



BĀĠ-E FĪN

BĀĠ-e FĪN, known also as Bāġ-e Šāh-e Kāšān and Bāġ-e Šāh-e Fīn, a royal garden at about one parasang to the southwest of the city of Kāšān, where subterranean waters from the Dandāna and Haft Kotal mountains emerge to form the Fīn springs (Sohayl Kāšānī, p. 49). More than 22,608 m² (Moštāfawī), Fīn Gardens contain an ornate, tiled pool which is the source of cold artesian waters that feed the park's system of basins and water channels and that ultimately irrigate the two small villages of upper and lower Fīn. Above the central pool is a two-story pavilion of carved ornamental stone containing four alcoves (*šahnešīn*) and daises. At one time, over the pavilion was a one (Sohayl Kāšānī, p. 50) or two- (Īzadyār, p. 272) story, bowler-shaped extension built of iron and wood that survived until the mid-Qajar period. The two-story pavilion, a rectangular reflecting pool fronting it, and a walkway that connects the pavilion to the garden entryway form the basic layout of Bāġ-e Fīn.

The Safavid Shah Šafī (r. 1038-52/1629-42) is credited with the original construction of Fīn Gardens (Sohayl Kāšānī, p. 49; Hedāyat, VIII, p. 463); the site was evidently next to or above the ruins of a Mongol-era structure (Meškātī, p. 11). Šafī was not the first Safavid king to use the springs of Fīn; 'Abbās I built a garden, no trace of which has survived (Sohayl Kāšānī, p. 51) and Shah Esmā'īl I once gave a royal audience there (Narāqī, 1345 Š./1966, p. 96). Shah Ṭahmāsb is also credited with the foundation of this garden. During the reign of Shah Solaymān (1077-1105/1666-94) a partitioned pool was built outside the garden where the springs emerged from the ground; this pool, known as Čašma-ye Solaymānī, was repaired and rebuilt "ca. thirty years ago"



(Moṣṭafawī). The Safavid kings would also generally stop and rest at Fīn Gardens while passing through Kāšān (Hedāyat, VIII, p. 482; Narāqī, p. 141).

During the Qajar period, in 1220/1805, Fath-'Alī Shah ordered damage done to the garden by an 1192/1778 earthquake to be repaired (Narāqī, 1345 Š./1966, p. 9). His reign also saw the erection of a gatehouse, the pavilion known as Şoffa-ye Fath-'alīšāhī, under which a turquoise, tiled pool and numerous fountains were installed (Hedāyat, X, p. 137; Šīrvānī, p. 457), several buildings flanking the pavilion including a small *ḥammām* in which Amīr(-e) Kabīr (q.v.) was murdered (Sohayl Kāšānī, pp. 51-52); the pavilion's cupolas and arched ceilings were adorned with portraits of the shah and Qajar princes. A chronogrammatic poem by Kāvārī inscribed on the building in raised *nasta'liq* puts the date of the pavilion's completion at 1226/1811 (Meškātī, p. 11; Šīrvānī, p. 457). During the reign of Moḥammad Shah (r. 1250-64/1834-48) another pool with several small fountains was erected. The Qajar kings maintained Fīn Garden, using it as a base camp on journeys to their hunting grounds around Kāšān (Moṣṭafawī, loc. cit.; Īzadyār, p. 272); toward the end of the Qajar era, some of the rulers of Kāšān would use it as their residences and seats of government (Sohayl Kāšānī, p. 77; Narāqī, pp. 4, 11, 21). During the rebellion of Nāyeb Ḥosayn Kāšī, the *nāyeb*'s son Māšā'allāh Khan dislodged some of the marble and tiles from the residence and used them in his own palace (Narāqī, 1345 Š./1966, pp. 248, 257; Īzadyār, p. 273); Bāġ-e Fīn was later declared an historical landmark and the damage was repaired (Moṣṭafawī).

Bāġ-e Fīn owes most of its notoriety to the fact that from 8 Şafar 1268/3 December 1851 it served as the exile home of the deposed Prime Minister Mīrzā Taqī Khan Amīr Kabīr (Ādamīyat, p. 707), who on 17 Rabī' I 1268/10 January 1852 was assassinated in its small *ḥammām* (Ādamīyat, p. 726). Fīn Gardens then fell into disrepair until Prince Jalāl-al-Dīn Mīrzā Eḥtešām-al-Molk became governor of Kāšān (Afšār, p. 105) repaired the structure and made it his official residence (Sohayl Kāšānī, p. 51).



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See also R. G. Watson, *History of Persia*, London, 1866, pp. 398-406.

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