

# Qajar Government and Urmia Crisis in World War I

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## **Abstract**

With the start of World War I and despite Iran's declaration of neutrality by Ahmad Shah Qajar, Iran became involved in the War and some Iranian cities were occupied by Russia, the Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire. Among the occupied territories, Azerbaijan and the city of Urmia and its environs deeply plunged into crisis due to ethnic variety, religious diversity, and differences in the way of life. The present article aimed to review and analyze the performance of the Iranian government in controlling the Urmia crisis. By studying the causes of the crisis in Urmia, this analytical descriptive research thus tried to answer the question that what the Qajar government did to control the crisis in Urmia and what the result of those measures was. The findings of the research show that the Qajar government made an effort to control the crisis through firstly negotiations with the occupying powers to withdraw their forces from Azerbaijan, secondly dispatching the crown prince to Tabriz, and thirdly changing the governors of Urmia. Nevertheless, due to the extreme weakness of the central government, an increasing financial crisis, and the lack of reliable military forces, it could not achieve much in managing the crisis.

**Keywords:** World War I, Qajar, Azerbaijan, Urmia, Triple Axis, Triple Alliance.

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