

BOOK PUBLISHING IN IRAN

A visualisation of Iran's book publishing process, as navigated by three narrative case studies.

HOW TO READ THIS INFOGRAPHIC

- Follow the coloured circles and match the numbers with the corresponding case studies for the full story
- Squiggled lines represent the act of writing or filling out
- Solid lines and coloured arrows help guide the eye to the next process.
- Dotted lines depict other paths that aren't represented in the case studies
- A** Author
- P** Publisher
- MCIG** Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance
- NL** National Library
- Door representing negative decision
- Door representing positive decision
- X** Blacklisted or Banned

CASE STUDIES

BANNED AFTER PUBLICATION

"I'm a Nobel prize winning author. During Khatami's presidency, I submitted a novel about a prostitute's life to the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance for publishing permission. It was easier when the reformists were in power. They gave me permission to publish my book. After the second edition was published, and I had sold more than 5,000 books, the conservative government banned it and called for all copies of my book to be removed from the shops."

- Nobel prize winning author writes a manuscript about a prostitute's life
- Author sends manuscript to a publisher
- Publisher accepts manuscript for publication
- Publisher requests an ISBN and FIPA number from the National Library, which are then sent back to the publisher
- Simultaneously, the publisher also translates (if necessary), copy-edits, typesets, proofreads, designs the cover and produces one copy of the manuscript in book form
- The author and publisher fill out their respective application forms
- The publisher sends a copy of the book, two application forms (one from the author and one from the publisher), a PDF of the final book and the ISBN and FIPA number to the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance (MCIG)
- The MCIG accepts the book and sends the application forms back to publisher
- The publisher then fills out a final release form and sends this and four printed volumes of book to the MCIG
- The MCIG approves the final release form
- The publisher publishes and distributes the book for sale
- After publication, the publisher pays the author
- After its second edition and the sale of over 5000 copies, the book is banned by the conservative government

PUBLISHED WITH CENSORSHIP

"I wrote a book about a couple going through a midlife crisis. The novel explored family values through their story. The Ministry of Culture sent me a correction request and asked me to remove the word 'kiss' from my book. They even wanted me to remove scenes of the parents kissing their child goodnight. So I censored my book, and submitted the manuscript again."

- Author writes manuscript about middle age crisis for a couple and family values
- Author sends manuscript to a publisher
- Publisher accepts manuscript for publication
- Publisher requests an ISBN and FIPA number from the National Library, which are then sent back to the publisher
- Simultaneously, the publisher also translates (if necessary), copy-edits, typesets, proofreads, designs the cover and produces one copy of the manuscript in book form
- The author and publisher fill out their respective application forms
- The publisher sends a copy of the book, two application forms (one from the author and one from the publisher), a PDF of the final book and the ISBN and FIPA number to the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance (MCIG)
- The MCIG states rejects the book stating it contains forbidden content
- The MCIG sends an anonymous censorship request to the publisher asking them to remove the word 'kiss' from the book
- The publisher requests these amendments from the author
- The author makes the changes to the book
- The publisher then resends the book and .pdf back to the MCIG for review
- The MCIG reviews the edited book
- The MCIG accepts the censored book and sends the application forms back to publisher
- The publisher then fills out a final release form and sends this and four printed volumes of book to the MCIG
- The MCIG approves the final release form
- The publisher publishes and distributes the book for sale
- After publication, the publisher pays the author

AUTHOR IS BLACKLISTED

"In my early twenties, I wrote a novel about the life of a gay man in Iran. I'd had a book published before, and was expecting the permission process to take a while, and that I might need to make some changes, but this time the book office told me within a week that my book was rejected. Ever since then, I haven't been able to get publishing permission for any of my books. I'm blacklisted. Now I can't even get a publishing company to work with me."

- Author writes novel about the life of a gay man in Iran
- Author sends manuscript to a publications company
- Publication house accepts manuscript for publication
- Publisher requests an ISBN and FIPA number from the National Library, which are then sent back to the publisher
- Simultaneously, the publisher also translates (if necessary), copy-edits, typesets, proofreads, designs the cover and produces one copy of the manuscript as a book
- The author and publisher fill out their respective application forms
- The publisher sends a copy of the book, two application forms (one from the author and one from the publisher), a PDF of the final book and the ISBN and FIPA number to the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance (MCIG)
- The MCIG rejects the book and blacklists the author

