

# MELA Notes

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## MIDDLE EAST LIBRARIANS ASSOCIATION

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Bye-bye (law)

We approach bylaws as we visit the dentist: only of necessity and without joy. The occasion of this visit is to change the requirements for membership. As it now stands, a person must be engaged at least half time in dealing with Middle East-related materials to have professional status. Others, whether organizations, non-librarians, or librarians who spend less than half their time acquiring and processing Middle Eastern materials, hold associate status. These people cannot vote or hold office. They are in effect interested bystanders. It is my understanding that the founders of MELA wrote this distinction into the bylaws in order to protect the professional integrity of the association. The point was that MELA would address itself to the issues and problems particular to Middle East librarianship. The requirements for professional voting status insured that MELA would attend to library matters and not let its gaze be distracted by cynosures of Middle Eastern studies.

MELA's personal membership is now about 54 professionals and 71 associates, a 43-57% proportion. While some associate members have little to do with the actual development of Middle East collections, many, in their less than half-time devotion, exercise considerable influence on the affairs of Middle East librarianship. In large part, the associate membership represents the increasingly inter-relatedness of our specialty with larger administrative units and with pressing technological change. For almost two decades we have benefitted from LC acquisition programs. AACR II, computerized vernacular script input and output, the formidable cannon power of networks such as OCLC and RLG, and the reappraisal of area studies programs by government and university officials are samples of developments and institutions that bear on MELA from the outside.

The professional membership, de jure, re-examined the two estate membership once before. Since a majority of professional members is necessary to change a bylaw, a vote at the 1977 annual business meeting resolved nothing: too few attended to constitute a majority vote one way or the other. In a mail ballot conducted in 1978, the amendment failed to win a majority. It is worthy of some note that only 29 of 55 ballots were returned, that is, only one more than the needed majority. At

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the business meeting held at the Library of Congress in November 1980, those attending voiced a desire to vote on this issue once again. Perhaps all of us eligible to vote can summon up the political resolve to mark and return the ballot this time.

Among organizations of Asian and African studies librarians, MELA is the most independent and in some ways the most democratic. Unlike our African, South Asia, and East Asia counterparts, Middle East librarians can belong to their library organization without being members of the larger area studies organization. South Asian librarians have a political voice only through the Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation which is appointed by the Council South Asia Council, itself an appointed body of the Association of Asian Studies (AAS). In theory, members of the Committee on East Asian Libraries (CEAL) must belong to AAS and in practice must pay separately for a subscription to CEAL's Bulletin. Up to the present, the executive committee of CEAL has elected its own successors: 1981 will witness the first CEAL-wide election of officers. Similarly, Africanist librarians must be members of the African Studies Association (ASA), but the Archives-Libraries Committee membership elects some of its executive committee, the remainder being ex officio (e.g., the head of the Africana Section at LC). Any member of AAS or ASA can stake a membership in, respectively, CEAL or the Africanist Archives-Libraries Committee whether a librarian or not.

I suppose MELA's organizational independence and the relatively democratic manner in which we elect our leadership has made us sensitive to requirements for membership. But this Athenian democracy for just some of us is uncouth, and impolitic. As long as those of us whose careers are actively involved in Middle Eastern materials play an equally active role in the organization, MELA's professional timber will not splinter. We inherit a praiseworthy singleness of purpose from those activists who launched MELA and sustained it to the present. Now is the time to expand our active membership by making all members full members. This trip to the dentist should render us more robust. E.M. Forster, an orientalist of sorts, wrote "Only connect." Although this phrase has been disneyized in public library circles, it is appropriate to our case, if like Forster, we remember how difficult connecting can be.

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REPORT FROM LONDON by Francine McNulty

The School of Oriental and African Studies was the site of the first International Exhibition of Books on Islam and the Muslim World, sponsored by the Islamic Council of Europe, September 23-25, 1980. The Exhibition brought together over 2000 English language books on the Islamic world. In addition, the Islamic Council also organized three two-hour programs on library services and resources pertaining to the Islamic world. Topics covered included the India Office Library, Index Islamicus, Encyclopaedia of Islam, Arabic printing in Europe, restoration of manuscripts, collection development for Islamic studies, Arabic and Islamic studies in Great Britain, and publishing and marketing books on Islam and the Middle East. A full report of the lectures and discussions is promised for the winter 1980 issue of New Books Quarterly on Islam and the Muslim World., a new bibliographical journal published by the Islamic Council. The autumn issue (v. 1, no. 1) contains a list of participants in the Exhibition as well as the works on display.

Some of the noteworthy announcements made at the lectures were:

- 1) The Middle East Libraries Committee (MELCOM) will soon publish a union list of Persian periodicals in Great Britain similar to the work by Auchterlonie and Safadi for Arabic titles.
- 2) The new Centre for Gulf Studies at Exeter University will serve as the site for MELCOM's winter meeting in December.
- 3) Index Islamicus will exclude books in the future because it has proved too difficult to obtain accurate and timely information on new and forthcoming titles. Pearson expects that New Books Quarterly will eventually assume this function for major Western languages. Initially it will cover English language works only.
- 4) The British Library, SOAS, Cambridge, and Oxford are considering becoming participants in LC's Book Procurement Center in Cairo.

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REPORT FROM RIYADH by Mark Tyler Day

Prior to leaving for Riyadh, I was Associate Head of the Government Publications Department at Indiana University, and it was in this capacity that I became involved in an internship program which the Indiana University Libraries conducted for several Saudi students of library science who had recently received MLS degrees in the U.S. and were returning to work at Riyadh University. The idea was to expose the Saudi students to the actual operations of a major U.S. academic library so that they could see how the principles they had learned in library school were applied in practice. After an internship of several months, each Saudi eventually returned to Riyadh University Library to be made Head of a newly formed department. The program has now been terminated (partly because there are no new departments left to create, and thus no more returning Saudi library science graduates) after processing about fifteen interns.

One of the newly formed departments was a Government Publications Department. Thus, in the spring of 1977 I helped to train Fahad Dosary in government publications procedures at Indiana University; in August 1977 (after finally negotiating an individual contract with Riyadh University and taking a leave-of-absence without pay from Indiana University) I went to Riyadh, and Fahad Dosary followed shortly after to become head of the department. We started out in a cubicle newly created for us out of existing office space, with only a few desks and bookcases in a space about 20 ft. x 15 ft., and with reassigned personnel from the existing "Documentation Department," which was itself a part of the Serials Department. Most of the functions of the Documentations Department have now been consolidated into an "Academic Publishing Department." Mr. Dosary's strategy was to "create facts," and by this time-honored political method, we gradually established our presence in the organization. (Having nearly unlimited funds available for standing-order book purchases, equipment orders, etc. helped in this regard, of course.) I have just received correspondence from a Pakistani colleague that the department now has responsibility not only for government publications but for all "international organizations" (the distinction in Arabic between a governmental international organization and a non-governmental international organization not being made in my experience, and the government publications department being the only department with the facility to handle corporate entry series publications). In addition, government publication

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sections are being added to each of the many branch (college) libraries. Thus, all operations dealing with government publications, from ordering to cataloging, are truly centralized. All this is in anticipation of moving to a new central library which is to be built in the new "University town" now under construction north-west of Riyadh. From my understanding it is to be built within the next five years (in sha'allāh) and will have the largest square footage of any academic library in the world.

Unfortunately, at present there are almost no active users of the library, although many students fill the study tables at exam time and the cafeteria of the present structure at all times, just as in the United States. In addition, no professionally trained librarian who is a native English speaker and who also has familiarity with Arabic language and culture is presently employed in the Riyadh University Library. An attempt was made at Indiana University (prior to my departure to Riyadh) to establish a librarian exchange program, but this was quickly scotched by local labor union antipathy to the idea of Indiana University "recruiting for a discriminatory employer such as Riyadh University," i.e., no women or Jews need apply at this time.

In any case, the primary document to come out of my work will be the "Dictionary Catalog and Guide." The final version will be in both English and Arabic (separate sections either bound together or bound as separate parts). I had completed the final editing for the English section before leaving Riyadh in July 1979, and had written a preliminary Arabic introduction. However, my colleagues tell me that the material has yet to go to press.

Likewise, my article "Contemporary Saudi Writers of Fiction" was accepted by the Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Riyadh University before I left, and editorial additions and corrections were made in October, but the article has yet to appear. This was a project which I undertook on my own while in Riyadh as a contribution to a neglected area of modern Arabic bibliography. What follows is the introduction to my article.

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Literature in Saudi Arabia continues to be overwhelmingly oriented towards poetical expression, and the classical models of this expression remain normative, notwithstanding the existence of active modernist movements. In addition, much of the Kingdom's population, generally estimated to be around 75% illiterate, continues to participate in an oral culture only. Nevertheless, as a result of increasing contact with other Arab and non-Arab countries during the twentieth century, modern literary genres have begun to appear.

The process by which these genres have appeared recapitulates in general the process previously undergone by more developed Arab countries. Thus the growth of prose literature followed close upon the establishment of an indigenous press, with the founding in 1924 of the official gazette 'Umm al-Qura'. The literary/journalistic essay continues to dominate Saudi prose and fiction largely appears as short stories published in newspapers and magazines.

Reliable bibliographic control of newspapers and periodicals, and thus of fiction published in these formats, is notoriously poor throughout the Arab world. Saudi Arabia is no exception, although a beginning has been made with publication such as that by Professor Mansour I. Hazmi, entitled: Bibliography of Saudi Writings in Periodicals and Journals, Vol. 1. Umm al-Qura 1924-1945 (Riyadh: University of Riyadh, 1974; in Arabic with added English title page). In addition, published collections of stories which had originally appeared in periodical formats, and some fiction written directly for book publication, began to appear after World War II, when the first generation of modern educated Saudi writers had matured, and when the greatly increased revenues from oil exploitation began to provide the economic base for a modern publishing industry. Following this growth in book publishing, a number of biographical and bibliographical tools have been developed which survey Saudi authors and their published output (see list of sources). Thus, it is now possible, in a preliminary manner, to identify the major contemporary Saudi writers and those works of theirs which they have thought worth preserving through publication in book form. This, then, is what we have attempted to do for the field of fiction, strictly defined as short stories and novels. Although Saudi dramas are being written and performed to a limited extent, the generally underdeveloped nature of the genre made it seem advisable to exclude drama from our survey.

The group of writers surveyed consists almost entirely of men, most of whom have received some form of modern education. Most

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of them are still alive, the oldest of them being one of the early pioneers of Saudi fiction, Aḥmad Muḥammad al-Sibā'ī, who was born in 1323 H./1905 A.D. As might be expected, most writers are from the Hijaz, where the center of literary culture has resided in Arabia since the time of the Prophet. Also, as might be anticipated from the economic and political conditions of Saudi Arabia, most of these men have spent the greater part of their careers in government service. Finally, it is important to note that almost none of the authors is primarily a writer of fiction; most have a comparatively large corpus of other writings, primarily essays and/or poetry.

Forty-six authors have been included in this bibliography, in addition to one special fiction issue of the journal al-Manhal and one fiction collection issued by the Literary Club of Jaizan. However, this lack of information should be remedied for many of the authors when the remaining parts of al-Mawsū'a al-Adabiyya (which is organized alphabetically by first name) are published.

Most likely, some additional Saudi writers of fiction have been missed in this bibliography, particularly the younger generation of writers who are only beginning to publish and the lesser known writers who have only published in newspapers and periodicals. For current awareness of such writers one must peruse the literary monthly al-Manhal, the cultural section of the weekly al-Yamāma, and the literary sections of daily newspapers, such as: 'Adab wa-'Udabā'' (which appears every Sunday in al-Riyād); al-Mirbad (which appears every Monday in al-Yaum); al-Usbu' al-Adabī (which appears every Tuesday in al-Jazīra); and al-Madīna al-Adabiyya (which appears every Wednesday in al-Madīna al-Munawwara).

A comparison of the sources listed for each citation indicates that each source taken individually is more or less incomplete. It is hoped that the present bibliography will provide a more comprehensive coverage by comparing and consolidating the various titles and editions listed in the sources. To this end the following criteria have been applied. Publications referred to in the sources only by title with no further bibliographic data have been excluded, as well as any title which could not be positively identified as a work of fiction. Sources A<sub>3</sub>, A<sub>5</sub>, and A<sub>6</sub> were used solely for biographical information because most of their bibliographic citations lacked detailed imprint and pagination data.

When one or more of the sources included information not contained in the others and this information has seemed not to conflict with the other sources, I have conflated all the information from the sources into one entry, citing all the sources used. Where



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there was conflict over minor items (such as a small variation in pagination or publication date), I have accepted the entry of the University of Riyadh Central Library Union Card Catalog as authoritative (checked against the actual holdings of the library whenever possible), followed by the National Union Catalog entry when Riyadh cataloging data were not available, and followed finally by the entry in the new bibliography of Yaḥyá Sā'ātī. When variant editions have been cited by different sources or when the sources differ in a major way so as to indicate the likelihood of different editions, I have listed each variant citation and its source separately.

The scheme of transliteration used is that recommended by the International Journal of Middle East Studies. It is applied throughout the bibliography, except in the case of well-known place names appearing in the sections on place of birth and place of publication. Here the Anglicized version commonly used in Saudi Arabian publications has been followed. The exact vowelization of a few uncommon personal names and the precise translation of a few ambiguous titles remains unclear, and corrections are welcomed in this regard.

I. ARABIC LANGUAGE SOURCES

A<sub>1</sub> 'Amīn, Bakrī Shaikh

al-Ḥaraka al-'adabiyya fī al-mamlaka al-'arabiyya al-sa'ūdiyya (Literary movement in Saudi Arabia).  
Beirut : Dār Ṣādir, 1972 A.D. 71lp.

A<sub>2</sub> al-'Anānī, Shukrī

Mu'jam al-maṭbū'āt al-sa'ūdiyya (Bibliography of Saudi publications) : maṣḥ mabda'ī li-mā ṣadar minhâ ḥattâ bidāyat 1393 H.--1973 M. (a preliminary survey of what was published up to 1393 H./1973 A.D.). Riyadh : al-Mamlaka al-'Arabiyya al-Sa'ūdiyya, Wizārat al-Ma'ārif, 'Idārat al-Maktabāt al-'amma, n.d. 332 p.

A<sub>3</sub> al-Manhal : majalla shahriyya lil-'ādāb wa-al-'ulūm (al-Manhal : a monthly journal for the humanities and the sciences).

'Adad khāṣṣ bi-tarājim wa-'adab 'udabâ' al-mamlaka

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al-'arabiyya al-sa'ûdiyya (Special number on the biography and the literature of men of letters from the Saudi Arabian Kingdom). Jeddah : Majallat al-Manhal, 1966. 272 p.

A<sub>4</sub> Sâ'âtî, Yaḥyâ Maḥmûd

al-'Adab al-'arabî fî al-mamlaka al-'arabiyya al-sa'ûdiyya : bibliyuḡrâfiyâ (A bibliographical survey of Arabic literary work in Saudi Arabia). Riyadh : Dâr al-'Ulûm, 1399 H./1979 A.D. 174 p.

A<sub>5</sub> al-Sâsî, 'Abd al-Salâm

al-Mawsû'a al-'adabiyya (Literary encyclopaedia) : 'udabâ' al-mamlaka al-'arabiyya al-sa'ûdiyya (an encyclopaedia of the most prominent men of letters in the Saudi Arabian Kingdom). Part 1; from the letter 'alif to the letter thâ'. Mecca : Dâr Quraysh lil-Ṭibâ'a wa-al-Ṣiḡâfa wa-â-Nashr, 1388 H. 352 p.

A<sub>6</sub> \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_. Part 2; from the letter jîm to the letter ṭâ'. Mecca : Maṭâbi' al-Thaqâfa, 1394 H. 286 p.

A<sub>7</sub> University of Riyadh. Central Library.

Union card catalog : Arabic language section. (Cards filed to December 31, 1978)

## II. ENGLISH LANGUAGE SOURCES

E<sub>1</sub> Library of Congress and national union catalog author lists, 1942-1962 : a master cumulation. Detroit : Gale Research, 1969-1971. 152 v.

E<sub>2</sub> The national union catalog, 1963-1967. Ann Arbor, Michigan : J.W. Edwards, 1969. 59 v.

E<sub>3</sub> \_\_\_\_\_, 1968-1972. Ann Arbor, Michigan :

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J.W. Edwards, 1973. 104 v.

- E<sub>4</sub> \_\_\_\_\_, 1973. Washington, D.C. :  
Library of Congress, 1974. 16 v.
- E<sub>5</sub> \_\_\_\_\_, 1974. Washington, D.C. :  
Library of Congress, 1975. 18 v.
- E<sub>6</sub> \_\_\_\_\_, 1975. Washington, D.C. :  
Library of Congress, 1976. 17 v.
- E<sub>7</sub> \_\_\_\_\_, 1976. Washington, D.C. :  
Library of Congress, 1977. 16 v.
- E<sub>8</sub> \_\_\_\_\_, 1977. Washington, D.C. :  
Library of Congress, 1977. Quarterly and monthly  
fascicles.
- E<sub>9</sub> Who's who in Saudi Arabia, 1976-77. Jeddah : Tihama / London  
Europa, 1977. ix, 272 p.

REVOLUTIONARY PUBLISHING IN IRAN FROM THE OVERTHROW OF THE SHAH  
UNTIL HIS DEATH by Wolfgang Behn

This discussion is concerned with political, non-commercial publications from Iran--and partly from abroad--rather than with the trade publications or the government documents put out by the Ministry of National Guidance and the Iranian embassies in the various western countries. It must also be stated at the outset that such a survey cannot be entirely comprehensive due to the unreliability of information coming out of revolutionary Iran. Who can claim to have complete bibliographic information at a time of unsurpassed printing activities by all sorts of political groups within Iran as well as the radical opposition abroad? However, the events of the last two years must have convinced everyone of the importance of knowing about the current situation so as to formulate an informed opinion. It is futile to speculate on what the relations with Iran would be like if the decision-makers in the West had taken seriously the publications listed in the writer's The Iranian opposition in exile (Wiesbaden, 1979). One is flabbergasted to hear from western Iranists that "by the 1970s opposition within Iran was dwindling to insignificant

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proportions and an open, organized form was nonexistent" (Iran under the Pahlavis, ed. by G. Lenczkowski, Stanford, 1978, p. 461). The misinterpretation of the current Iranian situation comes from the failure to realize that the Iranian left has lost face on account of the Soviet and Chinese support for the Shah.

During the last year and a half Iran has been experiencing a period of apparent free journalistic and literary activity. But as was the case after the abdication of Riza Shah in 1941, the real reason for the proliferation of political activities is the lack of central control over the affairs of the country. Opposing forces are at work that try to out-manoeuvre the political opponents by any means. Khomeini's idea of an Islamic government certainly cannot be equated with our western notion of democracy. The only reason that Mardum, Kār and other leftist publications are being sold freely in the streets of Tehran is the weakness of the government. Thus, the publications of post-Pahlivi Iran reflect the perpetuation of the political climate prevailing among the former anti-Shah movement of the 1970's.

A great deal of the revolutionary material is filled with charges and counter-charges that attest to the common animosity. With the achievement of the central goal of the former opposition, namely the end of the Shah's regime, the tendency towards internal division has increased in almost all organizations. Not only the major opposition groups of the Pahlavi era, both the Fedayin and Majahedin organizations, but also the Tudeh Party are plagued by signs of internal decline. The power struggle within the Fedayin and the Mojahedin organizations led to the emergence of Islamic and Marxist factions that have severed ties with the original party. The factionalism of many other parties has reached the point where it is no longer possible to consider the emerging entities as new parties; they are merely ideological cells that in many instances amount to no more than some hundred followers. By means of handbills, pamphlets and tracts, the various political groups accuse each other of opportunism as well as betrayal of the central committee of their respective party. A strange parallel to the former anti-Shah literature can be observed: most revolutionary writers still prefer to guard their anonymity.

Much of the political rhetoric attests to the euphoria prevalent among Iranians at this time. All positive manifestations of the Islamic revolution tend to be attributed to the popular movement, while all negative aspects are blamed on foreign imperialist influence. The ruling class, however, oversimplifies problems by

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considering all opposition as imperialistic and counter-revolutionary now that the revolution has been successful.

The central theme of the publications to the left of Khomeini's policy is the problem of the continuous struggle against imperialism. An example of this type of literature is Mubārazah-i zidd-i impiriyālistī yā 'avvām' firībī (1358/1980). There is disagreement only as to who the imperialists are among the Iranians. Advocates of extreme leftist ideologies openly challenge the sincerity of Imam Khomeini and ask who the real champion of anti-imperialism is. Most anti-imperialists are willing to sacrifice national unity on the altar of class struggle; they are divided only as to which road to follow: the type advocated by Bizhan Jazani (orthodox Marxist) or that by Ashraf Dihqani (the Che Guevara type).

Some of the publications might be considered demagogic, but solid, documentary literature is not wanting. The "Islamic Students of Imam Khomeini's Line" published a collection of documents seized during the take-over of the American embassy entitled Ifshā-yi impiriyālism. The Mojahedin Organization published three volumes of their public declarations and statements under the title Majmū'ah-i i'lāmīyah'hā va mawzi'giri'hā-yi siyāsī-i Mujāhidīn-i Khalq-i Irān in 1358/1979. Two volumes of editorials from Ummat have been published to date: Inqilāb dar inqilāb tā mahv-i niẓām-i impiriyālism, sar'maqālah'hā-yi Ummat, nos. 1-20; 21-40, ca. 1980.

It is strange that only one pro-Shah publication is known to the writer: The betrayal of Iran, by Dr. 'Abd al-Rahman (n.p., ca. 1980). No information can be obtained regarding publications in support of Shapur Bakhtiyar.

As has been the case during the Pahlavi era, all political groups are trying to support their policies by publishing translations of their ideological leaders. But for a proper appreciation of a certain group it is sufficient to know the type of translation chosen rather than its content. In other words, it matters less what Stalin has to say about the class struggle of farm labourers; what is important is that the Fedayin are following this type of thinking.

Looking at the political literature during the first year of the Islamic Republic, the professional appearance of the Tudeh publications, though printed on recycled paper, is most obvious. The Tudeh seems to be the only organization with

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sufficient funds for their propaganda activities. The content of their publications focuses on the historic role of the Soviet Union or the apparent Tudeh support for the political platform of Imam Khomeini. It is difficult to say whether any conclusion may be drawn from the outward appearance of the publications; it is obvious, however, that the quality decreases the further left of centre a group is positioned.

The supply of this type of literature has always been erratic and unreliable. Few of the bookshops listed in the writer's article in MELA Notes, no. 14 (May 1978) still carry Persian material. As a matter of fact, many of these so-called alternative bookshops have gone out of business, either on account of ideological inflexibility accompanied by commercial inexperience, or because of the inability to cope with rising rents, or for political reasons (being black-listed as former SAVAK agents), or because of a combination of these.

Important for the supply is also the new political constellation in Iran. Whereas up to the end of 1978 virtually no opposition literature could safely be published or distributed in Iran, most Iranians now have access to this literature in almost all parts of their country. This literature is destined for Iranians and not necessarily for Western orientalists. As the opposition during the first year of the Islamic Republic was active in Iran proper, only a limited supply has ever been distributed in Western countries. Still, some monographs and periodicals have been available at various bookshops in London (Iran Book Centre, 223 Old Brompton Road; Collet's Bookshop, 66 Charing Cross Road) and, to a lesser extent, in Paris (Thiers mythe, rue Cujas). However, the reluctance of other bookstores to handle Persian literature led many Iranian groups to set up displays at student restaurants where Persian political literature has been available, particularly in the large university cities.

In a transitional period such as Iran is going through, monographs are less likely to respond to the requirements of the day than do periodicals. This explains why revolutionary Iran has witnessed the mushrooming of periodical publications. No less than sixty-five dailies, weeklies and monthlies began publication after the overthrow of the Shah--though the frequency is often quite irregular, depending on the current needs. Mardum, the Tudeh daily, seems to be the only revolutionary newspaper that has been published regularly throughout. Mujāhid, the organ of the Mojahedin organization, has been published weekly, though on certain occasions, as during Khurdād 1359, it came out daily.