

Assaying the Causes and Consequences of Political Marriages in Qajar Dynasty

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Abstract

The current essay examines the issue of marriage in the ruling dynasty of Qajar and analyzes its causes and consequences in relation to the nature of the Qajarmonarchical dynasty. For as a social phenomenon marriage is the root cause of the convergence of various cultures of a community as well as the creation of family institution as the basis for the formation of other social groups. What makes marriage significant in Qajar dynasty is the fact that they are informed of the fundamental role of marriage institution and political exploitation of it. We have sought to answer the research questions and show that the Qajar monarchs' marriages were intended to strengthen the foundations of their influence and converge with the centers of power within their kingdom. As to research achievements, it can be noted that the Qajar government suffered from the lack of legitimacy and basic infrastructure for governing its dominant territory. To achieve these two criteria, they have turned to the kinship ties.

Key words: Qajar, Kinship, Political marriage, Local ruling dynasty, Childbirth

INTRODUCTION

Assaying marriage in Qajar ruling dynasty and its environmental influences forms the basis of this research. Accordingly, Qajar dynasty represents the last example of traditional Iranian rulers who have been able to form a comprehensive government relying on military capability of their own tribe. However, this regime lacked the necessary infrastructure, including permanent military forces and a coherent bureaucracy to dominate its territory. To tackle these deficiencies, Qajar dynasty has adopted the policy of convergence with influential powers within its territory via the arrangement of political marriages. In this way, with these types of marriages, the inner coherence of the Qajar dynasty, which was the bedrock of sovereignty, was preserved, and also these political marriages with the influential local families and the emphasis that was laid on childbirth strengthened their legitimacy. Particularly, by choosing these children as the governors of the

provinces the extension of Qajar government's power to these lands became possible. Moreover, the formation of a harem and bringing wives from various points of the Qajar dynasty's kingdom played the role of a mediator of peace and friendship for the ruling dynasty of Qajar. Besides marrying with influential local families, kinship links were also established with the staff and political agents of the court and the bureaucracy. In this kind of political marriages, the elements of loyalty to the Qajar monarchs and the competence of such agents as Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir, who lacked tribal support, to create the necessary infrastructures of sovereignty of the including permanent and unified army, inclusive and cohesive bureaucracy build the root causes of marriages. But this policy was in conflict with the influence of the local clans, and triggered clashes and interest controversies over power. The importance of the research topic is due to the lack of research in this area. Then the authors have tried to make use of all the available resources and assay the causes of marriage in Qajar dynasty and its impact on the environmental factors of this period, including social, cultural, political and economic conditions. In the context of the current research, it has been attempted to substantiate the basic questions that point to the process of marriage in Qajar ruling dynasty. The research background on marriage in Qajar era, and in particular the ruling Qajar dynasty, is considerably poor, and even the few existing

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cases are concerned with the margins of marriage. The current study is composed of three main sections including 1. examining the causes of polygamy among Qajar kings and their families 2. the marriage of Qajar ruling dynasty with the leaders of the local families 3. marrying political elite and the general public which are explained and analyzed as follows.

POLYGAMY OF QAJAR MONARCHS AND RULING DYNASTY

In the early days of the establishment of Qajar Regime, there were very few loyal forces to be appointed by the central government to rule this vast area and take over the management of the important bureaucratic offices. Even regime was not wholly confident in these few loyal forces. To provide the required human resources, thus, Qajar leaders propose a plan of polygamy and multiple childbirths. As the concept of marriage suggests, it can be regarded as a social contract based on the consensus between men and women and, consequently, between two social groups with common or different values and norms that is supposed to contribute to the survival of society through childbirth and effective regeneration (Farzad, 1993: 28).

These multiple marriages hit thousands during the reign of Fath Ali Shah. These progeny of Qajar monarchs were appointed to provincial government at an early age. And with this strategic move, reliable rulers were chosen for many provinces of Iran within a few years. Insofar as by choosing Abbas Mirza, the son of Fath Ali Shah Qajar as the crown prince and appointing him to the Azerbaijani government, this Qajar prince also appointed his four children to the governments of Kermanshah, Fars, Khorasan and Mazandaran provinces. (Lambton, 2012: 181). The marriage of Qajar princes in their childhood is known as the crown marriages (Shahid Thani, 2016: 45).

This form of marriages that were arranged for Qajar princes in their childhood and Qajar kings at an early age contributed to the formation of the family institution, growth of population and, consequently, of fertility in the ruling dynasty of Qajar (Delrish, 2017: 25). In addition to permanent marriage, temporary marriage was also used for childbirth in Qajar ruling dynasty.

“Lady Keshwar’s husband was the servant of the King for a long while. He was very wretched. He was hired in telegraph house, and after a while he was sent to Tabriz telegraph office. He had a girl from her former wife. This girl was chosen for Etezzad al-Saltaneh (Mohammad Ali Shah Qajar). The girl got engaged

with the crown prince in the name of the daughter of the woman who was free and the grandson of Haji Abbasgoli Mirza Ibn Khaqan. She got pregnant by crown prince. Now he has the title of “Etezzad al-Saltanah” and is six years old. Their affairs are good now. When the crown prince married the daughter of Nayeb al-Saltanah she was divorced, and she is living with his son in the monarchical court. The king loves his son and he is the beloved of the hearts. He is now in Tehran. He might be our future monarch” (Eyn al-Saltaneh, 2001: 1052).

In latter example, we are informed of the way that temporary marriage was arranged for the male progeny of Qajar dynasty and the childbirth in this type of marriage. The appointment of the male children of the king to political offices, is clear from the above example. This gives rise to the question of how these young children could rule a vast province such as Tehran, Isfahan or Tabriz. It must be said that the appointment of children to the Provincial Governments was only a symbolic political and psychological action in order to show the domination of Qajar ruling family in the provinces. And there were a number of monarchical agents by crown princes who undertook the managing affairs. In 1860, Kamran Mirza, the son of Naser-al-Din Shah, was appointed to Tehran’s government at the age of eleven. Pashaykhan Amin al-Mulk, {the head of the state house of assembly} was Kamran Mirza’s deputy and undertook the administration of affairs. In fact, the deputy of Prince and other agents and public officers managed the affairs of the central government as well as provincial affairs (Eyn al-Saltanah, 2001: 32). And the mothers of princes were seen in a lot of cases that moved to the provinces under the authority of their children following the king’s death or divorce from him to supervise the governorship of the province due to the immaturity of their children. Insofar as the mothers of Fathali Shah and Naser-al-Din Shah played a key role in their arrival to the power (Moezi, 2008: 175). The Qajar government assigned the recruitment of elite forces and managers for leading the key and important provinces as well as the management of the important military and bureaucratic offices to the male progeny of the monarchs. Polygamy and keeping a large number of wives in a place called the *harem*, along with multiple childbirths, this important issue was addressed (Polack, 1982: 163). Although childbirth and the need to assign them to significant strategic positions in the country were the key reasons for polygamy. The outbreak of various diseases that took the lives of children also led to the promotion of multiple marriages and childbirths. But multiple marriages and polygamy allowed the childbirth and fertility to continue to survive (Eyn al-Saltanah, 2001: 1042). There was also a third factor involved in

the multiple marriages of Qajar kings, in addition to two factors of childbirths and their appointment to important positions in the government and the immunization of children against the illness. And this third factor was having the support of the elite and various tribes and clans living within their vast territory. And to prevent their rebellion by establishing marital relations, kinship and blood ties with these elites, as well as collecting a harem of wives for Qajar kings who are from these provinces and tribes. When these tribes turned to insurgency and disobedience, these women were used as mediators for peace building depending on from which clan or region they come. And the king's wives played a vital role in the implementation of king's intentions towards the consolidation of the Qajar government's social base as well as its political position in the Qajar community. Insofar as in the clashes of the central government with the governors of the provinces or controversies of Qajar tribes with each other, each woman depending on her family ties and bondages was chosen as a government representative to resolve the dispute. Insofar as in the early days of the reign of Qajar dynasty, Agha Muhammad Khan of Qajar, sent her wife Asiyah who was the widow of his late brother Hussein Qoli Khan Jahansooz, with a lot of gifts and presents to Astrabad, the fatherland of the Qajar tribe, to unite the several branches of Qajar (Saravi, 1992: 166). Furthermore, with the formation of harems and the keeping of wives from the influential local families in it, many people are assigned to important government positions which served as a leverage in the hands of the Qajar government in exerting pressure on local elders when they turned to disobedience.

MARRIAGE PATTERN IN QAJAR MONARCHICAL DYNASTY

Intra-Tribal Marriage

Even after coming to power and establishing a government ruling over their vast territory, Qajars retained many of their tribal habits. And these tribal traditions and rituals served as the ruling laws. Among these traditions, one can refer to the intra-tribal marriages. And believing in the superiority of their tribe-mates over other tribes and clans of Iranian society. Insofar as they considered the marriage from non-Qajar tribes away from the dignity of Qajar dynasty (Eyn al-Saltanah, 2001: 1022). Qajar monarchs rule preferred to follow intra-tribal marriages. (Agha Muhammad Khan the first king of this dynasty, married to his brother's widows Golbakht Khanum and Maryam Khanum.) (Azhdoddoleh, 2009: 78). These types of intra-tribal marriages have often occurred in Qajar dynasty. This type of marriage has been a prominent example of unity among many tribes of Qajar tribes that sought to maintain their power over their

territory. This type of marriage had a vital role in unifying the tribe and numerous clans of Qajar dynasty. Since Qajar dynasty was composed of nomads who depended on livestock breeding they needed tribal unity for acquiring a pasture for their cattle, as well as plundering other tribes. And it was these intra-tribal marriages that provided the tribal unity (Shamim, 2004: 21). This mode of thought was of wide prevalence when Qajar dynasty and Qawanlou clan were struggling to reach power under the leadership of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar (Sepehr, 1958: 185). By analyzing this, it can be said that the Qajar kings were from the Qawanlou tribe. They arranged a number of marriages with another powerful tribe from the Qajar dynasty, namely, Dawalou. They struggled to strengthen the intra-tribal relationships and win the support of the powerful Dawalou tribe and prevent from the possible rebellions. By this intra-tribal marriage, they secured both objectives. Although Qajar monarchs' wives/women were numerous and had affiliations with the heads of tribes and clans of Iran, the women who came from the Qajar dynasty were of higher status, and could be chosen as the queen (Kasakowski, 1977: 161). At the early days of Qajar regime during the reign of Aqa Mohammad Khan Qajar until Fathali Shah Qajar, i.e. the era of the formation of the Qajar government in their territory and the period of the fighting to defeat the tribes of the regions of Iran. The marriage of royal family was more inter-tribal and particularly most marriages were arranged between two Qawanlou and dawalou tribes and even when Fath Ali Shah's girl had decided to marry one of the non-Qajar government agents the heads of Qajar clans objected her decision (Eyn al-Saltanah, 2001: 1022). And they considered the extra-tribal marriage a shame for Qajar tribe. The study of inter-tribal marriages among Qajar shows that most marriages have been permanent. Though based on Shia jurisprudence the Qajar monarch could only have four permanent wives, he was allowed to marry a new woman when one of his permanent wives died. Then, there was a heavy competition between Qajar tribes in choosing the queen (Estaeen al-Saltanah, 2001: 1022). It was from among these permanent wives that Qajar Queen was selected. Queen is the crown princess's mother and the next king of Qajar government. The crown princess's mother played a significant role in supporting her son in power and also defeating her child's rivals. The Queen was also of an effective role in resolving the internal conflicts of the Qajar kings. Insofar as in 1790 Aqa Muhammad Khan Qajar sent Asiyah the Queen of his court to Mazandaran and invite Ja'far Qoli Khan to Tehran, who was angry at his crowned brother due to sparing him the rule of Isfahan. Aqam Mohammad Khan cheered up his brother via Asyah and invited him to the government of Isfahan (Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 148).

Extra-Tribal Marriages

By the establishment of Qajar regime in Iran, we are witness to an expansion of a kind of marriage in Qajar ruling dynasty, which was of lower record before this event, i.e. extra-tribal marriages. Being aware of the social effects of marriage as a long-standing social tradition that has given rise to the first and the smallest social institution, i.e. family, which in turn bring about blood and kinship relationships among different groups of the society, with goals including the fulfillment of social, economic and cultural concepts in a society (Cohen, 1377: 127), Qajar family decided to establish relationships with the influential clans and tribes of Iran. They hoped to be able to jointly shape future generations based on the dominant beliefs of a society through social capital of marriage and, based on their values and beliefs (Good, 1973: 21). Insofar as the first example of such marriage took place during Fath Ali Shah's reign, i.e. the marriage of Hajj Mohammad Hussein Khan Sadr Isfahani's son, the third Chancellor of Fath Ali Shah with Sultan Khanum, the daughter of Fath Ali Shah Qajar (Etemad al-Saltanah, 1988: 1480). In this marriage and other similar marriages of Qajar monarchs and their descendants, with elites from non-Qajar tribe, we are witness to the protest of the leaders of Qajar tribe. And Qajar tribal chiefs have stated that this kind of marriage with non-Qajar individuals and families abases (the royal stature of monarchy) (Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 65). Now, in interpreting this phrase, it can be said that the royal stature is the very the tribal mores of Qajar Tribe in the intra-tribal marriage that the chiefs of the Qajar tribe demanded for a superior share in this governmental domain. This kind of marriage threatened the important position of the Qajar beneficiary tribes. Then the prevalence of extra-tribal marriages of Qajars has been a strategy for decreasing the power of the Qajar tribes and earning the support of other indigenous peoples of Iran. So, the idea of tribalism in the sense of the superiority of Qajar tribes over other native tribes in Iran, that triggered serious disputes among the members of the Qajar dynasty and the leaders of other clans, continued to exist until the end of Qajar regime. Qajar kings' marriages with non-Qajar elites were all temporary. This type of marriage contract is discontinued. To put it otherwise, in this marriage, unlike the permanent marriage, the time limits for the marriage are determined in advance. Temporary marriage and having multiple wives was more prevalent during Qajar regime, and following it in the court of governors throughout Iran. (In addition to his permanent wives, Aqa Muhammad Khan had numerous temporary wives in the court.) (Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 78). Temporary marriages, like permanent marriage, were arranged under the clerical authorities in the royal court, observing all traditions and rituals (Mostofi, 1964: 378). In temporary marriages in Qajar kingdom, the term of

validity of the marriage contract has been reportedly 90 years and even 99 years, while the term of temporary marriage can be reduced from a month to one year. The question is that if marriage is temporary, why its validity term is long, and even it can last until the end of the life of the couples. One can say that the prolonged term of temporary marriage is a means to ignore the restriction of four wives in Shia jurisprudence and to pave the way for the implementation of polygamy for multiple childbirth in the Qajar regime. In this type of marriage, the wife receives her marriage-settlement for this period and after this period she has no longer any right with the husband. In temporary marriage after the termination of the marriage term, wife could withdraw from the marriage of the Shah and sign another marriage contract. (Setareh Khanum left the court after the termination of her marriage term and married sheikh Mohammad the son of Sheikh Fars Khan, and she also divorced him and became the wife of Mahdi Moosh, and in 1925 she paid a visit to Holy Shrines of Imams with her husband.) (Etemad al-Saltanah, 1988: 451). Therefore, non-Qajari women who came from different tribes of Iran and married to the king were among the temporary wives of the royal court.

In numerous cases Shah has divorced these women, or upon the expiration of the validity of their marriage contracts these women married the elders of the country with considerable gifts. The rulers of such provinces as Kurdistan and Isfahan, have asked the king to allow them to arrange similar marriages.

The late king divorced the maids of the court and sent them by their jewelry and furniture to Aman Allah Khan's house. Such favors were made to honorable people of such stature. Muhammad Sadeq Khan Garroosi asked such favor from the the King. One of the royal temporary wives was given to him with her jewelry and furniture. She was the mother of Hussein Ali Khan Amir Nizam. Shirin Shah Khanum who was the mother of Moayer al-Mamalek one of the friends of Muhammad Khan and she married Aqa Ali Akbar who became the chief of staff after Aqa Seyyed Esameil (Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 77).

This type of divorce of the women who have been married to the Qajar king can be interpreted as an action taken for furthering the influence of the king in the dominated areas under the leaders of tribes. In other words, by marrying the royal divorced women to the distinguished figures of country, many crew members and step mothers moved to the new court to serve him. The crew played the role of the king's eyes and ears in the new court and provinces. Those prince and princesses who were the results of temporary marriages though their appointment

to important positions could not be the crown prince. This has even been objected to by some powerful Qajar princes. Insofar as Kamran Mirza and Massoud Mirza Zel al-Saltanah the sons of Nasir al-Din Shah never reached the position of crown prince due to their mother's temporary marriage with the King. However, these princes were the favorite sons of the king and more competent than Muzaffaroddin Mirza, the next king of Qajar. In his letter to his mother, Zel al-Sultan insulted his mother and severely criticized her, and wrote that if you were not the temporary wife of the king I could have been the crown prince and then king of Iran. Efat al-Saltanah, the mother of Eftekhar al-Dawlah and Zel al-Sultan, did not belong to the royal family of Qajar, and she was the daughter of Musa Razabeyk and one of the servants of Bahram Mirza, Nasir al-Din Shah's uncle (Judges, 2003: 12). Besides the reasons mentioned above regarding the root causes of the royal marriages with the non-Qajar dynasty we can also speak of the material reasons too. Financial concern is also an important element in the political marriages of Qajar rulers. Insofar as the intra-tribal marriages that were arranged between the leaders of Qawanlou tribe and other tribes, the King should have paid all the costs of the marriage from the state treasury. This imposed a heavy financial burden to Qajar government. ("Abbas-Mirza the Crown Prince of Qajar's wedding ceremony with Galin Khanum was held in a magnificent fashion. "This wedding ceremony was one of the biggest happy occasions in the country, and Iranian people were free for seven days and nights, and they understood the meaning of freedom." All Qajar statesmen and dignitaries were allowed to have fun in whatever way they preferred ((Moe'zi, 2008: 166). All the expenses of this wedding were paid from the state treasury. Polygamy, arranging a private harem for the wives and their children, as well as the allocation of monthly salaries for them and their crew and their dependents, imposed a heavy economic burden onto the government's treasury. While tax was the only government revenue source (Sheel, 1983: 73). This huge expenditure becomes revealed when we think of the number of the wives of Qajar Shah that exceeded thousands, especially during the Fath-Ali Shah era. And the male and female descendants of Qajar kings were also very numerous. Their royal weddings, that were held for days and nights, imposed a huge financial burden to the Qajar court that was numerous financial crises during Qajar Kings' reign. The only revenue source of the court was the state tax that was collected from agriculture, businesses and merchants (Isavi, 1983: 217). As time went by, Qajar government became more interested in marriage with other Iranian tribes, because in addition to the numerous reasons mentioned, which all have been intended to stabilize the position of Qajar regime. One can also refer to the role of financial concerns in expanding this type of marriage. For

example, the rulers of Isfahan and Kurdistan paid Shah gifts that exceeded the amount of their annual tax in return of marrying a woman from the royal family. Moreover, they paid for all the great expenses of the royal wedding ceremony, which lasted for weeks, along with all traditional and religious gifts, as well as a heavy amount of cash (Sarlak, 2010: 113). The wife, too, could have given away to her father all the gifts that were endowed as the marriage settlement (Behnam, 1976: 8). The story of Amanullah Khan, the Kurdish ruler's matchmaking from Fathali Shah's daughter for his son (after receiving the permission by Amanullah Khan to leave the presence of Khaqan (King), who was asked to permit the wedding, the King said: "Goodbye! It was very timely and proper, the governor offered 10 thousand Ashrafi and five trains of mule full of gifts, each of which was equal to one hundred tomans, and he also offered twenty precious rigs. (Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 77). The elders of the country who were witness to the wedding of the ruling dynasty of Qajar have brought many offers with good wishes. The story of the marriage of Zel al-Sultan's daughters with Sarim al-Dawlah. (The families and friends, the neighboring rulers and relatives in this wedding, brought 100 thousand tomans of gifts, jewelry, and so on, and in return they were all recompensed with expensive gifts and presents. (Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 77). In the weddings of non-Qajar noble people even it has been mentioned in some historical sources that they paid the costs of marriage, by borrowing from their friends. (Mooqer al-Saltanah, the son of Nazim al-Saltanah, who was now the son-in-law of the Shah. After the engagement his father take himself away and said I do not have the money. They waited for a while, but nothing happened. The bride was the daughter of Shah. He borrowed money from Nasir al-Dawlah, and now he does not his debt back.) (Ein al-Saltanah, 2001: 1472). In analyzing the marriages of the Qajar kings and expressing the fact that their marriages were deliberately planned and they were all in order to preserve and expand the dominance of the Qajar regime on their territories, it is evident that the ruling dynasty of the Qajar with all classes of society in Qajar era, except the businessmen class. Of course, they also married even with this group of Qajar community. While traders enjoyed a strong financial position and, in many cases, have been sponsors of the government and its elders. But why marriage with this social class is very low by the ruling Qajar dynasty? The reason for this can be found in two factors: one is that the business class lacked a strong social base in the traditional and agricultural Iranian society that took business people to be the lying brokers, then marrying this social class endangered the social status and legitimacy of the ruling dynasty. On the other hand, the merchants' class did not have the privileges of local rulers and that military force. Therefore, following the central government, they could not be benefitted from their power in suppressing

the provinces, and on the other hand, they could easily confiscate the property of merchants in favor of the central government under various pretexts (Flore, 1976: 47).

MARRIAGE WITH THE DEFEATED RULERS OF THE PROVINCES

In their marriages with non-Qajar dynasties, the Qajar kings considered certain principles including building kinship with the heads of the local family from various racial origins in order to pale down their strangeness within the Iranian territory. Hence, the best example of the kinship was the heads of tribes, and especially the families of former Iranian rulers. Accordingly, the types of marriages have been dominated in gaining acceptance for the Qajar government in their territory (Burgushen, 1989: 202). In those areas where various were ruling in the heart of the central government in a free fashion, Qajar government has sought to tame these local rulers with these kinds of marriages and family ties (Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 97). In this way, during the reign of Aqa Mohammad Khan of Qajar, in Khurasan there was discussions regarding the marriage with previous ruling families such as Afshariyah. Insofar as, despite the fact that these former rulers of Iran are defeated but their widows and daughters and sisters married the Qajar princes and Kings:

The late King was noble minded and insisted on the necessity of respecting the noble females. Of course, the sons and male descendants of Nadir Shah were either killed or mutilated due to some concerns or even blinded. One of the daughters of Shahrukh Shah married to the King. His other daughters also married Hussein Qoli Khan King's bother, Fazl Ali Khan and other princes. One of them was also married to Muhammad Qoli Mirza Malek Ara. The mother of Badi Mirza the governor of Astarabad became the wife of king and gave birth to a girl but she did not stay in the court (Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 92).

To justify this type of marriage, one can argue that the Qajar kings sought to have the support of the fans of former Iranian governments that were strongly supported by indigenous peoples and tribes. Insofar as the two previous governments of Iran, Zand and Afshariyah, kept the unity of Iran and had a good record among the people.

MARRIAGE WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNORS OF THE PROVINCES

In Qajar era, powerful groups of society were tribes and their leaders who ruled over the territory under their

jurisdiction in feudal form. These powerful feudal tribes in addition to Qajars included also Bakhtiari, Akkhad, Afshar, Qashqai, Arabs and other tribes who ruled Iranian territory and formed independent states in the heart of central government. And the power of these tribes was important there, with the central government lacking a non-tribal and powerful army. And provided the troops needed to suppress the opposition from the feudal militant forces (Lambton, 2012: 181). And they were the elders of the Qajar era. In addition to the marriage of the Qajar kings and their descendants with the family of the former rulers of Iran such as Afshariyah and Zandieh, they also married with the tribal elders in Iranian provinces and their families. Insofar as even the rulers of the provinces were opposed to the Qajar dynasty, and were subjugated to Qajar power and whose elders were murdered and exterminated. But Qajar ruling class has married their daughters and widows in a ceremony. (When Aqa Muhammad Khan defeated the Arab Qader Khan, he resettled the family in Tehran and engaged his daughter with Babakhan (Fath Ali Shah), who was then eleven years old. "(Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 13). Local rulers also arranged marriages with the central government. With such marriage, their position in the province under their jurisdiction was endorsed by the central government. Insofar as the governor of Kurdistan province, Amanullah Khan, once stated that his son's marriage with the King's daughter has immunized their territory against the possible threats from the neighbors (Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 77). This comment by the governor of Kurdistan reveals that feudal leaders were so powerful that they could attack the territory. Or the central government could provoke the feudal against each other and seize their kingdoms with promise. Now it is only by establishing a kinship with the Qajar ruling family that the loss of local rulers in each province is destroyed (Abrahamian, 2008: 27). To create a sense of obedience in Ahmad Khan the chief governor of Tabriz, Fath Ali Shah married one of his daughters, and also matched his other daughter for his eldest son Mohammad Ali Mirza (Polak, 1982: 161). It has been mentioned in the sources that Fathali Shah Qajar has ordered tribal leaders and powerful men of tribes within his kingdom to marry Qajar princesses (Polak, 1982: 331). Insofar as in line with this marriage policy in the Qajar dynasty sometimes Shah has reportedly married according to culture and customs of the provinces. These intra-tribal and extra-tribal marriages with the governors and chiefs of the provinces show the importance of the rulers of the provinces and the need for their association with the Qajar kings. (It is related that Sultan Khanum, the grandson of Muhammad Khan, who is the mother of Amanullah Mirza, was taken to the court under a mantle, and made the bride of court, and they sent to Jaan Mohammad Khan the message that they are stealing girls from each other! I have brought your daughter according the same law, you ask me my daughters for

your sons, you want to steal, you are free! (Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 88). In the example above, Fath Ali Shah Qajar's marriage with the families of tribal chiefs has been related. These marriages were all arranged according to the tribal traditions.

MARRIAGE WITH POLITICAL AGENTS

Qajar ruling dynasty's marriage with court staff or bureaucratic agents, such as Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir, who were not affiliated to any tribe or clan, can be regarded as a sign of the Kings of Qajar to protect his dependent persons and mercenaries. In doing so, in other words, the king sought to subordinate to appoint loyal people to key positions within the court. The marriage of the daughters and sisters of the ruling Qajar dynasty with the court staff was among the common marriages of the ruling Qajar ruling class. This type of marriage is not due to tribal affiliation or power rather it is out of loyalty and trust in the king and princes of the Qajari. Like Mirza Taqi Khan Farahani, who was the son of chef of the Qajari court, and was appointed as the Chancellor (Adami, 1976: 667). Or Abu al-Fath Khan Sarim al-Dawlah one of the servants of the Qajari court, to whom Massoud Mirza Zel al-Saltanah gave his sister, Kasrael Khanum, and made him minister in the government of Isfahan (Azd al-Dawlah, 2009: 81). Although the family status of these people is often referred to in historical sources, and that they lacked a wealthy family. But due to their loyalty, they were trusted by the Shah and his family and were appointed to important positions by the king's mediation. But in competition with the Qajar leaders and other feudalist attaché of the Qajar regime they have been murdered or overthrown by conspiracies and political plots. Their position is shaken and even murdered (Serana, 1983: 109). Since Qajar regime was considered superior than other indigenous peoples of Iran due to excessive tribalism, we see that when the daughter of Mirza Taqi Khan Farahani, and the sister of Nasser-al-Din Shah is married to Mozafar al-Din Shah by the order of the powerful Qajar woman, the mother of Nasir al-Din Shah, the elders of Qajar protest against and ridicule this marriage. Because her father, Mirza Taghi Khan, is a great cook. His divorce from Mozafar al-Din Shah and the imposition of many charges against him can be seen as examples of opposition from the Qajar chiefs by turning the Qajar kings to political elites such as Mirza Taghi Khan Amir Kabir. Since his father, Mirza Taqi Khan, was the son of a chef. Her divorce from Mozafar al-Din Shah and the imposition of many charges against her can be seen as examples of opposition from the Qajar chiefs by turning the Qajar kings to political elites such as Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir. Moreover, upon the arrival of Mohammad Ali Shah Qajar to power, he faced with

various charges including his non-Qajar origin. Opposition expanded and his kingdom was taken to task. During constitutional movement, these charges were used as a means to undermine his social base. The charges could have been raised by Qajar elders. In opposition to the policies of marriage of the Qajar king's family with the political elite. Their descendants, who were the result of these types of marriages, have not been spared from these objections.

The mother of king does also have a son and a daughter and it is almost twenty years now that she has got divorce from the King and moved to Tehran.... Then she became the wife of Mutamed al-Saltanah the chief commander of Azerbaijan.... She was his wife for a while and after it she divorced him and married Mirza Ali Jan the servant of Husam al-Saltanah (Eyn al-Saltanah, 2001: 1030).

Another example of such protests can be seen in the marriage of Naser-al-Din Shah's sister with Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir. The marriage was ridiculed by the elders of the Qajar dynasty. Moreover, after the death of Nasir al-Din Shah and the arrival of Muzaffar al-Din Shah to power, all the king's wives who were from lower social classes were expelled from the Harem in an inappropriate way (Ain al-Saltanah, 2001: 1022). Marriage with agents and court staff may also be an attempt by the Qajar kings to establish a policy independent of the interference of the tribal chiefs of the Qajar tribes in the government. By killing such court agents as Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir, Sarim al-Dawlah and this policy of Qajar kings in including a third force failed.

CONCLUSION

The current study sought to answer the question that what kind of marriage policies were adopted by the Qajar dynasty. It has been argued that this pattern of marriage was based on political expediency and the policy of preserving the regime's social status inside and outside its territory. Therefore, in order to understand the events of the Qajar government, it is very important to study these types of marriages. By examining their procedures, we conclude that the Qajar kings have provided the elite force for the management of important government positions and the rule of the provinces from among their progeny. It was possible with the multiple childbirth and polygamy and keeping wives and children in the king's harem. The targets of the political marriages of the ruling Qajar dynasty were local communities and political elites. The first target provided the forces needed for maintaining their existing position and the second one, the political elites, sought to transform the Qajar government into a

dominant central government making them independent of the militant force. The Qajar government has been dominant over the balance between these factions, but in case of non-convergence between these forces and the central government, the decay of the power of the Qajar dynasty was evident. Eventually local family overcomes the political elites and subjugates the Qajar kings. Generally speaking, the Qajar government, despite its unsuccessful attempts to establish a central power, can be considered the government affiliated to power centers of its own territory, including local communities, political agents, and clerical influential social classes, which has managed to maintain its power by blood and familial relations. But finally, inefficiencies in balancing these power centers have weakened the Qajar government and even debacled it.

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