

The Impact of Caucasian Political Marriages on Safavid Territory and Court

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Abstract

Caucasians, including Georgians, Armenians, and Circassians known as the "Third Force," were used in the Safavid era to counter tensions between Ghezelbash and Tajik elements. This force gradually showed its power to rivals in all areas and gained influence in the center and the state. The talent and ability of Caucasians in all fields gradually led the Safavid kings and local rulers to become close to them in various ways, especially family and marital ties. The tendency of courtiers, Caucasians and provincial rulers as the main actors in Safavid-era politics for family strife stemmed from political needs, economic interests, military capability and territorial expansion which motivated them to enter into these political marriages.

Keywords: Armenians, Caucasians, Circassian, Georgians, Political Marriage, Safavids.

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Introduction

The diverse composition of the population of Iran in the Safavid era influenced the political structure of the country in various dimensions. This population pluralism paved the way for the creation of numerous and diverse groups and elements in political games. On the other hand, in the vast Safavid realm, there were states and families that had ruled for centuries, but the central government was not able to fully control them for various religious and territorial reasons. Hence, different ways and hard and soft tools were used to dominate the Caucasians. Military campaigns, population migration and displacement, marriage and family ties with the rulers and governors of the Caucasus were some of the methods used to gain control of those areas. The Caucasus was also one of the regions that, in addition to its religious differences with the central government, benefited from its geographical location and high economic potentials. Therefore, the Safavid government took various measures to dominate it, such as marriage and family ties with the rulers of those areas and the purposeful migration of Caucasian residents into Iran. In order to ensure loyalty and to form alliances of border tribes and rulers such as the Caucasus, in an ancient and customary way, through family ties and marriages, arrangements were made to create security and declare their loyalty. With the entry and migration of Caucasians into Iran in the Safavid political and military structure, gradually from the time of Shah Tahmasb I, the ground was prepared for their involvement in political games. Connecting and marrying these emerging elements provided a new perspective on the future developments of the Safavid government. On the other hand, in America, they gained prestige and dignity through family ties. In addition, the Safavid kings tried to establish a family bond with the Georgian governors while weakening them to ensure their loyalty and political commitment to the central government. A family bond where political and economic interests were more important than the interests of the couple. Therefore, political marriage is considered to be the union of two groups of men, two clans, two dynasties and two families.

There is no independent and comprehensive article on the impact of political marriages on Caucasian relations at the local, national, and regional levels, although some studies have addressed this issue in an explicit manner. In the book "Safavid Iran: The Renaissance of the Iranian Empire" by Andrew Newman, brief references are made to this issue, or in the article "The Role of Caucasian Women in Socio-Political Relations and Developments and the Safavid Court", this issue is briefly addressed. Despite the commonalities, there is a stark difference between the two articles. Because in this research, an attempt has been made to examine the political impact of marriage with Caucasian women at several different levels, namely local rulers, the central government and the Safavid court. A review of the influence of Caucasian forces on Safavid rule from various dimensions using the method of family ties and political marriage illustrates the necessity of this article. This research seeks to answer the question, what effect did political marriage have on the regional, national and court dimensions in the relationship between the central government and the third force? Using their political abilities, trade potentials and military power, the Caucasian elements achieved a position in the context of political marriage in various dimensions of the Safavid power structure that was able to balance the political equations.

Reasons for Employing Caucasians by Safavid Kings

The Safavid government used and moved Caucasian elements for various political, military and economic purposes. Discussing the reasons for using these elements in the power structure is effective in explaining many events. . From a military point of view, the Ghezelbash were the main arm of the Safavids before and after the formation of the government. In contrast, the Iranians, as in previous eras, ran the bureaucracy of the government. The tensions and conflicts between the Iranians and the Qazalbash created many problems for the fledgling Safavid system, and these differences imposed severe defeats on the Safavids to the extent that it endangered the existence of the political system. Gradually, from the time of Shah Tahmasb, the ground was prepared for the recruitment of new forces,

including Georgian, Armenian and Circassian slaves. Shah Abbas I, by creating a group called "Special Honorable Slaves", entrusted the administration of an important part of civil and military affairs to this third group. Shah Abbas, with the aim of reducing the power of the Ghezelbash, changed the structure of the Safavid army (Babaie, 2011: 9). Of course, the Safavid kings did not intend to destroy the Ghezelbash, but wanted to establish a balance between the new and old forces to strengthen the central government (Matthew, 2014: 58). According to experts, the relocation of tribes from the main homeland was done by the rulers either with the intention of defending the borders, or preserving the resources of a part of the country or to use their work (Khobravi Pak, 2001: 65). The emigration of Caucasians in the Safavid era from their original homeland to different parts of Iran, especially the central regions, if examined from a sociological perspective, demonstrates that not only they were not in a position of inferiority, rather, they controlled some high-ranking positions and even established family ties in the center and most regions.

Therefore, this action should not be considered as a negative ethnic policy (Burton, 2005: 139). Therefore, from a sociological point of view, if minorities are at the top of the power pyramid within the framework of political structure and social base, they will be excluded from the scope of minority inclusion. Because it is this position and social base that creates a sense of difference between individuals and minority groups and creates a desire to oppose and resist in them (Khobravi Pak, 2001: 129).

The promotion of slaves did not mean the elimination of Ghezelbash elements, but added to the complexities of the political scene, and with the increase of the power of the Khawajas and the arrival of newcomers from the Arab countries, this complexity became wider (Matthew, 2014: 48). This policy made a significant change in the composition of power. The Qazalbash element was no longer the main source of the main body of the Safavid war organization, but the new forces of the Caucasus became the main elements of the military and political organization. Of course, the result of the policy of reducing the Safavid internal support forces in the years of the fall of Safavid had disastrous results (Tehrani, 2010: 11).

Economically, they, especially the Armenians, were the main tools of Safavid trade with the Europeans due to their religious similarity and linguistic commonality in trade, and gradually took the helm of Safavid foreign trade especially since the Caucasus was more important during the Safavid and Ottoman wars. In order to trade with the Europeans, the Safavids had to exchange their goods through Gilan-Hashtarkhan-Southern Russia (Savory, 2008: 195). On the other hand, those Caucasians who did not convert to Islam had to pay a sum as a ransom to provide financial and personal security, which in turn brought great wealth to the government treasury (Sanson, 1967: 134).

Politically, Caucasians could be one side of the political equation to balance power. From the very beginning of the formation of the government, the Safavids, using a complex sexual policy, emphasized the strengthening of relations through bilateral marriages with state rulers and elders, including Caucasians. This alliance worked in two directions: the king's dominance over the provinces and increasing the wealth and power of tribal chiefs and local and court nobles (Matthew, 2014: 39).

The Relationship between Safavids and Georgia

Georgia is a country bordering the Russian Federation to the north, the Republic of Azerbaijan to the east and southeast, and Armenia and Turkey to the south (Rasooli, 2014: 11). In the 16th century, Georgia was divided into separate political units; Kingdom of Kartli (ancient Iberia), Kakheti, Imreti and the princely state of Samtskhe (Meskhti = Musq) (Turkman, 2004: 648/2; Flora, 2009: 119). With the conclusion of the Amasya peace (961 AH / 1554 AD) between Shah Tahmasb I and Sultan Suleiman the Ottoman, Eastern Georgia (Cartel and Kakht) and East Samtskhe were ceded to Iran (Amira Ahmadian, 2004: 84). After the peace of Zahab (1049 AH / 1639 AD), Samtskhe joined the Ottomans forever (Isfahani, 1989: 268).

From the time of Shah Abbas I, Georgia was promoted to the position of "governor". In fact, by promoting them to the position of "governor", in addition to their traditional territory, they also played a major role in the Safavid court. The commanders of Georgia were often the generals of Iran, Qollar Aghasi, the headmen of Isfahan (Floor,

2008: 115). During the reign of Shah Abbas I, the cartil was handed over to Lorasb and Kakht to Tahmurth Khan. Due to internal disputes in the cartil, the sheriff of Tbilisi, Georgy Sakadze (Moravi), fled to Shah Abbas court and incited him to invade Georgia. According to the treaty of Shah Abbas I between Iran and the Ottomans, Eastern Georgia was annexed to Iran. After that, from the time of Shah Safi, from among the families of the governors, the Islamic "Bagratians" were chosen as the rulers of the Shah and the affairs of the region were entrusted to them (Turkman, 2004: 868 and 901/2).

According to the contract of Zahab (1049 AH), the areas of Kartil and Kakht were given to Iran. Vakhtang V (Shah Nawaz I) was succeeded by Rostam's adopted son. Shah Abbas II married the daughter of Shah Nawaz (Vahid Qazvini, 2004: 733; Amir Ahmadiyan, 2004: 318). During the reign of Shah Abbas II, the Georgians tried to save themselves from Iranian tutelage by being close to the Russians. With the support of the Russians, Tahmurt of Georgia tried to overcome the Iranian forces by building strong fortresses and providing Russian military support. But with the destruction of castles by Ghezelbasha, their plan failed (Jamalzadeh, 1994: 155). During the reign of Shah Sultan Hussein, the Kakht government was ruled by Mohammad Qoli Khan (formerly Constantine III). He even demanded that the cartil, which was then held by Hussein Qoli Khan (Vakhtang VI), be handed over to him. But the situation developed in such a way that Safavids court could not even maintain himself (Roushan Zamir, 1973: 188). At the end of the Safavid period, Vakhtang VI tried to reduce his domination of Iran by approaching Russia. Peter the Great entered the Caucasus with the help of Vakhtang and Vakhtang took refuge in Russia (Rasooli, 2014: 45).

Safavid-Armenian Relations

Armenia has been of special military importance to Iranian governments since ancient times (Xenfon, 2001: 75). The reason for this importance was the strategic and economic position of the Armenian region, and this region played the role of a shield or barrier between Iran and Rome (Daryaei, 2004: 24). It had the same role in the Islamic period in a different way. With the rise of Safavid rule and

rivalry with the Ottomans, Armenia once again became the scene of conflict between the two superpowers.

According to the first treaty between Safavids and Ottomans in 961 AH / 1555 AD. Eastern Armenia (Yerevan, Nakhchivan and Nagorno-Karabakh) were given to Iran and Western Armenia (Erzurum, Kars, Van and Diyarbakir) was annexed to the Ottomans (Nourizadeh, 1997: 75). After sitting on the throne, Shah Abbas recognized the Ottoman rule over Armenia due to numerous internal problems and confrontations with the Uzbeks during the Treaty of Istanbul I (1590 AD). However, (1603 AD) Shah Abbas, using the internal conflicts of the Ottoman Empire, recaptured large parts of Azerbaijan and Armenia from the Ottomans and emigrated many Armenians to Iran (Majiyani, 1990: 294). Through this migration, the Shah was able to increase the population and taxpayers of his country, and more importantly, the silk trade flourished (in Hohanian, 2000: 9).

Circassia

The territory of Circassia was bounded approximately from the west to the Black Sea, from the east to the Swange River, from the south to the Caucasus Mountains, and from the north to the Kuban steppes and the Pytigorsk plains to the north which currently applies to the republics of Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachay-Cherkessia, Adygea and the Shapsuk region in Russia (Zargarinejad, 2008: 72).

The first encounter between the Safavids and Charakseh took place during the Junaid period, when Sheikh Safavid took military action to persuade their Qazliya warriors and gain booty against Chirakseh and the Christians, in order to change their approach from the religious to the political phase. Sheikh Junaid married a Circassian woman in this campaign and the result was a son named Khajeh Mohammad. (Hosseini Astarabadi, 1987:26) With the advent of Safavid rule, the Safavid kings continued the same policy of their ancestors regarding Charakseh. While trying to strengthen the military morale of their troops, they tried not to miss out on the immense economic and financial benefits of these attacks. Also, through their migration to Iran and marriage with Circassian women, they seek to stabilize the situation in the face of the extravagance of the Ghezelbash.

Political Marriage of Caucasians in the Local Dimension

Gilan (Al-Ishaq)

Gilan could be important for the Safavid court from several perspectives. The first feature of Gilan was its proximity to the Safavid capital, Qazvin. The second reason was the multiplicity of powers in this state, so that several identical powers always ruled in different parts of it. From an economic point of view, it always had extraordinary potentials, even before the Safavids, so that Gilan silk was the main product of Iranian exports in this era (Clavijo, 2004: 78; Sanson, 1967: 134). From a military point of view, its forest and mountainous texture was a safe haven against local rulers and the central government. With these interpretations, the reason for the importance of Gilan for the central government and courtiers and in the whole structure of Safavid power is obvious. Muzaffar Sultan, the ruler of Rasht, after the death of Khair al-Nisa Begum, sister of Shah Tahmasb (Fumani, 2011: 38), married the daughter of Shamkhal Cherksi. From this marriage, he had a son named Sultan Mahmud (Fumani, 2011: 51). Muzaffar Sultan became an asylum seeker after Sultan Suleiman invaded Iran (Romlu, 2010: 1244/3). The situation in Gilan was tense and unsettled after this incident, until the government of Rasht was handed over to Sultan Mahmud through the mediation of Dashtdar Beg Safavi, the husband of Muzaffar Sultan's sister. Sultan Mahmud himself married the daughter of King Alexander the Great, and Jamshid Khan was the result of this marriage. After the death of Sultan Mahmud, Jamshid succeeded his father (Fumani, 2010: 55). It seems that Shah Tahmaseb did not want the balance of power in Gilan to be disturbed in order to curb the domination of Khan Ahmad Khan Gilani. On the other hand, the entry of Charakseh into the developments in Gilan shows the fact that the Safavid court was willing to use Caucasian forces to contain regional crises. Gilan's economic importance also required security to facilitate economic exchanges and trade in the region with other areas and to prevent the domination of a particular family over this economic resource. Also, since Muzaffar Sultan had established family ties with Shirvan and Shekhavandieh of Ardabil, because they could use this capacity and opportunity to develop political influence against the Ghezelbash.

Sistan (Kianian)

The rulers of Sistan province established good relations with the Safavid government from the beginning. King Mahmud Sistani declared obedience to Shah Ismail after the battle of Merv (916 AH) (Sistani, 2010: 143) King Mahmud seems to have realized the growing threat of Uzbeks within his territory, for this reason, he wanted to use the support of the Safavids against the Uzbeks. These good relations continued until the last years of the Safavid rule. This good relationship lasted until the end of the Safavid rule. Shah Tahmasb married his daughter Parikhan Khanom (from the Georgian wife of Sultan Aghakhanom) to Badi-ol-Zaman, son of Bahram Mirza, and delegated the rule of Sistan to him (Turkman, 2004: 116/1). During the reign of Shah Abbas, I, these relations remained good (Rerbern, 2004: 126) and until the last years of the Safavid rule, the peaceful relations between the Kisians of Sistan and the court of Isfahan continued (Afshar Sistani, 1990: 1121/2). During the reign of Shah Sultan Hussein, Gorgin Khan Gorji, a Safavid general, married the daughter of Jafar Gholi Khan Sistani (Kermani, 2005: 351). This connection is politically, militarily and economically important.

Sistan's impressive political, economic and military position has always put the province at the center of many developments. Due to the ancient road that connected it to Kandahar and Herat, it was always important as a military crossing (Bosworth, 1991: 39). Domination of Sistan and even Balochistan meant easy access to Kandahar. Kandahar, as the center of India-Iran disputes, was always moved between the two sides during this period, on the other hand, after Ganjali Khan and the escape of his son Alimardan Khan to the Indian court, the security situation in eastern Iran up to Kandahar was shaky and fragile and the central government did not have sufficient and lasting control over the vast geography. For this reason, it is thought that with the support of the court, Gorgin Khan wanted to establish a deep political bond between the two sides in order to restore lasting security in the mentioned areas. Sistan is economically known as Iran's grain warehouse, as Shah Abbas when he was in trouble due to famine and drought, in order to supply and eliminate the shortage of wheat in the capital, "a thousand tomans of gold came

from the Supreme Court to the sistan sheriffs, and Nawab Kamyab ... they buy eight thousand grains from Sistan ..." (Sistani, 2010: 441).

Wrong and ill-considered behaviors of Gorgin Khan's entourage failed the fruits and beneficial results of this connection and even provided the prelude to the fall of the Safavids. Historians have written the end of Safavid work in the light of Georgian recklessness. The recklessness that occurred due to religious abuses and changes in the bureaucratic system of Sistan province. Gorgin Mirza - Alexander Mirza's uncle - with the titles of Sepahsalar and Sardar, dealt with the Kermanis and Baluchis. Mirza Abdul Rashid was the supervisor and general manager of Gorgin Khan. Gorgin Khan suddenly prevailed over Mirza Qasim Anari. The harsh treatment of Mirwais's tribes - and the burying of some of them alive - led to early riots. In Afghanistan and among the Sunni Afghans, the celebration of Eid Baba Shujaiddin (Eid Omar Kush) by Khan Gurji was also unpoliticized (Kermani, 2005: 80) .

Khuzestan (Mashshian)

Seyyed Mohammad Hakim Masheshian established a very strong friendship and good relationship with Imam Qoli Khan Biglarbegi of Fars and married his daughter (Hosseini Munshi, 2006: 430). Imam Qoli Khan, son of Allah Verdi Khan from 1010 AH. In the province of Fars, and especially after the recapture of Bahrain and the overthrow of the independent government of Lar, was honored by Shah Abbas and delegated the position of Khani to him. After the death of his father, Allah Verdi Khan (1023 AH), Shah Abbas handed over the position of Sepahsalar of Iran and Biglerbegi to the rich and strategic province of Persia. He gradually added to his territory. The area of his territory, in addition to Persia, included Giloyeh Mountain, Larestan, and southern ports from Jask to Basra (Turkman, 2004: 1587/2; Jenabzi, 1999: 858).

An overview of the extent of Imam Qoli Khan's rule shows that Sayyid Muhammad was well aware of his political authority and military influence and he considered allying with Imam Qoli Khan as accompanying Shah Abbas. Historical evidence shows that Seyyed Mohammad knew very well that his internal rivals and the Bani Imam

were trying to overthrow him at the earliest opportunity, as in the period of Shah Safi after the assassination of Imam Qoli Khan, by the order of the Shah, Seyyed Mohammad was dismissed and his uncle Seyyed Mansour succeeded him, therefore, in order to strengthen its political position in the face of domestic rivals, it would have been better to put itself under the protection of Khan Fars. On the other hand, due to the high military power and the close distance and geographical dimension, Imam Qoli Khan in the event of an Ottoman invasion Meshashian lands or an internal conspiracy against him, could have supported her militarily. In addition, Seyyed Mohammad could have avoided possible dangers from Imam Qoli with this connection and turning the threat of a neighborhood with a powerful khan into a lasting opportunity.

On the contrary, according to the religious background and political influence of the Meshashians in the areas of Khuzestan and the Arab areas of those territories, this connection in a way means that those areas are attached to the sphere of influence of Khan Fars, on the other hand, Imam Qoli Khan could have increased his credibility in terms of legitimacy with a religious family, especially since he had established a family bond with Shah Abbas. In the end, he used Masha's military forces to achieve his political goals and territorial development, because Seyyed Muhammad was present in Imam Qoli's expedition to Basra (1037 AH). Also, considering the tribal context of the Khuzestan region, Shah Abbas could have used their internal differences in favor of consolidating the central government by raising and strengthening the radiant dynasty against other dynasties, and even if at times those native families of the region, such as Al-Fadhil, turn to the Ottomans, he will take action against them through the Radishes (Turkman, 2004: 2.952).

The result of this union has been children, among whom the name of Seyyed Abdolreza is revealed. This Seyyed Abdolreza lived in Shiraz and owned many real estates (Fasaei, 1988: 2/979) Seyyed Abdul Reza marries his cousin (daughter of Safi Qoli Khan, son of Imam Qoli Khan) and has a child named Sayyid Mubarak. This Sayyid Mubarak, a contemporary of Mirza Mohammad Tahir, was the author of Tazkereh Nasrabadi. He had a poetic taste and a high

mystical nature. For this reason, he was nicknamed "Madhosh" (Nasrabadi, 1999: 1/49).

Political Marriage of Caucasians and the Issue of Succession

After the death of Shah Tahmasab I until the end of the Safavid rule, Caucasians openly fought with other groups to determine the new king as one of the actors and influential elements in the political structure. . After the death of Shah Tahmasb (984 AH) and the ambiguity in the issue of succession, in the Safavid realm, especially in Qazvin, conflicts broke out between the Umrah and Ghezelbash and non-Ghezelbash tribes over the appointment of the Shah's successor. Caucasians were among the sides of this multifaceted crisis.

Examining the role of Georgian, Armenian and Czech women in the "Third Force" as the wives of kings. Because this force not only took steps in the military dimension to reduce the influence of the Ghezelbas, but also through political connections on the quality and manner of delegating the imperial authority to its beloved princes and created an undeniable influence. According to Safavid scholars, after the death of Shah Abbas I, this process took an accelerated process and they were considered as positional and calculating actors in the presence of Safavid kings. It should be noted, of course, that the Caucasian elements themselves had separate interests in the issue of succession, and each of its elders and nobles was placed in different factions.

When Shah Tahmasab I was on his deathbed, Caucasian elements in competition or with other political elements sought to remove their patron prince. . Supporters of Ismail Mirza, led by Pari Khan Khanum, daughter of Shah Tahmasb and Sultan Aga Khanum of Georgia, sought the appointment of Ismail Mirza to the throne. Pari Khan Khanum played an important role in the formation and political factions of the issue of Shah Tahmasb's succession. At first, Pari Khan Khanum wanted to make her brother-in-law Sultan Suleiman the crown prince, but since she did not find any talent in him, she befriended Ismail Mirza. Haidar Mirza Sultanzadeh's mother was Begum. Haidar Mirza's mother and Ali Bey's uncle Haidar Mirza and Zal Beg Gorji, whose sister was the wife of Shah Tahmasi, supported

the kingdom of Haidar Mirza. Caliph Ansar Qaradglou was a supporter of Haidar Mirza because his daughter was the wife of Zal Bey Gorji and agreed with the Estajlou clan. (Turkman, 2004: 119/1) . Sultan Aghakhanom Parikhan Khanom's mother could not see the superiority of her rival. Parikhan Khanom entered the field in favor of Ismail Mirza (Turkman, 2004: 196/1; Newman, 2014: 136).

Parikhan Khanom is shrewd and political with a cunning literature stating that "...if I have been guilty of stupidity and short-sightedness, I hope you will forgive me for the error of this book, and forgive me so that after this day I will be obedient and serve the work." I will be and you will not see the slightest wrongdoing from this poor person and no bad deed will happen." He deceived Heydar Mirza (Turkman, 2004: 1/192) Haidar Mirza forgave him on the condition that Shamkhal and his brother Suleiman Mirza renounce the support of Ismail Mirza (Valeh Isfahani, 1993: 392) but as soon as he got rid of the danger, Khalaf promised and explained the situation and caused the murder of Haidar Mirza. Shamkhal Charksi was retained in the position of Mehrdari for the murder of Heidar Mirza (Valeh Isfahani, 1993: 546) But Suleiman Mirza was killed for fear of a new alliance between him and his sister (Hosseini Astarabadi, 1987: 94) by the order of the Shah and by his uncle Shamkhal by eating a large amount of opium (Vale Isfahani, 1993: 534) After this event, the Shah married the daughter of Shamkhal Cherksi (Turkman, 2004: 317/1). After the death of Shah Ismail II, Pari Khan Khanum and other members of the government helped Sultan Mohammad Mirza to sit on the throne. With the death of Shah Ismail II, the reign of Parikhan Khanum and Shamkhal came to an end and they were killed by the conspiracy of Salman Mirzajaberi and by the order of Shah Mohammad Khodabandeh (Munshi Qomi, 2004: 660/2).

The involvement of Caucasian elements in the issue of succession continued until the end of the Safavid period. Although the accession of Shah Abbas I took place with the discretion and influence of the Ghezelbash, but the same king re-engineered the power structure in various dimensions to pave the way for Caucasian domination, especially in succession struggles. The subject of the succession was to show the authority of the Caucasian elements resulting from the connections of the Safavid kings with them.

At the sitting of Shah Safi, with the discretion of Zeinab Begum, the daughter of Shah Tahmasb I and the niece of Ms. Gorji, the affairs of the country were organized (Turkman, 2004: 135/1; Isfahani, 1987: 34). Anna Khanum, the mother of Shah Abbas II, a Circassian woman, was another woman in the Safavid political scene who had a direct influence on her son's accession to the throne (Fazel, 1997: 46). Nekhat, the mother of Shah Suleiman the Circassian, played an influential role in her son's succession with Aghambarak Khajeh. And if it were not for the support of the two, Hamza Mirza would have ascended the throne from the Georgian wife of Shah Abbas II (Chardin, 2004: 1608/4; Matthew, 2004: 124). Maryam Begum, the aunt of Shah Suleiman, along with other elders and nobles in the appointment of Shah Sultan Hussein had a great impact on the royal procession (Mostofi, 1996: 115).

Political Marriage and the State of Georgia

Georgia was ruled by a governor due to its remoteness, difficult geographical conditions, and finally linguistic and religious differences during the Safavid era. In addition to the mentioned factors, other variables such as Safavid differences with the Ottomans and the internal situation in Iran affected the level of relations between the Safavid court and the governor of Georgia. In addition to the use of political and military tools and the migration and displacement of the Georgian population into Safavid territory, another way to stabilize and increase political relations between the Safavid court and Georgia was to use the tools of political marriage, which was followed by the Safavid court seriously. If these connections were made, but various factors that do not need to be explained here failed the result of these connections and the governors of Georgia would raise the flag of revolt at every opportunity.

From the time of Shah Tahmasb I, with the four campaigns and the policy of migration of Caucasians into Iran, the number of their women in the court (harem) increased. As historians have written: " In Iran as a whole, they had several noblemen and Georgian slaves. As a result of the attention of Shah Jam Jah Khaqan Akbar, the number of maids increased, so that grocers and cooks had ten to twenty maids

and slaves" (Hosseini Savaneh Negar Tafarshi, 2009: 161). As mentioned, they were very influential in the power structure, which was an influential element in determining the new king in matters of succession. Now we analyze the political marriage in the internal developments of Georgia in this period, in the sense that what was the purpose of family marriages in Georgian politics? During the reign of Shah Mohammad Khodabandeh, due to the Ghezelbashan disputes and the Shah's inability to settle the internal situation in Iran, chaos spread throughout Iran and in every corner of the country, the flag of rebellion was raised. The Ottoman government made the best use of these unfortunate conditions and by imposing five wars, conquered many areas and states bordering the Safavids. In this deplorable situation, the Iranian states were annexing to the court of Istanbul and the threat had penetrated into the Safavid capital, family ties with the Georgian court were a good way to convince the rulers of the states and provinces that were threatened by the Ottomans.

Georgia was at the forefront of the Ottoman threat during the reign of Shah Mohammad Khodabandeh and it is said that the governors of Cartil and Kakht had each adopted a different policy towards the Safavid court. Both states were thought to have turned to one of the region's empires to balance power in Georgia. The governor of Kakht had a hostile policy with the Safavids and the governor of the cartil preferred the court of Iran. In the reign of Shah Mohammad Khodabandeh, the pillars of the government were led by Mirza Salman Jaberi because they saw the existence and territorial integrity of the government in danger by the Ottomans. They tried to gain the trust of the Georgian governors to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Ottomans, therefore, marriage and family ties in those circumstances met the needs of the divided Safavid society. In the Second Ottoman War against the Safavids (988 AH / 1580 AD) conditions were created for a political connection between the Safavid court and Georgia.

When Shirvan was conquered by the Ottomans, the Safavid court and Safavid chamber of war realized that the ultimate goal of the Ottomans was to conquer and dominate Georgia (Turkman, 2004: 1/271). Therefore, the Safavid rulers considered it expedient to establish deep relations with the Safavids through family ties with the

cartil and Kakht rulers, while reducing tensions between them. Alexander the Great, unlike the Carthaginian Simon, always pursued a hostile policy against the Safavids. For this reason, at first, under the pretext of the opposition of the elders of the tribe (Aznavaran) to his daughter's marriage with Hamze Mirza, he did not accept the marriage proposal (Monshi Qomi, 2004:2/715). Thus, Mirza Salman Jaberi, the Safavid chancellor, headed for Georgia to force Alexander to surrender. When Alexander found himself in trouble, he declared his allegiance to the Safavid court by offering gifts and presents. As a result, the pillars of the Safavid government "according to the expediency of the time" married his daughter to Hamza Mirza at the same time as Simon's daughter. What necessitated this expediency was the Ottoman threat, as the two undertook to refrain from following the Ottomans because of the conflict with Safavid interests (Valeh Isfahani, 1993: 636).

Mirza Salman Jaberi and emirs of Ghezelbash swore allegiance to Alexander Wessimon to the Christian religion to be stable in friendship and death with the Safavid rule. To guarantee this loyalty, the main elements of the Safavid government asked them to send one of their sons to the Safavid court in the manner of "Nawa". Simon Khan sent his son Lohrasb and his son Alexander Kandendil, who were each twelve years old, to the Safavid court (Turkman, 2004: 1/271; Valeh Isfahani, 1993: 637; Shamloo, 1992: 106). Thus, from the time of Shah Mohammad Khodabandeh, the policy of direct intervention of the Safavid court in directing the policies of Georgia began and family ties were a good way to establish their political solidarity with the Safavid court. The adoption of this policy continued during the reign of Shah Abbas I, and he emphasized this policy in the direction of more conservative policies. Shah Abbas I used the differences between the Kakht and the cartils or the tensions between the successor claimants of each state to establish Safavid rule over Georgia. He even pursued the policy of joining the Safavid court through family ties with other governors more seriously.

Following his father's policy, Shah Abbas I established family ties with the Georgian states of Kartli and Kakheti. He married the daughter of Gorgin Khan and the sister of Lohrasb, the governor of Carthage, named Tinatin (Gardina, Lily and Fatemeh Sultan) (1013

AH / 1604 AD). In addition, in order to balance the forces in Georgia and prevent the rebellion of the Kakheti governor, Alexander married his grand-daughter Martha, the daughter of Dawood Khan (Shamloo, 1992: 1/184). Shah Abbas used the tactic of marriage to legitimize his actions, including marrying non-Muslims. He married Jahan Banubigum, his grand-daughter, and the daughter of Zubeida Begum and Issa Khan Sheikhavand Ghorchi Bashi to Samayun (Simon) Khan Gorji and Mehr Sharf Begum to Alexander Mirza, son of Shahnavaz Khan (Marashi, 2000: 44). Shah Abbas's authority in regulating internal affairs and countering Uzbek invasions and retaking Ottoman-occupied territories and states forced the Georgian governors to continue cooperating and uniting with the Safavid court. On the other hand, Shah Abbas I knew that he was not in a position to disrupt his newly calmed territory due to the many problems and issues that plague him, for this reason, it seemed more beneficial to maintain the sovereignty of Georgia by establishing political relations with its governors, in addition, the satisfaction of the relatives and the faithful of the religion extended this connection to the Shekhavandiye family and the Georgians.

With the death of Shah Abbas, I, by the order of Shah Safi, Tahmourth remained in power in Georgia, but it was decided to send his sister to the Shah. Sohrab Gorji fled to Georgia and revolted against the central government. To suppress the Georgian uprising, Shah Safi sent Khosrow Mirza, son of Simavon Khan (Simon) Khan, the slain viceroy of Georgia, with the title of Rostam Khan at the head of an army to suppress Tahmourth. In general, the relations of the governors of Georgia with the court of Shah Safi were shaky. They wanted to use the differences between the Safavids and the Ottomans to establish their rule (Turkman, 2004: 1604/3; Mahdavi, 2007: 103).

The shaky behavior of the Georgian rulers continued until the Treaty of Zahab (1049 AH / 1639 AD). With the return of peace to the Safavid and Ottoman states and borders, the governors of Georgia found it convenient to get closer to Safavid. In fact, one of the consequences of Zahab's peace was the easing of the Georgian governors' uprising. In 1050 AH. / 1640  . on behalf of Rostam Khan, the governor of Georgia, a group brought Tahmourth's daughter to Isfahan to marry Shah Safi (Isfahani, 1989: 294). In this way, she

"became in the group of veiled people of the sanctuary of the beloved ones" (Hosseini Savanh Negar Tafreshi, 2009: 161).

According to the peace treaty, Zahab, Kartil and Kakhet were handed over to the Safavids and the Ottoman threat from these areas was removed. . But gradually the other actor in the Caucasus conflicts opened his feet. Tsarist Russia gradually sought to consolidate its position in the political equations of the region. Religious similarities with Caucasians, especially Georgians, and the wrong policies of the Safavid court provided a more favorable ground for consolidating the political position of the tsars in the region. After the death of Khosrow Mirza (Rostam) and Vakhtang V (Shah Nawaz I), Rostam's adopted son succeeded him. Shah Abbas II married the daughter of Shah Nawaz. He converted to Christianity despite converting to Islam. After this connection appears; Shah Abbas II, in order to continue the Safavid rule and prevent the spread of Tsarist Russian influence in this region and to counter the Shahnavaaz divergences, settled fifteen thousand members of the Muslim tribes of Javanshiri and Bayat in Kakht (Valeh Esfahani, 2001: 614). Safavid relations with Georgia continued until the fall of Isfahan, but religious persecution and incorrect court policies had adverse consequences for Iran's domination of the Caucasus and with the first whispers of the Afghan invasion of Isfahan, the Georgian governors rebelled against the Safavid court, and Georgia fell to Tsarist Russia.

Conclusion

The Caucasians (Georgians, Armenians, Circassians) known as the "Third Force" were added to the structure of the Safavid power from the time of Shah Tahmasb I and played an important role in political developments along with other political actors. This new element dominated the various dimensions of the Safavid rule and even commented on the appointment of the king and the determination of general policies and developments. Numerous marriages of these elements with different layers of power structure along with military capabilities and economic activities added to the political weight of Caucasians in this period. The political marriages of the Caucasians in the internal dimensions of the Caucasus, the regions, states and the

court of the Safavid government, in addition to showing the development and increasing their political power, showed the distrust of the Safavid kings to the Tajik and Ghezelbash elements who had endangered the existence of the government with their differences. Other influential variables, such as the Ottoman threat and religious differences and the distance dimension in the use of family ties, were also necessary. As mentioned, in the days when the Safavids saw their territorial integrity in danger due to internal conflicts and centralist policies, in order to protect the Caucasus from Ottoman aggression and to preserve the Caucasus within the framework of the Safavid rule, the use of political marriage with the court of the Caucasian rulers was considered as the best and safest solution.

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