



ČAHĀRBĀĠ-E GARRŪS

Č(AH)ĀRBĀĠ-E GARRŪS, a park no longer in existence in the south of the town of Bījār, center of Garrūs *šahrestān* in Persian Kurdistan. Two intersecting avenues divided the park into four sections, hence the name.

A row of large poplar trees circled the park, which boasted sturdy fruit trees, particularly apple and pear trees. It is not known when and how Čārbāġ came into being; we know, however, that in 1104/1692 a large villa was built there by Loṭf-‘Alī Khan, who was the governor of Garrūs in the last years of the Safavid Shah Solaymān (1077-1106/1666-94) and throughout the reign of Shah Sultan Ḥosayn (1106-35/1694-1722). Loṭf-‘Alī Khan was an ancestor, six generations removed, of Ḥasan-‘Alī Khan Amīr(-e) Neẓām Garrūsī, statesman and general under Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shah Qājār. His villa, locally referred to as Tālār-e Ayyvān, literally “hall of verandas,” is said to have had four verandas, each nearly five meters wide and supported by two long columns of embossed wood with enchased capitals. In the middle of the building rose a second-story room (*bālā-kāna*) with latticed sash windows, which afforded a view over the verandas. Facing one of the verandas to the east was a pond lined with exquisitely carved yellow marble slabs and with marble foot baths. Four marble dragon figures kept watch at its comers, spouting water from their mouths and openings all over their bodies. In addition, the pond was surrounded by numerous small fountains.

Both the park and its ornate villa gradually fell into disrepair and were in a state of decay when some time during the reign of Faṭḥ-‘Alī Shah Qājār (r. 1211-50/1797-1834) it came to the notice of the regent and crown prince ‘Abbās



Mīrzā while he was passing through Bijār. He allotted funds to the villa's restoration, and on his orders Moḥammad-Şādeq Khan, the governor of Garrūs and the father of Ḥasan-ʿAlī-Khan Amīr Neẓām, supervised the work. The plinths in the hall were paneled with marble slabs enchased with verses beautifully penned by the famous calligrapher Mīrzā Reżā, the enchasing being the work of Ostād Moḥammad-Reżā Eşfahānī, the renowned stonecutter. A chronogram in the last line of the inscription gives the year of the restoration as 1244/1828.

Later, however, the park again fell into disrepair, and the land was partially appropriated by various transgressors. Finally, in recent times, a new street was cut across the park, demolishing both it and the villa.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Moḥammad-Ḥasan Khan E'temād-al-Salṭana, *Mer'āt al-boldān*, Tehran, 1296-97/1879-80, IV, p. 33, Dehḳodā, s.v. *Bijār* and *Āarbāĝ-e Garrūs*.