

## LETTER TO EDITOR

### Zahra Zahedi Hospital in Damagh (1948-1979)

**Dear Editor,**

One of the medical centers of considerable importance in Hamedan province is Zahra Zahedi Hospital, which played a significant role in meeting the health and medical needs of Damagh village when it was in operation. Unfortunately, to the best of my knowledge, no research has been done on the hospital and its impact so far, and it has been instead left to oblivion. This article aims to address the hospital's history, the process of its establishment and dissolution. It is hoped to encourage other researchers to conduct further investigation in this field.

“Damagh” is located in Sardrood section of Razan city in the north of Hamedan province, which has been turned into a city by the approval of the Ministerial Cabinet on 1996/12/8. This city is located north of Kaboudar Ahang city, the west of Razan city. Its people speak Turkish (Parliamentary Research Center, 1996). “Mirza Nasrullah Khan Basir Divan” was one of the important landowners of this region, after whose death several villages, namely Damagh, Khorbandeh,

Reza Karami<sup>1, 2</sup>

1- M.A in Iran History of the Islamic period, Payame Noor University, Hamedan, Iran

2- Employee of Hamedan University of Technology, Hamedan, Iran

**Correspondence:**

Reza Karami

M.A in Iran History of the Islamic period, Payame Noor University, Hamedan, Iran; Employee of Hamedan University of Technology, Hamedan, Iran

r.karami6969@gmail.com

**Citation:**

Karami R. Zahra Zahedi Hospital in Damagh (1948-1979). *Res Hist Med.* 2022; 11(1): 69-72.



Chayan, were inherited from him. These villages were first managed under the supervision of his wife “Zahra Khanum” and then by his son “Fazlullah Khan” (who was first given the title of his father, Basir Divan and then he chose the surname of Zahedi), together with his agents. Until the end of the life of Fazlollah Zahedi (1892 Hamadan- 1963 Geneva), most of his and his son’s living expenses “Ardeshir Zahedi” (1928-2021) were provided through the products and the sale of his property (Nahavandi, 2015, pp. 7-9). The Zahedi family owned a castle in the village of Damagh, where they also founded a hospital. In addition to meeting the needs of its residents, the hospital provided medical services to the villagers. In 1948, General Fazlollah Zahedi, based on the will of his late mother “Zahra Zahedi”, built a 12-bed hospital in the town of Damagh, named after his mother, Zahra Zahedi. Annually, General Zahedi allocated some money to the hospital. In this hospital, there were a total of eight health workers, nurses and patient care technicians. They, as expected, treated the patients but transported the critically ill patients to the city by the ambulance. The total number of patients, visited monthly in this hospital, was 303, who were treated and received medications free of charge (Nedaye Mihan Newspaper, 1959, pp. 1, 4). Regarding this hospital, Fazlollah Zahedi wrote in a letter to his son Ardeshir, who was then studying abroad, on the 24th of November 1954:

“... Zahra Zahedi’s hospital in Damagh has received an outstanding reputation. Those who went there personally said that it functioned even better than the hospital in Hamedan. I happened to find a very good doctor whom the people are very pleased with. This year, more than 6,000 patients have been treated in the last five months. People are very satisfied, but I have spent a lot. I sent electric lights, refrigerators, even radios to the hospital. It requires around five, six thousand tomans to become the best hospital ...” (Pahlavi men according to SAVAK documents; Ardeshir Zahedi, 2008, p. 276).

The first doctor to work at the hospital was Dr. Behbood (Figure 1 and 2), from the Caucasus, who was invited to work at the hospital because he spoke the same language as the people of Damagh. Dr. Ghavami, Dr. Mir Hoshang Golgun and Dr. Soheil (from Pakistan) also worked in this hospital for years (Ebadi, 2019, February 18). This hospital was destroyed with the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution at the beginning of 1979 by the people’s attack on Zahedi Castle, and its equipment and tools were looted. Shortly afterwards, a new clinic was built on hospital’s ruins. However, traces of the castle walls can now be seen in the city of Damagh (Heydari, Karami, and Ali Sufi, 2019, p. 113).



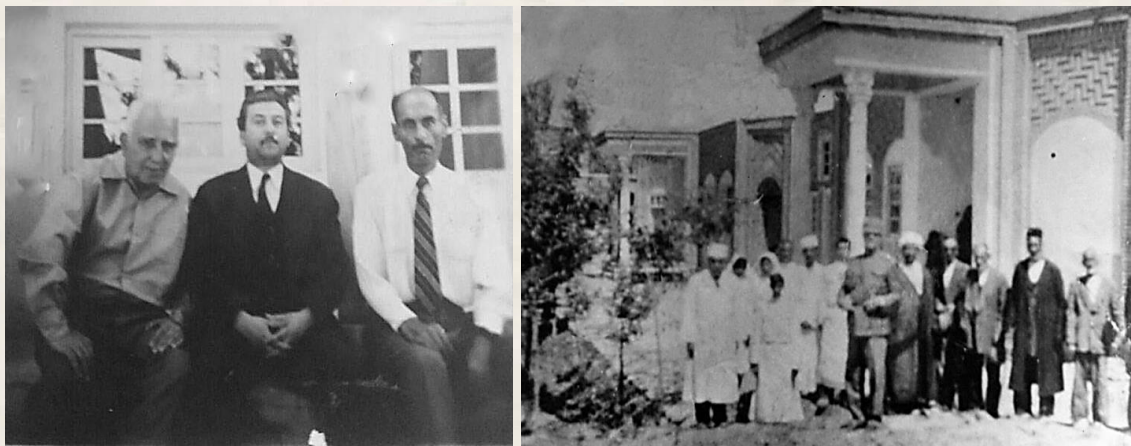


Figure 1. Left image: left to right: Mirza Aqa Basiri, Dr. Ghavami, Dr. Behbood in Zahra Zahedi's hospital, in the 40s (The picture is taken from the personal archive of Mohammad Jafar Basiri); Right image: General Fazlullah Zahedi, the middle man in a military uniform along with the nurses and staff of Zahra Zahedi Damagh Hospital, the late 20s (The picture is taken from the personal archive of Manouchehr Ebadi)

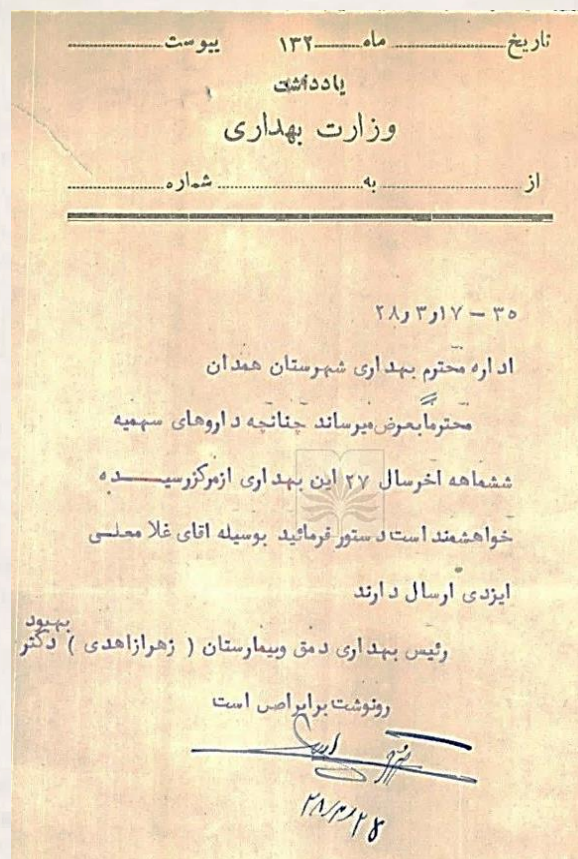


Figure 2. Request for medicine from Hamedan Health by Dr. Behbood; Head of Damagh Health and Zahra Zahedi Hospital in 1949 (Documents and National Library of Iran, Document No. 220/174)



### **Conflict of Interest**

None.

### **References**

Documents and National Library of Iran, Document No. 220/174

Heydari, M., Karami, R., Ali Sufi, A., 2019. Historical Review of the medical Conditions and Doctors in Hamadan province in the second Pahlavi period (1941-1979), first edition, Hamedan: Hamedan University of Medical Sciences.

Ebadi, M., 2019. [Interview] Zahra Zahedi Hospital. Interviewed by R. Karami. February 18.

Nahavandi, H., 2015. Political life of General Fazlullah Zahedi. Los Angeles: Ketab Corp.

Nedaye Mihan Newspaper, 1959. 11 December, Ninth Year. pp. 1, 4.

Pahlavi men according to SAVAK documents; Ardeshir Zahedi, 2008. First Edition, Tehran: Center for the Study of Historical Documents of the Ministry of Intelligence.

Parliamentary Research Center, approved by the Cabinet, 1996, conversion of Damagh village under Razan city into Damagh, Transformation of Damagh village of Razan city into Damagh city. Available from: <http://rc.majlis.ir/fa/law/show/116573>

