Theion kai hieron evangélion yani incili şerif (Θείον και Ιερόν Εὐαγγέλιον Γίαν Ινδζιά Σεριφ). [Divine and Hieratic Evangelion, i.e., the Evangelion translated into plain Turkish by the writer of the paper Anatoli, Evangelinos Misaīlidis from Kula; and printed to be studied by all Orthodox Christians in Anatolia], 2 vols.

Istanbul, Printing Press of Evangelinos Misailidis, 1865 - 1884
352 pp.; 312 pp., engravings by L. G. Platys; 13.5 x 21 cm.
Private collection

These two volumes contain the Greek texts of the gospels, read on different occasions during the Orthodox ecclesiastical year (from Easter Sunday until Palm Sunday) and their Turkic translation on the opposite page. The first volume contains extracts from St. John and St. Matthew, the remaining parts the respective texts from St. Luke and St. Mark. The Gospels are preceded by short biographies of the Evangelists by Patriarch Sophronios (1863-66), the first volume also includes their portraits. The work is dedicated to the sixteen Orthodox metropolitans of Anatolia.

Karamanlı versions of the Bible had also been published by missionaries. But Mesialidis, fiercely opposed to both «Papists» (Papuçlar) and Protestants, produced his own version where he strives, in particular, to remain close to the original Greek text. In the - Turkish - preface (pp. iv-v), addressed to the above-mentioned Metropolitans, he also evokes other motives: «Although it is an obligation for every Orthodox Christian to own a copy (sures) of it [i.e., the Gospels], one can find them, we do not know why, only in the venerable churches. One may say that not even our religious leaders own a copy of it, let alone the lay people. In the eyes of the non-Christian nations (Milletli gairi isteriye), he continues, this is indeed «very shameful» (pek ayıb).»

Evangelinos Misailidis (1820-1889) from Kula (province of Manisa) was for half a century the undisputed leader of the Turkish speaking Orthodox community. Some thirty percent of the works published in Karamanlı stemmed from his pen. He also reformed the spelling system by introducing diacritical signs. His printing press was located in the Tahtakale neighbourhood. Among his works were numerous translations of French and Greek novels, originally serialized in his paper Anatoli (founded in 1851). His Tamasan dünya ve Çelebi-tar-ı ceşafe (1871-72), after having been reissued in Latin script by R. Anhegger and V. Günayol (2nd edition, Istanbul, 1888), was considered for while as the «first Turkish novel». (Later, it was discovered that it was in fact an adaptation of a Greek novel). It nevertheless led to a renewed interest in the literature of the Turkish speaking Orthodox Christians of Anatolia usually referred to as Karamanli although this term was hardly ever used by the members of the community themselves.

Istanbul, [Typographie et Lithographie Centrales], 1870

380 pp., 13.5 x 19.5 cm.

Library of the Institut für Geschichte und Kultur des Nahen Ostens, Universität München

In the 1860ies and early 1870ies, a number of remarkable books in French were published in Istanbul. Apart from the seminal *Les Turcs anciens et modernes* (1869) by Mustafa Celâleddin Pasha (*alias* Konstanty Borzęcki; 1826-1876), one has to mention, in particular, Charles Miser’s *Soirées de Constantinople*.

The title was presumably inspired from another work, well-known at that time, the *Soirées de Carthage* (1847) by Abbé Bourgade, the first chaplain of the chapel to Saint Louis at Carthage. Whereas Bourgade’s *Soirées* were intended to make Muslims receptive for the message of the Gospel, Miser’s *Soirées*, on the contrary, were meant to defend Islam and its values. At the same time, it aimed at a «regeneration of Islam». In a memorandum submitted to the Grand-Visir Âli Pasha (*Soirées*, pp. 341-363), Miser had insisted on the necessity of a reform of the Arabic alphabet, considered as one of the major causes of «Oriental immobility». This idea was the fruit of his discussions with two prominent exiles from Iran, whose acquaintance he had made in Istanbul, Mirza Ya’qūb Khān and his son, Malikum Khān (1834-1908), a key-figure of Iranian modernism.

Even if the *Soirées* do not seem to have been translated into Turkish, Arabic and Persian, as the author claims in his memoirs, the impact of the book was considerable. Ziya Gökalp (1875-1924), the father of Turkish nationalism, still quotes Miser in his «Principles of Turkism» (Türkiye, Türkler ve Türkçesi; 1923) in one breath with Lamartine, Auguste Comte, Pierre Loti and Claudé Farère.

After an adventurous life spent mainly in the military service, the Alsatian Miser (1832-1904) settled in the Ottoman Capital in 1867 where he started a career in journalism. Another book published in Istanbul, *Au jour le jour*, 1867-1870. *Mélanges politiques et philosophiques*, consists of editorials that had been published previously in the Francophone press. The *Soirées de Constantinople* may be called a best-seller. There were at least six reprints in Istanbul. As the title-page shows, it was distributed simultaneously by booksellers in Paris, Brussels, Leipzig and Leghorn.

The Librairie S.H. Weiss on the «Grand Rue de Pétra» was one of the oldest Western-style bookstores in Istanbul. The Typographie (et Imprimerie) & Lithographie Centrales, located in the same neighbourhood, in the «Rue du Journal», was a sort of government printing press, mainly for publications in French (including the semi-official paper La Turquie founded in 1866). In an advertisement of 1881 it boasts of being the «établissement le mieux monté de tout l’Orient».


JS.

70
Philipp Anton Dethier (ed.): [Kritovoulos, «History of Mehmed II»; no title page] vol. 1 (of 4)

[İstanbul], Typographie et Lithographie Centrales, n.d., (Monumenta Hungarica Historica, vol. XXI, pars 1)
346 p., 16 x 23.5 cm.
Library of the Institut für Byzantinistik und Neugriechische Philologie, Universität München

The «History of Mehmed the Conqueror» by Kritovoulos from Imbros (15th century) is one of the rare Byzantine texts whose original manuscript has been preserved in Turkey. It was “rediscovered” in the nineteenth century by the German scholar Konstantin von Tischendorf (1815-1874), famous for having found the Codex Sinaiticus. Thanks to the Russian ambassador, Count Alexander Lobanov, he was able to see the manuscript in the legendary library of the Topkapi Palace whose holdings had intrigued generations of Western scholars.

Kritovoulos’ chronicle was printed in Istanbul around 1871 by the Typographie et Lithographie Centrales for the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, in the series of the Monumenta Hungarica Historica. The editor, Philipp Anton Dethier (1805-1881), was a German resident, appointed director of the Imperial Museum of Antiquities (Müze-i Himayen) in 1872. He added a variety of other sources concerning the siege of Constantinople including the text of a manuscript preserved in the Monastery of the Holy Sepulchre in the Phanar (see photograph), copied by the Grand Logothete Stavraki D. Aristeidis (1836-1925). The extracts from a chronicle compiled by the learned Phanariot physician Athanasios Komninou Ypsilantis (18th century), known under the title Το μετά της ‘Αλεξανδρείας («The Events After the Conquest»), are particularly noteworthy. This work had also been published in Istanbul in 1870, and has to be regarded as one of the major scholarly publications that have appeared the Ottoman Capital. Sections from Kritovoulos’ «History» were translated into Turkish already in the 1670s. But the best known version is by Paul Canard (1849-1930), deputy for Emin in the Ottoman Parliament in 1908. It was published in 1912 as a supplement to the «Journal of the Society of Ottoman History» (Tarih-i Osmani Encümeni Memalik).

Canard did not use Dethier’s edition (which he had apparently not seen) but that of Carl Müller (Croatulæ Imbratiæ libri quinque de rebus gestis Mehemesiti, Paris, 1870). As a matter of fact, Dethier’s edition has been described as very poor. According to some sources, the printed copies were given to the paper mill for this reason. (Others have put forward political motives). At any rate, very few copies of this Istanbul edition have been preserved. Interestingly enough, however, the English translation of Kritovoulos’ chronicle by Charles T. Rigg (History of Mehmed the Conqueror, Princeton 1954), a teacher at Robert College, is also based on what the translator wrongly calls «the Hungarian edition».

Chinaçi [Şinasi]: Extraits de poésies et de prose, traduits en vers du Français en Turc - Terceme-i manzume. Fransız lisanından türkçeye nazmen terceme eylediğim ba’z-i eş’a ārdır

İstanbul, Ramadan 1287 [beg. 25/11/1870]
14 pp., 19 x 3 cm.
Library of the Département d’Études turques, Université Marc Bloch, Strasbourg.

This small booklet marks a turning point in the history of Turkish literature. It is the first attempt by an Ottoman author to render Western poetry into Turkish verses (i.e. in the classical aruz metre). It contains extracts from several dramas by Racine (Esther, Athalie, Andromaque), poems from Lamartine’s Méditations and Recueillements poétiques, La Fontaine’s fable of the Wolf and the Lamb, the poem «Sur la Mort» by Nicolas Gilbert (1751-1780), and an excerpt from Fénelon’s Télémaque. Şinasi was a meticulous translator: words added and changes in the order of verse lines in the Turkish version are indicated in the printed text with a stroke on top of them.

The writer and journalist Ibrahim Şinasi (1826-1871), one of the most conspicuous figures of the Tanzimat-era, was a pioneer in several fields: the Turks also owe him the first domestic comedy in the Western tradition (Sar evelenmési - «The Poet’s weddings») and the first private newspaper, the Tercémant-i Ahvâl, founded in 1860 in collaboration with Ağh Efendi (1823-1885). Şinasi also deployed considerable efforts to reduce the number of letters used for printing in Arabic script. He spent several years in Paris where he met Lamartine and Littré. Since 1851 he had been a member of the Société Asiatique.

The book exhibited here is the last print of the «Translations of Verse» made during the author’s lifetime. The colophon (p. 14) says: «The Terceme-i manzume was published lithographed (biliografya ile) in the year 1859 of the Christian Era. This second edition was printed by the press of the Tásır-i Efkar». This paper had been founded by Şinasi in 1862. The first edition of the Terceme-i manzume, printed by the press of the Presse d’Orient, a French paper run by the Corsican Marie-J. Giampérye, seems to be extremely rare. After Şinasi’s death, it was reprinted in the «Selected Poems» (Menteşâhâbî-i Es’îr), published by the famous printer Ebüziziyâ Tevfik (1845-1915) in 303/1883 (4th edition, 1300/1883).

1859 is a particularly important year in the history of Turkish letters. The first prose translations from a Western language, Yusuf Kâmil Paşa’s Ottoman version of Fénelon’s Aventures de Télémaque and Münif Efendi’s Mahâverî-i hikâmiye («Philosophical Dialogues»), a selection of conversational pieces from Voltaire, Fénelon and Fontenelle, date from the same year.


J.S.
Les costumes populaires de la Turquie en 1873 –
[Turkish title: Bin ikiyüzdoksan senesinde elbise-i osmanîyye]

Istanbul, Printing Press of the „Levant Times & Shipping Gazette“ 1873
319 + vii pp., 92 illustrations (photographs), 27.5 x 37 cm.
Library of the Département d’Études turques, Université Henri Poincaré, Strasbourg

This famous costume book was published on the occasion of the World Fair held in Vienna in 1873. Its text is in French, only the captions on top of the photographs are in Ottoman Turkish. It was written by „Handy Bey“ (i.e. Osman Hamdi; 1842-1910), the famous painter and archaeologist, who was at the same time a great amateur of photography, and by Marie de Launay, a French engineer resident in Istanbul, who had already been member of the Imperial Commission and the International Jury at the preceding World Fair in Paris (1867).

The book consists of three parts: European Turkey, Ottoman islands (Crete, the islands of the Archipelago, Cyprus) and Turkey in Asia. It shows photographs of both men and women, Muslims and non-Muslims. Its documentary value is enhanced by the fact that it includes pictures from provinces such as Bosnia, Bulgaria or Thessaly, which had to be given up by the Ottomans a few years later. The colotype was produced by a renowned photographer, Pascal Sébah, who had opened a studio in Péra/Beyoğlu in 1857. The Levant Times & Shipping Gazette, whose press had printed the book, was a daily paper which appeared in English and French. It had been founded in 1868 by an Irishman, John Laffan Hanly (1835-1882).

On the occasion of the World’s Fair in Vienna, the Ottoman government had initiated the publication of several books: a surprising volume with the title L’Architecture ottomane was printed with a trilingual text (French-German-Turkish) in Istanbul by the Imprimerie et Lithographie Centrales; a short topography of Istanbul by Philipp Anton Dethier, Constantinople et le Bosphore was printed (also in a German version) in Vienna. But Les Costumes populaires de la Turquie show in a particularly impressive way the high standard of printing attained in the Ottoman Empire at that time. Pascal Sébah, the photographer, even obtained a medal on the occasion of the World Fair. Handy Bey was awarded by the International Jury the Förschritt-Medaille.

The brilliant photographs have been reproduced in many illustrated books. For a while, they were serialised in the Turkish historical journal Tarih ve Toplum. Most recently, Les Costumes de l’Empire ottoman were even reprinted.


J.S.
Alexandre Pacha Carathéodory (tr.): *Traité du quadrilatère attribué à Nassiruddin-el-Toussy (Kitāb shakl al-qāṭītā’)*

Constantinople, Typographie et Lithographie Osmanie, 1891 (1309) 167 pp. (Arabic text; headings in red letters) and 214 pp. (French text), 16 x 24 cm.

Library of the Institut für Geschichte und Kultur des Nahen Orients, Universität München

Alexander Carathéodory (1833-1908), the son of Stephan Caratheodory (1789-1867), who served as the personal physician of Mahmud II and Abdülmecit, was perhaps the best-known Ottoman-Greek diplomat of the 19th Century. His international reputation stems from his performance during the congress of Berlin (1878). Thanks to his considerable diplomatic abilities, he was promoted to minister of foreign affairs. He also served as governor of Samos and Crete. Perhaps less polyglot than his father (who is said to have known some fifteen Western and Oriental languages), he was nevertheless a very cultivated man, well acquainted with Persian and Arabic literature. Like Adesides, he had started his career at the Terzene Oda. In Paris, he presented a thesis under the title *De l'erreur en matière civile d'après le droit romain et le Code Napoléon* in 1869.

Nāṣīr ad-Dīn al-Tūsī (1201-1274), was one of the most versatile Muslim scholars of the 13th Century and one of the greatest mathematicians of his time. In his *Treatise on the quadrilaterals* (*shakl al-qāṭītā’*), spherical trigonometry was dealt with for the first time as a separate subject, and not as an auxiliary science of astronomy. Nāṣīr ad-Dīn al-Tūsī’s Arabic treatise together with Carathéodory’s French translation was published because it was hoped that such scientific researches will be appreciated in the eyes of his successors. The manuscript belonged to the former grand vizier Ibrahim Edhem Pasha (1815-1893), Osman Hamdi’s father, whose interest in science is well known; he donated part of his collections for lectures on natural science at the first Ottoman university (Dumlupınar) and wrote himself articles for the *Journal of Sciences* (*Mecmua-i fünun*; founded in 1861). He also was an honorary member of the Greek Literary Society (Syllogos).

The *Mathau-i asmaniyye* founded in 1285/1868 derives its name from Osman Bey (d. 1893), a favourite of Sultan Abdulhamit II. Thanks to this connection, he enjoyed numerous privileges. For his new printing press at Cemherti Taş he procured equipment, and even foremen and typographers from Germany. The *Mathau-i asmaniyye* was according to a contemporary observer, «sans contredit, la plus belle et la mieux outillée de toute la ville.» (Le Temps, 9 Septembre 1890). Today, the neighbourhood «Osmanbey» in İstanbul bears the name of this famous printer.


J.S.
Jacques Loria: *Les Mystères de Péra*

[İstanbul], Imp. E. Souma & V. Mango, 1897
932 pp., 15 x 23 cm.

Library of the *Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes*, Istanbul

The "Mysteries of Perä" represent the most voluminous French novel ever published in the Ottoman capital. It was issued between 5 January and 16 July 1897 in 56 numbers of 16 pages, published twice a week on Tuesday and Friday. The title is reminiscent of Émile Zola's extremely successful *Mystères de Paris* (1842) which were not only imitated in Europe (by publishing works like *Les Mystères de Londres*, etc.) but also in the Ottoman Empire. There had been, e.g., a Greek novel bearing the same title (*7ά αντίκροπα του Πέρατος; Istanbul, 1889*) and a German version had been serialized in the *Osmannische Post*. Thanks to an anonymous contemporary observer, we are well informed about the impact of Jacques Loria's sensational novel where "Perä" plays, however, a much less important role than one may expect. Nevertheless, *Les Mystères de Péra* were for months the talk of the town, in families, in the theatre, on steamboats — and even in churches! Since the name of the author seemed to be a pseudonym, both the Italian and the Greek community claimed him to be one of their members.

The novel consists of three parts: "Le Pacte ténébreux"; "Le Secret de la Banque;" "Les Revenants". At the end of the first one there is also a table of contents. The title page contains, in Ottoman Turkish, the permission to print of the Ministry of Education (Maârif Nezaret-i celhesi, 1876) necessary and indispensable for any book published, notably under Sultan Abdülhamid II. The price was one silver-piastre (20 centimes) in the provinces and 50 para (25 centimes) abroad. At the end of every installment is the signature of the author in facsimile. This practice, very common at that time, was used to prevent pirated editions. The Press of E. Souma and V. Mango was located in the Pera Pazarı neighborhood in Galata, one of the centres of printing in Istanbul.

The "Mysteries of Perä" and its author are forgotten today. Jacques Loria was in fact a teacher of the Alliance Israélite Universelle who was later involved also in Zionist politics. In his writings, he used various pseudonyms ("Comte de Persignac," "Prünkio Bey"). After the Young Turkish Revolution he seems to have tried a literary comeback. In 1909, a new detective novel by "Prünkio Bey" under the title "The Imperial Treasury of Topkapı Palace" (*Topkapı Hazine-i Hâmayunu*), was announced by the *Imprimerie Française L. Mourikides.* Only one installment of this novel — in Turkish! — seems to have been published. On the title-page, the author figures as the "Beyoğlu Eskiği müsilîfih".

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80
Ketāb-e Nush-Âfārīn-e Gouhartāj

Tehran 1263/1846

81 ff., 15 x 21.5 cm, written space 10 x 18.5 cm, 21 lines, 56 illustrations
calligraphy by 'Ali-Ashgar Tafreshi, illustrations by 'Ali-Qoli Khvā'i
contemporary red leather binding
Private collection

Documentary evidence for the early years of illustrated lithographic printing in Iran is extremely scarce. The first ever illustrated Persian lithographed book is an edition of Maktāb-ī Lūl va Mūyūn published in 1259/1843. It contains four illustrations executed in a rather crude manner. For the years 1260-62, less than a dozen illustrated lithographed books are preserved, such as the first Iranian edition of Kashefi's Ansār-e Soltānī (cf. cat. no. 37) of 1261/1845 and a few popular chapbooks published in 1262/1846. Soon, however, publishers appear to be gaining command of the new technique. Besides, they probably also expected illustrated lithographed books to yield profits. Proficiency in lithographic illustration is documented by the publication of a whole series of illustrated versions of popular booklets such as Chehel Tāzī (cf. cat. no. 41), Dalve-ye Mokhtār, Farhād va Shirin, Hormoz va Gol, Nush-Âfārīn-e Gouhartāj, et Dovd va Qızī-ye Baghdād in 1263/1846. This series marks the date of 1263/1847 as the breakthrough for the new technique of producing illustrated lithographed books in Iran.

Nush-Âfārīn-e Gouhartāj is a romance of love and adventure, a genre that had been popular in Persian literature for a long time and was highly favored during the Qajar period. A well-known example of this genre is the romance of Amir Ansālī (cf. cat. no. 38). The female protagonist of the present romance bears the sweet name of Nush-Âfārīn. She is born to the aging rulers of Damascus just as they are about to fall into despair for having grown old while remaining childless. At the age of 14, the girl's beauty attracts numerous suitors from all over the world, and Nush-Âfārīn falls in love with Soltān Ebrāhīm, the only son of 'Adelshāh, the ruler of China. While the eponymous princess is at first highly self-conscious and active, as the story develops further she is turned into the mere object of the interests surrounding her. At the same time, agency is transferred to the story's male characters demonstrating marital prowess.

The page shown here (fol. 19 b) illustrates a scene at the story's beginning. Nush-Âfārīn while taking a bath has been lifted into the air by a hand that came down from the sky. The readers soon after learn that she has in fact been abducted by one out of three love-stricken Div-brothers (depicted on the opposite page [fol. 20 a]) while talking to the henwife who is still only half clad. In the illustration, Nush-Âfārīn's father Jahāngīr Shāh together with Soltān Ebrāhīm and the other princely suitors succumb to their sorrow. In accordance with traditional style, the artist depicts types rather than individual characters. One can, however, also sense the artist's effort to demonstrate various degrees of emotional affliction.

Nezāmi: Khamse

Teheran 1264/1847

331 fr., 30.5 x 22.5 cm, framed written space 18 x 30.5 cm, 4 columns, 23 lines, plus two columns on the margins, illumination, 38 illustrations within the text, 286 illustrations in the margin
calligraphy by ‘Ali-Ashgar Tafreshi, illustrations by Mīrzā ‘Ali-Qoli Khvā’i
contemporary cardboard binding with leather spine, modest lacquer decoration
Private collection

Just one year after the breakthrough of illustrations in Persian lithographed books, a masterpiece was produced that was to remain unsurpassed. The calligrapher ‘Ali-Ashgar Tafreshi together with the illustrator Mīrzā ‘Ali-Qoli Khvā’i produced the first lithographed edition of the five narrative poems (Khamse) compiled by Nezāmi Ganjavi (died 605/1208). This edition, known as Khamse-ye Tafreshi, is unique in several aspects. It is the first illustrated Persian lithographed book in large folio format, a format that later came to be used predominantly for Ferdowsī’s Šah-nāme (first Persian edition 1265–67/1848–50; cf. cat. no. 38) and the voluminous popular romances and works of a religious nature (cf. cat. no. 39). Moreover, the illustrations in this particular edition set the standard for all subsequent lithographed editions of the Khamse. Furthermore, the large scenes illustrating the text are accompanied by a total of almost 300 miniature illustrations on the outer margin. Here, the artist depicted a wide range of fantastic creatures prompted by al-Qazwīnī’s (died 682/1283) A‘īd ib al-Maḥbūḥat, a book whose first lithographed edition, adorned with more than 300 illustrations prepared by the same artist, was also published in 1264/1847.

The Khamse-ye Tafreshi contains a number of lavishly illuminated chapter headings and adorned corners on almost every page, in addition to elaborate vines incorporating flowers and birds at the end of two of its chapters. As an exception to the typical of lithographic illustration, the edition also contains the illustration shown here, in which the artist portrays in detail the various stages in the development of a lithographed book: (1) distillation of the acid used to prepare the lithographic stone for printing (lower right); (2) preparation of the ink (lower left); (3) cutting and polishing of the lithographic stone (lower left middle); (4) polishing the lithographic stone’s surface (upper left middle); (5) carrying of the lithographic stone to be prepared for printing (upper left); (6) drawing of frames and auxiliary lines (upper right); (7) the actual process of printing.

The scene on the upper margin probably contains a self portrait. The senior person smoking a water-pipe while watching the young man’s technical preparations might represent the mature artist. As a technical aspect of lithographic printing, it should be pointed out that writing and drawing was usually affected on a piece of specially prepared paper which was then used to print a master copy onto the lithographic stone.


U.M.

84
Sâdeq: Akhbâr-nâmé

Tabriz 1267/1850

38 ff., 17 x 27 cm, written space 13 x 21 cm, 18 lines and some diagonally written lines at the upper and outer margins, 83 illustrations
calligrapher unknown, illustrations most probably by Mirzâ ‘Ali-Qoli Khâ’i
contemporary red leather binding with stamped decoration
Private collection

The Akhbâr-nâmé has been compiled by an otherwise unknown Qajar author who mentions his name to be Sâdeq. As far as the proportional relation between text and illustrations is concerned, the Akhbâr-nâmé is the richest illustrated Persian lithographed book ever produced, since on its 74 pages it contains a total of 83 illustrations. Drawing on Islamic and particularly Shi‘ite tradition, the book treats the popular topic of stories of the prophets, known by way of numerous representatives of the literary genres of Qisas al-Anbiyâ and Fâl-nâmé.

Following literary conventions, the book starts with passages of praise and justifies the reason for its compilation. The narrative passages begin by treating Adam’s creation, the Shaitan’s refusal to prostrate before him, and the expulsion of Adam and Eve from paradise. After mentioning Cain and Abel, Is’â (Isaac), Noah and Sâleh, the author treats Abrahâm in some detail. Next he relates the stories of Noah, Lot, Alexander, and the adventures of Joseph. This is followed by Job, Moses, Shaddâd, Bûkh Nisr, Lâqîn, Solomon, the Seven Sleepers (ashab al-kahf), Jonas, Zacharias, Jesus and Saint George. Islamic history begins with the Quranic episode (sura 105) of the elephant-riders being warded off by flights of birds throwing pebbles at them. Next come legends of Mohammed, ‘Ali and the twelve Shi‘ite imams. The book terminates with passages on the day of judgement, the coming of the Antichrist (al-dajîl), the bearded woman the messias will have to fight and, finally, the vision of the torments of hell shown here.

In its lower portion, the illustration reproduced here shows a recently deceased person. According to Islamic custom, the dead body has been buried covered by a rapidly decaying piece of cloth and is now shown as nude. The immobile body as well as the other sinners, some of whom are chained, are being tormented by dragons, snakes, and scorpions. In the background, the flames of the hell-fire create a glowing atmosphere, while at the outer left one of the guardians of hell (mâlekbân-e duze) brandishes his club.

Neither the calligrapher nor the illustrator of this edition have signed their names. Their anonymity is contrasted by the unusual fact that the book’s first illustration even portrays the author while presenting his work to his patron. On stylistic grounds, the present edition may, however, be safely assumed to contain illustrations done by the period’s master illustrator Mirzâ ‘Ali-Qoli Khâ’i (see also here nos. 1 and 2).