



## ĈĀP

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**ĈĀP** “print, printing,” a Persian word probably derived from Hindi *chāpnā*, “to print” (see Turner, no. 4994; cf. the terms *čhāpa*, *čhāpagarī* [sic] used by Abū Ṭāleb, p. 212). When printing with type was first introduced in Persia in the early 11th/17th century the Turkish term *bāsmā* “to stamp” was used. Although this term remained current, both *čāp* and the Arabic *ṭabʿ* and their derivatives gradually became more common in Persia.

*Xylography*. The art of printing from engraved wooden blocks, practiced in China from a.d. the 8th century, was probably introduced in Persia by the Ilkhanids. In 693/1294 Gaykātū Khan, to satisfy his need for cash, ordered the printing of paper money (*chʿao*, Persianized *čāv*) of the kind used in contemporary China. It was printed on several kinds of paper in the *čāv-kāna* at Tabrīz and was circulated for the first time on 19 Šawwāl 693/12 September 1294 (Jahn, 1970a, p. 121). Although no details on the process of manufacturing this currency have been reported, the printing press itself cannot have been very heavy: An official named Ūrdūbūqā, intercepted at Semnān with several donkey loads of *čāv* intended for Māzandarān, was also carrying the apparatus necessary for printing it, as well as white and colored paper for the purpose. Although there is no direct evidence on whether wooden blocks or copper plates were used for printing *čāv*, all the equipment traveling with Ūrdūbūqā was burned, which suggests the former (Rašīd-al-Dīn, *Jāmeʿ al-tawārīk*, Baku, p. 287; Jahn, 1970a, p. 123). Rašīd-al-Dīn reports that “they [the Chinese] transfer the book on to wooden plates and then print these off on to paper, just as painters transfer their pictures on to wood and then print them



off the block so that everything comes out uniformly correct, neat and light. And with the aid of matrices they can accomplish in one day that which a scribe requires a year to do” (Jahn, 1970b, p. 145). The printing matrices were made by Chinese artisans living in Tabrīz. Perhaps partly because of this foreign identification, paper money was totally rejected by the population, and Gaykātū Khan repealed his decree in ʿDu’l-ḥejja 693/November 1294 (Jahn, 1970a, pp. 125-35). Block printing, too, disappeared from Iran for many centuries.

*Early Persian-language printing.* Although movable type was invented in China in a.d. the 11th century (De Vinne), it was not immediately put to practical use. It was in 13th-century Korea that the combination of die and matrix was developed to produce durable and uniform typefaces in large quantities; such type had to be laboriously set and printed by hand, however. It remained for Europeans to invent the printing press with movable type, and it was from Europe that typography was first introduced to Iran in 1038/1629.

The first Persian-language book printed in the Near East was a Torah in Hebrew characters published in Istanbul in 943/1546 (Farman Farmayan, p. 145). The first books in Persian characters were *Dāstān-e Masīḥ ammā ālūda* (*Historia Christio Persica*), a Persian translation from a Latin original by Hieronymo Xavier with the collaboration of ‘Abd-al-Sonārayn (*sic*) Qāsem Lāhūrī and *Dāstān-e San Pīdrū* (*Historia S. Petri Persica*), published in Leiden in 1639. Only a few years later the first attempts at printing were made in Iran itself (Afšār, 1337, pp. 13-16; *idem*, 1345, p. 26; Farman Farmayan, p. 145).

In 1027/1618, when Father John Thaddeus presented Shah ‘Abbās I with “an alphabet in Arabic and acquainted him with the printing of Arabic and Persian letters . . . he showed much interest and expressed a wish to introduce it into his own country . . . the Shah has even charged me to procure it [a set of type]” (*Chronicle* I, p. 305). Although a printing press was at Rome ready to be sent in 1624, it apparently did not arrive in Isfahan until about Rajab 1038/January 1629. No book is so far known to have been printed on this press. In 1638 the Vatican inquired whether or not any use had been made of it (*ibid.*, I, p. 306), but there is no record of a reply. In 1052/1642 Bernard of St. Theresa, bishop of Baghdad (or Babylon) and temporary vicar apostolic at Isfahan, left Iran, handing over to a colleague matrices for 349 Arabic letters, together with an apparatus for casting letter forms and another for setting type (Floor, p. 370); they were stored in the Isfahan office of the Dutch East India Company from 1058/1648 until 1080/1669 (p. 371). Father Angélu à St.



Joseph, who lived in Iran from 1664 until 1676 reported, “Our old Carmelite fathers founded an Arabic-Persian printing-press in their convent in Isfahan. The Armenians had one in Armenian in Julfa. Neither one was a success, because of the dryness of the country . . . They still have it” (s.v. Stamparia; Floor, pp. 369 n. 2, 370-71).

The first Persian book published in the Near East seems to have been *Lesān al-‘Ajām*, a Persian-Turkish dictionary by Ḥasan Šo‘ūrī, which appeared in Istanbul in 1155/1742 (Ethé, *Catalogue*, p. 136; Dehḵodā, s.v. Šo‘ūrī). About thirty years later a Persian printing press was established in Calcutta. Its first book was *Enšā-ye Herkern* by Francis Balfour, which appeared in 1781; the next year *A Persian Translation of the Regulations for the Administration of Justice . . .* was published (Ġarawī, pp. 27-28). By 1233/1817, when the first printed book was issued at Tabrīz (see below), more than fifty Persian books had been printed in India, including the *dīvāns* of Sa‘dī and Ḥāfez. The first Persian newspaper appeared in Calcutta in 1810 (Ḥekmat, p. 453); if Father Angelus’ report is correct, the Arabic-Persian printing press must have been in use in the period before it was put into storage in 1648. Among other effects belonging to the Carmelites and stored by the Dutch were proofs (Floor, p. 370), but there is no report on whether they were in Persian or in a European language. The ultimate fate of the Carmelite press is unknown. Shah ‘Abbās II showed interest in importing printers from Europe to Iran (Chardin, IV, p. 90), but he did not do so, and his successor, Shah Solaymān, showed no interest in the matter.

*The Armenian press at Jolfā.* An Armenian press was established by Bishop Xač‘atur Kesarac‘i (Kāčātūr Ġisārāzī) in New Jolfā at Isfahan in 1047/1637 (Richard, p. 483). After struggling for seventeen months he was able to print the Psalms (*Saqmus*, 250 pp.) in 1047/1638 (Rā‘in, pp. 158-60), the first book printed in Iran. He had no lead type and used letters made of wood, copper, and iron. His major problem, however, was obtaining ink and paper of good quality. In 1640 the Capuchin monks in Jolfā wrote to Paris on his behalf; Father Joseph du Tremblay, an active promoter of printing in the East, who might have been willing to assist, had died two years earlier (Richard, pp. 483-84). Nevertheless, in 1641, without Capuchin assistance, Bishop Xač‘atur was able to print *Vark‘haranc‘* (Lives of the fathers, a religious tract of 705 pages), and *Xorhrdatetr* (or *Xratatetr*, Liturgical chants, 48 pages); the next year he published another religious tract, *Žamgirak* (44 pages; Rā‘in, pp. 460-01). Copies of these three books and the type from which they were set can still be seen in the museum



at Jolfā. Because of persistent technical problems Xač'atur sent one of his pupils, Yovhannēs (Hovhannēs), to Europe to learn the necessary printing skills. In 1054/1644 Yovhannēs printed a book in Armenian in Leghorn (Livorno). When bishop Xač'atur died, in 1056/1646, Hovhannēs returned to Jolfā, taking with him lead type and a printing press. In 1060/1650 he began printing the Old and New Testaments (Rā'in, p. 161). According to Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (V, p. 229), Yovhannēs (whom he called Jacob Jan), “not having the way of making good Ink, and to avoid the ill consequences of the Invention, he was forced to break the Press. For on one side the Children refused to learn to write, pretending they wrote the Bible themselves, only to get it sooner by heart: on the other side many persons were undone by it, that got their living by writing.” Although Hovhannēs was forced to leave Jolfā, the Armenian press was not in fact broken but simply moved to the Vank church at Isfahan (Rā'in, p. 162). In 1098/1687 it was used again, to print nine books, after which it fell into disuse. It took another century before new Armenian printing houses were established, in Ečmiādzin (Echmiadzin) in 1185/1771, in Naḳjavān (Nakhichevan) in 1200/1786, and in Ḥājī Ṭarḳān (Astrakhan) in 1210-11/1796.

*Introduction of modern typography (čāp-e sorbī “printing with lead”).* According to one report, a printing press was brought to Būšeḥr in 1198/1784 (Maḥbūbī, p. 211), but E. G. Browne could find no evidence to support it (p. 7). The *Notice sur Khoudjah Hafiz al Chyrazy* by A. F. J. Herbin, which according to Zenker (I, p. 68) appeared in Shiraz in 1220-21/1806, was in reality printed in Paris. On the other hand, John Malcolm wrote in 1231/1815 that “the art of printing is unknown in Persia” (p. 582), and Browne believed that the first printing press with movable type in Iran was the one established at Tabrīz in about 1232/1816-17, under the patronage of the crown prince 'Abbās Mīrzā (Browne, p. 7); the printer was Mīrzā Zayn-al-Ābedīn b. Malek-Moḥammad Tabrīzī. At about the same time Mīrzā 'Abd-al-Wahhāb Mo'tamed-al-Dawla sponsored a second press, in Tehran.

There is some disagreement about the earliest Persian work printed at Tabrīz. According to one report, in 1233/1817-18 *Jehādīya* (Fighters against the infidels) by Mīrzā 'Īsā Farāhānī Qā'emmaqām was printed by Moḥammad-'Alī b. Ḥājī Moḥammad-Ḥosayn Āštīānī at Tabrīz; it was reprinted the next year by Zayn-al-Ābedīn (Tarbiyat, apud Maḥbūbī, p. 212). According to H. Schindler, however, the first book printed at Tabrīz in 1233/1817 was *Fatḥ-nāma* (Book of conquest) by Mīrzā 'Īsā's son Mīrzā Abu'l-Qāsem Farāhānī, about a battle fought between Persians and Russians in 1227/1812 (Taḳīzāda apud Maḥbūbī,



I, pp. 211-12; Afšār, 1345, p. 28). A book on vaccination against smallpox (*Resāla-ye ābelakūbī*, Treatise on vaccination) by the British physician [Charles Cormick](#) was also probably published in that year (Ṭabāṭabā'ī et al., p. 209).

In 1240/1824-25 Faṭḥ-‘Alī Shah summoned Zayn-al-‘Ābedīn from Tabrīz to Tehran, where he settled and printed a number of books, mostly on religious subjects, under the direction of Manūčehr Khan Mo‘tamed-al-Dawla (Tarbiāt apud Maḥbūbī, p. 215); these books were known in the trade as Mo‘tamedī’s. Mo‘tamed-al-Dawla is reported to have spent 20,000 tomans on the printing of some 8,000 copies, among them probably the first book printed in Tehran, *Moḥarreq al-qolūb* (The kindles of hearts) by Maḥdī b. Abī Ḍarr Kāšānī Narāqī (Maḥbūbī, p. 215).

After the departure of Zayn-al-‘Ābedīn the original printed press in Tabrīz was operated by Mollā Moḥammad-Bāqer Tabrīzī. In 1241/1825-26 he issued *Ma‘āter-esoltāniya* by ‘Abd-al-Razzāq Beg Donbolī Maftūn. There may have been a second press operating in Tabrīz at that time as well, for Āqā ‘Alī b. Ḥājj Moḥammad-Ḥosayn Amīn-al-Šar‘ printed a school textbook, *Nešāb al-šebyān* (Primer for children), by Abū Naṣr Farāhī in the same year (Ṭabāṭabā'ī et al., p. 209). ‘Abbās Mīrzā had sent a number of students to England to become familiar with modern technology. One of them was Mīrzā Šāleḥ Šīrāzī, who, according to his own report (pp. 344-45), apprenticed himself to a London publishing house that specialized in printing the New Testament in Persian, Hindi, Syriac, Arabic, and other languages. He returned to Iran in 1234/1819, taking with him a small printing press and some other materials (p. 353). In 1244-45/1829-30 he was a member of an embassy to St. Petersburg, from which he returned with several printing presses, which were set up in Tabrīz under the directorship of his friend Āqā ‘Alī. One or two of these presses were later moved to Tehran (Maḥbūbī, p. 214).

A typographic press was established in Isfahan in 1244/1828; it printed *Resāla-ye ḥasanīya* by Mollā Ebrāhīm Astarābādī in 1247/1831 (Maḥbūbī, pp. 217-18). On 29 Du‘l-ḥejja 1256/3 March 1840 American missionaries in Urmia produced the first proof sheets of a tract in the Syriac language (Perkins, p. 456, cf. p. 246); their press could also print in Persian and English. Lithographic presses were also established in Būšeher, Mašhad, Anzalī, Rašt, Ardabil, Hamadān, K̄voy, Yazd, Qazvīn, Kermānšāh, Garrūs, and Kāšān in that order (Maḥbūbī, pp. 217-18).

*Introduction of lithography (čāp-e sangī “printing with stone”).* In the



lithographic process the material to be printed is written or drawn with a greasy crayon or special ink on a prepared stone surface, which is then etched, leaving the script or images in relief. According to one contemporary observer, “printing in types is not relished by Persians; the character being necessarily stiff and uncouth, and very displeasing to an eye accustomed to the flowing written hand” (Binning, I, p. 312). Among the renowned calligraphers who copied books for lithographic reproduction were Mīrzā Ḥosayn and ‘Askar Khan Ordūbādī (Browne, pp. 8-9). Illustrations could also be much more easily reproduced by lithography than in the typographic process, for which special metal plates had to be prepared.

Soon after his return from St. Petersburg Mīrzā Šāleḥ sent a certain Mīrzā Asad-Allāh there to learn the printing trade. In 1251/1835 Mīrzā Asad-Allāh joined with Āqā ‘Alī’s brother Āqā Reżā in operating a lithographic press at Tabrīz (Maḥbūbī, p. 214; Browne, p. 8). Either in the same year, or, according to Browne, five years later the two men were summoned to Tehran by Faṭḥ-‘Alī Shah (Maḥbūbī, p. 215; Ṭabāṭabā’ī et al., p. 209; Browne, p. 9). Shiraz had already had a lithographic press in 1245/1829, but it seems to have been used to print only a single edition of the Qur’ān (Maḥbūbī, p. 217). After the introduction of lithography in Tabrīz and Tehran, however, the process became so prevalent that for a time it seemed that typography would die out in Iran. In 1259/1843 Justin Perkins reported (p. 205) that “a lithographic press is now in use, in this city [Tabrīz], and books are bound here very well. The owner of this press was once ambassador to England . . .” [i.e., Mīrzā Šāleḥ]. In the same year another printer, Āqā ‘Abd-al-‘Alī, brought a lithographic press to Tehran (Maḥbūbī, p. 216). He later sold it to Mīr Bāqer, a former apprentice of Zayn al-‘Ābedīn (Maḥbūbī, p. 216). In 1260/1844 a lithographic press was established at Isfahan. By 1266/1850 there were four or five lithographic printing presses in Tehran (Sheil, p. 20), and in 1271/1855 no fewer than fifteen in Tabrīz (Burgess and Burgess, p. 85). According to a printer’s note at the end of *Zīnat al-majāles* by Majd-al-Dīn Moḥammad Ḥosaynī, in 1305/1887-88 there were one government-owned and seven private lithographic presses in operation in Tehran and five in Tabrīz (“Aḥwālāt,” p. 320). Despite the increased importance of lithography, movable type was still in use, however; in 1267/1851 Robert Binning (I, p. 312, II, p. 217) reported that in Tabrīz and Tehran, “books are published both in types and lithograph; but the execution is rather coarse, in the latter style in particular.”

Among the more interesting early lithographed editions were *al-Moʿjam fi āṭār*



*molūk al-'Ajam* by Fażl-Allāh Ḥosaynī Qazvīnī, issued in Tabrīz in 1259/1843, and Maktabī's *Laylā wa Majnūn*, printed, with illustrations, by Ḥājī Bahrām in the same year, also at Tabrīz (Nafīsī, p. 234). In 1262/1846 a translation of Voltaire's *Histoire de l'empire de Russie sous Pierre le Grand* (*Tārīk-ePeṭr-e kabīr*) was published in Tehran.

Illustrated printed books became very popular. B. W. Robinson has provided a detailed list of illustrated Persian lithographs in the British Museum, as well as a list of the artists who worked on them. One such illustration consists of a composite drawing showing the various stages of the lithographic process itself (Robinson, p. 62, fig. 1). It is clear from Robinson's list and from other sources that Iranian presses printed not only religious tracts and historical texts but also many popular works, including *Rawżat al-mojāhedīn* (*Moktār-nāma*), *Hazār o yak šab*, *Eskandar-nāma*, *Dozd o qāzī-e Baḡdād* (a comic text), and *Laylā wa Majnūn*. Only those published in Tehran achieved a reasonable standard of quality, however. Furthermore, Iranian printers were unable to reproduce illustrations in color, though they were sometimes colored by hand after being printed (Maḥbūbī, I, p. 219; Robinson, p. 61). Lithographed editions from Bombay and Istanbul were more expensive but also more sought after because of their greater variety (Binning, II, p. 217).

As for scientific works, a series of textbooks was published by **Dār al-Fonūn** (Farman Farmayan, p. 143; Polak, I, p. 307), which had been established by Mīrzā Taqī Khan Amīr(-e) Kabīr (q.v.) in Tehran in 1267/1851. These published editions were written by the staff of the school or translated from European works on engineering, mineralogy, chemistry, physics, mathematics, botany, medicine, geography, international law, music, and military science. The school had its own press, which also printed the Government Gazette (Browne, p. 12).

Dissemination of modern ideas was further stimulated by the establishment by the Persian government of the Dār al-Ṭebā'a (printing house) and Dār al-Tarjama (translation office) in 1288/1871-72. Under the directorship of Moḥammad-Ḥasan Khan E'temād-al-Salṭana numerous works, mainly histories and fiction, by European authors were translated and published (Āryanpūr, *Az Šabā tā Nīmā* I, p. 260). Popular editions of classics in Persian (e.g., works by Ferdowsī, Sa'dī, and Ḥāfeẓ) and Arabic (e.g., *Alf layla wa layla* [A thousand and one nights] in Persian translation) were also published. Historical works included Reżāqolī Khan Hedāyat's *Rawżat al-šafā-ye nāserī*, Moḥammad-Taqī Sepehr's *Nāsek al-tawārīk*, and Moḥammad-Ja'far Khan



Ḳormūjī's *Ḥaqā'eq al-aḳbār-e nāṣerī*. Among official chronicles those edited by E'temād-al-Salṭana himself are of special importance, as they contain much useful information on Iran in the second half of the 13th/19th century. Particularly important are *Mer'āt al-boldān*, *al-Ma'āter wa'l-āṭār*, *Montaẓam-e nāṣerī*, *Maṭla' al-šams*, *Ketāb al-tadwīn*, and the many *Sāl-nāmas* (yearbooks) that he appended to the chronicles.

*Revival of typography*. Nāṣer-al-Dīn Shah Qājār (Maḥbūbī, I, p. 217; Ṭabāṭabā'ī et al., p. 210) is said to have reintroduced typography in 1290/1872, perhaps because in Istanbul better-quality printing was done with movable type. The shah bought a typographic press in that city and had it shipped, along with a typesetter, to Tehran, where it stood idle for two years; another press was put into operation in 1296/1879 and then stood idle again (Ṭabāṭabā'ī et al., p. 210). Finally, in 1314/1896 a new printing press was established in Tehran, followed three years later by one in Tabrīz (Taqīzāda, p. 14). The former became the nucleus of the royal press, later the government press (Ṭabāṭabā'ī et al., p. 210; Maḥbūbī, I, p. 217). From the end of the 13th/19th century typography gradually regained its earlier dominance in the Iranian printing industry.

*Newspapers*. Although Persians were aware of the existence of printed newspapers as early as the time of Fath-'Alī Shah, Mīrzā Ṣāleḥ was the first to attempt such a newspaper in Iran; the sole issue of *Ṭalī'a-ye kāgād-e aḳbār* (Newspaper) appeared in Tehran in Ramaẓān 1252/January 1837 (Mīrzā Ṣāleḥ, ed. Rā'īn, pp. 14-19). The first newspaper to be issued regularly was also founded by him, on 25 Moḥarram 1253/1 May 1837; it was called *Aḳbār-e waqāye'* (Current news [from Tehran]) and was printed by lithography. The contents included foreign and local news, the latter emphasizing progress and reforms under Moḥammad Shah (Mīrzā Ṣāleḥ, ed. Rā'īn, pp. 19-21). The paper lasted three years. It was fourteen years before another appeared, the weekly *Rūz-nāma-ye waqāye'-a ettefāqīya*, founded by Mīrzā Taqī Khan Amīr(-e) Kabīr.

Because from the 1260s/1850s presses were primarily organs of the court and government opinion, a censorship department (*edāra-ye sānsūr*) was established; it was under the direction of E'temād-al-Salṭana until the 1300s/1880s. Every book and every newspaper issue, whether imported or printed in Iran, had to be checked by the censor; only when he had put his signature (later a stamp) on it could it be published or sold (see [censorship](#)).

*Persian printing outside Iran*. In the 13th/19th century Persian-language printers were also active in Cairo, Istanbul, several European cities, and



especially India (e.g., Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Cawnpore, Peshawar, Thatta, Lucknow). The first printing press in India (1780) was owned by **Bombay** Parsis. In the 1270s/1860s, printing was introduced in Afghanistan. A newspaper named *Kābol* was published during the reign of Dōst-Moḥammad Khan; it was later renamed *Šams al-nahār* (Daytime sun). It specialized in court news and continued to appear until 1296/1879. Sayyed **Jamāl-al-Dīn Asadābādī** (Afḡānī) is credited with having been the first editor (Pourhadi, p. 28; U.S. Government, p. 237), but there is no indisputable evidence on this point. Books were also printed in Kabul; apparently the first was *Taqwīn al-dīn*, a treatise on *jehād* by Abū Bakr Eshāqzay, dated 1305/1888 (Edwards, p. 53). S. Wheeler (p. 227) mentions the printing of a pamphlet in 1304/1887.

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