

UDC 39

## THE UNIQUE GARDENS OF TABRIZ DURING GAJAR DYNASTY (Ethnographic research)

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*Parks and gardens were always the significant element of urban culture and moreover, they were public centres, as well. From this point, the historical parks and gardens of Tabriz are very unique. Actually, parks and gardens were established from ancient times and they had always national features. A garden was a place where people had spiritual contact with nature and an indicator of people's philosophical outlook.*

*As Tabriz was located on the Silk Road and was cultural and trade centre there were established various gardens during middle ages. While Gajar dynasty was on the throne the historical parks of Tabriz were restored and furthermore, the new ones were established. Actually, during Abbas Mirza's reform period this process was more actively undertaken.*

**Keywords:** *Tabriz, garden, park, Gajar dynasty, Abbas Mirza*

**Sources:** Local historians and foreign travellers paid a great attention to the unique parks and gardens of Tabriz. According to the information given in these sources it can be clarified the appearance, function, number of the parks and their role in society.

Historian Katib Chelebi by explaining the geographical location of Tabriz stated: "In the plains close to Sahand Mountain there is a very famous city surrounded by gardens like in a paradise". The author also described the ornamented houses, picturesque gardens of Tabriz where various exquisite and colourful flowers grow and there were lots of pools in it and the water was pure [3, 380-381].

As he showed in his other books there were established a plenty of gardens in Tabriz during Middle Ages. He mentioned gardens such as *Bagh-i kolahduzan* (hat makers garden), *Bagh-I Pir Mahammad Sarraj* (garden of saddle maker Pir Mahammad), *Bagh-i Asvaran* (Huge garden), *Doctor Sadaddin's*, *SheykhKhojand's* (probably famous poet Kamaladdin Khojand's garden), *Ahmadabad*, *Khaja Mutahhar*, *Damashgiyya*, *Shah Huseyn*, *Bayim*, *Gaziabad*, *Mahmudabad*, *Turk Mahammad*, *Leylava*, *Novkhiz*, *Kolkhiz*, *Burj*, *Sheykh Tajeddin's*, *Khaje Yusif's*, *Shamsabad*, *Khalafan garden* and so on [12, 76].

In his book "Tarikh-i alam-arayi Abbasi" Iskender Munshi described Shah Tahmasib's son- Ismayil Mirza's wedding which took place in 1554 at splendid Northern garden of Tabriz that he called "Bagh-i Shimalabad: "There was organized such a big wedding at Shimalabad garden, even today the Qizilbash ("Red Heads") talk about this wedding. All of the guests brought different gifts. The musicians and singers performed in this wedding earned so much money that they could meet all their need" [7, 256].

E.Chelebi stated that there were approximately 47 thousand gardens and places for picnic in Tabriz. He paid a great attention to the inscription on the roof of palace in *Kalantar garden* - "This is a significant and lovely place [4, 292].

On the map of Tabriz made in 1880 there were indicated 301 gardens and parks. They were mainly decorative parks and orchards. According to the sources there were several streets in Tabriz surrounded totally by gardens or forests at that time.

These paradise gardens were described in our folk tales and legends, on the works of poets and play writers of the medieval ages, as well as in miniatures. Actually, the decorations on the carpets show the plan of ancient parks.

During Shah Tahmasib's reign it was weaved "Bagh-i behisht" (paradise garden) carpet in Tabriz where an imaginary garden with waterfalls, plants and flowers, cypress trees, description of animals (bird, lion, tiger, gazelle, monkey) was described. This carpet designed by the sketches of Kamaladdin Behzad, Sultan Mahammad Tabrizi, Agha Mirak and others was seized by Europeans during Safavid-Ottoman war. At present time part of this carpet is kept in Krakow (Poland) at Vavel museum and the other part in Paris at Art Museum.

**The establishment:** Due to the negative impact of harsh hot climate to people's lifestyle the first decorative gardens and parks appeared in Middle East, Asia Minor, Central and South Asia and also in Azerbaijan [9, 8]. From one hand, it was related with the protection of people from sunlight, making beautiful nature, on the other hand, due to intense trade relations and social-economic development of the city.

At first, trees and shrubs were planted individually in the yards and along the fences. As the time passed they transformed into public parks planned by government. Generally, orchards had more economic features and decorative gardens as an embodiment of pleasure were for entertainment. These decorative gardens later become known as "parks".

**Function:** The parks and gardens were the place where people rest and met one another in hot sunny days, discuss ongoing problems in society and in addition to this they were also place for public censure. Gardens were an important place in achieving nurture and discipline in society by the influence of council of elders. Actually, most of them were established by ruling dynasty and later became public places. Furthermore, the gardens that commonly used were considered the social and cultural centre of Islamic cities.

**The structure:** The gardens and parks established by shah or crown prince had a lot of common features in terms of architecture. These gardens surrounding the royal palaces were mostly in geometrical shape. Gardens of Tabriz being as a part of Iran gardens that date back to early middle ages and exist in different

countries till today (Israel, Spain, India, Turkey, Crimea and so on) attracted everybody's attention by their sumptuous view. During early Middle Ages they were established on rectangular plan and were separated by roads and channels to four equal parts that reflected the four basic element of matter (water, air, fire and earth). After islamization process of this region the paradise gardens shown in Quran a holy book of Muslims began implementing to the gardens. Along with this the elements of fire worshiping were partially kept, as well.

It is stated in Holy Quran that the devout believers obeying God and the Messenger will be admitted into Jannah ("Garden of Eden") forever. Jannah the main element of heaven was mentioned in Quran by different word combinations such as – "Gardens with rivers flowing underneath", "*Jannat al-Na'im*" (the gardens of delight), "*Jannat al-'adn*" (gardens of everlasting bliss), "*Jannat al Firdaws*" (the highest gardens of the paradise), "*Jannat al-Khuld*" (the Eternal Gardens), "*Jannat al-Ma'wa*" (Garden of Abode), "*Jannat al-Aliya*" (the highest gardens) [8,72-73]. According to Quran and hadiths *Jannah* is described as surrounded by eight principal levels, had various springs and fountains in it. Tuba tree is only tree which grow in all the levels of Jannah and any fruit you see in the world will be on that tree. Apple, pear, pomegranate and fig are also considered paradise fruits. Moreover, in Quran God swears to olive and fig. During the middle ages kings and princes by establishing gardens tried to create Jannah in earth and that gave religious meaning to the establishment of gardens.

Though gardens of Tabriz were established in different times most of them were in rectangular shape like in ancient times and surrounded by fence. There were mansions with balconies and terraces inside the gardens. As it was mainly intended to use these gardens in summer and spring they were decorated by fruit and decorative trees, flowers. Even plants in ceramic pots were put along the pool in these gardens. A garden decorated with roses, daffodils, lilacs, tulips and other flowers was called "gulistan" that means flower garden. Among

the decorative trees mostly elm, oak, fir, plane trees were planted in these parks. The flowers and grass on the ground look like a colourful carpet.

There were made pools and fountains in the centre of the parks and open water channels along the road and thus gave a fabulous view. This water was used for irrigation and had also an esthetical effect. For instance, the pool surrounded the palace reflected it like a mirror. The channels across the gardens were supplied by the waters of wells. The water first flow along the channels through the parks and later was used for irrigation. There were some stairs in the stone-paved interior roads.

**Historical gardens:** One of the main tourist attractions, the famous El-Goli (Shah-Goli) garden was founded during AkKoyunlu state, and was repaired over and again during Safavid and Gajar dynasty. At first, it was used both for watering the surrounding gardens and for drinking. According to sources this lake was so big that the water that needed to operate two mills filled it for 6 months. The water source of the pool was spring located in high above the hill. The pool was supplied with water by five channels coming from this spring.

El-Goli located on the south-east of the city was reconstructed in 1785 during the crown prince Abbas Mirza's reign by the order of his 8th son Gahraman Mirza [11, 167]. He wanted to use the garden and the palace in it as his summer house. In the centre of square pool there was erected a two - storey palace (mansion) in octagon shape. The walls of palace were covered with marble and the wide balconies had green-glazed windows from all sides. Generally, at first the only palace built in the centre of gardens was called pavilion, but later by the European influence it began to call "kulahfirangi" (mansion) and it meant European hat (kulah - hat and firang – European). The reason why it called like this was its appearance resembling the shape of the hat that Europeans wear.

As it stated above, El-Goli was reconstructed during the Gajar dynasty. First the palace located on the isle in the middle of pool, but later from the east side of palace there was built

a 4 metre width road connecting the palace and the pavement. Waterfalls were created alongside this road. There was a bridge that can be moved, but it was destroyed afterwards [13, 149]. This mansion resembling European castles was a resting place of Gajar princes.

Not far from El-Goli there was another garden called Fathabad. It was founded near the village Fathabad, on the way to Bisminj. On the documents of Rabi-Rashidi charity foundation Fathabad garden was listed as a charity foundation (vagf). These charity foundations were first introduced during the Ilkhanate kingdom and this fact shows that the founders of Fathabad garden lived during the Ilkhanate reign.

In his book "Persian Gardens and Garden Pavilions" Donald Wilber described Fathabad garden like this: "The centre of the garden is full of fruit trees. The water channel connects every corner of the garden. Only the new pavilion that erected instead of old one breaks the symmetry of the garden. Geraniums planted along the water ditches like green stripes are fabulous. In the highest part of the garden there is a large and deep pool enclosed by stone fence. Long-lived trees were planted around the pool [5, 74].

The water of this garden was supplied from the well called Fathabad. According to the documents of Fathabad garden the reconstruction works was maintained by Saidulmulk who was one of the honourable men of the city. The area of the garden was enlarged during its new owner Gulamrza Adlin's period [2, 102].

The *Northern garden (Shimalabad garden)* or Shah Yagub garden was established during the reign of AkKoyunlu Sultan Yagub Mirza (1478-1490) and later was repaired during Safavid and Gajar dynasty. The scholars have different thoughts about the etymology of its name. Some think that while Sultan Yagub was resting in the garden the northern winds blow over and he gave the name "garden of winds" (bağe-şamal). The others think that he ordered to establish the imitation of "Shimalabad" garden located in Herat and called the new garden with the same name [1, 157]. The garden with the same name was also established at Samarkand during Tamerlane's reign.

During Gajar dynasty Northern garden was a state property. On the eve of signing Gulistan treaty Abbas Mirza hosted his European guests in the pavilion of this garden. The east part of the garden was known as “Gum garden” (garden of sand) and English officers conducted trainings for soldiers and officers here [2, 71].

There was a luxury palace and a huge pool in Northern garden. During the middle ages most of the princes’ weddings were held in this garden. The garden was totally ruined during Safavid - Ottoman war and just got back its fame only during Gajar dynasty. The crown prince Abbas Mirza erected some highest and most beautiful buildings of Tabriz at that time in this garden. On the walls of the buildings were painted pictures of famous and mighty kings by his order. There was even a zoo on the meadow located between the two buildings. There were kept strange animals. In this garden there was even a place for cultivating seeds. Inside this garden there were different gardens like Big garden (apple, pear trees were planted), Almond garden, Gulistan garden, Farhad and Shirin garden (also called Farhad or Bagherez (grape garden)). After it was reconstructed and opened for public by the order Abbas Mirza, the name of the garden was changed by the people and it was called Prince’s garden. The garden couldn’t survive till present day, just its name.

*Sahibabad garden* was founded during the reign of Ilkhanate. Crown prince of Ilkhanate kingdom was established a garden in the Sahibulamr square located on the north bank of Mehranrud River and spent most of his time in this garden. The sultan of AkKoyunlu kingdom Uzun Hasan lived in this garden and watched military parade marching through Sahibulamr square. The historian Fazlullah Ruzbihan Khunji who lived in XVI century stated that Sultan Yagub erected Hasht-behsht palace in the centre of this garden and made a camp in Sahibabad garden. He also mentioned that Sultan Yagub organized fascinating wedding for young prince Sufi Khalil in Tabriz [6, 55, 66]. According to information got from other medieval sources the weddings of princes were mostly held in the gardens. As Sahibabad garden had a national importance during Ak-

Koyunlu kingdom it is possible that Sufi Khalil’s wedding was held in this garden as well.

Shah Tahmasib erected his realm mosque at the east of Sahibabad square. This mosque complex was totally destroyed during Ottoman invasion and internal struggle and only its name is remembered by local people. During Persian Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911) the government supporters gathered in this garden. That’s why one of the revolution leader Baghirkhan ordered to attack the garden from all sides and the palace situated in the garden was razed to the ground. Later the place of Sardarabad garden became a trading centre.

*Safa garden* was established in the north part of the city at Saylab Street located on the foot of Surkhab Mountain. E.Chelebi confessed that it was very hard to describe the beauty of this garden [4, 284]. At the beginning of XIX century this garden was Abbas Mirza’s property. The crown prince erected a palace in this garden. Scholars think that name of the garden can be taken from the Safa garden located at Medina (Saudi Arabia). In this garden there were abundant of plane trees.

The establishment of *Ark garden* dates back to the erection of Ark castle (Alishah mosque) built during Ilkhanate kingdom. There was constructed water channel system throughout the garden and fruit trees and lilac bushes were planted along the channels. As travellers notified the symbol of Muslim culture – Alishir mosque complex and beautiful view around it fascinated its visitors. According to local people this garden was called “Bala garden” (small). There was functioning a big theatre in the garden in the middle of XX century. Later at the place of theatre it was built a praying room.

*Amr garden* also was established by Abbas Mirza. By the ordinance of Crown Prince “Shah Chalabi underground water-supply” located 15 km away from Tabriz that become dry was restored. The water of this well was so abundant that several water mills were constructed here. This garden doesn’t survive till today, either.

*Sumuklu (bone)* garden was situated on the south-west of Blue Mosque. Near the garden there was a cloister where dervishes and Sufis wor-

shipped. There was a water well inside the garden. The people who died at the result of earthquake happened in 1777 were buried in this garden. So people called it "Sumuklu (bone) garden".

*Baba garden* was located in the north-west of Tabriz and the founder was Baba. Nasraddin shah rested in this garden while he was a Crown Prince and the gardener Baba served him. When Nasraddin Mirza became a king he gave this garden to him as a present. After the death of gardener the garden became neglected. At the 1920's *Baba garden* become the property of Ministry of Health and the hospital was built there [10, 158].

*Tapali (hilly) garden* was situated in the centre of Khiyabani Street. One of the richest people of the city built a pool here to irrigate his garden. For this purpose they dug the ground. At the result the sand and mud created a hill here. That's why it began called *Tapali* (hilly garden). Most of the gardens at that time were called by their founder's name.

*Gulustan garden* is situated on the east of the city, in the place of Gajil graveyard. This garden was established by the order of city mayor Mahammadali Tarbiyat approximately at 1920's. There are dense trees and large oval pool in this park. Inhabitants of Tabriz came here for rest and amusement.

Along with these above mentioned gardens there were different gardens in Tabriz like *Baghmasha, Gulleh, Biylankuh, Jahanshah, Jamshidabad, Lala, Maralan, Diraj, Hokmabad, Mehpeykar, Najafgulu khan, Vazir, Tubaiya, Gaimmagam, Eynaldovla, Ujan* and others. These historical gardens were places where people went for walk.

At present time citizens of Tabriz daily or as a tradition during ceremonies go for a walk to parks and gardens. On the 13th day of Nowruz which is considered unlucky day people don't stay at home. They go to the parks

and drop samanies grown for Nowruz holiday to running water. Maidens make a wish and tie the grass of samanie to each other and everybody makes general praying for the prosperous future in these days. People gather at squares, dance, sing and amuse in this day.

During XIX and early XX century parks and gardens that built in Middle Ages and had a beautiful architecture were restored and new ones were built. The existence of a number of gardens and parks in Tabriz proves that it had a developed urban culture at that time.

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## QACARLAR DÖVRÜNDƏ TƏBRİZ ŞƏHƏRİNİN BAĞLARI (tarixi-etnoqrafik tədqiqat)

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Təbrizdə hələ orta əsrlərdə hökmdarlar tərəfindən bağlar salınırdı. Onlar dördkünc planda, üstüaçıq su kanallarının ayırdığı dörd hissədən ibarət olub, materiyanın dörd ünsürünə (su, od, hava, torpaq) işarə sayılırdı. Qurani-Kərimdə cənnətməkan kimi göstərilən meyvə və dekorativ ağaclar əkilir, köşk və küləhfirəngilər tikilirdi. *El gölü, Şimalabad, Sahibabad, Səfa, Ərk, Əmir, Baba, Sümüklü, Gülistan, Daş qapılı* və digər tarixi bağların bəzisi Elxanilər, Ağqoyunlular, Səfəvilər dövründə, bir çoxları Qacarlar səltənəti zamanı salınmışdır. Bu bağlar, əvvəllər hakim sülalənin mülkü olmuş, sonralar isə xalqın istifadəsinə verilmişdir.

*Açar sözlər: Azərbaycan, Təbriz, bağ, Qacarlar sülaləsi, Abbas Mirzə*

## САДЫ ГОРОДА ТЕБРИЗА В ПЕРИОД ПРАВЛЕНИЯ ДИНАСТИИ КАДЖАРОВ (историко-этнографическое исследование)

И.Г.Мамедова

Сады в Тебризе были заложены правителями еще в средние века. Квадратного плана сады были разделены водными каналами на четыре части, согласно четырем природным стихиям (вода, воздух, земля, огонь). В Священном Коране сад назван райским уголком. В садах Тебриза водой кягризов орошались различные фруктовые и декоративные деревья, имелись беседки и навесы (кюлафиренги). Некоторые из исторических садов Тебриза, такие как *Эл гелу, Шималабад, Сахибабад, Сафа, Эрк, Эмир, Баба, Сюмеюкю, Гюлистан, Даши гапылы* и др. были заложены во времена Ильханидов, Аггоюнлу, Сефевидов, а многие из садов — в период правления династии Каджаров. Изначально эти сады принадлежали правителям, позднее были отданы в пользование народу.

*Ключевые слова: Азербайджан, Тебриз, сад, династии Каджаров, Аббас Мирза*