



BĀŠĠĀH-E MEHRAGĀN

BĀŠĠĀH-e MEHRAGĀN (Mehragān Club), an organization founded in 1952 in Tehran by the executive committee of the Iran Teachers Association (Jāme‘a-ye Mo‘allemān-e Īrān, q.v.); membership in the club was open to teachers, students, and other intellectuals in Tehran and eventually in the provinces where branches were established. Prior to the founding of the club, *Mehragān* was also used as the name of a newspaper founded by the Iran Teachers Association in 1948 and edited by Moḥammad Deraḳšeš.

The Mehragān Club sponsored seminars on language and literature and other subjects under the guidance of a committee which included a number of noted scholars. As a rule the club published the lectures it sponsored, e.g., the lectures of Moḥsen Haštrūdī and a five-lecture series given by Sayyed Ḥasan Taqīzāda and published as *Ḳaṭāba: tārik-e awā‘el-e enqelāb wa mašrūṭiyat-e Īrān*, Tehran, 1338 Š./1959, an important publication on the Constitutional Revolution in spite of its brevity. The club was also a center for art and photography exhibitions and functioned as a theater.

Early in 1340 Š./1961, the executive committee of the Iran Teachers Association called on teachers all over the country to strike in protest against low wages and difficult working conditions. The teachers went on strike on 12 Ordībehešt/3 May and gathered in Bahārestān square to stage demonstrations, during which a teacher, Dr. Ḳān-‘Alī, was killed, three other teachers were injured, and the head of the association, Moḥammad Deraḳšeš, was arrested. The refusal of Dr. Jahānšāh Šāleḥ, minister of education, to accommodate the teachers’ demand stiffened the teachers’ resolve, and the strike continued



until the Šarīf Emāmī government was forced to resign. In the cabinet of the new government that was formed by ‘Alī Amīnī, Deraḵšeš, at that time head of the club and of the Teachers Association and the strike organizer, became minister of education. During the years he held that post the Mehragān Club prospered; however, after the fall of this government the new government under Asad-Allāh ‘Alam (1962) ordered the cessation of the club’s activities; its headquarters and the newspaper *Mehragān* were closed, and the Teachers’ Association went underground.

The Bāšġāh-e Mehragān is the locus of some events in Jamāl Mīr Šādeqī’s novel *Bādhā kabār az taġyīr-e fašl mīdādand* (Tehran, 1363 Š./1985, pp. 142ff.).

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