

Middle Eastern states showcase heritage at London Book Fair

By Karen Dabrowska



BiFeiyu winner
of Man Asian
Literary Prize

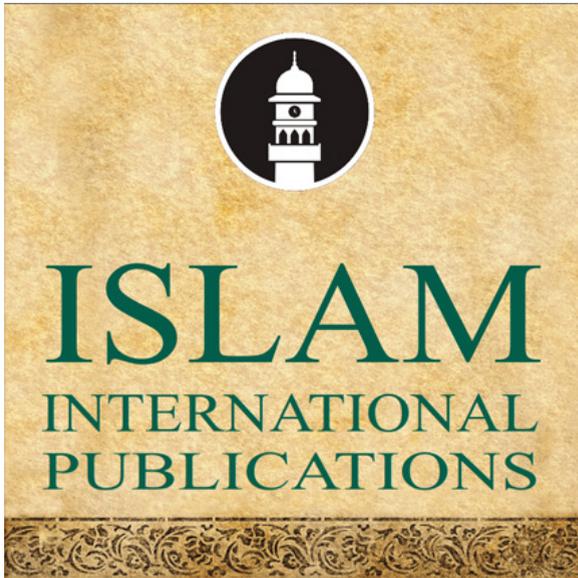
China was the market focus at this year's London Book Fair held at the Earls Court Exhibition Centre this week.

Over 1500 exhibitors from 57 countries participated in the world's leading international book fair. Brazil, Hungary, Hong Kong and Lithuania took part for the first time. The fair attracted over 24,5000 publishing professionals.

The Market Focus Pavilion featured over 180 Chinese publishers and included a wide range of professional and cultural events and industry debates covering topics from education and copyright to support

international publishers' understanding of the Chinese market.

The author of the day was Bi Feiyu, the winner of the Man Asian Literary Prize in 2010 for his novel, Three Sisters. Feiyu said :“Wherever you come from, we all have common literature memory in our heart. Its value is not limited to finding an old house; its value lies in that a consensus in life can be reached via the literature consensus. The only thing I need



Logo of Islam International Publications



Blue Dome Press



Chinese calligraphy at the London book fair

to emphasize is such a consensus is achieved in a life-loving context of freedom, friendship, help and sharing. With so many writers, especially Chinese writers gathering in London, this is a grand event. This is worldwide spiritual dialogue.”

Protesters holding banners condemning the persecution of writers in China held up large placards as Chinese delegates

were speaking at various seminars. The works of Tibetan, Uyghur and Chinese writers who were silenced by the Chinese Communist Party were read at a “Transcending the Terror” event organised by the Independent Chinese PEN Centre.

The British Council came under fire for its partnership with the Book Fair. The writers organisation PEN withdrew its stand saying dissident Chinese authors,

including Nobel Peace Prize winner Liu Xiaobo, were excluded. But the controversies surrounding the market focus country did not detract from the magnificent event. Islam International Publications displayed the Qur'an in 70 languages. Oman and Abu Dhabi showcased their heritage and culture with books about the countries history and attractions. The Omani stand took the form of a traditional fort and visitors were told that beauty has an address,

the slogan of the Ministry of Tourism.

The Abu Dhabi Tourism & Cultural Authority also featured a number of historical and cultural publications. The authority's cultural projects include the Sheikh Zayed Book Award, Kalima Project for Translation, Kitab company, Qalam project to develop young Emirati talents, the National Library and promoting the Abu Dhabi International Book



London Book Fair

Stands at the book fair



Fair (ADIBF) - one of the fastest-growing book fairs in the world. The works of Emirati authors and writers which have been translated into different languages were also featured.

Saudi Arabia's stand was opened by the Saudi Ambassador to the UK Prince Muhammad bin Nawaf. Saudi Arabia is participating in the fair for the sixth consecutive year. "Our pavilion in the fair highlights the increasing number of books

and publications in the Kingdom," the ambassador said. The focus of the stand was on educational books.

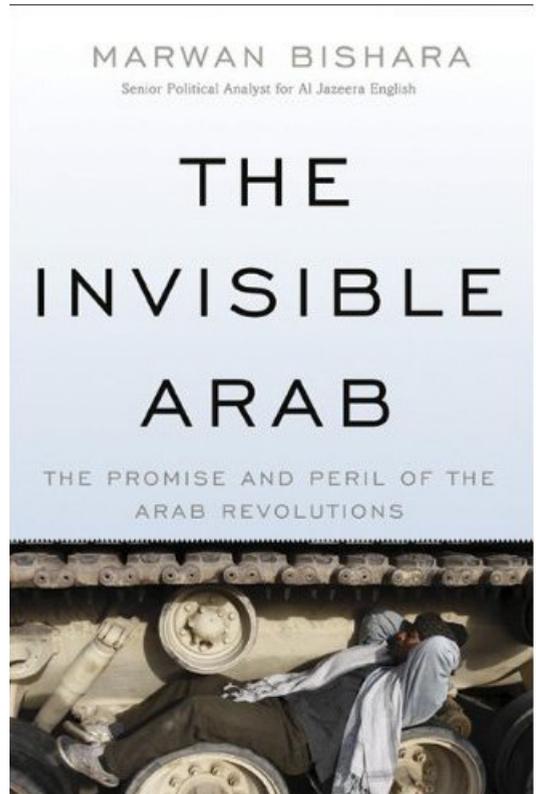
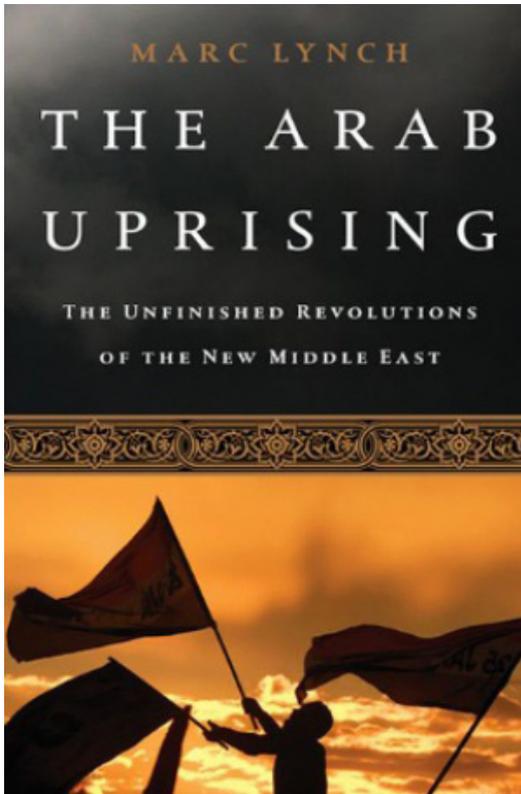
The Turkish collective stand, organised by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, promoted Turkish culture and literature as well as the country's publishing industry. Information was also provided about TEDA, a translation subsidy programme carried out under the auspices of the Ministry

of Culture and Tourism which has become one of the world's leading subsidy projects with 985 titles in a six-year period.

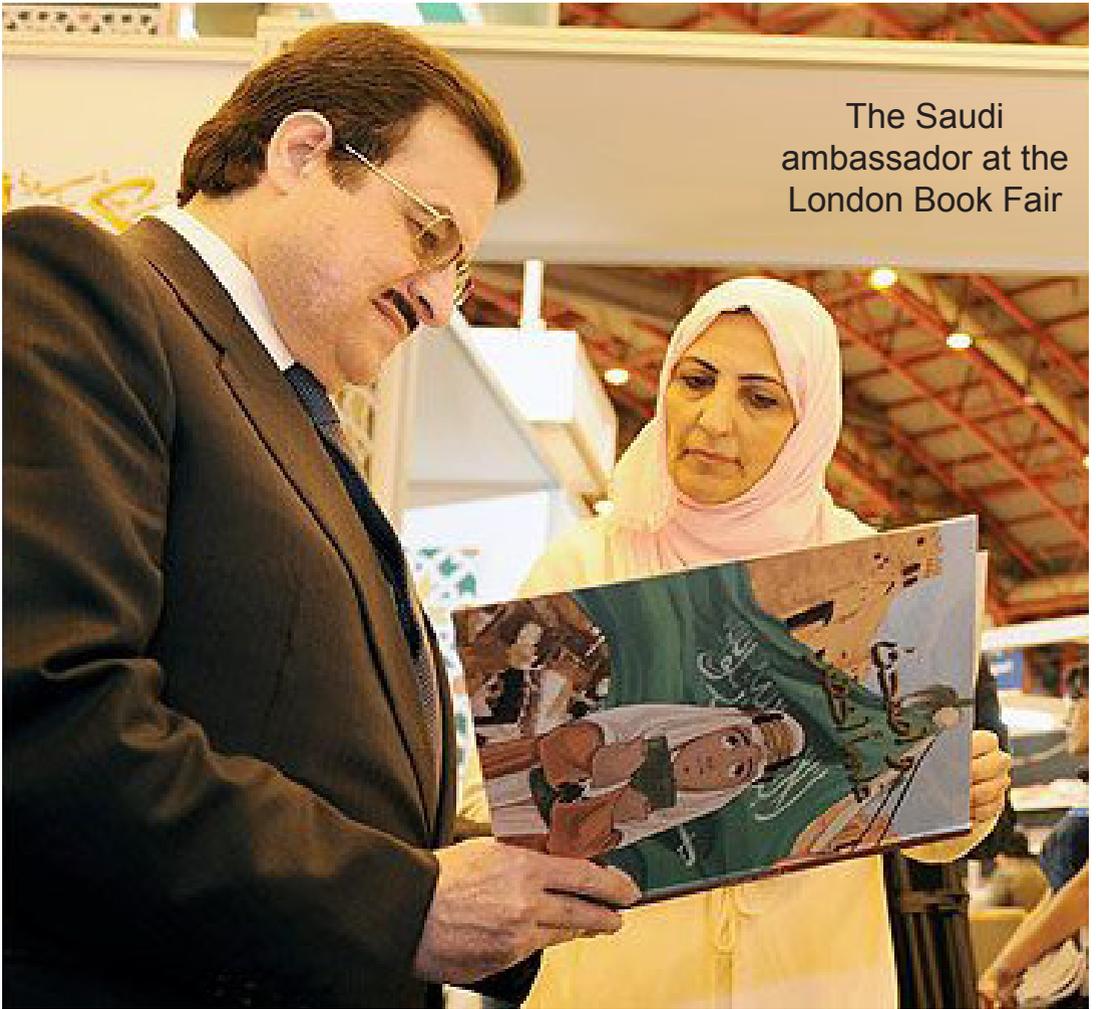
The director of London's Turkish Culture and Tourism Office, Tolga Tuyluglu said :”We are very excited to have the opportunity to introduce the richness of Turkish literature at this international book fair and hope that this year's appearance will whet attendees' appetites for 2013 when Turkey

will be the market focus country.”

One of the major exhibitors on the Turkish stand was Blue Dome Press established to publish scholarly and prestigious titles, primarily in the fields of interfaith dialogue, intercultural studies art and history. The mission of Blue Dome is to promote and encourage works that contribute to common understanding and dialogue among different cultures, religions and communities of the world.



The Saudi
ambassador at the
London Book Fair



A large poster promoting *The Arab Uprising: the unfinished revolutions of the new Middle East* by Marc Lynch was prominent on the Perseus Book Group stand. An imprint of Perseus, Nation Books has published *The Invisible Arab: the promise and peril of the Arab*

revolutions by Marwan Bishara.

Many other Middle Eastern publishers were represented at the book fair among them Dar Al-Kitab Allubnani, Dar al-Rateb, Dar el-Marefah, Dar Jearboa, Dar Sader and Dar Al Andalos.