

An Analysis of the Foundations and Dimensions of the Economy of Kashan in the Qajar Era from Abdul Rasoul Madani's Point of View

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Received: 19/01/2024

Accepted: 26/05/2024

Introduction

Abd Al-Rasul Madani (1280-1366 AH / 1863-1946 AD) is one of the clerics of Kashan who, during the Constitutional era, wrote the treatise *Ensafiya* in continuation of the tradition of writing treatises by scholars and in order to show the conformity of the Constitutional era with the laws of Islam. By publishing it in 1328 AH (1910 AD), he was able to soften the atmosphere to the benefit of the Constitutional era and the constitutionalists. Fereydoun Adamiyat considers the value of this treatise in intellectual discussions to be higher than that of Na'ini's *Tanbih al-Ummah wa Tanzih al-Milla* (The admonition of people and the refinement of Sharia). In this treatise, Madani paid special attention to the economic issues of the Qajar period. Relying on Quranic verses and hadiths, he considers the acquisition of wealth as endorsed by Islam, linking it to the creation of freedom and security in society.

Materials and Methods

This article analyzes Abd Al-Rasul Madani's views on the economy of Kashan during the Qajar period using a historical and descriptive-analytical method and with the help of archival documents and primary sources. The aim of this article is to test the hypothesis that Abd Al-Rasul Madani's views on the economic situation of Kashan during the Qajar period are consistent with reality and are confirmed by the original documents and sources. Therefore, Madani's points of view are presented in a concrete manner, and their conformity with the sources and documents is assessed.

Results and Findings

The findings of this article show that Abd Al-Rasul Madani's views are supported by archival documents and primary sources, confirming their alignment with historical realities.

Madani observed a change in the country's economic policy during the Qajar era, shifting from exporting manufactured goods to importing them while instead exporting raw materials. As a result, the reduction in the number of weaving machines caused a decrease in silk production, and following the recession of industries and unemployment of workers, farmers also faced a recession and turned to selling raw silk. Exporting raw silk was more profitable; therefore, merchants got involved in this business and exported raw silk and imported cloth. Madani emphasizes the added value that the manufactured goods have compared to the raw material. On the other hand, since the farmers of Kashan cultivated industrial agricultural products such as cotton and tobacco, Kashan's grain had to be imported from outside Kashan, and there was always a grain deficit in Kashan. This situation, especially in Kashan, exacerbated to the famine of 1288 AH (1871 AD).

Regarding customs duties and their impact on traditional Iranian industries against foreign goods, he protested why the government did not collect much customs duty on foreign goods so that they would be imported more expensively and find a smaller market.

He believed that taxes should be collected in proportion to the income and assets of individuals and objected to the collection of arbitrary taxes. Madani believed that the country's income and expenditures should be recorded and considered this issue to be one of the principles of a constitutional government.

The widespread unemployment and people's engagement in unproductive jobs as well as the multiple occupations of government officials, were always central issues for this innovative cleric. Abd Al-Rasoul Madani criticized unemployment, viewing it as an obstacle to constitutionalism. Although Kashan had always been wealthy due to surplus production; at this time, people were unemployed and the city was impoverished due to the import of foreign fabrics. Madani also cited unemployment as one of the reasons for the rise of Nayebeh Hossein Kashi to power and the prolongation of his rebellion. Moreover, Madani condemned taking up multiple occupations, regarding it as an impediment to constitutionalism.

Madani has addressed the issue of downsizing the government and making it more agile, which perhaps few innovators at that time thought about. As the head of the Kashan provincial association and the Peace Court, one of Kashan's Sharia courts, he, as a person who was informed and involved in executive work in the post-constitutional period, was aware of the increasing number of government offices and the difficulties faced by the people of Kashan. Thus, he emphasized that departments should be small and agile.

Conclusion

Abd al-Rasul Madani identifies the root causes of various problems in the country during the constitutional period primarily arising from economic issues. The import of foreign goods at low tariffs had caused the bankruptcy of Kashan's textile weaving workshops. Madani argued for high tariffs on foreign goods, reducing taxes for domestic trade, and exporting manufactured goods with high added value rather than raw materials. He believed that wealth should be attained through productive occupations, like agriculture. He endorsed wealth acquisition as sanctioned by Islam, leading to security and freedom in society. His recommendation was to abandon non-

productive occupations in favor of productive work. Madani continually criticized the multiple occupations of government officials during that time. He believed the government should be small and agile to effectively manage affairs without needing to expand its scope across all sectors. His insights were rooted in addressing the core issues of his time, linking the resolution of problems to the internal awareness and economic initiative of the people.

Keywords: Abd Al-Rasul Madani, Qajar period economy, unemployment, constitutionalism, textile weaving workshops, imports.