

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Examining the Role of Iranian Women During the Famine of the First World War (1914–1918)

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

Causal framing overstates “primary cause” and needs a tighter historiographical debate. Section 1 states: “The primary cause of famine in Iran has consistently been the forces of nature and climatic fluctuations...” Yet later you emphasize war, occupation, hoarding, and export procurement. Please revise this paragraph to present the causal structure as a contested historiographical question (climate shocks vs. political economy/war logistics), and clearly state where your argument stands in that debate.

Problematic or unclear sourcing: “Brittlebank” vs. the cited works. In the Introduction you write: “William Brittlebank... documented...” but then cite “(Polak, 1989; Rosen, 1990).” This is internally inconsistent: Polak and Rosen are separate travelogue sources and do not appear to correspond to Brittlebank. Please correct the traveler identity, provide the correct bibliographic entry, and align citations with the correct claim.

Section 3: strengthen source criticism and provenance for quoted/telegraphed materials. You mention “As reflected in a telegram, Kurdish notables and merchants appealed...” but do not provide the archive, collection, date, or citation. For historical rigor, please add full provenance: date, sender/recipient, collection name, and where it is published/archived.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

Critical engagement with Majd needs to be methodologically operationalized. You note that Majd's casualty figures "require further scrutiny and precision," but later you cite Majd's estimate of "10 to 13 million." Please either (a) present competing estimates from other scholarship and explain why you adopt or bracket Majd's numbers, or (b) treat the figures as contested and avoid repeating a single high-end estimate as if settled.

Section 2: requires clearer conceptual framework for "traditional society" and "public sphere." The section uses phrases like "traditional and patriarchal structures," "inner/domestic sphere," and "public sphere," but these are not defined. Please add a brief conceptual paragraph at the beginning of Section 2 defining how you operationalize "public presence/agency" and how you identify it in sources (e.g., press reports, memoir accounts, official correspondence).

Section 2: anachronism risk in rights-language and "women's consciousness." The statement "core of 'women's consciousness'" and later "demands such as suffrage" is plausible, but the paper should distinguish contemporaneous vocabulary from retrospective analytic categories. Please indicate whether "women's consciousness" is your term or taken from a cited author, and show at least one primary-source example (e.g., women's journals) that evidences self-articulated claims.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.