



AMIR KABIR PUBLISHERS

AMIR KABIR PUBLISHERS, a major Persian publishing house active from 1949 to 1979. It was founded by ‘Abd-al-Raḥīm Ja‘fari (b. 1298 Š. /1919) in a small office on Nāṣer Ḳosrow Avenue in Tehran, the location for most major publishers at the time. It opened its first bookstore nearby and later established thirteen branches throughout the city. It was the first private publisher in Persia to hold a book exhibition (in Tehran University Faculty Club, in 1958). In 1963, three subsidiaries, named Parastu, Simorġ, and Ketābhā-ye Ṭalā‘i, were formed to publish paperback editions of fiction, science, and children’s books, respectively.

Amir Kabir established a fee payment system for paying royalties to authors and translators, and was the second private publisher, after [Bongāh-e Tarjoma wa Našr-e Ketāb](#) (The Institute for Translation and Publication), to develop an editorial department. To promote reading, Amir Kabir offered a book club scheme in 1957 with a minimum of 3000 rials book purchase in ten monthly installments. Over 3000 subscribers joined the plan until it was discontinued in 1973. Starting in 1968, Amir Kabir made investments in other related enterprises, including the Sepehr and Offset Printing Houses, as well as Šerkat-e Čāp-e Ketābhā-ye-Darsi, Kārḳāna-ye Ḥorufrizi, and Pars Paper Company. It was also a member of the Publishers Union in Tehran and Khorasan, where it had opened a bookstore. Amir Kabir acquired three publishing companies, namely Ebn-e Sinā, K̄vārazmi, and Ketābhā-ye Jibi, and thus became the largest private publishing firm in Persia, with a total of 700 employees.

A Persian translation of *Histoire de la Science* by the French author Pierre



Rousseau received much publicity in the early years of publishing, followed by translations from the popular French educational series *Que sais-je*. Under the supervision of the scholars Dabiḥ-Allāh Ṣafā and Parviz-Nātel Kānlari, the low-priced series of literary selections, *Šāhkārhā-ye adabiyāt-e fārsi* (Masterpieces of Persian Literature), was started in 1954. By 1979 thirty-seven booklets had been published. The publication of *Farhang-e Mo'in*, an important Persian encyclopaedic dictionary, in six volumes and more than 8000 pages, took almost a decade (1963-1973), due to the long and ultimately fatal illness of its author, Moḥammad Mo'in. In 1971, a luxury edition of Ferdowsi's *Šāh-nāma*, based on the famous 19th-century edition of Jules Mohl and under the supervision of Moḥammad Ja'far Maḥjub, was produced. Jawād Šarifi, Moḥammad Bahrāmi, and 'Ali-Aṣqar Ma'ṣumi were respectively the artists for the calligraphy, miniatures, and ink drawings of this fine edition. The bookbinding and the artwork of the cover were done by Ḥosayn Eslāmiān. The miniatures were printed in 16 colors, and the text itself in six colors. A nine-colored edition of the Qur'ān, popularly known as *Qor'ān-e Amir Kabir*, was published in 1978 under the supervision of Sayyed Ṣadr-al-Din Balāgi. The calligraphy, the artwork of the cover and the binding were completed by Aḥmad Zanjāni and Ebrāhim Hāšemi, respectively.

In its three decades, Amir Kabir published over 2000 titles (2700 titles counting those of the merged publishers) of Persian literature and poetry (432 titles), world literature and poetry (388), books for children and adolescents (326), history and geography (214), sociology and economics (167), basic and applied science (164), philosophy, psychology, and religion (117), language and lexicography (103), and other titles (148). The English-Persian and Persian-English dictionaries compiled and edited by 'Abbās Āriānpur and the last volume of the *Moṣāḥab Persian Encyclopedia (Dāyerat-al-ma'āref-e Fārsi)* were also among the highly acclaimed publications of Amir Kabir press.

Soon after the Revolution of 1979, 'Abd-al-Raḥim Ja'fari was arrested and imprisoned for eight months, and his property sequestered. The Amir Kabir Publishing House was confiscated by court order and transferred to Sāzemān-e Tabliḡāt-e Eslāmi (the Organization for the Promotion of Islam).



BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also: 'Abd-al-Raḥim Ja'fari, *Dar jostoju-ye šobḥ*, vols. I and II, Tehran, 1383 Š./2004.