



## BĀR II. THE QAJAR AND PAHLAVI PERIODS

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The first Qajar shah was mostly engaged in foreign wars or struggles over the succession and paid little attention to formulating a detailed protocol for the royal audience (usually called *salām* in this period). In fact, it was not until the long reign of Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shah, during which Iran enjoyed a certain degree of political stability, that such a protocol was developed; it remained generally in force until the end of the dynasty. Until 1299/1881-82 Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shah regularly held public audience in the hall of the Taḳt-e Marmar (marble throne) on Nowrūz (new year); after that time the newly built Tālār-e Mūza (museum hall), later renamed Tālār-e Tājgoḏārī (coronation hall), was used for this purpose. At these ceremonies princes, ministers, and military and civil dignitaries were arrayed in order of rank (though this order was not always strictly observed). Palace cooks and eunuchs could be seen standing beside viziers and generals (E'temād-al-Salṭana, p. 422). The shah would then appear in a military uniform studded with diamonds and other precious stones, carrying the diamond-studded sword (*šamšīr-e jahāngošā*) of Faṭḥ 'Alī Shah and wearing the royal crown with a jeweled plume.

At the earlier *bārs* each guest would receive a purse containing 150 silver *šāhī* and five gold *do-hezārī* coins; in later times, however, the number of *šāhīs* declined, and the gold coins were omitted completely. The shah also received handsome gifts for himself (*ibid.*, pp. 945-46). At first the diplomatic corps was received as a unit, the senior diplomat wishing the monarch a happy new year



on behalf of his colleagues; the shah would then make a brief response through his interpreter. After the *bārs* had been moved to the Tālār-e Mūza, representatives of foreign governments were received individually by the shah, while the minister of foreign affairs and the royal interpreter stood at his right and left respectively. The *bār* at Nowrūz was customarily followed by displays of athletic skills, including gymnastics and wrestling bouts; the shah would reward the participants by throwing handfuls of gold coins. When Nowrūz coincided with days of solemn religious observance, however (as in 1312/1894, when it fell on 23 Ramaẓān), the *bār* was not held.

Beside Nowrūz there were other occasions for *bārs*. One such occasion was Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shah's return from his European tour. A general audience was held at the Taḳt-e Marmar on 24 Ṣafar 1308/25 October 1890. Military and civil grandees, as well as representatives from all classes of society, were stationed in the garden facing the open hall from the south. Military officers wore tall lambskin hats and blue broadcloth vests with shoulder straps indicating their ranks, the religious leaders their customary long cloaks and turbans, and judges tall cylindrical hats wrapped in cashmere shawls to match their cashmere robes. The shah appeared at the bottom of the garden and passed along the line, as the guests greeted him with bows, until he reached the throne, which was covered with a superb Persian rug and furnished with a pearl-studded cushion for him to lean against. As soon as he was seated, an attendant handed him a cup of coffee and a narghileh adorned with turquoise stones. He then spoke briefly of his satisfaction with the administration of the country during his absence. In response there were two orations on the happy occasion of his return and a program of choral music in his praise. The shah remained seated on the throne throughout these ceremonies, which lasted for about an hour, then left for the Golestān palace through a corridor to his left (Feuvrier, pp. 120-21).

The first major modification to the protocol of the *bār* under the Pahlavis was replacement of the long cashmere cloak (*jobba-ye terma*) and cylindrical hat by full formal dress (*lebās-e rasmī*) on the European model.

Two types of *bār*, or *salām*, were regularly held under the Pahlavis (1304-57 Š./1925-79). The first was the general audience (*salām-e āmm*) held on four official festivals: the shah's birthday (24 Esfand/15 March for Reẓā Shah and 4 Ābān/26 October for Moḥammad-Reẓā Shah); Nowrūz (1 Farvardīn/21 or 22 March); 'Īd-e Mab'at (27 Rajab), the day the Prophet was charged to recite the word of God; and 'Īd-e Ġadīr-e Kōmm (18 Du'l-ḥejja, q.v.), the day on which,



according to the Shi'ites, Moḥammad nominated 'Alī as his successor. The second was the special audience (*salām-e kāṣṣ*) held on the 'Īd-e Feṭr (1 Šawwāl), the celebration at the end of Ramaẓān.

Under Moḥammad-Rezā Shah the general *bār* usually lasted from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the grand audience hall of the Golestān Palace, known as Tālār-e Tājgoḏārī. Groups composed of members of the cabinet and parliament, ranking representatives of foreign states, directors of institutions and government agencies, and community leaders were received separately by the shah, according to a preestablished timetable. The master of royal ceremonies usually informed each group of its scheduled time at least one week in advance. Members of the group arrived at the palace half an hour before the appointed hour and were greeted by the master of ceremonies, who then conducted them into the audience hall, where they arranged themselves in order of rank to await the arrival of the monarch. The shah was announced by the master of royal ceremonies and entered in the full uniform of commander-in-chief, to be greeted with bows by the assembled notables. The leader of the group expressed on behalf of his colleagues good wishes on the auspicious occasion and received a brief reply from the monarch, who then proceeded past the line and left the hall through the doorway by which he had entered.

Separate audiences were granted in the following order: 1) Representatives of the clergy were received by the shah seated in his private office, rather than in the Tālār-e Tājgoḏārī. Only a few (at most five) men from the Tehran area attended these audiences, dressed in clerical robes and turbans; the religious leaders of Qom and Mašhad, the two most important Islamic centers in Iran, rarely if ever participated. 2) The second group included the minister of court, the shah's military and civil adjutants, department heads from the Ministry of the Court, and the directors of subordinate agencies like the Pahlavi Foundation, the Royal Bureau of Social Services (*Sāzmān-e Šāhanšāhī-e Kadamāt-e Ejtemā'ī*), and the Institute for the Protection of Mothers and Infants (*Bongāh-e Ḥemāyat-e Mādarān o Kūdakān*). 3) Members of the cabinet and their deputies came next, with the ministers aligned behind the prime minister in order of seniority of service, then of age. Former prime ministers and speakers of the Majles, as well as those who had received the Homāyūn or Tāj decorations, were considered senior to their colleagues, regardless of their tenure in office. 4) Senators and deputies of the Majles were received in two separate groups. 5) Next came ranking government officials, heads of state agencies (selected for the occasion by their respective departments), and



judges of the supreme court (Dīvān-e ‘Alī-e Kešvar). In the early 1320s Š./1940s ministers were ranked as follows, according to the official manual of protocol (*Dastūr-e tašrīfāt*, pp. 4-5): Foreign Affairs (Omūr-e Kāreja), Finance (Dārā’ī), Justice (Dādgostarī), Interior (Kešvar), Education (Farhang), Roads (Rāh), Industry and Commerce (Piša o Honar o Bāzargānī), Communications (Post o Telegrāf o Telefon), Agriculture (Kešāvarzī), and Health (Behdārī). 6) Officials and faculty of the University of Tehran and other institutions of higher learning, who were arrayed in order of seniority of service. 7) The foreign diplomatic corps, including ambassadors, ministers plenipotentiary, and chargés d’affaires in that order, attended only on the occasion of Nowrūz and the shah’s birthday. They dressed according to the customs and protocol of their respective countries. Representatives of some Islamic states also participated in the audience on the ‘Īd-e Mab’at, when they were received by the shah in his private office. 8) Former ministers, ambassadors, and provincial governors formed a separate group. 9) Next the president of the National Oil Company, trustees of government-controlled banks and insurance companies, members of the chamber of commerce, publishers of major Tehran newspapers, and representatives of the bar association (Kānūn-e Wokalā-ye Dādgostarī) were received. 10) The succeeding group included ranking municipal authorities of Tehran, like the mayor, members of the city council, and other high officials, as well as community leaders and guild chiefs (*ro’asā-ye ašnāf*). 11) Ranking officers of the armed forces (from colonel up, *Dastūr-e tašrīfāt*, p. 2), the police, and the gendarmerie were the last group presented.

The state dress prescribed for court officials, ministers, and their deputies was frock coat, trousers, and bicorn hat, all of black broadcloth; black patent-leather boots; and white gloves. The frock coat had gold-embroidered cuffs, a high closed collar, and seven gilt buttons bearing the Persian lion and sun. A long sword with a golden hilt was worn on the left side, and the side seams of the trousers were trimmed with gold braid 10 cm wide. Ministers had panels of gold embroidery on the front and back of the coat; in addition, the prime minister wore a braided gold belt and tassel. Deputy ministers had panels of embroidery on the back but not the front. Dignitaries lower than the rank of deputy minister had no embroidery on either the fronts or backs of their frock coats. The bicorn hat was creased in the middle and ornamented with white feathers and gold braid clasped in the center by a circle in the three colors of the Iranian flag: red, white, and green. (According to *Dastūr-e tašrīfāt*, p. 19, other forms of official dress were permitted in the Persian Gulf area in



summer.)

University and college professors attended the *bār* dressed in hexagonal caps with tassels and long black robes with wide bands sewn onto the shoulders in the colors of the schools or institutions they represented. Judges appeared in black robes with white lace on the collars and shoulders and tall cylindrical hats. Other groups wore black jackets, trousers striped in charcoal and light gray, neckties, white shirts, black patent-leather boots, and tall cylindrical hats. Decorations and medals were worn on the left side of the chest or as pendants.

The *salām-e kāšš* was held at Sa'dābād Palace when 'Īd-e Feṭr fell in summer and at Nīāvarān palace when it fell in winter. The shah customarily received members of the cabinet, the presiding officers of the Majles and the Senate, the commander of the armed forces, the chief of the Iranian intelligence agency SAVAK, and representatives of Muslim countries.

In addition to these regularly scheduled *bārs* or *salāms*, ambassadors and ministers plenipotentiary assigned to Tehran were granted royal audience to present their credentials. On the appointed date the representative would be met at his embassy by the master of ceremonies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who would personally conduct him and the ranking members of his staff to the court, where they would be greeted at the gate with their national anthem played by a military band. Then they would be conducted to the anteroom, where the master of royal ceremonies would greet them. The latter would then conduct the ambassador or minister plenipotentiary and his counterpart from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to an audience with the shah. The minister of court, military and civil heads of the court departments, and the minister of foreign affairs would also be present. The foreign representative would submit his credentials and ask permission for his colleagues, who had remained behind in the waiting room, to be introduced to the monarch. After these ceremonies the foreign delegation would be ushered out of the palace in exactly the same manner in which it had arrived.

In an effort to keep all important national matters under his close personal control, Moḥammad-Rezā Shah received in audience (*šarafyābī*) the prime minister twice a week; the president of the Senate, the speaker of the Majles, the president of the National Oil Company, the head of SAVAK, the commanders of the various branches of the armed forces, the chief of the military staff, and the head of police reported to him once a week. According



to *Dastūr-e tašrīfāt* (p. 6), black jackets and top hats were required dress for such meetings. All ministers, except for those of war and foreign affairs, reported through the office of the prime minister unless they were specifically summoned by the shah or had something particularly significant to report to him directly. The minister of foreign affairs often met with him at the end of each day. The master of royal ceremonies oversaw the general management of the official audiences with the shah, and the adjutants made sure that daily court routines proceeded smoothly and on schedule.

The *šarafyābīs* were held in the Kāk-e Marmar (marble palace) and in the Kāk-e Maḵšūš (private palace) and in summer in Sa'dābād Palace. When, after the assassination attempt on the shah at the Marble Palace 10 April 1965, Nīāvarān Palace (Kāk-e Nīāvarān) was built, most audiences were transferred to it. The new palace incorporated the Jahān-nāma, a Qajar construction, which was used for morning audiences; the Kāk-e Maḵšūš-e Nīāvarān was used in the afternoon.

At such meetings the shah received his visitors seated. They greeted him with a bow and bowed again when taking their leave. If the shah honored them by stretching forth his hand, they would normally kiss it. As none of his adjutants attended such meetings, the monarch's instructions were conveyed through his visitors, who submitted them in writing to the royal chancery.

Audiences with the queen were requested and granted through her office, and a similar protocol was followed. For further details see court.

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