



## The Policy of the first Pahlavi Government in Dealing with the Iranian Repatriates From the Soviet Union

Nasrolleh Pourmohammadi Amlashi<sup>1</sup> | Saeideh Rahmani<sup>2</sup> | Masuomeh Khazani<sup>3\*</sup>

1 Professor of Imam Khomeini International University (RA) Qazvin, Iran

2 Ph.D Candidate in History, Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Department,  
Tehran, Iran

3 Ph.D Candidate in History at Imam Khomeini International University (RA), Qazvin, Iran

\* Corresponding Author Email: khazani213@yahoo.com

### Abstract

Migration is one of the phenomena that Iranian Qajar society has faced since the era of Naser al-Din Shah. The separation of the southern regions of the Caucasus from Iran as a result of the Iran-Russia wars caused these regions to find a different fate from other regions of Iran and become a destination for Iranian immigrants. Most of these immigrants were workers who went to these areas seasonally or permanently due to the existing conditions in Iran as well as better working conditions in these areas. With the extinction of the Qajar rule and the communist revolution in Russia, the level of these migrations has decreased and the migrations have taken the form of returning to Iran. The number of these migrations was such that the Aras border became one of the busiest borders in the world during that period. The establishment of the Soviet communist government and the subsequent change in the citizenship law in this country caused a large number of Iranians to be exiled or forcibly sent to Iran. The Soviet government has taken such measures based on this law. This forced migration and deportation of Iranians residing in the Soviet Union was in line with the policies of population cleansing of the border areas, suppression of ethnic groups and silencing the voices of the opposition. The reason for the increase in the number of exiles in 1317 was the Soviet reaction to Reza Shah's repressive policy against the Iranian communists. In response to this Iranian policy, the Soviet Union showed its displeasure with Reza Shah's dealings with communists and supporters of communalism by deporting 3,500 Iranians living in the Caucasus. It is noteworthy that among the exiles there were many suspicious elements who worked as secret agents and spies of Moscow in Iran. The unemployment of Iranians living in the Soviet Union and their dismissal from their jobs has been one of the most important reasons for Iranians to return to Iran. Spying for the Iranian government is one of the accusations that these Iranians say the Russians have imprisoned and tortured them on. The requests of immigrants to return to Iran and the problems created for them by the Soviet government made the government of Iran provide a suitable platform for their return in order to support Iranian nationals. One of the most important works that took place in the last years of Reza Shah's rule due to the



maximum influx of immigrants and the need to solve their problems and control them was the establishment of the Immigrants Commission on July 8, 1317. Also, among other measures of the government, was solving the problem of obtaining passports and visas for Iranians. The Pahlavi government's decision to exempt immigrants from paying the fine for not having a visa upon entering Iran was despicable. This problem has plagued immigrants when these Iranian nationals arrived at the border without a visa and had to pay a fine, the reason for this was the long process of visa issuance by the embassy in Moscow, and for this reason, the government decided to allow these people to enter Iran simply by holding a legal identity card and not having to pay a fine for not having a visa. Entering Iran is one of the most important concerns of immigrants who decided to return. Non-receipt of customs duties for immigrants' furniture and non-application of entry and employment permits for these immigrants after entering Iran was one of the most important concerns of immigrants who decided to return. How to return immigrants from the Soviet Union to Iran, provide for the expenses of Iranians who went to Moscow and the Iranian embassy in that city to receive passports, provide for the travel expenses of these people and also provide a vehicle for their easy transportation have been requested by the immigrants and also noticed by the Iranian government authorities. In order to solve the livelihood problem of women and children entering Iran, the government has tried to return the men of these families to Iran so that they can provide food for their families, another aspect of the government's support for immigrants and diplomatic efforts to return the seized property of immigrants which was the Soviet Union. Of course, the intention of these immigrants to return has caused concerns for the government of Iran at the time, and the government in some cases suspected that these immigrants and citizens exiled from Iran intended to enter Iran with political and treasonous purposes, the influence of Iranian immigrants on the prevailing ideas in the Soviet Union and the fear of spreading such thoughts by immigrants in Iran has caused restrictions to be applied regarding the entry of these people to Iran and even their employment in some jobs. Also, based on the government's circular dated 1317, these people are not given jobs in government institutions. In the same year, all ministries and institutions under the supervision of the government were ordered to terminate the employment of immigrants in these institutions. Such a decision was related to the discovery of Soviet espionage networks in Iran. As a result, the exiles who were able to find jobs in their exile camps until that day, this possibility was also taken away from them from this date. One of the most important issues and problems related to immigrants is how to control these people. In this regard, the government tried to determine specific places for immigrants to live and deport them, and tried to control and monitor them. However, the large volume of immigrants, the participation of these immigrants in subversive activities and the unfamiliarity of most of these Iranians with the Iranian culture and language caused these immigrants to face many problems to the point that many of these immigrants even returned to the Soviet Union after entering Iran.

**Keywords:** Soviet Iran, Immigrants, Return to Iran, the Pahlavi Rule.

## References

### Books

- Ahmadi, Mahmoud (2004), Iran-Soviet relations during the period of Reza Shah, Tehran, Center for Documents and History of Diplomacy, [in Persian]
- Dehnavi, Nizam Ali (2013), Immigrant Iranians in the Caucasus, Tehran, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Printing and Publishing Center, [in Persian]
- Easavi, Charles (1983), Economic history of Iran, Tehran, Gostareh, [in Persian]
- Ebrahim F, T, A. (1981), The emergence of communism in Iran. Translated by R. Radnia, Tehran, Gunesh, [in Persian]
- Hakimian, Hasan, (1995), Wages and migration: Iranian workers in southern Russia 1880-1931, *Contemporary History of Iran*, [in Persian]
- Ivanov (1978), Iran's constitutional revolution, translated by Azar Tabrizi, Tehran, Shabgir and Armaghan, [in Persian]
- Arutonian, G.S. (2016), Iran's 1905-1911 Revolution and Transcaucasia Bolsheviks, translated by Mohammad Naibpour, Tehran, Humanities Research and Development Institute, [in Persian]
- Jafarian, Rasool (2008), Urban understanding of the constitution, Tehran, Iran Institute of Contemporary History Studies, [in Persian]
- Lenchafsky, George (1972), The West and the Soviet Union in Houra Yavari, Tehran, Ibn Sina, [in Persian]
- Makki, Hossein (1983), Twenty-year history, Tehran, Nasher publications, [in Persian]
- Maraghei, Haji Zainul Abdin (2014). Ebrahim Bey's travel book, with the efforts of M. A. Sepanlo, complete text in three volumes, Tehran, Aghar, [in Persian]
- Rais Nia, Rahim (1978), Aziz and two revolutions, Tehran, Chapar, [in Persian]
- Shakri, Khosrow (2005), The political-economic background of the constitutionalism movement and the development of social democracy in that era. Tehran, Akhtaran, [in Persian]
- Sabahi, Ganj Ali (2010), those days, translated by Behzad Henry, Tehran, Porshad, [in Persian]
- Taherzadeh Behzad, Karim (1984), Azerbaijan Uprising in Iran's Constitutional Revolution, Iqbal, Tehran, [in Persian]
- Valizadeh, Akbar (2006), The Soviet Union and Reza Shah, Review of Iranian-Soviet Relations between the Two World Wars, Tehran, Islamic Revolution Documents Center, [in Persian]

### Journal Articles

- Azari, Shahla, (1993), The immigration of Soviet citizens to Iran (1918-1938), *Document Treasure Magazine* 3 ( 9) 1-19, [in Persian]
- Bayat, Kave, (1995), Soviet immigrants, the first refugee experience in Iran, *Conversation* 7 ( 11) 7-23, [in Persian]
- Demirchi Lu, Mojtaba, (2018), Forced migration and deportation of Iranians



- living in the Soviet Union to Kazakhstan, *Foreign Relations History* 20 ( 80) 25-46, [in Persian]
- Mateni, Jalal, (1996), What Happened to Azerbaijan? *Iranian Studies Journal* 3 ( 31) 441-462, [in Persian]
  - Sadat, S. Mahmoud , Nurai, M , & Mirjafari, H , (2012), Studying the exile of Iranians from the Soviet Union during the years 1926-1941, *Ganjineh Sanad Journal* 23(90) 22-41, [in Persian]

#### Documents

- Archives of the National Library and Documents Organization of Iran, files 310-01381 / 310-108769 / 310-010747 / 310-013256 / 310-009808 / 310-013582 / 310-054180 / 310-108769