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**From Fellows to Foreigners:
the Qajar Experience in the Ottoman Empire**

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Abstract

From Fellows to Foreigners: the Qajar Experience in the Ottoman Empire

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This paper explores the impact of Qajar-Ottoman diplomacy on issues of identity and sovereignty during the late nineteenth century as addressed in the Treaties of Erzurum of 1828 and 1848. Through these treaties, the Qajars and the Ottomans introduced notions of imperial identities, extraterritoriality, and extended their imperial spheres of influence. The Treaties of Erzurum defined subjecthood and sovereignty over subjects based on place of origin, not current location. This radical change in international politics created a new, bureaucratic method of identification. Focusing on the Qajar perspective, this paper proposes that although Qajar subjects had always travelled to the Ottoman Empire for religious or economic reasons, the Treaties of Erzurum in 1828 and 1848 changed Middle Eastern geopolitics by legally allowing the Qajar government to exercise sovereign rights over its subjects.

To better understand the consequences of these new imperial identities and labels, this paper looks at different communities in the Ottoman Empire that shared special relationships with the Qajars. Each of these chapters focuses on their affiliation with the

Qajars and how the Treaties of Erzurum affected them: first, the Qajar travelers, second, the Qajar expatriates, and third, the Ottoman Shi'is. The examination of Qajar government documents, Persian travelogues and newspapers reveals complicated relationships between the Qajars and these communities. Analysis of each provides insight on the Qajar Empire's efforts in fostering a relationship with these communities, as made possible by the Treaties of Erzurum.

This study contributes to a number of narratives involving the Qajar Empire. First, it challenges the weak imagery surrounding the Qajar government and shows the Qajar extension of power outside its borders. Furthermore, this paper engages in the issue of identity, a crucial concept for understanding nascent, pre-nationalist sentiments. Discussion of the Treaties of Erzurum in conjunction with nationalism or imperial power remains overwhelmingly neglected. Although previous scholars have alluded to extraterritoriality in their research, the discourse on subjecthood and identity beyond imperial borders has been ignored in the Middle Eastern context. This study serves as a starting point for future research on the subject.

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Introduction

The Qajars and the Ottomans transformed the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East permanently during the nineteenth century.¹ Prior to the Treaties of Erzurum of 1828 and 1848, the Ottomans and the Qajars identified subjects according to their religious affiliations, regardless of their geographical origin. Both empires had used a similar religious-based system, so traversing the Qajar-Ottoman border did not significantly change the legal status of subjects. Although the Ottomans and Qajars had a long history of signing treaties to resolve border disputes, the status of subjects had not been wholly challenged until the Treaties of Erzurum. The Qajars and Ottomans bestowed imperial political identities upon their subjects—immutable identities that created new expectations of subject-imperial relationships.

Earlier Iranian-Ottoman treaties were written to avoid war and prevent hostilities between the two empires. Border disputes had been a long-standing point of contention between the powers, and the empires drafted and ratified treaties as a means of pacifying tension and preventing war. Treaties signed in 1639 and 1746 addressed border demarcations, settlement of Kurdish nomads, and trade agreements.² These two treaties set a precedent for the Treaties of Erzurum of 1828 and 1848, which were also signed to avert conflict and mitigate the threat of war. The Treaties of Erzurum, however, signified an important change in the diplomatic patterns of Ottoman-Iranian negotiations. For the first time, the treaties addressed sovereignty and subjecthood.³ By defining and discussing imperial subjecthood, these treaties created a new means of conceiving of

¹ The Qajar Empire lasted from 1785-1925, and the Ottoman Empire lasted from 1299-1922. To denote the names of foreign people and places, I used the transliteration guidelines set forth by the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*.

² Bruce Masters, "The Treaties of Erzurum (1823 and 1848) and the changing status of Iranians in the Ottoman Empire," *Iranian Studies* 24, no. 1/4 (1991) 9.

³ See Treaties of Erzurum. *Guzīdah- 'i asnād-i siyāsī-i Īrān va 'U_ smānī : jeld-i aval (1211-1270)*. (Daftar-i Muṭāla 'āt-i Siyāsī va Bayn al-Milālī, 1990) 293, 479.

people. Religious communal identities were made secondary to all-encompassing imperial identities. This change in subject-recognition came with a variety of benefits for Qajar subjects in the Ottoman Empire: state protection, exemption from Ottoman taxes, and representation by consulates that were to be established in major Ottoman cities.

The Qajars and the Ottomans met to discuss and sign the Treaties of Erzurum twice, first in 1828 and again in 1848.⁴ The Qajars and Ottomans brokered the first treaty and signed it independently of European intervention, defining its terms for themselves and their subjects. The British and Russians, who were horrified at the prospect of Qajar-Ottoman diplomatic relations independent of outside regulation, facilitated a second diplomatic meeting to revise the treaty's terms to their liking. At the behest of these European powers, the governments rewrote the treaty with input from the British and Russians.⁵ While the treaties remained fairly similar, the second Treaty of Erzurum differed from the first in one significant way: it granted subjects extraterritorial status in each empire.⁶ With this expansion of extraterritorial rights, Qajar subjects had special legal status that exempted them from Ottoman law. This distinction affected imperial-subject relations permanently.

The Treaties of Erzurum of 1828 and 1848 changed the legal standing of subjects across the Ottoman and Qajar Empires. For the first time in Middle Eastern politics, religious identity was a secondary means of classification. Subjects now belonged to their empire of origin and were legally bound to their birthplace, regardless of where they had travelled to or settled down. This new system required specific institutions and conventions, namely consulates and visas, to regulate the new legal changes. With the

⁴ Because the powers did not sign the treaties at the same time, scholars have failed to come to a clear consensus on the years of ratification.

⁵ As evident from documents in: *Guzīdah- 'i asnād-i siyāsī-i Īrān va 'U_ smānī : jeld-i aval (1211-1270)*. (Daftar-i Muṭāla 'āt-i Siyāsī va Bayn al-Milālī, 1990).

⁶ Ibid, 453.

ratification of the treaties and emergence of these institutions, these imperial governments could now extend their sovereignty over subjects outside of their respective borders. The treaties allowed for a new bureaucratic system of consulates for classifying and monitoring travelers and expatriates, and issuing visas and permits as legal recognition of their foreigner presence. The articles of these treaties permitted new and important imperial identities to be fostered among subjects. By signing the Treaties of Erzurum of 1828 and 1848, these governments recognized imperial associations as the primary means of identifying subjects and their allegiances.

This paper addresses a number of different issues that came to fore during nineteenth century imperial diplomacy. The aims of this paper are as follows. First, this paper outlines the impact of these set identities on imperial-subject relations in an effort to better understand nascent pre-nationalist sentiments. Nationalism changed Middle Eastern political geography, and understanding the contributing factors to the rise of nationalism would help develop a more complete narrative. In addition to analyzing imperial identity politics, this paper also explores the ramifications of the Treaties of Erzurum for extending spheres of influence into foreign territories. This paper analyzes the legalization of international sovereignty over different groups to demonstrate the changes in micro- and macro-politics. These changes came as a result of formalizing allegiances and creating alliances with foreign powers. By considering these different effects of the Treaties of Erzurum, this paper contributes to scholarship on Middle Eastern political history.

For a nationalist movement to gain traction, people would have had to identify strongly with a specific group. The Treaties of Erzurum imposed vaguely-conceived imperial identities on Qajar and Ottoman subjects, and for the first time, these subjects were aligned with a crown and land, as opposed to a simple religious affiliation. Thus, we

can understand the Treaties of Erzurum as catalysts for people viewing themselves as part of a greater entity, such as an empire or a nation. The Ottoman *Hatt-i Sherif* of 1839 had a similar effect when it declared all Ottoman subjects as equal citizens, rendering the Ottoman *millet* system irrelevant. The Treaties of Erzurum acted much like this Ottoman *firman*, but the treaties affected a much larger population. The Treaties of Erzurum not only affirmed the spirit of the *Hatt-i Sherif* and extended its properties to the subjects of the Qajar Empire as well.

The Treaties of Erzurum are significant in their long-term influence on international diplomacy and politics in the Middle East. In many ways, the Treaties of Erzurum can be compared to the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648.⁷ Both discussed issues of imperial sovereignty, changed international law, and served as a basis for the rise of the nation-state.⁸ Although the Treaty of Westphalia preceded the Treaties of Erzurum by a few centuries, the effects were quite similar in the long term. While the Treaty of Westphalia has been a popular subject of discussion when discussing modern international law, the Treaties of Erzurum have been largely excluded from these conversations. The shift from Islamic law to a European legal model represents a new perception of legal status in the Middle East, a drastic move away from tradition. In the third chapter on Shi'i communities in Iraq, other examples will also be provided to demonstrate how secular law trumped traditional Islamic law during the late nineteenth century in the Middle East. One cannot exaggerate the importance of the Treaties of Erzurum in replacing a supreme religious identity with a secular, imperial one.

⁷ The Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 ended the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) and is often viewed as a changing point for European international politics.

⁸ For further reading on the Treaty of Westphalia and its impact, refer to Lauren Benton, "From International Law to Imperial Constitutions: the Problem of Quasi-Sovereignty," *Law and History Review*, 26, no. 1 (2008), 595-619.

In regards to international sovereignty, the Qajars and the Ottomans agreed to allow each other to establish consulates in their empires that handled local affairs and reported their activities to officials in Tehran. While these consulates were meant to deal with the affairs of local subjects and travelers, they often exerted power to increase their influence in the region. Prior to the Treaties of Erzurum, imperial sovereignty ended at political borders. After the Treaties of Erzurum, however, the Qajars and Ottomans had to negotiate their sovereignty over different groups within their jurisdiction and share responsibility for various affairs, especially religious undertakings.

The Qajar Empire provides an interesting perspective on the study of extraterritoriality and sphere of influence, especially because of its notorious reputation as a weak dynasty in Middle Eastern history. Despite having controlled Iran for over a century, the Qajars are rarely given credit for maintaining regional stability. Historians have presented the power of the Qajars as limited to within the limits of the capital city and is assumed to have been heavily dependent on tribal and foreign support.⁹ One cannot expect an empire with such a weak infrastructure to have played a significant international role. For an empire to have affected geopolitics, it would have needed extensive political infrastructure within and outside its borders. With the exception of scholarship written by Anja Pistor-Hatam, Johann Strauss, and Fariba Zarineba, this level of infrastructure has been largely ignored in Qajar historiography. The works of these scholars served as important references for this project.

Thus, this paper will demonstrate the ability of the Qajar government to wield power in a significant manner in regions outside of its jurisdiction. In this study, I focus on the effects of the Treaties of Erzurum on the Qajar Empire, its subjects, and the

⁹ For more on Qajar political history, see this book Ann Lambton, *Qajar Persia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988).

changes in the imperial-subject relationship that ensued. Doing so will demonstrate the extent to which the Qajars had a hand in local politics and affairs, changing both the lives of the locals and the nature of their relationships with their subjects. Although the Qajars did not officially recognize their subjects as “citizens” until the Constitutional Revolution in 1906, this particular form of subjecthood resembled citizenship. After the Treaties of Erzurum, subjecthood was understood to be a legal status that followed an individual regardless of their location in a particular empire.

To better examine these relationships, they will be divided here into three categories. These categories are ordered by the level of complexity of the relationship with the Qajar rulers, beginning with the most straightforward one. Qajar consulates, as permitted by the Treaties of Erzurum, had multi-faceted roles in the Ottoman Empire and affected various individuals depending on their association with the Qajar Empire. By focusing on the different roles of the consulates, this paper presents analysis on the consulate’s range of work and flexibility when dealing with different groups of people. Each of these communities—the travelers, expatriates, and Shi’is—represent a different role of the consulate, as permitted by the Treaties of Erzurum.

First, I consider the most basic of Qajar extraterritorial relationships: the government’s attitude towards Qajar travelers and pilgrims. These subjects ventured into the Ottoman Empire for brief periods of time with the full intention of returning to Iran. These people had no desire to leave Iran permanently and were often traveling for religious purposes or trade. The Treaties of Erzurum had guaranteed the protection of Qajar subjects and had required non-Ottoman subjects to carry visas to legitimize their presence in the empire. Qajar travel to the Ottoman Empire became an increasingly bureaucratic process. By requiring various stops at the consulates for legal verification of documents, the bureaucracy fortified Qajar imperial-subject relationships. The Qajars

were able to instill a sense of identity in their subjects by creating a dependency amongst them for traveling purposes. By doing so, Qajar subjects who traveled outside Iran were constantly reminded of their legal affiliation with the empire.

Second, I examine the Qajar expatriate communities in the Ottoman Empire, especially those who settled in Istanbul. Even though they had emigrated out of Iran, expatriates had a more defined and prominent relationship with the Qajar government than travelers who had only temporarily left Iran. Slightly more removed from Iran than travelers, expatriates were also required to carry legal residency permits designating their foreign status. In contrast to the travelers, however, the expatriates derived their sense of identity from more than these legalistic bonds. Instead, expatriates established thriving communities in larger Ottoman cities and forged their distinct identity in tandem with the Qajar consulates. By founding schools, publishing newspapers, and hosting religious ceremonies, the expatriates created a cultural community that, at times, relied on the help of consulates to function properly. Even though these expatriates had chosen to live outside of the Qajar Empire, they rejected assimilating into the Ottoman Empire and maintained Persian-language resources for their communities.

Third, I consider the Ottoman Shi'is, especially those who lived in the Iraqi region. The relationship between the Ottoman Shi'is and the Qajar government is interesting because it challenges two assumptions. First, it rejects the notion that the Qajars were too weak to divert their focus away from their internal affairs. As the third chapter will show, the Qajars were fairly involved in the local politics of the Shi'i communities under Ottoman control. Second, it questions the importance of a national versus religious identity during the nineteenth century. Although the Treaties of Erzurum affirmed Qajar sovereignty over Qajar subjects, it is clear that the government still viewed itself as a protector of all Shi'i interests. To serve these interests, the Qajars

provided legal and financial support for these Shi'i communities to ensure their success and protect their ability to practice freely under Ottoman rule.

The complexities of the Qajar approach towards extraterritoriality demonstrate that the Qajar Empire capitalized upon its ability to affect international politics. Each of these chapters will focus on analyzing these relationships in their different capacities to answer the following questions. First, how did the Qajar government interpret its responsibilities to each group? How did each of these groups view the Qajar government? And what do these relationships say about the nature of nineteenth century international politics? To answer these questions, I have used a variety of primary sources, including travelogues, newspapers, and government documents. These sources include the perspectives of both the groups and the government, allowing for a better understanding of the nuances on both sides of each relationship.

This project is meant to be a starting point for a better understanding of Qajar-Ottoman diplomatic history during the nineteenth century, which laid the foundations for the many political changes that followed the downfall of both of these empires. By considering the precursors to later nationalist movements, such as issues of identity and the privileging of secular law over religious law, this paper presents the Treaties of Erzurum as a major factor in changing the Middle Eastern landscape. The imperial-subject relationship between the Qajars, travelers, expatriates, and an outside community demonstrate the extent to which the Treaties of Erzurum affected different populations living in the Ottoman Empire during the late nineteenth century. By addressing an underappreciated topic of study, this project provides a foundation for future research on these important and monumental changes in modern Middle Eastern history.

Qajar Travelers in the Ottoman Empire

The Ottoman Empire had long enticed many Qajar subjects to venture through their lands for economic and religious reasons. It is difficult to identify individuals who traveled solely for trading purposes, since most who embarked upon the arduous journey visited holy sites as well.¹⁰ The Ottoman Empire housed Mecca, the holiest of holy cities for Muslims, which attracted tens of thousands to the Kaaba for pilgrimage rites every year. According to Islamic tradition, economically able and healthy Muslims were required to complete pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lifetimes, an obligation that motivated Qajar subjects in traveling across borders despite the many trials they would face during their journey. Other cities were of importance as well, Medina, the resting place of the Prophet Muhammad, and smaller shrine cities associated with the Shi'i imams. The most significant of these shrines are located in Najaf and Karbala, the resting places of Imams Ali and Husayn, respectively.¹¹ Because the majority of Qajar subjects adhered to Shi'ism, traveling for lesser pilgrimages to these cities was a common choice as well. While pilgrimage and travel remained luxuries limited to the higher echelons of society, their proximity to the Qajar Empire made them more accessible to a wider population than would otherwise be the case. This chapter will describe and analyze imperial and subject perspectives as expressed in government documents, travelogues, and other sources to better understand how each viewed their allegiance and responsibilities toward each other.

Out of all Qajar subjects, the Treaties of Erzurum addressed and affected travelers into Ottoman territory the most directly. Article seven of the Treaty of Erzurum signed in

¹⁰ Anja Pistor-Hatam, "Merchants, Pilgrims and Refugees: Iranian Shiites in the Ottoman Empire," *Religious Refugees in Europe, Asia, and North America; 6th-21st century*, (2007), 236.

¹¹ Shi'i Muslims consider Ali, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, to be the first Imam, and Husayn, the Prophet's grandson, to be the third Imam. Najaf and Karbala are located in present-day Iraq.

1848 specifically addresses the Qajar travelers and their safety in traveling for pilgrimage to the Ottoman Empire.¹² By including this, the Treaties of Erzurum changed the terms for crossing Qajar-Ottoman borders, and promised safety and dignity to anyone who tried to cross through. Travel between the two empires was not unique to the nineteenth century, but the circumstances under which they occurred were distinctly different than was the case prior to the treaties. First, the Treaties of Erzurum recognized the travelers from the Qajar Empire as subjects of the Shah and under Qajar sovereignty. Qajar travelers in the later nineteenth century carried identification papers that served as the equivalent of visas or passports—a new and modern convention that was disorienting to many travelers unaccustomed to summing up their identities on a piece of paper. Another major point in the Treaties of Erzurum covered the rights of pilgrims, especially their right to be protected from excessive taxation at the hands of the Ottomans.¹³ The Qajars and Ottomans had brokered earlier treaties that called for the protection of pilgrims and broached the subject of unfair taxation.¹⁴ The Treaties of Erzurum, however, and the acknowledgement of foreign status and granting of the right to establish embassies, allowed the Qajars to maintain a stronger presence in the empire. Now, the Qajar state could more easily track the offenses against its subjects and lobby Ottoman officials on their behalf. Although the Treaties of Erzurum forbade the Ottomans from harassing travelers, many, as we shall see in this chapter, accused the Ottomans of taxing them multiple times throughout their journey. Altogether, the treaties had a significant effect on the government-subject relationship during the nineteenth century, an effect that was especially felt by Qajar travelers in the Ottoman Empire.

¹² *Guzīdah-’i asnād-i siyāsī-i Īrān va ’U-smānī : jeld-i aval (1211-1270)*. (Daftar-i Muṭāla ’āt-i Siyāsī va Bayn al-Milālī, 1990) 453.

¹³ Bruce Masters, “The Treaties of Erzurum (1823 and 1848) and the changing status of Iranians in the Ottoman Empire,” *Iranian Studies* 24, no. 1/4 (1991) 9.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

THE TRAVELER PERSPECTIVE

Information gleaned from travelogues provides greater insight on travelers' opinions and relationships with the government. While by no means perfect sources, travelogues constitute an important and rather common literary genre during the nineteenth century.¹⁵ Forays into the Ottoman Empire characterized many of these travelogues, which were also known as *safarnāmahs*. For the purposes of this study, Mīrzā Moḥammad Ḥosayn Farāhānī and Mīrzā 'Alī Khān Amīn al-Dawlah will provide some insight on the bureaucratic side of their trips through the Ottoman Empire. Prior to their travels, both served as diplomats to the Qajar government, so their texts represent sample viewpoints of the privileged, elite affiliates of the government. Although Farāhānī had left his government post by the time of his travels, he still submitted a beautifully illuminated copy of his travelogue to Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh in 1887.¹⁶ Other scholars, however, have tried to explore the perspectives of more diverse sets of travelers. For example, Amineh Mahallati's article titled "Women as Pilgrims: Memoirs of Iranian Women Travelers to Mecca" discusses upper-class wives and widows who were able to venture outside of Iran and complete their pilgrimage. Mahallati's survey of this literature demonstrates that the female travelers, much like their male counterparts, were generally preoccupied with their personal lives and performing ritual duties. Not all writings, however, were so limited. In her discussion on Sakīnah Sultān Khānom Isfahānī Kūchak's travelogue from 1898, Mahallati points out her "numerous references" to general frustrations with the Qajar government, a precursor to complaints that will

¹⁵ Elton L. Daniel, "the Hajj and Travel Literature," in *Society and Culture in Qajar Iran*, ed. Elton L. Daniel (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 2002) 218.

¹⁶ Mīrzā Moḥammad Ḥosayn Farāhānī, *A Shi'ite Pilgrimage to Mecca (1885-1886)*, trans. Hafez Farmayan (Austin: University of Texas, 1990) xxvi.

culminate in the Constitutional Revolution of 1906.¹⁷ Other travelogues, such as those written by Farāhānī and Amīn al-Dawlah, provided their own descriptions of the government.

The Treaties of Erzurum created institutions that facilitated travel to the Ottoman Empire that, with time, affected the nature of travelogues written in the late nineteenth century. Farāhānī and Amīn al-Dawlah represent two different phases in the development of travel literature. First, Farāhānī completed pilgrimage in 1886, and his travelogue is a detailed and informative piece on the various aspects of his trips. He especially liked to document the characteristics of the people he met, the state of the cities he visited, and other vivid vignettes describing and outlining various statistics he had garnered during his trip. Amīn al-Dawlah embarked upon his journey in 1898, and largely focused on his personal experiences. His travelogue chronicling the nine-month trip for pilgrimage reads much like a daily journal or agenda.¹⁸ Elton L. Daniel highlights this difference in style as an important development in this genre and as a reflection of the sheer increase in the volume of travel.¹⁹ While Daniel attributes this to technological and geopolitical trends relating to transportation and the greater security of the journey,²⁰ one would be remiss if one were to ignore the Treaties of Erzurum as a major factor in the surge of travelers and pilgrims venturing across the Middle East. The newly granted foreign status of Qajar subjects and the establishment of consulates formalized the process of travel, making it a

¹⁷ Amīneh Mahallati, "Memoirs of Iranian Women Travelers to Mecca," *Iranian Studies* 44, no.6 (2011), 846.

¹⁸ "Amīn-al-Dawlah, Mīrzā 'Alī Khan," (online; 1990) in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/amin-al-dawla-mirza-ali-khan> (accessed 15 March 2012).

¹⁹ Elton L. Daniel, "the Hajj and Travel Literature," in *Society and Culture in Qajar Iran*, ed. Elton L. Daniel (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 2002) 224.

²⁰ Prior to the nineteenth century, hostilities between the two empires prevented any significant amount of travel. During the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, the frequent Safavid-Ottoman wars made travel unsafe, and Safavid subjects were absolutely barred from pilgrimage. For the select few who were granted permission to travel, they were subject to various cumbersome regulations. Travel, however, became more open after the fall of the Safavid Empire, especially in the nineteenth century. *Ibid*, 225-7.

much more secure and open journey for those who could afford it. Qajar subjects now had rights in the Ottoman Empire. The rights granted in the treaties were not merely symbolic. Rather, they served as the basis and justification for rigorous Qajar advocacy on behalf of their subjects traveling through, and settled in, the Ottoman Empire.

The Qajar embassy and consulates controlled the travel routes available to Qajar subjects. In his informative travelogue, Farāhānī outlined his journey and discussed stopping at various consulates throughout his trip in various cities of the Ottoman Empire. The embassy and consulates clearly maintain a strong presence throughout his narrative, and Farāhānī tended to speak positively of them. For example, upon arriving in Istanbul, he described the function and role of the embassy with regard to Qajar travelers, and highlighted a number of critical points about the embassy's responsibilities. Visas were required for all Qajar subjects, and it is apparent the Treaties established a level of bureaucracy that did not exist prior to that time, as is expressed in this quote,

Transit visas are also provided yearly from the embassy to those transiting through Istanbul. Each person is charged half a lira as the cost of the visa, except for notable persons, the poor, and descendants of the prophet [sayad], who are not charged for the cost of a visa. In other words, in Istanbul one must obtain from the Ottoman government a transit visa and pay about four krans for the visa; the embassy endorses the Ottoman visa and charges half a lira as an endorsement fee.”²¹

The embassy required all travelers, regardless of whether or not they had special status, to carry a transit visa. The government's control of these visas represented their power to deny visas and designate who traveled through which area, as well as signifying the ways in which the government benefited from stationing a government office abroad, both financially and politically. Of course, the embassy collected fees for issuing visas, but beyond that, it was able to keep records of the travelers and collect intelligence regarding their subjects outside their empire. Before the Treaties of Erzurum, the government

²¹ Mīrzā Moḥammad Ḥosayn Farāhānī, *Safarnāmah*, (Tīhrān: Markez-i Intishārāt-i Firdawsī, 1983) 129. Mīrzā Moḥammad Ḥosayn Farāhānī, *A Shi'ite Pilgrimage to Mecca (1885-1886)*, 143.

lacked access to this level of information. While scholars like Ann Lambton have depicted the Qajar government as lacking any sense of affairs outside of Tehran, it is clear that the Qajars were more active than what is depicted in these studies. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that the legal rights of Qajar subjects enumerated by Farāhānī were the direct results of the Treaties of Erzurum. As foreign subjects, they were under the sovereignty of the Qajar Shah, not the Ottoman Sultan, and thus were exempt from Istanbul's local jurisdiction and were protected by the Qajar embassy.

The Qajar consulates lobbied for the safety and security of Qajar travelers in the Ottoman Empire. Historically, Shi'i-Sunni hostilities made pilgrimage unsafe for Qajar subjects, but after the Treaties of Erzurum and the establishment of Qajar consulates across the Ottoman Empire, violence against Shi'is had decreased. In another passage describing the treatment of Qajar subjects during pilgrimage to Mecca, Farāhānī highlighted the influence of the Qajar government in reducing anti-Shi'i sentiment,

“These days, because of the weakness of the Ottoman government and the European style civil law which is practiced there, and the strength of the Iranian government, this practice [of dissimulation] is completely abandoned. There is no harm done to the Iranians. No one would molest them, even if they did not practice dissimulation. They treat the Iranians very respectfully, especially the ones who do not show meanness in expenditures and appearance.”²²

The establishment of consulates allowed the Qajar government to expand its sphere of influence into the Ottoman Empire and advocate for the rights of its subjects there, at least under most conditions. The consulates were located in over fifty-three cities of the Ottoman Empire,²³ and their offices made frequent appearances throughout Farāhānī's

²² Farāhānī, Mirza Mohammad Hosayn Farāhānī, *A Shi'ite Pilgrimage to Mecca (1885-1886)*, trans. Hafez Farmayan (Austin: University of Texas, 1990) 229.

²³ Johann Strauss, “La Présence Diplomatique Iranienne,” in *Les Iraniens D'Istanbul*, Th. Zarcone and F. Zarinebaf-Shahr (Paris: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1993), 31-32.

travelogue. The role and objective of each of these offices as described in Farāhānī's travelogue demonstrated the immense role they played throughout the Ottoman Empire. At some, like the Istanbul office mentioned earlier, it was necessary for traveler's to obtain a transit visa. At others, it was necessary to stamp their passports, or even to pass health checks or acquire dismissal tickets.²⁴ All of these steps are repeated multiple times, on his way in and out of Mecca at various stopping points throughout his journey. His discussion of the consulates became more frequent en route to Jedda, where one may assume that there was tighter regulation and more intense population control of pilgrims traveling to Mecca. At each consulate, stamps, visas and dismissal tickets obligated the travelers to pay fees to both the Qajar and Ottoman offices, depending on the nature of the necessary paperwork. Thus, the consulates and mandatory travel documents were viewed as revenue building, not only for the Qajar government, but also for the Ottoman government. Allowing the presence of Qajar consulates throughout the Ottoman Empire benefited the Ottomans, as well as the Qajars. Despite their financial revenue from travelers, however, these allowances contributed to the weakening of the Ottoman Empire. Conversely, the Qajar government grew in influence.

The Qajar government's reach, however, was both a positive and negative factor in the trials of travelers. While Farāhānī often praised the Qajar government for its strength, one should note that as a Qajar subject and former diplomat, Farāhānī's biases probably influenced his understanding of the "strength" of the Qajar Empire. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the increased presence of the Qajar government allowed its subjects to travel under much safer conditions during the late nineteenth century than ever before. Much of this presence was the result of the Treaties of Erzurum,

²⁴ Mīrzā Moḥammad Ḥosayn Farāhānī, *Safarnāmah*, (Tīhrān: Markez-i Intishārāt-i Firdawsī, 1983) 171, 176.

which allowed the Qajar government to exert its power throughout the Ottoman Empire. He spoke highly of the consuls and consul-generals, describing them as, “very learned, wise, sedate, sensible and capable,” and “friendly and kind,” in the cases of the consul general of Istanbul and consul of Jeddah, respectively.²⁵ Farāhānī’s descriptions, however, were not limited to praise. When discussing the passport office in Jeddah, he used a popular Persian anecdote to convey the idea that, while the Qajar officials stationed there were expected to protect the interests of the travelers, the travelers often had good reason to fear them as well. He alluded to the exploitation of the travelers at the hands of Qajar officers, but refrained from elaborating further. Overall, however, it was these officials who facilitated traveling throughout the Ottoman Empire.

It is important to note that these new-fangled institutions not only changed the physical processes of travel, but also the mental conceptions of self and identity. Pistor-Hatam proposed that Qajar subjects from the nineteenth century felt that they belonged to a greater *mamālek-e eslām* rather than an Iranian nation in a modern sense.²⁶ While the discourse on the beginnings of Iranian nationalism is a complex one, the changing status of foreign subjects in the Ottoman Empire allowed for new conventions of identification and, ultimately, identity. Requirements for carrying a passport as well as obtaining visas from special offices conditioned Qajar subjects to think of themselves differently than before. Although Amīn al-Dawlah did not describe his experiences with the embassies with the same level of detail as Farāhānī, he did find it compelling to include tracts on his identity as an Iranian. For example, in a discussion with a German pedestrian, he

²⁵ Ibid, 141 and 179.

²⁶ Anja Pistor-Hatam, “Iranian and the Reform Movement in the Ottoman Empire,” in *Proceedings of the Second European Conference of Iranian Studies* ed. Bert G. Fragner, Christa Frager, Gherardo Gnoli, Roxane Haag-Higuchi, Mauro Maggi, and Paula Orsatti (Roma: Istituto Italiano Per Il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1995), 576. *Mamalek-e eslam* can be translated as “countries of Islam” or “kingdoms of Islam,” which referred to a larger Islamic community.

explained the great potential of Iranians to learn foreign languages, including German, and the beauty of Persian belles-lettres. In a show of pride, Amīn al-Dawlah distinguished Iranians from the general *mamalek-e islam*, and vouched for their intelligence and accomplishments.²⁷ Likewise, Farāhānī conceived of Qajar subjects as a separate entity and disregarded a greater Islamic community. He was just as likely to describe individuals or groups based on ethnicity as he was religion. Because the treaties now tied their identity to the Qajar Empire, travelers were, through the many legal documents reaffirming their status, exposed to accepting imperial identity on a personal level. The numerous stops at Qajar consulates for stamps and visas, the permanent passport all contributed to the nascent identity politics that emerged during the late nineteenth century.

Altogether, it is evident that the consulates played an important role in the experiences of Qajar travelers. The development of these administrative bodies provided the government with a number of financial, legal, and political advantages, as demonstrated by these sources. Because the Ottoman government required Qajar subjects to carry visas, a new source of revenue was established for both the Qajars and the Ottomans. These requirements also allowed the consulates to maintain information on their whereabouts, which contributed to instilling a sense of Qajar imperial self-identification in the travelers as well. For the first time, Qajar subjects were given an imperial identity that followed them throughout the Middle East, and they had the documents to prove it. Their identity was deemed immutable by travel, and their extraterritorial status came with privileges to remind them of their imperial allegiances. The consulates, however, did consider the protection of travelers, especially pilgrims, as a

²⁷ Amīn al-Dawlah, *Safarnāmah* (Tabrīz: Intishārāt-i Tūs-i Tīhrān, 1975), 99-102.

part of their official governmental duties. The following section considers letters written by Qajar officials stationed in the Ottoman Empire.

THE IMPERIAL PERSPECTIVE

As confirmed by the Treaties of Erzurum, the Qajars viewed themselves as protectors of their subjects outside their empire. The articles of the treaties better equipped them to follow through with their perceived responsibilities and allowed them to set up consulates to better serve their subjects. Qajar documents sent between government offices across the two empires provide some background on how the consulates prioritized different issues concerning travelers, including monitoring customs and protecting the rights of Qajar subjects. Analysis of these correspondences provides insight on the structure and function of these consulates and their roles vis-à-vis Qajar travelers.

The Qajars had included the protection of pilgrims as a major point in the Treaties of Erzurum. And yet, fifty years later, officials still sent reports to Tehran detailing the unfair treatment of pilgrims in Iraq. The Qajars had begun to establish their consulates in the Ottoman Empire in the 1840s for the purpose of serving Qajar interests abroad. Qajar officials stationed in the Ottoman Empire regularly wrote to the Shah, enumerating some of the problems and obstacles they faced in the completing their duties in Ottoman Empire. Although officials stationed all over the Ottoman Empire sent letters to Tehran, this study focuses on correspondences mostly sent from Baghdad for a few reasons. First, the office in Baghdad was one of the original general-consulates established in the Ottoman Empire.²⁸ By the time officials drafted these documents in the late nineteenth

²⁸ In Strauss' compilation of consulates mentioned in the various *salmane* shows Erzurum and Baghdad as the first two general consulates, established sometime before or around 1848. Johann Strauss, "La Présence Diplomatique Iranienne," 28.

century, they operated in a well-established office that had dealt with issues concerning Qajar pilgrims and travelers for over forty years. It is expected that during these forty years, the consulate gained important experiences in representing its subjects. Even in the 1890s, the consulates were faced with numerous cases concerning the unlawful taxation and harassment of Qajar travelers. Second, because the Ottoman-Qajar border was relatively close to Baghdad, officials stationed there dealt regularly with travelers. Qajar subjects largely adhered to Shi'ism, and many pilgrims travelled to the Shi'i shrines located in the 'Aṭabāt, the cities of Karbala and Najaf. Qajar officials stationed in this region heard about Qajar subjects facing abuse and harassment and reported them. These reports indicate a struggle with the absolute implementation of some articles from the Treaties of Erzurum. Recurring issues included search and seizure at customs, unlawful taxation, and general harassment. Although Farāhānī's travelogue described a smooth journey, these documents demonstrate that while conditions had generally improved for travelers, there was much room for improvement.

By the late nineteenth century, Qajar consuls believed that the Ottoman customs offices conducting excessive searches on the travelers, taking advantage of their vulnerable status in foreign lands. In 1897, 'Alī Naqī, an official working in the Qajar consulate in Iraq, sent a letter to Muẓaffar al-dīn Shāh explaining his negotiations with the local Baghdadi Pasha to regulate the sorts of searches customs officials could conduct on Qajar pilgrims to the Atabat.²⁹ His detailed report described how Ottoman officers had been unfairly stopping pilgrims and "examine even their men and women's clothes," putting an immense pressure on the travelers. In response, Muẓaffar al-dīn Shāh approved of Naqī's involvement and negotiations. Naqī's letter demonstrates the chronic nature of

²⁹ *Guzīdah-'i asnād-i siyāsī-i Īrān va 'U-smānī : dawrah-'i Qājārīyah / Vāḥid-i Nashr-i Asnād.* (Daftar-i Muṭāla 'āt-i Siyāsī va Bayn al-Milalī, 1990-1996) 6-7.

the problem, since he had been involved in multiple discussions with his Ottoman counterparts in addressing the unnecessary searches of Qajar pilgrims. Per his letter, the most recent of these discussions extended over two days' time. Despite Naqī's efforts, the problem persisted and manifested itself in later situations.

The consulate continued its efforts to uphold the rights of Qajar pilgrims and prevent such injustices. Its issues with Ottoman customs officials were not limited to physical harassment during searches, but also extended to the safety of travelers during their journey as well. Shortly after 'Alī Naqī's correspondence, another letter sent from the same embassy to Tehran explained the escalation of the original problem, as well as the emergence of others: a tax in the name of services for protecting the pilgrims, coupled with the seizure of their weapons.³⁰ Instead of protecting the pilgrims, however, the Ottoman customs' officials left Qajar travelers completely to their own devices. Without their weapons and any means of self-defense, the travelers continued their journey vulnerable to roaming thieves and looters. The steady flow of pilgrims to the 'Aṭābāt faced a dual threat. They were simultaneously harassed by the Ottoman government who demanded unfair tax payments from them, and by the thieves who exploited their weakness on the road. According to the author, the customs' tax was demanded multiple times throughout a single journey, and those unable to pay the amount were robbed of their personal possessions. Despite previous agreements and treaties protecting Qajar subjects from excessive taxation, the official felt that the Ottomans were failing to uphold their word. The Qajars demonstrated their concern through these letters, which highlighted their investment in the region and the importance of protecting their subjects and interests at large.

³⁰ Ibid. 8-9.

The negotiations, however, did not bring an end to the perceived injustices faced by Qajar travelers. Two years later in 1899, the consulate submitted another letter summarizing incidents concerning excessive taxes against Qajar travelers. Each pilgrim was required to pay a tax in the amount of five gold liras to the Ottoman officials, again breaching prior agreements regarding taxes directed towards Qajar pilgrims.³¹ Both times, officials submitted reports to Muẓaffar al-dīn Shāh detailing the problems and the actions taken to mediate them, who responded by either praising their work or outlining further steps for them to take. In these cases, officials were dealing with recurring problems that had supposedly been addressed in the Treaties of Erzurum. While the Treaties of Erzurum equipped the Qajar government with the ability to monitor happenings in the Ottoman Empire, the treaties alone could not guarantee that their articles would be upheld.

Travelers' welfare remained a priority of the Qajar government throughout the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. Historically, the issue had been included in various treaties, but the two Treaties of Erzurum were the first treaties to permit local consulates in the Ottoman Empire. The location of the consulates permitted officials to address problems concerning travelers and customs directly. By including the protection of travelers in the Treaties of Erzurum, it spoke to the degree to which the Qajar Empire felt responsible for its subjects. The importance of the matter is also demonstrated through the content of government documents, many of which discuss the various issues faced by Qajars travelers. The presence of consulates allowed the consuls to pressure the Ottomans to uphold their end of the treaties with varying amounts of success.

³¹ Ibid. 34-35.

The consulates, however, lacked the ability to effectively enforce the articles of the treaty. After years of functioning in the Ottoman Empire, the Baghdadi consulate still reported difficulties protecting travelers from different kinds of harassment. The officials witnessed the impact of bureaucracy on their jobs, especially since they constantly shuffled between the shah and Ottoman officials in negotiations to protect Qajar pilgrims during their travels. While the growth of bureaucracy and establishment of consulates strengthened the Qajars, the officials were bogged down with different issues and often needed to consult multiple officials before reaching any conclusions.

CONCLUSION

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Treaties of Erzurum had given rise to a number of conventions that facilitated Qajar travel through the Middle East. The regulation of travel and presence of the consulates provided the travelers a more structured, organized, and bureaucratic system of travel. These conventions affected the experiences of travelers and the responsibilities of the government. While the Treaties of Erzurum did not solve all problems faced by Qajar travelers, the Qajar government now had a means of addressing the issues and lobbying for its subjects. The shah repeatedly instructed consuls and other Qajar officials to speak to various Ottoman pashas and deal with problems through negotiations. Prior to the Treaties of Erzurum, these talks would have been more cumbersome and likely less effective. Thus, travel and travel logistics between the two empires changed on both a macro- and a micro-level.

From these travelogues and government documents, it is evident that the process of travel—from obtaining visas to stopping at designated consulates—prompted Qajar travelers to see themselves as subjects of the Qajar Empire more so than before. Legal documents, including transit permits and visas, bestowed a tangible imperial identity

upon Qajar subjects that followed them on their travels across the Middle East. A similar phenomenon of developing a stronger identity occurred amongst the expatriate communities. Like Qajar travelers, Qajar expatriates were required to carry permits and proof of residence. The expatriates mimicked the travelers in expressing their identity and associated themselves with the Qajar Empire. Unlike the travelers, however, the expatriates privileged creating a unifying identity for themselves as a community. As demonstrated in the next chapter, however, the expatriates identified as Qajar subjects much more directly than the travelers.

The Qajars and their Expatriates

The Treaties of Erzurum of 1828 and 1848 facilitated important changes in Middle Eastern identity politics and created a new standard for inter-imperial extraterritoriality. This chapter explores the role of the Treaties of Erzurum in changing the nature of the Qajar government's relationship with its expatriates. Before the nineteenth century, the Qajars lacked an efficient or official means of maintaining a relationship with their expatriate communities. I argue, however, that by the mid-to-late nineteenth century, the treaties' stipulations caused a pivotal shift in the Qajar government's relations with its subjects. By granting Qajar subjects foreign status and allowing the presence of Qajar consuls in the Ottoman Empire, the treaties enabled the Qajars to exercise their power and engage their subjects on a new level. The open lines of communication between consulates and Tehran allowed the Qajar government to extend its sphere of influence outside their borders and into expatriate affairs as they saw fit. In addition to this, the legal changes in the status of Qajar subjects also allowed for the expatriates to claim and build upon a distinct identity. Qajar expatriates were now officially connected to the Qajar Empire, an affiliation which allowed them to explore different means of political participation in the future of the government.

Altogether, this chapter seeks to answer the following questions: how did the Treaties of Erzurum affect the involvement of the Qajar government in expatriate affairs, and how did the treaties contribute to an expatriate identity during the late nineteenth century? First, I will address these questions by first analyzing the direct and basic role of consulates in the presence of the expatriate communities in the Ottoman Empire. Later, I consider the implications of the activities of Istanbul's expatriate community to better understand how Qajar subjects viewed themselves and the Qajar government during the late nineteenth century.

In this chapter, I engage newspaper articles and a travelogue to demonstrate the extent to which the new legal status and presence of consulates affected Qajar expatriates in the Ottoman Empire. This study considers the impact of the Treaties of Erzurum in two sections, first by looking at the direct legal ramifications of the treaties and their effect on a basic level, and second by looking at the indirect influence of the treaties over the cultural and political resources established by the expatriates to better serve themselves and provide a sense of community to each other. It is important to understand the roles of the different sides in this political relationship, and by considering the actors--the consulates and the expatriates—one can better understand the ramifications of the Treaties of Erzurum in nineteenth century Middle Eastern politics. With these primary source documents, this chapter delves into the Qajar Empire's methods of dealing with extraterritoriality and the expatriate reaction during the late nineteenth century.

Consulates represented Qajar power and control, both symbolically and literally. Not only were the consulates able to lobby for the rights of the expatriates, but also they were able to keep a closer watch on political activities. Although the expatriates had left Qajar Iran, they were still under Qajar sovereignty, and the newly established consulates lobbied for their rights to prevent them from facing abuse or harassment abroad. Qajar officials acted upon this priority in 1881 when a Qajar consul general pressured the Ottoman government to punish a clergyman for denouncing Shi'is as unbelievers.³² In addition to this, the Qajars used the treaties for their own more immediate diplomatic benefit. The Qajar government, for example, extradited two Babi editors of the *Akhtar* newspaper in 1897, because of their political ideologies, religious beliefs, and conspiracies against the government in 1897, and later executed them in Tabriz for their

³² Anja Pistor-Hatam, "Akhtar as a Transmitter of Political Ideas," in *Les Iraniens D'Istanbul*, Th. Zarcone and F. Zarinebaf-Shahr (Paris: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1993), 240.

supposed transgressions.³³ The Qajars also increasingly turned to the use of exile as a means of controlling threats to their power, such as uncooperative members of the royal family or dissident clerics who protested the dynasty's power.³⁴ By doing so, the government stripped them of their ability to directly influence Qajar society, while still restricting them to an area close enough that consuls could monitor their activities. Clearly, the establishment of consulates in the Ottoman Empire allowed for a wider range of political action by the Qajar government, similar in some ways to the actions and responsibilities taken up by a modern nation-state in regards to its citizens. The extraditing, exiling, and the lobbying on behalf of the expatriates during the late nineteenth century exemplify the political power wielded by the Qajar government during the late nineteenth century.

The relationships between the expatriates and the Qajar and Ottoman governments represent an excellent example of broader political shifts underway in Middle Eastern foreign and domestic governance. During the nineteenth century, Qajar expatriates settled various areas of the Ottoman Empire for political, economic, and religious reasons. According to Anja Pistor-Hatam, most Qajar expatriates had left in order to seek a better standard of living.³⁵ Some moved for better opportunities in trade, while others sought to have more regular access to the holy shrines.³⁶ Others, however, arrived in the Ottoman Empire as refugees or exiles, escaping tension with the government. Although they may have come for different reasons, all were faced with the

³³ Fariba Zarinebaf, "From Istanbul to Tabriz: Modernity and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 28, no. 1 (2008) 168-9. These extraditions took place after the assassination of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh and the shutting down of *Akhtar* newspaper.

³⁴ Anja Pistor-Hatam, "Merchants, Pilgrims and Refugees: Iranian Shiites in the Ottoman Empire," *Religious Refugees in Europe, Asia, and North America; 6th-21st century*, (2007), 235-46.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 235.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 236.

same realities during the late nineteenth century: they lived in an empire that recognized them as foreigners with allegiance to an outside government. This experience shaped their worldview, their relationship with the Qajar government, and even their decision to move back. Although the expatriates had largely chosen to immigrate to the Ottoman Empire, it seems that most ultimately returned back to Iran.³⁷ Their status as foreigners and Qajar subjects allowed them to maintain their contacts, which facilitated their move back. Altogether, the expatriates and their stories demonstrate the long-term impact of the Treaties of Erzurum on their lives and their mobility.

THE LEGAL ROLE OF THE CONSULATES VIS-À-VIS THE EXPATRIATES

The consulates played a significant role in expatriate-government relations during the late nineteenth century. Their bureaucratic presence allowed for the collection of data, which allowed for the government to engage the expatriates on a communal level. To demonstrate this, I use Mīrzā Moḥammad Ḥosayn Farāhānī's travelogue from 1885-86 where he documented both the expatriate communities and consulates located in the Ottoman Empire. Although he did not speak directly to the relationship between the expatriates and the consulates, he provided invaluable information on both.

Farāhānī's travelogue proved useful because of his reviews of communities he came across. During his trip to Mecca in 1885-86, he described his travels through the Ottoman Empire with ample detail.³⁸ While most travelogues detailed their day-to-day activities and paid little attention to the people they encountered, this travelogue provides empirical data on the expatriate populations during his pilgrimage and journey to the Ottoman Empire. In addition to this, Farāhānī served as a former diplomat and had

³⁷ Anja Pistor-Hatam, "Merchants, Pilgrims and Refugees: Iranian Shiites in the Ottoman Empire," *Religious Refugees in Europe, Asia, and North America; 6th-21st century*, (2007), 235.

³⁸ Mīrzā Moḥammad Ḥosayn Farāhānī, *A Shi'ite Pilgrimage to Mecca (1885-1886)*, trans. Hafez Farmayan (Austin: University of Texas, 1990) xxvi.

befriended Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh. In this case, it seems as if his relationship with the shah motivated him to maintain records that included information on government bodies in the Ottoman Empire. Thus, we can ascertain that the travelogues of notables and dignitaries not only represented the voice of Qajar travelers to the Ottoman Empire, but also perspectives heavily influenced by government interests as well.

Statistics provide invaluable information on the demographics and centers of expatriate activity during the late nineteenth century. In 1886, Mīrzā Moḥammad Ḥosayn Farāhānī made sure to discuss every Persian-speaking population (or lack thereof) in the cities he visited. He included raw data, activities, and even reviews on the expatriate communities. From his accounts, it is evident that while Iranians were scattered across the empire, most were concentrated in larger cities and were engaged in activities for the benefit of the greater community. Farāhānī noted the Qajar population in every city he visited, regardless of how large or insignificant. In Alexandria, for example, he mentioned a diverse community of two hundred, “mostly tradesmen, coffeehouse keepers, or innkeepers.”³⁹ He later found it worthwhile to mention the presence of “seven or eight people of Iranian origin” in the Suez, and Hejaz, namely Jeddah and Mecca, with twenty-five Iranians.⁴⁰ Istanbul’s vibrant population of 16,000 was the largest in the Ottoman Empire, and served as a central point for expatriate culture[*note: was it really larger than the Atabat, especially Karbala?*].⁴¹ The range in his statistics denotes an interest all Qajar expatriates, regardless of their specific location or significance within the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, Farāhānī’s brief descriptions of the scattered communities give the sense that the expatriates of the empire had a distinct identity wherever they settled.

³⁹ Mīrzā Moḥammad Ḥosayn Farāhānī, *Safarnāmah*, (Tīhrān: Markez-i Intishārāt-i Firdawsī, 1983) 137.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 154, 252.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 129.

The embassy and legal consuls were central to expatriate life in the Ottoman Empire, and its significance was not unnoticed. For example, while visiting Istanbul, Farāhānī highlighted the role of the embassy in the expatriates' legal matters as permitted by the Treaties of Erzurum. The embassy [and consulates] operated according to Qajar law, and handled expatriate affairs just as they would in Iran:

Legal recourse for Iranians is entirely through the embassy. They are never under the jurisdiction of the administration of Istanbul. The procedure of the embassy in court proceedings is this: If both parties are Muslims and Iranian subjects, [the case] is treated according to the laws of Prophet Mohammad. If one party is Christian and a foreign subject, [the case] is tried and punishment imposed according to French law.⁴²

By noting this, Farāhānī demonstrates the impact of the capitulations on the expatriate community. During the nineteenth century, the Ottomans phased out their religious-based millet system and introduced notions of citizenship based on imperial allegiance. Here, it is evident that the embassy utilized a system that categorized case proceedings based on religion. This legal system mimicked that of Qajar Iran's, demonstrating the extent to which the consulates were able to control their affairs.

The consulates and expatriates were often spoken about in tandem, as each derived its importance from the other. In addition to providing a means for legal recourse, the embassy and consulates helped maintain a congenial environment for Qajar subjects, many of whom practiced Shi'ism. The consulates lobbied for the rights of the subjects and legalized their presence through residence visas, which were issued in tandem with the Ottoman government:

⁴² See note 10.

The Iranians are held in esteem and respect. The embassy is very influential and orderly, There is never any religious dissolution [taqeyyeh]. The embassy provides residence visas every year for the Iranian subjects residing in Istanbul who have trade or work or their own means of livelihood. Half a lira is collected from each person for the cost of the visa.⁴³

Because of the embassy's political and social clout, the Ottomans respected the Qajar expatriates and did not threaten them based entirely on their faith. Often, in societies where Shi'is are the minority and are targeted because of their practices, Shi'is are able to hide their religion and publicly worship in accordance to the dominant belief system, which historically had been an issue in the Ottoman Empire. Here, however, Farāhānī asserts that the expatriates are so well respected that despite their minority status, they do not exercise "religious dissolution." Thus, the consulates did not solely lobby for the community, but their presence and efforts provided a level of security for it.

More importantly, however, this passage describes the most direct connection between expatriates and the consulates: residence visas. The Qajar embassy sold annual residence visas, which helped the consulates in a few ways. First, on a basic level, the consulate had a source of revenue on an annual basis, and collected fees from all expatriates except for notables, the poor, and descendants of the Prophet Muhammad.⁴⁴ In addition to this, the consulate was able to keep records on expatriates and their occupations, since residence visas were obligatory for those residing permanently in the Ottoman Empire.

At the time of Farāhānī's travels, the Ottoman Empire was home to over fifty consulates, which allowed for the growth of expatriate communities. According to Johann Strauss, the first mention of Iranian diplomats appeared in 1847-1848. Strauss

⁴³ See note 10.

⁴⁴ See note 10.

asserts that, prior to the mid-nineteenth century, there were no permanent ambassadors stationed in the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁵ His observation reemphasizes the importance of the Treaties of Erzurum in shaping the Qajar political presence in the Ottoman Empire. According to government correspondences, the Qajars operated a foreign embassy in Istanbul as early as 1842.⁴⁶ By 1848, the *salname* reported a total of nineteen consulates established in the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁷ In less than thirty years, the number of consulates had multiplied to fifty-three in 1877.⁴⁸ The cities mentioned in Farāhānī’s travelogue, especially those with larger numbers of expatriates, all housed Qajar consulates. Pistor-Hatam cites Ahmad Khan Malek Sasani’s *Yādbudhā-ye Sefārat-e Estānbul* and provides 1880s census data for Qajar expatriates living in the Ottoman Empire: 16,000 in Istanbul and 10,800 in Anatolia and Greater Syria.⁴⁹ Although Farāhānī failed to provide any sources for his information, it is likely that he gathered the statistics from the consulates as well. While the presence of consulates probably dictated Farāhānī’s travel route, it is significant to note the accessibility of information on expatriate communities for Qajar officials. The location of embassies allowed the government to maintain a close eye on expatriates living hundreds and thousands of miles away from Tehran. Even on a basic level, the presence of consulates greatly affected the lives of Qajar expatriates.

⁴⁵ Johann Strauss, “La Présence Diplomatique Iranienne,” in *Les Iraniens D’Istanbul*, Th. Zarccone and F. Zarinebaf-Shahr (Paris: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1993), 14.

⁴⁶ Guzīdah-’i asnād-i siyāsī-i Īrān va ’U smānī : dawrah-’i Qājārīyah / Vāhid-i Nashr-i Asnād. (Daftar-i Muṭāla ’āt-i Siyāsī va Bayn al-Milālī, 1211-1270) 453.

⁴⁷ Johann Strauss, “La Présence Diplomatique Iranienne,” in *Les Iraniens D’Istanbul*, Th. Zarccone and F. Zarinebaf-Shahr (Paris: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1993), 28.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 28-29.

⁴⁹ Anja Pistor-Hatam, “Merchants, Pilgrims and Refugees: Iranian Shiites in the Ottoman Empire,” *Religious Refugees in Europe, Asia, and North America; 6th-21st century*, (2007), 239.

EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

With significant numbers in cosmopolitan centers of the Ottoman Empire, the Qajar expatriate community was a vibrant one. Expatriates in the Ottoman Empire founded organizations and hosted religious events which reinforced their communal bonds. Newspapers played an especially important role at this time. Published in Istanbul, *Akhtar*, much like its contemporaries *Surrayā* and *Parvarish*, was written in Persian by and for the expatriate community.⁵⁰ By writing the news in the community's native language, *Akhtar* created a public forum for the expression of political and social opinions and engaged expatriates in a political debates and discussions. In addition to this, educational, economic, and religious organizations also contributed to the overall communal feel between the Qajar expatriates.

Persian-language newspapers published in the Ottoman Empire highlighted the community's politicized presence during the late nineteenth century. Mīrzā Muhsin Khān Mu'īn al-Mulk established the *Akhtar* newspaper in 1876 using funding and assistance from both the Ottoman and Qajar governments. While the two governments were heavily involved in the *Akhtar*'s inception, Istanbul's expatriate community took control of it not long after.⁵¹ Instead of outwardly identifying with either empire, however, *Akhtar*'s journalists took care to call the expatriate community *mellat-e Īrān*, which acknowledges their identity within the Ottoman terminology pertaining to the *millet* system.⁵² As the first Persian newspaper outside the Qajar Empire, *Akhtar* provides important insight on

⁵⁰ All three newspapers were contemporaries of each other and provide insight on the expatriate community abroad. *Parvarish* was published in Cairo, and *Surayya* was published in Cairo, Tehran, and Kashan.

⁵¹ Fariba Zarinebaf, "From Istanbul to Tabriz: Modernity and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 28, no. 1 (2008) 161-2.

⁵² Anja Pistor-Hatam, "Merchants, Pilgrims and Refugees: Iranian Shiites in the Ottoman Empire," *Religious Refugees in Europe, Asia, and North America; 6th-21st century*, (2007), 242.

the perception of political events from within the Ottoman Empire and the reception of foreign concepts by the expatriate community.

The organization of *Akhtar* points towards the community's budding sense of identity. As the first Qajar expatriate newspaper, *Akhtar* was printed entirely in Persian. The language choice expressed a distinct solidarity with the expatriate community as a whole, especially since most expatriates were of Azeri ethnicity and spoke a dialect of Turkish not far different from Ottoman.⁵³ Although they could have printed in Azeri and been somewhat accessible to Ottoman subjects as well, *Akhtar's* newspaper was written by and for Qajar expatriates. In another sign of camaraderie, it regularly listed several businesses where *Akhtar* was available for purchase in the bazaars of Istanbul, further highlighting a sense of community among the expatriates. Thus, the newspaper's production, in and of itself, reflected an awareness among the expatriates that they share a distinct identity. The expatriate newspaper signified their special needs as recognized by themselves, the Ottoman Empire, and the Qajar Empire, and bolstered their association as a separate entity of foreigners.

The articles not only reflected how the communities may have viewed themselves and their role in the Ottoman Empire, but also how they viewed their relationship with the Qajar Empire. *Akhtar's* articles addressed issues relevant to the expatriate community. In one article published in December 1880, the journalist recounted efforts made to host *Ashura* commemorations in the Ottoman Empire and the involvement of the embassies in the process.⁵⁴ The writer cited the *Ashura* commemorations as testament to the "kindness between these two Islamic governments and nations."⁵⁵ He recognized

⁵³ Ibid, 239-240.

⁵⁴ Many Shi'is commemorate the death of Prophet Muhammad's grandson Husayn, who died in battle in Karbala on the tenth of the month of Ashura. Shi'i consider Husayn to be the third Imam.

⁵⁵ *Akhtar*, no. 2, 11-12.

Iranian ambassador Jalāltamāb Muʿīn al-Molk for guaranteeing the availability of *Ashura* processions in the Ottoman Empire, while still recognizing the role of both empires for allowing the processions to take place. Mention of the Qajar Empire and *Ashura* in *Akhtar*'s report highlights an important aspect of the Qajar-expatriate relationship and indicates that that most expatriates still identified as Shi'i despite living in a Sunni empire and environment. It demonstrates that the Qajar expatriates were invested in maintaining Shi'i rituals, which is especially highlighted by dedicating a space for the commemoration.⁵⁶ Furthermore, Shi'i identification provided a direct link to the Qajar Empire, who could be called upon for Shi'i related concerns and requests. By hosting processions and prayer recitations in Istanbul, the Qajars carried out duties for its subjects that could not be fulfilled by the Ottomans. As a self-identified Shi'i empire, the Qajar Empire assumed the responsibility of hosting Shi'i rituals in the neighboring Sunni empire.

In the same issue, *Akhtar* editors ran a letter to the editor critical of the Ottoman Empire's apathy towards Kurdish violence in the Ottoman-Qajar border regions.⁵⁷ The author, who signed the letter as "just a Muslim" asserted that the Ottomans have failed the Qajars in being a proper neighbor, and that it would be laughable for the Qajars to align themselves with them in the future. It further described the Ottomans as being "two-faced" while praising Qajars for being honest with the Ottomans.

The letter, which described the problems with the growing Kurdish rebellions at length, reflects a number of sentiments important in understanding the general government-expatriate relationship. Because it was submitted anonymously, it could have

⁵⁶ Anja Pistor-Hatam, "Merchants, Pilgrims and Refugees: Iranian Shiites in the Ottoman Empire," *Religious Refugees in Europe, Asia, and North America; 6th-21st century*, (2007), 242.

⁵⁷ *Akhtar*, no. 2, 13. This letter coincided with the Kurdish revolts in 1880-1881. For more information, refer to *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries* by Hakan Özoğlu.

been published to demonstrate a general opinion among the population. The highly polarizing letter aligned itself with the Qajar Empire. It defended the Qajar government against the Ottomans, indicating a sense of connection with the Qajar Empire. Although *Akhtar* was later shut down for its critical stance concerning the Qajar government, its articles highlight the evolution of opinion over time among the expatriate community.

By signing the letter as “just a Muslim,” the author may have been appealing to the supremacy of religious morals, highlighting his supposed objective stance on the Ottoman response. One can assume that the letter’s author was a Qajar expatriate, with vested interests in the safety and security of Qajar Iran. By calling himself a Muslim, however, the author presents himself as an unbiased bystander for the sake of persuading readers of the Ottoman injustices and betrayal of the Qajar government. Thus, he highlights Islam to prevent others from attributing his views to his imperial identity. His identification as a Muslim does not undermine his status as a Qajar subject or expatriate, and should not be interpreted as a weakening of imperial identity.

Six years later, in 1886, *Akhtar* remained the foremost Persian newspaper published in the Ottoman Empire. During his trip, Farāhānī visited *Akhtar*’s editorial office and included some notes on the newspaper and its staff. Although the more controversial of *Akhtar*’s articles had not yet been published, Farāhānī acknowledged and deflected the newspaper’s already politicized reputation. Farāhānī alluded to the provocative nature of the paper, but described it as well-meaning journalism on behalf of its upstanding editor:

Among the places we visited during these several days, one was the bureau of the newspaper *Akhtar*, which is in Valedeh Khan. It has five or six employees, such as writer, translator, etc. The head of the bureau is Mirza Tahe [*sic*] [*recte* Taher]. He is a native of Tabriz and an Iranian national. He is well bred, learned, quiet, experienced, temperate, and straightforward. He had come to Istanbul years ago and stayed. Previously, he had a business; at present, also, he has a little capital which is his main means of subsistence. As he is religious, he has good ideas and considers the welfare of the government of Iran

to be one of the articles of his religion and faith. If once in a while he writes something in his newspaper [critical of] the government of Iran, he has no other motive than public-spiritedness. He means this as a kind of sincere faith and patriotism.⁵⁸

In this passage, Farāhānī characterizes *Akhtar* as a completely Iranian organization. He notes that the office is located in Valedeh khan, the expatriate business district, and emphasizes Mirza Tāher's background and personality to indicate goodwill on behalf of his engagement with the newspaper. It is especially telling that Farāhānī considered Tāher's patriotism to equal his faith in importance. By identifying Tāher as a patriot, Farāhānī implies that his efforts in the newspaper are ultimately in the best interest of the Qajars and their subjects as a whole.

The *Akhtar* newspaper started with the help of the Qajar and Ottoman governments, and it ended with them as well. Following Farāhānī's visit, the newspaper was shut down multiple times for its political commentary on issues chiefly concerning the Qajar Empire. First, it was shut down briefly during the Tobacco Concession in 1890 for reporting on the concession's negative consequences and instigating protests in major cities across the Qajar Empire. After Nāṣir al-dīn Shāh's assassination in 1896, the Ottoman Empire closed the newspaper permanently.⁵⁹ Two of its editors, as mentioned earlier, were extradited to Tabriz and executed a year later. Officials that had been stationed in the Ottoman Empire had monitored the community and its newspapers diligently. The extradition of the two officials and the closing of the newspaper represent instances when the Qajars flexed their diplomatic power after the Treaties of Erzurum.

⁵⁸ Mīrzā Moḥammad Ḥosayn Farāhānī, *A Shi'ite Pilgrimage to Mecca (1885-1886)*, trans. Hafez Farmayan (Austin: University of Texas, 1990) 299.

⁵⁹ Fariba Zarinebaf, "From Istanbul to Tabriz: Modernity and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 28, no. 1 (2008) 168-9.

Akhtar's publications reflect an awareness of foreign and domestic issues, including border violence, holiday processions, and the general state of the Persian-speaking community. One can deduce that the expatriate community as a whole maintained a distinct identity that was not fully dominated by Ottoman characteristics. Only a complex and well-developed foreign community would have the capability to maintain a school and have access to multiple newspapers published in its native language. The authors of *Akhtar*'s articles not only praised but also defended the Qajar Empire against the Ottoman Empire. Pistor-Hatam's scholarship, however, would have readers believe that *Akhtar* existed for the dissemination of Ottoman ideals and identity. While this may be partially true, Pistor-Hatam fails to acknowledge the impact the Treaties of Erzurum had on the community and the creation of *Akhtar*. Just as Farāhānī attributed Mirza Taher's involvement in the newspaper as an example of patriotism, *Akhtar* as a whole, despite its critical articles, represented a sense of great association with the Qajar Empire. The provocative stances of *Akhtar*'s journalists did not reflect animosity, but rather indicated a shift in the political involvement of subjects as a whole. The foreign status of expatriates, as well as their legal associations and obligations to the Shah, cultured this change in imperial-subject relations during the nineteenth century.

Ironically, while many present *Akhtar* and its increase in controversial content as a result of grassroots movements, it was actually the consequence of intergovernmental processes. Often, scholars, such as Pistor-Hatam, attribute the provocative element in *Akhtar*'s articles to exposure to Ottoman constitutionalism. Based on this research, however, it is clear that *Akhtar* marked a greater change than that. The Treaties of

Erzurum emboldened the Qajar expatriate community to embrace a legal identity and vocalize their opinions on the political developments in the region. Without treaty clauses granting foreign status to Qajar expatriates, these expatriates would not have felt a civic duty towards the Qajar government, nor would they have invested such interest in the current affairs of the period. The Treaties of Erzurum linked the expatriates to the Qajar Empire, a connection that they understood to demand their civic engagement and participation even from abroad.

CONCLUSION

Expatriates in the Ottoman Empire, diverse in their reasons for migrating, maintained a semblance of a tight-knit community during the late nineteenth century. While it is true that the communities sprouted in different parts of the Ottoman Empire, all shared one thing in common: they lived in the presence of the Qajar government. No matter how many thousands of miles away from Tehran, enough Qajar consulates dotted the Ottoman Empire to lobby for and monitor the state of affairs concerning the expatriate population. Regardless of the number of expatriates located in any given city, the Qajar government established a local consulate and kept records on the expatriate residents through resident visas and their yearly censuses.

Clearly, the Treaties of Erzurum changed the lives of the expatriates in more ways than one. Beyond granting them foreign status and an official voice to lobby on their behalf, the Treaties of Erzurum gave them an identity through which they were able to explore modern ideas and expound upon them publicly. Expatriates were able to build a community, with their own centers for education, religion, and business, and the role of the Qajar government and consulates varied in each of these centers. For example, the

government initially providing funding for *Akhtar* newspaper, and the expatriate community later replaced the government's role and took direct control of its publication. Another example of this concerns the religious center, where the Qajar ambassador hosted *Ashura* processions for the commemoration of Husayn's death. In each example, the Qajar government engaged the expatriate community, and furthering a sense of identity amongst the subjects.

Only a strong government would have had the ability to establish consulates in numerous cities scattered across an empire. The sheer volume of consulates speaks to the priorities of the Qajar government in maintaining constant contact with its subjects abroad. Although previous scholars have presented the power of the Qajar government as limited to within the confines of Tehran, this research shows the reach of the government deep into Ottoman lands. The consulates were not only offices that relayed messages to the Qajar government, but they served as symbols for the authority of the Qajars.

Per the Treaties of Erzurum, the Qajars built the embassy and consulates to exercise the government's rights over its subjects. These physical reminders of power were not limited to a few major cities, but rather spread across the empire, and their gradual growth during the later nineteenth century reflects upon the government's growing interest in monitoring its subjects abroad. While the Qajar government is often depicted as only maintaining control within its capital, these reports demonstrate the Qajar investment in its expatriate subjects.

The Treaties of Erzurum were catalysts for significant developments in the Middle Eastern identity politics. They altered inter-imperial relations and granted external governments power over individuals and communities outside their traditional

boundaries. Prior to these treaties, the gunpowder empires defined the reach of their power by their geographic boundaries. The Treaties of Erzurum lessened the primacy of borders and created a new standard for the reach of power in the Middle East. The treaties converted the expatriate communities scattered across the Ottoman Empire into Qajar colonies, independent of Ottoman laws and regulations. While these communities were ultimately involved in the downfall of the Qajar government in the early twentieth century, the processes which fostered a sense of civic duty in the Qajar subjects, regardless of their location of residence. Because previous scholars had not seriously considered the impact of the Treaties of Erzurum on expatriate populations, they considered political movements and changes solely in the context of their environment removed from their relationship with the imperial governments.

The Qajars and the Ottoman Shi'is

Beyond addressing imperial-subject relations in the Qajar context, the Treaties of Erzurum affected the nature of Qajar relationships with neighboring Arab subjects in Ottoman Iraq. The stationing of consuls and officials throughout the Ottoman Empire allowed the Qajars to have a hand in local politics, especially those involving the Arab Shi'i communities in Iraq. In this chapter, I consider the provisions of the Treaties of Erzurum, the expressed intentions of the treaties, and their inadvertent consequences concerning the Ottoman Shi'is, especially those living in Iraq.

Initially, the Treaties of Erzurum only addressed extraterritoriality in terms of subjecthood. By agreeing to the Treaties of Erzurum, the Ottomans had granted the Qajars authority and sovereignty over their subjects traveling through or living in the Ottoman Empire. In this chapter, I will answer the following questions: to what extent did the Treaties of Erzurum affect the relationships of the Qajars with communities outside of their legal realm? Did the Qajars affect the politics of the Ottoman Empire? To what degree did the Treaties of Erzurum prevent the Ottomans from controlling their subjects in Ottoman Iraq? To answer these questions, I review other theories on the growth of Shi'ism in Iraq, discuss Ottoman policies concerning Shi'ism during the nineteenth century, and analyze Qajar government documents from the late nineteenth century. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate the impact of Qajar presence in the Ottoman Empire in inter- and intra-imperial relationships between the Qajars, the Shi'is, and the Ottomans during the late nineteenth century.

The primary documents used in this chapter are mostly published letters from Qajar officials and Shi'i leaders based in different places in Ottoman Iraq. Many of these letters were addressed to Muẓaffar al-dīn Shāh, who ruled from 1896-1907, while others

were general reports submitted to the foreign affairs office in Tehran. These documents offer both government and local perspectives on the Qajar-Ottoman Shi'i relationship, because these documents also included responses from Muẓaffar al-dīn Shāh for his officials. These letters, reports, and general missives are invaluable for better understanding the Qajar government's motives and its courses of action for dealing with Shi'is and Shi'ism in Ottoman Iraq.

EXPLANATIONS FOR SHI'I GROWTH IN IRAQ

Various scholars have tried to explain the sudden growth of Shi'ism in Iraq during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Shi'i communities had historically held a presence in the region, but their presence was limited to southern Iraq, especially in the 'Atabat.⁶⁰ Outside these holy cities' limits, the Iraqi population had been largely Sunni until a sudden increase in the Shi'i population. Scholars have identified a number of socio-political changes as the causes for this upsurge in Shi'ism, including Ottoman settlement policies, and the spread of Wahhabism. In addition to these factors, I argue that the Treaties of Erzurum provided opportunities for Qajar subjects to practice their religion freely and for the Qajars to support Iraqi Shi'i communities. These changes in religious freedom and political presences helped maintain the presence of Shi'is in the Ottoman Empire.

During the nineteenth century, the Ottomans erected a number of policies to raise revenue from the nomadic Iraqis. To facilitate collecting the taxes, Ottomans settled the nomads and tied them to an agricultural lifestyle.⁶¹ The Ottomans, however, did not

⁶⁰ Juan Cole and Moojan Momen, "Mafia, Mob, and Shi'ism of Iraq: the Rebellion of Ottoman Karbala 1824-1843," *Past and Present*, no. 112 (1986) 113.

⁶¹ Yitzhak Nakash, "The Conversion of Iraq's Tribes to Shiism" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 26, no. 3 (1994) 449.

expect for these changes to cause a religious-demographic shift amongst the formerly nomadic population.

The settlements allowed for Shi'i clerics to regularly engage these originally Sunni or heterodox people, exposing them to Shi'i teachings and ideals. In his book *the Shi'is of Iraq*, Yitzhak Nakash presents this scenario as a major factor in the conversions to the Shi'i mode of practicing Islam.⁶² Because the Shi'i mosques and clerics only had access to inhabitants of their neighborhoods, the settlement of nomads gave them a larger local population to work with.

Violent Wahhabi attacks on Shi'is during the nineteenth century also played a role in the spread of Shi'ism in Ottoman Iraq. Naturally, these deadly attacks alarmed the Shi'i community. In response, Shi'i clerics in the region were motivated to be more vigilant in educating people about Shi'ism.⁶³ Instead of directly defending Shi'ism, clerics responded by being increasingly active in their communities, gaining the trust of the non-Shi'i population and teaching them about the tenets of the sect. Together, the settlement of nomads and heightened attacks against Shi'is gave the Shi'i clerics both the resources and motivation to reach out to other inhabitants. This compelled Shi'i clerics to strengthen their educational programs and better maintain their mosques in Iraq, which were distinctly different from their dilapidated Sunni counterparts.⁶⁴ These improvements made Shi'i Islam more attractive and accessible to the local inhabitants. In this period, the percentage of people practicing Shi'i Islam reached up to fifty percent of the total population.⁶⁵ Thus, factors outside the power of Shi'i clerics were involved in the

⁶² Yitzhak Nakash, *The Shi'is of Iraq* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994) 28.

⁶³ *Ibid.* 28.

⁶⁴ Huda Al-Khaizaran, "Traditions of Moral Education in Iraq," *Journal of Moral Education* 36, no.3 (2007) 323.

⁶⁵ Yitzhak Nakash, *The Shi'is of Iraq* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994)

increase in Shi'ism. The clerics, however, took advantage of the opportunity to expose new people to the Shi'i school of thought.

In addition to these factors, I argue that the political relationship between the two empires may have influenced the presence of Iraqi Shi'i communities. First, the Treaties of Erzurum gave Qajar subjects foreign status in the Ottoman Empire and granted them state protection.⁶⁶ Articles from these treaties also promised the protection of Qajar pilgrims in Ottoman dominions.⁶⁷ With these special rights, Qajar subjects could visit Shi'i shrines more freely, increasing the amount of traffic in Shi'i centers. I have already discussed the importance of the Treaties of Erzurum on relations between the Qajars and Qajar pilgrims and its significance in forging a nascent imperial identity. It is, however, also important to consider the increase of Shi'i pilgrimage in terms of support for the Shi'i communities of Iraq. With a larger number of people traveling to Najaf and Karbala, collectively known as the 'Atabāt, these Shi'i intellectual centers became stronger and local leaders had increased contact with Qajar subjects. In addition to this, more regular pilgrims, as facilitated by the Treaties of Erzurum, increased revenue for the Shi'i communities. The economics of pilgrimage attracted more Ottoman Arabs to convert to Shi'ism.

Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, the consuls stationed in the Ottoman Empire, were able to expand their sphere of influence outside of Qajar communities. The Qajar government established consulates in major cities and points of interest for their subjects in the Ottoman Empire, including in the 'Atabāt. These consulates handled issues concerning pilgrims while also addressing problems faced by the local Shi'i.

⁶⁶ Bruce Masters, "The Treaties of Erzurum (1823 and 1848) and the changing status of Iranians in the Ottoman Empire," *Iranian Studies* 24, no. 1/4 (1991) 11.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 13.

They reported on the state of local Shi'i communities to Tehran, lobbied on their behalves to Ottoman officials, and offered financial and legal support to the communities. By the mid-nineteenth century, the growth of the Shi'i population had subsided, and the Qajar government focused more on sustaining its imperial presence and the religious presence of Shi'ism in the Ottoman Empire. The Qajar government obliged to requests of the Shi'i community in Iraq and, in return, was well respected in the area. Each of these factors created a dependency on Qajar power and wealth in the region, which seem to have affected the Shi'i communities in a more tangible manner than settlement practices or Wahhabi backlash.

All in all, the Qajar presence in the Ottoman Empire seemed to have a strong influence on the sustained and lively Shi'i communities, especially those in Ottoman Iraq. By agreeing to these treaties, the Ottomans inadvertently strengthened the Shi'i communities and created an important role for Qajar officials. Although the direct consequence of Shi'i loyalties to the Qajars was never truly tested, the heightened dependency worried the Ottomans in case of war with the neighboring empire.

THE OTTOMAN ATTITUDE AND RESPONSE

It is critical to consider the Ottoman perspective on Shi'i growth to better understand the importance of Qajar involvement with Ottoman Shi'i subjects. Prior to the mid-nineteenth century, Ottoman sultans had not addressed the growth of Shi'ism within their borders. Although the spread of Shi'ism had subsided by then, the Ottomans launched a number of programs to break Shi'i dependency on the Qajars. The Ottoman sultan 'Abdulhamīd II ruled from 1876-1909 and took distinct measures to curb Qajar involvement in the Iraqi region and convince Shi'i Ottomans of Sunni Islam. Ottoman officials experimented with a few different endeavors: amendments to citizenship and

marriage laws, the replacement of Shi'i soldiers in Iraq, the education of Shi'i boys in Istanbul, and the employment of Sunni clerics to live amongst the peasantry. These strategies, each of which targeted a different aspect of the perceived problem, were first introduced in 1874 and tried to re-introduce the population to the Sunni sect.

The Ottoman response to Shi'i growth was largely non-violent and based in educating Iraqi Shi'is to attract them to the Sunni sect. 'Alī Galib Bey, the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran, expressed the desired outcome as one reached by "inculcating...the idea that the survival of the Shiite sect in Baghdad...is the result of the protection of His Imperial Majesty the Caliph...demonstrating to the subjects...they can derive no benefit from the Iranian state and its officials."⁶⁸ This stance fueled the perspective for the Ottoman measures taken in Iraq. As discussed later in this chapter, however, these actions were rendered ineffective.

The first legislation directed at controlling Shi'ism preceded the reign of 'Abdulhamīd II in 1874, when citizenship and marriage requirements were amended to address cases involving Iranian spouses. In her article "Rethinking Ottoman Frontier Policies: Marriage and Citizenship in the Province of Iraq," Karen Kern highlights the 1874 "Law Protecting the Prohibition of Marriages between Iranians and Ottoman Citizens." The Ottomans justified the sanction against intermarriage by referring to the precedent against intermarriage "from the olden times," a reference to historic Sunni-Shi'i conflict.⁶⁹ And although this law forbade all marriages between Ottoman and Qajar subjects, it specifically addressed people who chose to defy the ban as well. The Ottoman law added a provision on the marriage of Ottoman Sunni women to Qajar Shi'i men.

⁶⁸ Gökhan Çetinsaya, "The Ottoman view of the Shiite community of Iraq in the late nineteenth century" *The Other Shiites: from the Mediterranean to Central Asia* 1, no. 1 (2007) 35.

⁶⁹ Karen Kern, "Rethinking Ottoman Frontier Policies: Marriage and Citizenship in the Province of Iraq" *Arab Studies Journal* 15, no. 1 (2007) 12.

Traditionally, Muslims adhere to a patriarchal system in which the man's religion as the determiner of the family's religious practice without consideration for other factors. In this system, the wife and the children are expected to practice as the patriarch does. In this law prohibiting intermarriage, the Ottomans announced that if an Ottoman woman were to reject the sanction and marry a Qajar subject, the woman would still retain her status as an Ottoman subject. All children from the marriage would be considered Ottoman subjects as well. By making this pointed distinction in the law, the Ottomans rejected the Islamic patriarchal model for religion and sought to safeguard the Ottoman Sunni population against dilution by marriage with Shi'is.

The Ottomans also took steps to prevent conflicting loyalties from threatening the Ottoman cause in the case of war. Because the Ottoman government identified itself as a Sunni caliphate and the Qajar government was Shi'i by association, the Ottomans were concerned that Ottoman Shi'i soldiers would defect to the Qajars if war erupted between the two powers. The recent disputes concerning the Qajar-Ottoman border exacerbated this worry, and the close proximity of most Ottoman Shi'is to Ottoman-Qajar border seemed to threaten the balance of power between the two empires. In 1891, 'Abdulhamid II ordered for all Shi'i soldiers stationed in Baghdad to be transferred to stations outside of Ottoman Iraq and replaced their posts with Sunni soldiers.⁷⁰ Despite the soldiers' Ottoman citizenship and training, Ottoman officials did not trust their loyalties. The removal and transfer of Shi'i soldiers from Ottoman Iraq signified a practical, short-term solution to the problematic demographics of the Iraq province. The Ottomans did, however, consider education as a long-term means for re-introducing Sunni Islam to the Shi'i populace.

⁷⁰ Gökhan Çetinsaya, "The Ottoman view of the Shiite community of Iraq in the late nineteenth century" *The Other Shiites: from the Mediterranean to Central Asia* 1, no. 1 (2007) 27.

The Ottomans used both formal and informal education as a means to target Ottoman Shi'i and their belief systems. Advisors to the sultan believed the Shi'i monopoly on educational resources in Iraq was responsible for the acceptance of Shi'i thought.⁷¹ Because of this, education became the primary focus of the government. On a formal level, Ottoman advisors believed that they could replicate the model used by American missionaries to teach the superiority of the Sunni school of thought over Shi'ism. By recruiting a group of mostly Shi'i boys for schooling, the Ottoman officials believed the method would teach the students the error of their ways. The program, housed in Istanbul, proved to be a failure. Much to the surprise of Ottoman officials, most students discontinued their attendance during the first few years of their schooling.⁷² Realizing the futility of their efforts, officials decided to educate the Shi'is in a more clandestine way.

Ottoman officials turned to informal education and exposure to Sunni Islam as their primary means of increasing the Sunni presence in Ottoman Iraq. Officials had noted the resources available to Shi'is in the Iraqi region: the Atabat served as a center for Shi'i scholars, and their well-funded schools provided a solid education for students.⁷³ Conversely, inhabitants had abandoned the dilapidated Sunni centers, rendering them as ill-suited for their needs.⁷⁴ 'Abdulhamid II attempted to counter the weak Sunni infrastructure by mimicking a grassroots educational movement. He hired Sunni clerics to live among the poor, landed Ottoman Iraqis who had accepted Shi'ism. These government clerics were instructed to remind the Shi'is of the Sunni way of Islam

⁷¹ Selim Deringil, "The Struggle Against Shiism in Hamidian Iraq: A Study in Ottoman Counter-Propaganda" *Die Welt Des Islams* 30, no. ¼ (1990) 55.

⁷² Gökhan Çetinsaya, "The Caliphs and Mujtahids: Ottoman Policy towards the Shiite Community of Iraq in the Late Nineteenth Century" *Middle Eastern Studies* 41, no. 4 (2005) 565.

⁷³ Gökhan Çetinsaya, "The Ottoman view of the Shiite community of Iraq in the late nineteenth century" *The Other Shiites: from the Mediterranean to Central Asia* 1, no. 1 (2007) 30.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 31.

without drawing attention to themselves or their relationship with the sultan.⁷⁵ The Ottomans wanted the people to believe they found Sunni Islam on their own and not through the state, to prevent any backlash or animosity towards the Ottoman government.

In response to the changing Iraqi demographics, the Ottomans tried legislative, military, and educational actions to increase the presence of Sunnis in the region. Most of the Ottoman government's early actions failed, and the percentage of Shi'is in Ottoman Iraq remained steady throughout the late nineteenth century. Had the Ottomans targeted Qajar presence in Iraq in a serious way from the beginning, it is possible that the Shi'i presence would not have persisted through the nineteenth century. Qajar support of the local Ottoman Shi'i in Iraq was extensive, and the Ottoman reforms neglected to address this vital relationship for the Shi'i community. The next sections will show the extent of Qajar involvement in Ottoman Iraq, a contrast to the limited influence of the Ottomans amongst their Shi'i subjects.

QAJAR INVESTMENT IN SHI'I IRAQ

The Qajars exercised their influence in Ottoman Iraq to simultaneously serve their own motives and benefit the local community. As discussed in the previous chapter on the Qajars and their pilgrims, the Qajars had vested interests in maintaining the safety of travelers through the Ottoman frontier. Their investment, however, went beyond the protection of Qajar subjects and dealt with the social issues of the Shi'i community.

Qajar direct involvement with local Shi'is fell into two general categories. First, the Qajars provided financial backing for different projects that benefited the community. Most of these requests concerned funding for rebuilding or remodeling Shi'i mosques. The funds represented more than simple money transfers: all requests were loaded with

⁷⁵ Ibid. 32.

political rhetoric, a nod to the power politics between the two imperial powers. Second, the Qajars helped maintain a public Shi'i presence during important Muslim and Shi'i commemorations, especially during Hajj and Ashura processions. During each holiday, the Qajars advocated for Shi'i participation and provided security to guarantee their protection. By doing so, the Qajars were able to maintain their influence in the region, counter Ottoman anti-Shi'i propaganda, and meet some of the needs of the Shi'i community in Iraq.

The Qajars focused their attention on the maintenance of major Shi'i centers: mosques and shrines. The Qajars interacted with leaders from the Ottoman Shi'i community, who contacted the foreign government with fund requests for building materials or repairs. The issue of funding was intertwined with imperial competition for the attention of the Shi'is. In his 1896 letter to Tehran, a Qajar official stationed in Baghdad named Nazim al-Molk outlined a series of half-finished shrines in need of repairs.⁷⁶ His letter enumerated two obstacles regarding the support. First, he mentioned that the Ottomans had already promised funds but had delayed in sending any in due time. Second, Nazim al-Molk expressed concern regarding a recent Ottoman law preventing Qajar intervention in the development of religious centers. In his letter, Nazim al-Molk highlighted a new effort on behalf of 'Abdulhamid II's administration to curb Qajar presence and influence in the provincial region. This alarming update was followed by a request to the Qajar government to formally approach the Ottomans and request permission to provide funds. Although the Ottomans attempted to bar the Qajars from contributing to new Shi'i religious centers, they were not steadfast in these rulings.

Some Ottoman officials sidestepped the recent Qajar funding ban and granted the Qajars permission to send funds on a case-by-case basis. Sheikh Hamid, an Ottoman

⁷⁶ Ibid. 16-17.

official, granted to the shrine of the seventh Shi'i imam, Musā al-Kazim this special exception.⁷⁷ In a letter written in 1897, the leaders of the mosque submitted a letter to the Qajars urging prompt action on their behalf, lest Sheikh Ḥamīd reversed his generous decision. Just as was expressed in Nazim al-Molk's correspondence, this letter points towards the Shi'i community's distrust of Ottoman promises. Even though the Ottomans had guaranteed their cooperation with the Shi'i shrine and Qajar government, the Shi'is persisted in their negative expectation of the Ottomans.

The requests made by these letters to the Qajars rested on the assumption that the Qajars were likely to send funding, despite the Ottoman guarantees of financial support. In both letters, the authors cited these repairs as an urgent legal and social matter. The authors were keenly aware of their responsibilities to the community, and persuaded the Qajar government to act quickly because unkempt property "reflects poorly on the Muslim nation," or, more specifically, the Shi'i community of Iraq.⁷⁸ Muẓaffar al-dīn Shāh responded to these each of these letters himself, briefly outlining the course of action for each situation.

It should be mentioned that the Qajar Empire did not act upon all requests. In 1896, Nazim al-Molk wrote another letter, requesting good quality candles.⁷⁹ The lanterns in the shrines, he wrote, caused too much smoke, blackening the mirrored mosaics and dirtying the prayer areas. He asked for candles that would create less smoke but still provide the same amount of light. Calling it a small investment for attracting new worshippers, Nazim al-Molk petitioned for twenty candles per shrine. Muẓaffar al-dīn Shāh responded to this request as well, citing the request as outside the responsibilities of the Qajar government. The Qajars, while willing to support the Ottoman Shi'is, were

⁷⁷ Ibid. 32-33.

⁷⁸ Ibid. 16-17. This is my translation.

⁷⁹ Ibid. 14-15.

prudent in their decisions and focused their efforts on maintaining Shi'i presences instead of cosmetic changes to lighting fixtures.

Without the Treaties of Erzurum, officials like Nazim al-Molk would not have been stationed in the Ottoman province, writing letters for construction funds or candles. With the presence of consulates in the Ottoman Empire, Qajar officials were better able to ascertain the needs of the Shi'i communities and how to best support them. While requests like candles were ignored, the Qajars did act upon most requests for the upkeep of Shi'i religious centers. The financial relationship between the Qajars and the Shi'is was met with great tension by the Ottomans, who tried to reject Qajar presence as much as possible. Although the Ottoman government attempted to work with the Shi'i community directly and prevent Qajar interference, these documents demonstrate that their efforts were not always appreciated or trusted.

Many of the correspondences from the Qajar consuls reported on two major times of the Islamic calendar: the pilgrimage to Mecca and the commemoration of the death of Muhammad's grandson Husayn. Each year, during the months of Dhul Hijjah and Muharram respectively, officials submitted reviews of their activity and Shi'i participation in these events. Of course, it must be mentioned that many Qajar subjects travelled to the Ottoman Empire to take part in the traditions for each event. Although these events were traditionally religious, imperial allegiance and presence proved to be important factors at these events.

Imperial presence during hajj was much more direct than ever before during the late nineteenth century. In 1898, the Qajar government set up a public display during the Hajj with permission from the Sherif of the Hejaz. Moṣṭafā, a Qajar official stationed in Mecca, wrote multiple letters to Tehran with regular updates of his work in Mecca.⁸⁰ In

⁸⁰ Ibid. 18-21.

his correspondences, he discusses his plan to raise the Qajar imperial flag over the embassy's tent during hajj. According to his reports, the Qajar flag was the first flag to be present at hajj, a privilege won only after a series of negotiations with the Ottomans. The decision to allow imperial insignia at a religious event came as a surprise to the Qajars, since the Ottomans had previously discouraged overt Qajar presence and involvement in the region. From analyzing the letters, it seems that the Qajars perceived this early publicity as Shi'i presence at a non-partisan Muslim gathering. The Qajars appreciated the gesture, and Muẓaffar al-dīn asked Moṣṭafā to thank the Hejazi sherif with an appropriate gift. Despite the importance of such a gesture, the officials were more invested in knowing about the Muharram processions in Baghdad than hearing about hajj in Mecca.

Shi'i observances during the first ten days of Muharram garnered much more attention from Qajar officials than any other point of the year. Every year, Shi'i Muslims gather to commemorate the death of the Muhammad's grandson Huṣayn, who was killed during the Battle of Karbala. Shi'is view Huṣayn's death as a pivotal point in their history and memorialize it through mourning processions. In 1897, a report submitted to Tehran reviewed injuries and deaths at the processions the past year and the steps taken to prevent any deaths the following year. Ottoman officials had tried to shut down the processions, which prompted a series of "difficult negotiations" between the Qajars and the Ottomans.⁸¹ Ultimately, the Ottomans permitted the processions to take place and sent officers to provide security for the mourners. The negotiations, as well as the attention to detail in these reports, demonstrate the extent to which the Qajar government assumed its role as a Shi'i state.

⁸¹ Ibid. 22-27.

When discussing either holiday or event, the officials conveyed a congenial or neutral relationship between the Ottomans and Qajars in their letters. Letters discussing funding were much harsher in tone, and the author often used antagonistic language to characterize the Ottomans. These officials used a far more tempered tone in their reports on special events. Thus, it may be understood that these gatherings at definite points of the year were generally tolerated. In an 1892 report, an Ottoman official blamed the growth of Shi'ism on these processions and called attention to the lax behavior of local officials towards the Shi'i practices.⁸² From these Qajar accounts dated in the later 1890s, it is evident that this report did not have a large impact on persuading local officials of curbing Qajar presence in the region. The legal presence of the Qajars coupled with the apathy of some local officials allowed the Qajars to exert more power and influence in the region.

In fact, the Qajars exerted so much influence over Ottoman Iraq that it may have helped develop a Shi'i culture distinct from other Shi'i communities in the Ottoman Empire. 'Ashura processions, for example, an activity specific to the Shi'is, were publicly hosted every month of Muharram in the 'Atabāt. Public processions and other displays of mourning, however, were limited to Ottoman Iraq. Other Ottoman provinces with a strong Shi'i population and weak Qajar presence, like in Lebanon, had a very different method of commemorating Husayn's death in the battle of Karbala. In his book, *In the Shadow of Sectarianism: Law, Shi'ism and the Making of Modern Lebanon*, Max Weiss identifies 'Ashura commemorations as "clandestine gatherings" amongst Lebanese Shi'i during Ottoman rule.⁸³ Unlike the Iraqi Shi'i, the Lebanese Shi'i were not able to practice

⁸² Gökhan Çetinsaya, "The Ottoman view of the Shiite community of Iraq in the late nineteenth century" *The Other Shiites: from the Mediterranean to Central Asia* 1, no. 1 (2007) 30.

⁸³ Max Weiss, *In the Shadow of Sectarianism: Law, Shi'ism, and the Making of Modern Lebanon* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010) 67.

this tradition freely in public. Although the Qajars did have a consulate stationed in Beirut,⁸⁴ they did not exercise the same level of influence in the region.

The weaker Qajar presence in Ottoman Lebanon could be related to a number of factors. First, the Qajars had built a rapport with local Shi'i communities in Iraq because of the importance of the 'Atabāt as a Shi'i center of culture, education, and pilgrimage. The importance of the 'Atabāt to Shi'is is only second to Mecca and Medina. Lebanese Shi'i were not affiliated with any large or significant shrines, and thus, were more isolated from other Shi'is. Thus, pilgrimage traffic played a large role in determining the priorities of the Qajar officials. Second, the sheer proximity of Ottoman Iraq to Iran, and the Qajar claims to the 'Atabāt likely made the Qajars more aware of the Iraqi Shi'is than their Lebanese counterparts. And third, Ottoman Iraq had a much larger population of Shi'is in comparison to the Lebanese. The Lebanese Shi'i were mostly limited to Jabal 'Amil, a region in southern Lebanon. Because of these factors, the Qajars focused on Ottoman Iraq, where they clearly influenced the landscape of the region and the nature of the Shi'i communities.

CONCLUSION

Although the Treaties of Erzurum were intended for maintaining imperial-subject relations, the Qajars wielded their power to affect communities outside of their jurisdiction. The presence of active consuls in Ottoman Iraq allowed the Qajars to better acquaint themselves with the Shi'i communities of Iraq and address some of their needs. While it is true that the consuls prioritized issues pertaining to Qajar subjects, they were also intent on supporting Shi'ism in various forms abroad. This commitment of the

⁸⁴ Johann Strauss, "La Présence Diplomatique Iranienne," in *Les Iraniens D'Istanbul*, Th. Zarcone and F. Zarinebaf-Shahr (Paris: Institut Français de Recherche en Iran, 1993), 29.

Qajars conflicted with Ottoman wishes for a Sunni populace, but the opposing tensions did not prevent the Qajars from continuing their involvement in Ottoman Iraq.

It is impossible to trace the growth of the Iraqi Shi'i population directly back to the Qajars. However, the Qajars did play a role in sustaining the community during the late nineteenth century. Scholars have cited various factors in motivating the Shi'i clerics to educate the local Iraqis of Shi'ism. However, they have not always stressed the importance of Qajar support of these clerics and their institutions as an external factor that affected Shi'ism's growth. The financial and legal support of the Qajars gave the Shi'i community the resources necessary to effectively talk to former nomads and present Shi'ism in an appealing manner. The financial and legal support given to the Shi'i community outweighed Ottoman efforts to re-introduce Sunni Islam to the region. The continual presence of the Qajars, made possible by their consul and officials, countered further Ottoman actions and furthered endeared the Qajars to the Shi'is.

Even though the Ottomans feared that the growth of Shi'ism would prompt a stronger Qajar Empire, very few of their earlier efforts concerning the Shi'i population addressed the Qajar government. It was not until the late 1890s when a Qajar document mentioned Ottoman legislation directly targeting Qajar financial support for religious centers. This delay in addressing the geopolitical imperial tension allowed the Qajars to operate fairly freely and make use of the Treaties of Erzurum to spread the power.

A number of factors allowed the Qajars to take advantage of the Treaties of Erzurum. First, the Qajar consulates were already active with cases concerning Qajar pilgrims in the region. As discussed in the earlier chapter on Qajar pilgrims, Qajar subjects often chose to travel to Iraq to visit the 'Atabāt. Because of these cases, the Qajars built an extensive network with local Shi'is for the benefit of Qajar subjects, but also for the sake of maintaining Shi'ism as well. The Qajars benefited from taxes

collected from Qajar subjects for visas and passports when traveling to the ‘Atabāt, so maintaining and remodeling these holy centers may have been an investment in the continuation of religious tourism and maintenance these sources of revenue.

It is more likely, however, that Qajar support for these particular religious Shi’i institutions was intensely linked to its self-identification as a Shi’i empire. For the Qajars, embracing the title “Shi’i Empire” went hand in hand with assuming responsibility of Shi’i interests. In this context, the Qajars interpreted Shi’i interests in terms of proper and protected worship at well-kept mosques and organized processions. Because the ‘Atabāt housed shrines popular for pilgrimage, it made sense for the Qajars to pay greater attention to them. Had they decided against supporting this significant Shi’i community, both in size and in history, the Qajars may have sacrificed their legitimacy and lost the respect of Shi’is who regarded the empire as their refuge. Additionally, supporting these communities bolstered their claims of being the Shi’i Empire and gained them respect amongst local Shi’i.

The Qajars used their consulates, which were established after the Treaties of Erzurum, to expand their influence over individuals that were previously outside of their jurisdiction. Their relationship with the Shi’is became firmly entrenched and set a precedent for later international relationships between the Iranian and foreign Shi’i groups. Since the late nineteenth century, governments have changed, but most religious affiliations have not. The model for these relationships, which rested mostly on financial power, have since been used by the Iranian government in other contexts.

Conclusion

In these three chapters, I have demonstrated the importance of the Treaties of Erzurum in fostering new relationships between the Qajar government and their subjects. These associations set a precedent for later nationalist movements and provided a basis for the Constitutional Revolution in 1906 when Qajar subjects were recognized as citizens. The citizenship-like qualities of subjecthood under the Treaties of Erzurum facilitated an easier transition for the Qajars. In fact, the impact of the Constitutional Revolution may not have changed much outside the Qajar Empire, since the extraterritorial status of expatriates already mimicked regular citizenship. In addition to developing imperial-subject relationships, the Treaties of Erzurum affected the Qajars' general sphere of influence abroad, since the presence of consulates enabled relationships with outside groups such as the Ottoman Shi'i communities of Iraq.

Each of these three chapters focused on a specific group connected to the Qajar Empire, despite being outside of it. The travelers, the expatriates, and the Shi'is each had a unique relationship with the Qajars. The nuances distinguishing each of these relationships demonstrate an important reality: the Qajars were able to identify various groups and their needs, despite being located outside of the empire. The presence of the consulates, as permitted by the Treaties of Erzurum, allowed the Qajars to maintain a legitimate and pervasive presence in the Ottoman Empire. By establishing consulates in various cities across the Ottoman Empire, the Qajars had extensive networks to provide detailed reports back to Tehran while also meeting the needs of the local populace. Although the Qajars may have only enjoyed weak control over their empire, they were able to extend their sovereignty over groups outside their geographic limitations.

The progression of association between the Qajars and these different communities is, in a way, counterintuitive. One would expect the Qajars to have fostered

the strongest relationships with the travelers. After all, the travelers were Qajar subjects who lived in Iran and had only left it briefly for religious or trading purposes. This basic relationship, however, seems to have been basic in its implications as well. Although the increased bureaucracy created more opportunities for Qajar travelers to assume their imperial identity, they seem to have adopted it on a simple level. In the travelogues, expressions of imperial affiliation were limited to bureaucratic processes and a few conversations with foreigners. One would expect that the travelers had the strongest relationship with the Qajars. While it is obvious that the Treaties of Erzurum created a need for a relationship between the travelers and the empire, the relationship seemed to be limited to one of convenience and legal circumstances.

The Treaties of Erzurum, however, seem to have affected the expatriate communities more directly. Like the travelers, expatriates were given paperwork to represent their legal status. The formal acknowledgement of their status affirmed their connection to the empire, regardless of their decision to not live there. Beyond this legal affiliation, expatriates highlighted their ties to the empire by seeking to create and serve a distinctly Iranian community through the establishment of mosques, newspapers, and even a school. Articles written in Persian-language newspapers demonstrate that many expatriates expressed solidarity with the Qajar Empire. The diversity of opinion in these articles point towards the various motivations of expatriates in leaving the Qajar Empire. More importantly, the articles highlight the expatriates' level of investment in political events that concerned the Qajar Empire. In comparison to the travelers, the expatriates had developed a much stronger relationship with the Qajar Empire, as shown through their different organizations and centers.

While the Qajars fostered basic diplomatic relations with their subjects and expatriates, they put the most effort in addressing the needs of Shi'i communities in Iraq.

Qajar support of travelers and expatriates was limited to addressing the legal needs of their subjects. With the Shi'i communities, however, the Qajars obliged financial requests to maintain the community survival and its independence from overbearing Ottoman laws. The Qajar-Shi'i relationship's lack of any official or legal basis did not prevent the Qajars from maneuvering around Ottoman laws. This relationship demonstrated the value of allying one's government with foreign groups under the guise of religion. By providing for the Shi'i communities, the Qajars were able to create a political alliance with a group outside their borders, expanding their sphere of influence beyond their own subjects and into foreign soil.

This project, like all projects, has its shortcomings. Given more time and resources, I would have liked to expand this study to include more sources to strengthen my understanding of the different parties involved. In each chapter, I discuss the imperial-subject or imperial-community relationship. Ideally, primary sources from both sides would have provided a clearer look at the different perspectives. Unfortunately, I was not able to find any government documents that discussed the consulates' relationship with the expatriate populations. To mitigate this, I relied more heavily on travelogues and local expatriate sources, which allowed me to get a sense of the relationship. Regardless, incorporating such primary documents would have added another dimension and benefited this project greatly.

In addition to this, primary sources written by the Iraqi Shi'i community would have also added depth to this study. While it is clear that the Qajars viewed the Shi'is as an important ally, if not more, the Iraqi Shi'i perspective on the Qajars remains unclear. Although the documents used in this paper include letters written by Shi'i leaders from Baghdad, it is likely that their language was modified to appeal to the Qajars. Internal Shi'i documents could reveal whether the Shi'i communities in Iraq had a strong affinity

with the Qajars, or if they viewed their relationship with the imperial power as a simply political alliance for their livelihood. A comparison of Shi'i perspectives on the Qajars versus the Ottomans would further our understanding of imperial affiliation and identity. Although the Treaties of Erzurum and the *Hatt-i Sherif* both undermined religious associations as a means to determined legal sovereignty, the Iraqi Shi'is may provide an example of where these declarations failed. Without proper documents, one cannot assume the Iraqi Shi'is rejected their legal status as Ottomans. Instead, it is evident that religious affiliations lingered after the Treaties of Erzurum and continue to do so today. Further research on this subject should address these missing pieces and incorporate more sources to strengthen the narrative.

Another aspect that scholars should consider for future research concerns the Ottoman perspective, not only on the Qajar subjects living within its realm, but also on the role of Ottoman consulates in the Qajar regions. Domestically speaking, I provided a cursory review of Ottoman measures to break Qajar-Shi'i ties. The Treaties of Erzurum however, did not protect the Shi'is, and Ottoman suspicion of Qajar involvement in the region was warranted. More analysis on Ottoman policies towards groups protected by the Treaties of Erzurum, namely Qajar subjects—travelers and expatriates—would demonstrate the degree to which the Ottomans respected and upheld the Treaties of Erzurum.

In addition to this, however, scholars should also look into Ottoman involvement in the Qajar Empire. Their relationship with Ottoman subjects abroad provides an important point of comparison in understanding the strength and ability of these empires to foster a sense of identity in their subjects. It would be interesting to compare whether both empires offered the same types of support—financial and legal—to serve their

subjects abroad. Unfortunately, the inclusion of Ottoman primary sources went beyond the scope of this paper, but represents an important area of work for future scholarship.

The Treaties of Erzurum played an important role in Middle Eastern geo-politics during the nineteenth century. The terms of the treaties opened new means of creating and imposing diplomatic ties between governments and people. The impact of these treaties have been far-reaching, priming people for nationalist movements and training governments to expand their power beyond their respective geographic borders.

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