



DĪVĀL-E ẸODĀYDĀD

DĪVĀL-E ẸODĀYDĀD (31°15'-31°16' N, 62°06'-62°09' E), an extensive area of historic remains in the center of an ancient canal system fed by the rivers Helmand and Ẹāšrūd. It is located between the eastern border of the Hāmūn-e Aškīn'ām and the lower Ẹāšrūd, about 45 km to the northeast of Zaranj in southwest Afghanistan.

The remains consist of low mounds and about twenty mud-brick ruins that once formed the so-called “ayvān-courtyard-houses” (see [AYVĀN](#)). These rectangular structures are invariably situated with one smaller side towards the northwest thus protecting its inhabitants against the “wind of the 120 days” (*bād-e sad o bīst rūz*) blowing during the summer months from northwest to southeast and thus transporting the typical Sīstānī moving sand dunes. In the course of the years and centuries sand dunes cover and again set free partially dried-up riverbeds, abandoned fields, and deserted houses. Therefore archeological maps of Sīstān/Nīmruz usually reflect only the present state of field surveys recently completed by air photography. The “ayvān-courtyard-house” is entered in the southeastern small side by a more or less decorated door. To both sides of the central court are situated square or rectangular rooms. To the northwest the edifice is closed and protected by an *ayvān*, an oblong hall covered by barrel vaulting; it was probably designed as the seat of the feudal owner and reception room and is modestly embellished with mud-brick patterns with squares, crosses, or triangles. In the *ayvāns*, rooms, *bāzār*-like buildings, and a cistern we observed various modes of Iranian constructions adopted to features of Islamic type settlements (tunnel



vaults, pendentive structures, squinch-domes, even superimposed domes). In the houses and the open plains between them we found sherds of Iranian and Islamic pottery; besides atypical, unglazed wares types from Ghaznavid glazed ceramics and Ghurid glazed decorated ware in early Islamic graffiti (to be dated from the 11th to 13th centuries according to the excavations in the residence of Lařkarĭ Bāzār), as well as Il-khanid and Timurid multi-colored varieties known from Iranian lands throughout 13th-15th centuries. Neither this ruin field nor adjoining ones can be identified according to Islamic sources. Dĭvāl-e Ẹodāydād seems to have been a rural estate (*rostāq*) situated in the vicinity of artificially irrigated fields. The settlement seems to have been established after the Arab conquest of Persia and Central Asia and may have flourished until 785/1383 when Tĭmūr raided Sĭstān/Nĭmrŭz, destroying irrigation systems, villages, and fortresses and reducing the population. Later on parts of Sĭstān were again converted to arable land but it never regained the former wealth.

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