



## ARDAKĀN-E YAZD

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**ARDAKĀN-e YAZD**, a town of central Persia on the present Yazd-Ardestān-Kāšān road along the southern edge of the Dašt-e Kavīr, forty miles northwest of Yazd, in 32° 18' north latitude and 53° 50' east longitude, and an elevation of 3,280 feet above sea level. It is possible that Ardakān is the Artacana of Ptolemy (*Geography* 6.5.4), described as a town of Parthia in the Carmanian desert (see W. Tomaschek, in Pauly-Wissowa, II/1, col. 1303), but no ancient ruins have yet been found in the vicinity, nor is anything known for certain of its early Islamic history. Ebn Ḥawqal (ed. Kramers, p. 260; tr. Kramers and Wiet, p. 263) mentions an Āḍarkān on the borders of Fārs which may be identical with this Ardakān. But the name occurs elsewhere including in Kermān and Fārs, where there is a well-known Ardakān north of Šīrāz in the Qašqā'ī country 30° 16' north latitude and 52° east longitude).

In the Il-khanid period there is definite reference to the Ardakān of Yazd. The local histories of Yazd now begin to mention Ardakān. Rokn-al-dīn Ḥosaynī Yazdī's *Jāme' al-kayrāt* describes it as a small town (*qarya*) of the district of Maybod, and names one of its *qanāts* as the *amīrī* one (ed. M. T. Dānešpažūh and I. Afšār, Tehran, 1341 Š./1962, pp. 112, 132, 134, 195). Moḥammad Mofīd Bāfqī (11th/17th cent.) in his *Jāme'-e mofīdī* mentions the Sufī *kānaqāh* there of the Dādā'īva shaikhs which was richly endowed with *awqāf*, and gives biographies of various Ardakānī shaikhs of the 10th-11th/16th-17th centuries (ed. Afšār, III, Tehran, 1340 Š./1961, pp. 326, 331, 338, 669).

A traditional center of a major agricultural area which was formerly served by more than thirty *qanāts*, Ardakān developed during the 19th and 20th



centuries into a major caravan stop. It is said that the town had approximately 15,000 inhabitants around 1900. It was surrounded by high walls; in 1933 parts of these ramparts were torn down and replaced by a modern highway encompassing the old center of the settlement on its southern and western side. In 1959 a new avenue was cut through the old center of the town itself, destroying parts of its old bazaar. Until 1969 Ardakān served as a *baḳš* center in the *šahrestān* of Yazd. With the proclamation of Yazd-*šahrestān* as a *farmāndārī-e koll* in 1969, Ardakān became a *šahrestān* center. Its population (1950: 12,270 inhabitants; 1966: 14,333) should now surpass 25,000 people; irrigated agriculture (grain, cotton, pistachios, pomegranates), metal working, carpet weaving, handicrafts, and trade serve as the main sources of income

See also 'Aqdā.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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See also Dehḳodā, *alef*, p. 1774.

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