Challenges and Strategies of Access
to Pahlavi Period Documents

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Abstract

The documents of the Pahlavi period should be considered the most important source of historical research among the available documents from this period, and scientific research in this field should be validated in the amount of use of this category of sources. There is a lot of material about the importance of using documents in the production of knowledge, but in short, it should be said that in contemporary studies, any scientific research without the use of documents does not have enough credibility, and it is necessary and necessary for every Pahlavi history researcher, which before Compilation of any scientific work, first of all, a comprehensive study of the documents of this period, on the subject under discussion, and to organize his research by relying on these sources.

But the study of documents has a necessary introduction, and that is that before starting the research, researchers should have a complete and accurate knowledge of document centers, and be aware of the challenges and strategies of accessing their documents. This article, which is placed in the framework of strategic studies and is organized based on the strategic research method, seeks to identify the challenges of this field and provide strategies corresponding to them. It is also necessary to explain that due to the short life of archival centers in Iran, the use of documents in historical research has not yet become a common practice, therefore, no special research has been done regarding the challenges of accessing documents (especially Pahlavi documents). Literature in this regard was not found in the searches.

Despite the existence of many challenges and difficulties, there have been no documents from any period as much as this historical period, and more than what is currently available in the archives, there are more documentary sources in the archives. There are government departments, unassigned papers. Therefore, the number of documents of this era is much more than what it seems at the moment, and of course, the number of

these sources is increasing day by day, and more documents are available to researchers. Therefore, before entering the real and virtual document forums, all researchers should have sufficient knowledge of the challenges and strategies available in these centers in providing archival services to clients. and also have a comprehensive understanding of the documents available in different archives.

About 60% of the articles published in Iranian scientific journals are related to the contemporary era, but it can be seen that only a little more than 20% of the articles have used documentary sources. And nearly 80% of historical articles in Iran are published without any document references. While this statistic is the opposite in the historical magazines of the world. In this research, these cases were carefully evaluated and 10 famous Iranian journals in the field of historical studies were compared with 10 historical studies journals in Europe and America, and these statistics were obtained by research.

The main reason why Iranians do not use documents in historical research is the difficulties that researchers have in accessing contemporary historical documents. And, of course, there are other things involved in this matter, but in this article only the challenges of accessing Pahlavi period documents are mentioned.

The challenges of access and research in Pahlavi era documents can be summarized in two parts as follows: A: Administrative and managerial (technical) challenges; B: Political and ideological challenges; Regarding the challenges of the first category, the following can be mentioned:

1- The absence of a reference expert (knowledgeable about the history and documents of the Pahlavi era) in most of the archives and the inability to properly guide the researchers and thus the documents and information related to them are lost;

2- The lack of presence of experts familiar with Pahlavi documents and history in the document evaluation process and the lack of transfer of important documents from this period to document centers;

3- Inaccurate cataloging in most document centers to the extent that the list provided in the document systems does not match the contents of the document files and the researcher will not be able to search for the document he needs;

4- Failure to provide public archival services in some document centers such as Presidential Document Center, Political Research Center, Contemporary History Studies Institute, etc.;

5- Non-compliance of archival centers with the approvals and instructions of the Council of Documents and Models prepared by the National Archives;

6- Unprofessional and unprofessional growth of document centers and creation of monopoly in a part of documents, and confusion of researchers in the matter of research;

7- Low speed of providing archival services in most archival centers and limited provision of documents to researchers, to the extent that it takes several months

for the documents needed for a master's thesis to reach the researcher. And scientific activity has been interrupted for this reason;

But regarding the political and ideological challenges, the following can be mentioned:

1- Non-liberalization and restriction of the level of access based on political considerations and issues related to the private sphere of individuals;

2- Existence of love and hatred towards this period among the auditors of the release of documents in document centers, and the failure to adopt a neutral position towards the content of the documents;

3- Acceptance of normative analyzes influenced by the discourse of the Islamic Revolution in relation to Pahlavi history and the researcher's unconscious search in some documents and subjects, and as a result neglecting some issues, arising from these analyses;

4- Pahlaviism especially in recent years and ignoring the documents that explain the reality of this era;

5- Politicization and lack of attention to the non-political parts of the history of the Pahlavi period.

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