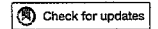


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Fariba Zarinebaf

Azerbaijan between Two Empires: A Contested Borderland in the Early Modern Period (Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries)

The first part of the paper examines the evolution and transformation of Safavid ideology in the context of confessional changes and the role of Turkoman tribes in the Safavid social movement in the Ottoman-Iranian borderland. The second part examines the impact of Ottoman-Safavid wars and religious rivalry on the society and economy of Azerbaijan from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.

Keywords: Safavid; Ottoman; Sufism; Qizilbash; Azerbaijan; Anatolia; Social Movements; Empires and Borderlands

The history of the Ottoman-Safavid borderlands in the early modern period has not received much attention beyond the history of warfare written by historians of the Ottoman Empire as well as Iran.¹ While Ottomanist historians have paid a great deal of attention to the history of the Ottoman-Balkan frontier, they have largely ignored the Ottoman-Iranian borderland. Moreover, national historiographies by both sides have failed to pay much attention to the political, demographic, religious and social changes in this important borderland during the early modern period.² Except for a few scholarly works, the history of Ottoman-Safavid borderland remains sketchy due to the dearth of archival material and early Safavid chronicles and the bias in the later histories written by both Ottoman and Safavid official chroniclers.³ European narrative accounts and travelogues have their own biases, although

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¹Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı-Iran Siyasi Münasebetleri*; Kırzioğlu, *Osmanlıların Kafkas-Elleri'ni Fethi*.

²For a recent example of Iranian historiography see, Parsadust, *Shah Ismā'il-i Avval*; Abisaab, *Converting Persia*; Allouche, *The Origins and Development of Ottoman-Safavid Conflict*; Melville, *Safavid Persia*; Mitchell, *The Practice of Politics in Safavid Iran*; Newman, *Society and Culture in the Early Modern Middle East*; Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*; Salehi, *Nasrullah*; Rizvi, *Kishwar*; Uluçay, *Çağatay*; and Zarinebaf, "Asserting Military Power."

³For a critical analysis of Safavid sources, see Morton, "The Early Years of Shah Ismā'il." He also underlines the importance of European (Venetian and Portuguese sources). Ottoman chronicles typically carry a very anti-Safavid and anti-Qizilbash bias while Safavid sources ignore the formative period and events in Anatolia. Most Ottoman archival sources are official reports and are very biased against the Qizilbash. See Zarinebaf-Shahr, "Qizilbash Heresy and Rebellion." See also Ghareghlou, "Chronicling a Dynasty on the Make."