Historical Aspects of Cataloging and Classification in Iran

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Historical Aspects of Cataloging and Classification in Iran

Poori Soltani

SUMMARY. This article consists of three parts: (1) Introduction, (2) Cataloging and classification of manuscripts, and (3) Cataloging and classification of printed matters in Iran. In the introduction, after a short review of Iranian libraries, the historical background of Fihrist is touched upon. In the second section, the historical development of cataloging of manuscripts is discussed, emphasizing the catalogs of manuscripts of the Parliament, Astani Qods, and the National Library as examples. In the third section, the history of cataloging and classification of printed books in modern times is reviewed: This event was initiated in Iran through formal and informal courses taught mainly by foreign lecturers. The initiation of the MLS degree at the University of Tehran and the establishment of TEBROC paved the way for standard rules and methods. With the amalgamation of TEBROC in the National Library, modern ways and means were developed more rapidly, hence computerization of cataloging, CIP, and IRANMARC.

KEYWORDS. Iran, cataloging, classification, manuscripts, TEBROC, National Library of Iran, library education

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Introduction

Historians have long spoken of the existence of libraries in pre-Islamic Iran. The first to give us a valuable account of such libraries and whose book *Al-Fihrist (The Catalog)* has survived is Ibn-Nadim (10th cent.). He states that in order to preserve knowledge for future generations, Iranians wrote on the bark of a special tree called *khadang* (*peuplier blanc*) and kept these writings.
in safe places immune to earthquakes. Thus the library of Saruyeh Jey in Isfahan came into existence. Ibn-Nadim says that he himself had seen the books of this library, which had been removed and brought to Baghdad. There have been other libraries such as Gondi-Shapur University Library and the libraries in Ctesiphon and Samarqand.

In addition, fire-temples had libraries attached to them, which were unfortunately destroyed by various invasions. During the Islamic era, from the eighth century on, great libraries flourished everywhere. All mosques and seminary schools had libraries. Cities such as Nishapur, Marv, Saveh, Shiraz, and Rey had such famous libraries that people came from far away to use them. It is not, however, my intention to elaborate on the history of libraries in Iran. Much has been written on this topic in Persian, Arabic, and European languages. But the fact that such libraries existed implies the existence of some sort of catalogs. The library of Sahib Ibn ‘Abbad in Rey is said to have had a catalog of ten volumes. Maqdasi (10th cent.) states that he had seen the library of Azod al-Dowleh in Shiraz in which books were arranged by subject and each subject was kept in a different room and each room had catalogs according to the title and author. Avicenna, the librarian of Nuh-Ibn Mansur Samani, had used the Royal Library in Bukhara and states that among the books listed in the catalog were many titles that no one knew. Here also books were kept on shelves according to subject. There are many references to catalogs of personal and private libraries in reference books and historical and social accounts.

In fact, the first time we hear of the word *fihrist* (catalog) is in the second century after Islam when Ma’mun (776-833), the Abbasid Caliph, asks the Iranian scholar, Hasan Ibn-Sahl (8th cent.): “Which Iranian book is the best?” and receives the answer *Javidan-i-Khirad* (Perennial Wisdom). Ma’mun demands the *fihrist* from his library. To his astonishment he discovers that the book does not exist in his library.

The oldest catalog to survive, however, as noted above, is *Al-Fihrist* of Ibn-Nadim, which is, in a way, a bio-bibliography of all books in existence at his time. It is arranged in ten broad subjects, each one divided into more specific subjects, sometimes up to eight divisions, with each division at times further classified into subdivisions. Under each subdivision books are listed under the names of the authors. Ibn-Nadim often gives valuable information about the authors and social and cultural conditions of their times.

From the eleventh to the nineteenth centuries, there also exist several catalogs; these are primarily personal catalogs, which were compiled by individual authors or for them. Biruni’s *Fihrist*, which is a list of the books written by
Abu-Reyhan Biruni (11th cent.), is one such example. Ibn-Tavus also compiled a list of his own books (13th cent.), which still exists.  

Upheavals and invasions in Iran for more than ten centuries, however, affected the pace of library development. In the nineteenth century, during the Qajar Dynasty’s relationships with the West, for the first time a European-style college, Dar-al-Fonun, was established, in which Austrian professors were employed to teach. Its library with Persian, Arabic, and German documents was cataloged and arranged on the shelves by accession numbers. Later, in 1937, these documents came to constitute the core collections of the National Library of Iran.

**CATALOGING OF MANUSCRIPTS**

Early in the twentieth century libraries began to be recognized again as sources of information and as places where the written heritage of the country had been preserved. Iranians looked back to their past fame, veiling their present backwardness with the pride of the past. Librarians looked at their collections and took pride in precious manuscripts, adorned with marvelous illustrations and miniatures. Thus they began to introduce these sources to scholars as well as to the public by printing their catalogs. With the victory of the Constitutional Revolution in 1906, the publication of newspapers and books flourished; and the age of enlightenment began, bringing some noticeable social and cultural changes, which were more or less influenced by the West. Some new public and government libraries were also established, and the existing silent libraries began to become active and people started to use them more often. The Library of the Parliament was officially inaugurated in 1925 though the proposal of its establishment dates back to 1909. Arbab Keykhosrow, a member of Parliament, under whose supervision the library functioned, states that he himself listed the following documents in the accession book of the library: 183 Persian, 185 Arabic, 9 Turkish, 855 French, 21 English, 20 Russian, 75 German, and 17 Italian. These volumes, together with a donation in 1912 of 1091 volumes by Ehtesham al-Saltaneh, Head of Parliament (first and second round), comprised the core collection of the Majlis (Parliament) Library.  

Yet there is no trace of cataloging until 1926, when the first catalog of the Majlis Library was published; it included both printed works and manuscripts. The introduction of this catalog reveals how much the compiler, Yusof E’tesami, had been influenced by Western ideas. He gives reference to Diodorus Siculus, the Greek historian. He speaks of some Western catalogs...
such as those of J. T. Zonker, August Müller, and many others. He also cites as examples the catalogs of the Bibliothèque nationale, the Bodleian Library (Oxford), and the British Museum. He discusses the classification systems of Melvil Dewey, Charles Cutter, James Brown, and the Library of Congress. He eventually concludes that subject catalogs rather than classified ones are preferable. Although he lists the manuscripts alphabetically by title because they were so few (only 216 titles), he does list printed books by subject. It is interesting to note that he lists the subjects alphabetically (according to the Persian alphabet), and under each subject books are arranged alphabetically by title. Altogether thirty-eight subject categories exist, the list of which is given at the beginning of the text. The second volume of the catalog, also by Yusof E’tesami, came out in 1933 and excludes printed materials but includes the 216 manuscripts of the previous volume plus an additional 492 for a total of 708 manuscripts. The third volume, by Ibn-Yusof Shirazi, appeared in 1939; in the introduction he stresses the need for the catalog. He lists books under seven broad subjects, but gives more information about each volume.

Also in 1926 the Library of Astan-i-Qods, with a historical heritage of some seven centuries, published a catalog of its collection in three volumes. In each volume manuscripts and printed books are separately arranged under broad subjects. Under each subject, books are arranged alphabetically by title. Under each manuscript title the following information is provided: language, author and dates, sponsor, a few words of the first and last lines, date of the manuscripts, style of calligraphy, number of lines on each page, the donor, number of pages, and length and width of the pages. In some cases additional information about the authors and the books is provided in summaries, but this is never as informative as the content of Ibn-Nadim’s Al-Fihrist. Almost all the catalogs prepared around this period provide more or less the same information, and most of them consist of both manuscripts and printed books. It should also be mentioned that until the 1950s most efforts to catalog manuscripts were motivated by the individual interests of catalogers and were not part of an organized project to provide control and access to manuscript holdings in Iran’s libraries.

As noted, the second volume of the catalog of the Parliament Library consisted of manuscripts only. Gradually it became customary for libraries to publish catalogs only of their manuscripts. There are two main reasons behind this decision. First, printed books became superfluous and inexpensive and could be found in bookshops as well as in different libraries. Second, manuscripts were unique at each library and thus valuable as well as looked upon as the precious scholarly heritage of the country. So in the twentieth century many catalogs of manuscripts were published. Through tracing their development, one
can identify signs of modern cataloging. Thus when in 1986 Ali Ardalan was assigned to revise the above-mentioned three volumes of the Astan-i-Qods catalogs by separating the manuscripts from the rest, he rearranged and edited the volumes and corrected a large number of mistakes and inconsistencies as well as misprints. Yet he found no mistakes in the subject classification.15

**TOWARDS STANDARDIZATION**

The National Library of Iran was officially inaugurated in 1937. Among its collections, a part of which came from the ex-library of Dar al-Fonun, donations from the Royal Library, and other sources, there were many manuscripts, which by 1956 totaled 4,157.16 Before this time there had been some efforts to catalog the manuscripts, but none was ever published. In 1956 Iraj Afshar, presently one of Iran’s most famous librarians, bibliographers, and scholars, who had just returned from a UNESCO course on librarianship,17 became the head librarian and tried to set forth rules and regulations for the cataloging of manuscripts. He organized a committee of scholars and bibliographers. This committee eventually designed a worksheet of two sides (30 × 32 cm.). One side belonged to the bibliographic information of the manuscript, and the other side was for manuscriptology18 in which all the distinctive features necessary for the recognition of a copy are listed. (See Figure 1.)

Abdollah Anvar, one of the committee members and also one of the most outstanding of Iranian researchers, was assigned to do the work. The first volume describing 500 manuscripts was published in 1964. Other manuscript catalogers followed this pattern. The catalog of Persian and Arabic manuscripts in the National Library of Iran eventually comprised ten volumes; all were published between 1965 and 1979 under the direction of Mr. Anvar and described more than 5,000 manuscripts. In 1995, inspired by AACR2, Chapter 4, and in order to bring about maximum consistency, the Cataloging Department of the National Library of Iran designed another worksheet that could be used in a computer format. (See Figures 2 and 3.)

Since then, this format has been used at the National Library of Iran. On 1-2 May 2000 a seminar on manuscripts was organized by and held in the Library of the Parliament with the cooperation of the National Library of Iran and the National Museum of Malek. Mr. Habibollah Azimi, the head cataloger of the Manuscript Department of the National Library, presented the format, asking for conformity among all manuscript catalogers. The matter is still open to further discussion.
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**FIGURE 2**
FIGURE 3
Although Iran has a long history of libraries dating back to pre-Islamic times, such as the University of Gondishapur, the Public Library of Saruyeh Jey in Isfahan, and many libraries of the Islamic era, modern librarianship is fairly new in Iran. Due to the cultural relationship between Iran and Western countries, which essentially developed after the Constitutional Revolution (1906), Iran underwent major social changes. Students were sent abroad to be educated, printed publication increased, more modern schools succeeded the traditional learning institutions (*maktab khaneh*), and libraries flourished everywhere. Yet no concrete effort was made for the cataloging and classification of library materials. Books were usually arranged on shelves by size, accession number, or at best by broad subjects; and within each subject the arrangement was by accession number, making retrieval even more difficult. In libraries there were usually card catalogs. The existence of card catalogs was new and was considered fairly modern since most libraries had their holdings listed in accession books only. Even today the tradition of accession books continues in some libraries for peculiar financial reasons.

During the 1930s and 1940s there were hardly any major cultural transformations because of existing political conditions. Yet in 1938 the first course in librarianship was offered; and sixty students, who were either library employees or elementary or high school teachers, took part. The duration of the course was 120 hours; the lessons included alphabetizing, introduction to librarianship, history of librarianship, manuscripts, history of writing and calligraphy, literary style, and report writing. All the lecturers, except one, were Iranians and taught in Persian. None of them were professional librarians but rather scholars and men of fame. They were all familiar with Western culture, and some had been abroad. Ibn-Yusef, a manuscript cataloger, was one of the teachers. Rules for alphabetized categorization were taught by Salma Moqaddam, the French wife of Dr. Mohsen Moqaddam, one of the most famous archaeologists of Iran and a professor in the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Tehran. In fact, he also helped his wife during the lessons, acting as her translator. Each participant received a library certificate. The course was set up by the Ministry of Culture, which was in charge of cultural and educational affairs. Although cataloging was not taught as an independent subject, there were references to it during some of the lessons.

About 1940 Dr. Mohsen Saba, who had been trained as a librarian at the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, became the librarian at the National Bank of Iran. He introduced the use of the card catalog; and in order to disseminate the idea, he published the cards in the form of a book catalog.
fore the Second World War, which was also very significant in terms of East/West relationships, another course in librarianship was offered in which Dr. Saba and Dr. Mehdi Bayani, the founder and head librarian of the National Library of Iran, taught. Between 1940 and 1950 card catalogs were introduced to libraries in Tehran University and also in the library of the National Iranian Oil Company, headed by Ms. Evlin Anna Mary Vartani, a professional librarian who had been educated in the United States and had returned to Iran in 1952.

For the first time, in 1952, the University of Tehran (established in 1934), invited Josef Stumvoll from Austria and Mary Gaver from the United States to come to Iran to teach a five-month course in librarianship. In this course cataloging was given recognition as one of the independent lessons. Then in 1953 the first book in Persian on technical services librarianship was published. A year later in 1954 Susan Akers, former dean of the University of North Carolina Library School, continued to teach this course for another seven months at the University of Tehran. Among her lectures, which still exist in the National Library of Iran in mimeograph, in both English and Persian, are several relating to cataloging and classification. She taught cataloging and classification in detail and lectured on the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC). Several sessions were assigned to these topics.

In 1956 Fraune Dorfer, an Austrian librarian, was invited to Iran through UNESCO and taught a course on library science and collection management. Some mimeographs of his lessons also exist in the National Library of Iran. In all the lectures he presented, the main emphasis was on cataloging and classification. By this time there was a need for the development of librarianship in Iran, and efforts were made to promote the profession. From 1957 to 1964 librarianship became one of the elective courses at the Teachers’ Training College. Iraj Afshar taught the course during this seven-year interval. He also published the national bibliography of Iran, Kitabha-ye Iran for ten years (1954-1963). In the bibliography books were arranged according to the main divisions of DDC. The compiler acknowledges that he manipulated some sections relating to Iran, especially Iranian literature.

Under the supervision of Dr. Naser Sharifi in 1960, another course was taught at the Teachers’ Training College. The course was team-taught by Dean Farnsworth from the United States and Iraj Afshar. In the same year, for the first time, a type of centralized cataloging appeared. The Teachers’ Training College printed and published catalog cards (7.5 × 12.5 cm.) to be used in all faculties of the University of Tehran as well as all other libraries requesting them. Following (Figure 4) is an example of these cards:
This is the main unit card. The rest are identical, each having appropriate added entries and subjects printed above the main entry. Card numbers are printed at the bottom, including year and accession number. This card-printing project seems to have lasted for only one year since all the cards have the same date of 1339 [1960]. At the top right-hand corner of the card, the DDC number and author mark are printed. The information has been printed on durable card stock of superior quality with beautifully selected print fonts. Never again were such elegant cards published in Iran. The cataloging on these cards shows that it conformed to the existing rules at that time.

In 1962 the Children’s Book Council offered some classes for children’s librarians. These classes, which were taught for four years, presented simple instruction in cataloging and classification as well as general and special services for children. During the 1960s the necessity and importance of librarianship grew, and its study flourished in libraries. By this time many librarians had been trained in the courses described above, and those who went abroad for training gradually returned. So in 1964 when a course was offered again for the university librarians in the Faculty of Science at the University of Tehran, it was taught entirely by Iranians.

Those who had come back from abroad were managing the libraries. They blended imported modern ideas with touches of Iranian cultural heritage and made use of them in their libraries. Technical services had become of utmost importance. Some special or governmental libraries even bought catalog cards from the Library of Congress for their non-Persian/Arabic books. Through
these cards many librarians learned a great deal about cataloging and classification, the author of this paper being one of them. The Library of the Central Bank of Iran, which was established in 1960 and possessed the collection of the National Bank of Iran, was headed by Ms. F. Goharian, a professional librarian educated in the United States; it was at the time one of the best-organized libraries in Iran. The latest edition of DDC, in addition to Library of Congress subject headings, was used. The library bought catalog cards from the Library of Congress, used AACR, and possessed many other tools, such as the National Union Catalog (NUC) of the United States. This article’s author was employed there in 1963 and was trained to be a cataloger.

OFFICIAL EDUCATION

The establishment of a master’s degree in library science was proposed in 1964 to the chancellor of the University of Tehran by Iraj Afshar, then the head librarian of the Central Library of the university. It took two years for the proposal to be realized.26 At that time Ms. Margaret Hopkins worked in the Central Library of the University of Tehran as a consultant. She had come to Iran through the Fulbright Program. Ms. Iran Daqiq, who had been sent to England to be trained as a librarian, had returned and became the head of the Technical Services Department of the Central Library.

Ms. Hopkins helped Iraj Afshar in writing the proposal for the master’s degree. The duration of the degree program was two academic years. Ms. Alice Lohrer, lecturer at the University of Illinois School of Librarianship, came to Iran through the Fulbright Program to organize and teach courses for the degree. The head librarian of the Department, Mrs. Farangis Omid, had already obtained her MLS in the United States and was active in the field.

Of course, cataloging and classification were also among the courses; but Ms. Lohrer, who was not a cataloger, did not teach these subjects. This author was one of the students in this degree program27 and, having been trained by the head librarian of the Central Bank of Iran, was quite familiar with the development of technical services abroad, as were some others who were already using and applying Western methods in their libraries. Ms. Hopkins and Elizabeth Russell, another American who came later, tried to teach those courses.28 As soon as I graduated in 1968, I was asked to teach the cataloging and classification course, and I taught it until 1979.

TEBROC

The Tehran Book Processing Center (TEBROC) was established in 1968. Dr. John F. Harvey, an information scientist who came to Iran through the Fulbright
Program to take the place of Ms. Lohrer in the MLS degree program, wrote the plan for the center. He gave the outline of his plan to me for review and comments. I found the proposal relevant and useful. The plan had been written for the Ministry of Culture, directly responsible for the National Library. Yet the Minister was not disposed to its implementation. The plan was subsequently presented to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education; and after several sessions, the minister, Dr. M. Rahnema, agreed to its establishment as a sister organization to the Iranian Documentation Centre (IRANDOC).

TEBROC was founded with the intention that it would be a major force in the development of Iranian libraries. In order to fulfill this mission, TEBROC was to provide professional and technical services, especially cataloging, classification and consulting services, to all types of libraries and institutions under contract. TEBROC furthermore undertook special research projects in devising national standards.

To carry out these functions, TEBROC employed a pool of highly skilled post-graduate professional librarians, who could take advantage of new ideas developed abroad and make their services widely available to Iran’s rapidly developing libraries. In addition, TEBROC supervised a bibliographic center that received national bibliographies, book reviews, who is who’s, biographies, books and periodicals pertaining to library and information sciences in Iran and many other countries. This collection enabled TEBROC to aid librarians in book selection and acquisition as well as cataloging, classification, and research.

In preparing books for its customers, TEBROC employed the most recent and thorough cataloging and classification policies and procedures. The Anglo-American Cataloging Rules and Library of Congress subject headings were used for all books except those in Persian and Arabic. Since both the LC and DDC systems were used, each TEBROC catalog card offered customers a choice of classification schemes. Because standard cataloging and classification tools had been created basically for works in English or in the Latin alphabet, TEBROC attempted to satisfy its own needs by translating, adapting, and creating tools particularly suited to Iranian works or those in Arabic script. Therefore, one of the great undertakings of TEBROC was the cataloging of Persian books.

A special Iranian adaptation of the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules was gradually developed. As shortcomings in certain rules were encountered, decisions were made for adapting them to fit better into the Iranian environment. A Persian list of subject headings was also prepared based on the subject matter of books cataloged. These subject headings, which were at first maintained in a card file, were later printed in a single volume for national use.

Special Iranian expansions of DDC and LC were prepared for subjects relating to Iran: Iranian languages, literature, history, geography, philosophy,
and Islam. Two systems of Iranian author marks were prepared, one based on Cutter-Sanborn and the other based on the Library of Congress system.

The Tehran Book Processing Center also maintained the National Union Catalog and published six volumes, containing records from eight outstanding libraries of Iran. This publication was increasingly useful in facilitating the exchange of knowledge and inter-library loan. A union catalog of Persian and Arabic books was separately compiled and contained records from more than eighty major libraries of Iran. This catalog was kept on cards and still exists as such. The process stopped after the Islamic Revolution.

TEBROC also had a teaching function. It ran two one-month library workshops each year for the benefit of the staff of Iranian libraries; the senior staff of TEBROC offered courses at the University of Tehran, Faculty of Education, Department of Library Science. TEBROC consisted of five departments and one library research group. The departments were cataloging, classification, planning, selection and acquisition, and bibliography.

The members of the research group articulated and implemented all the expansions of DDC, LC, and other library tools. The first director of TEBROC was Mr. Abbas Mazaher (MLS), a professional librarian educated in the United States. Dr. Harvey became the consultant of both TEBROC and IRAN DOC and stayed until 1976. The author has headed the Library Research Group ever since.

TEBROC standardized the process of cataloging and classification, and all of its cataloging and classification tools were used for the arrangement of most libraries. The National Library of Iran was the last one to adopt and use these standard tools. In 1983 TEBROC, along with its staff and collections, was transferred to the National Library of Iran. The first task of the staff at the National Library was to get the National Bibliography of Iran published according to the guidelines of UNESCO. The first volume came out in 1986 and was widely recognized and acclaimed by professional librarians and researchers. It is a classified catalog, more or less similar to the National Bibliography of Australia, which was in fact adopted as the model. It has been published in the same style ever since.

When TEBROC was transferred to the National Library of Iran, almost all the necessary tools for cataloging and classification had already been published. In TEBROC we always exchanged ideas with and took the advice of the Library of Congress and Forest Press before introducing any of the revisions and expansions in DDC or LC classifications in the sections dealing with Iran.

During its ten years of existence, TEBROC has published about thirty titles of reference works and textbooks on technical services and librarianship resulting from research projects. In addition to the classification expansions, two major publications should also be mentioned: a name authority list and a list of Persian
subject headings. Both are kept on cards and are updated daily and continue to be published at irregular intervals by the National Library of Iran.

The most important function of TEBROC, which was extremely influential as far as cataloging and classification are concerned, was the publication of printed catalog cards. Publication started almost six months after the establishment of TEBROC in 1969. Many libraries became customers and bought sets of unit cards. (See Figure 5.)

FIGURE 5
From the beginning it was decided to use the third level of AACR. So full cataloging was used and each card had both LC and DDC class numbers for the benefit of libraries using either classification scheme. The Library of Congress catalog card was the model, but we offered author marks for DDC numbers as well.

After the founding of the Library School, the establishment of TEBROC constituted a real turning point in the history of librarianship in Iran, especially in the field of technical services.34

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF IRAN

As far as classification and cataloging are concerned, the National Library continued TEBROC’s role in serving the country’s libraries. Pursuant to TEBROC’s revision and expansion of Iranian languages and literature in the Library of Congress classification,35 the National Library has begun to publish translations and alphabetical rearrangements of individual authors in the LC classification. So far French PQ and American PS have been completed, and the literatures of some other countries are at hand. Research has been done on expanding the Iranian educational institutions section of the LC classification, and the National Library has been in contact with the Library of Congress on this proposal.36 Adaptation of AACR, which had started at TEBROC, and the process of making decisions on cards continued at the National Library. The results were published after necessary revisions.37 These works have gone through multiple revisions.

Three major innovations have taken place at the National Library of Iran in recent years. First is the beginning of computerization of cataloging in 1995 and the printing of catalog cards in response to individual requests. The library, which is situated in eight buildings scattered throughout Tehran, is to date about 60 percent computerized. The various locations do not have network connections although most of them are equipped with computers. Some activities, such as maintenance of the library’s name authority file, are carried out both manually and electronically. The authority file is issued in hard copy as well as on CD. State-of-the-art technology will be available in the new building (about 100,000 square meters) of the National Library, which is scheduled for opening in early 2003.38

The second major innovation was government legal approval in 1996 to institute a Cataloging in Publication (CIP) program. Such an idea had, in fact, existed for about three decades. The first institution to use CIP was the University of Tehran. Iraj Afshar, the head of the Central Library and the University Press, launched the program by pre-cataloging publications of the University
of Tehran and gave free sets of catalog cards to any faculty members of the university who requested them. Libraries not attached to the university had to purchase them. The program started in 1997 and lasted for three years. A catalog card was prepared for each title and was added before the title page in each published work. See Figure 6 below:

There were occasional instances of publications with CIP data before the CIP law was enacted. For example, a 1970 publication from Khaniqah-i Ne’matollahi has a catalog card printed on the verso of the title page. It should be noted that both the University of Tehran and Khaniqah-i Ne’matollahi actually provided catalog cards although they had no classification numbers.

In 1974 the problem of CIP and its development in the West was discussed in an article in *The Iranian Library Association Bulletin*, which stressed the necessity and usefulness of CIP for Iranian libraries. After the Islamic Revolution, however, the matter was forgotten for awhile. But before the 1990s, some libraries headed by professional librarians adopted CIP. The Central Library of the Plan and Budget Organization (starting in 1363 [1984]), the Library of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (starting 1991), and the newly established institution of the University Press were among the institutions that began to provide CIP. Some of these institutions brought their publications to the National Library of Iran and asked that CIP be provided. For a number of years this was done unofficially. At last an attempt was made to secure legal approval for CIP. The Deputy Director of the National Library, Dr. Fariborz Khosravi, worked to persuade the Cultural Revolution Council to permit addition of CIP. When eventually it was approved (5.12.1375 [24 February 1997]), it took

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**FIGURE 6**

[Image of a catalog card]
nearly a year before the official announcement could be made. In the meantime attempts were made to get the agreement of other libraries, especially in the provinces, to cooperate with the National Library. Regulations concerning the use of CIP were written and distributed to all publishers. The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance cooperates with the National Library to implement CIP for all publications. In 1380 (21 March 2001-21 March 2002), almost 90 percent of Iranian publications received CIP. Full cataloging was provided with subject headings, added entries, LC and DDC numbers, and author marks.

Finally, the third major innovation is the establishment of a committee to work on Iran-MARC, based on UNIMARC. The committee began its research in 1998, and an Iran-MARC manual for monographs has been printed. Several private companies and firms are now trying to implement and adapt the Iran-MARC format in the library software that they produce.

**CONCLUSION**

In the area of technical services, Iran is far ahead of other Middle Eastern and Islamic countries. Basic tools have been published to deal with all aspects of descriptive cataloging, subject analysis, and indexing as well as manuals to explain their use. AACR2 and DDC (abridged edition) have been translated into Persian. In recent years there has been a proliferation of books published on the use of the Internet, networking, and application of computers in libraries as well as library automation in general. Major reference tools include bibliographies, directories, and dictionaries such as the National Bibliography of Iran (which is published in hard copy and on CD), the annual Directory of Periodicals and Newspapers, and the Persian Cultural Thesaurus. National standards for both technical and public services exist for most types of libraries: university, special, libraries for the blind, prison libraries (at hand), and so forth. Iran is paving the way toward the realization of universal bibliographic control (UBC) and universal availability of publications (UAP).

**REFERENCES**

3. Ibid.
7. Ibid., 34-35.
10. Ibid., 12-14.
14. A sponsor was the person for whom or by order of whom a manuscript had been written. Kings, rulers, governors, officials, etc., usually ordered calligraphers to copy documents for them. The names of these persons, if known, are included in the descriptions of the manuscripts.
18. By “manuscriptology,” I mean information peculiar and unique to the manuscript at hand. I have coined the word for the Persian Noskheh shenasi (نسخه شناسی): the study of the manuscript that one is studying. It is different from the bibliographic information that may be similar in different manuscripts of the same work. There are two areas examined in the cataloging of manuscripts: Kitab-shenasi and Noskheh shenasi (bibliography and manuscriptology).
20. Mohsen Saba, Fihrist Ketabha-ye Bank Melli Iran (Tehran, 1325 [1986]).
22. Mohsen Saba, Osul-i fan-i Kitabdari . . . (Tehran: University of Tehran, 1332 [1953]).
24. The first two volumes were entitled Kitab-Shenasi-ye Iran.
25. Naser Sharifi obtained his Ph.D. in librarianship from Columbia University in 1958, returned to Iran, and then went back to the United States and later became dean of the Pratt Institute. For further information, see Who’s Who in the World, 14th ed., 1977, p. 1322.
27. Thirteen students, who were already working in different libraries in Tehran, were eventually graduated, the author being one of them. This MLS program has continued and is run by Iranian lecturers.

28. Ms. Russell was not a cataloger. At the time I was taking her course, I was working at the Library of the Central Bank of Iran as a cataloger. Most questions in class were answered by me; and as soon as I graduated, I was chosen to teach cataloging for the same MLS course.


30. These tools include revision and rearrangement for the needs of Iranian libraries of sections of DDC and LC classification relating to Iran. Tools with Dewey revisions include Iranian Languages (2nd ed., 1998), Iranian Literature (2nd ed., 1998), History of Iran (3rd ed., 1999), Islam (3rd ed., 2002), and Geography of Iran (4th ed., 2000). Revised LC classification schedules include Class PIR: Iranian Languages and Literature (2nd ed., 1997), Class DSR: Iranian History (3rd ed., 2000), and Class BP: Islam (2nd ed., 1997). Other TEBROC publications include works on author numbers, which were based on Cutter-Sanborn Three-Figure Table and LC’s system of creating author numbers. A textbook entitled Technical Services (8th ed.) was published in 1999, and subject heading lists were also compiled by TEBROC. University, governmental, and special libraries were foremost among types of libraries to use these tools for organizing their libraries.


32. For further information see: Poori Soltani, TEBROC’s Research Function (Tehran: TEBROC, 1974).


35. See note 30.


37. See note 29.

38. For more information on the National Library, see its Web site at: http://www.nli.ir. Furthermore, about 80 percent of the major libraries in Iran, especially those in universities, are computerized. Although public libraries lag far behind in computerization, the Board of Trustees of Public Libraries, nevertheless, publishes a monthly journal Namayeh (نماهی), which indexes all major periodicals of Iran; this index is available in hard copy and on CD.