

presses of Aleppo (1706–11), Shuwayr (from 1734) and Beirut (1751–53) is especially valuable, as it brings together much information previously scattered in various primary and secondary sources, and presents for the first time a coherent overall picture of this incunabular stage of Arabic printing in the Levant. The last chapter, on the Müteferrika press in Istanbul, 1728–87, covers, for the most part, ground well trodden by others, but is still a useful synthesis of previous accounts. One study, however, which Gdoura seems not to have taken into consideration is Osman Ersoy's *Türkiye'ye matbaanın girişi ve ilk basılan eserler* (Ankara, 1959). This contains important descriptive and analytical bibliographical information on Müteferrika's output to 1742, which is lacking in Gdoura's account; it also deals with the printed maps of the period 1719–29 which were the forerunners of the book-printing venture, and which Gdoura seems to have ignored.

An important feature of the book is the 'Catalogue des livres arabes imprimés au Proche-Orient au XVIII^e siècle' (pp.248–264), arranged topographically, and chronologically under each place. While this falls short of being a full descriptive bibliography—the so-called 'collations' are just summaries of the textual contents—it does provide useful checklists, and is especially valuable in the case of the Syrian and Lebanese imprints. For Müteferrika, however, it is less satisfactory than Ersoy's bibliography (op.cit., V. bölüm, pp.37–45), and contains a number of inaccuracies, especially in the CE equivalents of the Hijrī dates of the books: the very first Muslim printed book, for instance, Vankulu's *Tercüme-i Şihâh-i Cevherî*, bears the date 1 Rajab 1141 (= 31 January 1729), but is assigned by Gdoura to 1728, and similar inexactitudes occur elsewhere. Rather more serious, however, is the anachronistic misattribution of the famous Ottoman history of America (*Tarih-i Hind-i Garbi*), written in the sixteenth century and printed by Müteferrika in 1730, to the Arab historian al-Mas'ūdī. Gdoura is not the first to do this: the fact that parts of the first two chapters, on traditional Islamic cosmology and geography, are drawn, with acknowledgement, by the anonymous Turkish author from two of al-Mas'ūdī's works, evidently caused certain 'bibliographes ottomans' to cite his name as the author—hence the misattribution in Abdulhak Adnan [Adıvar]'s *La science chez les turcs ottomans* (Paris, 1939), which is Gdoura's source (p.215, n.124). The error has also been repeated by Ersoy (op.cit., p.40) and more recently by Alpaz Kabacalı (*Türk yayın tarihi*, 1987, p.36), evidently following Ersoy. Self-perpetuating errors of this kind are, alas, not infrequent in Middle Eastern bibliography and, indeed, historiography.

There are also, throughout the book, many typographical errors, too numerous to list here. Some of these border on the grotesque, e.g. *Zeits Chrifft der Deutschen Margenlandischen Gesellschaft* (p.72, n.6) or even the alarming, e.g. the citation of Bernard Lewis's *The emergency of modern Turkey* (p.75, n.21). But for all that, the book is well set out. After the main text and bibliography of eighteenth-century editions follow 14 pages of facsimiles, giving a reasonable idea of the type-faces and layouts used—it is a pity, however, that no indication is given of original sizes. Some are reproduced from copies in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and others from illustrations in secondary sources. Then come an extensive bibliography of works consulted, and finally indexes of persons, places, 'collectivités' (nationalities, religious groups, etc.) and titles of pre-nineteenth-century Arabic printed books.

This book, despite its shortcomings, is essential reading—and, indeed, an essential reference work—for all concerned with Arabic and Turkish historical bibliography, and that should mean everyone interested in the social and intellectual history of the early modern era in the Middle East.

Note

1. The terms 'Arabic' in this review, and 'arabe' in the book under review, when used with reference to printing, denote the script, not the language.

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ORIENTAL PRESSES IN THE WORLD. By NAZIR AHMAD. Lahore, Qadiria Book Traders, 1985. 272pp., incl. 39 facsimiles. Pak.Rs. 175.—

The title of this book is somewhat misleading: this is not a directory, but a history, and it deals not with printing in all Asian languages, but in just three: Arabic, Persian and Urdu. Nor does it cover proportionately all the countries of the world where those languages have been printed, but

concentrates mainly on Britain and South Asia, with but cursory treatment of other European countries, and only just over one page on the Middle East itself.

The first chapter gives a brief account of the Arabic alphabet and its Persian and Urdu variants. Here the author anticipates later chapters by discussing the origins of Persian and Urdu type-styles; in the course of this he makes the remarkable claim that the term *nasta'liq* was coined by the British orientalist Sir Charles Wilkins in 1780. He also states that the *naskh* types which Wilkins later prepared, in collaboration with William Martin, were never used for Urdu (p.32). In fact, these types were used, with the necessary additions, in a number of Urdu books printed by both Cox & Baylis and Bulner & Nicol in the first quarter of the nineteenth century—books which are described later by Ahmad in Chapter VI.

The origins and early development of Arabic and Persian printing in continental Europe are then covered in the second chapter, comprising just five pages. This account is too sketchy and selective to be of much value, and it is also marred by a number of errors and misconceptions. The text of Pedro de Alcalá's *Arte para ligeramente saber la lengua araviga* (Granada, 1505), was printed entirely in Roman type, not Arabic (p.35), but it does contain a woodcut Arabic alphabet, which is not mentioned here. The first Arabic printed book, the *Kitāb Ṣalāt al-Sawā'ī*, was printed in 1514, not 1517 (p.36), although some copies have a Latin preface with the latter date. The title of the first book printed with Granjon's Arabic types by Domenico Basa at Rome in 1585 was not 'Salamese ben cand Ghadi' (p.36): this is a corruption of the name of the author—Salāmish b. Kandghadī or Kundughdī—and the work is entitled *Kitāb al-Bustān fī 'Ajā'ib al-Arḍ wa-l-Buldān*. Chamberlayne's *Oratio Dominica in diversas omnium fere gentium linguas* (1715) was published in Amsterdam, not 'Upsala, Holland' [sic] (p.37); nor is it a 'Dominican dissertation', but a polyglot edition of the Lord's Prayer; nor were the types for it cast by 'William and Daniel'—it bears the imprint 'Guilielmi et Davidis Goerei' and they used Arabic types of the seventeenth century; furthermore the specimen from it of what Ahmad calls 'Arabic typography', and which he reproduces as Plate III at the end of the book, is in fact an engraved plate (not type-set) depicting Indonesian Jāwī script; and in Plate V the script illustrated, again from an engraved plate, is Maghribī, not Shikasta.

Even the one page devoted to Middle Eastern printing contains errors and dubious assertions. Can Islamic culture really be said to have been 'inadvertently hostile to Arabic printing' (p.38)? It is not true that the Qur'ān was 'never printed in any Muslim country except by means of lithography' (p.39). The earliest beginnings of Arabic printing in the Muslim world are traced back to the Tabriz banknotes of the thirteenth century, but no mention is made of the earlier block-prints of Qur'anic texts from Fatimid Egypt, although they are described and illustrated by T.F. Carter in the book cited by Ahmad in his footnote. The long-discredited assertion that Mūtefferika's types were imported from Holland is also repeated here. Finally, 1825, instead of 1822, is given as the date when regular Arabic printing started in Egypt. It is also remarkable that, although Persian printing is a major concern of this book, its development in Iran and elsewhere in the Middle East is omitted from this account. Nevertheless the author does later remark (Chapter IV, p.66) that 'it is amazing to note that Persian printing did not commence in Iran until 1850'; it would be, if it were true, but in fact the first Persian printed book from Tabriz dates from ca. 1817, and many more were printed there and in Tehran before 1850.

Chapter III deals with the history of Arabic and Persian printing in the UK to the mid-nineteenth century. The author has clearly done more research on this, and there are fewer errors than in the preceding chapter. He has unearthed some (but not all) of the same information which I have presented in my fuller account published in this *Bulletin*, 12 (1985), pp.12–32. Nevertheless, he fails to identify the earliest use of Arabic types in England—London, 1635—nor does he mention here the name of John Selden, who was the real pioneer in this field. He repeats Krek's erroneous attribution of Bishop's types to Oxford. It is also hardly correct to call William Caslon 'the first prominent Arabic printer in the country' (p.45): Bishop, Flesher, Roycroft and the Oxford and Cambridge presses in the seventeenth century all preceded him, and in any case Caslon was a type-founder, rather than a printer. Ahmad's account of Caslon would have benefited from a perusal of Johnson Ball's very full study of his life and work, published in 1973. In one matter, however, this chapter adds significant new information: this concerns Vincent Figgins, who around 1800 cut and cast a *nasta'liq* fount, which was subsequently used by a number of printers of Persian texts in London in the early years of the nineteenth century, including Samuel Rousseau, whose types I stated in my article (p.22) to be 'of unknown provenance'.

The remaining six chapters deal with Persian printing in South Asia, and Urdu printing there and in Europe. Here the author seems to be on firmer ground, and the result represents the fruit of

much research into the books, types, printers and scholars involved. One long chapter is very properly allocated to the development of Urdu lithography, which almost completely displaced typography in the second half of the nineteenth century. The final chapter is devoted to the 'Scottish genius' J.B. Gilchrist, who was a pioneer in promoting the study and publication of Urdu among British scholars and administrators in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

It must be remarked that the author is not entirely at home in English, and this results in a number of infelicities, *non sequiturs* and somewhat obscure passages throughout the book. This problem, however, almost pales into insignificance compared with the horrors of the book's typography. Gross misprints occur on virtually every page. What can one say when one finds the German incunable printer Reuwich transmuted into 'Renwick' (p.35), Granjon into both 'Granjor' and 'Granjou' on the same page (p.36), Leipzig into 'Lifaric' (p.37), *Ayyuhā al-Walad* into 'Ayyubia-al-Walad' (p.37), *Shooulue Ishq ... edited by W.C. Smyth* into 'Shoula-i-Ishq ... edited by W.C. Symth' (p.96), and so on and on? Then one finds a whole batch of footnotes missing, nos. 1–20 on p.131. Surely the author's study of typographical history ought to have brought home to him the importance of proof-reading.

This book has been reviewed here at greater length than it might appear to merit. But full-length studies on Arabic-script printing history are so few and far between that any newcomer must command serious attention. This one, however, cannot be recommended as a general history of the subject. Only on Persian and Urdu printing in South Asia does it add enough to the existing corpus of knowledge to outweigh its serious defects of presentation.

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AL-ŠIHĀFA AL-ISLĀMIYYA AL-JAZĀ'IRIYYA MIN BIDĀYATIĤĀ ILĀ SANAT 1930.
LA PRESSE MUSULMANE ALGÉRIENNE DE 1830 À 1930. By ZĀHIR IHADDĀDIN
(ZĀHIR IHADDADEN). Algiers, Entreprise Nationale du Livre, 1986. 53, 51pp. DA17.50.

This little work will be useful to scholars of Algeria. In his 21-page introduction in French the author defines his terms in a somewhat prolix manner; the Arabic introduction covers more or less the same ground. He divides the press into five categories: the official press, the colonial press, the 'indigenophile' press, the indigenous press, and the national press; of these the colonial press is not covered by this list. Apart from *al-Mubashshir* 1848, the list begins in 1876, ending in 1931. Most papers were short-lived, and published in Algeria, with one or two from Paris. The survey stops *circa* 1930, the year that saw the birth of a nationalist Algerian press whose principal demand was the country's independence. The literature on the Algerian press is reviewed in detail; a major study on the Muslim press has still to be made. This Bibliography covers only the holdings in the Bibliothèques Nationales in Paris and Algiers. Let us hope that one day it will be expanded to include the collections of La Direction Centrale des Archives Nationales d'Alger, and of libraries in Tunisia, Morocco and Cairo.

Many collections in Europe and the Arab world are in an advanced state of disintegration, and restoration has to be undertaken or completed as a matter of urgency. Since national libraries are giving this task low priority, librarians should be urged to persuade the Arab League to finance this operation, before this valuable source for Arab political, cultural and social history is lost. The author rightly laments the fact that the press is rarely used by scholars as a source of documentation. The Bibliography itself is short, covering 29 papers in French and 41 in Arabic, of which 14 are French and Arabic versions of the same newspaper though the collaborators differ. It covers periodicity, language, number of pages, size, name of the press, address, dates of appearance and closure, names of proprietors, editors, and contributors, political tendencies and campaigns. There are indexes of titles, proprietors, editors, etc., and places of publication. There are several discrepancies between the fiche numbers given in the Arabic and French sections: is *al-Akhbar* 1160 or 11160, *Le Sada* Fol. II 10 or Fol. 10, *El Misbah* J.O. 14.834 or J.O. 14334? With so few entries, the Bibliography would have been of more value, had it included the issue numbers of the periodicals held.

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