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1 Intent on distancing the Safavid state from its Azerbaijan Turco-Mongol roots, Šāh Ṭahmāsp embarked on the sizeable project of landscaping and developing a new imperial capital at Qazvīn in the late 1540s. Relatively little information can be found in the normative Safavid chronicles about this urban program, and recently scholars have begun looking to more literary material in an effort to reconstruct the spatial arrangements in this new imperial milieu. Specifically, the poetic work of ‘Abdī Beg Šīrāzī (moḩāllāṣ: Navīdī), who was also an acknowledged historian (Tahmilat al-aṣbāḥ) and administrator, has been particularly helpful in this regard. On the eve of the unveiling of the new imperial garden of Sa’ādatbād, ‘Abdī Beg Šīrāzī was commissioned to produce a poetic ode celebrating the beauty and complexity of Ṭahmāsp’s garden-palace. The resulting Jannat-e ‘Adan (“Garden of Eden”) comprises five poems (in the spirit of Neẓāmī’s Ḥamse) which detail various architectural and hydrological elements of this imperial space. Echraqi provides an expository schematic
of Sa‘datābād on the basis of these poems (P. Losensky had argued likewise in 2003 with “The Palace of Praise and the Melons of Time”; see Abs. Ir. 27, c.r. n°309), and points out how this expansive landscape was parceled out into twenty-plus “mini-gardens” (again, aspects of this had been examined by M. Szuppe in “Palais et jardins” in 1996). Echraqi does provide some more nuanced descriptions of the two royal squares (Meydān-e Sa‘adat and Meydān-e Asp), and two excellent maps provide a detailed schematic of how these new imperial spaces were arranged.

INDEX

Thèmes : 4.2.1. Safavides et Qâjârs

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