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Safavid Alliance with European Colonialism Against Arabs and Muslims

With the advent of the sixteenth century AD, Shah Ismail the Safavi became the sole master in the Iranian plateau. In order to confirm his rule with an ideological character, Shah Ismail imposed the "Shiite Safaviyya" as the ideology of his state and worked on the decline of the Sunni sect in favor of his new belief. As a matter of fact, that new belief is surrounded by many suspicions and some even considered it a new religious "heresy".

This is confirmed by historian Jean-Louis Gramon, who describes the Shiite Safavids, saying: "It is a strange hybrid doctrine, in which one finds local beliefs from before Islam, mixed with other beliefs coming from the ancient shamanism characteristic of the inhabitants of the wilderness, where all is covered with a light coating of a Shi'ite Islam, yet it is very odd from the Twelver Shiism." "

Safavidism was a mixture of ancient Persian religious beliefs in an attempt to revive Persian nationalism in the face of Islam, which Persian extremists viewed as the main reason for the demise of the Persian Empire and the end of Akasara rule. Hence, Shiite Safavids were not just a new religious doctrine, or even a religious heresy, but, in essence, it was a political project to revive the Persian Empire and redeem f Akasara rule again.

This becomes evident when we review the steps of the Safavid political project to control the Islamic world, especially the close neighbor, the Arab wing. The features of that project are evident through the repeated occupation of Iraq by the Safavids and the massacre they committed in Baghdad by executing the symbols of the Sunni sect, out of hatred for Arabs and Islam, and to confirm the spread of the Safavid heresy by the sword. In addition, there is the return of Persian ambitions in the Arabian Gulf, as well as attempts to control the western coast thereof.

In the beginning, Safavid ambitions in Arab waters will collide with European colonialism, which began through the Portuguese. Here, the Safavids will not find anything wrong with allying with the Europeans against the Islamic forces, even attempting to share the Arabian Gulf with European colonialism.

Abd al-Aziz Nawar confirms this pragmatic policy against Sunni Islam, saying: "The previous and later evidence confirmed that the Shahs of Persia did not hesitate to ally with the European Crusader powers."

The great collusion between the Safavids and the Portuguese took place to control the southern Arabian waters, yet the Portuguese did not satisfy all the ambitions of the Safavids to devour the Arabian Gulf region. Hence, the Safavids did not refrain from searching for a new European ally, which is the new colonial power: England. The largest manifestation of this was at the time of Shah Abbas the Great. Also, the Safavids began relations and then an alliance with Spain, the staunchest enemies of Islam and Muslims in the countries of the Maghreb. Most historical sources unanimously agree that the policy of the Safavids crystallized in establishing a major alliance with European powers, led by Austria, the Habsburg family, the Italian emirates and the Papacy, in order to wage a major war against the Ottoman Empire and gain control on the Islamic world.

Linked to that policy are attempts to stir up unrest and rebellion in some parts of the Arab world, such as encouraging Fakhr al-Din al-Ma'ni, the Druze Emir of Lebanon, to join this alliance, as well as the Kurdish Janbulad tribes, in order to work on the collapse of the Islamic world from within.

The features of this malicious alliance are clearly evident in the fact that whenever the Ottoman army was in military confrontations with the Habsburg family, whether in Hungary or even Austria, Safavid pragmatism appeared by igniting a new front, the eastern front, working to reoccupy Iraq and consolidate Persian influence throughout the Arabian Gulf, taking advantage of the Ottomans' preoccupation with battles in Europe. Ottomans were frequently forced to stop fighting with the Habsburg dynasty in Austria so as to focus efforts in the face of the Safavids and their treacherous stabs from behind.

That was the historical background of this vicious alliance between the Safavids and the European colonial powers, led by the Habsburgs; an alliance that began very early in the time of the Safavid Shah Ismail, through his correspondence with Charles V in the period from 1516 to 1519, while the Ottoman armies were advancing with several great conquests, almost subdued most of Central Europe if not for that vicious alliance between Ismail the Safavid and Charles V, Emperor of Austria. The peak of that treachery was in the letter written in Latin by the Safavids in 1523 to Charles V offering to coordinate joint operations against their common enemy; the Ottoman Empire.

This was the Safavid project: a religious heresy, political betrayal to Arabs and Muslims and an alliance with the colonial West.