



‘AQDĀ

‘AQDĀ, a small settlement and subdistrict (*dehestān*) in the district (*baḡš*) of *Ardakān-e Yazd* lying at 32° 30’ north latitude and 53° 36’ east longitude on the road connecting Yazd with Nā’īn and Isfahan, at a distance of 74 km from Nā’īn and 100 km from Yazd.

In medieval Islamic times, ‘Aqdā was regarded as an administrative dependency of Yazd and as marking the frontier between Yazd and Nā’īn, the latter being sometimes reckoned to Yazd and sometimes to Isfahan. Nothing is known of its pre-Islamic history, despite a popular etymology for its name connecting it with a Sasanian commander called ‘Aqdār, who is said to have constructed there a *qanāt* and fortress and to have established a village (Aḥmad b. Ḥosayn b. ‘Alī Kāteb, *Tārīḡ-e ja’dīd-e Yazd*, ed. Ī. Afšār, Tehran, 1345 Š./1966, p. 32). In the classical Arabic geographers, from Eṣṭaḡrī to Yāqūt, we find the form ‘Aqda/Oqda, but these authorities give no details about the place’s history or geography beyond the mere mention of its name and situation on the fringe of the Great Desert (see Le Strange, *Lands*, p. 285). ‘Aqdā had clearly played little part in the wider history of Iran; only the local historians of Yazd Ja’far b. Moḥammad Ja’farī (*Tārīḡ-e Yazd*, ed. Ī. Afšār, Tehran, 1338 Š./1959, p. 112) and Moḥammad Mofīd Bāfqī (*Jāme’-e Mofīdī* III, pp. 559, 585) mention occasional charitable works there by dignitaries of Yazd.

The population is now wholly Muslim, but formerly there were Zoroastrians at ‘Aqdā, which was also referred to as Deh-e Gabrān (the village of Zoroastrians). Josafat Barbaro visited what he calls “Guerde” in 1474 and mentions there several “Abraini” (i.e., “Abrahamites” = Zoroastrians). ‘Aqdā



(“Agda”) was further visited in 1621 by the Silesian traveler Heinrich von Posen und Gross-Nedlitz, who journeyed from Isfahan eastwards along the southern fringes of the Great Desert—the first European to do so—to Ṭabas, Bīrjand and Afghanistan (see A. Gabriel, *Die Erforschung Persiens*, Vienna, 1952, pp. 57-59). At present, the *dehestān* of ‘Aqdā comprises twenty villages, some on the desert fringes and some on the mountain slopes to the south. Its total population was estimated at 6,000 in 1344 Š./1965.

The monuments of ‘Aqdā and its dependencies have been listed and discussed by Afšār (*Yādgārhā-ye Yazd*, Tehran, 1348-54 Š./1969-75, I, pp. 33-55, 452-56). Those of ‘Aqdā itself include the *rebāṭ* or caravanserai of the merchant Ḥājjī Abu’l-Qāsem Raštī (1262/1846), now the police station; a cistern (1027/1617-18); a Ḥosaynīya (1292/1875) for the performance of passion plays and other Shi‘ite mourning rites; a bath (1055/1645); ruinous fortresses popularly connected with K̄vāja Naṣīr-al-dīn Ṭūsī and the ancient Iranian hero Sām; the *Jāme‘* mosque (ca. 8th/14th century); the Holākū mosque (1123/1711); and the Šams mosque (1090/1679). In the environs, noteworthy are the *rebāṭ* of K̄argūšī built by Shah ‘Abbās I in 1024/1625, a 7th/13th century mosque at Haftādor, and a Zoroastrian shrine of Būnāpars (Bānū-ye Pārs?) at Zarjū‘ or Zarjū to the south of ‘Aqdā (M. Boyce, “Bībī Shahrbanū and the lady of Pārs,” *BSOAS* 30, 1967, pp. 32-33, 38-44).

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See also *Jāme‘-e Mofīdī*, ed.

Ī. Afšār, III, Tehran, 1340 Š./1961, pp. 720-21.

Schwarz, *Iran*, pp. 198, 582, 657.

Razmārā, *Farhang* X, pp. 135-36.

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