



## BĀĠ-E ERAM

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**BĀĠ-E ERAM**, a famous and beautiful garden at Shiraz. Its site close to the embankment of the Rūdḵāna-ye Ḳošk was formerly on the northwestern fringe of the city but is now well inside the greatly expanded urban area. The present garden and mansion are not very old but, like the other famous gardens of Shiraz, may well have replaced an earlier foundation. D. N. Wilber surmised that its antecedent may have been the Bāġ-e Šāh mentioned in accounts of the Safavid period, but the present writer, after studying the sketches of Shiraz which have come down from that period, particularly those made by Chardin, considers that the Bāġ-e Šāh must have been opposite the former city gate called Darvāza-ye Bāġ-e Šāh, probably on the grounds now occupied by the Sa'dī and Namāzī hospitals.

Bāġ-e Eram, originally a foundation of a Qašqā'ī chief (see below) as his city residence, lay at a distance of one mile to the northwest of Shiraz. It had an area which, if sown with wheat, would require 290 maunds of seed (Fasā'ī, II, p. 164).

Forṣat Šīrāzī, a contemporary of Fasā'ī, praised the Bāġ-e Eram for its beautiful flowers, refreshing air, tall cypresses (a stately, beautiful cypress tree there known as *sarv-e nāz* has long been a major tourist attraction), fragrant myrtles, flowing watercourses, and numerous cascades. The garden contained a fine mansion, which according to Fasā'ī (loc. cit.) was erected by Jānī Khan (d. 1239/1823-24), the paramount chief (*ilḵānī*) of the Qašqā'ī tribe under the late Zands, but Forṣat attributes its foundation to the *ilḵānī* Moḥammadqolī Khan, the fourth son of Jānī Khan. The Bāġ-e Eram was subsequently



purchased by Ḥājī Naṣīr-al-Molk, who ordered the construction of a new mansion (the one still standing), entrusting the work to the architect Ḥājī Moḥammad-Ḥasan Me'mār (*Āṭār-e 'Ajam*, p. 511). Forṣat describes this mansion as consisting of a reception hall (*tālār*), which had a roof supported by two massive pillars and received light through sash windows (*orosī*), and two stories of side rooms. Another garden was added, containing an orangery (*nāranjestān*) together with a stable (*bārband*) and a pavilion (*kūšk*). An inscription on the stone plinth of the facade of the mansion consists of verses by Shirazi poets such as Faṣīḥ-al-Molk Šūrīda (1274/1857-1345/1926). The verses include the date 1339/1921 as well as descriptions of the constructional work and praises of the then owner Naṣīr-al-Molk.

After the coup d'état of 1332 Š./1953 and the exile of the Qašqā'ī brothers, who in the meantime had regained ownership of the Bāġ-e Eram, the government confiscated the garden and later on gave it to Pahlavi University (now the University of Shiraz).

During this period the former mud walls were replaced with iron railings, old trees were cut down to make room for lawns, and a broad street named Eram Boulevard was laid out on the northwest side.

Early during the revolution of 1357 Š./1978-79, the Qašqā'īs repossessed the garden; shortly afterward its owner Ḳosrow Khan dedicated it to the people of Shiraz. The garden has now been made into a botanical garden and the mansion has been assigned to the Faculty of Law of the university.

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