

## IRANIAN AND OTTOMAN SOCIAL RELATIONS IN THE SAFAVID ERA

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### **Abstract**

*Iran and the Ottoman Empire, two Muslim neighboring countries, have had good relations throughout history. Of course, this long association on the stage of history has sometimes been the scene of military and political conflicts. But these crises have never been able to deeply affect the friendship between these two nations. The purpose of this research is to highlight the good relations that have existed between the two countries. Undoubtedly, religious, political, scientific, cultural and mystical issues are at the forefront of the issues that connect these two nations. The fact that Atebat-ı Aliye, such as the Kaaba, Masjid-i Nebi, Najaf and Karbala, was located in the Ottoman lands, as well as the fact that the caravans traveling for trade and visits spent a lot of time in these lands, resulted in the establishment of very strong relations between the Iranian and Ottoman peoples.*

### **Key words**

*Tahmasb I, sunnahs, The Battle of Manzikert, Bezm-u Rezm, Sheikh Juneyd, Akkoyunlu State*

### **INTRODUCTION**

At the beginning of the 17th century, two important changes and innovations had visibly changed the face of the Ottoman State and society. The first of these is the coming to power of a state that adopted the Shiite ideology under the name of Safavids in Iran and then gradually making its weight felt in the region. They were magnificent victories of the Ottoman state against the western states. In this period, when the Ottoman Empire reached its peak in power and was a political authority, the Ottoman Empire was still a great representative of the Iranian-Turkish culture, whose center was in Central Asia and Iran. The social ties established between the Ottoman and Iranian peoples should not be seen as a relationship to be underestimated. Because there was a deep religious, literary, mystical and social bond between these two Muslim societies.

Although these relations have lost their color and weakened in some periods of history, they have never been broken. Even in the political and military conflicts that broke out between the two states, these two nations were able to maintain their social and cultural ties.

### MAIN PART

In most of the agreements signed between these two states, articles on road safety and the life safety of people traveling on these roads have been approved. In the text called "Sulhname" signed by Shah Tahmasb I with the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent; "As long as both states stand, their political relations will continue and Iranian visitors will be facilitated in the lands under Ottoman control." [1] is used. Another factor that strengthens the social ties between Iran and the Ottoman Empire is the mutual migration of people living in the lands of these two countries in groups. The Ottomans had always accepted and supported Iranian immigrants in the position of administration of the country. Bernard Lewis writes on this subject: "... Whether in terms of state and administration, in the fields of fiqh and kalam, or in literature and culture, after the Seljuks, it was the Ottomans who carried this flag and represented the eastern school. Likewise, the Ottomans offered many opportunities to the immigrants coming from the east to take part in the state administration" [2].

Some researchers describe the source of the endless wealth of the Ottoman sultans as the masses of people, scholars and men of letters who migrated from Iran in large groups. Others see the blessed religion of Islam as the foundation of the cultural and social bond that existed between Iran and the Ottoman Empire: "Although the cultural and social closeness of these two nations goes back to ancient times, the essence of this closeness is actually fed by one thing, and that is the adherence of both communities to the blessed religion of Islam. The customs, traditions and sunnahs of the religion of Islam, which have taken a place between these two peoples, are observed quite clearly" [3].

In our next topic, the individual and collective migrations of the Iranian and Ottoman peoples will be discussed.

### The Reasons for the Arrival and Migration of Iranians to Anatolia in Groups

Throughout history, many groups of Iranian peoples have had to leave their lands, sometimes due to the influence of foreign powers and sometimes due to the unrest within themselves. With the Arab invasion of Iranian lands, many Iranians emigrated to India. In the previous periods, that is, during the Sassanid period, the pressure and heavy sanctions applied by the Zoroastrian rulers against the Mazdak and Mani religions, which were very powerful and active in their own time, and

the later killing of the people of other religions living in the region by the Abbasids caused these people to see Anatolia as a door of salvation. [4]

Especially the geographical proximity of Anatolia, the fact that the eastern parts had very fertile lands compared to today, and the fact that the population was quite low can be counted as important factors for Iranian immigrants to settle in these regions. On the other hand, the high mountains and wide plains on these lands, and the borders that were not yet clear, did not constitute an obstacle for the immigrants to come and go. In addition, these regions were no longer called the Land of Rum because of the relentless wars between the Greeks and the Iranians. And again, when we look at the peoples living on these lands of that period, apart from the Iranians, we see Armenians, Kurds and other nations. Great Seljuk Ruler Alparslan and Byzantine Emperor IV. The Battle of Manzikert, which took place between the Roman Diogenes on August 26, 1071, and the victory of Alparslan, were destroying the walls of the Christian Greek world. Iranian immigrants followed the Seljuk armies and entered Anatolia with the titles of merchants and state officials.[5] These lands were named with names such as Istanbul, Anatolia, Pergamon or Bergama by ancient civilizations such as the Hittites and Greeks, and in Persian sources; Names such as Beautiful Village, Waterway, Hot Water, Fisherman and Jeshme can be seen.[6] If we pay attention to those times, most of the state officials, viziers, kadi, preachers, professors and ambassadors were Iranians. As an example, when we look at the surnames of these people, it is seen that each of them comes from different regions of Iran. For example; Like Isfahani, Tabrizi, Khorasani, Razi, Qazvini, Hamadani, Nakhchivani.

The works of many Iranian architects draw attention with their eye-catching beauty in Anatolian lands even today. Until the period when Bursa became the Ottoman capital, the works of Iranian architects and artists were everywhere. Known as the most beautiful mosque in Bursa, Yeşil Mosque has the phrase "Work of Masters from Tabriz" on its mihrab. In another Bursa mosque (Muradiye Mosque), there is an inscription "It is the work of Master Muhammed Isfahani" on the upper part of the mihrab.[7] Well-known families and groups who migrated to those regions also brought the Iranian school and culture from which they came. Later, these groups coming from Iran started to come to the fore in Anatolia under the name of Ahilik. Ahi order was originally an organization of Khorasan origin, which provided the Iranian Turkmen people living in Anatolia during the Seljuk and Ottoman periods to be educated in various professions such as art, trade and economy, educated them both economically and morally, and organized their working life on the basis of good human virtues. Ahilik has been an organization

that emerged when the cultural roots of ancient Iran were later intertwined with Islamic Sufism.

Many respected and cultured families who migrated from Iran to Anatolia played a very important role in the social and cultural relations of the two nations. The author of the book "Bezm-u Rezm" evaluates this issue as follows; "One of the most important reasons for the spread of the Iranian language and culture in Anatolia is the migration of well-known and well-known Iranian families to these lands. At the beginning of these immigrant families, Mevlana Jaleleddin Rumi's Father, known as "Sultanü'l-Ulema" (Sultan of Scholars), Muhammed Bahaeddin Veled, famous Sufi poet Necmeddin Razi, nicknamed "Daye", Evhaddin-i Kirmani, Fahreddin-i Iraki , Sirajeddin-i Ermevi, Seyfeddin-i Fergani, Nasruddin bin Bibi. The fact that these lands, known as the Greek land, were safe compared to other regions in terms of life safety in the 1200s, and were quite advanced in terms of culture and education, were perfect for the scholars and writers of the Islamic world. In such an environment, the acceptance of Jaleleddin Rumi's Mesnevi-yi Manevi and the Mevlevi movement by the people of the region led to the spread of Persian language and culture in this region." [8]

#### Ilkhanid Period and Later Migrations

The economic problems experienced in Iran during the Ilkhanate period, the heavy tax policy implemented by the government and the very weak domestic security caused different layers of people to migrate to Anatolia. In addition to all these negativities, the Mongols' burning and destruction of everything was enough to make Iran an unlivable place. In the following periods, the incorporation of Anatolia into the structure of the Ilkhanate and the presence of Iranians who had migrated to many cities on those lands did not allow them to experience the feeling of homelessness. Thus, the migration of Iranian immigrants to Anatolia gained even more speed. Among these migrating groups were Sufi dervishes who made nomadism a culture. With the disintegration of the Great Seljuk Empire, the first state established by the Turks, in 1157, the inhabitants of the Anatolian central provinces shifted in large groups to the slowly deteriorating borders of the Seljuks. The groups that migrated to the border regions were not only members of Sufism and cults, but also scientists, religious scholars and men of letters, whom the Mongols did not take care of, because they suffered greatly from this situation. the villagers also moved to the border regions with these groups.[9] In the book titled "World History in the Perspective of the Abbasids" written by Rumlu, it is stated as follows; "... In Iran, many people of science and knowledge, wise, jurists and

religious scholars migrated either to the Ottoman lands or to the Indian land. These migrations even continued until the reign of Safavid Emperor Shah Abbas I.

On the other hand, there are many tribal chiefs and well-known names who were in the Ottoman Empire and took refuge in Iran for some reasons. Among those who were forced to migrate to Iran from the Ottoman lands, there were also a substantial number of Ottoman scholars. İsmail Hakkı Uzuncharshili, who prepared the eight-volume Ottoman History, describes the calligraphers, fine writing and pencil masters who migrated from Iran to the Ottoman lands as follows; "Besides the Sheikh Hamdullah school, some calligraphers from Iranian Azerbaijan came to Istanbul and established a separate school. In this context, there was Abdulvahid from Mashhad, one of the students of Sultan Ali, who had the protection of Suleiman the Magnificent and stayed in Istanbul. Likewise, Hoylu Mir Seyyid Hüseyin and Tabrizli Haji Mehmet, who were members of the Sultan Ali school, and Molla Ali Sultan, one of the students of Abdurrahim Enisi from Harezm, who had a special style in taliq, served in the fullness of the taliq script by seeing the same protection. İdris-i Bitlisi was one of the valuable masters in Divani writing; The above-mentioned Hoylu Mir Sayyid Hussein wrote the Shahnameh of Suleiman the Magnificent"[10].

The Interaction of the Ottomans from the Safavids and the Migration of Anatolian Turks to Iran

In this section, the migration of Anatolian Turks to Iran and its reasons will be examined. Undoubtedly, the establishment of the Safavid State was one of the most important events in the history of Islam. The result of this event was the formation of a new central authority in the Islamic geography. The Anatolian Turks' interest in the Safavid sect, which was especially popular in Iran, was due to the presence of Sheikh Jüneyd. At a time when Sheikh Jüneyd wanted to both consolidate the Sheikh's office and have a say in the country's lands, the Karakoyunlu Ruler Jihanshah, worried about the increase in the members of the sect, acted together with Sheikh Jüneyd's uncle Sheikh Cafer and entered the struggle against him. They made it out. Sheikh Jüneyd, who was expelled by Jihanshah, came to Anatolia and started spreading studies on the Anatolian people there when the environment was suitable.

When Sheikh Jüneyd saw how inclined the villagers and the people of this region living a nomadic life were, he accelerated his movement and had many followers following him. In fact, sources state that he even had an armed and regular military army of around five to ten thousand subordinates to him. When Sheikh Jüneyd came to the Akkoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan with these armed

followers one day, Uzun Hasan welcomed him better than he expected and married his sister Hatice Begüm. He stayed in Diyarbakir, the center of Akkoyunlu, for three years. Later, after a joint meeting with their followers, they returned to Ardebil. After returning to Ardebil, instead of Sheikh Jüneyd, who was shot dead during a war he participated in, his son Haydar, born by his wife Hatice Begüm, sat on the Ardebil post with the help of his uncle Uzun Hasan. Like his father, Sheikh Juneyd, he enlarged the sect and gained many followers in Anatolia. Thus, the Ardebil Lodge became stronger in Anatolia and created an area of influence that cannot be underestimated. The murder of Sheikh Haydar in a war near Tabaristan did not destroy the beliefs of his followers towards their Sheikh, on the contrary, it strengthened their blessed spirits, caused them to protect Ismail and Ibrahim until the end, and to hide and defend them from their enemies for a long time. During this time, the people of the region abducted them to Gilan and took them under protection, and many tribes in Anatolia did not forget Ismail and sent many gifts and ministers.[11]

After Uzun Hasan's death in 1478, the fights for the throne between his sons weakened the Akkoyunlu State. In fact, the two great heirs of the throne, Murat and Elvend, divided the country into two. In the meantime, although Ismail was only 12 years old, he started political and religious activities and was sent to Ardebil in August 1499. According to what is told, 1500 people from Rum and Damascus had already gathered around Ismail and pledged allegiance to him.[12]

Ismail went to Gökçe Göl after visiting the Ardebil dervish lodge in 1500. Ismail assigned envoys to gather around him his followers living in Anatolia during the time he resided here.[13] Crowd groups went to Ismail to show that they were with him and went to Yerevan, which was known as Chukur Saad at the time, because of the lack of security in the area they were in. Here, nine more groups were annexed to Ismail. Ismail, who resided with these groups in Kayızman, Erzurum and Terjan for a while, later came to Erzincan, where he would stay for two months. According to the information given by Ottoman sources; "The son of Ardebil (Sheikh Safavid) had easily reached Erzincan from the Caspian coast, although they had almost no equipment. This situation reveals the following fact; The Akkoyunlu State lost its influence and began to disintegrate.

The arrival of Ismail on Anatolian lands made his followers very happy. The author of the book named "History of Shah Ismail" wrote the following on this subject; "As soon as he reached Erzincan, many people and influential leaders from Damascus, the Greek land, the Karaman velay and around Erzincan flocked to him. The number of them increased day by day... Thousands of people consisting of

Ustajlu, Shamlu, Rumlu, Tekelü, Zülkadir, Avshar, Kajar and Varsak tribes became attached to İsmail.”[14]

## CONCLUSION

Iran and the Ottoman Empire, two neighboring and Muslim countries, have had a very good socio-cultural relationship throughout history. Because these two countries had very deep common denominators in terms of culture, history and belief. One of the most important factors in the increase of this social bond between them was the intense movement of Atebat-ı Aliye visitors and traders in the lands of these two countries.

Another factor that improved socio-cultural relations was individual and mass migrations to neighboring countries. The migration of countless Iranian writers, Sufi scholars, scholars and artists to the Ottoman lands was also due to the special interest and respect that the Ottoman sultans showed towards them. On the other hand, the Iranians, who took refuge in the Ottoman Empire by escaping from Iran, which became uninhabitable with the brutal Mongol invasion, added wealth to the wealth of the Ottoman Empire thanks to the goods they brought with them.

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