



## A Comparative Study of the Women Social Situation in The Sassanid and Qajar Era

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### Abstract

The current research intended to compare the social situations of women in the Sassanid and Qajar eras. The research universe included women's motifs in the art works such as coins and paintings. The sample subsumed Sassanid and Qajar women clothing in the cultural data of these periods. The research was designed as historical descriptive and comparative study. Data was collected based on the library records, available documents and index cards note taking. The data was analyzed by qualitative procedure. The results revealed that women in both periods countered specific jurisprudential readings of the official religion of their era and in both periods were ready to accept major external changes. In the first case, Islam and in the second case, the wave of globalization and modernism entered the country and changed the position of women. Although women faced restrictions in the Sassanid and Qajar periods, they engaged in activism, social activity, and even influence over important governmental affairs under the guise of society. In the Sassanid period, this role was largely obvious and transparent; but in the Qajar period, in order to fulfill their desires, they had to fulfill their desires through men and the influence of their gender role.



## Extended abstract

**Introduction:** Undoubtedly, women's behavior, culture and thought play an important role in shaping a society. The transition from the first period of matrilineal to the realm of patriarchy was accompanied by the formation of large social societies which in structures such as tribes, city-states, micro-national governments were formed. In these social periods, women had a position, many of which were imposed on them. The position of women did not change much as it needed to be actively expressed in society. The social character of a woman a hundred years ago had many similarities with her character two thousand years ago. Due to the historical continuity on the one hand and the creation of a break in social life in certain periods of Iranian society, two periods in the history of Iranian society were considered to be studied and compare the social situation of women. It was the Sassanid period and the Qajar period, which were both representative of historical continuity and the period of change. The Sassanids were from the Persian tribes of Iran and formed their empire based on the Iranian religion and government. The Sassanids made Zoroastrianism official among the Iranians, and the other Iranian tribes each had their own specific and official beliefs. The position of women in the Sassanid period was better than their situation in the Middle Ages and they played an active role in society. During the Qajar dynasty in 1212 AH. with the reign of Agham Mohammad Khan Qajar began. The Qajar period represented an important change in the historical status of women in Eastern society. During this period, the woman gradually emerged from the closed space of the house and the patriarchal man's guardianship and wanted to express herself. At the forefront of this trend were court women. The court was the center of political power in the country. According to the reported materials, the purpose of this study was to identify and compare the social situations of women in the Sassanid and Qajar periods.

**Method:** The current research intended to compare the social situations of women in the Sassanid and Qajar eras. The research universe included women's motifs in the art works such as coins and paintings. The sample subsumed Sassanid and Qajar women clothing in the cultural data of these periods. The research was designed as historical descriptive and comparative study. Data was collected based on the library records, available documents and index cards note taking. The data was analyzed by qualitative procedure.

**Results:** The results revealed that women in both periods countered specific jurisprudential readings of the official religion of their era and in both periods were ready to accept major external changes. In the first case, Islam and in the second case, the wave of globalization and modernism entered the country and changed the position of women. Although women faced restrictions in the Sassanid and Qajar periods, they engaged in activism, social activity, and even influence over important governmental affairs under the guise of society. In the Sassanid period, this role was largely obvious and transparent; but in the Qajar period, in order to fulfill their desires, they had to fulfill their desires through men and the influence of their gender role.

**Conclusion:** During the Sassanid period, women of the lower classes of society probably suffered from the strictures and persecutions of some dogmatic Mughans, and of course in the Qajar period, such a situation existed in full force. An important difference in the status



of women in the two periods was that in the Sassanid period, the relatively significant position of women in Iran was at a time and place where in many places, women were burned or buried alive, but in Iran, the situation was different. During the Qajar period, women were subjected to social oppression and oppression; but the status of women in the world at that time was growing and progressing. From another point of view, it could be observed that the situation of women in both periods, their position and the situation of society as a whole was prone and prepared for great changes. In the first case, Islam pervaded Iran with its expansion, and in the second case, modernity, enlightenment and modernism entered Iran, and in both periods, Iranian society was receptive to external influences; because women, as the dark side of the moon or the silent majority, sought change and fundamental change.

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