AGAPS
Association for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies

BAHRAIN RESEARCH RESOURCE GUIDE

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GENERAL SUGGESTIONS:

- Bring a letter of introduction, including an Arabic translation, from your institution as you might be asked to produce it.
- Obtain the appropriate visa for non-GCC visitors.
- Although timings are included in the entries below, please be aware that sometimes these locations may not abide by these working hours. If possible, call in advance.
- Many people may not respond to/or check their emails. The best way to get in touch with them is through calling or messaging them.

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1. THE NATIONAL LIBRARY

- **Location**: https://goo.gl/maps/AkBqdLaovU2nLU5UA
- **Operating hours**: Sunday-Thursday 7:30 am- 2:00 pm/ Saturday: 8:00 am-1:00 pm.
- **What to bring**: ID and a letter of introduction. It might not be necessary, but you might be asked to provide them.
- **Contact details**: +97317366550

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- **Website**: http://www.icc.gov.bh/en/national-library
- **Resources & Notes**: Housed within the Isa Cultural Centre, the National Library contains a wide selection of resources. Its most valuable collection is the Newspapers Archives, which are housed in the basement of the library. It has the most comprehensive selection of Bahraini periodicals from the 1930s until the early 2000s. There are some missing issues of certain periodicals. Researchers on Bahrain may also be interested in the National Publications Room, which provides a wide-range of local publications (including copies of the Official Gazette from the early 1970s), and the collections donated by private individuals.

2. UNIVERSITY OF BAHRAIN CENTRAL LIBRARY

- **Location**: https://goo.gl/maps/ud3Vm2Zk9SHD9G3v9
- **Operating hours**: Sunday to Thursday: 7:00 am-7:00 pm
- **What to bring**: You can enter the campus by invitation only (e.g. by a faculty member).
- **Contact details**: +973 17438808 (Director's Office)
- **Website**: http://library.uob.edu.bh/en/
- **Resources & Notes**: The library contains a general collection of books on Bahrain and some published British documents. Given the fact that the campus is difficult to gain access to, it might be a time-consuming process for the researcher, especially given that many of the library's sources are available elsewhere.

3. AL ORUBA CLUB LIBRARY

- **Location**: https://goo.gl/maps/2diVAb9EDXEKsn5z7
- **Operating hours**: No timings can be found online. However, it is likely that the club is open in the morning until the early afternoon, and again later in the evening.
- **What to bring**: No ID or letter of introduction is necessary, unless you would like to introduce yourself to the librarian and other individuals who may be of interest to you.
- **Contact details**: N/A
- **Website**: N/A
- **Resources & Notes**: The club houses a small but rich library that contains various historical and literary books on Bahrain and the wider Arab world. The club was established in 1939, and many books thus date from the 1940s and 1950s.

4. AL AYAM BOOKSHOP AND THE NATIONAL BOOKSHOP ON EXIBITION ROAD

- **Location**: Al Ayam: https://g.page/alayamlibrary?share The National Bookshop: https://goo.gl/maps/bMmSeXoE3VxPsbts8
- **Operating hours**: Al Ayam: Saturday-Thursday: 8:00 am-10:00 pm.
  The National Bookshop: Saturday-Sunday: 8:30 am-1:00 pm/4:00 pm-10:00 pm, Friday: 4:00 pm-9:00 pm.
- **What to bring**: N/A
- **Contact details**: Al Ayam: +973 17716611, The National Bookshop: +973 17293840
- **Website**: Instagram: @alayambookshop and @nationalbookshop
- **Resources & Notes**: These two bookshops, which are within walking distance of each other, have most of the recent Bahraini publications on numerous topics. They offer books on topics of local interest that are otherwise hard to find outside of Bahrain.

5. FARADEES BOOKSHOP

- **Location**: Sheikh Salman Highway, in front of Al Moayed Furniture, Entrance No. 112, Second Floor, Office 21.
- **Operating hours**: By appointment.
- **What to bring**: N/A
- **Contact details**: +973 39461232
- **Website**: Instagram: @dar_faradees
- **Resources & Notes**: This Bahraini publishing house and bookshop has published various books on Bahrain's political history, and also sells a number of Bahraini and Arabic publications that can be useful for researchers. Make sure to contact the owner to arrange a visit.

6. BAHRAIN NATIONAL MUSEUM

- **Location**: https://goo.gl/maps/cvN5gfNuFhWHFkZw6
- **Operating hours**: Wednesday to Monday: 10:00 am- 6:00 pm.
- **What to bring**: To enter the public area no ID is required. Non-Bahraini visitors pay a 1 BD entry fee. Bahraini visitors pay 0.5 BD.
- **Contact details**: +973 17298718
- **Website**: http://culture.gov.bh/en/
- **Resources & Notes**: The museum covers Bahrain's history from the ancient period until the early twentieth century. The main collection includes a room containing various historical documents from the modern period pertaining to the ruling family and various state institutions. The museum also puts on various temporary exhibits throughout the year that can be useful to the researcher. For example, in 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had an exhibit on Bahrain's diplomatic history. The museum also includes a library that is not regularly accessible to the public.

7. SHEIKH EBRAHIM BIN MOHAMMED AL-KHALIFA CENTER FOR CULTURE AND RESEARCH

- **Location**: https://goo.gl/maps/PvabaJ8NYChQfAyCA
- **Operating hours**: Saturday to Thursday: 9:00 am-1:00 pm and 4:00 pm-7:00 pm.
- **What to bring**: N/A
- **Contact details**: +97317322549
- **Website**: www.shaikhebrahimcenter.org and instagram: @shaikh_ebrahim_center
- **Resources & Notes**: Founded in 2002, this center constitutes the institutional umbrella for the conservation of historical architecture in the district of Muharraq. It hosts various talks and events throughout the year, mainly literary and cultural. The center space also includes a small library and copies of original letters pertaining to Bahrain's history.

8. ABDULLAH AL ZAYED HOUSE FOR BAHRAINI PRESS HERITAGE

- **Location**: https://goo.gl/maps/C7v27NYnVprP1wpz5
- **Operating hours**: Saturday to Thursday: 8:00 am – 1:00 pm and 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm.
- **What to bring**: N/A
- **Contact details**: N/A

- **Website**: https://shaikhebrahimcenter.org/en/houses/abdullah-al-zayed-house-for-bahraini-press-heritage-3/
- **Resources & Notes**: The newly restored house of Abdullah Al Zayed, the founder of Bahrain's first periodical, *al-Bahrain* (1939-1944). The house hosts a small exhibition on the Bahraini press, which includes some copies of letters by Al Zayed, as well as copies of *al-Bahrain*.

9. BAHRAIN MILITARY MUSEUM

- **Location**: https://goo.gl/maps/wtnE2ba6b6oA7eKM8
- **Operating hours**: Monday to Thursday: 8:00 am-1:00 pm / Friday: 2:00 pm-6:00 pm / Saturday 9:00 am- 12:00 pm
- **What to bring**: N/A
- **Contact details**: +973 17495511
- **Website**: N/A
- **Resources & Notes**: A small official museum highlighting Bahrain's military history and displaying various military artifacts. The museum has a small library, though its collection is limited in comparison to the National Library.

10. BOOK FAIRS

- **Location**: Location may vary according to year, please check online closer to the date.
- **Operating hours**: The International Book Fair: 25 March – 4 April, 2020 Al Ayam Book Fair: TBD
- **What to bring**: Cash is preferred as many shops may not take cards.
- **Contact details**: N/A
- **Website**: N/A
- **Resources & Notes**: There are two main book fairs that take place in Bahrain. The first is the International Book Fair, which takes place every two years. The second fair is sponsored by Al Ayam Publishing Group and takes place annually. Both fairs host a wide variety of publishing houses, enabling the researcher to purchase many Arabic books that may otherwise be difficult to obtain.

11. BAHRAIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

- **Location**: https://goo.gl/maps/TAPdT2nTY7cqmD2p6
- **Operating hours**: Timings vary depending on events.
- **What to bring**: N/A
- **Contact details**: +97336575747 instagram: @historical1953
- **Website**: http://bahrainhistory.org, the society uploads its lectures regularly on its YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwwkhON_ubUJvzdmhlO_yUQ
- **Resources & Notes**: Founded in the 1950s, the society hosts lectures throughout the year on topics ranging from ancient to modern history. The society houses a small library that contains a number of sources on Bahrain's history and archaeology.

12. BRITISH ARCHIVES (UK)

- **Location**: The British Library: https://goo.gl/maps/vQrAgxJSnb1g2F7S9 and the National Archives: https://goo.gl/maps/pz3nfy6mwf1opUsv7

- **Operating hours**: The British Library: check this webpage: https://www.bl.uk/visit/opening-hours#2 and the National Archives: check this webpage: https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/visit-us/opening-times/
- **What to bring**: ID and Proof of Address to obtain a reader's card.
- **Contact details**: The British Library: +44 (0) 330 333 1144 The National Archives: +44 (0) 20 8876 3444
- **Website**: The British Library: https://www.bl.uk and The National Archives: https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
- **Resources & Notes**: The British Library: in addition to housing the archives of the India Office, which covered the Gulf region until the 1940s, the library contains an impressive collection of Arabic periodicals and books.

  The National Archives: the archives house the entire declassified documents of the Foreign Commonwealth Office and the Foreign Office.

  There are currently two independent digitization projects of the of the IOR and the FO and FCO archives:

  * To access the Qatar Digital Library (British Library): https://www.qdl.qa/en
  * To access the Arab Gulf Digital Archive (National Archives): https://www.agda.ae/en

13. OTHER RESEARCH RESOURCES

For more information on archives in Bahrain, please consult this guide published by Mawane, an independent non-profit Bahraini initiative. It focuses on archives for architectural research, but some entries can be relevant to a wide variety of researchers on Bahrain:

https://www.mawane.org/directory/