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LITHOGRAPH VERSIONS OF PERSIAN MANUSCRIPTS OF INDIAN MANUFACTURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

It is a commonly known fact that the early-print book invariably reproduced the form of its manuscript copy. This is true of lithographs as well. The basic method of lithographic printing is that a manuscript text or design was drawn on a smooth surface of specially prepared limestone treated so that special ink or paint adhered only to the text or design to be printed on paper with the help of a simple press. The very method was invented in Germany in 1798 and spread throughout Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In 1816, a lithographic press started to be employed in the printing-office of the Russian General Staff. However, both in Europe and in Russia, lithographic printing remained a subsidiary method of book printing, employed mostly as a means of reproducing works of art.

The lithographic printing, however, took a different turn in Muslim lands, though not everywhere. The Arabs and Turks, who had earlier adopted type-set book printing, recognized the virtues of lithography only partly. As concerns Iran and India, the lithographic method of multiplying texts was phenomenally successful, and producing type-set books was forgotten for several decades. In Iran, a traditional attachment to calligraphy had that effect that lithographic printing took rapid growth. As for India, an additional factor was that lithographic printing permitted the simultaneous production of works in several languages. Nevertheless, lithographic printing did not supersede the traditional method of manuscript production. In Iran and India, for the entire nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, Persian lithographic and manuscript books coexisted.

In modern times, the lithograph book was, in a sense, another form of a customary manuscript. In viewing lithography as a variant of manuscript copies, their basic similarity draws our attention — lithograph books and manuscripts are based on a text, written in pen, on paper, and in the same hands as a manuscript copy. A book printed as a lithograph follows a manuscript in the organization of its material, in the layout of the text on the page, and in the graphic and artistic layout. The same rules, developed over the centuries-long history of the Persian manuscript tradition, were used in the case with lithography. This did not exclude the creative approach to the tradition, the employment of its achievements with certain transformations, and the evident search for new means of expression, from the simple to the elaborately stylized. But these transformations appeared only with the passage of time.

Let us examine the topic on the basis of examples of Persian lithograph books produced in the nineteenth-century India.

Lithographic book printing in India became widespread in the 1840s. Books in Persian were produced in lithograph in dozens of Indian cities, although permanent centres for publishing Persian books existed only in a few places. Throughout the nineteenth century, the most important of these remained Bombay, Lucknow, Cawnpore, Lahore. A significant number of editions also appeared in Delhi, Madras, and Agra. From the 1860s on, the main centre of lithographic book printing became the city of Lucknow, in the Audh principality, where a printing house was created which later grew into the internationally known firm of Munshī Nawal Kishōr (1995 marked the centenary of this outstanding Indian publisher's death).

Lithographic book printing in India reached its peak in the final third of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. One should bear in mind that Persian-language books were also set in India, but it was lithography that was connected with the activities of the Muslim community. A traditional Muslim education included training in the art of *inshā'* — the ability to express one's thoughts elegantly, which presumed a no less attractive form of presentation. Lithography provided a relatively simple and cheap means of producing multiple copies of a manuscript in any language.

As the accounts of contemporaries indicate, the success of lithographic printing in India was exceptional. In the first years of its existence, Indian lithographic books, like other early-print books, completely followed their manuscript copies. Early editions released in Bombay, Lucknow and Cawnpore, even in lithographic presses organized by the English, reproduced the appearance of Persian manuscripts. The reverse side of the first folio carried the beginning of the work, with an unfilled upper part of the page, which is characteristic of manuscripts. Sometimes the publishers' foreword was also present. As for information about the author, title, and place of production, it was, as in a manuscript, provided at the end in a colophon.

However, since lithographic printing spread during the 1830s and 1840s, the culture of European book printing could not but influence local practice. The process by which manuscript copies were transformed into print books, with their rules of graphic design and arrangement of material, advanced quite quickly. Already in the 1840s, in the main