

## **Discourse Analysis of Qajar Socio-Political and Cultural Structure and its Reflection in Religious Lithographic Versions**

### **Abstract**

Political culture is a set of existing attitudes, values, and norms about policymaking and power supporting the whole development process. Political culture is formed during the political and social life of a society and under the influence of various factors such as climatic and geographical conditions, political and social system structure, historical conditions, belief system, customs, economic system and other various circumstances. Ongoing to this procedure, the process of socialization is institutionalized and passed down from generation to generation. In Qajar Iranian society, unhealthy political culture such as patrimonialism political structure, belief in superstitions, magic and destiny were the dominant thought in society and its traces can be traced in travelogues, newspapers and works of writers and thinkers of this period. Accordingly, the present study focuses on the effect of corrupt political culture on the underdevelopment and backwardness of the Qajar period and seeks to answer the question in a descriptive-analytical manner by applying the theoretical framework of Norman Fairclough critical analysis. The findings indicate that political culture, especially in its unhealthy field (superstition) through irrationality, scientism and ignorance, are the causes of underdevelopment in the Qajar period and this issue is well reflected in the religious lithographic versions of the Qajar period.

### **Research aims:**

١. Recognition of the discourse of the political, social and cultural structure of the Qajar period.
٢. Analysis of how the political, social and cultural structures of the Qajar period are reflected in religious lithographic versions.

### **Research questions:**

١. What were the characteristics of the political, social and cultural structure of the Qajar period?

۲. What is the reflection of the political, social and cultural structure of the Qajar period in the religious lithographic versions of the Qajar period?

Keywords: Corrupt Political Culture, Underdevelopment, Patrimonialism, Religious Lithography, Qajar.

## **Introduction**

Political culture is one of the factors influencing the development or underdevelopment circumstances of nations. If culture has its own problems, it is obvious that development will also face problems. As Galbraith addresses this issue in *The Nature of Public Poverty in India*, he follows the assumption that public poverty in India is closely linked to the type of culture being impoverished. In *The Asian Drama*, which chronologically precedes the book, Gondar Mirdal similarly argues in the same country that Asian drama is linked to developmental cultural values. Qajar Iran, which is considered an underdeveloped country in comparison with neighboring and similar countries, with characteristics such as a society with high illiteracy rate, lack of health, lack of safe drinking water and water piping in many Cities, lack of development infrastructure such as roads, asphalt, electricity, hotels and showers, and above all, a multi-development culture, the most important criteria and indicators of which are irrationality and scientism. There was no hope for a step forward in development. Among the various factors influencing the backwardness of Iran in the Qajar period, we can mention superstitions or in other words distance from the three factors of true religion, wisdom and science. In view of the above, it should be said that unhealthy political culture has several elements in which superstition and then decision-making based on superstition is its most important aspect.

By the end of the Qajar period, and especially during the reign of Mohammad Ali Shah, superstitions had become a major player in the world of politics, as both the king and the queen of the world were superstitious human beings. As their ancestor Nasser al-Din Shah used superstitions to solve many problems in the political, social and cultural structure. In the meantime, due to the arrival of the lithography industry in Iran in this historical period, we are witnessing the publication of numerous religious works. Examining this social and religious situation by studying these works can reveal important points about it.

Regarding the background of the present study, it should be said that a recent work with this title has not been written so far, but several articles have examined the lithographic versions and the printing industry in this period. Lari and Najafi (۲۰۱۵) in an article entitled "Characteristics of imagining the lithographic book of Toofan al-Baka with Ashura themes in the Qajar period" has examined the lithographic versions of the Qajar period in terms of images. Toofan al-Bakka is one of the religious books of this period and in a way reflects the religious beliefs of the people in this historical period. The free thinker and unfortunate (۱۳۹۶) in an article entitled "Study of religious issues used in lithographic books with reference to the works in the library of Tabriz" has analyzed the religious themes in this version. In the meantime, he has mentioned the connection between religion and popular beliefs in this period. Hosseini Rad and Khansalar (۲۰۰۵) in an article entitled "Study of illustrated lithographic books of the Qajar period" have studied the structure of these manuscripts. However, in the mentioned works, no attempt has been made to investigate the position of underdevelopment and superstition in these works. An analysis of the causes of the problem of underdevelopment in religious lithographic versions in the Qajar period.

## **Conclusion**

The backwardness and underdevelopment of Iranians is not the product of a direct cause; rather, various and multi-layered causes have been involved in phenomenon over time depending on the conditions and characteristics of the political structure and the people. Various thinkers have spoken in this regard and have stated various explanations. Authoritarian regimes alone cannot be responsible, nor can the people be accused directly for such problems. Relatively, a combination of various issues and problems are the cause of the formation of an insalubrious political culture that has led to backwardness and underdevelopment. In general, what can be deduced from the different chapters of the present study is the fact that the social, political, economic and industrial backwardness during the Qajar period before the Constitution was not merely due to superstition. Hence, according from what is received from the theories of intellectuals, elites, religious scholars, sociologists and philosophers, superstition itself is a type of disability that bears various causes. Numerous opinions emphasize that what causes superstition, destiny and belief in magic is the patrimonialism political structure, the ignorance of government and public officials and the obliviousness, irrationality and unreasonableness of the time. In fact, superstition and the various issues surrounding it were structural superstructures underpinned by other factors. Importantly,

studies show that superstition and the unhealthy political culture emerging before the pre-constitutionalism were first questioned by elites, intellectuals, and religious and political scholars. It is believed that before the time Iranians became acquainted with Europe and its political culture and society, the progress and development of this nation was normal and natural, and the arising problems were not annoying for the society and the elites. It is as if this class of society itself considered these issues (ignorance, superstition and backwardness) to be customary. In fact, it was in meeting with other nations that the backwardness and underdevelopment of Iran and their political and intellectual culture were challenged and many became aware of the depth of this shortcoming.

Iranian superstitions even harmed the Shiite religion, which can lead society to fair and progressive values and reduce its rhetoric to the level of annual rituals and the concepts proposed in the religion as it emptied religion of practical political and governmental manifestation. In this regard, the shortcomings and spiritual betrayals of the government and the court have not been ineffective. Corrupt political culture, which arises from superstition and its various branches, prevented the formation of any discourse based on rationalism and shrewdness among Iranians for many years. The result was the abandonment of scientific and practical solutions in the face of natural phenomena and events and the problems produced by them. With the rise of the Qajars in Iran superstition was able to gain more depth and breadth in Iran; this was due to the fact the Qajars considered themselves lacking sufficient criteria to gain legitimacy, as well as their tribal and nomadic lifestyles, which have long looked at the sky and the position of the stars, and concepts such as the hours of misfortune and the nomadic tribe. According to psychologists, superstitions are born at critical times and moments when there is distrust and uncertainty about the future. For example, in the face of events such as birth, death, disease, famine and poverty, and as a result of failure and anxiety, a person fulfills his desires, needs and emotions in the world of imagination and superstition, and this manifested during the Qajar period. In fact, during this period, long wars for power and expansion of the sphere of influence of princes, tyranny of rulers and the people under them to collect taxes, which lead to the destruction of the economic foundations of society, lack of public institutions in the field of health and treatment purposes, and the widespread prevalence of infectious and deadly diseases, the lack of widespread educational institutions and the consequent high illiteracy rate of society led to superstition and destiny. This cultural situation can be well seen in the religious lithographic versions of the Qajar period.

## Resources:

AbdolRahman Ibn Khadun. (۱۹۸۳). Introduction of Ibn Khaldun, translated by Mohammad Parvin Gonabadi, Tehran: Scientific and Cultural Publications. [In Persian]

Adamit, Fereydoun. (۱۹۷۰). Thoughts of Mirza Fath Ali Akhondzadeh, Tehran: Kharazmi Publications. [In Persian]

Adamit, Fereydoun & Homa Nategh (۱۹۷۶). Political and economic treatises on unpublished works of the Qajar period, Tehran: Agah Publishing. [In Persian]

Adamit, Fereydoun. (۱۹۷۸). Thoughts of Mirza Aga Khan Kermani, Tehran: Payam Publications. [In Persian]

Afshari, Morteza (۲۰۰۷). "Imagination, the founder of iconography in the modern sense", Art Month, No. ۱۰۷ and ۱۰۸, pp. ۴۴. [In Persian]

Afzal al Molk, Gholamhossien. (۱۹۸۲). Afzal al-Tarikh, by Mansoureh Etehadiyeh and Sirous Saadvandian, Tehran: Publication of Iranian History. [In Persian]

Al-Ahmad, Jalal. (۱۹۷۸). In the service and betrayal of intellectuals, Volume ۳, Tehran: Kharazmi Publications. [In Persian]

Arianpour, Yahya. (۱۹۹۳). From Saba to Nima, Tehran: Zavar Publishing. [In Persian]

Asadabadi, Seyed Jamaluddin. (۲۰۰۰). Collection of treatises and articles, by Seyed Hadi Khosrow Shahi, Tehran, Bija. [In Persian]

Azghandi, Alireza (۱۹۹۷). The inefficiency of Iran's political elites between the two revolutions, Tehran: Qoms Publications. [In Persian]

Azghandi, Alireza (۲۰۰۶). An Introduction to the Political Sociology of Iran, Tehran: Qoms Publishing. [In Persian]

Bashirieh, Hussein (۲۰۰۱). Barriers to political development in Iran. Tehran: Gam No Publications. [In Persian]

Bayani, Khanbaba. (۱۹۷۸). Fifty Years of Nasiri History, Volume ۳, Tehran: Alam Publishing. [In Persian]

Benjamin, S-G-W. (۱۹۸۴). Iran and Iranians, translated by Reza Rahimzadeh Malek, Tehran: Golbang Publications. [In Persian]

Blockbashi, Ali. (۲۰۰۲). Falsehood, the great Islamic encyclopedia, b under the supervision of Seyyed Kazem Bojnourdi. [In Persian]

Bruges, Heinrich. (۱۹۹۰). In the Land of the Sun, translated by Majid Jalilvand, Tehran: Markaz Publishing. [In Persian]

Dalmani, Henry René. (۱۹۹۹). From Khorasan to Bakhtiari, Volume ۲, translated by Gholamreza Samiei,

Dave Lafra. M. J. (۱۹۹۰). Iran, Kaldeh and Shousha, translated by Ali Mohammad Farahvashi, Tehran: Khayyam Publications. [In Persian]

Dolatabadi, Houshang. (۲۰۰۰). Zarwan footprint; God of Fortune, Tehran: Ney Publishing. [In Persian]

Dolatabadi, Yahya. (۲۰۰۸). Hayat Yahya, Volume One, Tehran: Ferdows Publications. [In Persian]

Haj Sayyah (۱۹۸۰). Memoirs of Haj Sayyah, by Hamid Sayyah, Tehran: Amirkabir Publications. [In Persian]

Haeri, Abdul Hadi (۱۹۸۰). Geography of Isfahan, by Manouchehr Sotoudeh, Tehran: Publications of the Institute of Social Studies and Research. [In Persian]

Hosseini Rad, Abdul Majid; Khansalar, Zahra. (۲۰۰۰). "Study of illustrated lithographic books of Qajar period", Fine Arts, No. ۲۲, pp. ۸۶-۱۱۷. [In Persian]

Iransky, Tria Pavlovich. (۱۹۷۸). Iranian Constitutional Revolution, translated by M. Hoshyar, Tehran: Pocket Books Company. [In Persian]

Jahuda, Gustav. (۱۹۸۴). Psychology of Superstitions, translated by Mohammad Naghi Barahini, Tehran: New Publication. [In Persian]

Khavari Shirazi, Mirza Fazlullah. (۲۰۰۱). History of Zolkarnain, by Nasser Afsharfar, Tehran: Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance. [In Persian]

Mahwan, Fatima. (۲۰۲۰). "Folklore in illustrated lithography by Nooshafarin Gohartaj", Bimonthly of Popular Culture and Literature, No. ۳۲, pp. ۱۷۴-۱۴۹. [In Persian]

Olivier, Guillaume Antoine. (۱۹۹۲). Olivier Travelogue; Socio-economic history of Iran. Translation: Mohammad Taher Mirza, Edited by: Gholamreza Varhram, Tehran: Information Publishing. [In Persian]

Open, Eugene. (۱۹۸۳). Iran Today, translated by Ali Asghar Saedi, Tehran: Zavar Publishing. [In Persian]

Pollack, Jacob Edward. (۱۹۸۹). Pollack Travelogue; Iran and Iranians, Translator: Kikavous Jahandari, Tehran: Kharazmi Publications. [In Persian]

Pete, Charles Edward. (۱۹۸۶). Travelogue of Khorasan and Sistan. Translation: Ghodratollah Roshani, Zafarani and Mehrdad Rahbari, Tehran: Yazdan. [In Persian]

Tahvildar Isfahani, Mirza Hossein Khan. (۱۹۶۳). Geography of Isfahan, by Manouchehr Sotoudeh, Tehran: Publications of the Institute of Social Studies and Research. [In Persian]

Torabi Farsani, Soheila. (۲۰۰۵). Merchants of Constitutionalism and Modern Government, Tehran: Publication of Iranian History. [In Persian]

Upton, Joseph M.M. (۱۹۸۲). A view on the modern history of Iran, translated by Yaghoub Azhand, Tehran: Niloufar Publications. [In Persian]

Zakerzadeh, Amir Hossein. (۲۰۰۹). The story of Tehran, an excerpt from the customs of the people of Tehran, Tehran: Qalam. [In Persian]

Zarinkoob, Abdolhossien. (۱۹۶۷). Two Centuries of Silence, Tehran: Javidan Publishing. [In Persian]

Ziba Kalam, Sadegh. (۲۰۱۸). Tradition and modernity: rooting out the causes of the failure of reforms and political modernization in Qajar Iran, Tehran: Rozaneh Publishing. [In Persian]