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**PhD Thesis Proposal**

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**Visual Public Sphere of the Late Qajar (1848- 1925)**

**and Early Pahlavi Period (1925-1945)**

# **Proposed Table of Contents**

The following is a tentative plan of chapters.

**Introduction:**

This dissertation investigates visualizing Iran through the circulated visuals of periodical from late Qajar and early Pahlavi period. The source of inspiration for writing this proposal is my supervisor professor Tavakoli-Targhi who introduced me to the vast visual archive of Iranian historical materials from his own archive as Tavakoli archive. The chapters are the thematic categorization on the subject that are more circulated in the visual archive with the essential scrutinization in the Iranian history. My main purpose for writing this thesis is to show how the visuals narrate the history. The public sphere is seen as a domain of social life where public opinion can be formed, and this has showed its importance through visual public sphere of the late Qajar to the early Pahlavi period. I will investigate my chapters from visuality and Persian print culture, women in the visual public sphere, popular politics and visualizing Iran, and Iran and the world.

**Chapter1: Visuality and Persian Print Culture**

My aim for this chapter is to examine how early print culture published visuals, and the historical aspect of mass publication in a period in which the illustrated lithographed books connected us to the arrival of the press in Iran. I will investigate how Qajar lithographs do not portray a public, but an official, courtly, and private sphere whom ordinary people were deprived of being illustrated in different images. By the emergence of printing press, 1232/1817[[1]](#footnote-1), Iranian visual public sphere shifted into a new and compelling form that one of them was the visuals of the normal people in the press. In fact, the male and female citizens were illustrated in the press routinely. This motivated the public to engaged with reading the press more actively. I will present how the Iranian visual culture moved from manuscripts, early books to later books publication that gains to visualize the ordinary people entered the scene by the publication of the newspapers. This chapters examines the visual design of newspaper and the importance of this investigation to show the gradual transformation of the visuals from one period to another which is the foundation for Iranian visual public sphere.

**Chapter 2: Women in the Visual Public Sphere**

The Iranian public sphere as it sought to define itself with a vocabulary which had been determined by the European experience, and it was in this space that women started to be experienced partly what it was dictated to them and partly what it was improvised by them. This chapter shows how images that specifically portrayed the responsibilities of the women in private and public sphere. How to do the house chores, how to wear simple clothes as to be luxurious, how to secure the future of their own job, and how to work with the men shoulder by shoulder. These are the subjects that would circulate in the newspaper and tried to make the women conscious in an environment that they would live and survive. The depicted image for the women has an educational and awareness role. There are several points are needed to be considered: I tried to define the position of women in the visuals especially before Constitutional Revolution, how these figures are in exchange with their surroundings, how their role has been defined, and finally, how the position of women determined the notion of modernization and nationalization. a meaning for the Iranian women, to be independent and to be financially prudent.

**Chapter 3: Popular Politics**

The late Qajar and early Pahlavi periods in Iran were times of significant political, social, and cultural changes. Caricatures from these periods provide valuable insights into the public discourse, especially concerning politics. Chapter 3 looks at two important satirical visual characters that are increasingly illustrated in a political context: one is mother nation (mādar vatan), and the other is millat (nation). These symbolic characters do not stand alone in the caricatures; they frequently interact with other symbols and characters, particularly the most important ones, such as state or the government. In most instances, the state’s agents—such as members of parliament, state representatives, senators, or state guards—are depicted more frequently than the Shah, the chief power. It seems the Shah's power operates as a shadow behind these agents.

The aim of this chapter is to understand the formation of the figure of mother nation and nation within the visual public sphere, and how their connection has been depicted and shaped as satirical character in relationship with the state. Also, what is the implication of these symbols, and how they get unfold in political debate.

**Chapter 4: Iran and the world**

Iran and the world show the foreigner relationships with Iran and how Iran has gained or lost during the Constitutional Revolution, the First and Second World War, and with the upcoming of the Cold War. The following events have fundamentally affected the process of Iranian policies with the US, Soviet Union, Britain, and Germany: The Constitutional Revolution (1905–1911), Iranian Nationalism, Third Power Policy[[2]](#footnote-2), Tripartite Treaty[[3]](#footnote-3). This helped the foundation of the Constitutional Revolution with an awareness for national awakening, political and economic independency, and policy-making process.[[4]](#footnote-4)

A variety of subject matters were circulated through the graphics of the Cold War in Iran: communism, the presence of the superpowers in the country, the issue of the oil nationalization, and the presence and role of the people, the foreigner agent as a rival to the country. Part of public debate is that the position of Iranian in the world, and how the issues are related to the position of Iran was replicated in the printed material survival of Iran, and the situation of Iran in socio-political and economic crises.

1. Philipp, and E. G Browne, *The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia*. Welt Des Islams 3 (3/4): 1916. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ever since 1927, when the American advisers withdrew from Iran, Riza Shah had cultivated the involvement of Germany instead of United State, partly as a counterbalance against the traditional rivalry of Great Britain and Russia. United State became the consultants of Iran according to the “Third-Power Policy” after Germany. Ramazani, Rouhollah K. 1975. Iran's foreign policy, 1941-1973; a study of foreign policy in modernizing nations. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia.25. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. In January 29, 1942 the Tripartite Treaty was signed between Muhammad Reza Shah and the alliance. According to this treaty, a number of the requests were demanded from the alliance, including the full access to “railways, roads, rivers, aerodromes, ports, pipelines and telephones, telegraph and wireless installations. They also acquired an assurance of co-operation in obtaining materials and recruiting labour, and in the maintenance of censorship controls. Sanghvi, Ramesh. 1969. *The Shah of Iran*. New York: Stein and Day. 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ramazani, Rouhollah K. 1966. The foreign policy of Iran; a developing nation in world affairs, 1500-1941. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia. 77-81 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)