



LITHOGRAPHY I. IN PERSIA

LITHOGRAPHY (Pers. *čāp-e sangi*, planographic printmaking technique, invented by Alois Senefelder (b. Prague, 1771; d. Munich, 1834) at the end of the 18th century and introduced to Persia through Russia in the early decades of the 19th century.

i. IN PERSIA

The first lithographic printing press was brought to Persia in 1821 from Tiflis (Tbilisi), on the orders of the Crown Prince, 'Abbās Mirzā. The Persian painter Allāhverdi who had studied lithography there, returned to Tabriz in March 1821 with a complete set of lithographic equipment (*Akty, sobrannye kavkazskoyu arkheograficheskoyu komissieyu VI/2*, pp. 238-39). The four volumes mentioned by Moḥammad-'Alī Khan Tarbiyat (1934, p. 662), namely the two-volume of Majlesi's *Ḥayāt al-qolub* (I, pub. in 1240/1824-25; II, in 1241/1825-26), the *Bustān* of Sa'di (1247/1831-32), and the *Maḳāreq al-qolub* of Nerāqi (1248/1832-33), were probably printed in Tabriz by this press.

What is certain is that in 1248/1832-33 a lithographic printing press began to operate in Tabriz. It was established through the efforts of Mirzā Šāleḥ Širāzi. In 1829, the equipment for the lithography and a printing specialist were presented as a gift to the Embassy of Kosrow Mirzā to Russia of which Mirzā Šāleḥ was a member (Rozanov, p. 225; Shcheglova, 1979, p. 31). The first books lithographed were the Qur'ān in 1248/1832-33 and the *Zād al-ma'ād* of Majlesi in 1251/1836. The lithographer was Āqā-'Alī b. Ḥājji Moḥammad-Ḥosayn al-Šar' Tabrizi (Tarbiyat, 1931, p. 450).



In Tehran, the first lithographed item was, the newspaper called *Kāgād-e aḵbār* (lit. newspaper) published by Mirzā Šāleḥ in 1837. There were only three issues, and these came out in Moḥarram-Jomādā I 1253/May-August 1837 (Šadr-Hāšemi I, no. 37). As far as printing of books is concerned, the first publications are datable to 1838. These were the *Noḵba* of Moḥammad-Ebrāhim Ešfahāni (Mošār, col. 1571), the *So‘āl o javāb* of Majlesi (Ibid, col. 909), and the *kolliyāt* of Hafez (Tarbiyat, 1931, p. 453). It is possible, however, that the first lithographed book was the Qur‘ān, as reported by Il‘ya Berezin (1819-96) who visited Tehran in 1843 and met Mirzā Šāleḥ there (Berezin, p. 248). Berezin also noted that the lithographic press remained mainly idle.

The first lithographic editions, as well as those typeset, were the work of printing enthusiasts who enjoyed the financial backing and patronage of such princely notables as ‘Abbās Mirzā in Tabriz and Manučehr Khan Mo‘tamed-al-Dawla in Tehran. The number of published books remained therefore insignificant until the middle of the 1840s, when businessmen and booksellers began to realize the potential profits of the book printing trade. By late 1840s, there were already at least six lithographic printing houses at work in Tehran, and dozens of books were published (Shcheglova, 1979, pp. 33-34). From this time on, one can speak of regular lithographic book printing in Persia. The reasons for the success of the lithographic method of printing are obvious and well-known: simpler and cheaper equipment in comparison to that required for the typographic printing, availability of a large number of professional copyists, and the traditional culture of calligraphy. Although considerably less expensive than manuscripts, lithographed books retained the usual format of the handwritten codex in a sturdy binding.

Tehran and Tabriz remained the main centers of book printing to the end of the 19th century, but lithographic books were also printed in such provincial cities as Shiraz, Isfahan, Mashad (Mašhad), and Kashan (Kāšān). Yet, such local enterprises had, in all probability, originated in single commissions and were connected with the activities of local rulers or enthusiasts of lithography. Provincial Persian booksellers placed their orders for book printing either in Tehran or, in the case of those from Shiraz, in Bombay.

In the latter part of the 1840s, the State Printing House (*dār al-ṭabā‘a-ye dowlati*) began its work; and was operative until the end of the first decade of the 20th century. After the opening of the *Dār al-fonun* (the first modern polytechnic on European lines in Persia) in 1851, a lithographic press was established within it for printing teaching aids. Activities of these two printing



houses were of some significance for the cultural and scientific life of Persia, since they published books on new subjects: manuals on exact and natural sciences, both translated and original, and works on history and geography.

In 1846 Sayyed Mirzā Ja‘far Mošir-al-Dowla started working on a mathematics manual entitled *Ketāb-e hesāb*. A royal decree was issued ordering the manual to be printed at the State Printing House and distributed throughout the country. The book came out in 1847 (Shcheglova, 1975, no. 737, colophon; Mošār, col. 561; Storey II, p. 21). At that time, the manager of the lithographic press was Moḥammad-Wali Ṭabib-e Ordubādi, while his brother Mirzā Moḥammad was the lithographer.

Like other printing houses, the State Printing House produced various items, and publishing books was only a part of its activities. As of February 1851, the first Persian regular official newspaper *Waqāye‘-e ettefāqiya* was printed there. During this period, the lithographic facility was managed by Ḥājji ‘Abd-al-Moḥammad (Ṣadr-Hāšemi IV, no. 1160). In the period 1860-65, the head of the State Printing House, and of the Arts School too, was Mirzā Abu’l-Ḥasan Ġaffāri Ṣani‘-al-Molk. After his death, his duties were transferred to the Minister for Sciences (*wazir-e ‘olum*) ‘Ali-qoli Mirzā E‘teżād-al-Salṭana, who was then the director of the *Dār al-fonun* as well. One of his many duties up to 1871 was the oversight of the State Printing House and all lithographic printing houses in the capital and in the provinces.

As an illustration of how infrequently books were published during the first years of the State Printing House’s activities, one could point to the fact that the first book under the supervision of Abu’l-Ḥasan Ġaffāri came out as late as 1864, that is, four years after his appointment to the directorship of the press. This is recorded in the edition of the poem *Farhang-e kodāparasti* of Lesān-al-Molk (Shcheglova, 1975, No. 1338; idem, 1989, no. 437; FIGURE 1).

The situation changed under Moḥammad-Ḥasan Khan Ṣani‘-al-Dawla (as of 1304/1886-87 he bore the title of E‘temād-al-Salṭana), who was appointed Minister of Press (*wazir-e enṭebā‘āt*) in 1871. From 1288 until his death in 1896, he was the head of the publishing complex which included: the *Dār al-ṭabā‘a-ye dowlati* (the State Printing House with a lithography and a typographic press); the *Dār al-tarjoma* (the translation bureau); as well as editor of six official newspapers; and, after the death of ‘Ali-qoli Mirzā E‘teżād-al-Salṭana in 1881, the *Dār al-ta‘lif* (the center for publications) as well. This was the period of active book publishing at the State Printing House.



The first book that came out at the State Printing House was, in all probability, the diary of Nāṣer-al-Din Shah's pilgrimage to Karbalā' in September 1870-February 1871. The books were provided with an introduction and were edited by Moḥammad-Ḥasan Khan who had accompanied the shah in his travels (Shcheglova, 1975, no. 134; idem, 1989, No. 62; Mošār, col. 964, printing house not mentioned). Another publication was the typeset edition of the diary of Nāṣer-al-Din Shah's travel to Europe in April-September 1873, which came out in April 1874. This too was edited by Moḥammad-Ḥasan Khan and typeset by Aršak Eslāmbuli (Shcheglova, 1989, no. 63; in Persian bibliographies, Istanbul [*Eslāmbul*] is erroneously mentioned as the place of publication).

From 1873 to 1906, the State Printing House had regularly prepared and published year-books (*sāl-nāmas*). The first two came out as separate volumes, while those that followed were annexed to multi-volume compositions also printed by the State Printing House. For more than twenty years, multi-volume works were published continuously, and their author was said to be the head of the Ministry of Press and Publications, Moḥammad-Ḥasan Khan Ṣani'-al-Dowla E'temād-al-Saltāna. The first in the series was a book printed in 1876. This contained an ancient history of the world, which had no special title; the *Tāriḳ-e Irān* which covered the history of Persia from the Arab conquest to the reign of Nāṣer-al-Din Shah; and the almanac for 1292/1875 (Shcheglova, 1989, no. 28; Mošār, cols. 299 and 349; *Fehrest-e ketābhā-ye čāpi-e fārsi*, col. 672; Storey-Bregel II, p. 711, III, p. 1457).

Other published works included well known scholarly titles: the *Mer'at al-boldān* ('Mirror of countries', a geographical dictionary) printed in 1877-80; the *Tāriḳ-e montazam-e Nāṣeri* printed in 1881-83; the *Maṭla' al-šams*, a description of Khorasan printed in 1884-86; the *Ma'āter wa'l-ātār*, a chronicle-almanac printed in 1889. Leaving aside the issue of the authorship, one must acknowledge that without the organizational skills of Moḥammad-Ḥasan Khan these educative and informative works would have never been composed and published. The series of historical works published by the State Printing House came to an end with two volumes of the *Tāriḳ-e salāṭin-e Sāsāni* ('History of the Sasanian Rulers,' printed in 1895-98). This was an expanded translation by of George Rawlinson's *The Seventh Great Oriental Monarchy*, (Storey-Bregel II, p. 726). The translation was made by Moḥammad-'Ali Khan Foruḡi, *Ḍokā'-al-Molk* (1877-1942). The *Dār al-ta'lif* (The bureau of publications) prepared six volumes of the biographical dictionary *Nāma-ye dānešvarān-e Nāṣeri* (vols. II-VII, printed in 1894-1906).



Besides historical compositions, the State Printing House also produced lithographed translations from European languages. A play of Fath-Ali Akhundov (**Fath-'Ali Ākundzāda**) was translated into Persian by Mirzā Ja'far Qarājādāgi as *Hekāyat-e Mollā Ebrāhim-Kalil kimiāgar* and printed in 1872 (Shcheglova, 1989, no. 648; Edwards, col. 207); the *Sargodašt-e mestres Hurtasetet-kānom-e englisi dar Hendustān*, was printed in 1887 (Shcheglova, 1989, no. 650; Edwards, col. 385; Mošār, col. 596; *Fehrest-e ketābhā-ye čāpi-e fārsi*, col. 1243); the *Mémoires de Mademoiselle de Montpensier* was inserted into the *Tāriḵ-e Farānsa* (History of France) and translated by Moḥammad-Ḥasan Khan, printed in 1895; three volumes of the *Ḳayrat al-ḥesān* by Mehmet Zihni were translated from Turkish, and printed in 1886-90.

In addition to the diaries of the travels of Nāṣer-al-Din Shah mentioned earlier, descriptions of his travels to Māzandarān in 1877, to Khorasan in 1889, and to Europe in 1887, 1879, and 1891 were also printed.

The State Printing House ceased to function in the first decade of the 20th century. By that time, lithographic printing was being forced out by typeset printing, and from 1911 on, the official newspaper *Irān* was printed typographically.

As already mentioned, the lithography press of the *Dār al-fonun* (*dār al-ṭabā'aye maḵṣuṣa-ye mobāraka-ye dār al-fonun*) was created during the period 1851-58 when **Rezā-qoli Khan Hedāyat** was its director (*ra'īs wa nāẓem*). In the tenth volume of the *Rawzat al-ṣafā'*, in the section dedicated to the *Dār al-fonun*, Hedāyat writes that manuals on medicine by **Jacob Eduard Polak** (1818-91, resided in Persia until 1860) were printed both at the press at the *Dār al-fonun* and on his own (Hedāyat's) press. Publication dates of the works by Polak are known, they came out in 1854-57. Earlier editions, including two treatises on artillery by Augustus Kržiž (1814-86, resided in Persia until 1859) were printed by the private lithography press of Moḥammad-Taqi b. Moḥammad-Mahdi Tabrizi in 1269/1852-53 (Shcheglova, 2002, no. 162; Edwards, col. 342, without mentioning the lithography). Some of the other educational manuals for the *Dār al-fonun* were also published later outside its own printing facilities. For example, the French grammar compiled by Moḥammad-Ḥasan Khan came out at the State Printing House in 1876, and the entire print-run was given to the library of the *Dār al-fonun* (Shcheglova, 1989, no. 697; Mošār, col. 1300, under "Gerāmer" in *Fehrest-e ketābhā-ye čāpi-e fārsi*, col. 2709).



The bulk of the book production was published by private lithographic printing houses. In the period from the 30s of the 19th century up to the first decade of the 20th century inclusive, no less than thirty-three lithographic printing houses were at work in Tehran and no less than thirty in Tabriz (Shcheglova, 1979, pp. 211-13). The largest and the most long-lasting of them were eight in Tehran (see below), six of which are mentioned in the afterword to the *Zinat al-majāles* edited by Iraj Afšār (*Zinat al-majāles*, pp. 319-20), and seven in Tabriz (see below), four of which are likewise recorded in the afterword to the *Zinat al-majāles*. Private lithographic printing houses provided the book market with material on Shi'ite rites and creed, *feqh*, prayers, hagiographies of the Prophet and the Shi'ite martyrs, texts for the *ta'zia* performances, *divāns* of Persian classical poets, stories, and fairy tales. Books were printed in Persian and Arabic, and, in Tabriz, in Turkish too.

In Tehran, perhaps the largest of all the lithographic printing houses was that of Mir Bāqer (1850s-1880s) and his descendants. This printing house published works of 19th-century authors who had influenced the development of science and culture at the time. Books printed by Mir Bāqer are among the most outstanding publications of the time from the point of view of printing quality, setup, paper, and script. His son, Sayyed Mortaḏā (80s of the 19th century-first decade of the 20th century), increased the volume and widened the subject range of the books printed, but failed to surpass his father in craftsmanship.

According to Sayyed Ḥasan Taqizāda (p. 12), Mir Bāqer was a disciple of the first Persian printer Zayn-al-Ābedin Tabrizi, and his lithographic equipment came from one of the first Persian lithographers Mollā 'Abd-al-'Ali, who had been the editor of Voltaire's works printed in 1846. For the publication of his *Rowḏat al-ṣafā'*, Reḏā-qoli Khan Hedāyat acquired a lithographic press and invited Mir Bāqer to act as the lithographer. The cooperation of Hedāyat and Mir Bāqer continued later, and after the death of the former, Mir Bāqer printed Hedāyat's work, *Majma' al-foṣaḩā'*, in 1878. The lithographic printing house of Mir Bāqer produced several volumes of the *Nāṣeḩ al-tawāriḩ* by Sepehr, in particular, all the sections dedicated to the Qajars. Besides that, Mir Bāqer also published two works by 'Ali-qoli Mirzā E'tezād-al-Saltāna, the diary of the first travel of Nāṣer-al-Din Shah to Khorasan (1869), the *Ganjina* of Naṣāṭ, and many other works.

His sons succeeded the father in book printing business; the afterword to the *Zinat al-majāles* mentions Āqā Sayyed Ḥosayn, but it was his brother, the aforementioned Sayyed Mortaḏā, who was the more productive in output. The



lithographic printing house of Sayyed Mortazā printed such famous works of contemporary authors as the *Fārs-nāma-ye Nāšeri* of Fasā'i (1895-96), the *Ṭarā'eq al-ḥaqā'eq* of Ma'ṣum 'Alīšāh (1898-1900), and the *Tāriḳ-e bidāri-e Irāniān* of Nāzem-al-Eslām Kermāni (1910). It also published such historical and poetical classics as *'Ālam-ārā-ye 'Abbāsi* of Eskandar-Beg Monši (1896), and the *Šāh-nāma* of Ferdowsi (the famous edition of Amir Bahādor, 1901-05; [FIGURE 2](#)).

The lithographic printing house of Āqā-Mirzā Ḥabib-Allāh (1882-1900), a lithographer employed at the State Printing House between 1892-87, was active for about two decades. Here they lithographed the *Tāriḳ-e Beyhaqi* (1890, the text was edited by Sayyed Aḥmad Adib Pišāvari), the *Maṭnawi-e ma'nawi* of Rumi (1890, edited by Mirzā Abu'l-Ḥasan Jalva Eṣfahāni; [FIGURE 3](#) and Amir Neẓām-e Garrusi (1828-1900) contains a fine portrait of the author.

Lithographic printing house of 'Ali-qoli Khan Qājār survived for more than forty years (1855-98). His editions were distinguished by the high quality of the printing and their elegant script; the best known of them are the *Farhang-e anjomanārā-ye Nāšeri* of Hedāyat (1871), and the first volume of the biographical dictionary entitled *Nāma-ye dānešvarān-e Nāšeri* (1879).

Activities of the lithographic printing house of Allāh-qoli Khan Qājār spanned more than thirty years (middle of the 1850s to late 1880s). In 1869-70 it printed the work of the contemporaneous philosopher Hādi Sabzavāri entitled *Asrār al-ḥekam*.

The afterword to the *Zinat al-majāles* (1305/1887-88) praises the quality of books lithographed at the "Karbālā'i" printing house of Moḥammad-Ḥosayn where the book itself was printed. This lithographic printing house had been in business for almost four decades (1861-99). It was an ordinary commercial enterprise whose range of publications was not distinguished by any originality and the quality of production was mediocre. Two publications deserve being mentioned: the abovementioned play of Akhundov translated by Mirzā Ja'far Qarājādāgi, and the richly illustrated narrative *Eskandar-nāma* which was printed in 1897-99 and contains 107 illustrations and four head-pieces (*'onwān*).

The workshop (*kārḳāna*) "Karbālā'i" of Moḥammad-Taqi b. Moḥammad-Mahdi Tabrizi existed for half-a-century (1852-1902). It was there that the two treatises of A.Kržiž on artillery, mentioned earlier, were lithographed. One of



the best works of this printing house was the first edition of the *Nāma-ye kosrovān* of Jalāl-al-Din Mirzā Qājār), published in 1868.

The major part of production of lithographic printing houses of Mašhadi Taqi (1878-90) and Mašhadi Kodādād (1884-1915) was presented by popular works of belles-lettres, of both known and anonymous authors, which were targeted at the lower echelons of the society. These publications were ordered by booksellers exclusively. The quality of books produced by Mašhadi Taqi was good, while that of Mašhadi Kodādād's was low (Sanglāk (1874 and 1878;

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