



Influential Factors on the Convergence of Anatolian Sufi Turkmens with the Safavids

Mehdi Jamalifar^{1*} | Mehdi Ebadi²

1 Assistant Professor, International University of Islamic Religions, Tehran, Iran

2 Associate Professor, Department of History and Civilization of Islamic Nations, Payam Noor
University, Tehran, Iran

* Corresponding Author Email: m.jamalifar@mazaheb.ac.ir

Abstract

The main question of the article is: What were the most significant historical factors influencing the convergence of Anatolian Sufi Turkmens with the Safavids? In response, it is noted that although Ottoman policies towards the semi-nomadic and nomadic Turkmens of Anatolia, who were followers of folk Sufism, played a significant role in their divergence from the Ottomans, the attractions of the Safavid movement led to the Turkmens' alignment with the Safavids. This article addresses the main question from this latter perspective.

The spiritual allegiance of the Anatolian Sufi Turkmens to the order of Sheikh Safi al-Din Ardabili is clearly visible in the sources of the Anatolian Alevis. Among the Alevis, there are two types of "Buyruks" known as "Imam Jafar Sadik Buyrugu" and "Sheikh Safi Buyrugu." In Sheikh Safi's Buyruk, sayings, recommendations, and instructions of Sheikh Safi are conveyed in a question-and-answer format through Sheikh Sadr al-Din, the son of Sheikh Safi al-Din. Moreover, Alevi poets have expressed their allegiance to the hearth of Sheikh Safi al-Din Ardabili in various poems.

From the narratives in *Safwat al-Safa*, it appears that Sheikh Safi al-Din's disposition was considerably at odds with the followers of folk Sufism. The Suhrawardiyya and Kubrawiyya orders, which influenced Sheikh Zahed Gilani and Sheikh Safi, were both considered elevated Sufi paths. Sheikh Zahed Gilani, the mentor of Sheikh Safi al-Din, was a staunch critic of the Qalandari dervishes, who were known for their non-adherence to Sharia.

Although it is difficult to precisely determine when the Safavid dynasty leaned towards Shi'ism, reports suggest that this inclination towards the Shiite faith dates back to the time of Khwaja Ali, the son of Sheikh Sadr al-Din Musa. Given that the beliefs of various groups known as the Anatolian Alevis significantly differed from those of the Ottoman Sunnis, and considering that the Safavid Shi'ism in the 9th and 10th centuries Hijri was essentially a form of Sufism infused with extremist Shi'ism, it can be concluded that the Safavid order's closeness to folk Sufism was related to a shift in their religious orientation. During the reign of Shah Ismail, relations between the Safavid order and elements of folk Sufism became closer and more amicable.



Considering the disdain and marginalization of Anatolian Turkmens by the Ottomans, especially their exclusion from court and military roles, the importance of the Safavids' revival of "ghaza and jihad against the infidels" becomes clearer. The semi-nomadic and nomadic Turkmens of Anatolia, once honored as "Ghazi" for serving the Ottoman state and benefiting materially and spiritually from fighting the infidels, faced disillusionment and a sense of injustice under the Ottomans. The Safavids' emphasis on fighting against infidels not only provided financial resources but also boosted the morale and trust of their followers. With the division of the spoils of war against the infidels, not only disciples but also those eager for plunder gradually joined the ranks of the Ghazi.

Anatolian Turkmens, once disparaged as culturally unaware by the Ottomans, saw their identity respected and their language promoted after aligning with the Safavids. This period is considered the golden age of the Turkish language and literature in Iran. During the Safavid era, the Turkish language flourished alongside Persian, with many poets writing in Turkish and various authors producing works in science and literature in Turkish. Additionally, numerous books were translated from Persian and Arabic into Turkish. In the Safavid era, knowledge of Turkish was not only a privilege but ignorance of it was considered a deficiency. The Ottomans' shift towards Persian-Arabic literature prompted Shah Ismail, who opposed the Ottomans and supported Turkish customs, to write poetry in Turkish under the pseudonym Khatāī and speak Turkish in the villages and tribal areas of Anatolia, thereby garnering support and admiration from the Turkmens of the villages and tribes.

The political poetry within the literary sources of the Anatolian Alevis, which laments the injustices of the Ottomans and compares them to Yazid, vividly reflects a sense of injustice among the Turkmens and their readiness for change. Aware of the Turkmens' dissatisfaction, the Safavid caliphs in Anatolia, in addition to propagating for the Safavids through both oral and written forms, facilitated the mass migration of Safavid supporters from Anatolia to Ardabil. These migrations provided the necessary military force for the Safavids. Another duty of the caliphs was to secretly transfer money and valuable items collected under the guise of "vows and alms" in an organized manner for the Ardabil shrine.

An overlooked aspect in examining the claim of Safavid descent is the special status of the sayyid among the spiritual leaders of the Alevi-Bektashi. The sayyid of Haji Bektash Veli was documented about 120 years before Sheikh Junayd Safavi entered Anatolia. Thus, it can be concluded that if the Safavids sought to attract followers from the inclusive Bektashi umbrella to their movement, they could not lack a claim to sayyid status, as otherwise, they would not have been accepted by the Anatolian Sufi Turkmens. Evidence also shows that the Hurufis, who had established ties with the Safavids before spreading in Anatolia, found a connection with the Bektashis in the 9th century Hijri, which facilitated their link to the Safavids. Indeed, the efforts of Fazlullah Hurufi's disciples in Anatolia created the necessary ideological grounds between the Safaviyya and the followers of folk Sufism, who were largely gathered under the inclusive umbrella of the Bektashi order, allowing Junayd Safavi to emerge as a spiritual guide among them.

Keywords: Folk Sufism, Safavids, Anatolian Sufi Turkmens, Hurufis, Bektashis.

References

Books

- Ebn-e Bazzāz Ardabīlī, (1376). *Şofūat al-şafā*, Edited by gholāmređā Ṭabātabāyī Mađjd. Čāp-e dovom, Tehrān, Nāşer: Zariāb.[In Persian]
- Ādmondez, sīsīl djeý, (1367). *Kordhā, Torkhā va ‘arabhā*, Translated by Ebrāhīm Yūnesī, Čāp-e aval, Tehrān, Rūzbehān.[In Persian]
- Espenāqčī Pāşāzādeh, Moĥammad‘āref, (1379). *Enqelāb al-Eslām baīn al-kavāş va al-‘avām*, Edited by: Rasūl ja‘farīyān, Čāp-e aval, Qom, dalīl-e mā. [In Persian]
- Esfarāzī, (bītā). *Rođāt al-jannāt fī Oşāfe Madīney-eh Harāt*, Edited by Moĥammad kāzem Emām, Tehrān, Dāneşgāhe Tehrān. [In Persian]
- Emāmī kyū, Moĥammad taqī (1391). *Torkān, Eslām, ‘alavīgarī-Baktāşīgarī dar Ānātūlī*, Čāp-e aval, Tehrān, Pażūheşgāh-e ‘olūme ensānī va moţāle‘āt-e farhangī. [In Persian]
- Amīnī Heravī, Amīr şadr al-dīn Ebrāhīm, (1383). *Fotūĥāt-e Şāhī (Tārīk-e şafavī az Āgāz ta Sāl-e 920hĥ)*, Edited by Moĥammad ređā Naşīrī, Čāp-e aval, Tehrān, Anjoman-e ātār va mafāker-e farhangī. [In Persian]
- Badlīsī, Edrīs ebn-e Heşām al-dīn, (1995). *Salīm Şāhnāmeĥ, be ehtemām-e Hejābī qīrlānqīj (Resāley-e Doktorī)*, Dāneşgāhe Ānkārā, Anīstītoy-e ‘olūme Eĵtemā‘ī. [In Persian]
- Pīrzādeh Zāhedī, Hoşeyīn ebn-e Abdāl, (1343). *Selseleh al-nasab al-şafavīye*, Edited by Edvard Brawn, Čāp-e aval, Berlīn, Čāpkāne-ye Īrānşahr. [In Persian]
- Torkmān, Eskandar beĵ, (1382). *Tārīk-e ‘ālam Ārāī-e ‘bbāsī*, Vol 1, Edited by Īraj Afşār, Čāp-e sevom, Tehrān, Amīr kabīr. [In Persian]
- ĵānābadī, Mīrzā Beĵ ebn-e Ḥasan, (1378). *Rođeh al-şafavīye*, Edited by golām reza Ṭabātabāyī Mađjd, Čāp-e aval, Tehrān, Bonyād-e mūqūfāt-e Doktor Maĥmūd Afşār. [In Persian]
- kaţā‘ī, Şāh Esmā‘īl Şafavī, (1380). *Kollīyāt-e Dīvān, Naşīhatnāmeĥ, Dahnāmeĥ, Qūşmālār, Fārsjā Şe‘rlar*, Edited by: Rasūl Esmā‘īl zādeh, Tehrān, Enteşārāt-e beyīn almelālī-e al-hodā. [In Persian]
- kanjī, Fađlollāh ebne Rūzbahān, (1382). *Tārīk-e ‘ālam Ārāy-e Amīnī*, Edited by: Moĥammad Akbar ‘aşīq, Čāp-e aval, Tehrān, Mīrāt-e maktūb. [In Persian]
- kāje Sa‘d al-dīn Afandī, (1280). *Tāĵ al-Tavārīk*, Estānbūl, Maţba‘e-ye ‘āmereĥ. [In Persian]
- kāndmīr, ĵīyāt al-dīn bne Homām al-dīn, (1380), *Tārīk-e ĥabīb al-Sīyar fī aĥbār-e afrād-e başār, zīr-e nazar-e Moĥammad Dabīr sīyāqī*, ba moĥadame-ye ĵalāl al-dīn Homāyī, Tehrān, kayyām. [In Persian]
- Delāvāleh, Pīyetro, (1384), *Safarnāma-ye Pīyetro Delāvāleh*, translated by Şo‘ā‘ al-dīn Şafā, Čāp-e çahārom, Tehrān, Enteşārāt-e ‘elmī va farhangī. [In Persian]

- Dolfānī, Saiyāvaš, (1392). Peyīdāyeš-e selseleye-ye ahle-e ḥaq, Čāp-e aval, Tehrān, Manšūr-e omīd. [In Persian]
- Zarrīn kūb, ‘abdālḥoseīyn, (1380). Dondāle-ye jostoju dar tašavof-e Īrān, Čāp-e pañjom, Tehrān, Amīr kabīr. [In Persian]
- Sāvāš, Šā’em, (1394). Peī Āmadhāie Ejtemā’ī Kešmakešhāi-e ‘otmānī-šafavī, Translated by Alī Kātebī, Tārīk-e Ravābeḡ-e Īrān va ‘otmānī Dar a’šr-e šafavī, Edited by Našrallāh Šālehī, Čāp-e aval, Tehrān, Enteshārāt-e Ṭahūrī. [In Persian]
- Sūmer, Fārūq, (1371). Naqš-e torkān-e Ānāṭulī dar taškīl va tūse’a-ye dolat-e Šafavī, translated by Eḥsān Ešrāqī va Moḥammad taqī Emāmī, Tehrān, Našr-e Gostareh. [In Persian]
- Šāh Esmā’ile Šafavī, (1368). Maǰmū’e-ye Asnād va mokātebāt-e Tārīkī hamrāh bā yāddāsthā-ye tafšīlī, Edited by ‘abdālḥoseīyn Navā’ī, Čāp-e dovom, Tehrān, Enteshārāte Argāvān. [In Persian]
- Šafā, ḍabīḥallah, (1378). Tārīk-e Adabīyāt dar Īrān, Vol 5, Čāp-e haštom, Tehrān, Enteshārāt-e Ferdūs. [In Persian]
- Šulāq zādeh, (1298). Tārīk, Estānbūl, Maḥmūd bek, Maṭba’asī.
- ‘āseq Pašāzādeh, Aḥmad, (1332). Tavārīk-e Āl-e ‘otmān, Estānbūl, Maṭba’a-ye ‘āmereh.
- Ferdūsīye Rūmī, (2011). Velāyatnāma-ye Ḥājī Baktāš Valī, translated by Asrā’ Dūḡān va Maryem Solṭānī, Čāp-e aval, Arbīl Eqlīm-e Kordestān-e ‘arāq, Enteshārāte Ārās. [In Persian]
- Fereydūn bek, (1274AH). Maǰmū’a-ye Monšaāt al-Salāṭīn, bījā, dar al-sa’dah, taqvīm kāna-eh ‘āmereh. [In Persian]
- Fīgovīrvā, Don Garsīya Desīlvā, (1363). Safarnāma-ye Don Garsīya Desīlvā Fīgovīrvā, translated by ḡolām rezā Samī’ī, Čāp-e aval, Tehrān, Našr-e Nū. [In Persian]
- Karbalāyī, Hāfeẓ ḥoseīyn, (1349). Roẓāt al-ǰanān va ǰannāt al-ǰanān, Edited by: ǰa’far solṭān al-qarā’ī, Vol 1, Tehrān, Enteshārāt-e bongāh-e tarǰoma-e va našr-e ketāb. [In Persian]
- Kasravī, Aḥmad, (1306). Šeyk Šafī va Tabāraš, Tehrān, čāp-e Katībe. [In Persian]
- Kamāl, Nāmeq, (1884). Tarāǰom-e aḥvāl-e solṭān Salīm, Estānbūl, Aḥmad Medḥat maṭba’asī.
- Kampfēr, Angelbert, (1361). Safarnāma-ye Kampfēr, translated by Keīykāvūs ǰahāndārī, čāp-e sevom, Tehrān, Šerkat-e saḥāmī-ye enteshārāt-e kārāzmī. [In Persian]
- Kīyā, Moḥammad šādeq, (1330). Vāženāmaeh Gorgānī, Tehrān, Enteshārāte Dānešgāhe Tehrān. [In Persian]
- Mostūfī, Ḥamdollāh, (1364). Tārīk-e Gozīdeh, Edited by: ‘abdolḥoseīyn Navāyī, čāp-e sevom, Tehrān, Amīr kabīr. [In Persian]

- Movahed, Šamad, (1381). Šafī al-dīn Ardabīlī čehre-ye ašīle tašavof-e Ājarbāījān, čāp-e Aval, Tehrān, Tarḥe Nū. [In Persian]
- Mo'alef Maǰhūl, (1384). 'ālam Ārāī-e Šāh Esmā'il, Edited by: Ašġar Montazer šāheb, čāp-e dovom, Tehrān, Entešārāt-e 'elmī va farhangī. [In Persian]
- Mīr kānd, Moḥammad ben kāvandšāh, (1270AH). Rūzat al-šafā, bījā, Dāral-ṭabā'eh kāša-eh jadīdeh.
- Mīrzā Samī'ā, (1378). Tadmereh al-molūk, Sāzmān-e Edārīy-e ḥokūmat-e Šafavī (ta'līqāt-e Mīnoreskī), Edited by Sayyīd Moḥammad Dabīr sīyāqī, translated by Mas'ūd Raǰabnīyā, čāp-e sevom, Tehrān, Amīr kabīr. [In Persian]
- Nasīmī, Sayyīd 'emād al-dīn, (1387). Dīvān-e Aš'ār-e torkī, Edited by: Doktor ḥ. M. Šedīq, čāp-e aval, Tabrīz, Našr-e Aḳtar. [In Persian]
- Hīnts, Vālter, (1361). Taškīl-e dovat-e mellī dar Īrān, translated by Keykāvūs jahāndārī, Tehrān, kārasmī. [In Persian]
- Vāleh Esfahānī, Moḥammad yūsof, (1372). kold-e barīn, Edited by Mīr hāšem Moḥadeṭ, čāp-e aval, Tehrān, bonyāde moqūfāt-e Doktor Maḥmūd Afšār. [In Persian]

Articles

- Panāhī, 'abās, Ta'tīr-e mabānī-ye fekrī va 'aqīdatīy-e Šeīyk Zāhed Gīlānī bar tarīqat-e šafavīye az manzar-e gozārešhāī-e Darvīš bne Bazāz Tavakūlī, Tārīknāma-eh Īrān ba'd az Eslām, sale panjom, Šomāre-ye 9, Pāyīz va Zemestān-e 1393. [In Persian]
- Pūr moḥammadī Amlašī, Našrollāh, Raḥīmī, Abd al-raḥīm, Bītarafān, Moḥammad, Barresī va taḥlīl-e mabānīy-e fekrī va e'teqādī-e jonbeš-e Šafavīa bā tekīa bar tarīqathāī-e Āsīyāī-e Šaġīr, Moṭāle'āt-e Eslāmī, Tārīk va Farhang, sāle čehelo čahārom, Šomāre-ye payāpey 89, Pāyīz va Zemestāne, 1391. [In Persian]
- tavāqeb, jahānbakš, Barresī va taḥlīl-e monāsebāt-e sīyāsī-nezāmī-ye Šīyūk-e Šafavī bā Šervān Šāhān (1460-1495m/864-900AH), Pažūhešhāye tārīkī, Šomāre-ye 17, Bahār, 1392. [In Persian]
- jamālī far, Maḥdī va 'ebādī, Maḥdī, 'avāmel-e mūaṭer bar vāgerāyī-ye torkmānān-e Šūfīy-e Ānāṭūlī az Āl-e 'otmān, Maǰala-ye tārīk va tamadon, Dānešgāhe Āzād-e Eslāmī, sāle 17, Šomāre-ye 34, Bahār, 1400. [In Persian]
- jamālī far, Maḥdī, Edrīsī, Mehrī va 'Ebādī, Maḥdī (2017) Bāvarhāī-e 'alaūī-Bektāšī Dar Dīvān-e Šāh Esmā'il Šafavīa (kaṭā'ī), Moṭāle'āt-e Āsīyāī-e šaġīr (Vīza Nāma-ye Farhangestān), 4(2), 93-120. [In Persian]
- Rostamī, 'ādel, Monāsebāt-e tašaīo' va tašavof dar Ānāṭūlī va ta'tīr-e ān bar hamgerāyī-e Šafavīyān va Torkmānān īn manṭaqa-e, Tārīk-e Eslām dar Āīnaye pažūheš, Šomārea-ye 12, Zemestāne 1385. [In Persian]
- Rafīq, Ahmad, Šī'ayān va Baktāšīyān dar Qarn-e dahom/Šānzdahom (hāvī-ye Asnād-e marbūṭ be Šī'ayān va Baktāšīyān-e maḥfūz dar kazīna-ye orāq-e Torkīye),

translated by Tofiq Sobhānī, *Maḡala-ye Ma'āref*, Šomāre-ye 28, farvardīn-Tīre 1372. [In Persian]

- Mūrīmoto, Kāzo'ū, *Avalīn nešān az sīyādate Šafavīyān dar ansāb*, translated by 'alī kākpur, *Paīām-e bahārestān*, dore-ye dovom, sāle sevom, Šomāre-ye 11, Bahār-e1390. [In Persian]
- Yāšār Ojāq, Aḡmad, (bītā). *Tazrīq-e hame kodāgari be eslām degarandīš Ānāṭulī: ta'ūrāt-e Ḥorūfīgarī*, translated by Ašgar Delbarīpūr, *Maḡmū'a-e maqālāt-e farhangīy-e sāzmān-e farhang va Ertebāt-e Eslāmī (vīžanāma-ye 'alavīyāne Torkīye(1))*, Ānkārā, rāyzanīye farhangīy-e sefārat-e jomhūrīy-e eslāmīy-e Īrān.
- -----, *Az 'oşyāne bābāyān tā Qezelbāşgarī; negāhī be tārīk va roşd-e 'alavīyān dar Ānāṭulī*, translated by Šahāb Valī, *Maḡala-ye tārīk-e Eslām*, Šomāre-ye 27, Pāyīze 1385. [In Persian]

References in Turkish

- Algar, Hamid, (1993). “The Ḥurufi Influence on Bektashism”, in Alexandre Popovic and Gilles Veinstein, eds., *Bektachiyya: Études sur l'ordre mystique des Bektachis et les groupes relevant de Hadji Bektach*, Paris.
- Ardabilli Şeyh Safiuddin,(2015). Şeyh safi buyruğu, hazırlayan: Doğan kaplan, Ankara, Türkiye diyanet vakfi, Birinci baskı.
- Arsalantaş, Yasin, *Depicting The Other: Qizilbash Image in The 16th Century Ottoman Historiography, The Department of History İhsan Doğramacı, Bilkent University, Ankara, July2013.*
- Aslanoğlu, İbrahim, (1997). *Kul Himmet. Yaşamı, Kişiliği ve Şiirleri*, İstanbul, Ekin Yayınları.
- Bağcı, B, (2020). *Osmanlı Devleti'nin kuruluş döneminde Kalenderî gruplar*, Ortaçağ Araştırmaları Dergisi, 3(2), 240-252.
- Birage, J. K, (1937). “The Bektashi order of dervishis”, London, luzac.
- Franz Babinger-M. Fuat Köprülü, (1996), *Anadoluda İslamiyet*, İstanbul, insan yayınlar, birinci baskı.
- Gallagher, Amelia, (2004). “The Fallible Master of Perfection: Shah Ismail in the Alevi-Bektashi Tradition,” Ph.D. diss., McGill University.
- Gölpınarlı, Abdulkaki, (1969). “100 Soruda Türkiyede Mezhebler ve Tarikatler”, İstanbul, Gerçek Yayınevi, Birinci baskı.
- Gölpınarlı, Abdulkaki, (1969). “100 Soruda Türkiyede Mezhebler ve Tarikatler”, İstanbul, Gerçek Yayınevi, Birinci baskı.
- Gündüz, Tufan, *Safeviler*, DİA, c.35.
- İdem, (1998). *Alevi-Bektaşî şiirleri antolojisi (Vol. 3)*. Türk Tarih Kurumu.



- İdem, (2015). *Pir Sultan Abdallar*. İstanbul, Can yayınları, 4 basım.
- İdem, Boratav, Pertev Naili,(2010). *Pir sultan abdal*, İstanbul, Derin Yayınları.
- Karamustafa, Ahmet, (2005). *Origins of Anatolian Sufism. Sufism and Sufis in Ottoman Society: Sources, Doctrine, Rituals, Turuq, Architecture, Literature and Fine Arts, Modernism*.
- Kutlu, Sönmez Aleviliğin Dinî Statüsü: Din, Mezhep, Tarikat, Heterodoksi, Ortodoksi veya Metadoksi. *İslâmiyât, C. VI, S, 3:32*.2003.
- Minorsky, V. “Shaykh BaIi-Efendi on the safavids.” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 20, 1957.
- Noyan, Bedri, (1995). “Bektaşilik, Alevilik nedir?” İstanbul, Ant / Can Yayınları.
- Özmen, İ. (1998). *Alevi-Bektaşî şiirleri antolojisi (Vol. 2)*. Türk Tarih Kurumu.
- Refik, Ahmet. (1932). *Onaltinci asırda Rafizîlik ve Bektaşilik: (On altıncı asırda Türkiyede Rafizîlik ve Bektaşiliğe dair: Hazinei Evrak belgelerini içerir.)*, Sadeleştiren : Mehmet Yaman. (1994). İstanbul, Ufuk Matbaası, Birinci Baskı.
- Savaş, Saim, (2002). *XVI Asırda Anadoluda Alevilik*, Ankara, Vadi Yayınları, birinci baskı.
- Savory, R. M, “Kizilbash”, *EI*, v.5.
- Teber, Ömer Faruk.(2005). *XVI. Yüzyılda Kızılbaşlık Farklılaşması*, Doktora Tezi, Ankara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Zaman, Süleyman, (2009). *Alevi bektaşî edebiyatında yedi ulu ozan*, İstanbul, Can Yayınları, birinci basım.