



IRĀNŠAHR (4)

IRĀNŠAHR, a monthly Persian journal, published in forty-eight issues in Berlin by Ḥosayn Kāzemzāda Irānšahr (q.v.) from June 1922 to February 1927. Kāzemzāda was a member of the Committee of the Iranian Nationalists (Komita-ye melliun-e irāni), which was formed in Berlin by Sayyed Ḥasan Taqizāda (*q.v.) to promote the interests of Persia, and he participated in the campaigns in Kermānšāh against the occupying forces of Great Britain and Russia.

Kāzemzāda was a close friend of Taqizāda and collaborated with him in publishing the journal *Kāva*; after it was closed down, he decided to publish *Irānšahr* on his own. This journal was distributed in cities in Europe as well as in Persia, Afghanistan, India, and Egypt and had readers even in the Far East. A glimpse at the titles and numbers of its articles can shed some light on the purpose of this journal. Out of 236 articles published in four years, 73 are about the importance of public and civil education, 45 address the situation of women, 30 are about ancient Persia, and 40 deal with a variety of philosophical subjects.

On the whole, two principal tendencies can be distinguished by the issues addressed in these articles: one is a strong interest in ancient Persia and its language and culture, and belief in the potency of a nationalistic spirit, which caused their writers to be accused of promoting the idea of the Aryan race. The other tendency is involvement in philosophy and philosophical thoughts concerning the future of mankind and the school of Theosophy, of which Kāzemzāda was a follower.



Figure 1. The logogram of Irānšahr, with images of ancient Iranian monuments (clockwise, from center): tomb of Darius I (r. 522-486 B.C.E.) at Naqš-e Rostam; monument of Kōsrow II (r. 590-628 C.E.) at Tāq-e Bostān; palace of Ardašir I (r. ca 224-40 C.E.) at Firuzābād; platform of the Achaemenid apadāna (q.v.) at Persepolis; tomb of Cyrus II (r. 559-530 B.C.E.) at Pasargadae; the late Sasanid Ayvān-e Kesrā (q.v.) at the site of Ctesiphon. Illustrated is the front page, top, of vol. 1, no. 2, 1340/1922. (Courtesy of Princeton University Library.)

Irānšahr was one of four journals (the others were *Kāva*, *Farangestān* [q.v.], and *Elm o honar* [q.v.]) that were published one after another in Berlin from 1916 to 1928 and advanced the idea of adopting Western civilization, promoting religious tolerance, developing a powerful country, improving the situation of women, and achieving the needed reforms in Persia. Most of the contributors were well versed in Western languages and quite knowledgeable about the modes of life and intellectual trends in the West; and, at the same time, since the time they lived in Persia they had kept themselves informed of the ideas of Turkish and Arab intellectuals. Even after moving to the West, they continued to follow the current intellectual trends in the Middle East. Although the writers of these articles were not always in mutual agreement concerning the issues discussed, their paths were identical. A kind of cultural nationalism, especially of the linguistic kind, as well as their determination to fight domestic despotism and external enemies, united them. In most issues of the journal *Irānšahr*, Kāzemzāda concentrated on the state of affairs in Persia and discussed the chaotic situation. He reflected on the condition of his homeland in the framework of international incidents and the courses of different political regimes, thereby trying to figure out possible solutions. He believed that the people of Persia, having experienced the benefit of limited freedom during the period of the Constitutional Movement, would no longer tolerate the unbearable situations imposed upon them by a despotic, corrupt regime. He maintained that the people of Iran were inheritors of a glorious civilization and, despite having suffered for centuries the despotism of oppressive rulers and the burden of foreign occupations, had not fully lost their ancient characteristics and traditions, and the Iranian spirit was still alive. Like his friend Taqizāda, he considered education to be the indispensable key, arguing that a spiritual revolution had to take place deep in the spirit of the nation and that it could not be realized except through public education.



The essential questions posed and discussed in *Irānšahr* concerning progress in Persia were: Should Iranian blood to be diluted through marriage with foreigners? To what degree should nationality and race be made dominant over other social elements? Concerning administrative organization, should we accept centralization or decentralization? How can the religious establishment be made aware of the requirements of the modern age? How can the spiritual power be separated from the temporal power? How can one solve the conflict between religion and science and rationality versus tradition? What is the best way to reform the Persian language? How can we save women from their predicament and ignorance. How do we basically reform the principles of education?

The journal benefited from the cooperation of a number of well-known intellectuals, including Rašid Yāsami, ‘Abbās Eqbāl, Mošfeq Kāžemi, Aḥmad Farhād, Ḥosayn Nafisi, Yaḥyā Mahdawi, and Taqī Arāni. It also published a piece by Šādeq Hedāyat (q.v.), entitled “Marg.” *Irānšahr* is also known as the publisher of a number of books and pamphlets, most of them the works of Kāžemzāda himself.

Towards the end, the journal experienced dire financial conditions, as all the demands for the payment of subscription dues and appeals for contributions went unheeded; and the journal had to be discontinued (Kāžemzāda, p. 191). The last issue was published in 1927. The entire set has been reprinted in four volumes (Tehran, 1984).

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