



AVA

ĀVA, the basic modern form (and the older spoken form) of the name of two small towns of northern Persia, normally written *Āba* in medieval Islamic sources. The geographers of that time had difficulty in distinguishing the two places, but usually designate them by the names “*Aba of Hamadān*” (Maqdesī, pp. 25, 51, “*Āba of Qazvīn*”) and “*Aba of Sāva*.”

1. *Āba* (now *Āvaj*) of Hamadān. This, the more northerly of the two, lies on the Qazvīn-Hamadān road approximately halfway between the two, 49° 15' east longitude and 35° 35' north latitude, on a high plateau, and was considered as belonging to the *sardsīr* or cold regions. Ḥamdallāh Mostawfī reckons it as belonging to the district of “the two *Ḳarraḡāns*,” dependent administratively on Hamadān and comprising forty villages, of which *Āba* was one of the chief (*Nozhat al-qolūb*, p. 73, tr. p. 76). The present town, now known as *Āvaj*, had 1,800 inhabitants, Persian- and Turkish-speaking, in 1950.

2. *Āba of Sāva* (with which town *Āba of Hamadān* was usually linked). This seems to have been the more important of the two in medieval times. The town lies in 50° 20' east longitude and 34° 45' north latitude, on the Zarrīn-rūd (or *Qara-sū*, former *Garmāsa-rūd* or *Garmās-āb*), which rises in the Alvand district of Hamadān and flows down to the plain of *Āba* and *Sāva*; there it was, in Saljuq times, dammed and the waters stored used for irrigation in the summer (*Nozhat al-qolūb*, p. 221, tr. pp. 212-13). The *Ḥodūd al-‘ālam* (tr. Minorsky, p. 133, sec. 31.22) describes *Sāva* and *Āva* as two flourishing towns on the pilgrimage route from Khorasan; Yāqūt (pp. 57-58) mentions that the people of *Āba* were ardent Shi‘ites and frequently at odds with their Sunnite



neighbors in Sāva. It was from Āba that two celebrated statesmen of the 5th/11th century sprang, both with the *nesba* al-Ābī: Abū Saʿd Maṣṣūr b. Ḥosayn, protégé of the Ṣāḥeb Esmāʿīl b. ʿAbbād (vizier to the last Buyid amir of Ray and Jebāl, Majd-al-dawla Rostam) and author of an *adab* work, the *Ketāb naṭr al-dorar* (extant) and a lost *Taʾrīk al-Rayy*. He died in 421/1030 (Brockelmann, *GAL*² I, pp. 429-30; Sezgin, *GAS* II, p. 646). 2. His brother, Abū Maṣṣūr Moḥammad was vizier to “the king of Ṭabarestān” (one of the Ziyarids?). In the early 6th/12th century, the governor of Āba and Sāva on behalf of the Great Saljuqs was the *atābak* Anūštigin Šīrgīr, builder of the dam on the Garmāsa-rūd (see above), and active against the Ismaʿīlis of the Alborz mountains; in the later part of this century, the Shiʿite *madrasas* of ʿEzz-al-molk, ʿArabšāh, and others are mentioned at Āba (C. E. Bosworth and A. Bausani in *Camb. Hist. Iran* V, pp. 118-19, 294-95). Although attacked by the Mongols, like Sāva, Āba apparently regained its importance, for we possess a fair number of coins minted at Āba (presumably Āba of Sāva) in the post-Mongol period under the Il-khanids, Jalayerids, Mozaffarids, and Timurids (E. von Zambaur, *Die Münzprägungen des Islams, zeitlich und örtlich geordnet* I, Wiesbaden, 1968, p. 138; earlier, coins were minted at Āba by the Samanids briefly and more extensively by the Buyids, see von Zambaur, loc. cit.). The present small town or village of Āba had 885 inhabitants in 1950.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also Le Strange, *Lands*, pp. 196, 211.

Schwarz, *Iran*, pp. 549-50 (Āba of Hamadān), 542-43 (Āba of Sāva).

Razmārā, *Farhang* I, pp. 26-27.

L. W. Adamec, ed., *Historical Gazetteer of Iran I: Tehran and Northwestern Iran*, Graz, 1976, p. 57 (Āba of Sāva).

Kayhān, *Joḡrāfiā* II, pp. 374, 398.

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آوه، آبه aweh aveh