



Investigating the Issue of Citizenship and the Role of Marriage in the Citizenship of Iranian and Ottoman Citizens in the Qajar Period (Based on Archival Documents)

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Abstract

One of the fundamental civil and political rights of individuals is possessing the citizenship of a country, which connects a person to their homeland. Throughout history, citizenship has depended on various factors, and in certain cases, it has been either granted or revoked for an individual. Intermarriage was one of the factors that conferred citizenship upon an individual in the respective country. Marriage was considered a sacred institution and served as a means for rulers to maintain connections with other countries, facilitating greater interaction among people. Consequently, during the Qajar period, marriage was a significant factor that could grant an individual citizenship in another country.

Iran and the Ottoman Empire, due to their geographical proximity and cultural similarities, maintained extensive relations that facilitated widespread interactions between their citizens. However, at various points in history, conflicts arose concerning the nationals of both countries. Before the Safavid period, there were multiple motives for the movement of citizens between the two nations, but this trend accelerated significantly during the Safavid and especially the Qajar periods. During this era, special attention was given to the issue of citizenship, and specific laws were enacted to regulate it. Individuals either voluntarily or under compulsion acquired the citizenship of the other country, leading to numerous conflicts and disputes between Iran and the Ottoman Empire. Various factors, such as the pursuit of knowledge, trade, asylum, and marriage, prompted individuals to migrate to the neighboring country. Among these, political and familial marriages became significant factors in migration, prompting both governments to enact laws that were adjusted over time according to the circumstances and interests of both parties.

The issue of citizenship gained increased attention from the Qajar period onwards due to the expansion of international communications and relations between countries. One significant factor that facilitated individuals' acquisition of citizenship was intermarriage between citizens of different nations. This research aims to elucidate this aspect of Iran-Ottoman relations during the Qajar period. Drawing on library resources



and archival documents from Iran, this study seeks to clarify the issue of citizenship and its role in Iran-Ottoman relations. It addresses the question of how marital unions influenced the citizenship status of Iranian nationals in the Ottoman Empire, the conflicts these unions generated between Iran and the Ottoman Empire, and the reactions of both governments to these issues. This research employs a library and archival methodology to examine the general issue of citizenship, the role of marriages, and the impact of these unions on the citizenship of Iranian nationals in the Ottoman Empire. It aims to answer the question of what consequences these marriages and the resulting citizenship of Iranian nationals in the Ottoman Empire had for both countries.

Although numerous books and articles have been written about Iran-Ottoman relations and the foreign affairs of both countries, there has been no independent or separate study on the specific topic of this research. The only related work is the article "An Examination of the Issue of Changing Citizenship of Iranian and Ottoman Nationals and the Reaction of the Iranian Government Between 1900 and 1922 AD / 1317 to 1341 AH Based on Iranian Sources and Documents" by Morteza Dehqan-Nejad, Mina Moeini, and Behnaz Qaed Sharafi. The authors briefly mention marriage as one of the factors influencing the change of citizenship. Most existing historical studies have primarily focused on the mistreatment of Iranian pilgrims and visitors and their citizenship issues as the main points of contention between Iran and the Ottoman Empire, with extensive literature on this subject. Other factors influencing citizenship have received less attention. For example, Reza Dehghani's article "The Legal-Social Status of the Iranian Community in the Ottoman Empire in the 11th-14th Centuries AH with Emphasis on Iraq" addresses this issue. Similarly, Daryoush Rahmanian's article "The Issue of Iranian Nationals in the Holy Shrines After the Treaty of Erzurum and Its Impact on Iran-Ottoman Relations" provides comprehensive information on the number of Iranian nationals in the holy shrines and examines the problems between the two countries and the first and second Erzurum treaties, highlighting their impact on the citizenship of Iranian pilgrims, scholars, and Shiite students.

The distinguishing feature of this research is its focus on marriage—a consistently important aspect of Iran-Ottoman relations—and its role in the citizenship of Iranian nationals in the Ottoman Empire, along with the associated problems and conflicts between the two countries. While the aforementioned studies have briefly touched on this topic, this research provides a detailed examination using the available documents.

The research findings indicate that during this period, the geographical proximity between Iran and the Ottoman Empire facilitated extensive interactions between the two states, resulting in numerous intermarriages. These marriages often led to the acquisition of Ottoman citizenship by Iranians. Citizenship through marriage became a source of conflict between Iran and the Ottoman Empire. Iran consistently endeavored to address these issues, whereas the Ottoman Empire, due to its substantial interests, often neglected to enforce the laws concerning marriage and citizenship that had been enacted.

Keywords: Citizenship, marriage, Iran, Ottoman Empire, citizens.

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