



IRĀN-E MĀ

IRĀN-E MĀ, a political newspaper published in Tehran, with long interruptions, from 21 Kordād 1322 to 23 Ābān 1339 Š./11 June 1943-14 November 1960. Its founder and chief editor was Jahāngir Tafazzoli (1914-90), but, starting in the sixth year, the ownership was transferred to Fāṭema Tafazzoli, since Jahāngir, then being a state officer, was not allowed to publish a paper.

Irān-e mā was an influential liberal paper with nationalistic orientations. It enjoyed the cooperation of some of the most eminent writers, journalists, and political activists of the time, including Ḥasan Arsanjāni, Qosrow Eqbāl, Esmā'il Purwāli, Jahāngir Afkami, Moḥammad Mas'ud, Fereydun Tavallali, Jawād Fāzel, Dabiḥ-Allāh Maṣūri, Nāṣer Qodāyār, Jawād Šayḵ-al-eslāmi, Noṣrat-Allāh Mo'iniān, for some of whom (e.g., Arsanjāni, Mo'iniān, Tafazzoli) the paper paved the way for reaching high political positions.

Irān-e mā was a daily morning paper until 1327 Š./1948, when it turned into a weekly journal with Nāṣer Qodāyār as chief editor, often publishing verses of the outstanding poets of the period, most of whom were affiliated to the communist Tudeh Party. During the period (1954-60) that Tafazzoli was in Europe as a government delegate to supervise the progress of Persian students there and later on as Persia's representative at UNESCO, Taqi Tafazzoli took over the management of the paper, and Naṣr-Allāh Šifta served as its chief editor. Nevertheless, upon Jahāngir Tafazzoli's return to Tehran, *Irān-e mā* ceased publication.



Irān-e mā became the official organ of the Peykār political party as the substitute of the paper *Nabard* (published by Ҷosrow Eqbāl with Tafazzoli as chief editor), which had been banned by the government; and it remained so until Ҷordād 1323 Š./May-June 1944, often changing its political orientation to suit the general policy of the party (Behzādi, p. 162). During this period, it showed nationalistic tendencies, and, while denouncing the reign of Reza Shah (1924-41), it condemned the presence of the Allies in Persia and even showed inclinations in favor of Nazi Germany. An article by Moḥammad Mas‘ud criticizing the Majles deputies resulted in a four-day suspension of the second issue. In the third month of the publication, Tafazzoli and Eqbāl (a leader of the Peykār Party) were accused of cooperating with the Nazis and arrested by Allied forces and sent to prison in Arāk (Tafazzoli was later transferred to a prison in Rašt). Nonetheless, the journal continued publication under the editorship of Esmā‘il Purwāli with a growing interest in leftist politics. During this period, it was suspended twice when the Turkish embassy lodged complaints against it. After the release of the incarcerated leaders of the party, *Irān-e mā* became a controversial publication, criticizing the cabinet and the minority faction in the Majles as well as the clergy; in the winter of 1943, it was charged with slandering the government and was banned for a period of five months until 24 Ordibehešt 1323 Š. (15 May 1944). It continued as the organ of the Peykār Party for thirty-two issues, before the party disbanded itself and joined with two other political parties, Esteqlāl and Miḥanparastān, to form a triumvirate called the Miḥan Party (Sanjābi, pp. 68-69). Thereafter, *Irān-e mā* remained a rather independent publication, while it still supported the Miḥan Party (see “Aḥzāb-e melli e’telāf kardand,” *Irān-e mā*, 30 Ҷordād 1323, no. 152). Throughout its numerous suspensions, it reappeared under such sobriquets as *Aras*, *Tehrān-e moṣawwar*, *Donyā-ye emruz*, *Ragbār*, *Šahbāz*, *‘Ali Bābā*, *Mazdā*, *Nabard*, *Wafā*, and *Yaḡmā* (Barzin, p. 71).

In the summer of 1945, *Irān-e mā* proclaimed itself a member of the Jebha-ye Āzādi (Freedom Front), which had been formed by the coalition of a number of leftist and centrist newspapers. Soon after, charged with disseminating false news in favor of the so-called autonomous government of the Democrat Party (Ferqa-ye Demokrāt) in Azarbaijan, which was being supported by the Soviet Union, it was again banned for three months. In the winter of the same year, the journal began campaigning in support of the new Prime Minister Aḥmad Qawām (Qawām-al-Salṭana) and his government, and consequently Tafazzoli was included in the delegation headed by the prime minister in the latter’s historic trip to Moscow to negotiate the withdrawal of Soviet forces from



Persia. Upon the return of the delegation, Tafazzoli, who had left for Paris on an official assignment in Europe, turned over the management of the paper to his brother, Maḥmud Tafazūzoli (Behzādi, pp. 163-64). Thereupon, in its fourth year and under the new management, *Irān-e mā* drifted towards the left, often bearing resemblance to the publications of the Communist Tudeh Party. Remarkably enough (for a journal to form a coalition with political parties), it joined with the Tudeh and the Irān parties as a triumvir in July-August 1946. Nevertheless, after the return of Tafazzoli from Europe and the fall of Ja'far Pišavari's communist government in Azarbaijan on 21 Āḍar 1325 Š./13 December 1946, *Irān-e mā* thoroughly dissociated itself from the communists and began supporting Ebrāhim Ḥakimi's government. In its heyday in 1948, the newspaper's harsh criticisms of 'Abd-al-Ḥosayn Hażir's administration generated a great deal of popularity for it, but, upon the unexpected appointment of Tafazzoli as the deputy prime minister under Hażir, the newspaper deviated from its prior policies and discontinued publication for one year (Behzādi, pp. 164-66). During the prime ministry of Moḥammad Moşaddeq, *Irān-e mā* was close to the supporters of Ayatollah Abu'l-Qāsem Kāşāni, but it gradually lost its relevance and came to a halt.

The distinctive sections of *Irān-e mā* were its editorials (mostly by Jahāngir Tafazzoli, under pen names M. Fazilat, Gorsna) and articles dealing with socio-political questions. It also covered the current news, besides treating a variety of other subjects, particularly literature. The paper, however, never followed an overall, steadfast policy concerning the types of material it covered or the manner of their presentation. The distinctive popularity of *Irān-e mā* in the early stages of its life was mainly due to the articles addressing political and social issues from the pen of Ḥasan Arsanjāni, who used the pen names Ḥasan Maḥallāti and Dr. Dāryā, and to the news reports of Esmā'il Purwāli under the pen name Bāmşād.

According to the press law of the time, *Irān-e mā* enjoyed the right to publish a monthly journal as well without seeking a new license. The periodicals so published were *Niru wa rāsti* (1943, a sports magazine) and two political journals *Naşriya-ye nāşionālisthā* (1949-50) and *Nāşionālist* (1955), run by Manučehr Mehrān, Maḥdi Tājvar, and Amir-Şapur Zandniā, respectively.

Irān-e mā was printed in eight different printing houses in four five-column pages, except for a short period (from Āḍar 1322 Š./December 1943), when it appeared in six-column format with a new logogram before returning to its prior layout. Starting from 1325 Š./1946, it was once again printed in large



format. *Irān-e mā* had a sizeable print run of about 2,000 copies despite the relatively expensive price of a single issue (2.5 and 3.00 rials; see Rustā'i and Salāmi, ed., pp. 51-55, 70). Incomplete sets of *Irān-e mā* are available in many libraries in Persia and at the Library of Congress and the libraries of the Princeton University and the Science Academy of Azarbaijan.

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