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**Mohsen Ehteshami (Moḥsen Eḥtešāmī). *Logo-hā-ye maṭbū'āt-e dowre-ye qājār / Logos of Iranian printed media in the Qajar period***

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# Mohsen Ehteshami (Moḥsen Eḥtešāmī). *Logo-hā-ye maṭbū'āt-e dowre-ye qājār* / *Logos of Iranian printed media in the Qajar period*

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Mohsen Ehteshami (Moḥsen Eḥtešāmī). *Logo-hā-ye maṭbū'āt-e dowre-ye qājār* / *Logos of Iranian printed media in the Qajar period*. Tehran, 1391/2012, 214 p., over 600 ill.

- 1 Filling a hitherto hardly recognised gap, this compact volume offers a register of over five hundred newspapers, gazettes, and other periodicals, from the beginning of commercial printing in Iran (1233 h.q. / 1816 c.e.) to the end of the Qajar dynasty. What gives this compilation a heightened significance is that for the first time it surveys them based on their visual layout, as opposed to their literary content, informative value, or political agenda. Accordingly, the bulk of the volume comprises thumbnail-size images of the “logo” (one would prefer to call it as masthead or nameplate) of each publication, arranged in alphabetical order. Each image is supplemented by a short checklist which includes the general alignment of the respective periodical, editors’ name, foundation date, publication frequency, etc. This is why the book comes in handy for reference and comparative analysis and may be used in parallel with standard works on the subject, including those by Moḥammad Ṣadr-Hāšemī and others. The author does not fail to admit that his catalogue is not a fully comprehensive database: titles which were unavailable for photographic reproduction were omitted, just like the full range of logos of the same publication, a limitation which was dictated by the shortage of space. Nevertheless, the rhythmic flow of hundreds of headpieces still impresses on the viewer their rich and so-far badly underestimated variety. Given that the alphabetic order in which the catalogue is presented is just one possible way to

organise the material, the reader will be pleased to find an introductory chapter about other options (i.e., distinguishing between script-only and pictorial mastheads, as well as the printing techniques of lithography and typesetting). Reflecting a recent tendency in Qajar studies, this volume emphasises the need for a technological approach to early Persian journalism instead of an ideological one. Through the rich visual material, it demonstrates the high degree of creativity manifest in early Iranian graphic design. In this respect, the book is a tribute to these little-known printer-calligraphers: they formed a wholly new community of professionals which took the stage to align traditional Iranian visual media with the imported infrastructure of industrialisation and shaped the production of texts and images in an increasingly competitive environment of cultural consumerism.

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## AUTHORS

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