On 21st March 2022, during the IBBY press conference at the Bologna Children’s Book Fair in Italy, it was announced that Zohreh Ghaeni was one of the winners of the 2022 IBBY-iRead Outstanding Reading Promoter Award. Zohreh was born in 1954 in Tehran to book-loving parents. She grew up with wonderful picture books, folktales and classic literature and started bringing books and stories to children herself when she was still a university student.

After teaching in rural Iran and completing master’s degree in librarianship and information science, Zohreh founded the Institute for Research on the History of Children’s Literature (IRHCL) in 2000, a non-governmental and non-profit organization. IRHCL has done important research on Iran’s children’s literature for many years, which resulted the publication of a 10-volume book *The History of Children’s Literature*.

In 2010, under the leadership of Zohreh, IRHCL established a new project that has made great impact all over Iran as well as in Afghanistan: Read with Me. The project was developed based on vast research on children’s literature and education that had been done over nearly twenty years. The project makes books available to disadvantaged children who are at risk, such as street and working children, those living in remote and deprived areas, and those living in crisis due to unrest and natural disaster.

After 12 years’ hard work, Read with Me has reached several hundred thousand children in 25 provinces in Iran, has established nearly 100 child-centered libraries, and has trained about 10,000 teachers and librarians to promote quality children’s books around the country.

The success of Read with Me is partly due to its realistic and easy-to-follow principles, which are expandable, flexible and sustainable. This means that Read with Me’s model could be easily adapted and implemented by interested local organizations and individuals. Read with Me’s libraries are also closely monitored and evaluated, ensuring their sustainability.

With her steadfast and unrelenting commitment to children’s reading promotion, Zohreh and her team have changed the lives of many disadvantaged children as well as mothers, teachers, librarians and volunteers.

**Who is Zohreh?**

I grew up in a middle-class family in Tehran. My mother used to be a teacher before her marriage and my father was an educator and translator. I have four sisters and one brother and I am the fifth child.

Although we were not a rich and prosperous family, I had a very calm and happy childhood. I owe a large part of my today abilities and success to my mother and father who provided me with such a happy and comfortable childhood.

My father loved books. He had a rather big library at home. I could never imagine him without books. His passion was not only confined to reading books, but he always encouraged us to read literature and poems. He always bought us many story books and read to us every night. My youngest sister and I had a collection of wonderful picture books, folktales and classic literature at home and we read them with great enthusiasm. I still remember the smell of paper and the colors of those books. During the hot summer afternoons, we lay in the basement and traveled to the world of fairy tales through those books.

I have always loved children. In the last years of my high school, I was fascinated by social activities, and that was when Samad Behrangi, a children's book writer who was a village teacher as well, became popular among the young intellectual people because of his critical stories against injustice and oppression. Samad Behrangi was a social activist and critic, folklorist and story writer from the Azerbaijan province. Like many other young people, I was influenced and very impressed by his books, which portrayed the lives of the disadvantaged children of deprived villages and cities. I loved particularly *The Little Black Fish* story, when the little black fish says: "I want to go see where the stream ends. … I didn't sleep a wink all night…I want to know what's happening in other places." This part of the story moved me and encouraged me to leave university when I was 19 and move to a small village in north of Iran to become a teacher of the children who lived in poverty near the forests of northern Iran. In that village I started to read stories to children who had never had any books in their lives.

**Read with Me**

**iRead:** Could you briefly tell us what is Read with Me?

**Zohreh:** Read with Me is a project designed and implemented by the Institute for Research on the History of Children’s Literature (IRHCL), to promote literacy and reading for/with disadvantaged children who are generally at risk, the deprived children and children in crisis.

The Read with Me project was developed over nearly twenty years from the vast research on children's literature and creative education by the Institute for Research on the History of Children’s Literature in Iran. The project has been implemented for more than twelve years in wide areas of Iran (mostly deprived parts of the country), among children at risk, refugee children from Afghanistan, Pakistan immigrant families, and also in some Farsi speaking regions of Afghanistan.

**iRead:** Read with Me was established in 2010. Against what background was the project established? What problems were you seeing in Iran?

**Zohreh:** Reading literature with the aim of intellectual, emotional and social development of children is not an integral part of the Iranian education system. This problem is deeper in deprived communities, where children live in poverty, have to work and often their rights are violated.

There are thousands of children working in Tehran and other big cities of Iran. They work in small workshops or they are seen in all neighborhoods digging into garbage bins for recyclables, or selling chewing gum or flowers at the road intersections. Most of them are members of undocumented Afghan families who live in Iran illegally, which means that they are barred from attending school. Some are Iranians whose parents have left their rural homes to try and earn a living in a big city. Also, many children in remote areas of Iran live in cultural poverty and deprivation and they are excluded from even the smallest facilities that could expand their capabilities.

Based on this reality, since 2010 the Institute has developed the project Read with Me, aiming to encourage deprived children and young adults to read, to improve their basic literacy and comprehension, and help them to learn skills such as critical thinking and creative problem-solving.

**iRead:** What is Read with Me’s theory of change? How did you design the project to tackle these problems?

**Zohreh:** We believe that by empowering the disadvantaged children and their families through literacy acquisition and reading literature, help them to gain the basic and essential skills, they can get themselves out of the cycle of poverty and deficiency.

The project is designed on following base points:
◙ Supply quality books to children and their families, caregivers, teachers and librarians, sharing books with children through reading aloud and doing related activities to develop life-long interest in reading and literature in deprived areas;

◙ Train tutors, teachers and librarians in deprived areas to promote literacy through literature and reading quality books;

◙ Empower mothers, who are mostly not well-educated nor aware of their abilities, to change their attitudes towards their role, through workshops to improve their children’s lives and their chances to thrive in the future;

◙ Promote the concept of emergent literacy in the society by publishing books and guidelines, holding workshops for parents, kindergarten, preschool and school teachers, and librarians;

◙ Expand children’s and young adults' libraries in deprived areas to be rich literacy environments compatible with children's rights and needs;

◙ Improve basic literacy and language skills among bilingual children;

◙ Expand living values and skills and environmental values through book reading.

**iRead:** How many full-time staff do you have working for the project and how many volunteers?

**Zohreh:** 10 full-time and 5 part-time paid staff and about 50 volunteer staff around the country.

**iRead:** Could you briefly share with us the development of Read With Me during the past years.

**Zohreh:** In 2010, the Read with Me program was implemented as a pilot plan for about 140 students in MahmoudAbad, a village near Tehran. After 12 years of hard work, Read with Me has been implemented in 23 provinces of Iran and 3 cities of Afghanistan (Kabul, Mazarsharif and Panjshir).

It has reached to several hundred thousands at risk and unprivileged children and their families. More than 10,000 teachers, librarians and volunteers are trained. Hundreds of mothers with their babies and toddlers have participated in Read with Me workshops in marginal neighborhoods of large cities. Almost 100 libraries have been set up with rich literacy environments, defending
children's rights especially the right to read and learn. Many girls in small villages without a chance to study after the elementary school, have been working as librarians in their village libraries. It has worked in a wide range of fields: schools, nurseries, hospitals, factories, in natural and social crisis, in Iran or Afghanistan, for newborn children to young adults.

**iRead:** The project has three main features: expandable, flexible and sustainable. What do you mean by this? Can you give us some examples on how you make sure the project is expandable, flexible and sustainable?

**Zohreh:** *It is expandable*: The project has realistic, clear and simple principles that are designed within a user-friendly model. When the people understand the principles and are trained through workshops, it is easily adapted and implemented by every interested local organizations and individuals.

*It is flexible*: The structure is designed in a flexible way so that it can be adjusted to different social and cultural needs, whether urban or rural environments, or different setting such as preschools, schools, orphanages, and hospitals or even in factories. By now, the preschools and schools from different regions with different language and cultures, all around Iran and even in Afghanistan have joined to this program.

*It is sustainable:* The constant supervision and evaluation of the project along with establishing child-centered libraries near schools which involve families specifically mothers in the project, ensure the sustainability of the project.

**iRead:** Read with Me now covers 25 provinces in Iran and several 100,000 children and young adults. How does Read with Me choose the location and people to work with? From establishing connection with an area to building and managing a library, is there a standard procedure?

**Zohreh:** During the first years of the project’s implementation, centers were assessed and chosen by Read with Me team, considering the requirements and necessity of the project in each region. Since the project was mostly implemented in schools, a cooperative Education Office in the region was also another important criteria in choosing a region. But in recent years, due to recognition of the project in most parts of the country, requests from different centers are received at Read with Me office. Choosing the locations and people depends on several factors or criteria:

* The locations should be deprived areas and families should be from the low-income ones.
* The people, whether from schools or kindergartens or any kind of centers, should be interested and cooperative.
* In some cases, the sponsors determine the deprived areas where they are interested to support.

Also, unfortunately there have been many natural catastrophes in Iran in recent years, and as children in crisis are an important focus of the project, regions affected by earthquake or flood have been chosen for the project’s implementation.

**iRead:** Read with Me makes quality books accessible to children in many different ways, such as providing cloth pocket libraries, building classroom libraries, school libraries and later on local libraries. How do you decide which kind of library to build? Could you tell us about each type of library Read with Me builds?

**Zohreh:** The most important objective of the project is to provide quality books for children. According to this objective, libraries have an important role to make books accessible to children. The kind of the library is decided based on the project’s features in each region or center. At best, classroom libraries are expected to work along with school or local libraries. Classrooms, schools and local libraries work in cooperation with each other to provide quality books to children and their families.

**iRead:** When we build school libraries in China, we often encounter the problem of the school locking up the library and not actually using the books donated. Do you have the same issue in Iran? If yes, how do you prevent this problem? How do you make sure the libraries stay open and are well managed?

**Zohreh:** This is a most important problem and those people who want to set libraries in schools should consider it. Most of the school principles are OK to have library at their school without paying money, but they actually have no insight into this issue.

Before setting up a library in a school, first, we speak with the principal and teachers about the Read with Me libraries and explain the features of our libraries. Then we sign an agreement with them. We insist in having reading aloud sessions with every class at least once in a week. All teachers should be trained to read aloud and do related activities, as well as include reading books in their schedules. The libraries should be open all the time and books should be accessible to children. Every class should have a small shelf-library and exchange the books regularly. The children's books should be displayed to children in classes. In summer when the schools are closed, children should be able to come to the library at least 2 days a week and borrow books and the librarian share books with them there. We only set up libraries in schools that accept these conditions.

**iRead:** I really like the interior design and decoration of the libraries Read with Me built. How is the design of each library done? Are there any guidelines that you follow?

**Zohreh:** We consider children in every aspect of the library design. Whether it is color or light, or it is the library equipment; or whether it is library service and books. Each aspect of the library should be at child’s interest level and it should be compatible with children’s rights and needs. Also, a rich-literacy environment is a critical aspect in our library design. We insist on environment as a motive and also a source for children to learn and become interested in books and reading.

**iRead:** How are the Read with Me libraries run and managed?

**Zohreh:** Considering the differences between libraries in every region, libraries are managed in different ways. Some libraries are run by volunteer mothers, some are run by teachers in schools or preschools. In some remote villages, some out-of-school young adult girls run the libraries and some libraries have full-time employed staff.

Librarians send their reports to “Library Supervision Team”, and they receive feedback based on their work. Also by close monitoring, libraries needs are assessed and provided so the libraries can perform as well as possible.

**iRead:** The motto of Read with Me is “all children have the right to read quality books”. Quality books is something Read with Me places great emphasis on. For Read with Me, what books are quality books? And how do you choose the books for the libraries?

**Zohreh:** The list of quality books is prepared by an expert and professional team. The selection criteria include the aesthetic and literary qualities of writing and illustrating, as well as the ability to see things from the child's point of view and the ability to stretch the child's curiosity and imagination.

The subjects of books are very important in Read with Me project. Read with Me tries to promote living values and skills and as well as environmental values through books.

**iRead:** Read with Me works with different kinds of vulnerable children such as working children, orphans, refugees, children in hospitals and earthquake affected areas and so on. Do you use different approaches when working with children in different situations?

**Zohreh:** There are several common principles that are followed in every single project. Such as: sharing quality books with children; making the books accessible to them; reading the books aloud; doing art-related activities with the children after reading; promoting dialogue-based reading among children and adults; empowering parents, teachers and librarians by enriching their knowledge on children’s literature; and sharing books with children through various workshops.

But of course the list of books, methods of sharing books with children with different problems and the type of activities would be somehow different. The books are selected for each center based on the needs and interests, and also the regional conditions.

Also we focus on some specific parts of the project depending on the circumstances. In bilingual provinces where the illiteracy is the main issue, Read with Me focuses on basic literacy and reading and writing skills through literature.

In marginal parts of the big cities like Tehran, where some empowering women centers (NGOs) are located, we have the “Reading with babies and toddlers” program for mothers and their babies.

For children working in the brick kilns, we have trained volunteers who go to kilns with book bags and read aloud books to the children in their leisure time.

For earthquake-affected children, it is important to have short-term and long-term plans. As a short term plan, we dispatch trained volunteers with book packs and book packages with the purpose of bibliotherapy through reading aloud quality books and having dialogue with children in order to help them cope better with the emotional pressures of the crisis. For long-term, we train the volunteers and set up libraries wherever we can, even in containers. These libraries would be a relaxing place for children and their families amongst the chaos.

In hospitals, we train volunteers and send them to read books for sick children.

**iRead:** What trainings does Read with Me do? Who does Read with Me train?

**Zohreh:** There is a group of Read with Me trainers who run different workshops for parents, teachers and librarians. The topics include:

* Introduction to children’s literature and quality books
* Illustration and picture books
* Introduction to story elements
* Reading aloud techniques and how to organize reading aloud sessions
* Basic Literacy creative education workshops
* Learning phonological and phonemic awareness skills
* Reading with babies and toddlers
* Dramatic art workshops
* Emergent Literacy workshop
* Rich-Literacy and child-centered environment

**iRead:** In what ways are volunteers involved in the running of Read with Me?

**Zohreh:** People, specifically young and educated ones, are encouraged and trained to join the projects in deprived areas. The volunteers are organized in different parts of the project according to their abilities and they are trained based on the projects’ needs.

**iRead:** How does Read with Me raise money?

**Zohreh:** Most projects are supported by private companies that are interested in such cultural activities.

In addition to big supports, since March 2019, Read with Me started the campaign “one teacher, one classroom, one library” to collect small amounts for establishing small class libraries.

Every individual can adopt a classroom library and support it financially. The campaign has been designed to collect donations to cover a larger group of teachers and classrooms with the Read with Me program. In addition to providing quality books for every classroom, the teachers are trained to share those books with children.

**iRead:** How do you monitor and evaluate the project?

**Zohreh:** Monitoring and evaluating are the most important parts of the Read with Me project. Our expert team visits the centers regularly based on a pre- configured program. The experts mentor, guide and support the librarians, teachers and volunteers to solve their problems.

The Read with Me team also monitors the project through especially designed questionnaires, aiming to assess the children’s language, cognitive, personality and social developments. The teachers and librarians should answer the questions and write progress reports of their works. They send a lot of photos and videos of their activities with children as well. Read with Me has a large archive of its activities.

All trainers or experts should write reports after their workshops and visits. Also, the team prepares and submits comprehensive annual reports from each region to the sponsors and the research unit in the Institute. The achievements are evaluated based on archived data, progress and annual reports.

**iRead:** What results have you seen from the work of Read with Me?

**Zohreh:** ☑ The children who were not interested in reading books, have become book lovers. Children are now eager to borrow books, take them home to read to their siblings and parents.

☑ Children can comprehend and relate to the story, remember the highlights and describe the sequence of events. They have learned many difficult words through reading, and their vocabulary and pronunciation have improved.

☑ Bilingual children who could not speak, write or read Persian before, now have made impressive progress in basic literacy and verbal skills.

☑ The children’s communication skills, with other children and the teacher, are improved considerably.

☑ By reading stories and discussing them, children have come to a better understanding of living values, friendship, peace, and environment.

☑ The project has equally made an impact on teachers, librarians, and volunteers. The training workshops have motivated the teachers to learn more and improve their knowledge of books and literature as an effective tool to work with disadvantaged children.

☑ Since 2010 when the project was launched, numerous school libraries have been established, which help the sustainability of the project. Establishing child-centered libraries near the schools is another step to expand the project, make it more sustainable, make children interested in book reading, and improve the literacy skills in students.

**iRead:** What were the biggest challenges you faced?

**Zohreh:** An educational system that deals with the subject of reading books and literacy in traditional and old ways. Illiterate families in disadvantaged areas who do not participate in the program, and money to support our projects in adequate ways.

**iRead:** How did you overcome them?

**Zohreh:** It is not easy to overcome these problems. During the years we have learned how to cope with these big issues. In some areas, we could negotiate with authorities to ease part of the problems. Recently, Read with Me has focused on families and designed some workshops for mothers. Step by step, we are trying to convince the parents to acknowledge the benefits of reading with their children. By sending books and handbooks, as well we clips and videos to them, we are trying to motivate them and also create rich literacy environment at their houses.

**iRead:** Read with Me not only operates in Iran, but also in Afghanistan. Is it difficult to run programs in another country? What are some of your experiences that you could share?

**Zohreh:** Reaching out to other Persian-speaking countries and sharing experiences with active promotion programs has been a dream for the Read with Me program and of course, Afghanistan has always been a special place for us.

In Autumn 2016, Read with Me ran its activities in Afghanistan with the cooperation of the Future for Afghanistan Children Organization. This project covers almost 400 children studying in the first and second grade of elementary School in Mazar-e-Sharif and nearby villages.

In summer 2018, we held online workshops on “Learning Phonological and Phonemic Awareness Skills” for tutors in Herat. August 2019 was one of the most violent months of Afghanistan in the past few years. Yet, in the midst of explosions and desperation and in cooperation with the Aschiana Foundation (IBBY Afghanistan), one of Read with Me experts travelled to Kabul to hold workshops for interested and volunteer young people.

In a 3-day workshop on the three topics of Children’s Literature, Reading Aloud and Child-centered Libraries, 28 volunteer reading promoters, representatives from different child-related institutions and organizations including Aschiana Foundation, Book Cottage, Charmaghz , Gahwara and Johanniter International from Kabul and Mahboba’s Promise’s orphanage, from Panjshir enthusiastically attended. (for more information see here: <https://khanak.org/en/2019/content/read-with-me-travels-to-afghanistan/>)

Those workshops made us hopeful of continuing our cooperation for improving the conditions of children and young adults in the region. One of the consequences of this workshop was the establishment of a children's section of the Parande (Bird) Library in Panjshir – there was no children’s library in that region beforehand. Building the library started in 2019 and was very well-received by the locals from the beginning. It was finished within a year. In October 2020, with local cooperation the books were put on bookshelves.

I am afraid after the rise of Taliban, we could not follow our dreams there, but we will never lose hope.

Fortunately, Read with Me has long experience of working in Afghan refugee and immigrant communities and since that date, Read with Me has increasingly focused on the Afghan refugee families who have recently settled in the outskirts of big cities, such as Tehran.

**iRead:** What are the most valuable things you’ve learned from running Read with Me?

**Zohreh:** We have learned that if we want to promote the culture of books effectively and develop life-long reading habits we have to start from babies, toddlers and families specifically living in deprived areas. Families have the most significant role in changing the destiny of their children.

**Work Before Read with Me**

**iRead:** You have researched and studied various subjects in the field of children’s literature. One of the first is titled: “The responses of 4- to 6-year-olds to picture books.” Could you tell us a little bit about this research?

**Zohreh:** This research was my thesis for master's degree in librarianship and information science. It was for 72 children aged 4 to 6, including 36 girls and 36 boys, from 4 kindergartens. I shared 5 picture story books – two Iranian and three translated picture books – with the children. I recorded their verbal responses and afterwards I analyzed and evaluated their reactions. The aim of the research was to collect data on children's responses to picture books so I could reflect on their cognitive skills at this age, as well as their ability to understand hidden meanings in picture books. It also helped the educators, librarians and parents get a better and more accurate understanding of children's responses to pictures. I also wanted to share picture books with children and empower them to communicate with this literary-artistic source and enjoy it more. This research is a documentary source for illustrators of children's books.

**iRead:** How did you know about IBBY Iran and what work did IBBY Iran do at that time?

**Zohreh:** Children’s Book Council or IBBY Iran is one of the oldest national branches of IBBY and is very popular and well-known in Iran. All people who are interested in children's literature, whether a researcher, writer or illustrator, cannot ignore this non-governmental and professional organization of children's literature. I was very lucky to join the Children's Book Council at the beginning of my career and I learned a lot from the professors who worked in this Institution at that time and I am very happy that this cooperation continues to the present day.

**iRead:** Could you share about your work between graduating from Open University and establishing IRHCL?

**Zohreh:** Joining the Children's Book Council and studying librarianship led me to a variety of research in children's literature. After completing my thesis successfully, I was encouraged to do more research on children's literature. At that time, I was very interested in researching picture books. But to study in this field I needed to have access to rich sources of the international libraries. I tried to apply for fellowship programs around the world.

In April 1997, I was accepted for fellowship program at the International Institute for Children’s Literature, Osaka, with the title of:” The New Illustrations of Old Folktales”. Then in 2000, I was accepted for fellowship program at “International Jugendbibliothek” in München, Germany where I researched “The Intercultural Communication and Cultural Stereotypes in English and German Picture Books”.

These two studies, attending two international libraries for two three-month periods, as well as being in contact with international researchers, made me think that the history of Iranian children's literature, which is a long and ancient history, should be written.

**The Institute for Research on History of Children’s Literature (IRHCL)**

**iRead:** What led you to establish The Institute for Research on History of Children’s Literature?

**Zohreh:** Realizing the importance and necessity to research the history of children’s literature, made my colleague, Hadi Mohammadi and I determined to search and study the subject for a few years before establishing the Institute. But on the way we found that this huge and extended research could not be accomplished by two researchers. For researching such a long history, from ancient time to modern era, we needed to establish an institution to train and lead assistants and different groups to search the tremendous and multiple sources of information related to the history of children's literature that could be found at national libraries all around Iran and abroad. This is why we founded the Institute for Research on the History of Children’s literaturetwenty-two years ago, in 2000.

**iRead:** Could you tell us a bit about the history of children’s literature in Iran? What are some of the important findings from your research?

**Zohreh:** The children's literature in Iran has a very old history that dates back to more than 3,000 years ago, when the first Persian families narrated rich oral literature, including lullabies, folktales, rhythmic fables, generation by generation.

In addition to children's oral literature, the children enjoyed written stories that dated back to the Sassanid’s period. This claim was proved when a Pahlavi manuscript of "Asurik Tree" (the story of palm date and the goat) was found about 2,000 years ago.

The extensive research on the history has proved that although there are a lot of similarities between the historical patterns in the west and the east, during the Middle Ages, children's literature in Iran was different in certain aspects. It referred to the very progressive views of the Iranian philosophers toward children and the concept of childhood. However, modern Iranian children's literature is very influenced by western children’s literature. In 1930, several pioneer writers and poets, who were mostly impressed by French, English and in some cases Russian children’s books, started to write stories and poems for children; simultaneously a considerable number of children’s books from western countries were translated and published.

**iRead:** What impact did the publication of the 10-volume book *The History of Children’s Literature in Iran* havein Iran?

**Zohreh:** The impact of the 10-volume book of *The History of Children’s Literature in Iran* can be evaluated from several perspectives.

First of all, it was proved that the history of Iranian children's literature dates back to many years ago, and in fact it has an ancient past. Even the academic community and educators were very skeptical about how the history of Iranian children's literature could be so long and old!

However, with the publication of this collection of books, it gradually became clear that the children’s literature in Iran is not a modern phenomenon.

The impact of publishing these books did not end there. Since this work covers the history of education, children's libraries and in general, the history of children's culture, many experts in various fields of children's culture were able to get acquainted with their work background. This was a great help to warrant plans for the future based on historical data.

We are happy during these years that most of the research libraries related somehow to this field have these volumes in their collection.

Also, most of the university art and literature departments or faculties, have placed these volumes in their research libraries, and many professors advise students to study these books as the very basic and necessary sources and references. And of course, a large number of interested families also bought these books for their home or local libraries.

Based on the 25 years of research done for *The History of Children’s Literature*, and the unpublished muti-volume project called *The Iranian Childhood History*, the Iranak Museum of Childhood has been set up temporarily in Tehran. This museum has a narrative-interactive design. In the Iranak museum, artifacts are not objects of display. In fact, the narrative behind the artifacts is what binds everything together. The museum is interactive because children and adults become engaged with these narratives. They act and react, feel and think, learn and benefit.

**iRead:** You said, “researching the history of children’s literature changed my life completely.” Could you talk a bit more on this? How and in what way did it change your life?

**Zohreh:** We all have prejudices about the history and culture of our country or other countries, which in many cases are incorrect. A large part of these prejudices is due to the lack of awareness of historical events. By studying documents and books related to this field, I gained a better understanding of the historical development of education, reading promotion, the establishment of children’s libraries and even children's rights in Iran. I can say that researching the history was a kind of school for me that changed my attitudes toward many topics.