the beams that secure the roof.

The “busara” is an even more similar building type with a circular or oval base. First, a stone wall up to one meter high is constructed, supporting the main massive wooden frame. Cross branches are laid over it, and grass is layered on top. The building typically has one or two doors placed opposite each other.



Figure 65. Klisura village, Bela Palanka, Serbia. A settlement with dugouts used for housing [Село Клисура, Бела Паланка, Србија. Насеље са земуницама које се користе за становање]



*Figure 66. “Dubirog” in Donja Morača in Montenegro
[„Дубирог” у Доњој Морачи у Црној Гори]*



*Figure 67. “Busara” on the Pešter Plateau, Serbia
[„Бусара” на Пештерској висоравни, Србија]*

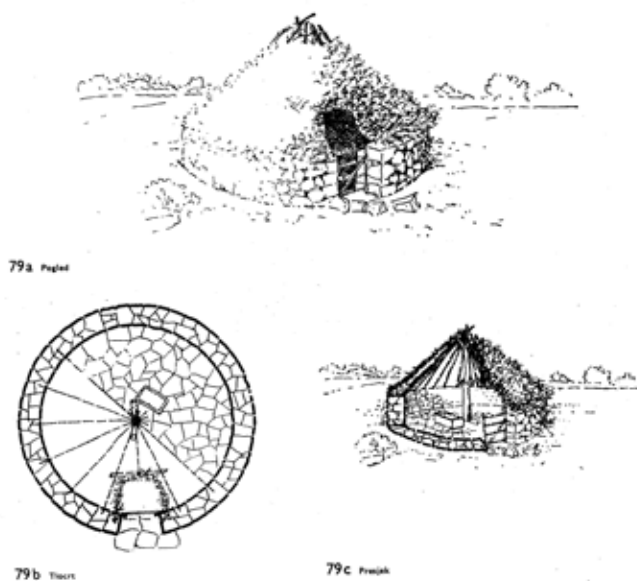


Figure 68. “Thesis” with forked columns, Širitovci near Drniš
[„Teza” sa rashљastim stupcima, Ширитовци код Дрниша]

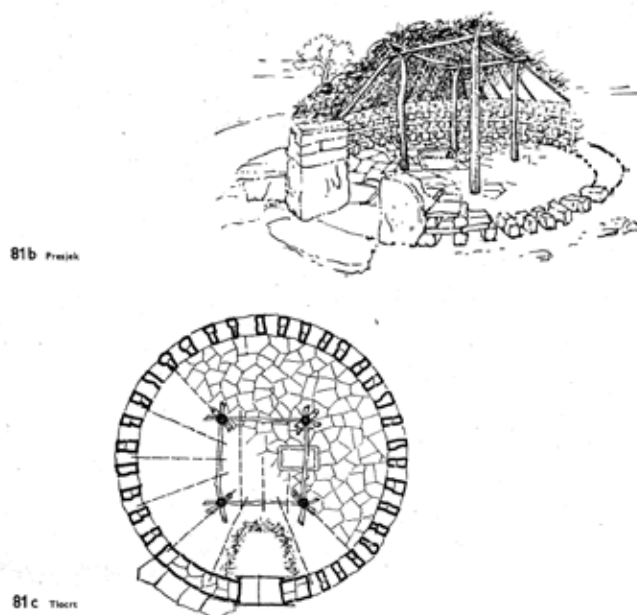


Figure 69. “Teza” with four forked columns, between Obrovac and Benkovac in Croatia
[„Teza” sa четири rashљаста ступца, између Обровца и Бенковца у Хрватској]

CONCLUSION

The traditional houses of the mountainous area around the city of Salalah in Dhofar, Sultanate of Oman, are specific and valuable examples of traditional architectural models. In general, the basic concept of the house, both spatial and constructive, is consistent with those found along the northern coast of the Mediterranean and the mainland of Asia Minor and the Balkans. This basic concept has been slightly modified to adapt to available materials and building habits. Thus, on the Mediterranean coast, we find houses of similar constructive concepts called “tesa”, and in the mainland of the Balkans, “kulache” and “dubirozi”.

The basic concept of the house is based on a circular or oval base. A stone wall up to 150 cm high is built along the edge of the determined base. The wall has two openings up to 100 cm wide on opposite sides, where the door is located. The roof is supported by two columns with forks at the top into which a horizontal beam is placed. The roof rafters, consisting of wooden branches with a larger cross-section, are supported on one side by the wall and on the other by the beam. Smaller branches are placed over these branches, followed by a covering of grass tied into bundles. The door is low, requiring a person to bend significantly when entering and leaving the house.

In front of the main door, which usually faces east, the house has an oval courtyard enclosed by a stone wall with the same characteristics as the wall of the house. The courtyard is entered through a gate. On the opposite side, a small plateau is built, though no construction of a fence wall has been observed.

The traditional house of the mountainous part around the city of Salalah in Dhofar is an important document of the architectural past of the Arabian Peninsula and the Mediterranean. It is necessary to architecturally record as many preserved examples as possible to collect detailed information on the construction methods, tools used, and measurements. High-quality buildings should be moved to one zone to create a museum of traditional Dhofar architecture. In this way, one could gain insight into the architectural models in one place while increasing supervision over the preserved examples. The architecture of the mountainous part of Dhofar is a significant part of the cultural heritage of the Arabian Peninsula and world architecture.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to thank Ahmet Al Kathiri, Hatem Bin Salim Tahmoom and Muhammad Musallam Al Amri from Salalah for their assistance in the field research and understanding of the culture of the Gebali people in Dhofar.

ORIGIN OF FIGURES

Figure 1–39, 56–59 / Duško Kuzović;

Figure 40–55, 60–64 / Muhammad Musallam Al Amri & Duško Kuzović;

Figure 65–67 / Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade / Етнографски музеј у Београду;

Figure 68–69. Aleksandar Freudenreich (1962). *Narod gradi na ogoljenom krasu*. Zagreb–Beograd.

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ОРИГИНАЛНИ НАУЧНИ РАД

Примљен: 5. 5. 2026.

Прихваћен: 25. 5. 2026.

ТРАДИЦИОНАЛНА КУЋА НАРОДА ЦЕБАЛИ У ОКОЛИНИ ГРАДА САЛАЛА, ОБЛАСТ ДОФАР, СУЛТАНАТ ОМАН

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РЕЗИМЕ: Традиционална кућа племена Цебали захвата широк планински појас области Дофар у Источном Јемену. Формирана је према начину живота и привређивања племена Цебали, као и њихов начин друштвене организације. Архитектонски модел развијан је вековима у прошлости, а последњи примерци су саграђени 70-их година двадесетог века. Простор на коме је истраживана кућа захвата планинске делове области Дофар. Пружа се од насеља Рајут на југозападу, преко старе престонице града Салала, и даље насеља Така и Мирбат на североистоку. Ширине је од почетка планинског гребена до границе са пустињском области на северу. Кућа је организована у два овална простора: покривени (кућа) и отворени (каменом ограђено двориште). Кућа се гради по карактеристичном архитектонском моделу који се састоји из неколико елемената. Први елемент је камени зид који се гради до висине 100–140 цм, ширине 50–100 цм, пратећи основу која је овалног облика који тежи ка кругу. Пречник унутрашњег простора је од 450 до 700 цм. У кућу се улази кроз двоја врата, наспрамно постављена, обично једна према истоку а друга према западу. Други елемент су два ступца и греда који су постављени у централном делу основе. Ступци су доле укопани у тло а горе имају рачве у које је постављена греда. Трећи елемент је кровна конструкција која се састоји од неколико слојева. Први слој су крупне гране које имају улогу рогова у класичној кровној конструкцији. Ослањају се на једној страни на камени зид а на другој на греду. Наредни слој су ситне гране које се постављају преко крупних и које попуњавају празнине. Преко њих се поставља кровни покривач од траве повезане у снопове. Против развјејавања покривача ветром се преко покривача постављају гране и камен. Организација куће је једнопросторна, с тим што се јасно знају намене сваког од квадраната унутрашњости. Квадранти су формиран у односу на врата. У квадранту најближем главним вратима у кућу (исток) налази се огњиште поред зида и које је од површине пода одвојено са ниском каменом соклом. Остатак тог квадранта је намењен за потребе домаћинства. Квадрант поред је одређен за дневни боравак што укључује и пријем

гостију. Остала два квадранта (према вратима ка западу) су намењена за приватни живот породице, спавање и чување гардеробе. Кућа је по концепцији веома слична балканским моделима: приморској „тези” и копненој „кулачи” односно „дуборог”.

КЉУЧНЕ РЕЧИ: традиционална кућа народа Џебали; народна архитектура Дофара; народна архитектура Омана; традиционална кућа Арабијског полуострва; џебали култура