INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP DENOTES the early European books printed from movable type in the formative period as incunabula, the Latin term incunabulorum denoting both the cradle and, metonymically, childhood. Beginning with the first items produced in or shortly after 1450, the chronological range of the “childhood” of printing from movable type has been pragmatically defined as ending with the year 1500. Within the course of these 50 years, Gutenberg’s invention is said to have resulted in the foundation of more than a thousand printing establishments in about 350 cities all over Europe. Between 1450 and 1500, these printing houses published some 30,000 different items with a total output estimated at about 9 million volumes. Contrary to this rapid development, the history of printing in the Islamic Near and Middle East followed a much more moderate course, both in terms of chronology and quantity.

While the history of early printed books in Turkish and Arabic has been quite well studied, our knowledge about the early history of printing of Persian language books in Iran is still fairly limited, and numerous details remain to be explored. For the present discussion, Persian incunabula are defined as Persian language books printed from movable type in the formative period of printing in the territory of present-day Iran. This definition implies the exclusion of four categories of printed books each of which deserves a separate survey: First, Persian language books printed in Europe and elsewhere, some of them as early as the seventeenth century; second, books printed in Iran in languages other than Persian, such as the seventeenth century Armenian books printed in New.


3 For general assessments, see OLIMPIADA P. SHCHEGLOVA: İran dilinin literatürünü anlatanother such book could be added (see note 2), pp. 249–268, 271 sq.

Jolfa; third, Persian language books printed in Iran by way of techniques other than movable type, particularly books printed by way of lithography; this technique was introduced to Iran around 1830 and for various reasons had soon gained preference over printing from movable type; and fourth, Persian language books printed from movable type in Iran after the formal period. In contrast to the situation in many other geographical regions, the history of printing from movable type in Iran is clearly divided into two periods. The first period begins with the earliest documented item printed in the second decade of the nineteenth century and comprises a period of about four decades. At some time in the 1850s, printing from movable type went out of use in favor of lithography. The second period begins with the reintroduction of printing from movable type some two decades later, most probably with the publication of Nâser al-Dîn Shâh’s travel journal to Europe, the Rûznâme-ye sufâr-e Fârâhângtâstân, in 1291/1874. Persian incunabula thus constitute an unambiguously defined phenomenon restricted to the first period of printing from movable type in Iran.

The introduction of printing to Iran and the early protagonists of the process have repeatedly been discussed in previous research. Referring to the historical development only occasionally, the present discussion aims to define the exact period as well as to identify the number and nature of Persian incunabula. Several scholars have dealt with this topic before, such as most recently Russian Persianist Olimpiada P. Shcheglova and Iranian scholar Shahâ Bâbâzâde. Shcheglova’s listing of early books printed in Iran as appended to her History of Lithography in Iran primarily relies on the holdings of two major libraries in Leningrad, present-day Saint Petersburg. Supplemeting her findings by referring to data published in the catalogues of the London and Mashhad libraries, she also refers to various Persian language sources, such as Khânbâbâ Moshâr’s Iranian National Bibliography, and two early studies by Mohammad-‘Ali-Khân Tarbiyât. Particularly the Persian language sources Shcheglova refers to cite a number of items whose physical existence has not been verified beyond reasonable doubt, and some of the rudimentary references listed by Khânbâbâ Moshâr and others might relate to lithographed books rather than to items printed from movable type. Bâbâzâde’s book is a result of the growing awareness

6 See Shcheglova (see note 3); MARZOLPH (see note 3).
7 See Bâbâzâde (see note 3), pp. 21 sqq.; GOLPÂYEGÂN (see note 3).  
8 Shcheglova (see note 3), pp. 208–211.
12 Bâbâzâde (see note 3), pp. 81–205.
13 BSPK: London BL (see Edwards [see note 9]); Mashhad, Ketâbbhâne-ye markazi-ye Astân-e Quds-e Rezavi (Central Library of the Sanctuary of Emâm Rezâ; MAQ.); Saint Petersburg, Instituta Vostokovedenija (Oriental Institute; SPIV; see OLIMPIADA)
P. Shcheglova: Katalog il’irografovannikh knig v persidskom yazyke v sobranii Leningradskogo otdeleniya instituta
for the history of printing in Iran. Combining study and catalogue, the book presents a history of printing in Iran against the backdrop of the holdings of the Iranian National Library in Tehran. In addition to the published data, the present survey relies on a physical inspection of the holdings of the most important libraries in the Iranian cities of Tehran, Shiraz, Tabriz, and Mashhad as well as those of some major international libraries.

While Sa‘id Nafisi already in 1946 had tentatively fixed the amount of early Persian books printed from movable type at 33 items, 23 of which are listed by Bābāzāde in the holdings of the Tehran National Library, Shcheleghova’s study has augmented this number to some 44 items. This writer has previously estimated the actual amount of Persian incunabula at some 55 items. Additional evidence supplied by the present survey now documents a verified number of 50 and a presumed maximum of at least 61 Persian incunabula. It should, however, be understood that this number as well as any of the general statements in the following assessment can only be tentative. The present writer’s personal experience over the past years has proved ever so often that private libraries in Iran hold numerous copies of books that are not available otherwise in Iran or elsewhere. Consequently, these libraries hold a large potential for invalidating any of the current statements about early printed books in Iran.

It is commonly agreed that the lasting introduction of printing from movable type to Iran at the beginning of the nineteenth century is due to the endeavours of the reformist Qajār prince ‘Abbās Mirzā Nā‘eb al-saltana (1203/1788–1249/1833), who had a set of equipment for printing from movable type imported from Russia. Yet the nature and date of the first item printed from movable type is still disputed. In all probability this first item was a small volume compiled by ‘Isā b. Hasan Qā‘em-ma‘qām Farāhānī in 1230/1814 titled Resāle-yeh Jeḥādīye, an 84-page collection of judicial sentences passed by Shi‘ite scholars who had called for resistance to the “infidels” during the Iranian-Russian War. The first edition of this book was printed in 1233/1817 by Mohammad-‘Ali b. Mohammad-Hosein Āshṭiyānī in Tabriz. Some studies in the history of printing in Iran claim the earliest printed book, also produced in the same printing house 1233/1817 in Tabriz, to be a certain Fath-nāme (“Book of Conquest”), 16 which Persian


schor scholar Sa‘íd Nafisi has characterized as a form of pamphlet from the time of the Iranian-Russian War. According to the contemporary description of this book’s content by H. Schönfelder, an employee of the company commissioned to establish the telegraph system in Iran, it appears reasonable to assume that a separately distinguishable book titled Fath-nâme never existed but that the Fath-nâme and the afore-mentioned Resâl-e-ye Jâhâdîye are identical. At any rate, the 1233/1817 edition of the Resâl-e-ye Jâhâdîye is physically available in the Tehran National Library, while no copy of the Fath-nâme is known to have survived.17 [Fig. 1]

Similarly, the nature of the last item before the hiatus of printing from movable type in the second half of the nineteenth century is not altogether certain. While Shcheglova lists a Qur’ân dated 1271/1854 printed in the establishment of ‘Abdalkarim and preserved in the Leningrad/Saint Petersburg University library,18 previous research by the present author has extended this date to 1272/1855 by referring to a copy of the popular martyrological work Tujfân al-bokâ’.19 [Fig. 2] This date may now be extended yet another year later, as another edition of the same work dated 1273/1856 has recently been discovered in a hitherto unexplored private collection in Tehran.

Printing from movable type in Iran was first practiced in Tabriz, the capital of the north-western Iranian province of Azerbaijan, then governed by the reformist Qajâr prince ‘Abbâs Mirzâ. Nine items printed during the period 1233–1247/1817–1831 have been verified to exist, with another six items relating to Tabriz being mentioned in various sources.20 The only item that can verifiably be excluded from the latter group is the 1244/1828 edition of Karâmat-‘Ali b. Rahmat-‘Ali Junpuri’s ‘Arzu va qaţâ’î listed by Bâbâzâde (and also, without date, by Shcheglova).21 Concerning this edition, Bâbâzâde discerns a typographic font different from all other contemporary Iranian fonts known. A physical inspection of another copy of this edition in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek, originating from the Sprenger collection, clearly leads to identifying the edition as having been printed in Calcutta “around 1830”. Consequently, this item should not be listed within the Iranian incunabula. Two items from the group of early Tabriz printings, a 1240/1824 edition of Sa‘di’s Golestan and a 1250/1834 edition of Majlesi’s Jalâ’ al-‘oyun, are listed by Shcheglova according to essays by Mohammad-‘Ali Khân Tarbiyat.22 The 1241/1825 edition of Nesâh al-sebyân is only mentioned in a short essay by Mohammad Mohit Tabâtabâ’î who explicitly states, however, having seen the book himself.23 The 1248/1832 edition of the Persian dictionary Borhân-e qâte‘ listed by Shcheglova with reference to Moshâr is mentioned by Moshâr without a specification of the printing mode;24 while Moshâr talks about “Iran” as place of publication, the catalogue of Shi‘ite books by Ağâ Bozorg al-Tehrânî designates the first Iranian edition of this work to be published in 1259/1843.25 As the latter indication should most probably correctly refer to the lithographed edition published in Bombay, it appears likely that the 1248/1832 edition mentioned by Moshâr might also refer to an Indian edition of this work. The
final item from this group, a 1258/1842 edition of Jouhari’s Tafān al-bokā’, is again listed by Shecglova with reference to Moshār; Moshār records this edition as printed from movable type (sorbi) in folio size (rahlī) without a place of publication.16 While Āqā Bozorg al-Tehrānî mentions the first Iranian edition of this work as published in 1260/1844,17 the earliest verifiable edition dated 1259/1843 and printed in Tehran rather than Tabriz is preserved in the Central Library of the Astān-e Qods in Mashhad.

The nine Tabriz incunabula that have been verified to exist so far mention six different names as printers or editors, including those of Mohammad-Ali b. Mohammad-Hosein al-AShtiyāni (Resāle-ye Jehādiye, 1233), Mirzā Zein al-Ābedin (Resāle-ye Jehādiye, 1234), Mirzā Jafar (Golestān, 1237), Mohammad-Baqer Tabrizi (Ma‘aser-e solānīye, 1241), and Khalil Tabrizi (Abvāb al-jenān, 1241). The most prominent name is that of ‘Ali b. Mohammad-Hosein Tabrizi (Golestān, 1243; Resāle-ye ta’lim-nāme dar ‘aman-e ābele kubi, 1245; Bustān, 1246 and 1247), a printer who also prepared the as yet unverified 1241/1825 edition of Nesāb al-sebyān. While not much is known about most of these persons, Mirzā Jafar probably belonged to the foremost group of students that had been sent by Mirzā ‘Abbās to London (in 1230/1814) and, later, Saint Petersburg (in 1240/1824), to acquire knowledge in the technique of printing, import printing presses and establish printing houses in Iran; Mirzā Zein al-Ābedin in following an order by Fath-Ali Shāh later moved to Tehran, where he established the most productive printing house of the day.18

The Tehran printing press run by Mirzā Zein al-Ābedin and his successors was owned by the influential court official Manuchehr-Khan Gorji, one of the most powerful persons of his day, who later was awarded the honorific title of “Mo’tamed al-doule” (“The State’s [most] Trustworthy Person”).19 Referring to this title, the books produced in his printing house are known as chāp-e Mo’tamed (“Mo’tamed imprints”). The establishment was operative for three decades and produced a total of some 40 items. While the majority of these items have been preserved in various libraries, the existence of five items has not yet been verified. The first item, a 1239/1823 copy of Moharrer al-qolab, is explicitly listed by Moshār as chāp-e Mo’tamed, probably with reference to an earlier mention by Nafisi.20 While most Persian language sources state that Mirzā Zein al-Ābedin moved to Tehran only in 1240/1824, the dating of this particular item lead Russian scholar Shecglova to presume that Mirzā Zein al-Ābedin must have moved to Tehran the previous year or even earlier.21 The second item, an edition of Meftūh al-nobovat, is listed by Shecglova with reference to Tarbiyat. Contrary to Tarbiyat, who mentions the edition’s date as 1240, Shecglova has amended the date to 1245, according to the item’s position in the chronologically arranged listing by Tarbiyat.22 Tarbiyat’s dating is, however, corroborated by Moshār, who in fact lists no other but the work’s Tehran edition of 1240 and explicitly mentions the scribe of the lithographed edition.23 Taking this fact into consideration, the mistake appears not to have been in Tarbiyat’s dating, but in his memory of the item’s nature.
Consequently, this lithographed item has been excluded from the appended bibliographical listing. The third and fourth items, editions of the Qur’ân dated 1247/1831 and 1258/1842, are listed by Shcheglova with reference to earlier sources and remain to be verified; while the Qur’ân has probably been printed numerous times, the Berlin Staatsbibliothek holds an undated copy said to be printed between 1825 and 1847 that could correspond to any one of both quoted items. The fifth item is an unverified 1262/1845 edition of Naṣīrī el-‘ebād, listed by Shcheglova with reference to Moshār who explicitly states the book to be prepared from movable type (sorhī). The most prominent name mentioned in the Tehran incunable is that of Mirzâ Zeyn al-ʿĀbedin, who in the stereotyped prefaces to numerous works is praised as the person who established and perfected the art of printing in Iran. Out of the 18 verifiable items published between 1239/1823 and 1259/1843, a total of 16 items mention his name. Though the date of his death is not known, the 1260/1844 edition of Taṣfān al-bokāʾ mentions him as marhum, or deceased. Some of his collaborators are also mentioned, including Mohammad-Esmā’īl (5 items between 1242/1826 and 1267/1850), Esfandiyār-Khān (5 items between 1245/1829 and 1254/1838), ʿAbdarrashīq Esfahānī (2 items in 1247/1831), and Rostam-ʿAli (2 items between 1254/1838 and 1259/1843). The exact nature of the collaboration of ʿAbdarrashīq Esfahānī remains unclear, in particular as this person (at times together with his brother Mohammad Khalil Esfahānī) is responsible for virtually all of the verifiable books printed in Esfahan. This double responsibility has lead Shcheglova to assume Esfahan as the place of publication for the 1247/1831 edition of Soʿāl va javāb, an assumption that is not followed here. As of 1261/1845, the Tehran printing house appears to have been run by ʿAbdalkarim, whose name is first mentioned in 1260/1844, and continues to be mentioned until the very last item published in 1273/1856. ʿAbdalkarim’s collaborators included Bahrām Beg (1 item in 1262/1845), Allāh-Qoli-Khān (1 item in 1271/1854), and Mirzâ Bābā Khvānsārī (1 item in 1273/1856). While ʿAbdalkarim is also known as a minor lithographic printer (at least two items dated 1271/1854 and 1276/1859), Allāh-Qoli-Khān probably ran his own lithographic establishment where he printed at least ten (illustrated) items between 1268/1851 and 1297/1879.

The city of Esfahan is the third place at which Persian incunabula are known to have existed. Whether or not printing from movable type was also practiced in other Iranian cities remains open to speculation, as no preserved items have been documented. The production in Esfahan is fairly short-lived and modest in numbers, over a period of five years comprising a total of six items, five of which have been verified to exist. [Fig. 3] The only unverified item is a 1244/1828 edition of the Resāle-ye Hasāniye mentioned by Tarbiyat. All of the five verified items have been printed by ʿAbdarrazzaq Esfahānī, who obviously ran the only existing printing establishment. This Esfahan printing house most probably also belonged to Manuchehr-Khān Gorji “Moʿtamed al-doule”, and ʿAbdarrazzaq was evidently a close collaborator of Mirzâ Zeyn al-ʿĀbedin, the director of
Mo'tamed al-doule's printing house in Tehran, as his name is mentioned in two of the Tehran prints. Moreover, the books printed in Esfahan have been prepared with the same typographic font as the Tehran incunabula, albeit with a different layout. A close cooperation between Mirzâ Zein al-Ábedin and 'Abdalkarim suggests itself all the more since Manuchehr-Khán had been appointed governor of Esfahan in 1240/1824 (where he remained only until 1242/1826). While the actual establishment of the Esfahan printing house coincides with the fact that Manuchehr-Khán was awarded his honorific title “Mo'tamed al-doule” in 1244/1828, its discontinuation after 1248/1832 most probably resulted from the owner's death in 1250/1834.

In addition to the previously discussed items, there is an undated edition of Tufân al-boká' of which only a single sheet has been preserved as the fly-leaf of a later book.\textsuperscript{40} [Fig. 4] Since the typographic font of this text corresponds to the characteristic style of cháp-e Mo'tamedi, it was most probably printed in Tehran. The sheet is highly unusual in that it combines a few lines of text printed from movable type with an illustration that was obviously prepared by way of lithography, a combination that is not known from any other Persian printed text. Illustration in Persian incunabula is, at any rate, an unusual phenomenon and is documented only for a limited number of items of cháp-e Mo'tamedi.\textsuperscript{41} In Persian lithographed books, illustrations had been introduced in 1259/1843 in a copy of Maktabi's Leili va Majnun, and became a regular phenomenon as of 1263/1846.\textsuperscript{42} The first Persian book printed from movable type containing illustrations is the 1261/1845 edition of Rouzat al-mojâhedin, also known as Mokhtar-náme.\textsuperscript{43} While the eight illustrations in that book have most probably been printed from engravings, it remains unclear whether the material used for engraving was metal or wood. [Fig. 5]

No other books containing illustrations produced in a similar manner are known, and later publishers preferred to include full-page illustrations prepared by way of lithographic printing, so that the text and the illustrations were printed in two distinct processes. This method has been applied in altogether four editions of Tufân al-boká' printed between 1269/1852 and 1273/1856.\textsuperscript{44} [Fig. 6]

Considered together, the printing houses in the three Iranian cities of Tabriz, Tehran, and Esfahan, produced a total of 50 verified items, and probably up to as many as 61 items, over a time spanning some 40 years (1233–1273/1817–1856). The period in which these Persian incunabula were printed can be divided by physical evidence into four distinctive units, each of which is introduced by a decisive event influencing the further development.\textsuperscript{45}
The first unit comprises the early years of printing in Tabriz (1233/1817–1238/1822) with a limited production of three items over the course of six years. Considering the fact that the typographic fonts employed differ for each of the three items, printers were obviously still experimenting. The second unit begins with the inauguration of the Tehran printing house.
owned by Manuchehr-Khân Gorji and run by Mirzâ Zein al-Âbedin in 1239/1823 and ends with the pervasive introduction of lithography to Iran in 1248/1832. It is the most productive unit and the only one in which printing houses in all of the three Iranian cities were operative. The verified production amounts to a total of 26 items during a period of ten years, thus averaging two to three items per year. The introduction of lithography to Iran, with the first known item being a Qur‘ân printed in 1248–1249/1832–1833, marks the beginning of the third unit. This unit is characterized by a steep decline in the number of books printed from movable type. While only two unverified items are mentioned for the Tabriz printing houses, the Tehran printing house during the early years of this unit produced a mere two verified items between 1249/1833 and 1258/1842. In the later years of this unit, printing from movable type appears to have recovered to a certain extent from the decrease resulting from the introduction of the new technique, as the Tehran printing house published a total of twelve verified items between 1258/1842 and 1263/1846, thus averaging two items per year. The fourth unit is again marked by a very modest output. Following the death of Mirzâ Zein al-Âbedin in 1260/1844, production continued for a while before it came to a complete stop for a period of three years following the death of Mo’tamed al-doule in 1263/1846. Though production was resumed in 1267/1850 by Mohammad-Esmâ’il and later continued by ‘Abdalkarim, a total of only seven items were published during a period of seven years. It is to be noted that four out of these items constitute editions of the popular martyrological work Tafân al-bakâ’, all of which contain illustrations printed separately by way of lithography. The illustrations in three out of these four editions were prepared by the contemporary master of lithographic illustration, Mirzâ ‘Ali-Qoli Kho’i.46

At the present stage of research, it is too early to supply a qualified assessment of the typographic fonts employed by the various printing establishments. As it has not been possible to conduct a detailed physical inspection of each and every verified item, the following remarks are provisional. All of the fonts used in Persian incunabula have been prepared in the calligraphic style known as naskh. Contrary to books printed in India, no Iranian imprint employing the ta’liq or nasta’liq styles preferred by Persian calligraphers is known to exist. The early printers in Tabriz employed a number of different fonts, and no uniform style is known to have developed. Persian scholars who have criticized the font of the first book, the 1233/1817 edition of the Resâle-ye Jehâdiye as coarse, have praised the font of the book’s second edition dated 1234/1818 as quite appealing. The following item printed in Tabriz, the 1237/1821 edition of Sa’di’s Golestân, was again printed in another, smaller font, covering a printed space of 8.5 × 15.5 cm, with between 21 to 24 lines to the page.

This font, also employed for the 1241/1825 edition of Ma’âser-e solâniye [Fig.7], appears to have been used also for contemporary Turkish language books, such as — to quote but one example — an undated divân of the Ottoman poet Zeyâ’ al-din Khâled Naqshbandî. As has already been mentioned,

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the books printed in Esfahan employed the same fonts as the Tehran chā'āb-e Mo'tamedi, though the line spacing as well the printed space differ from the Tehran imprints. The only Persian incunabula printed in a fairly uniform and easily recognizable visual appearance are those known as chā'āb-e Mo'tamedi. Most texts from the printing establishment of Mo'tamed al-doul regularly cover a printed space of about 13.5 to 14.5 cm with about 30 lines per page; the printed text is usually surrounded by a double frame of two thin lines on the inward and three thin lines on the outward frame. Only the later large size editions of Tūsān al-bokā' cover a printed space of about 16.5 x 26.5 cm framed by a single set of three thin lines, with about 36 lines per page. Only the text of the Mo'tamedi editions of the Qur'ān, of which only the 1242/1826 edition has been verified, employs a larger and fully vocalized font with about 14 lines per page. [Fig. 8]

A final point to be mentioned with reference to the typical layout of the chā'āb-e Mo'tamedi is concerned with the adornment of the first page of a given book. While the first items issued from the Mo'tamedi press would leave the top of the first page blank so that the book's title could be filled in by calligraphy, most books of the later period show an inserted rectangular adornment measuring 13.7 x 6.9 cm. Framed by a space of slanted hatching of about 0.5 cm, this adornment figures a centrally inlaid oval space surrounded by a stylized floral ornament ascending in triangular shape on both sides and encing in a stylized Qājār crown. The resulting triangular spaces on both sides are filled with horizontal hatching and show the royal Qājār emblem of a male lion on each side facing the crown with the upper quarter and the beams of a humanoid sun appearing from behind the lion's back. The inlaid central space of this adornment experienced an interesting development over time. In books printed during the reign of Fath-'Ali Shāh (reigned 1212/1797-1250/1834), it would contain a calligraphic arrangement reading "Fath-'Ali Shāh-e Qājār" or, sometimes, the title of the book, such as in the 1240/1824 edition of Hayāt al-qulūb, where the calligraphy reads "ḥazā ketāb-e Hayāt al-qulūb" ("this is the book Hayāt al-qulūb"). In books printed during the reign of Fath-'Ali Shāh's successor Mohammad Shāh (reigned 1250/1834-1264/1847), the inlaid text of books printed in or after the year 1259/1843 was changed to reading "sharāf dārad bar anbeyá' Mohammad" ("[the prophet] Mohammad is preferred before [all other] prophets") together with the date 1259. [Fig. 9]

In a number of instances, the exact dating of which will have to be checked, the inlaid space is left blank. While the material from which the adornment was printed is not clear, it is most likely printed from a single wooden block. The very same block appears to have been employed with changing inlays, and only at a later date a different block with a similar adornment was used.

In conclusion it may be stated once more that the period of Persian incunabula was an experimental period involving numerous difficulties and failures. Just when printing from movable type was gaining a certain momentum before the middle of the nineteenth century, a number of
socio-cultural reasons contributed to the predominance of the new technique of lithographic printing. More decisive, however, than the traditional adherence to the written – rather than the printed – word, was, most probably, the lacking support of the ruler. The introduction of printing from movable type to Iran is largely due to the personal effort of various individuals, some of them highly influential, but nevertheless without supreme power. In consequence, the death of each of those individuals severely threatened the continuation of the process. After the death of Abbás Mirzâ in 1249/1833, which coincided with the introduction of lithography to Iran, the Tabriz production obviously stopped. The death of Fath-‘Alî Shâh, who had been sponsoring the development of the Tehran printing establishment, just a year later (1250/1834), was followed by a virtual standstill of production for a period of almost ten years. During the fifteen-year reign of Mohammad Shâh, a total of only 14 books were printed from movable type. Mohammad Shâh’s successor Nâseroddin, rather than supporting the technique of printing from movable type, which in the introductory passages of the Iranian imprints was praised for making accessible knowledge, invested tremendous funds in fancy things, such as the production of the six-volume illustrated manuscript of the Arabian Nights. While this manuscript is justly famed as the last outstanding specimen of the art of the book in Iran, the cost of its production amounted to a sixth of the total amount spent to construct and decorate the contemporary multistoried palace in Tehran known as Shams ol-‘emârâ, itself the most sumptuously decorated royal building of the Qajar period.\(^{47}\) While the printing of books from movable type continued after the death of Mirzâ Zein al-‘Abeddin in 1260/1844, the death of Mo’tamed al-doule in 1263/1846 dealt a final blow to the process of printing from movable type from which it was not to recover for almost two decades. While new findings extending our present knowledge cannot be excluded, the production of Persian incunabula apparently came to its end in 1273/1856.


For the abbreviated references to library holdings see note 13. Quoted studies and library catalogues include Bâbâzâde (see note 3); Edwards (see note 9); Mohammad Reza Fazel Hâshemi: Barresi-ye vizhegishâ-ye ketâbâ-ye châp-e sangi-ye mosavvar dar ketâbbkhâne-ye markazi-ye Astân-e Qods-e Rezâvi (An Assessment of the Characteristics of Illustrated Persian Lithographed Books in the Central Library of the Sanctuary of Emâm Rezâ in Mashhad). Thesis Mashhad 1377/1998; Floor (see note 16); Marzolph: Narrative Illustration (see note 3); Nafisi: Nakhostin chahâ-ye mosavvar (see note 14); Shche-Glova (see note 3); Tabâtabâ’i (see note 23); Tabriyat: Mahda-e târik-e Iranshenâsi and Târikh-e ma’âre’ (see note 13). — Items whose physical existence has not been verified are marked with an asterisk (*).
Appendix: A Bibliography of Persian Incunabula

A. Books printed in Tabriz

1. 1233/1817; 'Isâ b. Hasan Qâ'em-maqâm Farahâni: Resâle-ye Jehâdiye; 84 pp.; 10 × 15 cm, 13 lines; printed by Mohammad-'Ali b. Mohammad-Hosein al-Áshtiyâni TKM (BÂBÂZÂDE, no. 1); TARBÂYAT 1934, p. 659; SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 210

2. 1234/1818; 'Isâ b. Hasan Qâ'em-maqâm Farahâni: Resâle-ye Jehâdiye; 76 pp.; 8,5 × 15 cm, 16 lines; printed by Mirzá Zein al-'Ábedín Tabrizi TKM (BÂBÂZÂDE, no. 1*); MAQ; SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 210

3. 1237/1821; Sa'dî: Golestan; 140 pp.; 20,5 cm LBL 757.d.12 (EDWARDS, col. 555); SPIV, no. 1452; SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 210

4. 1240/1824; Sa'dî: Golestan; printed by Mirzá Ja'far TARBÂYAT 1934, p. 660; SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 210

5. 1241/1825; 'Abarrazzâq Najaf Qoli Maftun Donboli: Ma'âser-e soltâniye; [153 fols.]; 8,5 × 15,5 cm, 21 lines; printed by Mohammad-Bâqer Tabrizi TKM (BÂBÂZÂDE, no. 2); LBL 14771.c.1.d.12 (EDWARDS, col. 40); TKMD; TKDA; TKMJII; TKMA; SPIV, no. 49; SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 210

6. 1241/1825; Mohammad-Rafi' Vâ'ez Qazvini: Abvâb al-jehân; [103 fols.]; 12 × 22 cm, 26 lines; printed by Khalil Tabrizi TKM (BÂBÂZÂDE, no. 3); LBL 757.k.6 (EDWARDS, col. 405 [c.1820]; cf. SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 210)

7. 1241/1825; Abu Nasr Faráhi, Nesâb al-sebyân; printed by 'Ali b. (marhum) Mohammad-Hosein Tabrizi TABÂTÂRÂ'î, p. 209 (see FLOOR, p. 762)

8. 1243/1827; Sa'dî: Golestan; 70 fols.; 20 cm; printed by 'Ali b. (marhum) Mohammad-Hosein Tabrizi SPIV, no. 1453; SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 210

9. 1245/1829; Kârmik (Cormich): Resâle-ye ta'lîm-nâme dar 'amal-e ábelekubi; 56 pp.; 14,5 × 18 cm, 17 lines; printed by 'Ali b. Mohammad-Hosein Tabrizi TKM (BÂBÂZÂDE, no. 8); TKMD; LBL 14753.b.5 (EDWARDS, col. 685); SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 210

10. 1246/1830; Sa'dî: Bustân; 150 pp.; 20,5 cm; printed by 'Ali b. Mohammad-Hosein Tabrizi "Amin ash-shar" SPIV, no. 1135; SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 211

11. 1247/1831; Sa'dî: Bustân; 128 ff.; printed by (Ali b.) Mohammad-Hosein at-Tabrizi "Amin ash-shar" LBL 14787.b.20 (EDWARDS, col. 549)

*12. 1248/1832; Borkân-e qâte' MOSHÂR, col. 495; SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 211

*13. 1250/1834; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Jalâ' al-'öyun TARBÂYAT 1931, p. 449; SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 211

*14. 1258/1842; Mirzá Ebrâhim b. Mohammad-Bâqer Jouhari: Tufân al-hokâ' MOSHÂR, col. 2269; SCHCHEGLOVA, p. 211
B. Books printed in Teheran

1. 1239/1823; Mahdi b. Abi Zarr Narâqi: Moharreq al-qolub; châp-e Mo'tamedî. Moshr, col. 2444; NAQIS 1958, 233; SHCHEGLOVA, p. 208

2. 1240/1824; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Hayât al-qolub vol. 1; 331 fols.; 19,5 x 29,5 cm, 27 lines; printed by Zein al-'Âbedin Tabrizi. LBL 14779.h.4 (EDWARDS, col. 457-458); TKT; MAQ; SPIV, no. 172; SHCHEGLOVA, p. 208

3. 1240/1824; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: 'Eini al-Hayât; 268 fols., 29,5 cm; printed by Mirzâ Zein al-'Âbedin. SPIV, no. 349; SHCHEGLOVA, p. 208

4. 1240/1824; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Jalâl al-'lûm; 290 fols.; 21 x 30 cm, 27 lines; printed by Mirzâ Zein al-'Âbedin. LBL 14779.h.2 (EDWARDS, col. 458); TKT; MAQ; SPIV, no. 172; SHCHEGLOVA, p. 208

5. 1241/1825; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Hayât al-qolub vol. 2; 447 fols.; 19,5 x 29,5 cm, 28 lines; printed by Mirzâ Zein al-'Âbedin Tabrizi. TKDB; TKMD; TKMJ; MAQ; SPIV, no. 172; SHCHEGLOVA, p. 208

6. 1241/1825; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Haqq al-yaqin; c.273 fols.; 14 x 23 cm, 27 lines; printed by Mirzâ Zein al-'Âbedin Tabrizi. TKM (BÂBÁZÂDE, no. 4); TKMD; LBL 14712.h.1 (EDWARDS, col. 457); SPIV, no. 350; SFGU IO 115; SHCHEGLOVA, p. 208

7. 1242/1826; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Zâd al-ma'âd; printed by Mirzâ Zein al-'Âbedin Tabrizi. MAQ; SHCHEGLOVA, p. 208

8. 1242/1826; Mohammad-Hasan b. Bâqer Sâheb Jâvâher: al-Tahâra; 125 fols.; 10 x 16 cm, 20 lines; printed by Mohammad-Esmâ'îl. TKM (BÂBÁZÂDE, no. 5)

9. 1242/1826; Qor'ân; 29,7 x 20 cm; 236 + 2 pp., 14 lines; printed by Mirzâ Zein al-'Âbedin. TKMJ

10. 1244/1828; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Zâd al-ma'âd; 179 fols.; 14 x 23 cm, 28 lines; printed by Mirzâ Zein al-'Âbedin. TKM (BÂBÁZÂDE, no. 7); TKMJ; MAQ; LBL 14718.h.1 (EDWARDS, col. 459); SPIV, no. 621; SHCHEGLOVA, p. 209

11. 1245/1829; Mohammad-Ebrâhîm b. Mohammad-Hasan Karbâ'si: Eshârât al-'osul; 281 fols.; 14,5 x 22,5 cm, 28 lines; printed by Esfandiyâr-Khân, Mirzâ Zein al-'Âbedin Tabrizi. TKM (BÂBÁZÂDE, no. 9); TKDA; TKMJ; TKMD; MAQ

12. 1247/1831; Mahdi b. Abi Zarr Narâqi: Moharreq al-qolub; 202 fols.; 13 x 22,5 cm, 26 lines; printed by 'Abdarrazzâq Esfahâni, Mirzâ Zein al-'Âbedin Tabrizi. TKM (BÂBÁZÂDE, no. 14); MAQ

13. 1247/1831; Qor'ân. SHCHEGLOVA, p. 209 (referring to DORN in MÉLANGES ASIATIQUES 5, p. 509)

14. 1247/1831; Mohammad-Bâqer b. Mohammad-Taqi Shefti Esfahâni: So'ai va javâb; 162 fols.; 14 x 23 cm, 28 lines; printed by 'Abdarrazzâq Esfahâni, Mohammad Khalîl Esfahâni, Mirzâ Zein al-'Âbedin Tabrizi. TKM (BÂBÁZÂDE, no. 13); TKMD; TKMA; MAQ; SPIV, no. 626; SHCHEGLOVA, p. 211; LBL 14716.c.1 (EDWARDS, col. 458)

15. 1248/1832; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Hayât al-montaqin; 159 fols.; 18 x 22 cm, 28 lines; printed by Esfandiyâr-Khân and Mirzâ Zein al-'Âbedin; bound together with no. 16. TKM (BÂBÁZÂDE, no. 15); TKMD; TKT; MAQ; SPIV, no. 785; SHCHEGLOVA, p. 208
16. 1248/1832; Hosein b. 'Ali Abu l-Fotuh Râzi: Resâle-ye Hasaniye; 29 fols.; 18 × 22 cm, 28 lines; printed by Esfandiîr-Khân and Mirzâ Zein al-'Abedin; bound together with no. 15 TKT; SPIV, no. 364; SICHEGLOVA, p. 208
17. 1248/1832; Mohammad-Bâqer Mahlesi: ‘Ein al-hayât; 188 fols.; 13 × 23 cm, 30 lines; printed by Esfandiîr-Khân and Mirzâ Zein al-'Abedin TKM (Bâbâzâde, no. 16). TIKMD
18. 1254/1838; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: ‘Ein al-hayât; 268 fols.; 13 × 23 cm, 30 lines; printed by Mirzâ Zein al-'Abedin and Esfandiîr-Khân TKM (Bâbâzâde, no. 16); SPGU OSH 582; SICHEGLOVA, p. 209
19. 1254/1838; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Zâd al-ma'âd; 114 pp.; 14 × 20 cm, 22 lines; printed by Mirzâ Zein al-'Abedin and Rostam-'Ali TIKMD
*20. 1258/1842; Qorical TARBÂYAT 1934, p. 661; SICHEGLOVA, p. 208
21. 1259/1843; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Haqq al-yaqin; 266 fols.; 14 × 23 cm, 30 lines; printed by Mirzâ Zein al-'Abedin Tabrizi TKM (Bâbâzâde, no. 4). TIKMJ; TKT; SPGU O1U 185; SICHEGLOVA, p. 209
22. 1259/1843; Mohammad-Ebrâhim b. Mohammad-Hasan Karbâsi: Nokhbe; [83 fols.]; 9.5 × 15.5 cm, 23 lines; printed by Mirzâ Zein al-'Abedin TKM (Bâbâzâde, no. 17)
24. 1259/1843; Mirzâ Ebrâhim b. Mohammad-Bâqer Jouhari: Tufân al-bokâ'; 207 fols.; 19 × 29.5 cm, 29 lines; printed by Rostam-'Ali Tehrâni MAQ
25. 1260/1844 (date printed fol. 200a as 0621); Mirzâ Ebrâhim b. Mohammad-Bâqer Jouhari: Tufân al-bokâ'; 220 fols.; 14.5 × 23.5 cm, 29 lines; printed by 'Abdalkarim TKM (Bâbâzâde, no. 18). TIKMJ1; MAQ
26. 1260/1844; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Hayât al-qolub vol. I. LBL 14779. h. 4 (EDWARDS, col. 458)
27. 1261/1845; ‘Atâ’allah b. Hosâm Vâ’zâr Haravi: Rouzat al-majâhedin = Mokhtâr-nâmâ; 183 fols.; 13.5 × 23 cm, 28 lines; 8 illustrations, probably executed as engravings; printed by 'Abdalkarim TKM (Bâbâzâde, no. 19). LBL 14773. h. 7 (EDWARDS, col. 136). SPIV, no. 219; SICHEGLOVA, p. 209
28. 1261/1845; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Hayât al-qolub vol. I; 14.5 × 22.5 cm, 29 lines; printed by Mohammad-Esmâ’îl TKM (Bâbâzâde, no. 20)
29. 1261/1845; Mirzâ Ebrâhim b. Mohammad-Bâqer Jouhari: Tufân al-bokâ'; 182 fols.; 21 × 30 cm, 32 lines TIKMD
31. 1262/1845; Mohammad-Bâqer Majlesi: Jalâ’ al-‘oyun; 290 fols.; 14 × 22.5 cm, 28 lines; châp-e Mo’tamedî TKM (Bâbâzâde, no. 21). TKDB. TIKMD; TIKMJ11; LBL 14779. h. 3 (EDWARDS, col. 458). SICHEGLOVA, p. 210
32. 1262/1845; Mohammad-Jâ’far b. Seifâdîn Astarâbâdi: Mâdâ’în al-‘olum; 96 fols.; 11.5 × 19.5 cm, 25 lines; printed by Bahrâm-Beg and ‘Abdalkarim TKM (Bâbâzâde, no. 22). SICHEGLOVA, p. 210
33. 1263/1846; Ebrāhim b. Mohammad-Bāqer Jouhari: Tuftān al-bokā'; 222 fols.; chāp-e Mo'tamedi TKML; TKMD; TKT; LBL 14779.h.6 (Edwards, col. 489)

34. 1267/1850 (date printed as 7621); Mohammad-Bāqer Majlesi: Hayāt al-qolūb vol. 2; 14.5 × 22.5 cm, 28–29 lines; printed by Mohammad-Esmā'il, chāp-e Mo'tamedi TKM (Bābzāde, fo. 20); TKMD; Shcheglova, p. 210

35. 1269/1852; Ebrāhim b. Mohammad-Bāqer Jouhari: Tuftān al-bokā'; 175 fols.; 16 × 27 cm, 35 lines; 11 full-page lithographed illustrations signed by Mirzā 'Ali-Qoli Khō'i; printed by 'Abbālkarim TKM (Bābzāde, no. 23); BSPK; SPGU O 1:196; Shcheglova, p. 210

36. 1270/1853; Mohammad-Taqi b. Mohammad Baraghānī Qazvini: Majāles al-mottaqīn; chāp-e Mo'tamedi Moshār, col. 2891; Shcheglova, p. 210; TKDB.

37. 1271/1854; Qur'ān; 166 fols.; 20 × 31 cm, 17 lines; printed by 'Abbālkarim TKMD; SPGU O 1:184; Shcheglova, p. 210

38. 1271/1854; Mirzā Ebrāhim b. Mohammad-Bāqer Jouhari: Tuftān al-bokā'; 314 pp.; 20.5 × 34 cm, 36 lines; 9 full-page lithographed illustrations signed by Mirzā Hādi and Mirzā 'Ali-Qoli Khō'i; printed by Allāh-Qoli-Khān and 'Abbālkarim MAQ (Fāzel Hāshemi, no. 165; Marzolph, Zur frühen Druckgeschichte [see note 3], p. 266)

39. 1272/1855; Mirzā Ebrāhim b. Mohammad-Bāqer Jouhari: Tuftān al-bokā'; 148 fols.; 21 × 34 cm, 36 lines; 8 full-page lithographed illustrations signed by Mirzā 'Ali-Qoli Khō'i TKMA; private collection (see Marzolph, Zur frühen Druckgeschichte [see note 3], p. 267)

40. 1273/1856; Mirzā Ebrāhim b. Mohammad-Bāqer Jouhari: Tuftān al-bokā'; c. 148 fols.; 21 × 34 cm; 36 lines; 4 full-page lithographed illustrations signed by Mirzā Hasan and Kerbelā'ī Yusufjadid; printed by 'Abbālkarim and Mirzā Bābā Khvānsāri private collection
C. Books printed in Esfahān


2. 1246/1830; Hosein b. ‘Ali Abu l-Futuh Rāzi: Resāle-ye Hasaniye; 69 fols.; 9 × 14,5 cm, 19 lines; printed by ‘Abdarrazzāq Esfahāni, cháp-e Mo’tamed TKM (Bābāzāde, no. 10; see also no. 16)

3. 1246/1830; Mohammad-Ebrāhim b. Mohammad-Hasan Karbāsī: Nokhke; [17 fols.]; 9,5 × 14,5 cm, 22–23 lines; printed by ‘Abdarrazzāq Esfahāni TKM (Bābāzāde, no. 11); SPIV, no. 627; Shcheglova, p. 211

4. 1246/1830; Mohammad-Bāqer b. Mohammad-Taqi Shefti Esfahāni: Vajje; 74 fols.; 9 × 13 cm, 19 lines; printed by ‘Abdarrazzāq Esfahāni, cháp-e Mo’tamed TKM (Bābāzāde, no. 12)

5. 1246/1830; Mohammad-Bāqer b. Naqi al-Musawi “Hojjat al-eslām Esfahāni”: Tōḥfat al-Abrār; 75 fols.; 14,5 × 20 cm, 19 lines; printed by ‘Abdarrazzāq Esfahāni TADM, col. 79; Shcheglova, p. 211

6. 1247–1248/1831–1832; Mahdi b. Abi Zarr Narâqi: Moharreq al-qolub; printed by ‘Abdarrazzāq Esfahāni, Mohammad Khalil Esfahāni SPIV, no. 181; Shcheglova, p. 211

D. Unknown place of publication

1. s.a.; fragment of an edition of Jouhari, Tufān al-hokā; single leaf as fly-leaf in a copy of the 1303/1885 edition of Javâher al-taqul in MAQ, MAQ (Marzolph, Zur frühen Druckgeschichte [see note 3], p. 266)