



# EDUCATION XVIII. TEACHERS'- TRAINING SCHOOLS

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## EDUCATION

### xviii. TEACHERS'-TRAINING SCHOOLS

The first institution specializing in the training of elementary-school teachers in Persia, *Dār al-mo'allemin-e markazi* (Central Teachers' College), was founded in a private house in Tehran in 1297/1918. The first director was Abu'l-Ḥasan Forūḡī (q.v.; d. 1959), younger brother of the well-known statesman *Ḍakā'-al-Molk Forūḡī* (q.v.; *Mo'in*, VI, p. 1351; *Dehḡodā*, s.v.). A comparable institution for women (*Dār al-mo'allemt*) opened in 1300/1921. In 1928 *Dār al-mo'allemin-e markazi* was upgraded to an institution of higher education, *Dār al-mo'allemin-e 'ālī* (see xix, below), and began training teachers for secondary schools. Until 1933 anyone who could read or write was considered qualified to teach in traditional elementary and secondary schools, and such people were often hired without scrutiny. A small number of qualified teacher trainees from *Dār al-mo'allemin* taught for a few hours each week in the fourth- to sixth-grade classes in a few Tehran schools, but their efforts were insufficient to improve the overall quality of education. It was only when the idea of standardized teachers' training took hold among supporters of modern educational methods that officials recognized that literacy alone is not an adequate qualification for teaching.



In March 1934 an act establishing lower and advanced schools for teachers' training under the Ministry of Education (Wezārat-e ma'āref) was adopted by the Majles, and an operating charter for such schools was ratified in July of the same year (*Ta'līm o tarbiāt* 6/1, 1315 Š./1936, p. 37). The two-year curriculum envisioned for lower training schools included educational psychology, both theoretical and practical; ethics and sociology, with emphasis on educational and religious principles; Persian language and literature; Arabic language; a European language; history and geography; mathematics; physics and chemistry; natural history; hygiene; painting; music and singing; physical education; and handicrafts and agriculture for male students and home economics (sewing, laundering, ironing, and some gardening) for females. Candidates for admission were expected to have completed the first three years of secondary school.

The Dānešsarā-ye moqaddamātī for men opened in the autumn of 1934, with Ḥabīb-Allāh Ṣaḥīḥī as dean. The first class comprised twenty-three students, and there were fourteen part-time teachers. A teachers'-training school specifically for women was established at the same time on the grounds of the Sa'dī School near Sar-čašma; the school was headed by Hājar Tarbiāt. The ministry allotted 24,000 m<sup>2</sup> of land outside the Dawlat Gate for construction of a two-story building for the Dānešsarā. Laboratory equipment for physics, chemistry, and the natural sciences was purchased from France and installed in the new building, which was inaugurated on 7 January 1935 by Reżā Shah (1925-41). Students from secondary schools without laboratories were also allowed to use the new facilities. Every student in the second year at the Dānešsarā was expected to teach forty half-days at an elementary school affiliated with it (*Asās-nāma-ye dastūr-e taḥšīlāt-e Dānešsarā-ye moqaddamātī*, arts. 7, 10, 11). Thirteen students from the first class were graduated in 1936. Although the Dānešsarā was initially a day school, boarding facilities were added in 1937. A library was also gradually developed; by 1948 it contained more than 3,200 volumes, most on educational techniques, psychology, or Persian and French literature. There were forty-two graduates of the class of 1948, bringing the total number of alumni to 331 (*Sāl-nāma-ye Dānešsarā*, pp. 5-13, 29).

The Dānešsarā was also equipped with sports facilities, which were used during specified hours by students under coaches Mīr Mahdī Varzanda and Ḥosayn Banā'ī. In the first two years of its existence the Dānešsarā did not have space, equipment, or qualified instructors for handicrafts, but after the



move to the new building carpentry, metalworking, soldering, and similar vocational skills were included in the curriculum.

Field trips were an important part of the curriculum from the start. Students visited monuments at Ray and archeological sites at Varāmīn. In subsequent years these trips grew in number and scope, including various museums, the government radio station, the laboratory of the teachers'-training college, and major libraries. During the Nowrūz holidays students also traveled to Isfahan, Shiraz, and other cities.

Article I of the legislation establishing the Dānešsarā called for the establishment of twenty-five campuses in Tehran and the major provincial towns. The first branches were opened in 1935 in Mašhad, Isfahan, Tabrīz, Shiraz, Rašt, Kermān, and Ahvāz and a branch for both men and women in Urmia. Some years later additional branches were opened in Ardabīl, Yazd, Kermānšāhān, and other urban centers (*Sāl-nāma-ye Dānešsarā*, p. 13).

In 1948 the Ministry of Education decided to establish a special teachers'-training school for physical education. It opened in the academic year beginning in 1948. Similar schools began to appear in other parts of the country, but full-time study was possible at only a few of these institutions before 1965, when their financing was assured through savings from the general teachers'-training budget (*Āmūzeš o parvareš* 35/6, 1346 Š./1967, p. 80).

After the revolution of 1979, during the academic year 1980-81, all Persian schools for teachers' training were dissolved and replaced by four-year schools (encompassing grades nine through twelve) for training teachers to work in rural areas (Table 1). Graduates from middle schools (see x, above) are accepted at these institutions, and, upon completion of the program and final examinations, they are appointed to schools in rural areas. In 1992 there were 357 such schools, with a total enrollment of 48,256, of which more than 40 percent was female.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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(For cited works not found in this bibliography, see “Short References.”)

*Sāl-nāma-ye dānešsarā-ye pesarān-e Tehrān, 1327-28, Tehran, 1328 Š./1949.*