Reading

The Golestan Palace in Tehran – Library and Archive

[1] Within the Golestan palace in Tehran, there is a library that was once called the Royal Library and today is known as " Collection of Manuscripts of the Golestan Palace ". This library of the Golestan Palace is considered as one of the most significant libraries in the world despite its relatively small number of books. In this matter, the support that artists received during the Teymurid rein and under the rule of Baisonqor Mirza, Ibrahim Sultan, and Sultan Hussein Mirza Baiqara, has helped shape the great libraries in Iran. Add to that the considerable investments made by them in books and libraries which resulted in the book making and libraries that Iran is known for.

[2] "Hazrat-e A'alaa" was the name of royal libraries in the early years of the Safavid era. At that time, Shah Tahmasb who was a miniaturist and calligrapher himself did establish a large library. Kings and ambassadors of Europe were added to the collection of the libraries as they were presented to the Iranian kings at that time. When the Afghans conquered Iran at the end of the Safavid reign and **looted** treasures, the royal library was completely **brought to ashes**.

[3] During the rule of Nader Shah Afshar and Mirza Mehdi Astarabadi, there were few attempts to retrieve stolen books. Such books were present during the reign of Mohammed Shah Qajar and more books were added to the library during the time of Naser ed-Din Shah.

[4] Nasr ed-Din Shah was an artist himself who found himself in libraries, and put the idea of opening a large library and museum into practice. That's why he dedicated a room for the library in the Golestan Palace. The library he made contained books scrapbooks and calligraphers' works.

[5] In 1873, Naser ed-Din Shah developed interest in establishing a European-style museum after his first visit to Britain, and that's how Talar-e Salam or Mouze-ye Makhsous was made into existence. By his order, a library to the north of Talar-e Salam was constructed too. One of the recognized books kept there is the "Shahname-ye Baisonqor Mirza" which is considered as one of the oldest worldwide and is listed on global Intangible Heritage list.

[6] Naser ed-Din Shah was himself in charge of the library and even kept the keys to it with him. After him, more books were brought to the library, but a considerable number of books are believed to have had been stolen by the man in charge of the library back then.

[6] It was soon after when Reaz Khan rose to power and the Qajars were **dethroned** that a lot of books were moved from the Royal Library to the National Library established at the time. Unfortunately, some volumes were lost in that process. It's believed that around 14 thousand printed books and manuscripts were moved from the royal library to the national library.

Questions:

1. **According to the article, what's one primary factor behind the existence of libraries in Iran?**

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a) Free available spaces that Iran had
b) The many requests made by world leaders
c) Support Iranian artists received
d) Requests made by the clergy

2. **If you were living in the early days of the Safavid era, how would you say "I'm going to the library"??**
   a) "I'm going to the collection store"
   b) "I'm going to Hazarat-e A'alaa"
   c) "I'm going to the royal library"
   d) "I'm going to Talar-e Salam"
3. **According to the article, one of these was a leader and an artist who constructed a library in the Golestan Palace:**
   a) Naser ed-Din Shah
   b) Reza Khan
   c) Nader Shah Afshar
   d) Mirza Mehdi Astarabedi
4. **When were books transferred from the Royal library to the National library ?**
   a) At the end of Qajar dynasty
   b) During the Safavid era
   c) At the beginning of Mohammed Shah Qajar's rule
   d) In 1873
5. The word **"looted"** in paragraph **2** is closest in meaning to:
   a) Repaired
   b) Sold
   c) Preserved
   d) Stolen
6. The term **"brought to ashes"** in paragraph **2** is closest in meaning to:
   a) Decorated
   b) Destroyed
   c) Cleaned
   d) Rebuilt
7. The word **"dethroned"** in article **6** means:
   a) Removed from power
   b) Brought back to power
   c) Hired
   d) Relocated

Answers:

1. C
2. B
3. A
4. A
5. D

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6. B
7. A

Sources:

"hawatehran.com"

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