

Our Profession's Strategies to Serve the Society in Time of Crisis

Rahmatollah Fattahi [LIS proff. at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran] | The social status and prestige of each profession is deeply rooted in extent to which it would influence the society. This is a historical fact. The validity of both professions and those who are interested and involved with them depends on this important professional aspect. There are some professions who have succeeded to complete their historical mission through their services influencing the society's development processes and also meeting both personal and social needs. It would be more important to serve the society in times when people suffer from serious and disastrous problems.

Today, the human society across the world, including Iran, suffers from an enormous problem whose past and future is unknown. Before prevalence of coronavirus disease, the most obvious manifestations of human disasters used to happen through devastating wars and annihilating natural disasters such as volcanoes, floods, typhoons etc. Today the human society, beyond its geographical, lingual, cultural, religious, and even economic borders, is wrestling with a fatal disease with

an unknown future. Only a while ago, i.e. about three months ago, nobody would be able even to imagine such a deadly condition for themselves or others. There was nobody who was able to imagine that there would be a day when they or their dearest or closest ones will be sick with covid-19, will be a day when everybody have to close their businesses or even lose them all. Nobody was able even to think that there would be day when all organizations, including schools, universities, libraries and all events such as national/international exhibitions and Olympic Games will be closed.

Today, even the personal contacts and travels have been restricted, something nobody would think about it just two months ago. Huge negative consequences across the world are expected. Extensive economic recession in all countries, a sharp drop in oil price, tourism industry shutdown are just

some consequences of this horrible disaster.

All of these disasters occurred within the past two months in the human society, from poor and developing countries to the developed, rich ones. Almost all countries are facing consequences which are initially destructive, although so many creativities have been manifested in the same period of time, as today we see that the human society is rethinking about its intellectual foundations and philosophical and religious beliefs. Most of individuals are no longer the same people who used to live normally anymore.



Most of them are worried about the future of themselves and their families. The anxiety has affected negatively their thoughts and behavior. Certain problems such as stress, distress, etc. are widely growing. Other problems such as family disputes, divorces, drug abuse and addictions, etc. are

amongst the most prevalent consequences in the current and next years. In such condition, there are certain professions which can prove their responsibilities and profitableness and influence and realize their historical mission.

The Librarianship and Information Science profession is among the professions which has a known and important mission throughout the history: serving people to provide them with information and knowledge in order to achieve welfare and happiness. Relying on its historical experience, it is the time this profession can help the human society at the global level. It is obvious that it won't be successful with its current scattered and incoherent situation.

Today is the time for compiling a collection of local, national and international strategies. Experiences of all libraries and librarians in serving the society in crisis would be helpful in setting down such strategies. Here in this article, I will refer to a number of frameworks and proposed strategies and their executive imperatives upon fighting against the covid-19 and its destructive consequences:... [continued to iBulletin.info]

Standardization Department in NLAI

Attending by the president of Iranian National Standards Organization and Director of National Library and Archives of Iran, the inaugural ceremony for opening the standardization department was held in the NLAI building on January 2020. The standardization department was established in the Research Center of NLAI based on the Act of Strengthening and Developing the Standard System and in accordance with the approvals of Supreme Council of Standard of Iran. Accordingly all of ministries and public institutions and



public non-governmental organizations and governmental companies of Iran are obliged to launch the standardization departments. In this ceremony, Nayereh Piroozbakht, Head of Iranian National Standard Organization, said, "Documents and archives are amongst the historical memory of each country, so it is necessary to keep them safe and secure, because history and credibility of our land is hidden in such treasures."

Pointing to destruction of cultural and historical monuments and archives in various times, especially during wars, she said that it is necessary to maintain these precious things according to the predefined standards in order to be able to keep them safe and secure for the next generations. Pointing to 230 national standards on archives and documents, she said, "There are certain cooperation with the technical organizations and committees of ISO in the international field and Iran has

been ranked 21st in the field of ISO in the world, whereas its status in Asia is third along with South Korea, as Japan and China are first and second ranks in this ranking." Speaking to this ceremony Boroujerdi, Director of NLAI, referred to the importance of keeping the current heritage and precious books in

this organization and said, "It is necessary to struggle to keep and maintain these precious works with the assistance of Iranian National Standards Organization, because standards which are defined by the Iranian National Standards Organization have been recognized in the world and this organization is the best source to direct qualification in this regard."

"Given recognition and criteria for keeping and maintain and producing resources and repairing both visual and auditory resources, there is a proper capacity in the NLAI, especially in the field of visual and auditory resources; because UNESCO has a plot useful for preventing destruction of visual and auditory resources, so we can take advantage of certain standards and our colleagues in the archives research center have their own sensitivities; because NLAI recruits professional experts to launch standards and we hope that everything in Iran would be defined based on the international standards in future, so our next generation would use these resources safely" Boroujerdi said.

Tehran & Baku Cultural Ties

Attended by Iran, the sixth Baku International Book Fair was held on September 2019.

Ali Akhmedov, Prime Minister's deputy, Abulfas Garayev, Minister of Culture, and Karim Tahirov, Director of National Library of Azerbaijan Republic visited Iran's booth in this fair.

In this visit, Khazaiee, the manager of Iran's booth, initially introduced Tehran International Book Fair and said, "Tehran International Book Fair is one of the greatest book fairs in the region in which more than 2000 domestic publishers and about 40 publishers from other countries attends."

The Minister of Culture of Azerbaijan Republic announced satisfaction about Iran's participation in this course of Baku Book Fair and stated hopes that such cultural cooperation between Iran and Azerbaijan would be extended more than ever.

Declaring His satisfaction about Iran's participation in the BIBF, the Director of Azerbaijan National Library said, "I am interested in participating in Tehran International Book Fair and participation in the next Tehran Book Fair has been put atop agenda of my schedules."

Likewise the draft of a MOU between Tehran and Baku book fairs was prepared which was signed in the Frankfurt Book Fair.

125 publishers from 22 countries participated in this international fair, and Iran Cultural Fairs Institute and Cultural Counselor

Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran were representatives of Iran in this fair. Participating for the second time in the BIBF, Iran presented more than 400 book titles on Persian language education, Iranology, Islamic-republic Art, children and young adults, which some of them have been translated into Azeri.

Cultural Counselor Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Berlin, Embassy of Islamic Republic of Iran to Budapest, Yazd City Council, Grant Plot Secretariat and some publishers, publishing guilds, the Literary agency were active in the Iran's national booth.

Baku is the capital and largest city of Azerbaijan, as well as the largest city on the Caspian Sea and of the Caucasus region. Baku is located 28 metres (92 ft) below sea level, which makes it the lowest lying national capital in the world and also the largest city in the world located below sea level.

Baku has wildly varying architecture, ranging from the Old City core to modern buildings and the spacious layout of Baku port. Many of the city's most impressive buildings were built during the early 20th century, when architectural elements of the European styles were combined in eclectic style.

Baku has an original and unique appearance, earning it a reputation as the 'Paris of the East'.

Baku joined UNESCO's Network of Creative Cities as a Design City on October 31, 2019 on the occasion of World Cities' Day.



NLAI & ISO/AWI

National Library and Archives of Iran won C3 mark in ISO/AWI 34000. This standard in an integrated manner and coherently assesses all human resources processes and considers their efficiency and helps organizations to improve their processes. It is for four years that the management faculty of Tehran University has started to work on this assessment with the aim of reaching a systematic, comprehensive and integrated analysis on human resources with the a scientific approach in the national level. NALI has participated voluntarily in this assessment for two consecutive years (2018 and 2019)



and has won the standard in both years. Trying to improve quality of processes of the manpower management and following standards are one of NLAI's goals to participate in this assessment and in accordance with ISO 34000; the current status of manpower resources is analyzed in terms of two aspects: organization and employee's perspective.

Public Libraries Social Functions: A National Conference

The Association for Improving Iranian Public Libraries held its first national seminar, titled "Social Functions of Public Libraries" in Ahwaz (Khuzestan Province) on April 2020.

According to the announced call-for, the subject of articles sent to the secretariat of this seminar are as follows:

- Services and programs proper with the social roles of the public libraries
 - Public libraries and socialization
 - Public libraries as the social technology
 - Libraries in the public perspective
 - Public libraries and social harms
 - Public libraries and natural disasters
 - Economic aspects of Public libraries: production, employment, entrepreneurship and business
 - Social concepts related to the Public libraries: social participation, social justice, improving people life quality
- Since September 2019, when the call for sending articles for this seminar announced, several preliminary seminars and journal clubs were held in Tehran, Hamedan, Qazvin and Fars.



"Most of intellectuals believe that public libraries are a part of the society's texture and they need to make more important their roles in the society.

They also need to take their strides given the importance of the social issues in the society and believe in the fact that public libraries should try their best to solve the social problems of the society.

Hence, it was decided to hold a seminar dealing with the social applications of the public libraries in order to pave the way for exchanging thoughts and producing texts for all intellectuals and policy-makers and managers working in this field; therefore, the first national seminar of the scientific association of Improving Public Libraries of Iran with the cooperation of National Public Libraries Institute and Public Libraries Department General of Khuzestan Province will deal with this issue," Koochi Rostami, secretary of this seminar, said.

HBD LISNA

The first specialized news agency in the area of library and information science that publishes the related news in written form, sound as well as video. LISNA is an independent news agency that has started its career since March 2, 2001. The mission of LISNA is to familiarize the public with the services that libraries and librarians provide. In addition, it tries to communicate news regarding the libraries, books, and information science from Iran and other countries. Another mission of LISNA is to make the authorities hear the voice of librarians. The audiences of LISNA consist of a vast variety of librarians, book readers, publishers, as well as experts in the area. Being published on lisna.ir, the



news agency has been able to establish an appropriate interaction among its target society. It also has made a network among the specialists in the field of information. During its activity period, LISNA has been able to act as an interactive base for knowledge promotion and through providing news and interpretations it has enhanced the vision of the experts of the area. Have a look: www.lisna.ir

Iran in the New Delhi World Book Fair

Participated by Iran's booth the 28th New Delhi World Book Fair (NDWBF) was held on January 4 to 14 2020. Mohsen Javadi, Iranian Deputy of Culture Minister for Cultural Affairs, Niknam Hosseini-pour, the head of Iran's Book House Institute, and Mohammad-Ali Rabbani Iran's cultural attaché in India were Iran's representatives in the inaugural ceremony of this event. Some of Iranian booth's programs in this fair were as follows: showcasing 450 title

tion dissemination about manuscripts, facilitating accessibility to information and manuscripts for researchers, promoting research and study tasks with the aim of recovering the written legacy, making relations with the orientalism centers and libraries, holding meetings and specialized courses on research, repair codicology, cataloguing manuscripts and oriental documents, publishing precious and rare copies, supporting research projects related to the joint



books, introducing plans designed to support translation and publishing Iranian books in the international markets, introducing publishing industry and the related centers in Iran, introducing Tehran International Book Fair and inviting foreign publishers to take part in this fair. On the sidelines of this fair, the Iranian delegation visited the head of India's National Book Institute and Director of New Delhi World Book Fair and a group of Indian publishers. Javadi said, "I invite the Indian Publishers to participate in Tehran International Fair and present their books for sales. We are ready to start cooperation with the Indian writers and publishers in various areas related to books." The Iranian delegation also visited Noor International Microfilm Center in India. According to directors of this center identifying, safeguarding and protecting Islamic-Iranian written heritage in India, launching the international network of informa-

tion dissemination about manuscripts, facilitating accessibility to information and manuscripts for researchers, promoting research and study tasks with the aim of recovering the written legacy, making relations with the orientalism centers and libraries, holding meetings and specialized courses on research, repair codicology, cataloguing manuscripts and oriental documents, publishing precious and rare copies, supporting research projects related to the joint heritage of Iran and India are amongst the purposes of this center. Also, in his meeting with the Indian writers and poets, Niknam Hosseini-pour, the head of Iran's Book House Institute, said, "Producing books and transferring knowledge to each other is one of our key duties to keep this joint heritage." Within past 40 years, more than 1500 books on India, Indiology, Indian philosophy, and Indian poem have been printed and published in Iran. And in the most authentic book award of Iran, Iran's Book of the Year Awards, five books on Hinduism and Islamic mystic, Shiism in India, linguistics and Indo-European languages, Persian language and Indian style poem have been selected. Hosseini-pour said that Iran's Book House Institute is tasked with producing book databanks and Iran is ready to produce and publish the mutual databank of Iran and India in order to protect this cultural heritage.

Internet Blackout: Bad News for Librarians

The 2019 Internet blackout in Iran was a week-long total shutdown of Internet. It was ordered by Supreme National Security Council and imposed by the Ministry of ICT. The blackout was one of the Iranian government's efforts to suppress fuel protests. During the blackout, Iranian citizens could only access the National Information Network. Mohammad-Javad Jahromi was sanctioned by the United

States Department of the Treasury because of his role in Internet censorship in Iran. The 16 – 23 November 2019 blackout was the most wide-scale internet shutdown ever in Iran. It was "the most severe disconnection tracked by NetBlocks in any country in terms of its technical complexity and breadth." Although It was a near-total shutdown, top Iranian politicians still had access to the Internet. The 2019 blackout was the first-ever and longest total Internet shutdown in a large country. It was also the first blackout that effectively isolated a whole nation. Doug Madory, the director of Internet analysis at Oracle, has described the operation as "unusual in its scale" and way more advanced. Iranians usually use VPNs to access social media, but none of them worked during the shutdown. As a result of that, some people



used Toosheh to get news and other Internet-related content. It took 24 hours for MICT to cut off people's access to the Internet. The ministry had to order a range of ISPs and mobile data providers to stop providing users with international network and connect to NIN. Some providers withdrew their routes from the Internet and some continued to announce routes but block traffic. Although Global network was not accessible, Local services including banks, state-run messaging apps, and ride-hailing apps continued to operate through National Information Network. State-owned search engines and navigation apps were also enabled. Users first reported minor outages in Mashhad on 15 November. The disruptions increased in extent and severity with impact also visible on overall connectivity charts. Iran's largest mobile network operators, including MCI, Rightel and Irancell, fell offline on the evening of 16 November. The Internet blocking gradually increased until the country reached the point of total shutdown. By 20 November, national connectivity was at 5% of ordinary levels. On 23 November, NetBlocks reported that "Internet access is being restored in Iran and connectivity levels have risen to 64%".



Abdolhossein Azarang [Writer and researcher; Member of the Great Islamic Encyclopedia]

Publishing is neighbor to many fields and even it has border interference with some of them. Hence, any sort of development in the latter will affect the former and any new achievement their gain would find its way into publishing area and vice versa. The neighbor and vicinal fields of publishing are:

- Book studies and other paper and non-paper resources;
- History of readable and publishing resources;
- Communicational media, history, development and their studies;
- Materials, form, function, application and the effect of audio and visual media;
- Economy and financial studies related to readable industries and materials;
- Cultural, social, educational developments;
- Identifying audiences and analyzing various audiences of readable materials and their developments.
- Application of various media in education, researches and spare times of the society.

Actually any other field which plays a role in sociology, culture, education, researches, spare times, communications, information, etc. is somehow related with

Publishing and the Related Fields (Part3)

publishing. Any study on the mentioned areas and any achievement gained from studying them affect directly the policies and planning for publishing institutes. Here, some examples and historical cases about this direct relationship and its direct and indirect effects are succinctly explained.

Before emergence of electronic publishing, books were the most important product of publishing industry. Since industrial and machine-based production of books, several factors found their ways into publishing area which actually some of them have become tools or a part of production processes of publishing.

For instance, development of printing technology since 15th century was contemporary with the emergence of a new class of urban people. Members of this social class used to work in plants and factories, commercial institutes, import-exports companies, transportation and official departments. They were not like the rural workers whose daily or nocturnal times were uncertain, but they used to start their work in a certain time of mornings and finished it in the certain time of evenings. Their fees were certain and they had a weekend which over time and through strengthening various guilds and workers unions working schedules and fees became organized and the spare times were increased.

This structural development which was accompanied with economic, commercial, social, industrial, technical, management developments also affect the publishing. Publisher figured out a development in their society and found a class which would be audience of their published books, a class

who had new interests and inclinations and if the publishing industry was able to meet its needs, it would a profitable market. If the urbanization would not take place after industrial developments, novels and short stories and generally writing stories never would be developed and the most important and most profitable and somehow the most effective branch of publishing never would be formed.

Since late 15th century, and especially during the early 16th century, booksellers in the west world figured out that readers need other resources, different from the manuscripts, for reading. They had direct contacts with readers and buyers of books and inevitably they became familiar and informed about their preferences, interests and expectations.

Some of these booksellers were smarter and found the differences between interests of readers and producers of books, they found writing and grammatical errors in some books, they found unreadable and hard to understand some texts and it was a starting point of a new phenomenon and activity which later become known as "Book Editing".

Booksellers who had both sharp minds and more money or enjoyed stronger cultural incentives invited authors to work on improper texts in order to edit and refine them based on semantic and grammatical norms. As a result, the first generation of book editors were emerged which after several developments in both book and publishing arena, they reached an exquisite and even determining status in the field of publishing in 19th century.

Thus, a simple form of audience analysis, while there was no trace of social and communication sciences, brought about a development in the publishing industry which changed its path. A new kind of editors emerged in the 19th century who were known as publishing editors. They are editors who not only have a deep knowledge about three main pillars of publishing, i.e. developers, publishers, and readers, but also are familiar with other aspects of publishing and factors which both affect the publishing and are affected by it.

In the developed publishing there are a group of editors who run the publishing institutes, set their policies, plan for them, select authors and subjects, run intellectual currents and affect the culture and civilization development without any form of exaggeration.

The so-called traditional booksellers of the 16th century, who used to sell manuscripts and had certain and limited customers, without having any picture of the future of books and publishing, made a simple decision which made a rail over which the publishing train started to move and after passing a distance it found another path. This historical event is an example of the influence and effect of bookselling on publishing which considered interest of readers in editing books. Later when various sciences were developed or emerged, new activity fields became active, smart and qualified factors found their ways to the publishing and brought about long-standing developments which their more obvious examples need to be underlined in the next parts of this article.

Iran in the Frankfurt Book Fair

Like past years, the national booth of Islamic Republic of Iran was held in the Frankfurt International Book Fair 2019.

1494 books on Iranology, contemporary and classic fiction, arts, Islamology, children and young adults, academic, Islamic Republic and the Sacred Defense (Iran-Iraq War) were presented in this fair, besides books presented in this booth, brochures about introducing Tehran International Book, Iran's cultural fairs institute, Iranian publishers and participants in the Iran National booth and Grant Plot (the supporting plot for translation and publishing Iranian books) in 12 languages and also a CD containing data about books presented in the booth for selling copy right and introducing the World Award for Book of the Year of the Islamic Republic of Iran were distributed among interested people.

Unveiling translations of 14 Iranian books in Turkish (Grant Plot), unveiling Hafiz Diwan, Islam Belongs to Germany, 250-year-old Human Being, Cultural Heritage of Yazd in German, holding a meeting about recording the historical texture of Yazd City in UNESCO, unveiling Yazd's calendar in 2020, unveiling the audio version of 50 Ghazal of Hafiz in both Persian and Hungarian languages, unveiling Yazd's picture book and Jászberény, Yazd's sister in law in Hungary, unveiling Kheradnameh Farsi (introducing seven Persian Language poets), holding a special day for children

literature, holding a meeting about illustrating children books in Europe, holding a meeting about Germany's children libraries and "back-pack" and "white raven" awards, holding a special day for Hafiz and Goethe along with speech of Thomas Ogger (Former professor of Iranology in Berlin University) on the occasion



of 200th anniversary of publishing Goethe's West-östlicher Diwan and unveiling General Bibi Maryam Bakhtiyari translated in English were among activities of this Iranian booth.

Visiting Juergen Boos, Director of Frankfurt Book Fair, and deputy of Frankfurt Book Fair, Donna Chai, Managing Director of Shanghai Children Book Fair, Jessica Sännger, the Legal Counsel and deputy director of the Legal Department of Germany's Publishers and Booksellers Association, director of New Delhi Book Fair, Secretary General of the World Publishers, Grant Plot officials of

Turkey (TEDA), the plot for supporting translation and publishing Turkish books in other countries, deputy of Beijing Book Fair, Oliver Zille, Leipzig Book Fair director, the delegation of Azerbaijan Republic, Pazzoli, director of Bologna Book Fair, were among visits made in Iranian booth with other cultural officials and authorities from other countries.

Likewise the draft of a MOU between Tehran and Baku book fairs was prepared which was signed in the Frankfurt Book Fair. Oliver Zille, Leipzig Book Fair director, visited Iran's national booth and said, "All of people who have visited Tehran International Book Fair recall it happily.

Iran is a country with great history and civilization."

He formally invited Iran to participate in Leipzig Book Fair and stated that he is very interested to participate in Tehran International Book Fair.

He also said "Iran National booth where wind towers of Yazd City have been installed is very admirable and attractive."

In this meeting, Ghader Ashena, surrogate of director of Tehran International Book Fair and Iranian Publishing capacities and said, "We are ready to use mutual publishing capacities and experiences."

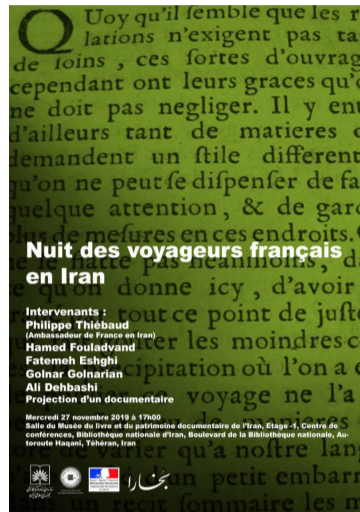
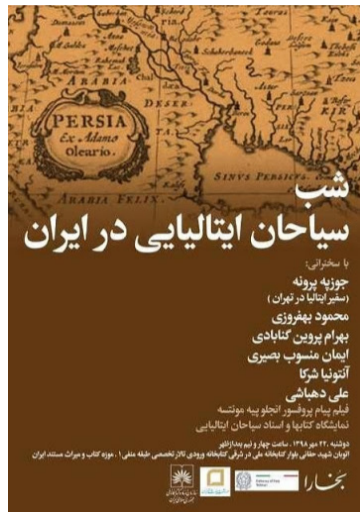
He also invited Oliver Zille, Leipzig Book Fair director to participate in Tehran International Book Fair and said, "We hope you come to Iran and see the realities precisely in order to be able to take effective steps to extend our mutual ties and relations."

Shanghai Book Fair

The 7th China Shanghai International Children's Book Fair (CCBF) was held in November 15-17 with the participation of Iranian Cultural Fairs institute in the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition and Convention Centre (SWECC). This fair was held in a land area equal to 25000 sq-ms with about 400 publishers from China and other countries. The booth of Iranian Cultural Fairs institute started its work through presenting 240 special books for children and young adults, which had been chosen by various festivals, and also presented works of the best writers of children and young adults. Cultural Association of Children's Book Publishers (CACB) was active in this booth, as well. Agents of Fatemi Publishing Institute (Tooti Book), Barf and Kamal-e Andishe also was active in the Iran's booth. This fair is supervised and organized by Shanghai Press & Publication Administration, China Education Publishing & Media Group, China Universal Press & Publication Co. it started its activities taking advantage of Bologna Children's Book Fair in 2013 and now, after 6 years, it has become an important event in the world publishing industry and is the largest international children and young adults book fair in Asia and Pacific. Visitation of officials of Shanghai book fair, presence of head of Bologna Children's Book Fair, holding a meeting for officials and international literary agencies were among the programs of Iranian booth in the Shanghai International Book Fair. Joharchi, Director General of research department of Iran Public Libraries Institute, said, "This department is tasked with solving problems of public libraries using research-based tools in order to help reforming programs and solutions for problems of the public libraries."

NLAI Hosts Two Programs: “Night of Italian and French Travelers in Iran”

“Night of Italian Travelers in Iran” and “Night of French Travelers in Iran” were amongst gatherings held to commemorate great cultural and artistic characters by Bukhara Magazine with the cooperation of Book Museum and Documented Heritage Department of NLAI. In the “Night of Italian Travelers in Iran” ceremony held in October 2019, Giuseppe Perrone, Ambassador of Italy to Tehran, Muhammad Behfrouzi, Bahram Parvin Gonabadi, Iman Mansoub Basiri, Antonia Shoraka and Ali Dehbashi delivered their speeches. On the sidelines of this ceremony, an exhibition constituted of books and documents of Italian travelers, which have been protected in the reservoirs of NLAI, was opened. Another program of this gathering was displaying the video-message of Professor Angelo Michele Piemontese, who had taught Persian language and linguistics, in Rome, Venice and Strasbourg for many years. Italian Bibliography in Italian Language is one of the best works of the great Italian Iranologist. Prof. Piemontese has discovered and published a valid copy of Attar Neishaburi’s *Manṭiq-ut-Tayr*’ (Conference of the Birds). He also played a key and important role and in understanding and introducing Hakim Ferdowsi’s *Shahnameh*’ (Book of Kings) manuscript (1217) which was used as the basis for the available copies in the market. Initially, Italian Travelers came to Iran as political delegates from Venice and left memoirs and notes from themselves. We have become familiar with social life, beliefs, traditions and



customs of Iranian within centuries through these documents. In this ceremony, 13th to 17th centuries’ travelers including Pietro Della Valle and Marco Polo and some other travelogue writers were dealt with. In the “Night of French Travelers in Iran” ceremony held in November 2019, Philippe Thiébaud, Ambassador of France to Tehran, Hamed Fouladvand, Researcher, Translator, and veteran of philosophy and literature, Fatemeh Eshghi, Faculty member of Allama Tabatabaee and Ph.D. of French Translation, Golnar Golnarian, Master of Translation from France Sorbonne University and Ali Dehbashi, Researcher and editor in chief of Bukhara Magazine, delivered their speeches. Dehbashi spoke about such travelogues of French travelers in 17 to 19th centuries as Jean Chardin, Jean-Baptiste Feuvrier, special physician of Nassereddin Shah of Qajar, Pierre Loti, Eugène Flaudin etc. Thiébaud, the France ambassador to Tehran, said that travel-

ogues are a reflection of the enriched culture of Iran and continued, “These travelogues transfer knowledge and experience of travel and are a common heritage. These travelers not only tried to introduce civilization and great culture of Iran to west, but also they struggled to introduce this culture to Iranians themselves, today we can work on better cooperation through analysis and introduction of such interactions to each other.” Thiébaud also said, “Henry Corbin played a key role in studying Shiism and introducing Iranian philosophy to Europeans and also promoting it across the France and Europe. Because Corbin was the first director of Iranology Association in France and helped considerable in cultural and humanistic interactions, as today we can continue his way.” On the sidelines of this gathering, an exhibition including works from 20 French travelers which are kept in the Iranian archive was held. Out of most ancient works of this collection we can refer to Levant travelogue written by Jean de Thévenot and various copies of Chardin’s. Besides travelogues, six manuscripts of Iranian tourists who had traveled to France were showcased in this exhibition, out of which we can point to Nassereddin Shah Qajar, the fourth King of Persia and Mozaffar ad-Din Shah Qajar, the fifth Qajar king of Persia. The appreciation paper for Prof. Corbin, philosopher, theologian, Iranologist and professor of Islamic Studies, and André Godard, archaeologist, architect and historian of French and Middle Eastern Art, awarded by the University of Tehran were showcased in this exhibition, as well.

“Thinking Library” Call for Help

The Thinking Library (in Farsi: Ketabkhane Tafakkor) locating in Shahriar (Tehran Province) was set in fire and annihilated and its books and equipments were destroyed on November 2019. Performing under supervision of Iran Libraries Foundation, this library failed to continue its activities. Through publishing a call-for-help, this organization asked all people and book lovers to help it in reconstructing this library. Here some items that can be helped are listed:

- Helping to reconstructing library in terms of constructional considerations;
- Collecting the donated books through all public libraries of the country;
- Supplying equipments including shelves, chairs, desks, etc;
- Cash aids.

More than 10000 books and cash aids have been given to this library and various campaigns across the entire country have been launched to reconstruct this library.

There are more than 3000 public libraries in Iran. Under Iran’s law, the Iran public libraries Foundation, which is a non-governmental entity, is responsible for the task of establishing, constructing, equipping, developing, managing, and monitoring the public libraries across the country.



Iran Participates in Doha Book Fair

As the representatives of Iran, Iran Cultural Fairs Institute along with some other publishers participated in the Doha International Book Fair (January 9 - 18, 2020). Iranian booth showcased 400 book titles from 30 different publishers on religion, academic, children and young adults, literature etc. Also introducing Iran’s publishing industry and related centers, plans designed to support

Aboleinin, Head of Doha Book Fair. In this meeting, Aboleinin said, “we expect that cultural and scientific exchange between Iran and Qatar would not limited to this fair. We know very well that the Persian civilization is a very deep and enriched one and it is not just the Doha’s people view to Iran, but it is a global view to Ira.” Ashena invited Aboleinin to visit Tehran International Book Fair 2020.



translation and publishing Iranian books in the international markets through introducing and inviting foreign publishers to participate in the Tehran international book fair were among other programs of this booth. Ahmad bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud, Chairman of Consultative Assembly of Qatar, Salah bin Ghanim Al Ali, Qatari Minister of Youth and Sports along with a group of officials of Doha Book Fair visited Iran’s booth. Also, Ghader Ashena, surrogate of director of Tehran International Book Fair and Managing Director of Iran Cultural Fairs Institute paid a visit to Jasem Ahmad

Doha Book Fair is one of authentic book fairs in the Persian Gulf region and as the result of considerable requests from international and regional publishers to present in this fair, it has become very famous and known within the past years. Initially, it was opened in 1972 and continued by 2002 biannually and since 2002 it is held annually. For its first year, Doha Book Fair hosted only 20 international publishers; while today more than 800 publishers from 31 countries are gathered in a space larger than 29000 sq-ms.

Cultural Interactions: Iran & Belarus

With the aim of keeping alive the culture of donating books, Belarus National Library donated 23 Russian books to the Exchange and Donation Group of National Library and Archives of Iran Organization on October 2020. Book Donation Ceremony is a part of a cultural cooperation between Iran and Belarus with the aim of strengthening mutual traditional friendly ties. In the same direction, the Iranian ambassador to Minsk donated a collection of Persian, Russian and English books on history, literature, philosophy and culture to the Belarus National Library on December 2019. Likewise, on the sidelines of this cultural measure, which was held in the framework of Year of Book in the Belarus, the statue of great Persian scientist and poet Omar Khayyam was awarded to Roman Motulsky, the Director of National Belarus Library. Locating in the city of Minsk, National Belarus Library with 22 stories and about 10 million resources is recognized as one of the most comprehensive libraries in the Europe. With a history about 90 years, this library is working on providing the documented heritage of Belarus people. The published documents in Belarus since early 19th century, the published works on Belarus and valuable foreign copies are kept in this library. Out of works are kept in this library we can point to works written over papyrus, camel bones, the smallest and biggest book formats, pictures of famous artists and also a Quran from 17th century and old manuscripts of Attar Neishaburi and Nizami Ganjavi divans. Also, there is a very ancient Iranian carpet in the Belarus over which the poems of Maksim Bahdanovič, the famous Belarus poet, have been woven. It indicates that the two countries have had mutual ties since ancient times.

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