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در ایران، افغانستان، تاجیکستان، ازبکستان، اروپا و آمریکا
فرید مرادی، لتیسیا نانکت، مسعود حسینی پور، علی امیری، دیشاد رحیم اف، ب. بی نیاز



Publishing in Persian language

in Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Europe
and United States

Farid Moradi, Laetitia Nanquette,
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International Alliance of independent publishers



Collection État des lieux de l'édition

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Introduction

B. Biniaz

Typesetting and printing industry was invented in China around 1050 AD by a man named Bi Sheng who used movable characters of clay. This technique was in use until woodblock printing became popular, and it created the basis for industrial printing. When the printing industry found its way to Europe years later, it was revolutionized in 1440 by using moveable characters of an alloy and a new formulation for ink by Johannes Gensfleisch, known as Gutenberg, from Mainz Germany.

Such printing techniques became the core of the Renaissance and provided citizens of Europe with reading and writing opportunities that were previously exclusive to the aristocrats. However, this modern industry was still very expensive for the majority of people so only the bourgeoisie could afford it. Around 300 years after the invention of Gutenberg's printing technique, in 1798 another German named Alois Senefelder invented lithography. This technique was much cheaper than Gutenberg's technique, was easier to use and made colour printing possible.

Lithography was the main printing technique in Europe and Germany

until the beginning of the 1920s. Lithography is a word borrowed from Greek language; Lithos means “Stone” and Graphein means “To Write”. Images or words were drawn in reverse (as their mirror image) on a particular stone, for example on limestone, and then through a chemical process were cleaned on all sides by lithographs. This basic raised mould along with ink and pressure made printing cheaper.

Although Gutenberg’s printing technique was in use in India and Ottoman territory since 1730, the growth in book printing in Europe and the Middle East (India, Ottoman territory and Persia) owed more to using Senefelder’s lithography rather than Gutenberg’s printing technique.

In the beginning, books written in Persian were published using these methods in India, Ottoman territory, Egypt and some European countries, but not in Iran. The oldest books in Persian published using Gutenberg’s printing technique were produced in 1639 by a Dutch named Ludovicus de Dieu (1590-1642) in Leiden, Holland, after the death of Shah Abbas I (1629). These two books were “Jesus Story” and “St. Pedro Story”. The first printing house for publishing Persian books was established in 1810 in Calcutta, India, by the British using Gutenberg’s printing technique. This was more difficult and more expensive than lithography. Therefore, the prices were too high for even middle-class people to afford. During the Qajar dynasty, according to Raphael du Mans, “Since the printing industry is not in use in Iran, books are very expensive. Books are priced based on the number of lines and the content of the books has no effect. A book with a thousand

lines is worth two Abbasi. If it is written in calligraphy, it will worth up to five Abbasi”. (Bahman Ibrahimi, Resaneh-haye Nowin Website)

As mentioned before Gutenberg printing technique was both more difficult and more expensive than lithography. In 1640, during the Safavie era, an Armenian merchant brought the first printing machine to Iran (Jolfa-Isfahan) and later on during Qajar dynasty and under Naseredin Shah’s rule (1831-1896), printing machines with lead letters were purchased. Both of these attempts used Gutenberg’s printing techniques and did not progress.

27 years after the invention of lithography by Germans, this industry found its way to Iran in 1825 for the first time when Mirza Jafar Tabrizi introduced lithography in Tabriz and then it moved to Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz, Urmiyah and other cities (Same Source). Since this technology was easy to use and cheap, it soon became popular in Iran. Hafez (Hafez’s love poem collection) was first published in Tehran using lithography techniques (1838). Afghanistan started to use this printing technology in the reign of Amir Shirali Khan (1863-1880), almost 40 years after Iran. According to historical documents, in the reign of Amir Shirali Khan, there were two other printing houses using lithography technique near Shams Al-nahar in Kabul. But due to political reasons and lack of a powerful central government in Afghanistan, this process did not develop.

In Tajikistan a series of periodicals and newspapers were published in Persian between 1912 and 1913 and the Soviet Council Government introduced industrialized printing. “The first governmental printing

house in Tajikistan was established in 1925 in Samarkand. The reason was that from 1924 to 1929, Tajikistan was like an autonomous republic in Uzbekistan” (Same Source) But sadly, due to the nationalistic policies of the Soviet authorities, publishing in the Persian language was banned. However, after Tajikistan independence in 1991, newspapers and periodicals in Tajik (Persian Tajik) and Cyrillic script were published once again. Although Tajiki is linguistically a dialect of Persian, the governors of this country consider it different from Persian.

During Mozafar Al-din Shah’s reign (1835-1907), some Iranian cultural figures such as Haj Mohammad Hossein Amin Al-zarb, Yahya Dowlat Abadi, Mirza Hassan Roshdiyeh, Mirza Alikhan Amin Al-doleh and Ehtesham Al-saltaneh, established a company named “Tabe Ketab”. [Mohammad Ali Foroughi](#) served as its director and some books were published in this printing house such as “The History of Iran” by Foroughi and “Ali” by Yahya Dowlat Abadi. However the publishing house did not last long because of the disputes between the founders, and was disbanded afterwards.

In 1923, Mohammad Ramezani, a nineteen year old, launched “Sharq Library” which published literary magazines. At first, Nasr-Allah Falsafi and then Saeid Nafisi were the editors of these literary magazines. These literary and cultural magazines attracted translators and authors such as Saeid Nafisi, Parviz Khanlari, [Sadegh Hedayat](#), [Bozorg Alavi](#) and Nasr-Allah Falsafi.

Until the reign of Reza Shah (1925-1941), the printing industry was mostly under the control of the government or governmental institutes

in Iran with a few exceptions mentioned above. However during this era some Iranian merchants who were buying Persian books from countries such as Egypt, Turkey and India and selling them in Iran got interested in the printing industry and evaluated it as a source of income.

Since then, the following modern and legal publishing institutes were launched: “Khayam Library” under the management of Mohammad Ali Taraghi 1925; “Broukhim Library” under the management of Eshaq and Yahouda Broukhim 1927; “Ibn-e Sina Library” under the management of Ibrahim Ramezani 1930; “Scientific Publications” under the management of Haj Esmaeili Elmi 1932; and “Eghbal Library” under the management of Haj Mohammad Hossein Eqbal 1935. These companies were the major publishers during Reza Shah’s reign (Same Source).

Considering the historical events of printing and publishing industry in Iran, its history of printing can be divided into the following categories:

1. 1825-1923

This period can be called the establishment of the printing and publishing industry in Iran. During this period, the driving force for the establishment of printing houses in Iran and after that in Afghanistan was the government. However, Iranian traders who were importing Persian books from India or Ottoman territory gradually started publishing books in Iran, as it was found to be economically reasonable.

2. 1923-1941

This period is one the most important eras in the history of the publishing

industry in Iran. Alongside with the governmental printing houses, private publishers were formed which produced books, newspapers and journals. Due to the growth in competition and production, prices of publications went down and more people could afford them. Moreover, due to the expansion of economic and social infrastructure and because of the increased number of educated people, the printing and publishing industry flourished.

3. 1941-1953

Although the Second World War started in 1939, its effects on Iran were evident from 1941. Due to the economic difficulties and paper shortage, publication of books, newspapers and periodicals significantly decreased. On the other hand, at the end of the Second World War and beginning of the cold war, the world of publishing changed and evolved intellectually.

Educated elites in Iran were significantly influenced by the socialist ideology of the northern neighbour and the reflection of these ideas was evident in written materials. However, in comparison with the previous era, this era was not much of a progress in terms of quality, both in terms of appearance and in content of books.

4. 1953-1978

The immediate outcome of Iran's coup on August 19th 1953 was a political impasse in Iran. In spite of this political impasse, publishing was not affected much and international standards were adopted more in this industry. In terms of the quality of book publication, this period was one of the most fruitful periods in Iran. Franklin Publishing

Institute, an American company, entered the cultural scene of Iran and Homayun Sanatizadeh was elected to the management of this institute. His innovations had a long-lasting influence on many areas of publishing such as close attention to the importance of editing, paying attention to the design of book covers and the importance of illustrations and graphics in the structure of the books. Franklin Publishing produced works such as the first Persian Encyclopedia under the supervision of Qolam Hossein Mosaheb, and a series of pocket books.

The Translation and Publishing Agency of the Pahlavi Foundation, under the management of Dr. Ehsan Yarshater, also had a positive contribution to publishing in Iran through creating collections in various fields, designing a uniform cover for its collections, making ID numbers for books, creating an index system and introducing new methods of literal and technical correction and editing (Same Source).

In addition to these governmental and private institutes, two other private institutes; Amir Kabir and Nile Publications, were formed in the same period. In addition, the most important event in this era in the 1950s was the establishment of the Publishers and Tehran Book Sellers Union (Same Source). Thus this period is known to be productive in terms of quality of the book publication.

5. 1978-1983

A year before the Islamic Revolution, the government had no effective control on publishing. That is why since 1977, the number of publications significantly increased. Specially, a large number of political-religious and Marxist books with white covers entered the

market. “White Cover Books”, regardless of their contents, were not based on international publishing standards. Most of these books were not edited, so were full of typographical and spelling errors, wrong punctuations and incorrect translations. In summary, in this chaotic period the dominance of quantity over quality occurred. Although it may be possible to relate the chaotic situation of publishing to the revolutionary situation, the reality is that it continued for years after the revolution.

6. 1983 to present

With the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war, a shortage of paper and a severe political impasse for controlling dissidents, the quantity of publications decreased significantly. The war years had the most negative impact on the publishing industry in Iran. War on the one hand and suppressing the dissidents on the other hand caused the publishing trend in Iran to slow radically. With the election of President Hashemi Rafsanjani 1989-1997 and his relationship with international economic organizations, the publishing situation slightly improved. However, the quantitative growth of publications in Iran was the result of international economic organizations. One of the conditions for cooperation was the increase in mass production of books and intellectual goods. An unexampled growth in the number of publishers was seen during his eight years of presidency. A large number of new publishers were ideologically close to the government and their lack of knowledge and expertise in publishing led to the very poor quality of publications. Since then, one of the problems in the publishing field has been a severe economic

dependency of publishers on the government. Due to the economic structure of Iran, the printing and publishing industry in the private sector is tied to the government. So far, 9264 publishing licenses have been issued, but the quantity does not reflect quality of publications. Besides these structural-economic instabilities, political changes play an important role and have become an obstacle to the development of the printing and publishing industry at the present.

The printing and publishing industry in Iran has so far been directly related to the political situation and the degree of illiteracy in the country. When printing and publishing industries were introduced to Iran, more than 80% of the population were nomads (clans) or were living in the villages. This social illiteracy was a barrier to the primary investment in the industry. Yet without the establishment of printing and publishing industry, education was not possible. Therefore, it can be said that public (social) education is directly tied to this industry. It comes as no surprise that the formation of schools and universities occurred in parallel with the development of the printing industry. That is why the government and its dependent organizations were the first to pave the way for the industry.

Despite being dependent on the government, the private sector focused on publishing non-academic books - this was the starting point of intellectual, political and cultural friction between the government and the newly established civil society. Political affairs outside Iran have always had an impact on the process of publishing as well. The Cold War between the West (Capitalism) and the East (Socialism) had immediate

effects on the intellectual goods produced in Iran, as policies of Iran's government in regards to publishing were directly under the influence of the conflict between the two superpowers following the coup of 1953. After this, publishing on the topics of socialism, USSR and China got tighter, while Franklin Publications, an American institute, dramatically improved the quality of publications in Iran. Franklin paid close attention to the importance of editing, design and establishing pocket books organization with the aim of offering inexpensive books, Establishment of offset printing houses, and producing high school textbooks.

In summary it can be said that despite the political impasse, between 1953 and 1957 there were two factors involved in the development of better quality publications. The first was the increasing number of literate adults and the second was the printing industry and the know-how of professional publishing organizations being transferred to Iran from the West. This led to significant development in the private sector. During this period, literature which was approving socialist ideas was not allowed to be published; however in 1977, with the beginning of the protests in Iran, this barrier was broken.

It can be said that between 1977 till the end of 1982, due to the lack of a coherent government, the publishing market in Iran enjoyed much freedom. White Cover Books are the typical example of this. War on the one hand and the integration of the governmental organizations on the other hand then led to the establishment of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance that replaced the former Ministry of Culture and

Arts, so that the government could control the intellectual products.

During the war (1981-1989), due to the shortage of paper and other needed printing materials, the publishing and printing situation was quite critical. Besides this unstable situation and because of ideological and religious reasons, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran led the publication industry towards specific fields and issued publishing licences mostly for its loyal supporters.

Currently, more than 9200 publishing licenses have been issued. While after 2 decades there were a number of powerful and responsible publishers in Iran, the industry is still not comparable with the one in Northern America or European countries. The reasons for this include the following: Numerous Iranian publishers are not experts in the field; government and its media do not support a culture of reading; censorship limits cultural diversity and leads to the neglect of people with different tastes; there is a dependency of the private sector on the government, especially subsidies for importing printing technologies; and finally the design of academic books does not arouse children's interest in non-academic books.

The decline of traditional printing

Today, by means of advanced software, it is possible to publish an electronic book online in a way that it is not misused. Although in terms of technology and civil law, it could take a few more years to secure the laws protecting electronic publishing. But currently, despite such problems, the electronic publishing market has already been opened.

Paper books will be increasingly replaced by electronic (digital) ones, and it will be very beneficial if in future an Iranian publisher could bring the modern technology together with the traditional ones.

A distinguishing feature of changes in publishing that we are now witnessing is that it is specialized for different areas of publishing industry. In other words, classifying books that is being done roughly would become more subtle. It means that publishers who work on different but almost similar fields (for example classic literature, modern literature, poetry, fictions or translations in this field) will be obliged to be more careful. Therefore, current publishers will have to be more specific about their future area of expertise, for example classic poetry in a specific period of time and its explanatory literature. The process of greater specialization (being meticulous about classifying) in the publishing field is a trend that we can find across the production of all goods.

Publishing books outside of Iran

Before the Revolution of 1979, some Persian books were published outside of Iran as well, especially those which had political and ideological themes. Organizations and political associations were in charge of the main part of the publishing. These books were of low quality except the ones published in China or Moscow and also the ones published by communiste party of Iran. It did not take long following the unprecedented departure of Iranians after the Revolution in 1979 and their stay in the European countries and Northern America; they

started to publish newsletters and different books and since many were members of political groups and organizations, many of their publications had political or ideological themes.

Among other immigrants or exiles holding other nationalities, Iranians are one of the most prolific producers in Europe or Northern America. After a few years, especially after the collapse of the USSR, a turning point was created in the overseas publishing field in terms of quality. Gradually, political books with ideological themes were replaced by non-ideological books on philosophy, history, fiction and poetry. However, this turning point worked as a political separator in the Iranian community outside of Iran: the process of transformation of “Iranian exiles” to “Iranian immigrants” also occurred at the same time. In other words, the production of various intellectual goods was concurrent with this identity transformation. It was a competition between culture as a diverse collection and politics as an ideologized understanding, and culture was the winner. Gradually the previous carelessness that characterised publishing Iranian books outside of Iran was replaced by higher quality works, in accordance with the understanding that books are intellectual products as well as commodities. The mission of publishing outside of Iran has mainly been documentation (preserving intellectual works of Iranian residents in foreign countries) and not investment. Since the circulation of books is limited, neither the author nor the translator or publisher can afford a living in this way (with a handful of exceptions).

By studying this book, we can have a general and clear picture of the trend of printing and publishing in Persian in Farsi speaking countries, especially in Iran, and find out its strengths and weaknesses. Here, we can have an understanding of the impact of political developments on the publishing industry, particularly in Iran. While it can be said that this book is the history of the publishing industry in Iran, but it also provides readers with an understanding of Iran's political changes.

The elaborated history of Persian publications in Persian-speaking countries and non-Persian speaking countries by Iranian publishers outside Iran in this book has been created based on the transcripts and arranged articles collected by Ms. Sonbol Bahmanyar and commissioned by International Alliance of independent publishers. The interviews were done in person or by correspondence and in some occasions with experts in publishing from Persian-speaking countries were requested to provide more information on various subjects. Part of the material that exists in the Alliance's archive is available as a book in Persian. The English translation of the book will also be published at the same time as the Persian book, for the use of English readers.

B.Biniaz

History of book Publishing in Iran

Farid Moradi

The first edition of *Jahadiyeh* magazine was published by Muhammad Ali Ben Haj Muhammad Hossein Ahstiani, who is thought to have learned typography and printing in Petersburg. However, as the first edition was not of high quality, a second edition was published by Mirza Zain Al Abedin in 1818. At the end of that edition it was stated: “Zain Al Abedin Mohammad Tabrizi was assigned by the Qajar King to establish a printing house at the Qajar prince’s court in Tabriz in September 1819.”

In 1823 Zain Al Abedin was ordered by Fathali Shah to go to Tehran and launch a printing office there. While in Tehran, he was supported by Manoochehr Khan Mo’etamedolleh Gorji, who was the governor of Isfahan and Fathali Shah’s consultant. With Gorji’s support, he published many books, which in Iran are known as books by Motamedi Publications. It is not clear when Mirza Zain Al Abedin Tabrizi passed away but, based on the book *Rozatol Mujahedin and Jala Al’ayoon*, he was most probably alive until 1845. Below is the book’s description of him:

“Zain Al Abedin Mirza, who was unrivalled in his knowledge and skills, established typography with all his efforts in Tehran, the capital of Iran. With the help of his apprentices, he then published the book of *Rozat Almojahedin* at his printing house.”

Zain Al Abedin trained many apprentices whose names can be found in the books published at that time. Amongst those are Muhammad Bagher Tabrizi, Khalil Tabrizi and Ali Ebn Muhammad Hossein Tabrizi (Ashtiani), who all worked as publishers in Tabriz. Others were Muhammad Ismaeil known as “Soldier”, Abdol Karim who worked in Tehran and Abdol Razzagh Isfahani, the first publisher in the city of Isfahan.

The adoption of letterpress printing in Iran in 1817 should be considered as the beginning of the first period of Persian books publishing. However, letterpress printing was not well-received as its scripts were not desirable to Iranian readers. Consequently, when lithography arrived, this new technique of printing completely dominated the book publishing in Iran for almost half a century.

The first lithography machine was introduced in Tabriz by Abbas Mirza Nayeb Assaltaneh and was run by a person called Mr Amin Alshar Altabrizi. It is said that the Holy Quran and the book *Zad Alma'ad* were published there under his supervision. However, the founder of lithography in Tabriz was certainly Mirza Jaafar Tabrizi in 1824, whose name was confirmed by the late Mr Tarbiat. Also, a person called Asadollah was sent from the Fars province to St. Petersburg by Mirza Saleh Shirazi in order to learn lithography. It seems that Asadollah also

worked in Tabriz where he published the Holy *Quran* in 1832 and the book *Zad Almaad* in 1835. The calligrapher of both books was Mirza Hasan Khoshnevis.¹

In the last page of the book *Zad Alma'ad* it was stated:

“Mohammed Saleh, the son of Hajji Bagher Shirazi, came across typography techniques on a mission to Russia and brought back the tools and accessories to Tabriz to launch a printing centre there. He assigned Haj Mohammad Hussein, known as Mo'tamed, as the manager of the centre. He then began the printing of the Holy Quran. In 1838, the book *Zad Al Ma'ad*, which was the continuation of *Rab Al Ebad*, was exquisitely finished and printed.”

It is not clear when exactly Asadollah was sent to Petersburg by Mirza Saleh Shirazi to learn lithography. He might have travelled there in 1829 as part of Khosro Mirza's group of diplomatic representatives. By 1882, about 200 books were published in Tabriz using lithography².

Muhammad Ali Tarbiat believes that the first book printed in Tehran using lithography was *Divan of Hafez*. He said:

“The book of Hafez's poems was published in 12th of April 1883 and was printed in a small size with an exquisite perfection. I did not see any other book apart from this.”

Lithography spread fast in Isfahan and Shiraz and many other cities. In Tehran, until 1925 (close to the ending of Qajar dynasty), 183 title books were printed lithographically. Based on the subject, these books

1 From Saba to Nima. 1st edition. P232.

2 Iranian history in Europe, Muhammad Ali Tarbiat, magazine, Year 12, No. 7.

can be categorized into the following groups:

- Iranian literature (including literary essays, poetry collections, references, grammar rules and popular culture), 75 titles recorded.
- World literature (mostly translations of French literature including historical or romantic novels), 16 titles recorded.
- Iranian history (including historical texts, modern history, memoir and travel literature) 42 titles
- World history, 9 titles
- Ethics, philosophy and law, 9 titles
- Religion, 9
- Poets' biography, 9
- Dictionaries and references including Persian and bilingual dictionaries, 6
- Military and army, 1
- Science (both practical and psychological sciences), 7

With respect to book printing and publishing, there was not much difference between Reza Shah's era and previous eras; however, a spark of change occurred in Iran at the time, which had an important impact on book publishing in the country. Perhaps the most important factor was the establishment of independent and legal institutions for book publishing. With one or two exceptions which I shall refer to later, prior to this period, book publishing was mainly sponsored by the government or by a number of individuals who had personal, religious or business interest in the business. In fact, the first private

book publishers in Iran were merchants, who were referred to as book traders in some of the writings of the time. These merchants travelled to countries near Iran such as Egypt, Turkey and India, and came across Farsi books that were published in those countries, especially India.

Foreign book publishers suggested to the Iranian merchants to take their books to Iran for sale, but the Iranian merchants thought that they could print books themselves, and trade them in other countries in exchange for other books. Therefore, a generation of merchants appeared who exported and imported books. The ancestor of Ramezani Family, Mirza Ali Asghar Kashani is an example of such tradesmen. Interestingly, in following years, the first private sector book publishers appeared from this same group of people.

During Mozafaredin Shah, a group of noble men and cultural figures such as Haj Muhammad Hussein Aminozzarb, Yahya Dolatabadi, Mirza Hasan Roshdiyeh, Mirza Alikhan Aminoddoleh and Ehteshamossaltaneh established a company called Tab'e Ketab, which aimed to print and publish educational books for children. Muhammad Ali Foroughi was elected as the president of this publishing company. The company published a number of books including "History of Iran", written by Foroughi, and "Ali" by Yahya Dolat Abadi. However the company did not last long due to a dispute between the shareholders and was eventually dissolved. The late Iraj Afshar considers this company as the first legal institution in the publishing industry in Iran.³

In 1919, Ganje Danesh (Treasure of Knowledge) Publications, was

³ See Mahdavinamh, Yadnameh by Dr. Yahya Mahdavi, Tehran, Hermes Publications, an article on Iran's first private institution.

established as the second publishing institute in Iran. The company is still active after 92 years, publishing specifically law books, under the management of Alireza Ganje Danesh.

In 1923, when Reza Shah was commander in chief of the army and Ahmad Shah was the last king of Qajar dynasty, Muhammad Ramezani, a 19 year old man, established one of the first publishing institutions in Iran called Sharq (The East) Library. Muhammad Ramezani's name is still remembered in the publishing sector because of his pioneering activities. He is one of the first founders of literary magazines in Iran, the first of which was the *Sharq* (East) magazine, published under the management of Nasrollah Falsafi and later Saeid Nafisi. He was also the creator of *Afsaneh* (Legend), a collection of (translated) writings, which was published in three editions. The collection was published as a weekly booklet and gave rise to the appearance of a new generation of translators who gained fame later on. People such as Saeid Nafisi, Parviz Khanlari, Sadegh Hedayat, Bozorg Alavi and Nasrollah Falsafi published their literary writings and translations in this collection for the first time.

Muhammad Ramezani also published the first professional journal out of the same book with the same name in 4 editions between 1930 and 1932. However, feeling inspired by *Nehzat Farsi Sereh Nevisi* (the Pure Persian writing movement), he later changed the name of his publications for "Kolaleh Khavar". He was the first person to publish books of *Shahnameh* and Rumi's *Masnavi* in Iran in typographic texts, as well as *One thousand and one night* story book with an introduction

of Ali Asghar Hekmat. He was also one of the prominent founders of The Publishers and Booksellers Union in Tehran, which started its activities in 1958.

From 1923, more legal publishing institutions were set up. Some of the major publishers during Reza Shah reign included Khayyam Library (1925) under the management of Muhammad Ali Traghi, Berokhim Libarary (1927) under the management of Isaac and Yahuda Berokhim, Ibn Sina Library (1930) under the management of Ibrahim Ramezani, Scientific Publications (1932) under the management of Haj Ismaili Elmi and Eghbal Library (1935) under the management of Haj Muhammad Hossein Eghbal.

During Reza Shah's reign, several important features emerged in book publishing in Iran:

- 1) Private sector publishers began to operate officially and legally.
- 2) Serious attention was given to Ancient Persia, which gave rise to historical writings (often focused on real events). As a result of this, a new generation of historians emerged, whose historical writings are of great significance. Moshirodolleh Pirnia, Seyyed Hassan Taqizadeh, Abbas Iqbal, Nasrollah Falsafi, and Abbas Parviz are of the most prominent of such authors. Three of these people - Moshirodolleh, Taqizadeh and Iqbal - even decided to write a periodical collection of Iranian history. Moshirodolleh wrote about Ancient Persia (apart from the history of Sassanid dynasty, for which he believed that Foroughi's translation of Rawlinson's book was a sufficient source). Seyyed Hassan Taqizadeh wrote an account of king Parviz's time (Sassanid)

up until the time of Chengiz (Mongols) and Eghbal wrote about the Mongol history, at which point the writings stopped. Moshirodolleh passed away, Taqizadeh got engaged in politics and Abbas Eghbal became involved with non-historical writings, although he later wrote a concise collection of the history of Iran, which is still used today as a reference.

3) In the Army, the Supreme Council of Military became responsible for the compilation and preparation of military history. People such as Ahmad Baharmast, Ahmad Ehtesabian, and Jamil Qouzanlou wrote important books about the scope of Iran's military history.

4) New educational institutions progressively spread and replaced the traditional establishments such as "Maktab". As a result, writing educational books gradually began. However, this was far from a unified system of textbooks. The publishing of these textbook was also a source of income for publishers, as they had regular customers and sold well. At the time, most of Iran was rural and there were few readers, so publication of these textbooks helped the private sector economy and encouraged the publishers to continue their work.

The establishment of Tehran university in 1934 (the colleges of medicine, literature, and high school of political science were already active) gave rise to the training of a new generation of educated people, which naturally affected the cultural atmosphere of the country. On the other hand, the increase in the number of people sent abroad for higher education led to the emergence of a generation of technocrats, (which gave rise to the need for a more educated society). Despite Reza Shah's

tyranny, a group of leftists managed to create a magazine called *Donya* (The World) based on their materialistic ideologies, which was published between 1933 and 1934 in 12 editions. The owner of the publications was Dr. Naqi Arani who was educated in Germany. However, members of this group were arrested with charges of being communists. The group arrested consisted of 53 members, and amongst them, only Dr. Arani lost his life in prison. The rest of the group were released from prison in August 1941, when Reza Shah was removed from power and was exiled to Mauritius. These people then established the Tudeh Party of Iran (“Party of the Masses of Iran”), which had a long-term impact on the intellectual atmosphere of the Iranian society. Reza Shah’s efforts to modernize the country were unsuccessful because they did not stem from the core of the Iranian society but instead were dictated from his position of power. Since his alliance with Germany was hostile to the allied powers (Britain and the Soviet Union) he was forced to abdicate from power and had to leave Iran in degraded conditions. Muhammad Ali Foroughi (Zaka Almolck), who was a major writer and politician, helped the young Muhammad Reza to take the throne after his father’s abdication. Iran was not doing well in those days as it was under the control of World War II allied forces. The Russians took the north of Iran and the British occupied the south. In this situation, pro-Soviet leftist political forces gathered at the house of Soleiman Mirza Eskandari, a Qajar prince and a prominent political figure, and established a party, called “Tudeh” (Masses), which influenced Iran’s political and cultural life for almost four decades.

Economic problems, poverty and lack of government authority opened up space for political activities. In addition to Marxists, who gathered under the banner of the Tudeh party, the Democratic Party was founded by Qavam Alsaltaneh. Seyyed Ziaaldyn Tabatbai, who was also desperate for power, became involved with political activities. Publications increased in general but the book publishing process did not change much. Lack of paper, shortage of graduates and the traditional nature of the Iranian society, all together prevented the increase in books' circulation and titles. However leftist ideas, particularly those of Zhdanov, a Soviet politician, had a serious impact on the publishing in between August 1941 and the coup on the 19th of August 1953. Jalal Al Ahmad, Bozorg Alavi, Ebrahim Golestan and Sadegh Hedayat were the most famous novelists of the time. With the exception of Sadegh Hedayat, the other three were strictly influenced by Marxist literature. The book, *The Pain We Suffer*, by Al Ahmad, was an adaptation of such literature. The masterpiece, *Her Eyes*, by Bozorg Alavi, was a leftist work and in some stories of Ebrahim Golestan, leftist elements can be found too.

Even though the book circulation was low, some important events occurred in the Iranian publishing sector during this period. The first was the rise of Ali Akbar Elmi, one of the five sons of Haj Muhammad Ismail Elmi, who, by obtaining the right of distribution of schools' textbooks in 1945, became one of the most influential publishers in Iran. The other was the development of the Central Library, which started its activity in 1929 under the management of Haj Abdol Rahim

Soboohi. His father was a dominant preacher in Tehran and he himself had spent time in a British prison. Later on, Soboohi played a key role in the formation of the Publishers Union. In 1948 and 1949, Sanaie and Amir Kabir publications began their publishing works under the managements of Davoud Ramezan Shirazi and Abdolrahim Jafari. Because of his presence at publishing trade establishments, Davoud Ramezan Shirazi became an important figure in book publishing in Iran. Abdolrahim Jafari turned Amri Kabir publications into the largest publishing institute in Iran throughout thirty years of activities (until 1979). Apart from his daring character, he had many innovations in his work and managed to publish more than two thousand titles and open a dozen book shops in Tehran. For a long time Jafari was the CEO of the Textbooks Organization and during this time he was able to organize the publishing and distribution of school textbooks. After the revolution and the Ismail Raien's death at Jafari's office (the author of the book "Faramooosh khaneh dar Iran"), he went through several legal problems, which eventually led to the confiscation of his publishing company and its handover to the Islamic Propagation Organization. Since then, Amir Kabir publication has only managed to survive by reprinting earlier books.

In 1953, with the coup led by General Fazlollah Zahedi and the overthrow of Dr. Mosadegh's government, Muhammad Reza Shah managed to consolidate his power. Iran's extensive political, economic, cultural and military relationship with America turned the Pahlavi dynasty into a regime that was dependent on America's power.

The regime then started to fight against the leftist culture, which was established as the dominant ideology in Iran by the Tudeh party and the intellectuals of the time, by abolishing leftist activities and writings.

The establishment of Franklin Publications, an American institute in Iran, and the Translation and Book Publishing Agency, which was economically linked to the Pahlavi Foundation, created changes in the context of book publishing in Iran. Homayoun San'ati Zadeh was elected as the manager of the Franklin Publications and his innovations created lasting impacts on many areas of publishing. Some of these innovations included:

1) For the first time in Iran serious attention was given to proofreading. A generation of professional editors were trained by Franklin Publications such as Dr. Siroos Parham, Najaf Darya Bandari, Manoochehr Anvar, Karim Emami, Abdol Hossein Azerang, Hormoz Homayounpoor and many others.

2) Book illustrations and cover designs were taken into account. The establishment of Franklin Studio and presence of its great illustrator Hormoz Vahid together played a major role in the formation of the art of book illustration and design in Iran.

3) The first Persian reference dictionary was designed and printed under the supervision of Dr. Gholam Hossein Mosaheb.

4) The establishment of the Pocket Books Organization with the aim of offering low cost books in high number of copies.

5) The foundation of Offset Printing House, which is still the largest book printing establishment in Iran.

6) Editing, designing and writing textbooks for schools.

In addition, by supplying its books to other publishers for a period of twenty two years, Franklin made a significant contribution to the economics of publishing books in Iran.

The Book Translation and Publishing Agency also managed to have a positive impact on the process of book publishing in Iran by publishing new genres, creating a uniform design for the covers of its books, introducing indexes and using new methods of literary and technical editing.

Alongside these two major public institutions after 1953, we should highlight the growth of Amir Kabir Publications and the birth of Nile Publications as one of the largest publishers in the private sector, where intellectuals such as Abdol Hasan Najafi and Abdol Hossein Al Rasool played significant roles. In the 60s Nile Publications became one of the most influential institutes for publishing literary books in Iran.

Perhaps from the book publishing perspective, the most important event in the forties was the creation of Tehran's publishers and booksellers union. The union was a result of years of effort by Tehran's publishers to establish a trade entity. With the efforts made by publishers such as the Central Library manager Abdul Sobouhi, Ebne Sina Library's director Ebrahim Ramazani, Kolaleh Khavar, the director of Khayyam publications Muhammad Ali Taraghi, the director of Ataie Publications Ahmad Ataie, Sanai library's director Davoud Ramezan Shirazi and the director of the Hafez-e-Novin Publications Marashi, finally the union was established in 1958, which is still active today. However, until the

beginning of the sixties, book production did not grow much in Iran. The factors that prevented the appearance of powerful book publishing and production institutes were mainly the lack of intellectual growth amongst the urban middle class and the domination of the political police (SAVAK) on the intellectual currents. Towards the final years of the fifties and the beginning of the sixties, a wind of change started to blow in the Iranian society. These changes started with the teachers' strike that was sparked by the killing of Dr. Khan Ali by the regime. But most of these changes were based on the demands of the Democrat American government, which had started with the presidency of John F. Kennedy. Americans wanted their affiliated societies' economy to change from agricultural to industrial, as this was a necessity for the expansion of the global capitalist market. Therefore the plan, which was later named as the White Revolution of the King and the People, was proposed as an economic reform and was put to a referendum. This reform caused major changes in the Iranian society including the growth of the urban middle class, migration from rural areas to cities, urban sprawl and unexpected growth in administrative bureaucracy. On the basis of such changes, cultural institutions designed to meet the needs of the middle class people such as theatre, cinema, leisure centres, culture centres, event halls and press and publishing offices were established. These changes imposed some sort of tolerance and created more space for cultural activities and therefore are considered as a uniquely significant era with regards to growth in book production, writing, and journalism.

Apart from Nile Publications, other new publishing institutes such as Rozan, Tarfeh, Rose, Rooz, Zaman and Javaneh brought modern initiatives to the book publishing field. All legal Institutions, which were not dependant on booksellers, appeared in that decade. However, despite these developments, the society was suffering from a sort of contradiction. The new cultural openness caused intellectuals criticize the situation of the time, which eventually led to the establishment of a trade entity for the writers called the Iranian Writers' Association. The association has never gained a formal or legal status and has always been in conflict with the governments of the time. Moreover, it lacks internal cohesion because of the diverse spectrums of its creators who try to dominate it. A short time after the revolution, the members and supporters of the Tudeh party split from the association and created a new organisation called the Writers' Council and also established a magazine. Today, the Iranian Writers' Association continues its work while not yet being recognized by the Iranian government.

In addition, a new generation of university graduates appeared, including religious and leftist thinkers, who believed that the regime lacked capability to establish peaceful communications with them. Therefore, they started an underground fight with the regime, which resulted in the formation of two underground organizations called Mujahedin-e-Khalgh (People's Mujahedin) and Fadaian Khalgh Militias. Facing its opponents, the regime created a climate of intellectual and cultural repression with many restrictions. On the other hand, an increase in the price of oil led to a further gap between the shah's regime and the

people. From the beginning of the seventies, a repressive atmosphere dominated the society as many publications were banned or shut down; writers were imprisoned, banned from writing or they left the country. A different branch of cultural activities started in that decade, which was an underground publishing of prohibited books. These publications were significant in Iran between 1977 and 1981, led to the publication of many books mainly in fields of religion, philosophy, politics and history. These books were known as white cover books.

Despite the pressure on intellectuals by the security agencies in the seventies, the social and political efforts and achievements were significant in book publishing. Young publishers gradually entered the field of book production. Publications such as Negah and Ghoghnoos were established under the managements of Alireza Raes Danai and Amir Hossein Zadegan, and are still running in Iran. Many other small intellectual publishing institutes were formed in the seventies but did not last long.

After the revolution, book publishing in Iran can be divided into several periods:

The first period began in 1977 and lasted until about 1983. It was a political era in which leftist, Islamist and nationalist parties were politically active. Most of these parties had their own publishing entities. In addition, many new and unknown publishers also printed and published books, some of which were in serious disagreement with the regime (either in opposition to its ideologies and Islamic beliefs or its policies). With the start of the Iran-Iraq war there was a sudden

increase in nationalism amongst Iranian people and defending the country became their main concern. At the same time, the government aimed to restrict political groups and prevent serious confrontations among them. As a result, gradually restrictions were imposed on books and journals publications.

From 1983 onwards, publishers were required to own a publishing license by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. As a result of this new regulation, only very experienced publishers remained in the field of publishing. In 1988 the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution formulated an enactment under the title of ‘Objectives, policies and standards for publishing’ and asked the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance to enforce it. Based on the new regulations, books would have to be supervised and authorized for publications by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Until 2010, this was the only regulation, which the government applied for supervising book publishing. In 2010, this act was abandoned and a new act was endorsed, which contained a more detailed governmental supervision, although it has not yet been put into practice.

From 1981 till 1989, Iran was caught in the Iran-Iraq war and the economic crisis made importing paper difficult. On the other hand Fars paper factory was located in Haft Tappeh of Khuzestan province, in the theatre of operations. This made the book production process very slow and as a result not many books were published during that period.

When the war ended and Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani became president, changes were made in the constitution and this period took

the title of Reconstruction Era. During this era, the government policy was to get close to international economic organizations, especially the World Bank. One of the factors for being considered as a developing nation was an increasing publication of books and cultural products, therefore several publishing licenses were distributed and the only requirement to get the licenses was having a bachelor degree. However, the increase in the number of inexperienced or unqualified publishers caused serious problems. One of these was producing books without considering their popularity. Also, lack of professional expertise in book publishing and lack of technical knowledge in the field led to the mass production of books which were low-quality from the structural and technical perspectives. Many of these new publishers left the field subsequently. Having said that, the demand for gaining a publishing license was still on the increase and the reasons behind this included:

- 1- With the support of Tehran city council (Gholam Hossein Karbaschi was the mayor at the time) holders of publishing license could legally work in residential buildings. This meant that a publishing license could be a cover for other economic activities.

- 2- To help the increase of book production quantity, the government was willing to give various subsidies to publishers such as low interest loans, long-term loans and subsidized paper, which was two or three times cheaper than the price of the open market.

- 3- The government purchasing was between three hundred to a thousand copies of each new title from publishers.

- 4- Possibility of participating in various national exhibitions (Tehran

International, country fairs and occasional exhibitions such as the Book week, Islamic Revolution Anniversary, etc.)

5- Governmental institutions and organizations purchasing books.

This led to the issuance of around nine thousands publishing licenses. Publishers are expected to satisfy certain criteria, one of which is to publish at least four new title books per year. As a result of such rules, many of the books that are published suffer from weak writing styles, content problems and lack of scientific proof. With the rise of the reformist government of Mohammad Khatami in 1997, publishing entered a new era of great production. A decrease in government supervision and the presence of Ata'ollah Mohajerani as the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance provided a space for more publication of books. However this did not increase the market boom as the previous problems were still present. Pressure from conservatives and an increase in criticism of the book publishing process resulted in the dismissal of Mohajerani and a boost in censorship process once again. With these constraints, book publishing found itself in a circle of fraud and growing corruption. Excessive imports of paper also led to the entry of government paper in the open market, which faced the protest of the Publishers Union members. They asked for cuts in governments quotas of paper and to set the price of paper according to the open market so that the financial abuse could be limited. But until the end of Khatami's working period, these demands were ignored.

As the fundamentalists came to power with the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadi Nejad, changes in the publishing field arose. Saffar Harandi,

the editor and deputy manager of Keyhan newspaper (a conservative paper published in Iran) was appointed as the new Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance. Strictness in publishing certain books in the field of literary, historical and social books increased and subsidised paper was cut. The government's book purchase policy from publishers was also changed. It was natural that the new government was more inclined to support publishers who published books within the extent of their views. Religious and governmental publishers received major support and the subsidy that before was provided to all publishers was now exclusively allocated to a certain ones. Many writers and publishers had objections to this process but the government ignored them. There seemd to be conflict between the president and his minister, though.

During President Ahmadinejad's second term, the Minister of Guidance was replaced. Seyyed Mohammad Hosseini, the new minister, happened to be one of the people who impeached Khatami's minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Ata'ollah Mohajerani. Under this new minister, who had no cultural background, restrictions increased even more. However, the government's rigorous oversight does not sound everlasting. Social networking sites and electronic books give rise to a fast growing communication between Iranians and the outside world. Moreover, educational attainment, general knowledge and proficiency in foreign languages amongst Iranian youth is quite high. Hence people have more access to foreign resources than before. This rise in information resources weakens the effect of strict supervision. It is not clear what strategy the government will take to tackle this. At the

moment, with regards to quantity, Iran is not far behind its neighbouring countries in book publishing, although the circulation is still suffering. We shall see what arrangements could be used to increase reading habits in Iran.

We shall finish this chapter by mentioning women's activities in the field of printing and publishing. Before the revolution, women were not present as publishing directors but after the revolution, they gradually entered the book printing and publishing sector and became actively engaged. Farideh Khalatbari, the director of Shabaviz Publications, was one of the first qualified women to enter this sector and managed to become one of the successful literary books publishers. Since 1991, she focused her activities mainly on publishing books for children and adolescents and became an international publisher in this field. Shahla Lahiji is another example who found the Roshangaran and Women Studies publisher in the second half of the eighties and managed to turn it into one of the prestigious publishing institutions in Iran. Since the beginning of the nineties, the number of female publishers increased and women are now publishing books in various fields such as children and adolescents', humanities, technical and medical sciences. From the beginning of the 21st century, some women publishers formed a group called "Female Publishers Association", the objective of which was to protect the female trade union's rights. However this group was never formally and legally recognized. More recently in 2010, another group established and registered an institute called "Women Publishers' Institute of Culture", the objective of which was to form a

non-political union and cultural entity and to unite female publishers. The Institute has an official and legal identity and has about 50 members. Overall, publishing in recent years in Iran has gone through changes and experienced strong presence and influence of women.

A review of the independent book publishing in Iran

The formation of legal and independent publishing organizations in Iran that were not reliant on the government first began during Mozaffaredin Shah. As mentioned in the previous section, Tab'e Ketab as a corporation was established by some political figures and prominent statesmen. We have already mentioned Mohammad Ramezani, who, at the age of nineteen, established the Sharq (East) Library in Laleh-zar Street of Tehran and published books from 1923. A few years later, he changed the name of his publications to Kolaleh Khavar. Ramezani was one the most active and innovative private sector publishers in Iran. He had an effective role in the formation of the Publishers and Booksellers Union of Tehran, which was one of the oldest union institutions in Iran. Haj Mohammad Ali Taraghi, who assisted his uncle Asadollah Taraghi in book trading since he was a teenager, established Khayyam Library in Naser Khosro Street in Tehran from 1925. For many years he was one of the most hard working and prominent publishers of historical and reference books. After him, his sons Shahrokh and Bijan Taraghi, a famous songwriter, continued their father's business. However with

the death of Bijan Taraghi, Khayyam Publications became less active in the first half of the twenty first century.

Isaq and Yahuda Berokhim, who were from the Jewish minority of Iran, established Berokhim Publications in 1927. The name of Berokhim has always been tied to the name of the *Hayyem* bilingual dictionaries, the first edition of which was published in 1930. This publishing company was located in Ferdowsi Street in Tehran and was open until the revolution in February 1977. Following the emigration of Berokhim brothers, their library was closed and, after a while, the dictionaries were published by Davoud Mousayee, the manager of Farhang Mo'aser Publications. The dictionaries have been published many times in new versions by this publisher.

Ebrahim Ramezani, the younger brother of Mohammad Ramezani, also founded the Ibn Sina Library in Mokhberodowleh square in Tehran in 1930. Up until the first half of the seventies he was a prolific Iranian publisher. However, being threatened by SAVAK, he left Iran and Amir Kabir Publications received the right to publish his books.

The Elmi family is one of the oldest and long lasting families in the field of book publishing in Iran. Haj Mohammad Ismail Elmi, a member of Khansari family, moved to Tehran and established the enterprise of Elmi printing and publishing in Khodabandeh Avenue in Naser Khosrow Street of Tehran. He had five sons who were all into book printing and publishing. His eldest son Haj Mohammad Ali took over the management of printing and publication after his father passed away. His children currently own a number of publishing institutes

in Iran. As a publisher, Ali Akbar Elmi became the owner of one of the largest book publishing companies in August 1941, after winning the auction for printing and selling textbooks. Mohammad Hasan Elmi also published books and his three sons established a publishing organization called Javidan, which, in recent years, has been working under the new name of Badragheh Javidan. Mohammad Jafar Elmi, who worked mainly at the printing house, died in a car accident in 1941. Abdol Rahim Elmi's sons, Parviz and Shapour, also worked in the book publishing sector. From Ali Akbar Elmi's children, only Fereydoun worked in book publishing.

Eghbal Publications officially began its activity in 1935. Even though, according to Khan Baba list of records, Haj Mohammad Hossein Eghbal was already working in the book publishing sector before this date, the first books with the Eghbal Publications logo were registered in this year. Today the third generation of this family are still present in book publishing business.

Razi library and Biryani Press Agency started their work from 1937. Biryani agency is famous in Iran for its publishing of cheap book series. During Reza Shah, publishing in Iran relied mainly on independent publishers and the government had a limited activity in this domain. However, censorship, dictatorship, and the small number of educated and middle class people limited book publishing. With the overthrow of Reza Shah from power in August 1941 and the arrival of his son (Mohammad Reza), publishing still did not develop much, due to economic issues and the occupation of Iran during the Second World

War. Ali Akbar Elmi's Publications was one of the companies that were turned into a strong institution through selling school books.

The central Library expanded its activity in Naser Khosrow Street in Tehran from 1945, under the management of Abdol Rahim Sabouhi. In the following years, Sabouhi became one of Iran's most prominent publishers. Between 1948 and 1949, two other important publishers stepped in the field. Haj Davoud Ramezan Shirazi founded Sanaie Library in Naser Khosrow Street, which in its 62 years of activity has published important titles, especially Persian classic poetry. In addition, Haj Davoud Ramezan Shirazi had been the President of the Publishers' Association for two terms after the Islamic Revolution.

Abdol Rahim Jafari founded Amir Kabir Publications in the same years (1948-1949), which through perseverance, innovation, the use of consultants, and effective operational controls, turned into the biggest private sector publisher in Iran in just three years. Unfortunately after the revolution due to some misunderstandings Amir Kabir Publications was confiscated by the government and was handed over to the Islamic Propagation organization. Although the company is still active as a publisher affiliated with the government, it has never achieved prominence in the way it did during the management of Jafari.

Moreover, a Safi Ali Shah publication was also established in the 1940s by Moshfegh brothers and is still active in Iran. This company has published significant historical and literary works.

Between August 1941 and the 1953 coup d'état Persian publications in Iran was influenced by the Tudeh Party. As a result, many works either

written or translated were influenced by the leftist political ideologies. After the coup the government officially took a more central role in book publications. It aimed to reduce the influence of leftist ideas in the domain of books as well as the influence of independent publishers.

Until the early years of the sixties, there were two prominent publishing institutes in the private sector. First was Nihil Publications, which was founded by Ahmad Azimi Zavvarehei, Abolhassan Najafi and Abdol Hossein Aal Rasoul. This publisher had a significant role in the publication of the world modern literature and its translations. Andisheh Publications is the second one, which was established by Ahmad Ahmadi and for many years remained unique and innovative in publishing literary works, especially drama. Aal Rasoul left Nile in the sixties, and launched Zaman Publications, which was one of the best literary and social book publishers in the sixties and seventies.

With the beginning of the sixties, many changes occurred in the Iranian society. Reforms that were later referred to as the White Revolution, led to the expansion of administrative bureaucracy, a growing middle class, urbanization and cultural liberalization. Also, an increase in the numbers of weekly, monthly, quarterly magazines, changes in theatre and performing arts, a new wave in the Iranian cinema and the establishment of publishing institutions were some of the most significant changes in book publishing in Iran. Before these reforms, publishing and book selling were not separate entities, but from the beginning of the sixties, independent publishers such as Rozan, Torfeh, Javaneh, Rose and Zaman were founded in Iran. Although many of

them did not last long, they had a positive impact in the field of book publishing.

In the sixties, the society's main paradox was lack of communication between the government and the intellectual community, which resulted in a conflict between the two parties. Therefore, a union entity called the Iranian Writer's Association was created. The paradox also gave rise to a conflict between the government and the opposition in academic and religious constituencies. Such clashes along with the increase in the price of oil led to more political and ideological complications in the society. From the beginning of the seventies, book publishing slowed down with no prominent institutions stepping into the field. There was a growing gap between the nation and the state, which resulted from an increase in the conflicts, pervasive economic crises and lack of attention to the demands of the poor and middle class of the society. These issues provided the ground for the revolution and the eventual collapse of the regime. In 1977, particularly with regards to the changes emerging in America's foreign policy towards Iran, Shah began a number of reforms against his will.

A series of poetry nights held by Goethe Institute in October 1977 was one of the first opposition activities against the situation of the time. During the poetry sessions poets and writers gave talks, read poetry, spoke of the cultural needs, and people such as Shams Al Ahmad and Bagher Momeni bravely criticized censorship and, the radical poet, Saied Soltanpour, read revolutionary poems. This was the beginning of the appearance of a split in the society, which ultimately led to the

breakdown of the Pahlavi regime with the help of different social groups especially religious powers.

With political pressures from America's democrats, which brought Jimmy Carter to presidency, an organisation called the Book Publications of Iran was established. This initiated a more open political atmosphere and prompted an increase in book publication in Iran. Many of the books that were banned previously were published in big volumes, without a particular publisher's logo or a designed cover with poor grammar. These books were known as the White Cover books and were an important chapter in book publishing in Iran between 1977 and 1981. They were mainly in the fields of literature, history, philosophy, politics and religion. Philosophical works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and political memoirs and religious works, especially books by Ayatollah Khomeini and Dr. Ali Shariati, had the highest circulation and audience. On the other hand, almost all political parties, especially leftist groups, had book and journal publishing organizations and establishments. In the early years of the eighties and with the expansion of Iran-Iraq war, as well as, a confrontation of political groups with the Islamic Republic, the state achieved more control over the field of book printing and publishing.

Since those years, a new generation of publishers came to prominence that currently forms the backbone of book publishing in Iran. The following are examples of these influential publishers. Markaz Publications was founded by Alireza Ramezani, son of Asghar Ramezani, who was the brother of Mohammad and Ebrahim Ramezani the founders of Iran

Novin Publications. Alireza Ramezani was the third generation of the Ramzani family to work in the publishing sector. He was educated in England, and stepped into the field with new ideas and worked with Jahangir Oshidri and Fereydoun Fatemi. Markaz Publications' main activity was publishing literature, history, philosophy, social sciences and children books. In the last three decades, this publisher has produced significant works in literature and translation. Famous writers like Jalal Sattari, Mehdi Sahabi, Zoya Pirzad, Dr. Mohammad San'ati, Abbas Mokhber and Shams Langeroodi have continuously worked with Markaz Publications. Ney Publications was established by a group of young individuals, who worked with Etela'at newspaper in the early years of the eighties. They started by publishing the book *Confessions of the General* by General Qareh Baqi, which sold in large numbers and provided the capital for the continuation of their work. Jafar Homyee, an economic graduate of Tehran University who also worked in Amir Kabir Publications, was elected as the managing director of this newly established company. Homyee's interest in economics and his contacts with the scholars of the field resulted in Ney Publications producing a number of significant books in the field of economics. Some of these books were published in several editions as textbooks, which made Ney a prestigious and prominent publishing institution in Iran. In recent years, Ney Publications has been giving serious attention to the publishing of social sciences, cinema, drama and literature and is now one of the most prolific publishers of the country.

Cheshmeh Publications was founded by Hasan Kiyayan Mousavi from the city of Babol. At the beginning it was based in Karim Khan Street as a bookshop, which soon became a community centre. Hasan Kiyayan's good nature and manners made him one of the most respected figures in book publishing in Iran. He also worked for a long time with the Publishers Association and even assumed the presidency of the union for a period of time. Cheshmeh Publications started its work by focusing on literary works. Publication of books by Fereydoun Moshiri, one of Iran's contemporary poets, and the musician Mustafa Kamalpoor turned Cheshmeh to a progressive publisher. In recent years Cheshmeh has achieved a distinctive success by devoting itself to youthful literature (in the context of novels and short stories).

Niloofer Publication was established by Hossein Karimi with the aim of publishing literary translations. It has collaborated with several translators such as Saleh Hosseini, Abolhasan Najafi, Mohammad Qazi, Mehdi Qebraei and Farhad Qebraei. Some of important world literature has been published by its main office at University of Tehran Street.

Qatreh Publications was founded by Bahram Faiazi in the mid-eighties. In recent years, it has turned into a prominent publisher by publishing works in the field of literature, history, and social sciences. Since 2000, it also has been focusing on performing arts and psychology.

Tarh-e-no was formed in the second half of the eighties by Hossein Paya. Its manager, a philosophy graduate, had an interest in publishing works of social sciences and philosophy. By publishing works of

government reformists including Abdollah Nouri, Saeed Hajjarian and Akbar Ganji, this publisher became one of the most prominent publishing institutions in Iran. However from the beginning of the 21st century, it lost its glory and even came close to closure. Although Tarh-e-no is still publishing books, it does not have the sparkle that it had in the nineties.

Some of the publishing institutions that were established in the eighties and nineties had innovations and achieved some success but this was temporary and they did not last long. No (New) Publications, under the management of Reza Jafari, son of Abdol Rahim Jafari the founder of Amir Kabir Publications, was one of the best publishers in the eighties but did not last long. Asparak, Faryab, Noghreh, Morghe Amin and Tirajeh were amongst prominent publishers in the domain of social science books but they ended closing up. Negah Publications was founded by Alireza Raees Danaie in 1973. He had worked in Sharq (East) Library for some years and gained experienced from it. Negah's focus was on publishing arts, history and philosophy books, but from the eighties it expanded its domain and over the last three decades has become a prolific Iranian publisher. Works by Ahmad Shamlou, Morteza Ravandi, Ali Mohammad Afghani, Mohammad Hoghooghi, Nader Naderpour, Sivash Kasraiee, Reza Seyyed Hosseini, Ahmad Golshiri and many other authors have turned Negah to a successful current publisher.

Amir Hossein Zadegan established Ghoghnoos Publications in 1974. After the revolution he also opened a bookshop in Tehran's book

market. From the eighties, Ghoghnoos expanded its work and since the year 2000 has published works in the fields of literature, history, philosophy and law. It is currently one of Iran's biggest publishers.

Morvarid (Pearl) Publications was formed in the early sixties by Majid Roshangar, Manouchehr Hasanzadeh, Fereydoun Niknam and Ali Beig. From the beginning Morvarid set its goal on publishing innovative literary works. Despite Roshangar's emigration to America and Niknam's death, Morvarid still continued its work and since the revolution it has been a very dynamic publisher in the field of literature.

Agaah Publications started its work in the early seventies by Hosseinkhani and Bakhshi and is located by University of Tehran. It has been a prominent publisher in the domain of social science and philosophy books. Some years ago, Mr Hosseinkhani's daughter established Agah Publications, which has been publishing books in the same domain as Agaah.

Kharazmi Publications was created in 1969 by a group of prominent teachers from some of Tehran's high schools of the time. Their main objective was to publish educational books but choosing Alireza Heidary, a literature teacher, as the director of this institution, soon modified the main objective. Due to its scientific accuracy and innovations, Kharazmi became an important publisher in the domain of social science books. It published books in literature, history, philosophy and science. It also has produced some of the best collections of translated works in the last four decades. Although the sudden death of Alireza Heidari reduced its circulation, it still remains active.

Farhang Moaaser (Contemporary Culture) Publications was founded by Davoud Mousaiee in the early years of the eighties. Having worked in book selling business for many years, Mousaiee set his goal to publish reference books. Initially the company published the old *Hayyem* dictionary with a new edition and then invested in bilingual dictionaries. Being selective and particular, Farhang Moaser has produced credible reference books. The manager of the company has also opened a large bookstore for the supply of French and English books in Tehran.

Tous Publications was founded by Mohsen Bagherzadeh in the early seventies in Tehran. Bagherzadeh had previously published several books in the city of Mashhad. Tous soon became a selective and successful publisher, thanks to its manager's experience and his connections to prominent literary figures and scholars. Its main focus is publishing literary and historical books. Recently the company's activities have slightly declined due to Mohsen Bagherzadeh's health issues.

Ofogh) Horizon (Publications was launched as a publisher for children and adolescent. From the second half of the nineties, its manager Hashemi Nejad started to publish modern literature and the company slowly became a productive publisher especially in the domain of fiction books.

Asatir) Mythology (Publications was launched by Abdolkarim Jorbozehdar in the early eighties. Its focus is classical Persian literature and has published up to a thousand titles in this field.

Sales) Third (Publications was established in the nineties by

Mohammad Ali Jafariyeh ,who had a family background in printing and publishing .From the early21 st century, this publisher has focused on the publication of literary and social science books, and, as a result, has become a dominant publisher in the country. Sales also owns one of the biggest bookstores in the country.

Ghadyani Publications was founded in the early seventies by Nader Ghadyani, who is currently the president of Tehran’s Publishers and Booksellers Association. Its original scope of work is children and adolescent literature. In the years after the revolution, the company employed a group of experts on children’s books and, by doing this; it expanded its activities and turned into one of the biggest children and adolescents’ book publishers in Iran.

Peydayesh Publications was launched by Mohsen Taeb. Since the 1990s, this children and adolescents publisher has managed to turn itself into one of the biggest and most successful publishers in the relevant field.

Fatemi Publications was established by Iraj Zargham in the eighties. From the very beginning, its main objectives were creating and editing educational books. Zargham employed a group of education experts to achieve this, and Fatemi became a distinguished publisher of scientific books. Despite the increased competition in the supply of such books, Fatemi has remained committed to its goal.

Kanoon Farhangi Amoozesh Publications (Cultural Centre of Education) was founded by Kazem Qalamchi in the nineties. He first started his work as a specialist in assessing students participating in the

national university entrance exam and then began its own publications. Due to the high demand of target readers, the company turned into a successful publisher of tuitions books. Qalamchi provides grants to thousands of disadvantaged students in order to help them achieve higher level of education.

Gaaj Publications was founded by Jokar. Despite it being just over a decade old, it has managed to become one of the largest educational publishers in the country through extensive advertising.

Gooya Cultural Centre was launched by Naser Mir Bagheri in the eighties. From the nineties onward, Mir Bagheri focused its work on publishing books on art. Gooya is now a famous publisher of art books, and the publication of Mahmoud Farshchians' art prints has been a highlight of its work.

Yasavoli Culture Centre was founded by Javad Yasavoli in the early eighties at Tehran's book market. Through persistence and hard work, he not only managed to develop the institute but also made it into one of the best publishers of art books. At the moment the company is run by Yasavoli's brothers as he has immigrated to Canada.

Negar Publications was established by Davoudipoor with the aim of publishing arts books, and it has maintained its success to the present day. Simin and Zarrin Publications, which worked in the field of art, was an offshoot of Negar Publication. It was created after the departure of some of the former company's partners.

Mirdashti Cultural Centre was founded by Mehdi Mirdashti, a relative of Javad Yasavoli, after years of working for him. Mirdashti has also

been successful in the publication of art books and is currently an important publisher in this field.

Mola Publications started its work after the revolution by publishing books on mysticism under the management of Mofid, who is an architect. They have recently published Mulla Sadra's works, which is a representative of their enthusiasm for mystical works.

Hekmat (Wisdom) Publications is also another publisher that started its work after the revolution by Ghaffari brothers. This publication is specifically engaged in publishing philosophical works.

Sokhan and Zaryab Publications were launched by Haj Mohammad Ali Elmi's children after the revolution. Sokhan Publications has periodically published Persian dictionaries under the supervision of Dr. Hasan Anvari. This publisher is mostly active in the fields of contemporary and ancient literature, history and psychology.

Zavvar Publications has been active for almost six decades. With the death of Akbar Zavvar, the founder of the publication, his son Ali (Ardeshir) became the publishing director and still is after three decades. Zavvar is a publisher of classical Persian literary texts and is one of the leading publishers in this field.

Finally, it's important to draw attention to Mohammah Zahraei, one of the most talented and elite publishing figure in Iran. He is one of the partners of the Nile Publications and for many years has been involved in Karnameh Publication. Every book that has been published by Karnameh has had significance in Iran's publishing field. Divan of Hafez edited by Houshang Ebtehaj (Sayeh) and The Cook Book

by Najaf Darya Bandari are amongst important publications of this publisher.

The structure of book publishing industry in Iran

Farid Moradi

- Outlining the current structure of publishing in Iran
- Organizing and planning the book chain (from writing to market)
- International marketing (distribution, trade, etc.)
- Legal topics (copyright, royalty, taxation, etc.)
- Publishing problems (barriers, censorship, plagiarism, etc.)
- Electronic publishing
- Guidelines and proposals of book publishing experts in Iran

Outlining the current structure of publishing in Iran

Book publishing in Iran currently has three distinct groups. First group is the governmental publishers, which include those for ministries, universities, higher education institutes and some other government agencies.

The Ministry of Education has two very active publishers: Entesharat Madreseh (School Publications), which in addition to publishing books on science and education, children and adolescence, also publishes

books in the field of humanities (history, literature, geography, and philosophy). The second publisher is the Institute of Intellectual Development of Children and Adolescents (Kanoon), which is active in producing books for children and adolescents and also producing educational aids, films and music. As well as these two, the Educational Books Organization has the exclusive right of publishing textbooks specific to pre-school up to pre-university.

The Ministry of Science and Higher Education and the Ministry of Health and Medical Education run the Assessment Publishing Organization (Sanjesh), which is the publisher of university entrance examination assessment books. They also own other institutions such as Samt Publication, Academic Publishing Centre (the main producer of university textbooks), university publishers across the country and finally Iranian Students Book Agency. The Ministry of Health and Medical Education publishes medical textbooks and is also the exclusive importer of medical and paramedical books.

In addition, there are publishing units within different ministries. For example, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance owns a few publishing units as well as one of the most well-equipped printing presses in Iran. These governmental publishers are serious competitors of private sector publishers, because they don't have budget problems, lack of investment or concerns about return on investment and consumption by applicants. They are also able to pay higher copyrights and have the capacity to print books in greater volume.

The second group of publishers are those who are quasi-governmental

or semi-governmental, and whose management is elected by the governmental agencies. However they have autonomy in setting their budget and profit and loss accounts. Some examples are; the Islamic Propaganda Organization affiliated to the Qom Seminary, which mainly publishes religious books, the Islamic Propagation Organization's art unit, Soureh and Soureh Mehr publications, Amir Kabir Publications, The Eight Years Holy War Propaganda Unit, Scientific and Cultural Studies Organization (mostly owned by the Social Security Organization), the Institute of Cultural Studies, the Institute of Communications, etc.

The third group is private sector publishers, which constitute the largest number of publishers. These are divided into several categories. Some of the major ones are as follow:

Reference Publishers, whose main domain of work is printing and publishing bilingual, multilingual or monolingual dictionaries. There are very few publishers of dictionaries as they need long-term investment and time to prepare a book. The most important private publisher in this category is Farhang Moaser Publication under the management of Mr Davoud Musaei.

The next category is publishers of books for children and adolescents. Publishers like Qidiani, Peydayesh, and Ofuq are currently some of the most successful publishers in this area. The majority of these have been able to form an organization called Children's Publishers Association. This association has played an effective role on behalf of its members in ways such as: attending local fairs; effective communication with Ministry of Education to promote the sales of their books to this

ministry; creating centres and bookstores to supply products.

Publishers of religious books consist of two groups. The first is old publishers from the time of Pahlavi regime, such as Eslamieh, Elmieh Eslamieh, Mohammadi, Farahani, and Office of the Islamic Culture Publications, Enteshar Co. Publishers. The second group is composed of post-revolution publishers such as Sadra and Dalil-e-ma (Our reason), who are mainly active in the city of Qom as a religious centre. Some of the publishers in this sector have had significant growth in recent years. The reason could be that apart from the traditional market for religious books, which is concentrated mainly in the religious centres in different cities, these publishers also have the support of government. Also, book purchases made by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, public libraries and the Mosques' Management Institutions are predominantly from these publishers. Some of these publications had a significant financial growth in the recent years.

Publishers of science books mainly focus on educational aid books. In recent years there has been a boom in the purchase of such books, due to increasing numbers of higher education institutions, increased competition for acceptance in the academic disciplines and the additional capacity to accept students at universities. The majority of turnover and performance in this area is with the private publishers. Publishers such as Qalamchi (Cultural Centre of Education), Gaaj, Mobtakeran and Fatemi Publications are some of the most successful publishers in this field.

With regards to the publishers of technical and engineering books;

their main activity is limited to providing curriculum-based books and resources introduced by university professors. At the beginning of university terms, especially in October and February, this group of publishers has the highest circulation. Due to the increase of higher education institutes, the number of these publishers is rising.

Publishers of medical and paramedical sciences and biology books have achieved good growth in recent years due to the supply of textbooks and reference books. Publishers such as Tabib, Chehr, and Teymourzadeh are some of the most important publishers in this field.

The number of publishers of art books has increased since the 1990s. Their work is mainly supplying luxury books, colourful and artistic works such as artworks of Farshchian or Poetry collections of poets such as Hafez and Khayyam or Ferdowsi's Shahnameh and tourist literature in Iran. The majority of publishers in this sector are also looking at markets abroad. Gooya Academy, Simin, Zarrin, and Yesavoli Academy are amongst such publishers.

Aside from the fields mentioned above, most other publishing license holders are active in the field of humanities and social sciences. The five main reasons behind the fact that this field is over-populated could be that:

- It's a common and inclusive field.
- It does not require specialized and professional knowledge.
- It does not require large investment.
- Most authors and translators are active in this field.
- World literature is available in this area.

- However, there are the frequent problems in this sector, the most serious of which include:
 - More government control has shifted to this sector.
 - Sensitivity to the human sciences by the majority of governmental sectors means that this section has been confronted with more challenges.
 - Most intellectuals and critics who protest the government's procedures are active in this area.
 - An excess of publishers (70% of all publishers) in this sector has led to financial constraints and difficult bottlenecks. In addition, there is not enough creative activity in this area for the numbers of these publishers.

On the other hand, the book market has always fluctuated with the economic ups and downs of the middle class (who are the major customers in this field) and this does not provide economic security for investment in this sector. Therefore, despite the presence of numerous publishers in this area, only 17 per cent of the annual production of books in Iran is devoted to humanities and social sciences. This illustrates the small production of the books in this field against the large number of consumers demanding such books.

According to data issued in the years 2008 to 2010, the annual production of books in Iran has been between 53,000 and 62,000 titles. The following sectors have had the highest share in the production of books in Iran in this period:

- Publishers of religious books 22%

- Publishers of books for children and adolescents 21%
- Publishers of scientific books 10%
- Publishers of technical and engineering books 12%
- Publishers of science books 14%
- Publishers of books in the humanities + social sciences (17% = 4% +13%)
- Publishers of art books 2%
- Publishers of reference books 2%

65% of Iranian publishers are from the private sector and 35% belong to the public sector. In the last three years, about 33 percent of books were re-published and 67 percent were published for the first time. Books have on average a circulation of about 3,000 copies per title. However in some sections, numbers of copies of books are high, for example in the areas of children's books, educational books or religious books, occasionally over 100,000 copies are sold, but in the humanities and social sciences the average circulation is about 1,500 copies per title, decreasing in the recent years.

Book publication in Iran is currently experiencing difficulties, some of which are related to the internal structure of Iran's publishing establishments such as: little working capital; lack of trained and skilled manpower; a lack of project-management and planning based on the patterns of the foreign modern publishing institutions; not having enough knowledge about their scope of activities in the publishing world; a lack of cross-border (international) trade; traditionalism in the area of book production.

Other problems rest on other factors that are outside the sphere of publishing such as: government control over all areas of book production in Iran; an inconsistent and unequal competition between private-sector publishers and government publishers; lack of expenditure on books by Iranian families; a lack of attention to written culture compared with aural or visual culture products, classification and censorship of books by religious leader; a major part of Iranian society being traditional; and finally emigration of educated Iranians.

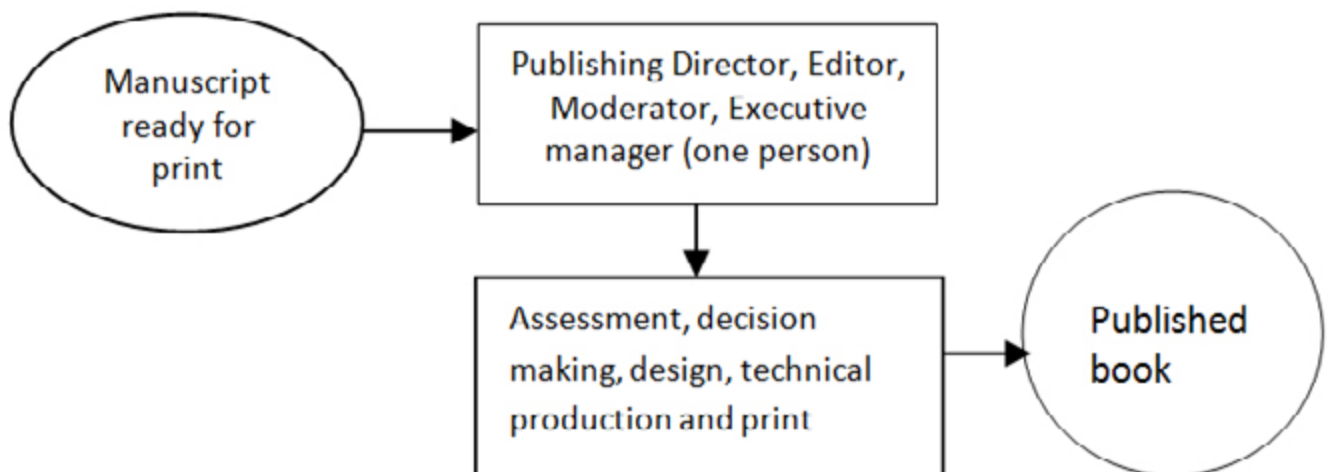
Despite all these difficulties and obstacles in the years since Iran's Islamic Revolution, growth in publication of books has been relatively good. If we pay attention to the statistics of published books, especially in the past three decades (1981-2011) this increase is apparent. A significant increase in newly published titles shows that Iranian society is seeking pluralism and diversity. In 2011 alone, more books were published than all the titles released from the entry of printing machine into Iran till the fall of the Pahlavi dynasty.

Numerous factors contributed to this quantitative growth, but the major ones can be outlined as: low average age of population (Iranian society is very young); increasing numbers of students and university graduates in Iran; increased urbanization and growing middle class in Iran; increasing travel abroad has increased the level of communication; expertise and knowledge requirements to advance social and business affairs that has led to an increase in the number of scientific books and finally; an increase in domestic book fairs outside the capital and major cities.

Organizing and planning the book publishing chain (from writing to sale)

Current publishing institutions in Iran may base their activities on one of the following three models:

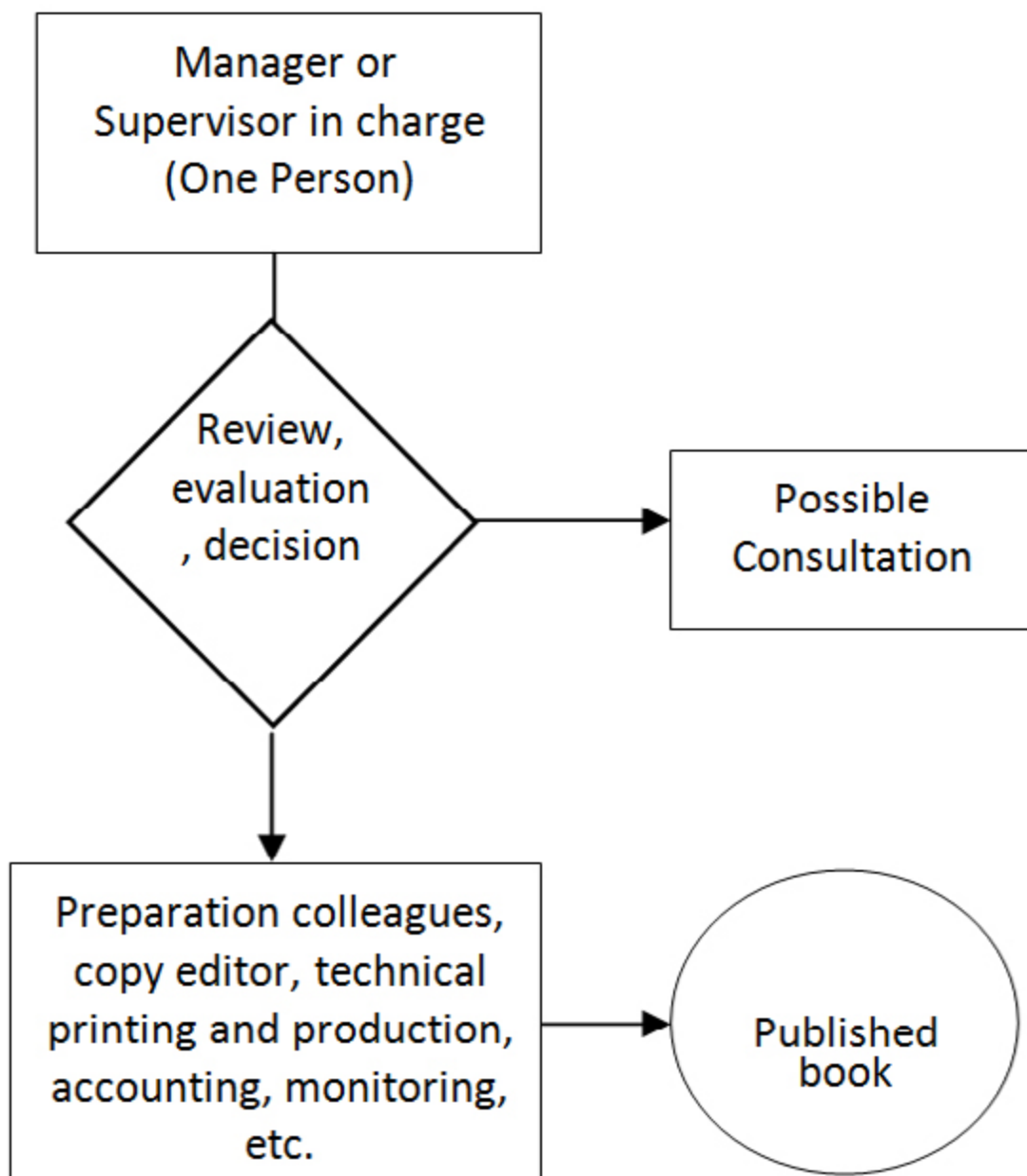
Model 1: One person engages in multiple roles model - investor, selector of books, publisher and negotiator with the authors. He himself is therefore responsible for all the stages of book production. These publishers are also called “Suitcase Publishers” (Nashere Chamedani) in Iran. The pattern of their work can be outlined as follows.



In such a model ,decent books are unlikely to be produced .First of all choosing and selecting books is dependent on one person ,who may

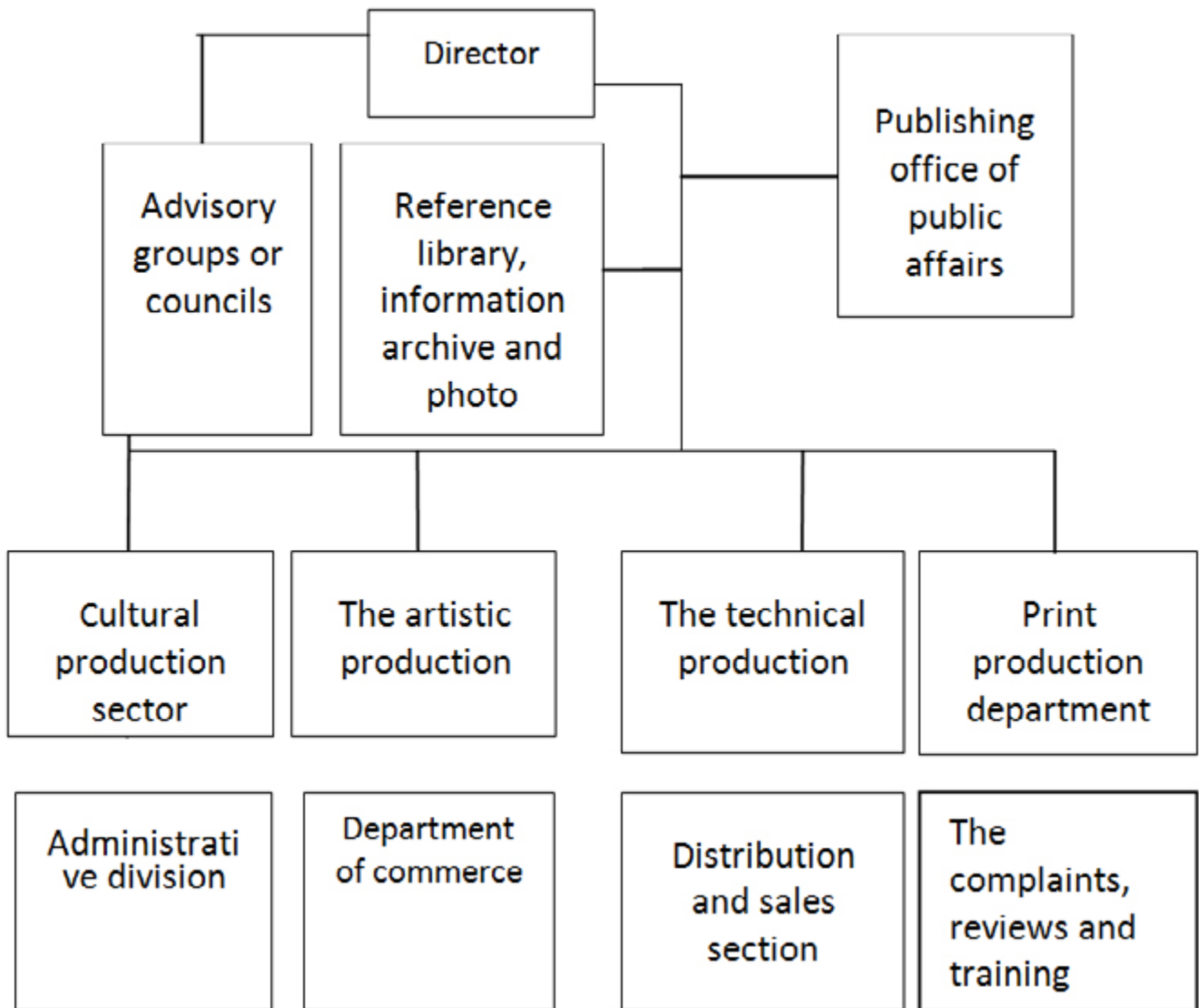
not possess the ability and expertise in all areas of book production. Furthermore doing the job alone is time-consuming and causes a long time-lag in the production .Sadly many publishing license holders in Iran follow this same pattern.

Model :2 Another model that is somewhat more advanced than the above is called the average model and its framework can be outlined as follows:



In recent decades ,organisations structured according to this pattern have proliferated .Currently ,there are about 970 such publishers in Iran that has a registered address .From this number about 427 have quite acceptable production levels) from 30 to 470 titles per year ,(which constitutes 75 percent of book production in Iran .The rest are either publishers who produce 10 to 30 titles a year and own about 15 percent of the book production, or those who produce about 1 to 4 titles a year, which is ten percent of the book production.

Model 3: The third model is followed by the largest publishers. Iran's most active publishers consists of publishers of educational aid books (Qalamchi, Gaaj, Madreseh) and publishers of books for children and adolescents (Qediyani and Intellectual Development of Children and Adolescents), who produce between 300 and 470 book titles a year. The following pattern shows the framework that these publishers work within.



Book production procedure

Usually a draft of a book is presented to the publisher in as a handwritten manuscript, typeset text, email, or by CD or USB. The publisher's task after receiving the work is to review and evaluate the text, either himself or using a group of experts or consultants in the field. At this stage, the work is reviewed and its content gets analysed and if verified, it can be sent for printing preparations. At this stage, the publisher signs a

contract with the owner of the work.

According to law, there are different types of book publishing contract in Iran:

- A contract that is based on royalties of books sold (between 5 to 20 per cent).
- A permanent assignment contract for transferring publishing rights in exchange for receiving a certain amount by the publisher.
- A joint venture contract by the publisher and owner of work.
- An investment contract with investment by the owner of the work and production by the publisher. Upon signing a contract, the publisher shall plan the book's preparation process. The first phase consists of different editing stages including basic editing (based on conventional guidelines) and structural editing (highlighting problems within the text, increase or decrease of the content, changes in the composition and compilation of the book, reference, footnotes and appendixes modification). After this stage, the book is given to the copy editor, whose job includes the following tasks:
 - To set the opening pages including: a short title page, a title page with author's name or the interpreter and subtitles, a rights and information page, example page (phrase or poem that is congruent with the text), a dedication page, a preface containing information about the formation of the work that is not related to the book content, acknowledgement, a list of

contents, and a description of all the pictures and tables and a list of acronyms.

- To set final pages including: glossary, descriptive glossary, bibliography, notes or comments, indexes, photos and maps. Page breaks, font and font sizes for title, sections, chapters, headlines, sub-headlines and the main text would be decided upon jointly by the copy editor and the graphic designer.
- To identify and check direct quotations, references, quoting and numbers in the text. Requirements include: using a single font, uniformity of words and editing marks; setting footnotes and postscript notes; placing the epilogue in the right place (if necessary); inserting pictures, maps, tables in the text, or the end of the books according to the design of the artistic designer; working with the editor and the author with regard to any final modification or changes.

The work is then delivered to artistic designers or artistic editors, who are mainly graphic designers. In conjunction with the copy editor, they are responsible for the appearance and design of the book's cover, header, title and subtitle, page numbers and text, the font and font size, the location of images, tables, diagrams, forms, charts (in coordination with the author and the copy editor).

Book typesetting

Based on the guidelines received from the copy editor and the artistic designer, the typesetter then arranges the typeset of the text. It is essential that the typesetter is familiar with all the printing signs and

symbols. After the typesetting, the typesetter gives the printed version of the book text to the publisher, who passes the print to the copy editor for a review. However the first copy of the typeset print is not usually used as the final layout of the book.

Sample Reading

The publisher hands the typeset text to the copy editor. This task is done either individually or by two people. The copy editor should have an understanding of punctuation and editing marks and symbols, and precisely review the accuracy of the text. Word-by-word comparison between the manuscripts and the typeset text is sometimes necessary for the copy editor to establish accuracy.

DPI

The number of pixels in every inch is called DPI and is the abbreviation of “dots per inch”. The Zarnegar typeset format is the most common typesetting format that is mostly used in Iran today, in which two kinds of DPI are used based on the printer’s power: 300 and 600 DPI – the latter is best for typesetting. Other typeset formats known in Iran are: Lotus, Compuset, Jasmine, Mitra, Zar, Nazanin and Badr.

Book indexing

In specialized and reference books, an index is a list of key terms provided at the end of the book that allows readers to benefit from easy access to desired subjects. There are various types of index based on people’s names, places and subjects. Sometimes there are other indexes extracted from a book such as indexes for specialized terms, books, verses and hadiths (saying of the prophet), and narrations.

The above mentioned steps in the process of book production in Iran

are called cultural and technical production. After these stages the publisher sends the book to the national library for cataloguing before publication with abbreviation of the Farsi term “Fipa”. This system was established in the nineties and has since been compulsory for all the printed books. After cataloguing, the international registration number is added to the book by the publisher. This number is known as the ISBN, which is a ten-digit number that is provided by the Book House and given to the publisher. At this stage the book is sent by the publisher to the Book Office at the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance to obtain publishing permission. The book then will encounter one of two scenarios. In first scenario, the book requires no change, the publishing permit is issued and the book can be published. In the second scenario, the book requires modifications and changes. This can be from a few words or sentences and paragraphs to removing more substantial parts of the book. In these circumstances the publisher and the author either accept these modifications and changes, at which point the book will obtain a permit, or they object to such changes. In some cases these objections result in a partial agreement between the publisher and the Book Office. However, there are times when the negotiations and objections do not reach any conclusion and the Book Office does not issue the publishing permit. Such books are declared as non-publishable and this situation is the most common conflict between the publisher and the government.

After obtaining the publishing permit, the publisher prepares the book for print production. This includes lithography, printing the book and

its cover, binding and preparation for distribution.

Publishing general obstacles

There are various difficulties in book publishing in Iran. We shall review some of these difficulties and then pay attention to other factors involved in the book publishing cycle.

One of the main problems is the shortage of working capital in the whole system of publishing in Iran. Book production turnover is less than 150 million dollars a year at best, which compared to manufacturing and other services are insignificant, especially when considering the approximate 9000 licensed publishers in the country. On the other hand, the highest turnover in the area of publishing books belongs to educational textbooks and if their turnover is deducted from country's book production sums, the result will be a tiny figure. This shortage of circulated capital leads to a lack of appeal in investment required for book production.

Lack of education, knowledge dissemination and experience in publishing management is highly visible in Iran's publishing sector. From the beginning, publishing in Iran has relied more on traditional methods rather than relevant education and training and even if educated, qualifications are often not in publishing. Different stages of book production require different expertise. Sample reader, editor, editing supervisor, book processor, printing supervisor, public relations manager, legal negotiator are all individuals that in a modern publishing organization are essential to efficient operation. However there are

not enough units to train such people in the country at the moment. Publishers Union's have set up training classes for these roles and although effective, they are still in their early stages.

Unequal competition between private and public sectors of publishing is a problem, because the public sector does not have any concerns with regards to investment, return of capital or book distribution. It also has more power to supply and sell books to public institutions compared to the private sector.

Inefficient distribution of books is another obstacle that will be elaborated in more details later in this chapter. The fluctuating prices of imported raw materials for book production such as paper damage Iran's publication economy. Other problems could be: the excessive number of publishers and disproportion between the number of publishers and booksellers numerically equal to one in five; the high cost of advertising in Iran; a lack of databases and of professional bookstores in many areas; recent emigration, especially of educated and potential consumers of books; a culture of reading not being institutionalized in families due to their traditional setting and the insufficient number of libraries and the lack of availability of more attractive books in libraries that would encourage readers to visit them.

In addition to those above, the regulatory role of government is also a major problem in the way of publishing in Iran. In order to understand the country's publishing problems and to find real solutions to these problems, one also needs to measure the role of censorship in the book production process and the psychological and social effects of it.

Following the obstacles of publishing, we shall elaborate some of the subjects in book publishing such as book distribution, royalties, tax, copyright and censorship in more detail.

Book distribution in Iran

Book distribution in Iran goes back to the formation of independent organizations after the revolution in February 1979. Prior to this, publishers distributed their books themselves or through some large institutions such as Amir Kabir Publication. However, shortly after the revolution there was significant growth in the number of publishers and book titles, leading to a serious need for the formation of distribution institutions. Before this, a distribution organization had only once been launched; this was done by a group of active publishers in 1958, but it did not last long and closed before 1962. The main members of this organization were Ibrahim Ramezani (Publishing Manager of Ibn Sina), Nor Allah Iran Parast (director of Danesh Saadi Library), Ahmad Elmi (director of Mohammad Ali Elmi Library), Akbar Zavvar (director of Zavvar Publication), Mahmoud Kashichi (director of the Gutenberg Press), Abdul hossein Al-Rasul (director of Abshar Publication), Ahmad Azimi Zavarei (director of Nile Publication), Abdul Qafar Tohouri (director of Tohouri Library) and Rahim Rahimi as the CEO of the company. After this organisation, it was only after 1981 that other book distribution institutes were established.

Due to the lack of importation of industrial and electronic goods after the revolution, retailers who faced a market slump launched book distribution agencies. After some time, other establishments also

entered this field, including Gozideh under the management of Ebrahim Karimi, and the Institute of Culture Studies under the management of Kazem Elmi. Both of these institutes have been active for three decades and are the longest lasting book distribution institutes in Iran.

Unfortunately, book distribution in Iran has failed to find other markets rather than the domestic market. Unlike the Arabic language, which is spoken in numerous countries and has got international audiences, the Persian language lacks such power and Farsi speakers in the world are too few to consider exporting books as an important economic activity. Farsi speakers only live in the three countries of Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Afghanistan had been caught in civil wars for years and its infrastructure is destroyed. For this reason, it still cannot be viewed as a serious market. Tajikistan on the other hand is an extremely poor country and due to the longstanding rule of the communists, the Persian language has been completely marginalized. However during the recent years this country seems to go back to Persian language again.

On the other hand Iranians who live abroad are scattered across different countries and there is a lack of cultural centres for the supply of Farsi books. There is also a lack of interest in reading amongst second-generation of the Iranians abroad, and third-generation Iranians consider Persian as their second language and read books in the language of their resident countries. In addition, some bureaucratic difficulties in sending books abroad also make profit difficult to achieve. At the moment, the activities of most Farsi-speaking writers abroad are focused on publishing institutions in countries such as United State,

Sweden, France, Germany and Denmark that publish Farsi books.

Another problem could be the fact that there is not much communication between writers and intellectuals in Iran and the world's cultural circles. Although in some area such as children's books, there have been some activities. Some publishers of this field, who have been attending the Bologna Book Fair, have managed to make progress with regards to international book publishing rights (copyright). Shabaviz Publication under the management of Farideh Khalat Bari is an example of such a publisher. Also, websites that have been launched in the last three years have increased access to international markets to some extent, although this has had a minor impact so far.

There are a variety of difficulties in the distribution of books within Iran itself. Distribution of books is still very traditional and has not followed the new trade rules and methods of modern societies. Distribution networks from the beginning have tried to be mediators between existing booksellers and publishers, and have therefore failed to discover other book-selling markets. Marketing practices in the distribution organizations also use old approaches, such as a direct visit of the marketer to the bookstore, providing samples or list of books in person, receiving orders over the telephone and sending list of books by post (especially to provincial booksellers).

Some other problems are structural and are related to book distribution establishments in Iran. For example, there is little knowledge and understanding of different areas of book publishing in the country. There are constraints on working capital that lead to various financial

problems for book distribution centres. There are few suitable partners with regards to payments and receipt of payments for existing and sold books, limited storage space for books, a lack of a comprehensive database about book selling centres, and a lack of persons and independent groups who are trained and skilled in book marketing. Other problems are listed below:

- A lack of technology in book distribution facilities
- A lack of promotions that could draw the attention of buyers and readers
- Book distribution's small margin of profit, which barely reaches 7% of the price on the cover of the book
- Lack of funds due to the economic inefficiency in the distribution chain
- Absence of specialized distribution businesses
- A lack of an establishment or a system for teaching the techniques of book distribution in Iran
- Unfamiliarity of distributors with methods of adequate communication with the market and consumers
- Lack of advertisement because of its high expenses
- A struggle to make a return on investment
- Expensive mailing costs
- A small number of booksellers in comparison with publishers
- Too many small distributors (without the necessary capital, lack of sufficient expertise and knowledge)
- The slow speed of book distribution

- The distribution system's lack of access to accurate information derived from research that would assist their decisions and conclusions
- Absence of large distribution enterprises with adequate facilities, equipment and modern techniques
- A lack of a single and agreed model for the distribution network in Iran
- Absence of organizations that would support the distribution system

In late 1993 and early 1994, a group of major book distributors in Tehran arranged a series of meetings to discuss common distribution problems. With further increases in the number of major book distributors, these meetings were gradually expanded and led to the establishment of an organization. With the efforts of its members, this organization went under the umbrella of the Ministry of Cooperatives and took the name of "The Cooperative of Tehran Book Distributors".

The purpose of this cooperative was to support distribution, to establish the correct relationship between distributors and booksellers and to confront booksellers that gave bad deals. Despite nearly two decades of the organization's works, it has not yet been effective in addressing the problems of the distribution system. Firstly, because most booksellers do not yet consider the cooperative as an official body and secondly, the cooperative members in many cases do not follow the decisions of the executive board and go around it. Because of this, the book distribution's uncertain cycle of turnover especially in recent years has

caused bankruptcy and insolvency for many distribution centres.

In the early decades of the nineties, thirty-three prominent publishers created an organization called “Peka”, which stands for Iran book sector. The purpose of this centre was to set up large organizations that use modern systems to distribute books of its own members and also books of other publishers across the country and to search for global markets. Unfortunately, due to the lack of management, Peka dissolved shortly after its establishment.

Majid Rahbani, a book expert and the director of the magazine “Jahan-e-ketab” (The book world), has done a lot of research in the field of book distribution. In an article about the specific features of book distribution in Iran he notes:⁴

“Most book distribution institutions are newly established entities (based on research more than 70 percent have been established since 1991). Most are small and there are few of them (50 percent are working in less than 50 square meters of space). Nearly 60 percent of distributors are based in leased locations and only 25 percent of institutions are dedicated only to this profession. The rest combine distribution of books with publishing and book selling so that they can make a profit necessary to ensure the survival of their institutions.”

Given the lack of liquidity and capital in the book market, exchange of books between distribution companies is common. As this work is done without exchanging money or securities, it does not create a financial obligation for the parties. This gradual trend is more prominent

4 Book distribution and related issues ,Majid Rahbani ,inserted in Publishing Industry) Tehran publishers and booksellers union’s journal ,(fourth year ,numbers 34 to ,36 winter .2009 pp.33-32 .

in certain areas. First the distribution of education books formed its own exchange network, and in later stages, languages, computers and medical books did the same. In most cases, transactions are conducted based solely on an oral agreement and contracts are not prevalent.

Despite these problems there are ways for improving the distribution of books. For example small institutions should merge together, as this can provide more scope of activity and more opportunities for profit. The running costs will be then lower and it can provide greater flexibility. A guarantee fund for transactions should be constituted, which can be especially effective in loan settlement. If a distribution institute obtains exclusive distribution rights for books of a certain publisher, it can preserve the existing market. There should be changes in marketing methods such as the creation of digital catalogues and databases. Book auctions should be set up at certain time of the year. This can help the publisher and the distributor to remove some of the books from their storages. In a modern and transformative distribution network, attention is given to: electronic ordering and distribution (online sales); establishment of book clubs in different parts of the country; supplying books at centres that don't sell books such as chain stores, cinemas, leisure centres, etc; to the needs of different regions and formation of centres for supply or distribution of books from publications to individuals; and trying to attract graduates across the country to reading.

Distribution methods

The distribution of books is done in the country in three ways. Firstly

the publisher can approach the distributor, secondly the distributor can approach the publisher; and thirdly distributors can exchange books. 43 percent of distributors use all three methods and the rest use one of them. Selection of books by the institutions is based on market trends, the topics' attractiveness, the author's reputation, publisher's credibility and book reviews in the media.

Currently, the wholesale price in Iran is from 33 to 45 percent of the cost on the back of the book, 25 percent of which belongs to the bookstore (sometimes with cash or rapid payment it can reach 30 to 33 percent). 5 to 7 percent of the wholesale price includes transportation, packaging, damages and the rest goes to the profit and administration costs of the distributor.

Despite the direct and indirect government intervention in the production of books, distribution institutions are highly vulnerable because of significant number of produced books for which there is no demand, the small number of book buyers compared with the population of the country and the volume of publishers despite the small number of booksellers. In order for book distribution to develop and flourish, there needs to be a more dynamic market.

In 2001, the cultural Institute called The Book World started research with the subject of reviewing the book distribution network in Tehran and its working processes. The method used was a non-probability sampling and 74 active institutions were statistically analysed. This number covered 75 percent of participants in the trade. In this study it was found that only 12,1 percent of the participant institutes were

working before the eighties and 17.6 percent started in the eighties. 7.2 percent were established after the year 2000 and were based in streets around Tehran University. Most distribution centres (95 percent) had a publishing, book selling or distribution background. 37.8 percent were over 15 years and 42 percent had been in the profession for between 5 to 15 years.

54 percent of these organizations had up to 5 employees. 32.4 percent employed from 6 to 10 people and only 6.8 percent had a workforce of more than 15 people. 50 percent of these institutions were active in an office space of less than 100 square meters. 21.6 percent in an area of less than 50 square meters. 19 percent had a business area larger than 200 square meters and 43 percent owned their office. 35 percent of distribution centres had about 200 books in their warehouses. 19 percent announced less than that and 24 percent had more than 500 titles.

40.5 percent of distributors were found to also be active in publishing and 4 percent in book selling. 33 percent of institutions were active in both publishing and book selling and only 25.5 percent of these institutions are just book distributors. 73 percent of institutions distributed to Tehran and the provinces. 15 percent were only active in Tehran and 12 percent of these institutions send books overseas. 69 percent of these organizations covered most of Tehran, but 31 percent were active only in certain areas of Tehran. 51.4 percent of distributors had work connections with less than 100 bookstores in Tehran and 36.5 percent covered 100 to 300 booksellers.

85 percent had a book exchange relationship between themselves. 61 percent of these institutions were active in the public domain and distributed all kinds of books. The specialized areas included 8 : percent educational aid 6.8 ; percent computer 5.4 , percent medical sciences and 2.7 percent dictionaries 58 . percent claimed that they have exclusive distribution for at least one publisher. Interestingly 80 , percent announced that they have marketing representatives living in other cities 69 , percent do their marketing via phone and 2.7 percent also sent their new books , the rest have not responded on this subject⁵.

Copyright

Copyright in publishing is a set of exclusive rights awarded to the publisher or the author of a book and includes rights of publishing, reproducing and copying the style of the work. In most jurisdictions, works have copyright from the beginning without the requirement of registering the work.

Copyright holders have exclusive legal rights of reproduction or exploitation of their works for a certain period of time before their work enters the public domain. Any use or exploitation of these works requires permission from the publisher or the creator of it. In some cases where the work is fairly used, the copyright's holder permission is not needed. The copyright holder can transfer his or her rights to another person. In some jurisdictions, the rights of creators are also recognized in such a way that their names must be mentioned and referenced. At first copyright included books, and then translated and adapted books.

⁵ Using the article «An overview of Tehran Book distribution network» by Rahbani Majid with request from Iraj Afshar, Tehran, Khojasteh Publications, 2008, pp 176-163

Today copyright covers a wider range of works including maps, music, dramatic works, paintings, photographs, architectural drawings, voice recordings and also applies to movies and computer programs.

The first statute of copyright was a bill called “An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of such Copies”, which was passed in Great Britain in 1709. Today’s copyright laws have become standardized through international and regional conventions such as the Berne Convention and the Copyright Treaty. Although there is compatibility between different countries in copyright provisions, courts have separate rules and regulations covering copyright. National copyright rules on licensing, transfer and assigning copyright differ from country to another. However, all rights belonging to a work are usually country-specific. Some jurisdictions also recognize the rights of the manufacturer of the work.

Copyright applies to any work from the moment it is in a tangible form. According to the Berne Convention on copyright, it remains valid for the duration of the creator’s life and 50 years after his death. This duration applies to all member countries of the Berne Convention but each country can place a longer period for the copyright to be applicable. However this duration cannot be less than the amount specified in the Convention. Sometimes copyright can be transferred to the heirs of the creator, if it is specified in a will.

Copyright in Iran: Negatives and Positives

For each cultural item to which copyright applies, a financial agreement needs to be reached with the owner of the work. Considering the low book circulation in Iran, this results in highly priced books and reduces the purchasing power of the reader. However in recent years there have been discussions by some independent publishers and translators with the authors or publishers of foreign works. With enhanced communications and a commitment to understanding the problem of low circulation and low profitability in Iran, the issue of pricing can largely be solved.

On other hand, sanctions that have been imposed on Iran by Western industrialized countries, especially the US, are one of the main obstacles for Iran to join the copyright covenant. Thus, Iranian publishers are being disqualified from the translation of many scientific, literary and artistic works by the West.

Since copyright is not limited to books only, the extent of the outflow of foreign currency, especially with regards to Iranian software products will be huge, causing economic damage to Iran. It is said that Iran's acceptance of the copyright laws will increase foreign investment in the country. This seems to be a false impression as the country has not yet reached such agreement with regards to its heavy industry, so is unlikely to attract foreign investments to its book production. In addition, readers of Farsi language are limited mainly to its geographical area and around it.

Paying copyright fees in foreign currency increases the cost of book production drastically. Considering the small size of working capital in the Iranian book market, this increase will attract more publishers to areas of compilation and translation. This can result in decreasing the quality and quantity of knowledge and information in the country.

Translators are now earning as much as authors and writers in Iran to the extent that sometimes a translator is more famous than many authors. By joining the copyright provisions, translation will become a mediating role, so the respect and status of translators will diminish in the Iranian society.

Linking to the World Trade Organization can be a source for authors' rights recognition although opposition to this by the US and some Western countries has been a serious obstacle for Iran to join WTO. Even after joining this organization, copyright laws can still be ignored as many conventions and international laws that Iran is obliged to implement are not entirely followed in the country.

Despite these obstacles, difficulties and disadvantages, if Iran adopts the authors' rights laws, domestic and global sales will increase due to lower book costs.

Acceptance of this Act could increase the level of Iran's cultural contacts with other countries.

This could lead to more interactions with the international community and Iranian cultural domains could be revived and reconstructed. Publishers can find new markets for translations of Farsi works and state monitoring of book publishing in Iran will lessen. Books could reach

readers with more assurance and production planning and scheduling would become more accurate.

It has been said that in the field of software products, the Supreme Council of Information and Communication Technologies (SCICT) has begun to draft a comprehensive copyright law. According to Saeed Salarian, deputy of SCICT, since 2005 the organization has focused electronic goods that focus on moral, social, religious and education. With this regard, SCICT has defined its plan for production and organization of electronic contents in 14 areas.

One of these 14 areas was the issue of copyright. As a result a draft of a comprehensive law to protect literary and artistic property rights and related entitlements was proposed, that after two years would become a general law. However for the draft to be implemented, it still needs to be presented to the cabinet and then get passed through parliament.

In summary, despite all disadvantages and advantages of the copyright laws, it is an inevitable necessity that the publishers of the country must be prepared to accept it.

Royalties

One of the legal aspects of publication in Iran is the contract between the publisher and the author of the book, which creates obligations for both sides. The author's royalty contract occasionally causes disagreements between the contracting parties. This is often due to the lack of familiarity with the legal rules by the parties involved. In recent years and by the use of legal advice, publishers have been able to obtain a type of general contract used by most prestigious publishing institutions. Since there are various forms of agreement between publishers and authors, we shall describe them below in detail.

A general contract used mostly by publishing institutions in which the royalties are based on a percentage of cover price multiplied by the number of copies agreed between the publisher and the author. The percentage could be between 2 to 20 percent according to the type of the book. However, the usual practice is between 10 and 15 percent and is mainly based on the circulation of two thousand copies. In general the publisher considers 10 percent of the number of copies as advertisement and waste and does not pay for it. Based on mutual agreement between the parties, the author's royalties are usually paid between 2 to 6 six months after publication. These contracts are usually signed for a maximum of three print runs and after that a new agreement must be reached between the publisher and the author.

In some cases, the publisher may propose to the author to write or translate a book. In this case he is committed to pay a certain amount

fully or on monthly basis to the author. After publication of the book, these payments will be counted as part of the author's royalties. In another type of agreement known as assignment of rights of a book contract, the author accepts to transfer the reserved right of publishing his book for good or for a period of time to the publisher in exchange for a fixed payment in cash or in several instalments. The publisher then has the right to print the book indefinitely. In this case, apart from the intellectual property rights (the name of the author and rewards received by the book) the author has no financial rights in relation to the book.

Another type of contract is a partnership contract in which both parties accept to cooperate in the publication of a work based on equal shares or a defined percentage of the profit. Based on a written agreement and after the printing, the publisher can cooperate with the author in distribution of the book. Or after publishing each of the parties would receive books based on the ratio of their shares.

Finally in an investment contract, the author provides the financial investment, and the technical elements of the books are done by the publisher. In such a case, the publisher designates an amount as fees for publishing and at end of the work, and he shall receive this amount in cash or based on volumes sold. In such case, the publisher has no obligation to distribute the book.

Despite the above types of contracts, conflicts occur between the publisher and author. In cases where the publisher is the party not fulfilling its contractual duties, a common situation is when a publisher

prints a book in more copies than the amount agreed with the author. If such a case is proved, the author can terminate the contract and claim damages. Also sometimes after completion of printing and publishing, the publisher may avoid re-printing the book for some reason. Usually such a case is handed over to a mediator chosen by both parties to decide on the case. If an agreement is not reached at this stage, the dispute will be referred to be referred to the dispute settlement panel either at the publishers union or at the ministry of guidance. Once more, if the case is not resolved, it must then be referred to judicial authorities. A publisher could also avoid or delay the payment of the author's royalties. In this case, the author can sue the publisher based on the contract and claim compensation for the losses. Some cases occur when the publisher refers the publication of the book to another publisher without the consent of the author. This is also a breach of contract and the author can terminate the contract and claim losses. Finally there is a situation when a work is completed by the author and handed to the publisher, but the publisher abstains from publishing the book on time or for a long duration.

On the other hand, the author may violate the contract. For example, the author may not deliver the completed draft of the book (written or translated) to the publisher at the scheduled time agreed in the contracts. Also, the author may deliver a book similar to the one given to the publisher to another publisher. Sometimes the author receives an advance amount as a deposit or prepayment from the publisher that is contingent on later sales, and after the publication of the book and

calculation of the author's royalties this amount needs to be returned to the publisher. If the author refuses to do this, disputes may occur. There are also some occasions when the author delivers a different book from the one agreed with the publisher.

In all cases mentioned above, if an agreement cannot be reached with the mediator or other unofficial authorities, the dispute needs to be referred to the legal authorities to be solved. Despite the common legal problems of contracts in Iran, the above problems are decreasing. In recent years, publishers and authors have reached a better mutual understanding of each other's roles and obligations, and usually resolve disputes by themselves.

Tax

Tax has always been one of the complications to publishing in Iran as well as a challenge between publishers and the Ministry of Finance. While the Ministry determines taxes based on publishers' annual production, the publishers claimed that taxes should primarily be based on the number of books sold and on profits after deducting publishers' production and current costs. This problem has always existed and therefore every publisher has had to reach an agreement and reconciliation with the corresponding tax audit.

In the second half of the nineties, in collaboration between publishers and the board of directors of the Publisher's Union, serious actions for tax exemption of book production were taken, and as a result the government has set the rule of "exemption of book publishing institutions and book sellers from paying taxes".

Book censorship

Book publishing in Iran was historically done by government agencies. It took nearly four decades until some individuals stepped into book publishing field. From the time when Mohammad Hassan Khan Etemad Al-Saltaneh (1873-1883) became the head of the House of Publication and gradually expanded its scope of power until he became the minister of this organization, he was confronted with the challenge of the awakening of minds of different groups of the society. The arrival of some publications criticizing the Shah and manifests distributed at nights disturbed the Shah and therefore Etemad Al-Saltaneh decided to establish censorship.

In 1863, in official newspaper number 552 a declaration was published, which can be considered as the first step to an official censorship of books and writings in Iran. It was said in the declaration:

“As there is no regularity amongst the press and publications in Iran so far and no efforts have been made to amend it, anyone can print whatever his heart desires and does not care if the government or the nation would approve it or not. As a result, works that are harmful to children or adults have been printed that contain irrelevant and inappropriate stories. These stories could encourage readers and listeners to audacity, obscene actions or even to commit murder and homicide.

Unfortunately, these works were distributed to readers despite their destructive effects. Their contents were repeated so many times that readers started to express them in gatherings and provoked the listeners to sensual temptations. I know that the royal highness is aware of these

cases and does not like his subjects to be deviated from the straight path. Therefore his highness has ordered the Gallery of Printing (Negarestan) to appoint Sani Molk⁶, the king's foreman in charge of press and public companies, as supervisor of all works of printing houses throughout Iran, and to prevent the publication of issues that are against Islam and that mislead people. Instead, he will promote the publication of books that are written with good intentions and would benefit the people from good and useful ideas.”⁷

Although in the declaration it was clearly mentioned what was allowed to be published and vice versa, Etema Al-Saltaneh took further steps to strengthen censorship by ordering all printed creations to be reviewed and sealed before publishing. In his own words he said:

“From the beginning of this government's establishment, it has been declared that no book, magazine or work is allowed to be published in workshops around the country without the work being reviewed by the head of this department and given his signature. Also books and other publications must be sealed containing the phrase “Reviewed” and given the royal lion and sun logo.”⁸

In 1878, a set of rules with regards to public order was presented to the Shah. These rules were gathered by Count. De Montfort, an Italian adventurer who was Iran's chief of police at the time. These rules that became known as “Penal Code 1878” contained sections that covered

6 Sani Al Molk was Mohammad Hassan Khan's first title; he then received the tile Etemad Al Saltaneh from the king.

7 Government against Iran, Volume 2, National Library of Tehran, Iran, reprinted 1991, p 639

8 Almasar and Alasar, MH Khan Etemad Al Saltaneh, edition by Hussein Mahboubi Ardekani, Tehran, Mythology Publications, 1984, p 161-162

the penalties for publishing offences. Naser Al-din Shah declared the executive order of the provisions of this code as follows:

“Dear Viceroy, we have read the draft of the Count’s code. Most provisions are reasonable and appropriate apart from one or two, which I have corrected. Please read the draft and refer it to the parliament to be reviewed and read at its first held assembly. Ministers should also sign the draft and the code shall then be printed. From the date of signing the code by ministers, it shall be considered as an applicable law and even a slight violation shall not be acceptable. No objections to the Code are recognized and it shall be executed and implemented. Present this letter to the Count and let him know that we have approved the rules.”⁹

In the section of the Code on the subject of freedom of speech it was stated: “Anyone who publishes a book that is against religion, the state or the nation, shall be imprisoned from five months to up to five years... Anyone who sticks announcements and notes against the king on streets’ walls as well as those who commit actions opposed to the nation or causing it harm, based on his degree of fault, shall be sentenced to one month to five years imprisonment. Anyone who questions the state’s actions, stimulates wrong thoughts against the state and makes a slander or accusation against it verbally or in writing, upon the proving of his guilt and based on the degree of his fault, will be imprisoned from one to fifteen years.”¹⁰

9 Goel Kohan, History of Press Censorship in Iran (volume 1), Tehran, Agah Publications, 1981, p99

10 Same reference as above, p 98-105

However, there are no historical documents to show the implementation of this law, but what is certain is that monitoring and censorship were strictly enforced on printed materials. For example, Etemad Al-Saltaneh burned a poetry book that was reviewed by his vice-president, Mohammad Hossein Foroughi, and had gained a publishing permit, because he himself had not seen the book.

Despite this strictness, articles criticizing the state were published in journals abroad, such as Akhtar in Istanbul and Qanoun in London. This led Etemad Al-Saltaneh to apply a new strategy:

“Some publications outside Iran at times published contents that contained praise of leaving the country or criticism and personal abuse of government personnel and desecrations, which the Shah always detested to read to the extent that you could see it in his majesty’s face. I have mentioned to the king that European countries have avoided such insults to their governments by censorship and if the Iranian government establishes the censorship too, such disrespects and insults will not be publicized anymore.”¹¹

In Iran’s official newspaper number 99 in 1900, formal methods of censorship were announced. It described the procedure with regards to publications outside Iran and stated: “...according to the government’s order, all publications outside Iran shall be prohibited from entering Iran and because of the government’s lack of access to control and elimination of such papers, they will also be banned to enter the country in the future.”

The growth of social movements, publication of manifests and the entry

11 Almasar and Alasar, p 159

of journals published abroad into the country, partly broke barriers of censorship and new thoughts and ideas were promoted, which became part of a new intellectual movement. After this, the constitution was drafted with an additional amendment.

In Article 2 of this amendment freedom of press was expressed as follows: “apart from deceptive books and materials harmful to Islam, all publications and press are free to be published and censorship is forbidden. However if something against the press was published, the writer or the publisher would be punished according to press law. If the writer is known and resident in Iran, then the publisher and the distributor will be immune from prosecution.”

The time gap between the signing of the Constitutional Law and ratification of the first press law in 1907 was an exciting era for freedom of press and book publishing. However this did not last long as Mohammad Ali Shah bombed the parliament in June 1908, imprisoned many critics of the regime and imposed censorship extensively on the society’s intellectual side.

During Ahmad Shah (1909-1925), the press was more prosperous in spite of censorship, although with the rise of Reza Shah in 1921, severe restrictions dominated the society once more. In 1922 a law called the “Press Monitoring Act” was passed by the parliament. The first and second articles of the Act read as follows:

“Article 1- All managers of newspapers or magazines are obliged to obtain the approval of a supervisor of religious affairs prior to publishing any written or spoken material that is directly or indirectly

related to Islam. The supervisor is appointed upon the approval of two qualified clergymen by the Ministry of Education and will be based in Tehran and capitals of provinces. After the supervisor gives written confirmation that the work is not against Islam, the relevant material can be printed and published.

Article 2- If a manager or the owner of a newspaper or magazine violates the provisions of the above article, the prosecutor or private claimant can bring the issue before the religious supervisor or a qualified clergyman. If the written confirmation of the above conferees states that the relevant material is harmful, they will be immediately collected and seized. Upon the verdict of the religious supervisor or the qualified clergyman, the director, writer and the publisher of the work will be punished according to the Press Act.”¹²

The domain of censorship expanded during Reza Shah and sometimes even led to assassinations (murder of writer Mirzadeh Eshghi on July 1924) or murder in prison (the poet Mirza Mohammad Farrokhi Yazdi on October 1939). In this era, without the permission of a special inspector at the police and without the seal saying “Valid”, nothing could be published. These inspectors had very little education, which made the problem even worse. Dr. Taghi Arani in reference to one of these auditors said: “He censored whatever he could not understand and because he could not understand anything, he censored everything.”¹³

In 1931, a memo was issued by the police addressing the press. In

12 Collection of Cultural Regulations, General Writing and Statistics Administration, Tehran, 1960 P 212

13 Public figures of Pahlavi era from Foroughi to Fardoust, Mahmoud Toloui, Tehran, Science Publications, 1993, p 781

the memo, which suggested strict control on all stages of typesetting, printing and distribution of press, the following guidelines were established:

“1. Please advise the distribution manager not to release morning and afternoon newspapers for distribution on any day without the notice and permission of the relevant police branch.

2. All publishers, press directors and managers of typesetting rooms are warned to avoid printing any news or articles without the signature of the censoring officer and in urgent cases they can go to the press branch at the police to obtain permission.”¹⁴

New books and publications from abroad were banned from entering the country and the borders were strongly controlled. For example the poetry collection of Abolghasem Lahouti published in Moscow and the biography of Colonel Mohammad Taghi Khan Pesyan published in Berlin were both banned.¹⁵

Book publishing also faced serious censorship in this period. For example, Malek al-shoara Bahar described publishing of his poetry collection as follows:

“I gave my poems collection to Majles print house, which printed up to two hundred and eight pages of it. Suddenly the police ordered the book to be inspected. As a result those prints were seized and the police censorship office started further inspections. In the meanwhile I received an order of five month imprisonment and a year of exile.”¹⁶

¹⁴ Media in the era of Reza Khan, quoted from the May the 15th Journal, Written by Alireza Rohani, Year V, No. 21, Spring 1996, pp 161-162

¹⁵ Based on the documents of the National Organization of Iran

¹⁶ Obstacles in the political development during the reign of Reza Shah (1925-1941), Khalil Aallah Sardar Abadi, Tehran, Islamic Revolution Document Centre, 1999, pp 148-149

Censorship in the era of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (1941-1979) can be divided into three periods. In the first period from 1941 when he came into power until 19 of August 1953, book publishing had a relative freedom due to the presence of foreign forces in Iran, Iran's involvement in World War II, a lack of consolidation of the Shah's power and the active presence of rival political forces. However, according to statistics of published books, the book market in Iran didn't have much prosperity as only around 4671 books in total were published during the time.

The second phase was from September 1953 until 1961, with the establishment of the Intelligence and National, events such as the coup in August 1953 the fall of Mohammad Mosaddegh's government, the rise of Zahedi's militant government followed by a curfew headed by General Teymour Bakhtiar and creation of SAVAK (secret police) in 1957. During this phase, pressure and control to prevent the spread of critical ideas and thoughts increased.

A new press law was adopted in 1955, in which there was no reference to book publishing. On 01/09/1957, a bylaw was passed by the cabinet with regards to establishment of print houses. In Article 15 it was stated: "If a manager of a printing house accepts an order of print from a client, the client must submit a signed copy of the ordered work, along with a certificate from the Ministry of Culture, to the printing house."

The Council of Public Culture also passed another bylaw with the title of "A corrective bylaw with regards to printing house establishments including methods of registering books, newspapers

and other publications”. Article one of these regulations was a pretext to censorship in the third period:

“Managers of printing houses are obliged to send two copies of the work that is the subject of print after being printed and before binding to the National Library of Iran indicating the name of the author or the translator and the numbers of copies to be printed. The work will be then registered within ten days at a private office designated for this purpose.”

The most prosperous era for book publishing in Iran belongs to the third period from 1962 until revolution in 1979 with the publication of nearly 43,098 book titles. However Censorship did still exist and it was only after 1976 due to the revolutionary atmosphere in the country that it reduced to a great extent.

Governmental bodies who were involved in censorship and control of publications were the Information Office of Ministry of Culture and Arts, SAVAK, the police, and the Ministry of Information Ministry of Interior. The director general of the Office of Information in 1975 explains the reason for censorship of books after publication as follows:

“We are not the only authority who intervenes in book issues, as each ministry and agency depending on its duty and role is involved in this work. Sometimes because of inconsistency of a legally published book with a certain legal matter, it may get collected by the Ministry of Justice as well as other agencies and organizations in connection with their duties and work.”¹⁷

SAVAK had an active role in censorship and monitored the printing

¹⁷ Censorship of printed books, Iraj Zandpour, Youth Resurrection, No. 23, Date 10/10/1975, p 74

and distribution of books. Until mid-sixties there were no codified regulations for censorship and the Press act 1908 was used as the base for it.

In the late sixties, an interdepartmental body called “Publication” was launched in the Ministry of Culture and the Arts to monitor book publishing. Censorship during Mohammad Reza Pahlavi consisted of five areas; political, social, religious, moral and scientific. In short, the publication of books on religious enlightenment or Marxist ideas was prevented and any kind of censure or constructive criticism to the government was banned.

Censorship methods were carried out before and after publishing. There were three ways of dealing with books. Either the book would be given a publishing permit or changes or omissions would be demanded, or the publisher’s request for publishing permit would remain unanswered.

From 1976, censorship had a setback as the pressure from the revolutionary movement forced the government to retreat. As a result there was a flow of banned books in the market, which were known as White Cover books, and made this era an important period of Iran’s publishing history.

With the victory of the revolution in 1979, freedom of expression became widespread, numerous books and journals were published and an enthusiasm for reading and knowledge was high in the revolutionary Iran. However there were two main difficulties against this cultural wave. First was the war with Iraq, which put a lot of pressure on the young and revolutionary government and second was the widespread

and uncontrolled activities of political groups with various ideologies. From the start of the new government, most of these groups opposed and criticized it and some had the objective of overthrowing it.

This rise of conflicts within the country and at the borders required the new government to adopt tougher measures. An increase of security in the country occurred because of opposition political organizations, with the People's Mujahedin of Iran at their centre, which created a tense atmosphere that damaged the spread of thoughts and ideas in the country.

As these conflicts ended, organizing cultural affairs took higher priority on the agenda. The Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution, which was established to settle cultural domains especially at universities in the country, developed objectives, policies and standards in the field of publication in its enactments number 147, 148 and 149 in August and September 1988. The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance was entrusted with implementing these standards.

Since applying these laws and up till now, monitoring and auditing of books has consistently created challenges between publishers and the Ministry of Guidance. A group of independent publishers opposed the censorship done by the Ministry; they believe that publishers should be responsible for published works themselves and in case of a violation of law, the judiciary should deal with such violations.

There are also issues in these enactments that have caused problems in book publishing. One issue is that apart from the case of child and adolescent books, there are no indications of pre-publishing book

review for censorship. Therefore, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance does not give any written official document to the publishers indicating reasons for removing parts of the book or not issuing a publishing permit.

Despite the obstacles, publication in Iran in recent years has been able to take effective steps towards modernization, becoming up-to-date and connecting to world's publishing industry. A surprising increase in titles published has occurred in recent years (about 62,000 titles per year) that cover most fields. Other important developments in the field of publishing have been: an increase in distribution networks; opening of multi-purpose cultural stores; entry of trained professionals in the field of publishing; an increased level of interaction and dealing with the publishing world and serious movements in the areas of research, compilation and translation, etc.

Perhaps one of the most challenging issues at the moment is the rejection of international copyright and the resulting translation or adaptation of works from different countries without the permission from their authors or publishers. However, in recent years there have been effective steps taken by professional Iranian publishers and translators, who by interaction with publishers and authors abroad have provided the basis for a greater communication and collaboration. Also, Iran's judiciary has so far been able to support reserved rights of the creators upon their request.

Electronic Publication

Since 1985, mankind has entered the era of digital technology and many things have found a new digital basis. Such changes in the publishing field are known as digital or electronic publishing, which has different means of production and distribution.

Anything that generates content in electronic and non-printed formats is electronic publishing. This can be done on a floppy disk or a CD or on the internet. Even short messages on mobile phones that are passed through various portals are covered by the definition of electronic publishing and can be the subject of laws and regulations.

Content in this publication area is produced in the same way as a traditional publishing and has the same ideas, planning and goals. It also includes collecting, writing and translation, but the type of message transmission is different in this kind of publication. It is not limited to providing text but it can also include sound, images, animations and videos. In addition, meaningful communications can be established by various networks alongside such productions. The user can simultaneously take advantage of multimedia systems for reading a book. Features such as images, sounds and added videos, music and animation used while reading a book can add to the interest and understanding of the reader.

With an increase in this type of publishing, production costs of publication would be reduced and the speed of production would be higher. Many believe that it also reduces environmental pollution and

traffic as well as the time spent. Naturally, with growing adoption of computers by Iranian families, electronic publishing would also increase. There are already many electronic products available within the subjects of history, literature and social sciences.

One of the main difficulties of electronic publishing in Iran is the lack of copyrights. Many authors believe that the rights of the producer simply disappear in the case of electronic publishing. There is now the “Electronic Publishers Association” in Iran and its chairman is Mohammad Amin Taleb. Those involved in electronic publishing in Iran think that apart from the issue of copyright, there are other weaknesses in this field including lack of a formulated strategy, a design for a comprehensive system of electronic publishing, and knowledgeable and skilful management.

On one hand, development of electronic publishing meets with resistance as the traditional publishing market is concerned that it would limit their productions. However, this is a misconception, because the growth of this field in other countries has had not impacted traditional publishing formats. On the other hand, lack of a widespread access to Internet by the majority of the society and the relatively high costs of network access, are also inhibiting factors in electronic publishing.

In addition, electronic producers believe that the government’s lack of support of this production method is a hindrance. They believe that the government supports traditional publishing more, although electronic publishers have been entitled to tax exemptions by the government. The final problem is the inefficiency of existing laws that creates holes

in the economic security of this type of publication in the country.

The most important form of electronic publishing is online publishing. In this case, the book does not require any physical means, even CDs, for its supply and reading it on screen or downloading it is the easiest way of access for the user. The user not only spends time reading a book, but he is also reading a whole new world, because parts of the text produced have links to other documents.

There is no doubt that IT infrastructure and support are important and valuable activities for any government but in Iran, the focus of public and private organizations on hardware, software and banking are still very weak. Some activists in this field believe that the authorities' view of this area is basically wrong, for example, when the government is at times almost solely focused on IT developments in mobile phones.

The Commission of Electronic Books Publication, along with the collaboration of the National Standard Institute, has developed a mutual protocol to formulate data alignment. The National Standard Institute can help facilitating a more professional operation in this field by developing standards and monitor the implementation of laws related to electronic publishing.

A member of the Iranian ICT Guild Organization lists concerns with regards to electronic publication as follows:

- Creating a culture of using software applications is very important.
- Developing appropriate standards for the software production and updating them regularly.

- Copyright as a mean to protect the rights of creators.
- A lack of governmental attention to this phenomenon and less than one percent of its legislation being in connection with information technology. There is still no policy with regards to software issues, and as a result there has been no focus on creating a market and financial growth for it.

In addition to the issues above, most experts believe that the main reason for Iran's lack of development in electronic books is the non-admission to copyright. Currently, institutes such as the Iranian ICT Guild Organization, The Assembly of Organizations for information and communication technologies, Association of Information and Communication Technology Companies and Association of Online Companies, have not achieved agreement on this issue. Closer association between these institutes may help solving the problem of copyright.

The Assembly of Electronic Publishers now has 250 member companies. Currently in the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance a centre called the Digital Media Centre has been established, which has been active for three years. This centre has managed to partially assist with infrastructure solutions for software producer companies who for long have found it complicated and difficult to gain a registration number for their products. By registering and issuing a certificate for such works, the centre has prevented illegal publishing of these products.

It should be noted that electronic publishing in Iran is still in its

beginning. E-commerce is a dynamic activity, in which the constraints of time and space are left behind.

For changes to happen in the thoughts ruling in the society, one should consider the current status of traditional publishing and reading in the country. Until most parts of society understand the productivity and value of books in raising the level of knowledge and awareness, undoubtedly the books will not appear in Iranian's household baskets. On the other hand, guidance and moral support from the government is needed. If the government doesn't supply subsidies to the publishers for building content in various electronic formats, and doesn't provide opportunities for e-book publishers, we can't hope to advance much in the e-book publication.

Another way is to provide centralised support for this type of book production in Iran. For example, the Ministry of Culture and Guidance could launch a powerful online portal, which would display a few scanned pages of books published every month, provide facilities for qualified e-book publishers and offer advice, publicity and discounts to book producers to help them offer their products to customers, it may help to boost the electronic production and industry in Iran.

Cultural and translation exchanges between Iran and the West (France, Germany, Great Britain, the United States) Laetitia Nanquette

In this chapter, I shall study the cultural movements between Iran and the Western countries with which Iranians have had important exchanges: France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States, focusing on issues of translational exchange. I shall first give an overview of these exchanges from the mid 1850s and then focus on the period after the 1979 Revolution. Translations reflect, to a certain extent, Iran's relations with other countries; they work as a filter, and can offer good insight as to what one country wants to know about another and what is transmitted of the other at different periods.¹⁸

Overview of cultural exchanges with Europe until World War II

Iran has long been at the crossroads of civilizations and has largely benefited from the cultural contributions of this position. One can say

18 This chapter is based upon research completed at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, during my PhD thesis, which was turned into a book : Nanquette, Laetitia. *Orientalism Versus Occidentalism: Literary and Cultural Imaging between France and Iran since the Islamic Revolution*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2013.

that it is since the first half of the 19th century that a Western element, in addition to the Islamic and Persian elements, became a major cultural part of Iranian civilization.¹⁹ The 1850s was the time when Iran started to open up substantially to Europe, a bit later than neighbouring colonized countries. Qajar kings were particularly admiring of the West and anxious to emulate it; they travelled there in great pomp, wrote travel logs on their sojourns, commissioned translations and sent the children of the elite to study in European capitals, with the intention that they would return with technology and help modernize the country. Modernization happened primarily through the establishment of newspapers (the first newspaper was published in 1837 and the first weekly in 1851),²⁰ supported by the advent of the printing press in the first decade of the 19th century,²¹ as well as through the setting up of modern schools—the Dar al-fonun, the polytechnic school founded in Tehran in 1852, being the foremost example of such a project.²² The establishment of modern schools required many translations of technical and scientific subjects, and “these were made from the French because, for political reasons, the teaching staff had been recruited mostly from central Europe where French was the language of diplomacy and culture.”²³

19 Shayegan, Dariush. *Le regard mutilé. Schizophrénie culturelle: pays traditionnels face à la modernité*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1989.

20 Azadibougar, Omid. «Translation Historiography in the Modern World. Modernization and Translation into Persian.» *Target* 22, no. 2 (2010): 298-329. p.301.

21 Balaÿ, Christophe. «French Literature in Persia.» In *Encyclopedia Iranica*. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/france-x-french-literature-in-persia->, accessed 03/01/2010

22 Gurney, John, and Negin Nabavi. «Dār Al-Fonūn.» In *Encyclopedia Iranica*. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/dar-al-fonun-lit>, accessed 03/01/2010.

23 Balaÿ. «French Literature in Persia.» For a complete history of translations from the French: Navvabi, Davud. *Tarikhche-ye tarjomeh-ye faranseh beh farsi dar Iran az aghaz ta konun*. Kerman: Daneshgah-e Kerman, 1984.

Translations of literary works soon followed, with Alexandre Dumas's novels, Voltaire's historical texts, Jules Verne's science fictions and James Morier's *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Isfahan* appearing in journals like *Iran*, *Tarbiyat*, *Farhang*, *Ganjineh-ye Fonun*.²⁴ An important number of translations also appeared of entertainment literature, especially historical and crime novels, which had an element of exoticism for Iranian readers.²⁵

These translations were at first undertaken by the court and aristocrats; for example, Etemad al-Saltaneh headed a new office called the Dar al-tarjomeh (House of Translation), which supervised Qajar state-sponsored translations.²⁶ At the turn of the century, constitutionalist figures were the most important translators (Mirza Fath Ali Khan Akhondzadeh, Mirza Molkom Khan, Abd-al Rahim Talebof Tabrizi). It is only around the 1920-1930s that translation becomes an activity undertaken by writers and intellectuals, although this chronological categorization of types of translators is not strict.²⁷ The first translations from Western languages are by Iranians trained in sciences, and their literary quality can be questioned. In any case, they are full of comments and elements that were not in the texts and thus quite far from our modern conception of translation. Their prefaces are revealing of the new frame of mind that animates the Iranian elite: these translations

24 Meisami, Julie. «The Age of Translation and Adaptation, 1950-1914, Iran.» In *Modern Literature in the Near and Middle East. 1850-1970*, edited by Robin Ostle. London: Routledge, 1991. pp.48-9.

25 Ibid. p.50.

26 Karimi-Hakkak, Ahmad. «Persian Tradition.» In *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, edited by Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha. London: Routledge, 1998. p.498.

27 For an analysis of late 19th century-early 20th century translations and their translators, see pp.41-75: Balaÿ, Christophe. *La genèse du roman persan moderne*, Téhéran: Institut français de recherche en Iran, 1998.

are conceived as a step toward modernization and the development of new ideas.²⁸

French cultural primacy until WWII

With the Great Game, the fight for supremacy between the United Kingdom and Russia over Central Asian territories between 1813's Treaty of Gulistan and World War II, Iranians suffered the effects of both British and Russian imperialism, which was to be replaced by American imperialism after World War II. Because of the suspicion towards the British Empire, as well as of France's position in Europe as the country of culture and of French as a common language for intellectual elites, it was France which crystallized Europe for Iranians in that period and which was preferred for its non-interference in Persian affairs. Indeed, the term for Europe in Persian, *farang*, comes from the word "Frank", and France was a metonym for the rest of Europe until the end of World War II. European literature was translated primarily from the French.²⁹ Many literary scholars have also argued that literary theories and modern fiction were introduced through the translation of French writers.³⁰ Some figures played an important role

28 For a criticism of this argument, see Meisami. «The Age of Translation and Adaptation, 1950-1914, Iran.» p.48. It is also important to remember the elitist aspect of this endeavor, and to note that, considering the poor alphabetization rate in Iran until 1979, these cultural movements were mostly felt by the governing minority. Azadibougar, Omid. "Translation Historiography in the Modern World. Modernization and Translation into Persian." *Target* 22.2 (2010): 298-329. pp.312-3.

29 Including the translation by Mirza Habib Esfahani of James Morier's picaresque novel, *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan*, in the French version. Emami, Karim. "Translation of English Literature into Persian." In *Encyclopedia Iranica*. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/english-5-translation-into>, accessed 04/01/2010.

30 In French, the reference is: Balaÿ. *La genèse du roman persan moderne*. In English, it is: Kamshad, Hassan. *Modern Persian Prose Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966.

in this double endeavor: “Two writer-translators played a pivotal role in the development of modern fiction in the decades between 1920 and 1940 and deserve to be singled out: [Mohammad-Ali Jamalzadeh](#) (1895-1997) and Sadegh Hedayat (1903-51). Their contributions illustrate the way many of the most influential writers of fiction in modern Persia were influenced not only by translations from European and American literature, but by their own direct and thorough immersion in western literature.”³¹ In the case of Hedayat, it is through France; in the case of Jamalzadeh, through Germany—where his famous *Yeki Bud, Yeki Nabud* was published in 1921—which starts the genre of short stories in Persian literature and whose preface discusses the genre of the novel.³²

It is important to note that in the first decades of the 20th century, the status of the translator was a prestigious one in Iran, and that many writers began their careers by publishing translations of European texts into journals. Translation often appeared as a step towards creative writing, and readers at first bought books because of the prestige of the translator over the status of the foreign writer.

For the reasons explained above, in the first part of the 20th century, political texts or texts concerned with the idea of social progress were widely translated from the French. French texts were, for example, an important part of the required reading for members of the Iranian communist party (Tudeh), which counted many intellectuals and translators among its ranks; Francophile translators and their work are thus linked to the history of this party. There was a Eurocentric trend

31 Balaÿ. «French Literature in Persia.»

32 Jamalzadeh, Mohammad-Ali. *Yeki Bud, Yeki Nabud*. Berlin: n.p., 1921.

in the Tudeh, mainly supported by Francophile intellectuals like Iraj Iskandari or Behazin (pen name of Mahmud Etemadzadeh). The Tudeh was attached to the French Communist Party and made reference to texts on social progress such as the works of Romain Rolland or Anatole France. The involvement with the Tudeh of translators such as Behazin is reflected in the number of translations from French works mainly concerned with the idea of social progress, that are almost forgotten in present-day France. French texts were used as models for political and social reflections.³³

According to Mehrzad Boroujerdi, during the interwar period, the Western thinkers with whom Iranian intellectuals seemed to be most familiar are figures such as René Descartes, Auguste Comte, Gustave Le Bon, and Anatole France, a heterogeneous quartet linked by anticlerical ideas.³⁴ Indeed, the French ideas most cherished by Iranians were those linked to the Enlightenment, political and social rights, and anticlericalism. Entirely different but also important was the fascination for racialist thinkers like Arthur de Gobineau and Gustave Le Bon; the idea of an Aryan race was attractive to Iranian intellectuals, as a fascination for Nazi Germany also testified, a theme to which I shall return.

The perception of an affinity between France and Iran is thus not confined to literature; it also expands to ideas. Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, one of the most famous early travelers to Iran, expressed it as such:

33 Nanquette. *Orientalism Versus Occidentalism: Literary and Cultural Imaging between France and Iran since the Islamic Revolution*. p.98.

34 Boroujerdi, Mehrzad. «»The West» In the Eyes of the Iranian Intellectuals of the Interwar Years (1919-1939).» *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 26, no. 3 (2006). p.401.

“Persia is in Asia what France is in Europe.”³⁵ “For long, Iran has been the crossing place of different cultures, Aryan and Semitic among others, that she then spread to others, so that it is through and across Persia that an important part of the Aryan heritage could penetrate in Europe. It is also through Iranians that Islam spread to Transoxiana and to Eastern Asia, all the way to China. France has played a similar role for Greco-Roman and Christian cultures, and she can be considered a bridge that joined the ancient and the modern world.”³⁶ This idea has been drawn upon by most of Tavernier’s followers, as well as by Iranians, even as the status of France declined in Europe and that of Iran in the Middle East.³⁷ The prestige of the French Revolution became an important part of this feeling of affinity, especially during the 1906 Iranian Constitutional Revolution,³⁸ although it was to be replaced by the prestige of the Russian Revolution because of the sympathy among many Iranian intellectuals with the communist Tudeh party.³⁹

This cultural influence was reinforced because of the presence of French schools, where most of the elite studied. In Tehran alone, there were the Alliance Française, the Lazarist schools St. Louis and Jeanne d’Arc, the Franco-Persane school and Lycée Razi, as well as

35 Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste. *Voyages de Perse*. Paris: Veuve Lepetit, 1810. p.45. Translations from the French are mine.

36 Hadidi, Javad, and Dominique Carnoy. *De Sa’di à Aragon: l’accueil fait en France à la littérature persane (1600-1982)*. Tehran: Éditions internationales Alhoda, 1994. pp.521-2.

37 This discourse is also present in politics. President Khatami is reported to have said that France was the herald of independence and liberty in Europe, like the Iranian Revolution was the herald of independence and liberty in the Middle East. Dad, Babak. *Khatami dar Paris*. Tehran: n.p., 1999. p.50.

38 Tavakoli-Targhi, Mohammad. «Persia and the French Revolution.» In *Encyclopedia Iranica*. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/france-vi-persia-and-the-french-revolution>, accessed 03/01/2010.

39 See the chapter: Keddie, Nikki. «The French Revolution and the Middle East.» In *Iran and the Muslim World: Resistance and Revolution*, edited by Nikki Keddie. London: Macmillan, 1995.

the Alliance Israélite schools.⁴⁰

Germany benefited also from this combined anti-English/anti-Russian feeling, at the outbreak of World War I. The intellectual Hassan Taqizadeh, for example, was in Berlin, publishing the influential journal *Kaveh* (1916-1922) with the support of the German government.⁴¹ At the dawn of World War II, the ties became even closer, thanks to an affinity for Aryan theories amongst Iranian intellectuals and the government. However, the link between Reza Shah and Germany would prove fatal to his reign and he was forced by the Allies to abdicate in favour of his son Mohammad Reza Shah in 1941. Germany kept good commercial ties with Iran in the years following, and has since been the foremost European trading partner of Iran.

In contrast to the positive view of these two countries, Great Britain has long been the focus of Iranian fear and paranoia, and there is a wide and interesting imaginary on the United Kingdom, as well as a literature drawing on the subject. One famous example is Iraj Pezeshkshad's best-selling novel *Dai jan Napoleon*, published in 1973 in Tehran and later turned into a popular TV series.⁴² The book illustrates both the conspiracy theory about the English among Iranians, and the positive influence of France—Napoleon being the name given of the narrator's uncle, who has great admiration for the emperor and invents stories about his battles in Napoleon's army. Despite this Anglophobia, after

40 Nateq, Homa. *Karnameh-ye farhangi-e farangi dar Iran. 1837-1914*. Paris: Khavaran, 1994.

41 Katouzian, Homa. «From Romantic Nationalism to Social Criticism, 1914-1950, Iran.» In *Modern Literature in the Near and Middle East. 1850-1970*, edited by Robin Ostle. London: Routledge, 1990. p.133.

42 Pezeshkzad, Iraj. *My Uncle Napoleon*. Translated by Dick Davis. Washington: Mage, 1996. *Mon oncle Napoléon*. Translated by Sorour Kasmaï. Paris: Actes Sud, 2010.

World War II, Anglo-American culture replaced the primacy of the French in this sphere.

The primacy of Anglo-American culture after World War II

“With British and American forces in the country, learning English acquired practical value, and later many Persian students went to England or the United States to complete their education. English thus replaced French as the foreign language of choice in Persia, and translations of literary works from English became more and more frequent.”⁴³ Two agencies help this increase, the Royal Institute for Translation and Publication (Bongah-e tarjomeh va nashr-e ketab), on the initiative of Ehsan Yarshater, and the Tehran branch of the Franklin Book Program and publication. There is thus a significant increase in the translation of Western classics, and an evolution in the perception of what translation means. Indeed, the Royal Institute for Translation and Publication establishes standards “to ensure authenticity, accuracy and editorial supervision.”⁴⁴ In this period, most books were translated from English, including the famous Latin American novelists and many scholarly books and essays in the humanities, social sciences and sciences.⁴⁵ Hemingway became the most popular American writer, translated dozens of times.

Whereas translations of technical subjects often happened through English and sometimes German, most translations devoted to literary subjects, primarily literature, philosophy and history, were still from the French after World War II. The Service de Coopération et d’Action

43 Emami. «Translation of English Literature into Persian.»

44 Karimi-Hakkak. «Persian Tradition.» p.500.

45 Emami. «Translation of English Literature into Persian.»

Culturelle, the cultural section of the French Embassy in Tehran, has compiled a list of texts translated from French into Persian from 1950 to 2005.⁴⁶ This list of translations, comprising nearly 2,200 references, includes the following information: name of the French author, title of the book in French, title in Persian, translator's name, publishing house, year and place of publication, and category of book translated. The major category represented is literature, which includes not only literary texts but also literary essays and criticism. Interestingly, there is no evident evolution between translations from the French before and after the Revolution; the trend is very much stable. During these fifty years, literature makes up for 1,677 translations out of the 2,198, some 76 percent of the total. History comes second, with 104 translations, or 4 percent; followed by philosophy, with 72 translations (3 percent). Translations from works on economics, engineering or technology account for less than 2 percent of the total. In literature, a few classic authors such as Honoré de Balzac, Alexandre Dumas, Gustave Flaubert, Victor Hugo and the youth classic Jules Verne were regularly retranslated, Jules Verne alone being the subject of 350 translations in 50 years (15 percent of the total).⁴⁷ Engage authors of the second half of the 20th century, such as Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, come next and were regularly retranslated, 88 titles from the list being translations of Sartre (4 percent). This research helps

46 The list has not been published yet. I thank M. Armand Goudarzi and the Service de Coopération et d'Action Culturelle for making it available to me before its publication.

47 In an interview, Tinoush Nazmjou, a translator of theatre in both Persian and French, insisted that there is a generational gap in the reading of French literature. The status of Jules Verne as a children's classic seems for example to have been challenged by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *Le Petit Prince*. Interview with the author in Tehran, May 21, 2009.

us to see precisely that translations from the French are constituted primarily of World Literature classics like Hugo or Jules Verne and also by engage texts, whose writers are heirs of those such as Anatole France and Romain Rolland of previous decades.

Along the lines of the Royal Institute for Translation and Publications and as part of its control of the cultural sphere, the Islamic regime implemented a Committee for Translation, Composition and Editing in the early 1980s.⁴⁸ This, however, did not stop the primacy of English and American cultures, which increased after the Revolution.

Cultural and translation exchanges after the 1979 Revolution in Iran

Translations from European languages are important parts of the Iranian market since the Revolution. The primacy of translations from English and American literatures demonstrates that Iran is part of the globalised world and relies on the exchange with these cultures. If we consider restrictions on travel and trade, translations of Western texts appear as a dominant cultural activity and as an area where exchanges are the most dynamic in Iran.

However, it is only in its classical forms that Western cultures are accepted through translations. A French study on the Iranian publishing market has shown that the government strictly controls Western popular literature. Apart from Danielle Steel and John Grisham, which are astounding exceptions, there are few translations of genre fiction. Classics of World Literature are welcome, as well as best-sellers like Paulo Coelho (Coelho's *Veronika Decides to Die*, for example, sold

48 Karimi-Hakkak. «Persian Tradition.» p.500.

80,000 copies according to its publisher Caravan⁴⁹), but literature of entertainment, seen as a dangerous means for “cultural invasion”, is suspicious to the censors. Although translators still have a prestige that is unheard of in European countries—think only of the status of translators like Mohammad Ghazi,⁵⁰ Reza Seyyed Hosseini,⁵¹ Abolhassan Najafi⁵² or Dariush Ashuri for the translation of philosophical works⁵³—they are often lowly paid. However, readers continue to buy a foreign book because of the prestige of its translator, who is often a writer or a critic in the contemporary period.

Until the 1990s, one can say that translation was a rather traditional field in Iran, which scarcely included translation pedagogy.⁵⁴ This started to change with the publication of *Motarjem* (Translator) (1991-2007), a quarterly magazine dedicated to theories of translation and debates between translators, even on practical matters of translating. It helped to introduce debates that were absent from Iranian academia and the literary field, despite the heavy reliance of both on translations. A second journal of this kind appeared in 2003: *Motaleat-e tarjomeh* (Journal of Translation). It was a bilingual Persian-English publication based at the Iranian Center for Translation Studies at Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran.⁵⁵ However, there is still a lot to do for translation

49 Arnold, Jean-Christophe. «L'édition en Iran. Enjeux et perspectives de l'adhésion de l'Iran à la convention de Berne.» Paris: Bureau international de l'édition française, 2003. p.12.

50 Translator of Romain Rolland, Anatole France, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, but also of Cervantes from the French translation.

51 Translator of Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Marguerite Duras or André Malraux.

52 Translator of Jean-Paul Sartre and Roger Martin du Gard.

53 Translator of Nietzsche and Machiavelli.

54 Karimi-Hakkak. «Persian Tradition.» p.500.

55 Azadibougar. “Translation Historiography in the Modern World. Modernization and Translation into Persian.” p.322.

to become a professional field; Iran is not a signatory of the Bern Copyright Conventions, for example, which have an important impact on translations.

Translations in the Persian literary system cannot be considered without the analysis of the Iranian diaspora. Indeed, since the 1979 Revolution and the mass emmigration of writers and intellectuals, the Persian literary system has become more decentralized than ever. It was already a tradition to have Persian journals and important texts published abroad (*Buf-e Kur*, *The Blind Owl*, Sadegh Hedayat's masterpiece and the first Persian novel was for example first published in Bombay), but the trend accelerated in the eighties.

The importance of the Iranian diaspora in the exchanges between Iran and the West

Whereas there had been waves of immigration, primarily among young men and for purposes of studying and work in earlier decades, mass emigration of Iranians to Western countries increased dramatically after the 1979 Revolution and during the Iran-Iraq war. The Iranian diaspora today is primarily located in Western countries. In the United States, it represents a population of between 700,000 and one million, mostly located in California,⁵⁶ with an important percentage of members from religious and ethnic minorities, such as the Baha'is, Jews, Armenians, and Assyrians. Since it is numerous, concentrated in urban areas, and highly educated, the Iranian-American community is the most

56 «Iranian American Census Project». Iranian Studies Group at M.I.T. <http://isgmit.org/about/index.php?page=What%20We%20Do>, accessed 04/01/2010.

visible of the Iranian diasporic communities.⁵⁷ According to Census 2000, 50.9 percent of Iranian immigrants have attained a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to a 28 percent national average and 24 percent among the total foreign-born population.⁵⁸ The United States is home to important cultural projects like Mazda, a successful publisher established in 1980 in Costa Mesa, California, publishing on all issues pertaining to Iran and the Persianate world.

Among European countries, Germany is the main settlement country for Iranians, where there are about 150,000.⁵⁹ The number of books and journals published by the Persian community in Germany is significant. According to Moeen-al-Din Mehrabi, "438 books and 71 magazines were published between 1979 and 1993 in Germany".⁶⁰

In Great Britain, Iranians number around 75,000, according to the Iranian consulate, half of whom live in London.⁶¹ "There are a range of Persian newspapers, magazines and journals printed in Persian in Britain, such as *Nimruz*, *Kayhan*, *Asgar aqa*, and the advertising free paper, *Niazmandiha*." Initiatives like the Library for Iranian Studies in London, which opened in 1991 with Mashallah Ajudani as its director,

57 For a complete list of Iranian-American associations : http://www.parstimes.com/iranian_american.html, accessed 04/01/2010.

58 Hakimzadeh, Shirin and David Dixon «Spotlight on the Iranian Foreign Born». *Migration Policy Institute*, June 2006 : <http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?ID=404>. For occupations for Iranians in the US : "Immigration and Jobs: Where U.S. Workers Come From". *New York Times*, 07/04/2009 <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/04/07/us/20090407-immigration-country.html#view=52200>, accessed 04/01/2010.

59 Schirazi, Asghar. «The Persian Community in Germany.» In *Encyclopedia Iranica*. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/germany-x>, accessed 04/01/2010

60 Mehrabi, Mo`in-al-Din. *Mo`arrefi-e ketab: ketab-shenasi-ye ketabha-ye farsi-e montasher dar kharej-e keshvar*, 2 vol, Köln: n.p., 1993-94.

61 Spellman, Kathryn. «The Persian Community in Britain.» In *Encyclopedia Iranica*. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/great-britain-xiii1>, accessed 04/01/2010.

reinforce this cultural scene.

Many writers and intellectuals left for France in the first years of the Revolution because there was a tradition of Iranian engage intellectuals in Paris, starting from the opposition movement to the Shah, the Confederation of Iranian Students.⁶² Among post-revolutionary emigrants, only a small percentage (there are 30,000 Iranians in France, half in Paris) has gone to France, but their importance exceeds their number, owing to the high percentage of intellectuals and politicians among them.⁶³ More than forty periodicals were published in France between 1979 and 1989, of which twenty-six can be considered political, thirteen cultural, and the remainder of general interest.⁶⁴ The most important cultural and academic periodicals in Paris are *Ruzegar-e now*, edited by Esmail Purwali, *Cheshmandaz*, edited by Nasser Pakdaman and Mohsen Yalfani, *Dabireh*, edited by Homa Nateq, and *Arash*, edited by Parviz Qelichkhani.

In these three European countries, Iranians have organized cultural associations or professional associations, but they do not constitute communities as in the United States, due to their small numbers and their relative invisibility. Indeed, Iranians in Europe have tended to adapt well, although they often suffer from a drop in their social status.⁶⁵

62 For an analysis of the Confederation, Matin-Asgari, Afshin. «The Iranian Student Mouvement Abroad: The Confederation of Iranian Students, National Union.» In *Iranian Refugees and Exiles since Khomeini*, edited by Asghar Fathi. Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 1991.

63 Nassehy-Behnam, Vida. «Persian Community in France.» In *Encyclopedia Iranica*. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/france-xvii>, accessed 04/01/2010.

64 Iranian Center for Documentation and Research, *Listing of Persian Periodicals Outside Iran (1978-1989)*, Paris, 1989. Quoted by Nassehy-Behnam, «Persian Community in France.»

65 Vahabi, Nader. *Récits de vie des exilés iraniens. De la rupture biographique à la nouvelle identité*. Paris: Elzévir, 2009.

To the three European countries studied above, Sweden should be added, as it has a substantial Iranian community (around 56,000) and it has seen important cultural projects emerge, like Baran publishing house.⁶⁶ Iranians are dispersed all over the world today, and numbers can also be found in Australia, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Russia.

The intellectual and cultural diaspora is dynamic and contributes to exchanges between Iran and Western countries. It sometimes does so by translating Iran for non-Iranian audiences through accessible narratives. *Persepolis*, the comics and then movie by Marjane Satrapi, has been a huge success, first in France⁶⁷ and subsequently in the United States.⁶⁸ It was presented as a challenge to the mostly negative image of Iran offered in Western media. The best seller *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi has also helped to make of Iran a subject of cultural, and not just of political discussion. In all Western countries, Iranian writers publish works in European languages, often dealing with Iran, and participate as such in the dialogue between Iran and Western countries. In the Netherlands for example, Kader Abdollah writes in Dutch and is considered one of the most famous Dutch writers and columnists.

While Iranians abroad are engaged in political issues or in offering counter-images to the dominant negative ones, it has to be noted that the conflicts over what Iran means and how to represent it is also an

66 For a complete study of Iranians in Sweden, Hosseini Kaladjahi, Hassan. *Iranians in Sweden: Economic, Cultural and Social Integration*. Stockholm: Stockholm University Press, 1997.

67 The film won the 2007 “Prix du jury” of the Cannes festival, and the 2008 “Best first work” and “Best writing adaptation” from the Césars awards.

68 Nominee for the Best Animated Feature Oscar in 2008.

issue among Iranians themselves, between Iranians abroad and in Iran. There have been many conflicts between writers and intellectuals who left the country and those who stayed since the Revolution. Several texts in Iran by famous writers criticize exiled writers, for example Esmail Fassih's *Sorraya in a Coma*⁶⁹ or Hushang Golshiri's *Folding Mirrors*.⁷⁰

The reception of Iranian culture in the West

Although Iranian culture is primarily known to European audiences through its cinema, since Kiarostami's rise in international festival, Persian literature has begun to be recognized in Europe and North America. This has come about thanks to a growing interest by publishers in translating contemporary literature. For example in Paris, Zulma publisher is devoted to publishing the whole works of Fariba Vafi and Zoya Pirzad. The collection "Horizons persans" at Actes Sud publishers strives to translate and publish classics from *Dai jan Napoleon* to Goli Taraqi's short stories. Khavaran, a publishing house and library based in Paris, publishes books from Iranian diaspora writers in Persian. However, if one takes the case of France, Persian literature is scarcely translated, especially when compared with other Middle Eastern literatures. This amounts to only a dozen of books translated in the last decade. A few earlier translations include Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*. Its publisher José Corti announced in 2008 that *The Blind Owl* had sold 50,000 copies—hardly exceptional for the masterpiece of one of

69 Fassih, Esmail. *Sorraya in a Coma*. London: Zed Books, 1985.

70 Golshiri, Hushang. *Ayeneh-ha-ye dar dar*. Tehran: Nilufar, 1983.

the best-known Iranian writers in France⁷¹—over more than fifty years. Many important 20th century Persian authors have not been translated: from Simin Daneshvar to Sadegh Chubak to Mahmud Dowlatabadi, from Simin Behbahani to Ahmad Shamlu, as regards poetry. And classical poetry also suffers from this lack of interest.⁷² Charles-Henri de Fouchécour’s French translation of the whole *Divan* of Hafez was only published in 2006. Even Rumi, a best seller in the United States, has hardly benefited from an interest in mystical love poetry in France.

In the United States, because of an increased interest for ethnic literatures, writings by Iranian-Americans have developed more, especially memoirs. The 2000s have seen the rise of female memoir-writing and Amy Malek rightly points out that this genre can become an obstacle to Iranian writers: “The fact that these women have gained more commercial success for their memoirs than for their poetic anthologies, novels, or academic articles, points, I would argue, to the implicit reason behind their writing in the memoir genre: the demand of the market economy and the commercial inaccessibility of non-memoir genres to Iranian women. This only perpetuates several frustrations in Iranian exile culture within the larger Western culture: memoir and film have become the only two creative mediums through which mainstream Western consumers can view Iran and Iranians outside of the one-dimensional view provided by commercial news outlets.”⁷³

71 Farzaneh, M.F. *Rencontres avec Sadegh Hedayat. Le parcours d’une initiation*. Paris: José Corti, 1993.

72 Christophe Balaÿ discusses the problem of lack of interest in Persian literature from French publishers. Shahrokhi, Mariam. “Goftegu ba Kristof Bala’i.” *Kelk* 27, no. 2 (1992).

73 Malek, Amy. «Memoir as Iranian Exile Cultural Production: A Case Study of Marjane Satrapi’s Persepolis Series.» *Iranian Studies* 39, no. 3 (2006). p.364.

The reception of Iranian culture in the West thus has to be put into perspective. There are interesting developments but laden with postcolonial issues, and the main exchange happens in one direction: Iran, a peripheral cultural space, receives Western culture.

Power and translation

It is important to remember that cultural exchanges did happen more frequently through translations of Persian literature into Western ones, but this was mainly before the modern period, and thanks to orientalist interest in Persia.⁷⁴ The Aryan aspect of Persia made it relatively easy to interact with for most European scholars. However, in the modern period and especially since the Islamic Revolution—which has made it difficult for Europeans to interact with Iran⁷⁵—this cultural exchange has become mainly one-directional: it is almost entirely Iran translating from the West, not the other way around.

Translation is not innocent, and cultural exchanges also reveal and shape political power. Iran in translation is in a subordinate state; it receives from Western nations but is rarely able to export its culture. It is important to note that 22.5 percent of Iranian publications are translations,⁷⁶ which compares to 2 percent in France or 9 percent in the Russia. As such, cultural and translation exchanges studied in this

74 For an account of the influence of Persian literature on French one, focused on Montesquieu's *Les Lettres persanes*, on Voltaire's moral tales and on the influence of Omar Khayyam, see Hadidi, Javad. *Iran dar adabiyat-e faranseh, az aghaz ta sal-e 1789 miladi*. Mashad: Mashad University Press, 1990.

75 "Suddenly, for many in the 'West' and in Iran itself, the country was more Semitic than Aryan, more Iran than Persia, more Oriental than Indo-European, more black than white, more Third World than emerging economy, more Eastern than Western". Adib-Moghaddam, Arshin. «A (Short) History of the Clash of Civilizations.» *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 21, no. 2 (2008). p.4.

76 Arnold. «L'édition en Iran. Enjeux et perspectives de l'adhésion de l'Iran à la convention de Berne.» p.19.

article also have to be understood as part of larger power phenomena and their links to postcolonial issues have to be kept in mind.

Finally, I would like to conclude by saying that translation has often been mentioned as the primary reason for the introduction of new genres into the Persian literary system, primarily the novel and the short story, and that it also led to the tradition of Persian poetry evolving towards modern forms, on the model of French blank verse. Scholars like Hassan Kamshad and Christophe Balay have been defenders of this theory. Today, there are many counter-arguments which nuance the impact of translation and the imitation of Western literature on the evolution of Persian literature, for example by mentioning the importance of languages other than Persian in Iranian cultural exchanges⁷⁷ or by arguing that if translation did influence the emergence of new genres, it was not its primary cause.⁷⁸ If we consider that translation is a dominant mode of contemporary cultural exchange between Iran and its diaspora in the West, it is all the more important to be open to new arguments on the history of translation, and to be reminded of the weight it carries in a world where the West is a dominant cultural space.

77 Azadibougar. «Translation Historiography in the Modern World. Modernization and Translation into Persian.» pp.299-300.

78 Khorrami, Mohammad Mehdi. *Modern Reflections of Classical Traditions in Persian Fiction*. New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2003. p.9.

Publishing Persian Books in Europe

Farid Moradi

The 1979 revolution and its political changes are known to have affected the Iranian intellectuals, mainly those who fled the country.

Even though, for the first time in the Iranian history, the revolution managed to attract millions of people to the protests, it caused a lot of damage to the country, including the leaving of the young and educated. Many students, academics and political activists sought refuge in the West, and once the initial immigration shocks were over, they started to find out the roots of the revolution's failure.

The real reason behind such a big failure was believed to be the lack of knowledge in the society, caused by centuries of living under dictatorship. Hence, they sought solution in creating 'awareness' through publications, and, despite the lack of experience and assets, Persian publications were established outside of Iran.

Even though at first the publications lacked quality, the necessity for having awareness crossed to exiled intellectuals was of importance. Today, though, details such as binding, layout and book cover are also taken into account. Apart from the improvements in the books'

appearance, we can now see the impact they have on freedom of speech and fighting censorship. These publications can be considered as pioneers in promoting democracy amongst Iranians, as they have been publishing books in all kinds of fields and by various authors; from leftists to monarchists.

The exile publication journey has been facing various problems; however, for as long as such publications continue to exist, they could play an important role in improving freedom of speech and fighting censorship, which are the essence of a democratic society. On the other hand, they still deserve to survive even if their existence is merely to serve their initial purpose of creating awareness.

This article shall start with a brief history of Iranian exile publications, followed by an introduction to the European publishers and their aims, as well as complications and risks that they face. It will also discuss solutions for overcoming those issues. Moreover, we will consider the possibilities of achieving better publications through the SWOT method. This process is used to analyze strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to a particular idea, in order to determine a better strategy.

Exile Publications History

Before the 1979 revolution, there existed a number of Iranian publishers outside of the country, which mainly printed classic Marxist writings, with one also publishing writings on the social democratic movement in Iran. Ironically, those books that were published by Iranians in Europe suffered from lack of quality (except the Toodeh party publications), whereas the ones published in Moscow and Beijing enjoyed a rather high quality. During this period, Iranian political students based outside of the country distributed books and articles. Some would publish bulletins in European cities, and circulate these publications by selling them in conferences, gatherings and social events.

However, after the revolution the situation changed dramatically. When the Islamic regime came to power, political parties were banned from doing activities in Iran, and, hence, many of the activists, who had just finished school or started college, sought refuge in Europe. For most of these youngsters politics was a new phenomenon, so they started to seek answers to their political questions in books. However, they were not literate in their host country's language, and therefore needed to have access to Persian writings. Consequently, some started printing Persian books on politics and the revolution, despite their lack of experience in the publishing business. This lack of experience and professionalism, though, resulted in intolerance amongst those publishers who had differing beliefs.

The problem stems from the fact that Iranians had never lived in a

society as a minority group before⁷⁹. Therefore, once forced to immigrate, they were not aware of how to take an advantage of the social and/or religious benefits of a united immigrant community, unlike the Jews, Armenians or Chinese. However, as Mashallah Ajoudani states: “no minority community has ever published as many books, magazines and articles as Iranians have; the number of the exile publications amongst Iranians is striking”⁸⁰.

Masood Mafan also asserts that between 1979 and 2008 “more than 400 publishing organizations and companies were established outside of Iran, out of which 40 are still working”⁸¹.

Regarding the significance of the Iranian exile publications Ajoudani states:

“We were a cultured nation. We have a great history behind us in which we can clearly see that Iranian people have always sought refuge to culture in the time of crisis. Culture has always been a saviour for the Iranian people; a motive for resistance and survival. This characteristic has also been reserved by the Iranians abroad. That is why cultural productions are more common amongst Iranians comparing to other nationalities”⁸².

It is worth mentioning that Iranians are known to be one of the most active people in the world in terms of publishing weblogs.

79 The only exception to this would be the Parsis in India, who started to live and remained as a minority community, after the second century Islam immigration.

80 see the original for the reference page 4

81 see the original for the reference page 4

82 see the original for the reference page 5

An Introduction to the Independent Iranian Publishers in Europe

Sonbol Bahmanyar has carried out several interviews with some of the Iranian publishers in Europe, a few of which are briefly mentioned later on in this article. The aim of these interviews is to provide examples of the Iranian publishing business abroad.

The interviews are based on the following details and questions:

- A brief personal biography and publication work background
- How many titles and volumes do you publish per year?
- Do these books get a second and third edition?
- Who is your audience?
- Do you also publish non-Persian books? How many?
- Do you ever order work to a certain author and/or translator?

If yes, on what basis is the contract made?

- On what basis are the publication decisions made? (Personal preferences, market taste, etc.)
- What strategies do you employ in order to have your publications distributed?
- Have you ever experienced any problems concerning copy right? What are your thoughts on the subject?
- What are the main publication issues in the country you are based in? Or what complications do you face as a publisher?
- Do you receive support from any governmental or non-governmental organizations?
- How is your relationship with other Persian publishers around the world?

- What are your thoughts on the publication of electronic books?
- If all the Persian publishers around the world were to publish a book in collaboration with one another, in order to establish a worldwide network between them, what would be your suggested subject?

Mehr Publications

Mehr Publications, one of the first Persian publishing companies in Europe, was founded by Jafar Mehregani in Germany in 1979. After the Iranian revolution Mehregani started off by running an Iranian bakery in Koln, which eventually provided him with seed money for the publishing business. The company managed to gain recognition in the exiled Iranian community through publishing books on religious critique and the Iranian history in 1982. One example would be the book “23 Years” which observes Islam and Quran through a critical point of view. It was printed over ten thousand volumes in each of its ten editions. Mehr has also published a number of academic books, books that are prohibited in Iran, memoirs of Iran escapees, as well as Mohammad Reza Shah’s “Answer to the history”.

However, due to the nature of the books he chose to publish, Mehregani received threats from the Iranian regime and was asked to co-operate with them, by publishing books from Iran. The request was refused by him.

Mehregani has never received financial help from the governmental organizations, and now, at 72, lives on income support in a 20 square

meter room with his wife. In order to run the publishing business, he sacrificed everything he owned, including his household belongings and life insurance. However, this has not stopped him and, at the moment, he writes and translates children's stories, as well as the history of European cities. He has also published a work in German, which won a prize. He has been promoting his works through foreign newspapers and circulated them through the help of friends.

Forough Publications

Forough Publications, Distribution and Bookstore was founded in 1998 by Minu and Hamid Mehdipor in Cologne, Germany.

Their aim was to publish books which were banned in Iran.

“Murder of Kasravi” was the first book published by Forough in 1998. The intention was to publicize the truth about the death of Ahmad Kasravi, the famous Iranian critic of Islam.

They continued their work by publishing memoirs of ex-prisoners of Iranian Islamic regime.

Forough Publications now focuses on three main areas: literature, human & social sciences, and educational non-fiction.

The focus is Persian-language literature, but also translating, publishing, and distributing works by German authors. For instance “The Weekend” by Bernhard Schlink and “The Fall of the Islamic World” by Hamed Abdel-Samad.

Forough Publications has already published more than 250 titles in different genres such as: poetry, philosophy, biography, novels, and children as well as non-fictional books.

In addition, Forough supports Persian educational programs outside of Iran by publishing and internationally distributing Persian textbooks.

Pooya Publication

Pooya Publishing was founded in 2011 by Beytollah Biniaz. Criticism of Islam and new research on Islam are the focus of Pooya's programme. The founder of the publishing house has for years worked as a translator and he has collaborated with Forough Publishing (Cologne) and "The Graduate Society Foundation" (USA).

Nima publishing and bookstore, Essen

Under the management of Davoud Nemati, Nima has been one of the most active Persian publishers in the publication and distribution of books in Europe since the revolution. Nima is also known for publishing the Persian translation of [Salman Rushdie's](#) *The Satanic Verses*, which made it subject to threats from the Iranian regime. Ever since then it has been under the security protection of the German government.

Arash Publications

According to Masood Firoozabadi, the founder of Arash Publications, his company is the oldest outside of Iran which is still running. He started the firm in 1983, by publishing classical Marxist writings, followed by those writings which were banned by the regime. His publications serve two purposes:

- 1) The fight with censorship in Iran
- 2) The promotion of Persian language and culture

In the first case, his action encouraged some writers to threaten the regime to either allow their writings to be published in Iran, or risk

having them printed abroad. As a result, some were given permission by the government.

In the second case, he has been promoting the Iranian language and culture by publishing a large amount of books from such renowned writers as Shamloo⁸³. He also has managed to publish over 220 Iranian books for the first time.

However, the figures published have gone down in recent years. Firoozabadi believes that this could be attributed to the following reasons:

The over publication of mediocre writings

- The publication of exile books in Iran, without obeying copyright rules- some of these books are sold for half the price a Swedish company would charge
- The scattered distribution of the Iranian diaspora around the world
- The lack of high volume buyers (200-300 copies from the publisher)
- Excessive posting fees
- Problems in receiving royalties- the process can take up to a year
- The lack of an organization dedicated to providing introductions, analysis and literary criticism of the books
- The lack of knowledge and experience in the publishing field amongst the publishers
- The lack of team work amongst publishers

83 Shamloo (1925-2000) was a highly recognized poet, writer and translator in Iran.

On the subject of the most popular books amongst the readers, Firoozabadi refers to those written about or by women, followed by critical writings of religion. He also believes that readers are mainly interested in the books describing contemporary Iranian society. Hence, some of the books written by the writers inside Iran are also popular.

Even though Arash publishes all sorts of books from all kinds of authors, not all of them enjoy the company's logo on them. It has published a selection of Shamloo's poems in Persian and Swedish, both of which have been so well received that even the most popular morning paper in Sweden dedicated two pages of positive feedback to them.

Regarding the authors' payments, Firoozabadi states that normally a certain number of the books are given to the writer for free and a some at the whole sale price.

The breakdown of the revenues is as follows:

Author 15 percent, seller 35 percent, postage and packaging 20 percent, publisher 30 percent.

Arash has never commissioned a writer or a translator to carry out work.

According to Firoozabadi, the Swedish Cultural Council has allocated a department to the publication of immigrants' works. However, recently, due to the new laws, these writers are being discriminated against.

On the topic of digital publications, Firoozabadi believes that most readers of Iranian books outside of the country are first and second generation of immigrants who find it difficult to switch from paper to

digital books. He also states that people normally tend to skim read e-books and, therefore, are likely to forget what they read.

Concerning co-working with other publishers, he suggests that they should collaborate on a project which pays tribute to those writers who have been the most influential in the Iranian society.

Khavaran Publications

Bahman Amini moved to France in 1981 and established Khavaran Publications and a bookstore in Paris, in 1983. This was the time when many cultural and political activists fled Iran and started their activities abroad, also known as “the period of despair and cynicism”. Amini had initially become familiar with the publishing business while working as a writer in a magazine.

As the publication business was not profitable, he started a printing business to help him run his publications. The business started by printing 500 to 1000 copies per book. This has now been reduced to 200 to 300 ones. He claims that only 5 percent of books published abroad succeed in having a second edition. Since the start of his business only three books have had this experience.

Amini has never received financial aid from the French government.

In order to promote his books ,he initially got help from his network of connections ,as well as other Iranian publishing companies outside of France ,but now uses the internet to advance his works.

Amini believes that choosing the right subject and content is important as his audience are interested in Iranian affairs .So far he has published a number of books by well known Iranian authors ,as well as [Atiq](#)

Rahimi, an Afghan writer who later rose to prominence and won the Conger prize.

He divides Khavaran books into three categories: Prison memoirs, researched writings on religion, and the books that are prohibited in Iran. Nonetheless, he has also published a few French books in collaboration with a French publisher, as well as commissioning some work to a few authors.

Amini believes exile publications suffer from certain problems including lack of financial means, facilities to promote books, the geographical dispersal of the audiences, and the decreasing number of the bookstores which sell Iranian books. According to him, publishing an Iranian book costs the same as a European one, but it is worth almost half the price.

On the subject of writers' payments, Amini states that at the time when exile publications had just started writing was a means of fighting, hence the author's payment was never even discussed. However, he now makes a contract with almost all the writers whose works have been published by Khavaran. Some are paid a fee, others, who have the facilities to sell their own books, are given a number of books. Those writers whose aim is to support Iranian exile publications do not receive a payment.

Amini believes that digital publications have potential but require time and money. However, he does not believe that it is currently a necessity for Iranian publishers.

With reference to publishers' collaboration, he states that, even though

the matter has been discussed and a treaty has been prepared, it has not been put into practice yet.

Naakojaa Publication

Naakojaa is a publisher of paper, digital and audio books in Persian language. In 2012 Tinoush Nazmjou started the business in France.

Naakojaa produces his books with high and international quality of e-books to satisfy his readers.

Naakojaa believes in the freedom of press and therefor does not accept any form of censorship of books.

Furthermore, quality is one of his most important principles to choose the books for publishing and not the popularity or famous of the authors.

In the last year Naakojaa published over 80 books in digital and paper print.

Besides, he republished over 50 titles of other publishers as e-books.

Naakojaa publishes literature (Novel, history, poem, drama, literary criticism, research literature), philosophy and social sciences.

Aida Publications

Aida Publications/Bookstore was founded in Bochum, Germany in 2003 by Abbas Ghiayi and his wife. They also established Agaah library in 1978, which stores about five thousand books.

Ghiayi believes that, due to the diversity in the readers' taste, it is not always possible to recognize what is in demand. He thinks that what is important is that "writers want their books published".

He takes a certain approach in publishing books:

1. The publisher takes responsibility for the printing costs.

2. The writer him/herself pays the printing fees.

According to him, 80% of the writers do not enjoy any financial benefits and their books remain in the publishers' storage.

Aida Publications has published 23 books so far, out of which four have been financed by the publisher. On average, the firm publishes four books per year. However, the number of the published volumes, which initially started at one thousand, has now decreased to three hundred.

Aida promotes its books through fax, telephone and emails. In order to circulate the books, it collaborates with Forough Publications and has never received financial aid from any organization.

On the subject of copyright, Ghiayi mentions that one of his publications (a prisoner's memoirs) was republished in the United States of America within a month of its release, without his permission.

According to him, Iranian publications abroad suffer from the lack of advertising facilities. He also argues that unlike Germans, Iranians do not value books and thus do not spend as much on them.

Amini believes that e-books only take up one percent of the book market.

Aida only collaborates with Forough publications.

Arzan Publications

Arzan publications were founded in 1994 by Nemat Alimoradi. He used to sell books in social events and conferences and gained recognition by delivering Persian and Kurdish books to his clients in different European cities.

Alimoradi had no background experience in publishing business prior to immigrating to Europe. He started his business in order to publish Kurdish books. He is the first and only Iranian publisher in Europe whose focus is on Kurdish writings, and has printed around two hundred Persian and Kurdish books so far. His publishing choices are based on subject matter, market taste and books that are prohibited in Iran.

He believes that having a bookstore alongside a publishing business helps generate significant income. A noteworthy portion of his revenues are sourced from selling academic publications. According to him the Swedish government's help is very limited.

Arzan Publications usually publishes 250 to 1000 volumes per book. However, in order to avoid storing unsold ones, books are printed in separate rounds. For instance, if a book is to have 1000 volumes, he may publish them in two batches of 500.

Alimoradi usually commissions books to writers and translators. They receive a number of the published books as their payment.

He believes the reason why the number of circulated books is limited is because Iranians are not passionate about reading. Also, according to him, the accessibility of text books on the Internet has a negative effect on the book market.

He states that copyright issues are one of the publishers' main concerns. In some cases, for instance, a company's publications become accessible on the internet without the publisher's approval. In other cases, some writers have their books published by a number of publishers, despite

having a contract with one. Having experienced both issues, Alimoradi has decided to make his contracts more rigid and rules on copyright more stringent.

He does not believe in publishing e-books and states that some readers still prefer paper books as they do not feel comfortable reading on the internet.

Alimoradi describes the exile publishing issues as follows:

1. Lack of interest in reading amongst people.
2. Circulation difficulties- a book published in a particular city may only be circulated in that same city.
3. Financial problems.

Issues such as occasional outstanding balance on the buyers' side have a negative influence on the business, he states. Moreover, in order to lower the costs, publishers either have a second job or run the business from their homes, which affects them in different ways. Alimardani, himself, suffers from depression resulting from similar problems.

With respect to collaborative publications, he welcomes the idea of regular meetings among the publishers and suggests printing vernacular stories as well as a selection of stories by writers who are not well recognized but approved of by renowned authors. He also suggests that Iranian and exile publishers should collaborate and print Kurdish books.

Gardoony Publications

Abbas Maroufi, the founder of Gardoony Publications, is one of the few publishers in Europe who has a professional background in the

field. The company was founded in Iran and closed down in 1996, due to printing a book by Khan Rolfo. However, it still managed to publish over 100 books after its closing down.

Maroufi eventually fled to Germany with the help of the EU and the Iran-based German ambassador. In 2000, he opened a bookstore in Berlin. Shortly after that, he started a non-profit publishing business which aims to fight censorship in Iran. He has never received any financial help from the German government.

By January 2011 Maroufi managed to publish 120 books. He has printed books by some well-received writers as well as himself. At the moment he is planning to publish 60 books, half of which are banned in Iran.

The firm publishes 500 to 1000 volumes per book on average. Some of the books have succeeded in reaching their fifth edition. He has a number of books to publish in the future and estimates that they may manage to print over 5000 copies.

On the subject of the writers' remuneration, Maroufi declares that when dealing with successful authors, he either becomes partners with them, or pays for the publications' cost.

His experience of working with German publications has not been satisfactory, as their lack of Persian knowledge could result in an incorrect page numbering.

Maroufi was once quoted by the BBC website on the subject of Iranians' lack of interest in reading as follows:

“They do not dedicate any money to the cultural and/or literal aspect

of life. Iranians do not look after their writers and artists”.

Concerning book circulation, he mentions that Europe based Iranian publishers decided to establish a distribution centre a few years ago which never materialized.

At the moment he uses his website, as well as Amazon to circulate his books. Gardoon is the first Iranian Publication which sells books in Amazon and e-book. However, he fears that some Iranians purchase books on e-book and circulate them in Iran.

Gardoon Publications has purchased the licence for two children stories for translation, at the cost of 2 Euros per book.

Ferdowsi Institution

Mehdi Rahimzadeh is the founder of Ferdowsi Institution since 1984. Despite his passion for publications, the circulation and selling of books became the focus of his business at the start.

He also started the publishing business in 2009 and has printed ten books in Persian and Swedish ever since. He aims to promote the Iranian language, culture and history and have Europeans more familiar with these aspects of Iranian studies. The firm has a branch in Iran, named Ferdowsi'e Iran, which also provides publishing services.

Rahimzadeh's main audience are Iranians, but he also prints books in Swedish for Swedish readers and second generation Iranians who are not fluent in Persian but wish to gain knowledge about Iran. Last year, he published a Persian grammar book for Swedish people. At the moment, he is planning to publish a Swedish writer's memoirs from her journey to Iran.

The company established its website in 1995 and has been making its books accessible for everybody on the Internet.

Rahimzadeh states that there have been many Iranian publishing companies in Europe whose lack of quality and ignorance of copyright rules made them unprofessional. Also, some of the published books have been of very poor quality. He says, however, some have improved throughout years and are doing a more professional job.

If an author approaches Rahimzadeh, he first studies the book's content and writing quality with the help of some experts and editors in order to estimate its profitability. Then he either finances it or looks for other alternatives. He pays the writers a market-rate salary after deducting charges for copyright. He has had conversations with a few European and American publishers/writers who have complained about their books being printed in Iran without their permission, namely Oriana Fallaci. Rahimzadeh strongly believes in obeying copyright rules and thinks that failure to do so is not only culturally but also financially harmful. He argues that publishers avoid these rules to lower their costs. However, as foreign publishers are aware of the restrictions Iranian books face in exile, he states that it is possible to lower the copyright fees from 5-10 percent of the book's price down to 5-6 percent. He states that this could provide Iranian publishers with the support of European ones and create a form of collaboration between them. Also, this way they can benefit from access to foreign media. Having said that, he mentions about a few publishers in Iran who obey copyright rules. Paolo Coelho's books, for instance, are sometimes published in

Iran prior to the West.

Rahimzadeh suggests that Iranian publishers could ask the parliament to enforce copyright rules to cover books and other products, such as software programs. He states that buying the original version not only would provide a warranty, but also it can improve Iran's position in the world and help it develop in science and industry. Conversely, ignoring intellectual property rights is a form of theft that damages artists, publishers and writers. Hence, people should be taught that paying for a CD or a book is a way of supporting its creator ⁸⁴.

Rahimzadeh believes that, on the one hand, the world is moving towards digitalization with I-phones, I-pads and E-readers becoming more common. Hence, we have to prepare ourselves to adjust to these changes. On the other hand, this has paved the way for people to take advantage with some books available on the internet without the writers' permission. This causes financial losses for them. Even though this happens both in Iran and the West, the latter has been making an effort to prevent it.

Co-operating with a variety of libraries and cultural institutions, Ferdowsi has managed to develop its network of connections in Europe. It uses the Swedish phone directory catalogue as well as the internet to promote its publications and keep in contact with its audience. Rahimzadeh does not believe in advertising in Swedish papers as not many Iranians read them, but thinks advertising in Persian speaking radios can be effective. He also keeps in contact with Iranian based

⁸⁴ Sometimes movies are accessible everywhere before their official release- to make an example, we can refer to 'Ali Santoori', a controversial Iranian film.

publishers through their office in Iran and has some of its publications circulated via this office.

He believes that due to the scattered distribution of Iranians in Europe, exile publishers need a website which is updated regularly. However, running such a website is a time consuming and costly business.

Rahimzadeh's selects books based on his own personal interest and view of the market demand.

He has only received financial help from a cultural organization once, and believes that libraries could sponsor publishers by purchasing books from them.

Even though the company's products are considered expensive by buyers, Rahimzadeh states that in order to produce good quality books and guarantee the company's survival he needs to maintain current prices.

Concerning collaboration between publishers, he suggests that publishing a collection of short stories by unknown writers from Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan would be a good idea.

Alphabet-Maxima Publication

Alphabet-Maxima was registered in Sweden in 1997 by Reza Mansouri. He graduated from medical school in Shiraz, Iran. He fled the country in 1962 due to his leftist ideas, and spent some time in Turkey, where he worked as an English translator for the UN. Later on, he sought refuge in Sweden. Whilst in the country, Mansouri had some of his writings published by friends, which gave him the initiative to start his publishing firm. He started by opening a bookstore, followed by Alphabet-Maxima.

Since then, he has printed about 100 books at the average rate of five per year. He normally publishes 500 volumes per book in a year, although this can reach up to 1000. However, he rarely publishes a second edition. The company prints literature by Kurdish and Chilean authors, as well as, young Swedish poets. Mansouri's audience are mainly first and second generation immigrants, with political tendencies. His main interest is to raise awareness through his publications and states that "we are in more need of serious and informative writings than novels". According to him, while psychological books, prison memoirs and writings which address women are best-sellers, the demand for poetry has been decreasing. He argues that "books are turning into strangers (to people)". Alphabet-Maxim also aims to serve as a centre for cultural activities. However, the number of the members regularly attending their cultural events has decreased over time from a hundred to ten. Mansouri is well aware that losing about 70% of the members could result into the closure of the centre. This is the result of budget cuts by the Swedish government's neoliberal policies. While some writers cannot afford to have their books published, others never managed to pay the fee towards their already published books. Moreover, the company cannot afford to commission books to writers and translators. Mansouri takes a number of approaches to circulate his products, including advertising in his company's website, using personal connections as well as other publishing companies, and utilizing the company as a retail centre.

Like many other Iranian publishers, Mansouri also has been trying to

fight censorship in Iran. Therefore he suggests that there should be a collaborative work which protests censorship in Iran (e.g. a collection of the writings by those who have been killed by the regime or those whose works are banned in Iran).

Baran Publications

Baran Publications was founded by Masoud Mafan and his partners in Stockholm in February 1991 and published its first book two months after. This book was prohibited in Iran.

Being a leftist, Mafan started the business in order to fight censorship in Iran.

Mafan created the company in order to publish first edition books, as during that time most companies only reprinted old books.

While Baran pays famous writers royalties for their books, less prominent authors do not receive a payment- instead they are not charged for the printing of their works.

Baran can be said to be the most active Iranian publishing company in Europe, printing from 200 to 1000 volumes per book, with some even reaching the second edition.

In order to circulate his books, Mafan carried them in his car around Europe for many years. He is well aware of the power of advertising and proposes that Iranian media should dedicate a budget to promoting books. However, according to him, they only tend to promote the books that are published in Iran. Moreover, the excessive postage fees make it difficult for publishers to send out books to various media outlets. Hence, he argues that phone conversations should be used instead to

introduce and discuss books. Mafan, himself, has been using a variety of magazines as well as emails to promote his books. He suggests that the writers should also take part in promoting their books.

On the same subject, Mafan criticizes well-off Iranians for not providing financial support to the publishers.

The company's readers were initially political ones. Now, however, they are those people who have political tendencies but also are interest in literature and culture. Due to the green movement of 2009, there is a new young audience, who, unlike second generation immigrants, are literate in Persian.

Baran has published over ten Swedish books so far. It has also translated a few Swedish books into Persian, which sold had more copies than the Iranian ones.

Mafan believes that Western people are not interested in modern Persian literature and, as a result, translated Iranian books are not desirable in the West. He adds that there are some French-translated Iranian books which were commercially successful in Europe, but their publishers were French.

Mafan believes that obeying copyright rules would help promote Iranian literature. He finds it unsatisfactory that some of the Europe-based Iranian publications are reprinted in the United States and vice versa.

Mafan has published a variety of books by both famous and less prominent writers. His publishing choices are based on the chances of commercial success, his friendships with the writers, and the authors'

prominence.

Baran used to publish between 2 to 20 books per year on average, although this has recently has decreased to 5 to 6. Until 1998, Swedish organizations provided the firm with capital to publish 2-3 books per year. However, Mahan believes that the Swedish Cultural Council discriminates against foreign publishers by prioritizing its help to first edition publications as well as the writers who are based in Sweden. Hence, he has stopped demanding financial aid.

Mafan requests financial aid after publishing books and believes that it is his right and not that of the writers'. If he does not receive any, writers will be asked to pay for the publication costs.

On the subject of a collaborative work with other publishers, he suggests that they should publish research on women in a few European languages. He believes it is easier to agree on a amalgamated piece of research than a collection of stories.

Dena Publications

Reza Chavoshi started selling books in 1995, and created a publishing business in 1997. Prior to this, he provided Dutch libraries with Iranian books from the rest of Europe and Iran. He had no background experience in the field. He started his business out of personal interest as well as his desire to supply Persian books to Iranians who lived in Holland. He believed that as the Iranian community in Holland grew, so would their demand for Persian books. However the internet is now becomes a rival for publishers like him. Chavoshi believes his audience are the middle-aged first generation immigrants who have been so involved

with internet that they do not have time for reading paper books. He also has some readers under thirty years old who were raised in Europe and are not fluent in Persian.

Dena has been publishing between one to two books per year on average, with a maximum batch of 500 volumes. Besides Iranian books, it has also published a number of translated writings from Dutch, with the help of private organizations. They use their own website as well as mailing system to promote their books. Since 2005, however, the rise in the posting price has affected the business. Chavoshi states that, in order to conquer the excessive advertising fees, there needs to be a network of connections between Iranian publishers.

Chavoshi has never been a victim of copyright infringement, but is aware of the matter. He believes copyright issues stem from excessive postage fees. As sending a book to Canada or America costs around three Euros, American and Canadian publishers prefer to make a copy rather than purchasing original one. The same happens between Iran and Europe. As a result, it is suggested that the fees should be split between the original publisher and buyer.

As some of the books are available on the internet in PDF format, many readers prefer to take advantage of this free option. Chavoshi adds that some of the publishers are willing to publish their books electronically but they know that Iranian websites will make a copy of them accessible to the public for free immediately. Some of the Iranian websites abroad obey copyright rules; however these regulations do not exist in Iran. He believes that e-books will be the future of the

publishing industry and firms like his one should prepare themselves to adjust to the changing dynamics. He claims that publishers have been looking for a software which does not allow people to copy books. Even though they have even been offered a code system by a company, they know that the codes can be cracked easily in Iran. As Hollywood movies, which spend millions of dollars on codes, are simply pirated and available in the Iranian market before their release in Europe.

Dena publications are not sponsored by any organizations.

Chavoshi states that he is normally approached by the writers whose books are not likely to be published by prominent publishers. Even so, he tries to select books based on their chances of commercial success.

He initially started a retail company to provide him with seed money to run his publishing business. However, he is now faced with piles of unsold books. As he believes the books he has published are valuable, he is not willing to give them away. He has occasionally been approached by writers whose books could have sold as many as two thousand copies with a possibility of having a second edition. However, he could not afford the royalties they were demanding. As an example, a writer once asked for a fee of 12 Euros for a 20 euro book, even though an author's commission is normally around 15-25 per cent of the book price.

The publishing business and Iranian publishers' situation in Europe

We shall discuss here the problems that Iranian publishers face in Europe and the risks they are about to face in the future. Moreover, we will investigate the facilities and potentials in the business and explain

why it is a necessity for exile publications to exist. At the end, we will talk about how to overcome the existing and potential problems. This analysis uses the SWOT method to draw its conclusions.

1. Iranian Publishers' Problems in Europe

These weaknesses can be divided into two categories: a) industry's problems, b) external threats and issues.

According to the publishers, the industry's problems include:

- lack of a distribution centre
- Problems in receiving book fees
- Financial problems
- Lack of an organization for providing introductions, analysis and literary criticism of the books.
- Lack of standards
- Weakness in the evaluation of books before their publication
- Lack of professionalism amongst publishers (Lack of background knowledge and experience)
- Lack of co-operation amongst publishers

External threats and issues:

- The existence of internet and e-Books have affected the sale of paper books
- Lack of reading culture amongst Iranians (It should be noted that the low quality of the book contents has influenced this culture)
- The scattered distribution of the Iranian immigrants around the world

- Exile publishing is a low volume business
- Excessive postage fees
- Shortage in the number of Iranian bookstores in throughout Europe
- Lack of copyright rules in Iran, which provides the ground for the illegal publication of books

2. The potential risks that threaten Iranian publications abroad

Based on the above mentioned issues, we can divide such risks as following:

a) Issues that threaten the publishing business:

- Publishers having other jobs in order to make a living.
- Lack of professional background and knowledge in the field which results in a lower quality of work.
- Publishers have to use obsolete machinery and/or publishing houses.

Lack of quality, standards and financial benefits are threatening the existence of the business.

b) Issues that threaten exile publications:

- The evasion of copyright rules by the publishers in Iran and occasionally Europe, including the illegal publication of books on the internet decrease the chance of original books being sold (For more details see the interviews above).

- The underestimation of the value of editing in the Europe based publications.
- Ignoring the quality of content.

c) Problems in books circulations:

- Excessive postage fees. This could cost more than the price of the book itself. Hence, publishers cannot afford to circulate their books amongst the Iranian readers around the world.
- Lack of a guarantee in receiving the royalties. This affects the book sale, publishers and writers.

d) Issues that affect the book sale.

- Iranians are not avid book readers. This affects the number of books sold and makes the Iranian media abroad overlook books
- Not much attention is given to providing introductions, analysis and literary criticism of the books.
- Publishers themselves cannot afford to promote their books, due to lack of time and budget.

Consequently, the lack of readership among Iranians, a centre to provide introductions, analysis and literary criticism of the books, and hindrance in receiving royalties cause financial harms to the writers.

There are various reasons behind such issues, the most important of which are censorship and the constant threats that the writers face. Some writers even risk their lives by writing certain books. As a result, it seems like they are not expected to seek payment for what they write as it is considered a form of rebellion against the government.

3. The hidden opportunities in exile publications

Despite the aforementioned publication problems, there are opportunities for exiled writers to promote themselves.

As the interviews suggest, the publishers' main incentive has been to fight censorship in Iran and promote freedom of speech.

The exiled publishers have been fighting the restrictive publishing policies in Iran. On the one hand they publish the books that are forbidden in Iran; on the other hand, they publish writings by exiled authors. Hence, they create a cultural bridge between the people inside and outside of Iran. It also improves the cultural relationships between the publishers and sellers in Iran and abroad.

4. What to do?

Based on what has been said so far, we need to improve printing, publication, circulation and sales of books.

A) Printing

It is possible these days to circulate writings all over the world via the internet.

At the moment, the restrictions that publishers face and their lack of cooperation are affecting the production radically. If the exile publishers collaborate together they will be able to (save time and money) reduce the costs and create better quality productions with higher standards.

B) Circulation and Storage

Having a common circulation centre could reduce storage costs. However, the efforts made by some of the publishers in creating such a centre in Europe has been a failure. Therefore, the reasons behind this

failure need to be sought and alternative options should be provided.

C) Publication

According to the publishers, electronic circulation of books and avoiding copyright rules are the main threats to Iranian exile publications. What is more, publication of low-grade books affects exile publishers' reputations and results in financial losses. Finally, the publishers' resistance against digital publications could eventually serve as a threat to the industry.

D) Sales

When coming to market, books compete against one another in two aspects: a) appearance, including graphics, binding and cover. b) content, including structure, syntax and lexicon. Even though Iranian exile publications have improved in both aspects within the past thirty years, they still require more work to match Western standards. Hence, using professional editors, who can deal with both aspects, could advance the books' sale greatly.

On the other hand, due to the intense competition in the global book market, advertising plays a significant role in improving sales. Publishers can make use of modern facilities such as social networking sites, SMS and emails to contact readers. They can also use their own websites, as well as local libraries and media to promote their products amongst potential audiences. Hence, creating a collaborative website, which covers all the publishers, would help improve books' promotion.

Summary of Interviews with Iranian publishers in Europe

Farid Moradi

Iranian publishers in Europe mostly comprise refugees who were forced to leave the country after the revolution in 1979. Without experience or training in the field of publishing they started working in this field to spread awareness about the problems of censorship and to protect the freedom of speech. They initially focused their work on the needs of Iranians outside of Iran by printing those books that were forbidden in Iran, and gradually extended their work into new areas and improved its quality.

The number of copies of each title sold by these publishers over the last three decade has ranged from one hundred to five thousand copies depending on the author and on other factors. Some of the books have reached a second edition but only a few have gone to third edition. Over the last few years, the average circulation of books has decreased to one hundred to three hundred copies only. Of course, many books, including poetry books and books written by unknown authors, have not been sold in stores.

Buyers of Persian books in the West have mostly been the first generation of refugees who often have political backgrounds. The second generation refugees who have grown up in Europe often do not know the Persian language well enough to read it and therefore do not read Persian books. After more than thirty years, the first generation are still the main Persian book purchasers. However, since 2010 a new wave of refugees has come to the West from Iran but cannot afford to buy books.

Some publishers have published books in the language of the host country but they are a very few in number. It rarely happens for the publishers to offer a writer or translator a book contract. This is because of financial difficulties and uncertainty in the market.

Most Iranian publishers in Europe are run by one or two people and the decision to print a book does not follow special evaluative standards. Publishers do not use a modular system for distribution but rather send books to each other or to bookshops with which they have personal connections. Most of the publishers who were interviewed complained about other publishers in and outside of Iran who do not comply with copyright. Some also expressed their concerns about their works being published on the Internet without their permission and the continuation of this in the future.

The majority of publishers consider financial issues to be their main problem, which intensely threatens their work. Not only has their work not always been profitable, it has also caused them loss. The causes of this financial problem are firstly that the readers are scattered

across different countries and places, which means an expensive cost of postage, secondly that published books are printed in Iran and on the internet without permission, and thirdly the lack of a system for the publicity. Considering the facts above, book sales and gaining a return on their investment is a priority for these publishers.

Some publishers in Sweden have accessed some limited support from the government of this country, but most publishers have not yet received such help. Iranian publishers in Europe do try to support and help each other in selling and distributing books. In recent years Iranian publishers in Europe have come up with the idea of a joint work, but with regards to its contents there have been several proposals including a joint book on those authors who had the most influence on Iranian society; a collection of folk tales; stories by writers who are not yet known but have been approved by notable writers; a book for Persian Iranians, Afghans and Tajiks, which includes a good collection of short stories by authors that are unknown in these countries; a work that could tackle the issue of censorship such as excerpts from the writings killed by the current regime or whose works are strictly prohibited; or a study about women in Iran that could be published simultaneously in several European languages to address Europeans.

Publishing Persian Books in the United States

Farid moradi

Before the Iranian revolution in 1979, the first book that was published in the US about Iran was ‘Persia (Story of the Nations)’ by S.G.W.Benjamin⁸⁵, the first American minister in Iran. However, in the 20th century, Persian books are published in American cities such as New York, San Diego and Chicago for the first time. Bahais started publishing books about their faith in Chicago as early as 1907. Moreover, before the Iranian revolution, some of the political parties such as the Union of Islamic Organizations started to publish political books in the US. New York based Fanoos Publications was aligned with Pathfinder Publications, which mainly published the writings of the Socialist Party, including Leon Trotsky’s ideologies and his Iranian supporters, such as the Socialist Workers Party. However, after the Iranian revolution, due to the increasing number of Iranian immigrants who were unhappy with their situation in Iran, the number of the Iranian cultural and publishing organizations increased. Here we will list the

85 The book was published in 1887

most dominant Iranian publishing organizations in US followed by a table of other active publishers in the country.

The Book Company in Los Angeles

The Book Company was registered in 1981 as a publishing company, by Bijan Khalili and Sohrab Rostamian. In 1994 Rostamian left the company, so it was then run by Khalili until in 2006 when he was joined by Pirayeh Khalili. They describe the company's aims as follows:

- Holding exhibitions of Persian books
- Various commercial advertising
- Developing the company's design and calligraphy sections to meet Iranian customers' demands
- Retaining Iranian arts, literature and traditions
- Supporting Iranian media and newspapers in order to help improve solidarity amongst Iranians abroad
- Founding an information centre for the different cultural needs of Iranians abroad

The Company publishes books in Farsi and also English and it sometimes co-funds books with their authors. The Book Company is amongst the few Iranian publishing companies in America are still running today.

Mazda Publications in California

Mazda is under the management of Ahmad Ejbari and its most important activity is the publication of Iranika encyclopaedia. They also publish classical Persian literature, such as Ferdowsi's Shahnameh with the help of Jalal Khaleghi. They also collaborate with Iran Nameh,

a journal of Iranian studies.

Tasvir Publications in California (Los Angeles)

This is one of the dominant companies in the field of contemporary literature. With the management of Masoud Valipoor, it also owns a bookstore that sells books and journals from publishers in Iran. In 1991 this publication moved to the West Wood area in Los Angeles and changed its name to Ketab Sara (House of Books).

Iran Bookshop in Maryland

This company has been run by its manager, Naser Shirzad, since 1983. As one of the most prominent centres in the publication and distribution of Iranian books in the US, it distributes books from Iranian publishers and the works of foreign experts on Persian and Oriental studies which are about Iran, Iranian poetry and culture. The company also produces a list of their published works annually.

Eghbal Publications, Los Angeles

Farshid Eghbal was the founder and the director of Eghbal. He is the son of Javad Eghbal, the manager of Eghbal Publications in Tehran. In their printing house they printed their own books and publications from other publishers too. Sadly, this publication company closed down in 1995 and Farshid Eghbal has since been running the branch in Tehran.

Mehregan Magazine (Iranian Teachers Society), Washington

The centre was founded by Mohammad Derakhshesh with the help of some elite Iranians in America. They publish a journal called Mehregan, which presents critical opinions of Iran. Their books are also mainly political. However, their main activities took place in the 80s.

Other publishers in US

Apart from the main publishers listed above, there are other publishers which are listed in the table below, indicating their details and areas of activity.

| Other Iranian Publishers in US | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| Name and location | Management | Activities |
| The World Book Company, Washington | - | They have published books both in Persian and English and have a library of over 8000 books since .1970 |
| Zamaneh Publications, Californian/ San Jose | Afshin Nasiri | Publishes books (mainly literary) as well as the Zamaneh journal. They collaborate closely with Tasvir .Publications in Los Angeles |
| Iranian Cultural Association – Washington | Bijan Asadipoor | This centre is active in organizing seminars and gatherings for Iranians abroad. This centre collaborates .closely with Daftar-e Honar journal |
| Institute of Persian Art and Literature Publication, Los Angeles | - | Apart from publishing books, this publisher holds Persian Language classes as well as Persian art and .literature workshops |
| The Foundation for Iranian Studies' Publications, New York | Mahnaz Afkhami | This centre was mostly active in printing literary works during the 80s. It also publishes the Iran Nameh journal and organizes cultural and .literature seminars and talks |
| Iran Zamin Publications, California | Abolghasem Parto- .Azam | Its aim is to spread and retain Persian literature and poetry amongst Iranian abroad |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|---|
| Rozan Publications, New Jersey | Ali Abedini | Publishes poetry, fiction and novels and also collaborates with centres such as the Iranian Cultural Association in New Jersey and .Daftar>e Honar journal |
| Ketabe Par, Washington | Mohammad Goodarzi | As part of the Par Cultural Foundation, it has its own typography machinery and on top of Persian it also publishes books in other languages such as Arabic, English, French, Spanish and .German |
| Touka Publications, (California (San Jose | - | Also known as <Bazaar>e Ketab>, i.e. Book market, Touka is a book publisher as well as a bookstore |
| Mehr>e Iran Publications, Maryland | Daryoush Pirnian | Their aim is introducing and retaining the culture and traditions of .ancient Iran through publications |
| Farhangsaraye Nima Publications, Chicago | - | Its activities mainly revolve around .contemporary Iranian literature |
| Women Publications, Los Angeles | - | Their aim is to focus on women>s issues in Iran, such as women's rights, chauvinism in Iranian culture and female immigrants> situation .abroad |
| Iran Publications and Research Centre (cira), Washington | - | Their publications revolve around research and studies on Iran>s affairs and organizing important conferences amongst Iranian .academics abroad |
| Review on Iran Group Publications, (UC Berkeley), California | - | Consists of Iranian researchers and students at Berkeley University, and focuses on issues related to Iran. They also organize conferences and .seminars |

| | | |
|---|--------------------|---|
| Women's Liberation Association Publications | - | Part of Women's Liberation Association, which is involved in social and political activities. Their publications usually focus on women's issues from a leftist viewpoint |
| Free Women of Iran Association's Publications | - | As part of Free Women of Iran Association, this publisher also follows the Association's aim to find ways of resolving women's issues by publishing subjects related to women |
| The Intellect Publishing Centre, California | Parto Noori Ala | It mainly focuses on Iranian contemporary literature |
| Nima Cultural Centre Publications, California | - | It focuses on Iranian contemporary poetry |
| Negin Publications, California | Mahmood Enayat | A branch of Tehran's Negin Publications in US, which publishes same books in both countries |
| Samad Publications, Washington | Younes Parsa Bonab | In line with the leftist ideologies of its founders, it publishes Marxists writings |
| Farabi Publications, New Jersey | - | Their main focus is publishing contemporary Persian literature |
| Raah Publications, Huston/Texas | Ibrahim Makani | Besides publishing books, it also publishes the literary journal 'Sher-e-va Andisheh |
| The Art and Culture Centre Publications, Washington | - | This is a branch of Sheida Cultural and Art Centre whose main focus is research on Iranian culture. They publish a calendar which includes information on Persian music |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Publications of the Women of Iran Organization, Los Angeles | - | A US branch of Iran's Women of Iran Organization that follows their activities in US. Their main work is publishing books on subjects related to Iranian Women's issues. It collaborates with Iran Research Foundation |
| Pars Cultural Association's Publications, San Francisco | - | Their books mainly revolve around art and humanity subjects. It is a branch of Pars cultural association |
| Kankash Mobedan Publications, California | - | It was founded by a number of America-based Zoroastrians and the publications mainly revolve around Zoroastrianism |
| Gutenberg Publications, California | - | It mainly publishes works by Dr. Abdolali Moghbel |
| Publications of Iranian Cultural and Humanitarian Association in New Jersey | - | It mainly publishes literary writings and also publishes 'Peivand', 'Khabarnameh' and 'Daftar-e Honar' journals |
| Cinema Foundation Publications, Los Angeles | - | They aim to promote cultural, literary and artistic activities |
| Asia Publications, Dallas | | This is the US branch of Asia Publications that is based in Iran and usually republishes the Iranian branch's previous books, including the writings of Dr. Ali Parivar |
| Rira Publication, Los Angeles | - | It focuses on works of literature. It also publishes 'Daftarhaaye Shanbeh', a journal of poetry and short stories |
| Art and Design Center's Publications, Pennsylvania | - | It is the publisher of Dr. Fereydoun Keshavarz's writings |

| | | |
|---|----------------|--|
| Rahavard Publication, Los Angeles | Hassan Shahbaz | They publish books as well as .Rahavard journal |
| Amigh Publication, New York | - | Mainly publishes political and comic .books |
| History of Iranian Women Research Centre's Publications | Hassan Javadi | It mainly focuses on studies of .women's issues |
| Karoun Publication, Los Angeles | Abbas Saffari | .It mainly publishes Saffari's poems |
| Parastoo Publication, Dallas | - | Literary works are the main focus of .this publisher |
| Unified Front Publications, California | - | Besides publishing books, it also publishes "Jebheyeh Hamgam" .journal |

It is also worth mentioning names of some of other publishers in the US including: Freedom Association's Publications, Chicago; Book Publishing Foundation, Los Angeles; Research and Education Centre Publications, Los Angeles; Metro Publishing and printing House, Orange County; Freedom Association's Publications, Chicago; Shabtab Publication, San Jose; Pirooz Publication, Los Angeles; Page Publications, Washington; Negaresh Publication Company, California; Sepideh Namazi Khah Sociocultural Publishing Company, Los Angeles; Azar Publications, Washington; Sorayya Publications, Minneapolis ; Iran and the World Publications⁸⁶ ; Forough Publications, Los Angeles; Vartan Printing and Publishing Institute, Los Angeles; Roshan Publications, Massachusetts; Hakoob Gourian Centre of Contemporary Eastern Studies Publications, New York; Nazgol Publications, managed by Nersi Jafari; Afsaneh Publications; Iranian Studies Association

Publications⁸⁷; Rayegan Publications; Pooyeshgaran Publications; Iran Civilization Encyclopaedia Publications⁸⁸

Main Bookstores and Distribution Centres in US

In continuation of the above list, we shall look at a number of bookstores and distribution centres whose main activities include distributing Iranian books and journals in North America and Europe.

- Ebtekar Distribution Centre, California
- Shahrzad Book Distribution Centre, Atlanta/Georgia
- Asia Book Distribution Centre, Washington, Maryland, and Virginia.
- Daryoush Hayat-Gheib Bookstore
- Dekhoda Bookstore, Los Angeles
- Simorgh Bookstore, Los Angeles
- Danesh Bookstore, San Jose/California

It is one of the main Iranian book distributors in America and deals with a variety of topics such as history, sociology, philosophy, political, mysticism, Sufism, poetry and fiction. Besides books it is also one of the main video and music distributors.

- Andisheh-va-Khial Bookstore, Huston/Texas

It is considered to be “Andisheh va Khail” journal’s archive. Its motto is as follows: “an open space for new thoughts and imaginations”. It also allies with Raah Publications.

- Nima Bookstore, Orange County
- Noura Institute, Los Angeles

87 Iranian studies association publication

88 Iranian civilisation encyclopedia publication

Iranian Printing Houses in the US

We will now look at a number of printing houses who, as part of their business, print Persian books and journals. Most Iranian printing houses are based in Los Angeles and California. Some of the printing houses in Los Angeles include Peyk Iran, Zigma, Bella, Speed Craft, ABC Printing, Pragoon. Also, there are Persian and English printing houses, which are active in typesetting and the design of books, newspapers and magazines as well as advertisements, offering other printing services using Farsi script. Some of these printing houses include: Iranian Printing House and Iran Gohar in California, Del Arash, Printing Company, Arian Printing House in Denver who is the publisher of Kanoon monthly journal, and finally AHA Advertisement and Design in New Jersey under the management of Fariborz Anvari. AHA has been engaged in advertisement since 1981 and has worked closely with The Daftar-e-Honar Journal as well as other Iranian centres such as Afra Cultural Association (New Jersey), The Iranian Cultural Society (Maryland), Persian Cultural Centre (Louisiana), Iranian Professionals Society (Northern California), Golhcin Journal, Asheghaneh Journal and Art Publishing.

Independent Book Publishing in the US

Persian book publishing in the US has not progressed much, despite the significant population growth of Persians. The books published in this country are mainly in the following categories:

- Political books, including memoirs or books on the contemporary history of Iran that are written by the supporters of

the monarchy.

- Literature including the poetry of Hafez, Khayyam and works by contemporary poets whose books cannot be published in Iran.
- Persian language learning books for second and third generation Iranians living in US.
- Books with general and miscellaneous subjects such as cookbooks, psychology and humour.
- Reproductions of books published in Iran before the revolution and after the revolution, using offset printing

Upon reviewing the state of bookstores, publishers and Iranian centres in US, it is apparent that California, with 43 publishers, booksellers and printing houses has the most Iranian publishing centres, which is expected given that the majority of Iranians in America reside in this state. After California, Washington is next with 11 Centres (publishers and bookstores), New Jersey with 4 centres, followed by New York and Texas Houston with 3, and then Dallas, Chicago, and Maryland with 2 centres each. San Francisco, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Minneapolis, Denver, Atlanta in Georgia each have only 1 centre for publishing and distribution come next.

Most publishers currently in the US are linked to other entities affiliated with the aim of protecting Iranian identity. In recent years, due to the loss of the Farsi language in third generation Iranians in the US, publishing and selling books in Farsi has fallen and many publishing centres have reduced their activities or closed down.

Book Production Process

As in Iran, the book production process in the US starts with a typed or handwritten text being delivered to the publisher. In the US, however, most of the investment is made by the owner of the work him or herself or by a sponsoring organization as publishers are usually not willing to invest.

Generally after the typesetting, sample reading and editing the book is mostly done by the author himself or by someone he has hired, the book is published in limited numbers of between one hundred to one thousand copies, but in some instances, such as the memoir of Shaban Jafari, a book may be published in more than one thousand copies. In some cases, disregarding copyright, publishers use offset printing to publish books that are published in Iran or Europe. However, the numbers of copies of such printed books are not much more than first edition books.

Book Marketing and Distribution in the US

Farsi books published in the US are distributed for sales in two main places of focus. Firstly, they are distributed inside the US mainly within those regions where Iranians most live. At first books were sold in Persian or Middle Eastern grocery stores but at the beginning of the eighties Iranian bookstores emerged gradually and the supply of Persian books flourished. Secondly, books that are published in the US are distributed in Europe; Iranian centres in the US network with Persian cultural centres in Europe and send books via airmail to European countries such as France, Germany, Netherlands and United

Kingdom. One of the most well-known and enduring connection is between the Book Publishing Company in Los Angeles and Forough Publications in Cologne.

There are also Persian books that are distributed in US, which are published either in Iran and exported by institutes in Iran who focus on sending books to academic, scholarly and cultural centres abroad, or published in Europe and exported by air freight.

Despite these efforts, there are some barriers to distribution of Persian Books in the US. One reason is the geographic dispersion of Iranians in the US and their lack of access to up-to-date information about books published in the Persian language. Another problem is the small number of distribution centres for Persian books in US cities. Other problems are: the low return on the cost of distributed books; the high cost of book production and distribution; unwillingness of Iranians to read books in Persian, particularly in the second and third generations, and finally the detachment from Persian culture and embracing of Western culture by Iranians.

Some of the legal issues worth mentioning are issues of copyright and royalties. Because of the strict copyright laws in US, Iranian publishers do not seem to show much interest in supplying translated books and instead they focus more on books written by Iranians in Persian. However there are cases where US publishers, regardless of the rights of Iranian and European publishers and authors, print books by using the offset method without permission. A clear example of this is the cookbook of Ms Roza Montazami and the books of poet

Ahmad Shamlou and writer Sadegh Hedayat. On the other hand, as most authors have their books published at their own expense, the subject of royalties does not seem to have been much discussed in the publishing field in US. There are some public entities and sometimes city councils may pay subsidies for the publication of books that do not make a profit, but due to the low turnover of book publishing in US, it is difficult to sustain as an economic activity.

Publishing Obstacles

Although publishing Persian books in the US is safe from government surveillance and censorship, Iranian publishers have their own difficulties. The majority of these problems are related to the ways that Persian language is used and also the remoteness of the third generation of Iranians in recent years. Nowadays there are books in Farsi that use Latin script, also known as “Finglish”. This is due to the prevalent use of computers and mobile phones and it is mostly used amongst those who speak Farsi but cannot read it. There are negative and positive sides to Finglish. On one hand it has contributed to the alienation of young Farsi speakers in US from Persian books and their lack of interest in such books. But for many Iranians who were born outside Iran, the Persian language is their second language and although spoken cannot be read by them. Given this, the use of Finglish has been suggested by some publishers in order to encourage the new generation to read and learn Persian poetry and patriotic anthems. An example of such books is the publication of the Rubaiyat of Umar Khayyam gathered by Mr Khosh Kish with Fitzgerald’s English translation, published by

the Book Publishing Company, 1997.

Another style of using the Persian language in recent years is the style where there have been attempts to remove Arabic characters (which sound the same) and replace them with a single character. Some publishers have used this style of writing in a limited way. Some examples of such books are the Mehr seasonal journal under the management of Dr. Mahmoud Rezaiyan and also his book of Simple Persian published by the Book Company in 1989.

Despite the valid reasons for using the methods above, they undermine the growth and spread of the Persian language. By complicating the use of the language it limits it instead and separates the second and third generation even further from of the language and culture of their fathers.

Electronic Publishing

There has been some limited work on the electronic publishing of Persian books but it has not yet become a widespread trend. Some reference books such as dictionaries “Loghatnameh Dekhoda” and “Farhang Moein” are now available on CD in the US. The prospect of electronic publication in the US is very much dependent on Persian Farsi language development in US.

Iranian Publishers in Canada

Although most Iranian Publishers in North America are based in the US, there are also a number of publishing institutes in Canada. Most of these institutes started their works after the revolution in 1979. Given the increasing number of Iranians living in Canada, it could be expected

that the publication of Farsi books and press will thrive in the coming years. Some of the important of these institutions include:

Redcliffe Publishing and Printing House in Vancouver under the management of Khosrow Behnam, who as well as book publishing has been publishing Shenakht journal; the Institute of Bahai Teaching Publications, Farhang Publication in Montreal, Sangar in Toronto, Avaye Iran Publication in Ottawa, Danesh-e-no bookstore and publisher in Toronto who as well as publishing books produces audio books; Afra Publications with a speciality in contemporary literature in Toronto; Forough bookstore in Vancouver under the management of Saed Sepasi who also owns Rangin Kaman (Rainbow) journal in the US; Azad Publications (Montreal), Rokh Publications (Montreal) who also publishes Cheshm-Andaz, Arash and Mizgerd journals; Ayandeh Publication (Vancouver), Iran Gaam Publications, Iranian Woman Publications (Toronto) who also publishes a seasonal journal called Iranian Woman; Namaye Iran Publishing Organization (Vancouver) who publishes Namaye Iran journal (previously known as the journal of Iranian Society of British Columbia) since 1990; Pars Book Distribution Centre in Vancouver who supplies books from US and Europe for distribution in Canada; Pegah bookstore in Toronto, which is now the most active distributor of Farsi books from the US and Europe in Canada.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the work of Iranian publishers in Europe and the US could improve if the publishers within each of these two regions work

together and those who have better facilities share them with those who do not so that they can reduce some of the financial costs and save time. Also a joint distribution centre with a suitable warehouse could help publishers reduce transportation and storage costs.

Furthermore, if US publishers also cooperate contractually with European publishers and create combined distribution centres. This would mean that the basic postage costs, time spent as well as the storage cost would be saved. With such centres, copyright violations (printing books without permission) by some publishers can also be prevented. Another way to reduce the cost of storage is for the publisher who has agreed to print a certain number of copies of a book, to publish it on two or three occasions with a time gap. In this case a system for controlling the publisher's work also needs to be in place to avoid any mistrust and misunderstanding between the author and the publisher.

Another area that needs attention is the challenge of finding an audience. For this purpose publishers need to follow new developments and techniques in the field. Considering the low sales and circulation of Persian books, the "print on demand" style of work could guarantee the future of publishing Persian works abroad, bearing in mind that a book is defined by its function rather than its look.

Most Iranian publishers agree that the issue of the copyright is important and respecting it inside and outside Iran can benefit all in the long-term. In respect of this, Iranian publishers can organize meetings to discuss this issue and reach a joint resolution. Furthermore, communicating with publishers in Iran and encouraging them to respect the copyright

and explaining the benefits of it, can have a good impact in this field.

For publishing Persian books outside Iran, more than anything a joint website seems to be a necessity. All publishers and booksellers can have their own websites but should also share their website links on a joint website. Such a site should be managed and updated professionally, contain a search a function, and books should be selected and advertised based on international standards. The site should also be regularly in contact with book reporters and critics and pay them to introduce books and provide critical reviews. If such a site is obtained with the required quality, it can become a reference site for other Persian media sites, which can use the information on the site within the laws of copyright.

This site should be able to sell books online and also contain the latest news on Persian books and recent world books. It should include catalogues of books that have been published so far outside Iran, interviews with authors and translators, a blog for readers' comments and and a list of editors. One should be reminded that owning and running a website is an active and on-going process that needs to be maintained continuously.

To publicize the existence of such website, it could be advertised on national and local broadcast media as well as social networks such as Facebook. They could also hold online meetings for introducing authors and their books, as another way to achieve publicity.

It must also be said that publishers should take their websites more seriously. For instance, when a site is updated, for example a new feature is added or the data is changed such as the price of a book, it

is necessary to let other partners and publishers know of such updates. It is particularly important as most publishers abroad are bookstores as well. Given that overseas publishers have similar problems and common goals, if they work closely with each other, more success would be achieved and better gains would be obtained.

Publishing in Afghanistan

Ali Amiri

Introduction

Afghanistan is a fairly recent geographic and cultural entity, which was founded with the establishment of Durrani Empire and reign of Ahmad Shah in 1747. Since then, the country has gone through a series of divisions, civil wars and political transitions up to the current period. This period of almost three centuries (1747-2011) has not only been the poorest periods of the region's history in terms of the lack of social and cultural activities, publication of books and historical and cultural influence, but also one of the darkest and most frightening historical periods of this civilization.

During this period of poverty, ignorance and repression dominating Afghan people's lives, there has been no formal system of publishing, distributing, producing and marketing of books.

At the time of Ahmad Shah, there was a small cultural and literary circle formed at Shah's court, which continued its work until in the era of Teymour Shah (1772-1793), but with the hypocrisy of Shah's sons, it disappeared in later periods. The period of forty years between

the death of Teymour Shah and the British military expedition was as quoted by Mr. Farhang as: “One of the darkest and most tragic periods of Afghan history.”⁸⁹ Obviously in such conditions and atmosphere, there was a lack of cultural productivity and interest in books and reading.

The start of the era of the Sadozai dynasty also lacked an interest in books and culture. Afghan historians like Mullah Feiz Mohammad Kateb Hazara, Ali Ahmad Kouhzad, Mir Gholam M. Ghobar and Farhang have made occasional reference to the lack of interest in culture and the illiteracy of Sadozais. With regards to the founder of the Sadozai dynasty, Farhang has written: “Amir Doust Mohammad Khan, the first ruler of the family, was not properly educated and therefore had essentially no interest in poetry, literature or any scientific or creative matter.”⁹⁰ Due to this lack of interest and in some cases illiteracy of the rulers, as well as divisions and dissensions of the ruling families and their long-term bloody conflicts over power, the book publishing industry in Afghanistan grew slowly and with much delay, compared to the neighbour countries and people in the region.

The hegemony of the three correlated elements of “poverty”, “ignorance”, and “tyranny” over the Afghan people has been such that the era of reforms of Amanullah Khan (1919 to 1929) has been considered the golden era and the only prosperous time by Afghan intellectuals. In his book, Mir Mohammad Sadiq Farhang, a late

89 Mir Mohammad Sadiq Farhang, *Afghanistan in the last five centuries*, Ehsan Publications, Qom, Iran, 2001. P311

90 Same as above, P311

contemporary historian mentions: “before the golden era, there was not even a single graduate in law and legal studies in the country.”

⁹¹ The first bylaws were set by a Turkish officer called “Badri Beyk” during the Amani reforms that can be considered as the first sign of country’s transition from chaos to order.

History of Publishing in Afghanistan

There are not many credible sources that focus on publishing in Afghanistan but according to existing narratives, printing was first launched during the era of covenant Amir Shir Ali Khan (1863-1880). When considering that printing was commonly used for years before this in British India and in Iran and also that the first printing machine was used by Ottoman government in 1730, we understand publishing and printing in Afghanistan started very late and with a big time gap compared to its neighbours.⁹²

With regards to the start of the publishing industry in Afghanistan, Rasoul Raheen has written in his book “History of Press in Afghanistan”: “during the reign of Amir Shir Ali Khan, lithography was launched for the first time in Afghanistan.”⁹³ He then describes: “books and papers that were copied with great difficulty or were published in India’s printing houses were suddenly printed easily in Kabul. Thousands of copies were printed, which on one hand were owned by the king, governmental headquarters and the rich, but on the other hand there was an overflow

91 Same as above, P545

92 R.K.Mohammad Amin Riahi, Persian Language and literature in the Ottoman Empire territory, Ajang, Iran, 1990, p328.

93 Afghanistan History of Press, First edition, Meyvand Publication, Kabul 2007, p60.

of books including many national works available in libraries.”⁹⁴ This description by Mr. Raheen seems to be a bit exaggerated as no-one including Mr. Raheen himself has shown any evidence that the books published in this period was anything more than 50 titles let alone an “overflow of books in libraries” in Afghanistan. However, it is clear that at the time of Amir Shir Ali Khan, at least, three printing houses called “Mortazavi Printing House”, “Mostafavi Printing House” and “Shams-Al Nahar Printing House” were established. According to Raheen “The first work that was printed in Mostafavi Printing House was a treatise called the “A Lightning Bolt in Rejection of Mendacious Wahhabis”, which was published in 1865.⁹⁵ Books that were printed in these printing houses mainly had military or religious themes and were printed in limited numbers of copies, which indicates that these printed works were mostly promotional and educational pamphlets targeting a specific group of readers.

The era of Amir Abdul Rahman Khan (1880-1901) was the era of terror and violence. According to Sediq Farhang, in this time there were few literary works and many publications had generally been limited to the jurisprudence, hadith, Sufism and other sciences.⁹⁶

However, some historical books were published in this period including “Golshan Emirates” by Noor Mohammad Nouri and “the later kings of Afghanistan” by Mirza Yaqub Ali Khafi. Other important books published in this era are “The preaching letters”, “Al Din Calendar”,

94 Same as above

95 Same as above

96 Afghanistan in the last five centuries, Ehsan Publications, Qom, Iran, 2001, p441

“Jihad Encouragement” and above all, “Divan of Aisha Durrani”.⁹⁷

During the modern era, a period when ideas of modernity gave rise to movements by the people especially the intellectuals in Afghanistan and the region, the most serious actions in the field of book publishing were undoubtedly conducted at the time of Amir Habibullah Khan (1901-1919), who was an innovative and literate king. This period can be considered as one of publishing’s most thriving times in Afghanistan.

During the rule of Amir Habibullah, a printing house called “Enayat Printing House” was active under the supervision of his brother Enayatollah Khan. A series of books were published in this printing house with the efforts of Enayatollah, and with encouragement and partnership of Mahmoud Tarzi, the publisher of the famous and influential weekly journal called “Seraj Al Akhbar”. One of the most important works of this printing house was the publication of the three-volume book called “Seraj Al Tavarikh” between 1913 and 1915 by Feiz Mohammad Kateb Hezara, a prominent historian of Afghanistan, who was given the title of “Contemporary Beyhaqi” in his country. Volume three of Seraj Al Tavarikh was banned immediately after its publication, but overall the publication of this book as the largest and most detailed book on the history of Afghanistan is undoubtedly an important event in Afghanistan’s history of publishing.

Another rather remarkable work published in this era was the book “Russia and Japan at war” by two Turkish military officers translated by Mahmoud Tarzi, who also translated some of the stories of Jules Verne. These are translations based on the idea of modernization and

were important in the beginning of modernization movements.

The status of publishing during the few years of Amani's reforms (1923-1928) continued to improve and in some cases growth and prosperity were seen in this sector. However, during periods of Saqavy (1928), Nadir Shah (1929-1932) and the first thirty years of Zahir Shah (1932-1963), known as the era of "Ruling Cousins" (Sardar Mohammad Hashim, Sardar Shah Mahmoud and Sardar Mohammad Davoud), publishing and the book production didn't have much success in Afghanistan.

During the era of democracy or the constitution decade (1963-1973), publishing started to grow slightly. As described by Sabah Al-din Keshkaki, in this period, most of the activities of cultural and political forces of society centred on political debates, while the education sector and academic institutes focused on politics more than at any other time.⁹⁸ These ideological and social factors resulted in publishing flourishing more than before.

Writings of Egyptian Islamists, especially Seyyed Qutb, were also translated and published in this period to meet the ideological needs of the Islamist groups. The book "Islam and Social Justice" by Seyyed Qutb and "Sharia Politics" by Ibn Taymiyah, both published under the supervision of Molavi Mohammad Yunes Khales, who later became one of the leaders of the fundamentalist Jihad party in Afghanistan, show the ideological orientation of publishing in this period. The publisher of these works was an assembly called "The Education and Awareness

98 R.K. The decade of Constitution Law, Sabah Aldin Keshkaki, Meyvan Publications, Kabul, Fourth edition, 2005, chapter 5, p141.

Society”, which clearly had ideological resonance. The presidential era of Davoud Khani (1974-1979) and the first couple of years of the Left governments (including the presidency of Nurmohammad Torki, Hafizullah Amin from 1979 to 1981) were unsuccessful times for the publication of books in Afghanistan.

However in the later periods of the Left regime and at the time of Soviet military presence in Afghanistan, during the presidencies of Babrak Karmal and Dr. Najibullah (1981-1992), the Writers’ Association of Afghanistan, which was managed by people such as Rahnoud Zaryab and Akram Osman, published a few poetry books and novels. Despite the ideological themes of these books, they were still appreciated by the society’s intellectuals of this period.

Independent publication in Afghanistan

The history of publishing in Afghanistan is less familiar with the phenomenon of independent publication. For a long time the Ministry of Press, in particular the Compilation and Translation Department within this Ministry, was the single unit in charge of printing and publishing. The Ministry of Press in later years was replaced by the Ministry of Information and Beyhaqi Publications was the only book publisher in the country, working under a framework set by this Ministry.

In addition to Beyhaqi Publications, which worked under the rule of the Ministry of Information and Culture, there were three other governmental book printing and production centres involved in publication of academic and scientific books. One was the “History Association”, which was active in sixties and seventies but was

replaced by “Afghanistan Writers’ Association” in the eighties. The second centre was the Academy of Science, which was more active in the eighties and now days does not have the ability to publish books according to national and regional standards. The first volume “Ariana Dictionary”, which was recently re-published by the Academy of Science, shows a decreased quality of content compared to previous periods. This shows the turbulent state of publishing and deplorable lack of knowledge dissemination in Afghanistan’s public sector. The third centre is Kabul University Publications, the most active years of which were in the sixties and eighties.

Although some laws such as the press law during Zahir Shah in the twenties had given the right of establishing publications to natural persons, in reality there were no private publishers until the fall of Taliban in 2001, and therefore not even a single book was published by the private sector. This means that in a period of nearly one century the government had the exclusive right over publishing.

In recent times there have been some talks on independent publication and there are laws stating provisions for establishment of such publications. However much time is needed for these laws to result in creation of a publishing industry, which would be independent and active in accordance with market requirements and increasing demands. We should point out that the appearance of a publishing private sector is not only dependent on the will of the government or the openness of the political system but also on the social, cultural and historical conditions of the country.

In the new era in Afghanistan, a book as commodity good and a cultural need has been having problems from the foundation. Because of widespread poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, cultural stagnation and recession, writing styles and customs were eliminated to a great degree. In the book *Taj Al Tavarikh* (1904), Amir Abdul Rahman, complains that throughout the whole country not a single pen holder or Mirza (secretary) could be found.⁹⁹

This situation had made book writing impossible in Afghanistan and as there is no point in talking about publishing and distribution while there was no book written in the first place. Also, with regards to economic development, Afghanistan was not in a financial state to develop cultural phenomena such as publishing and a book market.

It is true that private ownership has always existed in Afghanistan and some economic sectors have been out of government's reach. But the concept of a private sector in the sense we know it today has never existed in Afghanistan and therefore even if publishing books was economically possible, the necessary mind-set for it did not exist. As a result, until the era of the new constitution of Afghanistan in 2002, it is meaningless to speak of independent publishing.

However, tasks undertaken recently already show a good start in the field of publishing. Freedom of speech and publication has found legal guarantees as the freedom of speech has been recognized as a right and as the foundation of a civil society. Publications such as "Amiri", "Saied" and "Taak" have been active in the field of fiction and "Armanshahr" in the field of literature and transitional justice.

99 Amir Abdul Rahman, *Taj Altavarikh*, Kabul Meyvand Publications, 2004, p 263.

Also, in academic publishing, there are visible signs of independent publishing emerging while previously this area was entirely under the government's control.

In addition, alongside public and academic publishing centres, private universities are slowly becoming active and trying to establish their own publishing institutions. Recently, "Ibn Sina Institute of Higher Education" has begun its activity, which shows the efforts of the private sector to rise in all areas. With the growing demand for access to resources that are scientifically valid, it can be hoped that this area would evolve soon.

Current Publishing structure in Afghanistan

One of the difficulties of publishing in Afghanistan is the lack of a suitable structure. As previously said, publishing in Afghanistan never became an industry, as publishing was the government's exclusive right and thus official ideology always dominated printing and publishing activities. In the new era, publishing generally lacks an overall structure, despite the fact that there are legal grounds for freedom of publication. In other words, not only has the government not made the necessary investment in publishing, but the private sector has not given the necessary attention to writing and publishing, too. There has never been a good distribution system that would include the different stages of book production from writing to publication and supply.

Apart from educational publications that are all exclusive to the government, there are no principles or formats ruling the publishing market nor there any applicable laws that can actually protect the right

of the author or compiler. Young authors are mostly active in the field of poetry and fiction and not many publishers would undertake all stages of book production from writing to supply of books. Instead, there are a number of small publishers who, because of inevitable market issues, are illegally publishing books that are in demand. They sometimes even reduce books' number of pages to lower the costs and have not acquired the slightest notion of responsibility or liability towards the original publisher, the writer or even customers.

Books that are published in Iran, especially in the city of Mashhad, and then enter Afghanistan for sale, are printed in Pishavar according to market needs by the offset method and are then distributed in high volumes but with low prices and lower quality than the original. Amongst the works that will be marketed this way, are bulky books with several volumes such "Dekhoda Dictionary" and "Khajeh Abdullah Ansari's interpretations of Quran".

The book publishing sector in Afghanistan currently depends more on the ability, desire and financial ability of the author rather than being based on supply and demand. As a result, a writer should use his own initiative in publishing his book. Some authors publish their own works, some assign publishers to publish it without claiming writing fees and some even apply for aid from NGOs.

The book market in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has been a limited consumer of books and has never had a position of producing or supplying large numbers of books. Also with the circumstances mentioned before, Afghanistan has never been in a

position to export books to neighbouring countries or enter a cultural exchange with them. Therefore, by speaking of the book market in Afghanistan we are looking at areas of publishing and book markets that have had an impact in Afghanistan. From the beginning of the new era in Afghanistan, its book market has been heavily influenced by outsiders.

Since a century ago, three centres of book publication have been influencing the limited book market in Afghanistan; central Asia, India and Iran (Persia). Relations between Afghanistan and Central Asia have a long historical background. Historically cities of Samarkand (Tajikistan) and Bukhara (now in Uzbekistan) were closely linked to the city of Balkh, the cultural capital of Afghanistan and for many years these cities located on the two sides of the Amu river created a cultural midpoint with similar characteristics.

At a time when printing was introduced in the East, Bukhara was one of the first cities to embrace modernity, and became engaged and active in the field of book writing and publishing. Because of cultural ties, Bukhara and cities nearby such as Samarkand and Tashkent and the surrounding cultural areas in Central Asia, had an effect with regards to books on Afghanistan. For a long time, Bukhara and surrounding cities were considered as the centre of books for most of the northern parts of Afghanistan. Some merchants such as Qari Taj Mohammed Khujandi, Qari Qous Al-Din and Qari Jalal Al-Din Siddiqi were famous for selling Bukhara-published books in Afghanistan.

This situation continued more or less until the mid-eighties but the

real impact of this area did not last in Afghanistan. The book sector in Bukhara on one hand experienced intellectual rigidity, censorship and stagnation, and on the other hand with the influence of Bolshevik movements and eventual Soviet political influence, the scope of its influence on Afghanistan became very limited.

This situation eliminated Bukhara's influential position in Afghanistan, although many religious schools, especially in northern Afghanistan, have been following the teaching outlines of schools in Bukhara and shares the same text books such as "Aghayed Alnasfieh" by Maturidi. Also some book lovers and readers in Afghanistan still keep books printed in Bukhara in their personal libraries not only as a book but as symbol of days when Bukhara and Samarkand were centres of culture and book production.

The second centre influencing the book market in Afghanistan was the Indian subcontinent. Many intellectuals and cultural figures of Afghanistan date the relations with India to the time of attacking India by Mahmoud Shah Ghaznavi (997-1030) and the writing of the famous book "Research on India" by Abou Reihan Birooni. But regardless of the historical realities of the past, Afghanistan was known as "the Gate of India" and many books published in India can also be found in Afghanistan. Cultural relations between Afghanistan and India, especially northern India and Indian Muslims has been very extensive.

The teachings of some Indian figures were one of the main roots of the Constitutional Movement in Afghanistan. In his book "The Constitutional Movement in Afghanistan" Abdul Hai Habibi Fasli

dedicated a chapter to the introduction of these figures and their works. He has written: “In 1903 when The School of HabibiyeH was opened, although there were Afghani teachers, there was a need for foreign teachers to teach science, mathematics and geography, as Afghanistan lacked teachers specialized in science. Therefore, they started to bring Muslim Indian teachers from colonial India to their schools.”¹⁰⁰ Habibi also refers to people such as Dr. Abdul Ghani and his brothers, and Molavi Muhammad Hussain, who all contributed to the publication of materials on modernization as well as the expansion of education in Afghanistan. They were also active in the constitutional movement, especially Abdul Ghani who spent a long time (about thirteen years) in prison. Molavi Muhammad Hussein wrote many books in the fields of mathematics, natural science and even history. Some of his books, such as “The Afghan King” and “Revolution in Afghanistan”, were like historical memoirs, although according to Habibi they were not free from political direction, as they contain the author’s personal observations and therefore should be remembered.

Rasoul Raheen points out that before the beginning of the printing industry in Afghanistan, books that were published in India had been in use. In the sixties the book trade from India was considered as a successful but limited trade. Haji Mohammad Rafiq and Haji Abdul Ghaffar were two of the most successful Indian book tradesman in the Qandahar market in the sixties. Books that were imported from Bukhara to Afghanistan were mostly on Sufism such as Jami’s “Seven

100 Abdul Hay Habibi, *Constitutional Movement in Afghanistan*, Kabul, State’s Committee of Writing and Publishing, 1983, p62.

Thrones”, “Divan of the Naqshband Shah”, “Rashhat Ein Al-Hayat” and “The Divan of Ghaus-e-Azam”, while books from India were more historical like “The Act of Virtue” (letters of Shah Jahan), “The Angel History”, “History by Sir John Malcolm” and “Soltani History”.¹⁰¹

Finally, Iran has been the third centre that has had an important impact on Afghanistan’s book market. As the domain of influence of the two previous centres gradually decreased, Iran stepped into the book publishing market in Afghanistan.

According to existing evidence, from the late Qajar era, books that were published in Mashhad, Tehran, and Tabriz, have been available to a limited group of intellectuals of Afghan society. But the arrival of mass cultural products from Iran was during the decade of democracy and republicanism era of Davoudkhani. In this era, cultural relations between Iran and Afghanistan expanded and the participation of scholars of the two countries became successful in publishing and editing written, especially historical books and books on the heritage of the Persian language.

Many of the books that were revised by Afghan scholars were published in Iran. Two important Farsi books of this group were “Alsavad Al’azam” translated by Hakim Samarkandi (about the fourth century AH) and “The virtues of Balkh” by Hossein Vaez Balkhi, which was edited by Abdol Hai Habibi and published by the Iranian Cultural Foundation under the management of Parviz Natel Khanlari. The literary atmosphere in Afghanistan in the seventies was for long under the influence of Iranian contemporary writers like Sadegh Hedayat,

101 Retrieved from the interview with Mt Vasim Amiri, date 4/04/2011.

Reza baraheni and Ahmad Shamlou, and with the start of war and religious jihad writers with religious orientations like Ali Shariati and Jalal Al-Din Farsi also received attention to some degree.

As well as these books from central Asia (Samarkand and Bukhara), the Indian Subcontinent (Lahore and Delhi and Hyderabad) and Iran (Tehran, Tabriz and Mashhad), some Egyptians books became available to the elite part of the society. This was due to relations that were established between Afghanistan and Egypt in the sixties.

An example of these works is the famous book of “Modal logic” by Zaki Najib Mahmoud, which was translated into Persian by Ghulam Hassan Mojadadi and published by Kabul University Publications. However, these exchanges of works were limited, were only available to elite circles and were never publicly released.

Overall, the book market in Afghanistan has a small share in the national market. This is due to the constraints of urbanization, the low number of published book, and printing and publishing limitations in the country. According to the reports of Hussein Nael in his “List of books printed in Dari in Afghanistan”, from the beginning of printing until the end of the republic era, only about two thousand books were published. This number of books during a period of more than a century shows that undoubtedly the circulation of books as a commodity has not had a place in Afghan society. This figure also shows that that few books that were published in Afghanistan have been released and supplied to the public. As an example, the book “Nicomachean Ethics” by Aristotle was published once only in the fifties in Kabul in a limited

number of copies (about a thousand), but a book of the same year can still be found in Afghanistan's book market.

Book publishing legal issues

Book publishing does not have a very clear place within Afghanistan's legal system. In a legislative period of nearly a century, many laws were passed and ratified in the country and yet no laws were allocated with regards to printing and publishing or regulating compilation and publication of books. This indicates a lack of a specific place for books in the mind of Afghan society.

There is no evidence that before sixties, book publication had followed a certain set of rules. The Compilation and Translation bill that was passed by the National Assembly in 1964 is most probably the first legal document with regards to books in Afghanistan. Although this bill was essentially on the education curriculum, it contained many subjects related to books and translation. Other laws relating to books can be found in trade law as well as in the customs and regulations governing media.

In 2008 the law "Protecting rights of Inventors and Pioneers" (official newspaper no. 456) was adopted, which stated intellectual property rights. However, it did not mention anything specifically about books. This inevitably raises the question as to whether with writing a book, the writer or the compiler would be entitled to the intellectual property rights or not.

The biggest legal event in the field of publishing was the passing of the "The Protection Act for authors, composers, artists and researchers",

which is known as the “Copyright Law” in Afghanistan. This law defines the position of authors and publishers as well as the set-up for the publication process. However this law is largely a government-orientated one. The Ministry of Information and Culture is not only the single executer of this law but has also been defined as a powerful entity in publishing and distribution of books. This is a regressive and monopolistic law, but only a small percentage of it is currently being implemented.

Although independent publication has been implicitly recognized by this law, the process of registering a publishing company is not defined in this law and therefore an independent publishing institute cannot follow the framework of this law for being legal. It is also for the same reason that there is no publisher in the country that is both “independent” and “legally registered”. According to the chairman of the Office of Planning of the Ministry of Information and Culture there are not any independent publishers registered at this office nor is there demand for a permit and yet there are many small publishers who are active in all varieties of illegal trade.¹⁰²

Despite the importance of these laws, they do not seem to go beyond the basic generalities of the publishing work and do not yet support the recognition of issues such as guaranteeing freedom of speech. Only such rights can provide a good basis for the formulation of appropriate laws and regulations in the absence of an appropriate enforcement mechanism and robust planning. Despite the presence of copyright

102 Retrieved from the interview with Mr Khosro Amini the head of Planning of Ministry of Information and Culture, date 25/04/2011.

law, there is still a need for legislations with more focus on details of book publishing, authors' rights and their relations with publishers.

Publishing Obstacles

Some of the main problems facing publishing are poverty, illiteracy, the public's lack of interest in books and a general lack of scientific knowledge within the Afghan community that limits the production of scientific and literary works in the society.

These problems are on one hand linked to readers and their low demand for high quality books and on the other hand publishers who are illegally printing and publishing. Furthermore, authors and creators do not have the technical capabilities and the necessary skills and knowledge to produce good quality works. It should also be pointed out that the book market's demand in Afghanistan has been often saturated by foreign markets, especially books published in Iran and partially in Pakistan. For example, as mentioned before, books published in Iran have been printed by offset method in Peshawar (Pakistan) by Afghan publishers and are imported into Afghanistan afterwards.

Other difficulties are due to book trade tax irregularities, widespread disregard for the rights of publishers as a result of the lack of law enforcement and supervision of the Ministry of Information and Culture.

The problem of readership for Afghani writers

This is a very complex problem with different aspects that includes: the influence of book market of neighbouring countries; the lack of spirit to critique and to publicize; and also the readers' failure to seriously

challenge authors. The afghan writer feels as he has no followers or if he does, they have been already seized by the authors of neighbouring countries. The situation is true mostly in the field of religious and fictional publications as the Afghan citizens' demand for such books is answered by its neighbours.

During the last three decades, no major religious work that would be used by more specialized readers has been written by Afghan religious scholars. The same situation is true in literature; despite authors like Akram Osman, Rahnavard Zaryab, no Afghan authors have found the same position as Iranian writers such as Reza Baraheni, Sadegh Hedayat, Jalal Al Ahmad and Mahmoud Dowlatabadi in hearts of Afghan readers. An Afghan writer is forced to claim and stabilize a position in the minds of Afghan readers, as well as being able to challenge the competitors. Only in this case one can hope for the vitality and prosperity to be brought into Afghanistan's static publishing sector.

In recent years, contemporary Afghan writers outside the geographical borders of Afghanistan have taken major steps in creating fiction. Khaled Hosseini, the author of "The Kite Runner" and "The rising of Thousands Suns", has become a universal writer and his books have been translated into many languages in the world. Although he wrote his works in English, his precise knowledge of Afghan society provided a living and moving picture of the country especially at the times of civil war. Another example is Atiq Rahimi, an Afghan writer and filmmaker who lives in France and has succeeded in giving Afghan contemporary literature a good reputation with two of his works - "Earth and Ashes"

and “Thousand houses of Dream and Terror”. Two other Afghan writers who are well known in Iran are Mohammad Asif Soltanzadeh, who lives in Denmark and has won few literary prizes for his books, and also Mohammad Hassan Mohammadi, who lives and writes in Iran and whose books have also won literary awards.

Difficulties in writing, production and distribution of books

The cultural discontinuities, scientific weaknesses, political instabilities and long term disputes of Afghanistan have destroyed the grounds for writing and imaginative works to a large extent. Regardless of the legal obstacles and turmoil that dominates the book publishing market, suitable grounds for production including technological developments, cultural complexities, accumulation of experience and knowledge, leisure time and the affordance of luxury, have not been available in Afghanistan, yet they are all necessary for the production and development of written works. As a result of long term unrest, the country is culturally a simple society without the ability of challenging or questioning. Therefore, the need for written works, which is a feature of an advanced stage of development and of the complexity of a culture are not yet essential in this country.

The produced works have been weak with regards to their content and quality of production and have also been unable to answer the mental and spiritual needs of the community. Some of these production problems as mentioned before are due to the lack of required order and regulation. In the past, censorship and state supervision dominated book production; however with resolving those issues in recent years,

the market seems to be experiencing more turbulences than before. Book production does not follow any specific process and no publisher applies the system of editing. Technical and artistic points are not implied in printing and they mostly depend on the publishers' taste or financial state. In many cases books are photocopied or printed by xerox.

On the other hand, if a book gets published, the more serious problem is the distribution, which faces strong barriers. Due to a weak domestic market and small numbers of books produced, Afghanistan lacks an internal distribution system. Books are mainly concentrated in Kabul, or at most in one, two or three other major cities. Even in Kabul, books that are produced by the government are only supplied to specific centres and are not distributed amongst other bookstores in the city. In this case, personal connections and the publishers or authors' communication abilities are the main factors behind success, rather than the system of distribution.

In addition there are other challenges such as scientific and literary plagiarism, taking advantage of lack of support for authors and censorship in religious matters by the government or other suppressive groups. There is no official censorship; however there are powerful sectors that can impose censorship on a book for ideological reasons. The lack of interest in and hostility towards books has a long history in Afghanistan.

Whereas the Taliban did not cause any harm to the National Library in the capital, during their ruling, they burned the "Abdol Ali Mazari

Library” in Bamyan as well as “Naser Khosro Balkhi Library” in Pol-e-Khomri the capital of Baghlan province.¹⁰³ In 2010 the Council of Afghanistan’s Clerics ordered the governor of Nimrooz to throw a thousand books into the river. Without any legal reasons, the Ministry of Information and Culture has banned religious books such as Bible from entering the country. Finally, the lack of publicizing is publishing’s other problem; most newspapers do not have a specific page dedicated to new publications and there are not any magazines or weekly journals that would follow the progress in the field of book publishing and its market.

Electronic Publishing

Internet access has grown significantly in the last decade, but this growth is not enough to consider electronic publishing as a reality in Afghanistan’s publishing market. Internet connections are still slow in Afghanistan and the necessary skills to use online publishing do not exist. With the help of foreign experts, government agencies have slowly taken initial steps towards digitizing, although most of these institutions and centres are still without official information websites.

Publishers themselves have not shown much interest in using internet and electronic publishing. This is because they do not see a need for them in their works, or do not know how to use it, or do not see it as cost-effective. No publisher in Afghanistan yet owns an official website to share information with its readers. Therefore electronic use in the field of books is currently limited to minor digital libraries and

103 Retrieved from a private interview with Mohammad Javad Sarvar the representative of Bamyan province in the first Afghan parliament after Taliban, date 13/08/2013.

websites for governmental data.

Suggestions for book publishing in Afghanistan

A book is a good and a cultural commodity. As far as the reader is concerned it does not matter which author has written the book but instead it is important to read a book of his/her interest and enjoyment. By focusing on some important points, improvement can be made in the slow-moving book market in Afghanistan.

One serious problem that Afghanistan's book sector is facing is the lack of investment. The report of Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) shows that the volume of domestic and foreign investments in Afghanistan, despite the unfavourable conditions of security, is high. However, the share of this that goes into cultural affairs and books is very low. Injection of capital into the book market and deployment of new technologies for a standard book production and layout will encourage publication within the frame of law and would cause difficulties for petty and illegal publishers. This will be an incentive for authors and writers and would give the writing sector momentum.

Books have never been of interest to the Afghan media sector and are missing from the pages of newspapers and magazines. Discussions on books are usually limited to formal occasions such as "The reading day" or the "Combating illiteracy day". To inspire readers and writers and to publicize information on books, a journal with information about books and review of books should be published. This would undoubtedly encourage the writer and the reader and would eventually help publishing and the book market to grow.

Afghanistan contains historical manuscript repositories. If the production and writing of new books is not satisfactory because of academic and scientific weaknesses, the revival of these past manuscripts could have a positive impact on the fragile book market in Afghanistan. It would require serious investment, the development of clear standards and new technologies to re-produce these historical books.

Encouraging and inspiring authors and writers can improve the field of publishing as well. Public and private sectors should establish mechanisms to encourage writers and authors and form a competitive atmosphere in this field. In Afghanistan today, an author or writer has little social prestige and economic benefit.

The last suggestion is the establishment of a prize and review event for the best book of the year in all fields. For the last two or three years, the “Mahmoud Tarzi Book Prize” has been launched by the “Centre for Strategic Studies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan”, but this program is exclusive to books on politics and international affairs, lacks precise mechanisms for arbitration and evaluation, and is not well publicized. If a prestigious book prize could be launched at a national level with the participation and cooperation of top government officials, it would hopefully help book publishing growth in Afghanistan.

In conclusion, the field of publishing in Afghanistan could be transformed by additional investment, the provision of legal frameworks, the encouragement of authors and giving books a clear place in the overall structure of cultural policies.

A review of publishing in Tajikistan

Dilshad Rakhimov

Tajikistan has an interesting history in book publishing and Tajik people have made valuable contributions towards world's literature and science as a Persian speaking culture. The beginning of writing and publishing in the Republic of Tajikistan was in the twenties. After the establishment of Soviet rule in Tajikistan, workshops with printing machinery were launched there for the first time.

From the first days of Bolshevik rule, there was an emphasis on the prominent role of the press in the dissemination of socialism. On the other hand the press was an important and effective tool in eliminating illiteracy; by promoting the values of socialist and communist ideas and training specialists in different areas, it raised an intellectual class on a national level.

Hence, the Soviet government spent large sums on the formation of printing houses and the progression of production of books, newspapers and magazines. Engineers and experts from the cities of Moscow, Leningrad (St. Petersburg), Kiev and Tashkent worked in printing houses in Tajikistan and taught the techniques and skills of the

profession to their Tajik counterparts.

From 1924 until 1929, Tajikistan was an autonomous republic within Uzbekistan. The first workshop, called “The Tajik government Publications”, was established in 1925 in the city of Samarkand in Uzbekistan. Another reason for this publication being in Samarkand is that at the time there were no printing machines in Tajikistan itself and therefore books and press were published in Samarkand and then were sent to Tajikistan.

After nine years the New Publications was opened in the city of Stalin Abad (now Dushanbe), the objective of which was to establish an allied Soviet government by keeping the Tajik people away from their own heritage of language, culture and religion. First, in 1925 Tajiks were deprived of using their ancestors’ Persian scripts and the Latin alphabet was used instead. Finally in 1940 the Latin alphabet was replaced by Russian Cyrillic alphabet. This transition was a strong blow to the spiritual and cultural traditions. It also had a negative effect on the growth of press and publication despite the money and time spent in efforts to convert the machines and devices for training entrepreneurs, editors and scribes.

The success of the Tajik press was seen more in the years 1960 to 1970. Compared with their neighbouring republics, Tajikistan repeatedly published works and translations of Persian literature (Rudaki, Ferdowsi, Khayyam, Saadi and Hafez, Nizami, Jami); Tajik contemporary scholars such as Sadr Al-din Eini, Abulghasem Lahouti, M. Tursunzadeh and Russian poets and writers including Alexander

Pushkin, Leo Tolstoy, Maxim Gorky, Mikhail Sholokhov and political writings of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and Vladimir Lenin (Soltanov, 1999:23).

The peak of publishing in Soviet Tajikistan was in 1988 when 920 titles, party's guidelines and pamphlets were published in 12,500,000 copies. In addition, 54 magazines were published in 26,361,000 as well as 74 newspapers in a daily account of 1,585,000 copies.

History of Tajik newspapers

In recent years, the 11th of March is known as the “Tajik Press Celebration” in Tajikistan, which is celebrated by all press including governmental and non-governmental. This is because in March 11th of 1912 a newspaper from Bukhara called “Bukhara-ye Sharif” was first published in Farsi by its founders Mohieddin Mirza and Mirza Siraj, who were leaders of an organization called “Young Bukharais”. However, the Amir of Bukhara became suspicious of it and with the help of Russia shut it down on January 2nd of 1913.

One of the oldest and most famous newspapers in Tajikistan during the Soviet regime was “The Tajik Song” later called “The Red Tajikistan” and then replaced by a new name “Soviet Tajikistan” and finally with the independence of Tajikistan became “The Republic”. Other soviet newspapers, which were still published for some time after independence were “Education and Civility” (later “Literature and Technology”), “Tajikistan Komosomol“ (now “Youth of Tajikistan”), “Tajikistan Pioneers”, and magazines including “The Revolution Flame”, “Leading Science”, “Red East” (now “Voice of the East”),

“Women of Tajikistan”, “Science and Life” and “The Flame”.

Other newspapers were “Таджикистан Коммунист” (Communist Tajikistan) and “Pamir”, which were both in Russian and there was also one in Uzbek language called “Тодҳкстоҳи Собет” (Soviet Tajikistan). Regular local publications were also printed in various regions and provinces. Most of these newspapers are recorded as published in the Soviet Union. This might have been done intentionally to promote loyalty to the Soviet Union. However some of these newspapers such as “The Tajik Song” and “The Revelation Flame” were published in Uzbekistan.

Readers of Soviet newspapers, regardless of where they were published, were mostly concentrated in the cities of Samarkand, Bukhara and Kokand. After Tajikistan’s independence, the number of newspapers and magazines increased. During the twenty years of independence (1991-2011), the theme, content, and goals of Tajik press has changed. Newspapers and magazines have played a major role in reflecting the society’s concerns during the economic, social and political transition period. They have also changed from a pure political and ideological instrument for the single communist party to wider social institutions.

With the elimination of the government’s monopoly on the media, independent non-governmental publications have emerged, reflecting different sides of social life. However, serious journalism that reports news and significant events is weak. Most institutions have aimed for financial earnings and have become known as “Yellow Media” (commercial media). To find readers and for more sales, such newspapers

and magazines use popular articles with glossy front covers to attract the masses.

More than two hundred and fifty governmental and non-governmental newspapers and weekly journals are active in the country today. Some of the famous private ones are “Charkh Gardoon” “Mellat”, “Azadegn”, “Nigah”, “Nejat”, “the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan”, “Emrooz- News”, “Donya”, “Aelleh”, “Ferg” and in Russian language, “Asia Pelos”, “Ibn Sina”, “Business and Politics”, and “Vicherny Of Dushanbe”. From governmental press, “The Republic”, “Voice of the People”, “Minbar Khalgh”, “Democracy Party of Tajikistan” and other journals are also published regularly.

In 2010, 34 newspapers and 23 magazines were newly registered. Some of these newspapers include; “Sima”, “Roozegar”, “Mogheh”, “Marifat Hoghoogh”, “Dana”, “Hayat”, “Shekarchi” and “Mahram” as well as journals such as “East and West”, “Voice of Children”, “Nonahal” and “The Academy”. Tajik media is classified as public and private and according to this classification their financial security and investment varies. State media uses public funds while the second group are dependent on their own income. However the sales income of some of these independent publications does not offset their costs, therefore they print advertisements as an additional revenue stream.

Independent publishing in Tajikistan (1991-2011)

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, newly independent Tajikistan was drawn into a civil war. As a result of these national conflicts, hundreds of specialists in the field of press, mostly Russians and other

Soviet representatives, were forced to leave Tajikistan. However, despite the turbulence of that time, the printing of books and newspapers wasn't discontinued in Tajikistan. Upon signing the peace and reconciliation treaty in Tajikistan in 1997, more opportunities and better conditions were created for more printing and publishing in the country.

At the moment, there is a range of 254 daily newspapers, including 54 public and 127 private. 39 professional publications are active in the country. Also there are eight information agencies (one public and seven private), and there are 55 publishers of which eight are governmental and 47 private. 186 print houses (34 governmental and 153 private) are engaged in the publishing sector.

Printing and publishing statistics in the era of independence shows that currently in Tajikistan, the information accessibility has definitely improved comparing to the seventy years of Soviet rule (Boori Ouf 2011). In 2005, in order to gain a cultural balance and adapt international book publishing standards, with the initiative of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan, the country joined the International Standard Book Numbering Agency (ISBN). In conjunction with this action, the Ministry of Culture of Tajikistan issued the order number 166, by which it was adopted that the ISBN representative will be in charge of the institution "Book House" in Tajikistan (Boori Ouf 2011).

According to this order, all printing and publishing institutions, irrespective of their ownership type or field of work, are obliged to join the Book House and to use ISBN according to regulations set by the ISBN national agency within the Book House. Until today,

more than half of publishing institutions in Dushanbe are members of the Book House and have an ISBN number and a financial mark. Laws of the Republic of Tajikistan on the subject of press and media, and The Republic of Tajikistan's printing and publishing laws have been approved by global experts as complimentary laws, which are consistent with democratic standards.

During Tajikistan's independence, the government launched a program for the development of printing and publishing for the years 2002-2006. The review shows that publishing activities increased in that period and governmental institutions were partially provided with new technologies. However, some books such as educational books are published by publishers outside the country.

According Mahmoud Khan Shahi Ouf, the head of The Centre of Production and Publication of Education Books of the Ministry of Culture, the quality of textbooks that are published by publishers in Tajikistan is not good enough to answer consumers' demands. Neither Dushanbe Printing House, nor the private institute of "The Press", "Publications", "Sharq-e Azad", possess efficient printing machineries. Therefore the Ministry of Education has decided to publish textbooks in China and Russia. Shahi Ouf believes that printing books in China and Russia is cheaper and has a better quality. However, Jalil F.Sattar, the president of the institute of "The press" denies this and asserts that the country has been publishing textbooks as well as other publishing materials for more than seventy years (Hamid 2009). From private publishers in Tajikistan, the Ministry of Education mainly uses Palkraf

Group Publications.

Book production cycle in Tajikistan: from the writing stage of writing to supply in the market

The office of “Press, Printing and Publishing” is part of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan and has an obligation to implement the state’s ideologies and politics through the press and publishing institutions. This office also has the duty of theoretical, scientific and literary supervision over the subject, the content of books and other printed materials.

The department of “Supervision of Press, Printing and Publishing Institutions” on the other hand oversees the accordance of such institutions’ activities with the laws of Tajikistan on printing and publishing as well as and laws of press and other public media intermediaries. Additional responsibilities of the staff and specialists of the Printing and Publishing department include the preparation and implementation of plans and agendas on books and literary products required by the public, materials and technical aspects of press, and supply and sale of books (distribution) and activities.

Publishers that belong to the government, which are under the supervision and influence of the printing and publishing chair, print and publish books on different subjects considered to be essential for the public. Adib Publications, for example, publishes books about various political groups as well as agriculture and other sciences. This publishing house publishes more than 300 scientific and literary book titles on various professions annually, which consists of more than

two million copies. Over the 68 years of its activity, this publisher has published 25,800 titles with a total number of 172 million copies of books.

Maaref Farhang Publishing Institute usually publishes educational books for university students and schoolchildren as well as teaching materials and instructions for teachers and lecturers of universities and secondary schools. Tajik Serdeksi Elmi Ensklopodi Publications mainly publishes scientific works, encyclopaedias, dictionaries, technical dictionaries, and other major technical books. Danesh Publications, as part of Tajikistan's Academy of Sciences, publishes scientific works of this institution. On the other hand, private publishers do not have a defined domain of work and would publish works of various fields.

In the last ten years, the status of the governmental press has not been high within the country and due to the lack of modern equipment in print houses around the country, their activities has not been technically compatible with the requirements of the time. Most governmental newspapers in provinces are printed only once or twice a month due to financial problems. As a result they usually do not reach people, who then give more attention to non-governmental newspapers.

However, in this relatively short period some printing houses and publishing institutes and organizations were established, and have recently obtained notable achievements and success by effort and determination in their works. Some examples of these units are: Sandvareh by the printing unions of Soghd, Khatlan and Badakhshan provinces, the office of periodical printing and publishing in the Rasht

valley, the public company of “Taminat va Sodaye Ketab” and the government’s Book Office.

From the private sector, publishers such as the Palgraph Group, R-Graph, Ijad, Azar, Qanouniyat, Sarparast, Rahim Jalil, Shojaian, Nasheran, Khorasan, Arjang and printing houses such as Offset and Arbeta have become more well-known in Tajikistan. These publishers work with authors based on contracts, in which it is usually indicated that the author needs to pay for the costs of printing and publishing, and the books shall be then owned by the author. In this case, authors are responsible for the distribution and sales of their books and will not obtain any advance. On the other hand, the publisher’s duty is only to print the published books and apart from wages and perhaps a few books, they will not be demanding anything else from the authors.

In some cases, publishers may, under a contract, ask an author or a translator to write or translate a book. After preparing the book, the publisher pays the author’s or translator’s wages and buys the manuscript from him/her. The publisher then publishes the book and earns all the profits from sales.

These methods seem to be followed by governmental publications as well. However, these publishers usually sign a contract with the author according to printing and publishing laws, which state that authors need to be paid through royalties or an advance, while the sale and distribution of books are the publishers’ responsibilities. A small number of the copies of the book, approximately 15-20, are also given to the author. The author’s advance, according to the size and content

of the book, is between 500 to 1000 US dollars.

All private and governmental publishers usually have one or two literary directors and technical editors within its staff. They work together on the preparation and printing of books and their wages are paid according to their contract. The production time of a book from signing a contract to print or creating an e-book version, is different in each publication. It depends on the speed of work and number of books that are to be printed in each turn. For example in Ijad Publications, the production takes from fifteen days to one month and in the R-Graph Publications and the Azar Publications this would be one month. On the other hand a small printing house such as “Moshfeghi”, which has few customers only, can publish a book within seven to ten days. The number of books that are printed with the author’s cost is very small, which is about 200 to 1000 copies. But if the book is funded by the government or an international organization, more than 1,000 copies would be published.

National and international marketing

Due to the weakness of book production in Tajikistan compared with its neighbours Iran and Russia, its book market is mainly domestic. None of Tajikistan’s governmental or private publications have any contract or relationship with bookstores abroad for selling books that are published in Tajikistan. However some books that are published in Russian language in Tajikistan are sent on an ad hoc basis to some of the Russian-speaking countries.

To date, no Tajik publishers have their own bookstores. Therefore

books are distributed to governmental and nongovernmental bookstores. With regards to governmental publications, books are distributed to bookstores by a governmental company called the Supply and Trade of Books. The company has representatives who work in public bookstores throughout the regions of Tajikistan. In 2008, the same company paid a sum of 563, 136 Somoni¹⁰⁴ to governmental and non-governmental publishers for the purchase of their books, journals, and other printed materials and sold them for the sum of 320 thousands and 130 Somoni (boori Ouf, 2011).

In recent years, some Tajik merchants also take some of the best-selling books to China, photograph them and publish them in thousands of copies and bring them back to country's book market. Printing in China is much cheaper than printing in Tajikistan. Even the Ministry of Education orders textbooks to be printed in China. As well as China, some governmental and non-governmental organizations in Tajikistan also have their books published in Turkey, Russia, Kazakhstan and Iran, and brought into Tajikistan.

Legal issues and difficulties of publishing in Tajikistan

During the Soviet government era, only four publishers called "Erfan", "Maaref", "Adib", and "Danesh" were publishing books. Prior to these publishers, books would be reviewed by literary and science authorities as well as censorship officials and a permit would be issued afterward. Not all books would pass this test as supervision over the publication of books was strict and many books were prevented from being

104 Somoni or TJS is the currency of Tajikistan. 4 TJS equals approximately to \$1 American dollar (June 2011).

published. Therefore, no-one could publish a book arbitrarily. But after independence of the Republic of Tajikistan and elimination of the severe inspection and supervision system, anyone could write and publish a book without any hindrance. Nowadays, the Board of Editors has been established the review and monitoring of governmental publications. There is still no obvious control over private publications; they follow the state laws but are free in their selection of books.

The Tajik government has taken some initiatives with regards to authors' rights and other rights related to printing and publishing. The Republic's Act on "Author's rights and other rights thereof" was passed on November 13th of 1998 and in 2003 and 2009 some additional parts were added to it. Also in the "Criminal Law of the Republic of Tajikistan" Article 156 entitled "Violation of Author's rights, related rights and rights of the publishing permit holders" has defended the rights of the author. It mentions that:

1) If a person publishes another person's scientific, literary, musical or other artistic work, or registers another person's computer software or databases under his/her own name as the patent of the work, he will be charged with copying and handed a minimum fine of two hundred or five hundred or two years of punishment ,2) For the illegal usage of goods with a copyright or patent, as well as illegal use of valuable inventions and industrial samples, electronic programming and accounting software or databases without the permission of the author or the inventor, or disclosing the nature of an invention, plans of a valuable invention or samples of industrial productions, or publicizing

their details consciously or by indiscretion resulting in financial losses, the offender will be sentenced to a minimum fine of five hundred to one thousand or will be imprisoned from two to three years.

3) If the above actions are committed by a group of people with their cooperation, the sentence would be one thousand to one thousand five hundred as a minimum or imprisonment from two to five years (Supreme Council's News, 1998).

Laws pertaining to royalties were strictly implemented during the Soviet rule in Tajikistan. At that time, a good amount was being paid to the authors of literary, scientific and general knowledge books by the publishers. Some authors were even just writing to obtain royalties. Newspapers and magazines writers were also paid well by a royalty called "Ganarar". Nowadays, royalties for newspaper writers are only paid by governmental newspapers and only a few private newspapers would pay such fee to their writers. With regards to books, royalties are mainly paid by governmental publications and some private publishers. However, governmental publishers would only pay this fee for books that have been published with the assistance of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Registration of publishers, newspapers and printing houses is free in Tajikistan. Previously the official registration of the media was done at the notary public offices, which were subject to Ministry of Justice jurisdiction. Since two years ago, the government has been promoting a new plan called "The Single Window", in which official registration of the media is carried out by tax authorities, according to the Legal

Circle of the Republic of Tajikistan's Act on "Official registration of legal entities and individual business owners".

According to Article 16 of the Act on "The press and other Means of Media", the Ministry of Culture only recognized publication institutes that are officially registered as a legal entity. Also according to Article 31 of the same Act, the prosecutor or the Ministry of Culture is obliged to officially notify the person who has violated rules of this Act. If the violation of law is repeated, the prosecutor or the Ministry of Culture can sue the violating publisher in court (The Republic of Tajikistan's Act on "Printing and Publishing").

The Republic of Tajikistan Act "The Press and other intermediaries medias", which is currently active, was ratified in 1990 and has been modified seven times during these twenty years by adding new parts. Finally in 2010 a new Act of the Republic of Tajikistan "Printing and Publishing" was prepared by a scholar Samieezadeh and Akram Shah Aliyev and was presented to the Supreme Parliament of Tajikistan for approval.

Problems that Tajik publishers are now faced with can be grouped into two categories. The first group of problems are related to the increased cost of printing materials, ink and paper, etc. However, with inflation in the national currency since last year and increasing prices of food products, oil and services, publishers have also been forced to increase the price of books and other publishing materials. The increase in the price of books will reduce sales but on the other hand, if publishers do not increase their rates, economic losses would draw them into

bankruptcy.

The second category of problems is related to technological tools and printing devices. Not all printing houses have machines with modern qualities. For the first time in Tajikistan in 2005, a new independent print house called “Aeleh-Print” was established that prints coloured newspapers. This print house has the capacity of printing at least 32,000 newspapers in just an hour. Currently some governmental newspapers such as “Vatan Parvar” by the State Borders Committee, “Separ” by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and “Baj va Kharaj” by the Ministry of Revenue and Expenses are being withdrawn from printing by the governmental publications of “Sharq Azad” and instead are printed by “Aeleh-Print”.

In the last ten years, the increasing number of new newspapers and weekly journals has caused some problems with regards to publishing them. Newspapers such as “Rooze Noe”, “Zendegi”, “Negah”, “Ferj” and “Nejat” publish various ideas and discussions that have caused discontent in some political groups. Some of them were even drawn to the court, being charged with tax evasion. As a result, some publications such as the two independent magazines, “Rooze Noe” and “Nirooye Sokhan”, which were printed at a public printing house, were banned from printing and publishing. Other public and private printing houses under the pressure of fear did not print them either. Nejat newspaper, which belongs to the Islamic Movement of Tajikistan, has found a solution to this by launching its own printing house called “Moattar”, which now regularly prints this newspaper.

Another point to consider is that according to Article 21 of the Republic of Tajikistan's Act on "Press and other public news intermediaries", a copy of all magazines and newspapers that are registered in the Republic of Tajikistan, regardless of the type of ownership, must according to this law be sent to relevant regulatory bodies immediately on the day of issue free of charge. The provision of sending free copies of journals to certain regulatory authorities and governmental institutions was verified in December 9th of 2005 under the bylaw number 482 of Tajikistan's government. (The Republic of Tajikistan Act on "Press and other public news intermediaries")

With regards to compliance with the law, it should be mentioned that not all publications send free copies to the relevant authorities. Amongst these are governmental newspapers such as "Jomhouriat", "Sedaye Mardom", "Manbar Khalgh", "Amoozegar", "Khalgh Avazi" (In Uzbek) and private magazines such as "Azadegan", "Negah", "CCCP"¹⁰⁵.

There are no major obstacles in the government's relation with the free press. Occasionally some discontent occurs between a newspaper or a journal, due to a person being criticized by that newspaper or journal. Such disputes are dealt with by the court, however they are not considered as the government's problem. Also, some private newspapers consider measures levied by tax authorities as a political mean to prevent them from their activities, but this does not have any real ground as the tax law applies to everyone.

The discontent and protest that journalism organizations and

105 CCCP- Stands for the Russian (Cyrillic) for the Soviet Union.

independent publications in Tajikistan speak of with regards to freedom of speech also seem to be without reason. These claims aim for the interest and benefits that such institutions can receive from international organizations and foreign embassies in Tajikistan, which would help them to develop their businesses. The freedom of speech that currently exists in Tajikistan cannot be seen in most countries of the region (Asrari, 2011).

One of the hot issues in the Tajik press is the usage of Tajik Persian language. There are many spelling mistakes and errors in relation to this language in almost all newspapers and magazines and books in the country. Journalists use words in Arabic, Russian, dialects and some people who write articles even create their own words that lead to negative reactions from readers. Therefore, the government of Tajikistan has considered restoring Tajik Persian and for this reason has created a centre called The Language and Expression Committee. The Committee will supervise the usage of the language by publications and press.

In recent years, interest in and attention to the Persian alphabet has increased more than ever in Tajikistan. Discussions on the subject of transition from the Russian Cyrillic alphabet to the Persian alphabet have continuously been raised in the press. Even some newspapers, such as “Literature and Technology” and “Bargahe Sokhan” have some pages in Persian. However, the government’s official script is Russian Cyrillic and books and newspapers are all printed in Cyrillic.

The Islamic Republic of Iran’s Cultural Centre is active in Dushanbeh,

and publishes “Rudaki” magazine in Persian alphabet. There is also a Persian Language Institute at the Iranian Embassy that is engaged in mutual scientific works between the two countries. It also publishes a magazine called “The Institute’s Mail” at Peyvand Printing house in both Persian and Cyrillic. These Iranian cultural institutions publish many of Tajik scholars’ works in Farsi and sell them in Iran and Tajikistan as well as offering them to those interested in the language.

One may wonder about the current state of book reading in Tajikistan. With the advances in the technology, improving IT and wide access to the Internet networks and communications by mobile phones, the position of books and some traditional arts such as cinema and theatre has decreased. Compared with a decade ago, youths are less interested in books. Today, children are rather more interested in watching movies via satellite and DVD player or in playing computer games than in reading books.

On the other hand, economic problems and inflation rates have given people less opportunity to read books. While the minimum monthly wage is approximately 150-160 Somoni (30-33 US dollars), the average price of a book in the market and shops is 10-15 Somoni. People often work two or three jobs to earn a living and raise a family. It is obvious that they do not have spare time for reading books and if there is any, they rather watch TV.

In comparison with art and science subjects, Tajik people are currently more interested in ethical and religious books. Religious books are mostly published in Tajikistan in Tajik Persian but some are also

imported from Iran and Afghanistan as well as some in Uzbek language from Uzbekistan. In the 90s alongside professional newspapers and magazines, there were also small publications in the market known as “homely” or “miniature”. Hundreds of these books and booklets were printed in limited numbers and in low quality with approximately 20 to 100 pages, by using old devices.

The subjects of these booklets were religious issues, ethics, morals, traditional medicine, faith, etc. Usually there was not any information about the name of publisher, year and place or numbers of copies inside the cover and in some of them even the name of the author was not included. These books were sold in bazars, mosques and other busy places. The goal of printing these books was to raise an income, while the promotion of religious values was secondary. Today the number of such books and booklets has decreased hugely. But they still can be found in bazar and shops near mosques.

Electronic Publishing

Tajikistan is one of the countries faced with economic crisis. Therefore, they have almost no electronic publishing. There are however some audio book CDs available in Tajik markets recently but they are mostly produced by new companies that deal with computer works and recordings of songs and music. Some of these audio books enter Tajikistan’s market from Iran and Russia.

Book publishers and experts have recently presented various proposals that are linked to social, political and economic fields. A few suggestions are listed below, which can be beneficial and essential for

all publishers:

- Collaboration with publishers of developed countries for receiving new printing and publishing devices, especially for publication of electronic books.

- Business and training trips for Tajik publishers to countries such as Iran, Russia and other European countries.

- Similar to the era of Soviet, The Committee of Writing and Publishing should be an independent governmental organization. The Ministry of Culture's competence, which is more related to the arts, is not compatible with this important governmental institution.

- Censorship and punishment for plagiarism should be strengthened.

- To encourage the purchase and reading of books amongst Tajik people who are currently not book consumers, the "Forum of Friends" that existed during the Soviet era should be activated again. Simultaneously the Ministry of Education should make more efforts to motivate children to read books.

Journalists and the staff of the periodical press have also some suggestions:

- Public news broadcasts (media) require a new law that would be according to the standards of democracy to help Tajikistan's journalism. (This law has been prepared and is pending for approval by the parliament of Tajikistan).

- Serious attention to freedom of speech is still required, even though the situation is better than the neighbouring republics. Some criticisms on this subject include a lack of access to information resources, the

pursuit of journalists with different causes, and barriers in publishing.

- Disputes and problems between journalists and those criticized by them should be examined within the frame of law.

In addition, the Ministry of Culture (as the government's agent in supervision and strengthening of the activities of public news organisations) has been trying to obtain better results by playing a major role in the implementation of Tajikistan's Act of "Press and other public news intermediaries", which is now coming to pass.

Publication of Persian books in Uzbekistan

Farid Moradi / Massoud Hosseinipour

Transoxiana is an ancient name referring to a part of the former Soviet Union that in modern days mostly corresponds to the two countries of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Russians ruled this land since the revolution in October 1917 until 1991. This dominance affected all aspects of social, cultural, political and economic affairs of this region.

Historically, in the nineteenth century Russia decided to expand its influence in Transoxiana in order to access its natural resources and to be closer to India. Therefore they continued their conquest until they took over the entire region. This happened during Naser Al-din Shah's reign in Iran. In those days Transoxiana consisted of three parts:

- 1) The Khanate of Khiva (Kharazm) with the central city of Khiva
- 2) Emirate of Bukhara with the central city of Bukhara (the eastern part of which corresponds to a part of Tajikistan today that is called "Eastern Bukhara")
- 3) The Khanate of Kokand with the central city of Kokand.

With the decision of the Russians, part of the Emirate of Bukhara

including the city of Samarkand joined the Khanate Kokand, which was then called the Turkistan of Russia. The Emirate of Bukhara and Khanate of Khiva became protectorates and were not allowed to intervene in foreign affairs.

The social policy of the Russian Empire in the area was based on the degradation and humiliation of the locals and their cultures. For example, in 1871 AD a merchant named Mohammad Bayiev, who was the resident of Tashkant, asked the Turkistan Governor, General Kaufman for the school textbooks to be written in Cyrillic scripts (Russian) so that the level of education of the students in the region could be on a level with students in Russian schools. But this request was not accepted.

Either because of disrespecting Tajik's national and religious beliefs or communication with the new world by the Tjik Society, the changes in Transoxiana implemented by the Russians led to increasing demands for various reforms and renewals, especially among the literate of this region. Ideologies such as the Pan-Islamism, Pan-Turkism or modernism (known as the knowledge movement in Transoxiana) that was nurtured in Ottoman Empire and then amongst Russian Muslims (Tatars), became significant in Transoxiana.

Pan-Turkism was based on the idea of creating a single territorial unit called "Great Turkistan" through the integration of the Turkish-speaking tribes from the Mediterranean to west China, under the leadership of the Ottoman Sultan. In Transoxiana, the missionaries of this ideology were Ottoman military prisoners who were settled by Russians in

Central Asia along with local pan-Turkists and Tatar translators that were brought in to help the Russians. They saw the dominance of the Persian language as an obstacle in the way of their goals and therefore brought up the idea of replacing it with Turkish Chagatai, which was later called the Uzbek language.¹⁰⁶

After the 1905 riots in Russia, Bolshevik ideas and beliefs appeared alongside the pan-Turkism and the pan-Islamism in this region. Therefore two months after the Bolshevik victory, the independent state of Turkistan was formed in 1917 in Kokand. However, the new revolutionary Russia saw this as the crystallization of the idea of a single State of Turkistan from Asia Minor to West China and therefore brought an end to this government with a massacre in Kokand and instead formed an Autonomous Socialist Republic of Turkistan in 1918.

In 1920, riots occurred in Khiva and Bukhara with support from Moscow that led to the overthrow of the rule of Khans (tribal chiefs) and Emirs in this area and instead Khwarizmi republics were formed. These republics later joined the Soviet Union officially. Bukhara was given the status of an autonomous republic within the Soviet Republic of Tajikistan. These republics were created due to Stalin's fear that a unified Turkistan would separate from Russia. Therefore, in his next steps he divided the Muslim areas of the region into several republics and gave each a name that was mostly based on their languages. For the Persian speaking part of Transoxiana he used other strategies, which were carried out with the help of local agents.

The large and fertile part of Transoxiana was then called "The Republic

of Uzbekistan” and its official language became Uzbek. However, this republic contained key centres of Persian literature, such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Ferghana Valley, Khujand, Kokand, Ghersi (Nesaf), and Termez. For various reasons, Khujand joined Tajikistan later.

Tajikistan, a main part of which used to be called Eastern Bukhara, was established with Dushanbe (a small village) as its capital and with a total population of one million people. About 95% of its area was mountainous and it was the only Central Asian country whose official language was Persian. In order to create a new identity for this country, it was claimed that their language is Tajik, but until then (1934) there was no sign of such name as a language and only in some mountainous areas people used to refer to their language as Tajik. This term was used instead of Persian language for the first time by a Tajik critic and researcher called Sadr Al-din Eini.¹⁰⁷ The presence of the Russians and the settlement of more than 100,000 Eastern Europeans in Turkistan led to industrial growth and made this region progress ahead of Bukhara and Khiva.

With regards to Persian language publications, the first newspaper published in Transoxiana (near Bukhara) was called “Bukharaye Sharif”, established in 1912 by its director Jalal Yousef Zadeh Caucasusi. This newspaper was revived for a short time after Soviet rule collapsed, but was shut down for political reasons. Years before the creation of republics, there were other Persian language publications published in Transoxiana in the city of Samarkand including “Sho’leye Enghilab” (1912-1921) and the bilingual newspaper of “Aeeineh”, produced in

107 Lutz Rzehak (2001): From Persian to Tajik, Reichert Ver Lag, Wiesbaden. PP. 160, 201. 113

Uzbek and Persian languages (1913-1915).

“Sho’leye Enghilab” (The Flame of the Revolution) was once the only Persian newspaper in Bukhara, but with the escalation of anti-Persian fever of the Turks, it was closed down.¹⁰⁸ However, after the Revolution of 1924, Persian-language newspapers and magazines began to be published in Uzbekistan, and were then mostly sent to Tajikistan, such as “Rahbare Danesh” (1927 Samarkand, Tashkent and later to Dushanbe). Other newspapers in Tajik were “Avaze Tajik” (1924); “Mulla Shafaghi” (1915); “Red Tajikistan” and its annual “Jahan-nama” (1925); and “Rahnamaye Mokhberin” (1939). The Tajik government’s books and press were initially published in Uzbekistan but there were exceptions such as the book “The Tajik Literature 1821-1921”, which was requested by Tajik government, prepared as a representation of Tajikistan’s cultural identity by Sadr Al-din Eini, but produced and published in Moscow in 1921.¹⁰⁹

The first book in the Persian language in this region was “Nesab Al Sabian” (The Ornament of Seven Skies), which was published in 1876 in Khiveh by Muhammad Rahim Muhammad Khan Sani, who ordered a stone lithography machine to be brought over from Iran (Persia). The first Persian book in Russian Turkestan was published in Tashkent in 1883.¹¹⁰ The first printing machines were stone lithography machines, which produced prints based on the handwritten manuscript. The promotion of letterpress printing reduced people’s attention to books

108 Same as above

109 Same previous reference

110 Familiar strangers, 20th century Persian poetry of Transoxiana inspired by Kharezm and Khoqand literature, Ibrahim Khodaya: 2005, pp. 77 and 131.

as they were not used to these letters, and therefore this kind of book printing in this region started fairly late.

Sometimes books came from outside the region, including the book “Monazereh” and “Bayanat Sayyah Hendi” by Abdol Raouf Fitrat Bukhari, published in 1909 and 1912 in Istanbul. The poetry collection of Amir Khan, the Khan of Kokand, was published in 1900 in St. Petersburg. In the second half of the nineteenth century printing houses increased in India, which was leading in publishing Persian language books. “Noval Keshvar”, a famous printing house that was highly regarded in India at the time, used to send books to Transoxiana.

The following are significant works from the ancient books published in Persian language in Transoxiana:

- Tohfat Al Alhabab Fi Tazkareh Al Ashab (Tazkareh Qari) by Rahmatullah Bukhari, printed in 1894
- History of Bukhara, Abubakar Narshakhi, published 1897 in Tashkent.
- Joseph and Zoleikha, Nazim Heravi, published in 1905 In Tashkent
- Divan of Amir Khan (Persian and Turkish) published in 1897 in Tashkent.
- Qanoun Qodsi (grammar), Abbas Ali bin Mohammad Qodsi, published in 1832 in Tbilisi.
- Dorreh Al-taj dar Mavaez va Maqal by Taj Neishabouri, Tbilisi 1909
- Delgosha by Ahmad Hossein Zadeh, Tbilisi 1884
- Afkar Al-malakout, Abassgholi Qodsi, 1850, Tbilisi.

- Alephbaye Roshdi, Reza Khan, 1882.
- Ha ghighat Al-alem, Saleh Ardebili, 1905.
- Tahf Ahl Bukhara, Abdul Raouf Bokhari, Bukhara, 1905.
- Asas Al-Islam, Mullah A. Ganji, Samarkand, 1909.
- Qandieh (Mazarate Bukhara), Mulla Abdol Karim Tajer, gathered by Bartavallod, Samarkand 1909.

Despite the Republic of Uzbekistan's independence after the collapse of Soviet Union, the Persian language has lost its status in those cities where the Persian language grew and developed in ancient times. This is due to accepting Cyrillic scripts during Soviet rule as well as economic problems in recent years that have caused a lack of attention to printing and publishing of Persian-language books in this country. The Russians' strict laws considered printing books in the Persian language to be a crime due to their presumption of these books being indications of Islam, and as a result the Persian language lost its strength and importance in the region.

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