



DAWLATĀBĀDĪ, ŞEDDĪQA

DAWLATĀBĀDĪ, ŞEDDĪQA (b. Isfahan, 1300/1883, d. Tehran, 6 Mordād 1340 Š./28 July 1961), journalist, educator, and pioneer in the movement to emancipate women in Persia. Her mother, Kātema, was descended from a family of local 'olamā', and her father, Mīrzā Hādī Dawlatābādī, was a prominent *mojtahed* (theologian) of Isfahan. Şeddīqa spent her childhood in Tehran, where she was privately tutored in Persian, Arabic, and French. At the age of twenty years she was married to an elderly physician, but the marriage ended in divorce in 1339/1921.

In 1336/1917 she founded Maktab-kāna-ye šar'īāt, the first school for girls in Isfahan, the beginning of her lifelong commitment to social service. A year later she established Šerkat-e kawātīn-e Eşfahān (Association of women of Isfahan; Bāmdād, pp. 78-79) and in 1337/1919 *Zabān-e zanān* (Voice of women), the third Persian newspaper founded and managed by a woman. The newspaper aroused the hostility of fanatics, who repeatedly attacked its office and finally forced Dawlatābādī to close it after only three years of publication. She then moved to Tehran, where a year later she resumed publication of *Zabān-e zanān* in magazine format (Şadr Hāšemī, *Jarā'ed o majallāt* III, pp. 6-11).

In 1301 Š./1922 Dawlatābādī went to Paris to pursue her education. She studied family hygiene, then attended the Sorbonne, where she received a bachelor's degree in psychology and education. During this period she published in French journals articles on the control of Persian women over personal property and the superiority of the rights of Islamic women to those



of European women. In 1926, as the representative of Persian women, she presented a paper at the International Congress of Women in Paris (Winsor). In 1306 Š./1927 she returned to Persia and was hired by the Ministry of education (Wezārat-e farhang) as an inspector for girls' schools.

Dawlatābādī never wore the veil, and in 1315 Š./1936 she became director of the Women's center (Kānūn-e bānovān), sponsored by the Ministry of education as the first step in a program to eliminate veiling of Persian women. In this post, where she remained for the rest of her working life, she organized literacy classes for women, as well as classes on homemaking, family hygiene, and raising children. She also lectured and wrote on social issues, including women's rights (e.g., *Majalla-ye zabān-e zanān*, *Ḳordād* 1323 Š./June 1944, pp. 3-4; *Tīr*/July, p. 16; *Šahrīvar*/September, pp. 7-10; *Farvardīn* 1324/April 1945, pp. 4-6; *Ḳordād*/June, p. 12).

She died in August 1961 and was buried in Zarganda, Tehran, next to her older brother [Yaḥya Dawlatābādī](#).

The following [link](#) includes Şeddīqa Dawlatābādī's voice and documents bearing her signature, found in archives.

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