

The Role of the Crimean Tatars in the Ottoman-Safavi Wars

Osmanlı-Safevi Savaşlarında Kırım Tatarlarının Rolü

H. Mustafa ERAVCI * **Abstract**

From the beginning of the XVI century until the beginning of the XVIII century, The Ottoman-Safavid struggle, which continued for about two centuries, took place in this buffer geography along the North-South directional Caucasus-Iraq-Arab line, which is the natural borders of both powers. These conflicts, which took place in the Southern Caucasus, Tabriz-centered Southern Azerbaijan, and the Iraqi-Arab geography, were largely carried out by the coalition elements of both states. In this context, the Crimean Tatars stand out as the most important coalition element in the Eastern Campaigns of the Ottomans. In this study, the role of the Crimean Tatars, who had an autonomous status in the Ottoman political and administrative system, and the military elements acting with them, in the Ottoman expeditions to the East will be clarified.

* Prof. Dr., Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Fakültesi Tarih Bölümü
hmeravci@hotmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-9092-8448
Ankara / TÜRKİYE

Keywords:

Kafkasya, Irak-ı Arab, Osmanlılar, Safeviler, Kırım Tatarları, Ordu

Öz

XVI. yüzyılın başlarından XVIII. yüzyılın başlarına kadar yaklaşık iki yüzyıl boyunca devam eden Osmanlı-Safevi mücadelesi, Kuzey-Güney yönlü Kafkas-Irak-Arap hattı boyunca uzanan bu tampon coğrafyada yer almıştır. Her iki gücün de doğal sınırları olan Güney Kafkasya, Tebriz merkezli Güney Azerbaycan ve Irak-Arap coğrafyasında meydana gelen bu çatışmalar büyük ölçüde her iki devletin koalisyon unsurları tarafından yürütülmüştür. Bu bağlamda Kırım Tatarları, Osmanlı'nın Doğu Seferlerinde en önemli koalisyon unsuru olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, Osmanlı siyasi ve idari sisteminde özerk bir statüye sahip olan Kırım Tatarları ve onlarla hareket eden askeri unsurların Osmanlı'nın Doğu seferlerindeki rolü açıklığa kavuşturulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler:

Caucasus, Irak-ı Arab, Ottoman, Safavid, Crimean Tatars, Army

** Prof. Dr., Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of History
hmeravci@hotmail.com
ORCID: 0000-0002-9092-8448
Ankara / TÜRKİYE

Başvuru/Submitted: 25/11/2021

Kabul/Accepted: 22/06/2022

Makale Bilgileri

- Etik Kurul Kararı:** Etik kurul kararından muaftır.
- Katılımcı Rızası:** Katılımı yok.
- Mali Destek:** Çalışma için herhangi bir kurum ve projeden mali destek alınmamıştır.
- Çıkar Çatışması:** Çalışmada kişiler ve kurumlar arası çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.
- Telif Hakları:** Çalışmada kullanılan görsellerle ilgili telif hakkı sahiplerinden gerekli izinler alınmıştır.
- Değerlendirme:** İki dış hakem / Çift taraflı körleme.
- Benzerlik Taraması:** Yapıldı – iThenticate.
- Etik Beyan:** sutad@selcuk.edu.tr, selcukturkiyat@gmail.com
- Lisans:** Bu eser Creative Commons Atıf-GayriTicari 4.0 Uluslararası (CC BY-NC 4.0) lisansı ile lisanslanmıştır.

Article Information

- Ethics Committee Approval:** It is exempt from the Ethics Committee Approval.
- Informed Consent:** No participants.
- Financial Support:** The study received no financial support from any institution or project.
- Conflict of Interest:** No conflict of interest.
- Copyrights:** The required permissions have been obtained from the copyright holders for the images and photos used in the study.
- Assessment:** Two external referees / Double blind.
- Similarity Screening:** Checked – iThenticate.
- Ethical Statement:** selcukturkiyat@gmail.com, fatihnumankb@selcuk.edu.tr
- License:** Content of this Journal is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0)

Introduction

In the 16th century, the Ottoman Empire had long-opposed the development of any powerful state on their eastern and western flank. Thus they become involved in a drawn-out war first in the Persian theatre and then in the border zone between the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires despite gaining land it suffered heavy losses both financially and in terms of human life. The order, large-scale participation of the Tatars in late of 16th and 17th centuries Ottoman wars was directly linked with the Turkish army's decrease in quality. And so it was also in the Hungarian and Persian theatres that the Turkish command was forced to use Crimean Tatar auxiliaries due to military losses and lack of financial resources. At the same time, the Crimean Khanate's influence area, the step of Black Sea which extends to Hungarian in the West and to Kazan in the East until the end of 16th century (Itzkowitz, 1972, p. 30). But later, it was gradually losing its influence in the east region because of Muscovy advance to South and advancement in trade and diplomatic relations between West and Persian (İnalçık, 1995, p. 39). Thus the Porte had encouraged the personal involvement of the Crimean Khans in the Turkish east campaigns since the late 16th century and even demanded them to remain in the winter quarters at the theatre. In addition, the situation of the coalition elements changed in the eastern campaigns of the Ottomans in the following centuries. In this study, here in the context of the changing geopolitical position of the Tatars, the role of Tatars in the Ottoman campaigns against Iran will be illuminated.

The Role of Tatar Armies in the Ottoman Campaigns against Iran in XVIth Century

Although Crimean Tatar troops had been invited to participate in the 1514, 1534 and 1548 of Ottoman East Campaigns (Küpeli, 2014, p.161-163; Hammer-Purgstall, 1985, p.1900; Kırzioğlu, 1993, pp.218-20) Tatar leader as Khan and the large numbers of Tatar troops deployed only as late as 1578. The reason for the late deployment of the Tatar troops was the success of the Tsardom of Muscovy, which spread its influence into Ottoman domains in the Caucasia and the Black Sea region after the advancement to Terek River in 1560. The other reason had been the invasion of Safavids in the Georgia until 1568. As a result of these developments, the Ottoman east-west trade monopoly had been undermined by these hostile powers. So much so that in the winter of 1568 the Tsar sent an envoy to Iran proposing an alliance against the Ottomans, and at the same time Pope Gregory XIII included the Tsar and the Shah in his plans for a crusade against the Ottomans (Naki, 2016, pp.116-120). Thus the Persian war become strategically important as a control to Muscovite and Safavid economic ties with Central Asia and lastly as a confirmation of Ottoman rights on the shores of the Black Sea and in the Caucasia. A part from these developments, the discontent of the semi-independent Georgian, Shirvanian, and Dagestanian Emirates in the Caucasus and their bitter rivalries over the choice of a successor to the Persian throne after the death of Shah Tahmasp had provided ample excuse and opportunity for the onset of hostilities. In addition to these factors, internal problem in Safavid State, made the announcement of war against Safavids easy. Thus, the twelve years war grew out

of a series of clash, was beginning in end of 1577 between governor (Beglerbeği) of Van and Safavid counterpart (Eravcı, 2011, pp. 47-58).

On the other hand, at the beginning of 1578, with the letters sent Crimean Khan II. Mehmed Giray, from him was asked to send Tatar cavalries to Shirvan for help to the Ottoman commander. However, Mehmed Giray could not respond to the sultan's order to help the Ottoman main army, and only after peace was made between the Crimea and Poland in September 1578 (Kortepeter, 1973, p. 57), he was able to send the military force to Shirvan. According to Mühimme register, II. Mehmed Giray's brother Adil Giray, the chief of staff, his other brothers Gazi Giray and Selamet Giray and his son Mübarek Giray, including a force of 15,000 people were sent to Shirvan via Derbent; with them from Istanbul to their entourage 500 janissaries, 12 artillerymen, 15 cannon coaches; besides, 6 great balls, 8 small blowing machines, 100 rifles, 1,000 weighbridges of gunpowder and other ammunition was also (BOA, MD 32: 310; Sungur, 1998, p. 29).

It can be seen from Ottoman sources that when the war was declared to Safavid there were three steps of Ottoman military action against them. According to the plan the directions of attacks were going to be Mustafa Pasha from Northeast Anatolia, Sinan Pasha from Southeast Anatolia, and the Crimea Khan from Derbent, but this plan was changed because of several reasons (Eravcı, 2011, pp. 60-70; BOA, MD32: 127/236). When the Tatar army, led by Adil Giray, set out from the Crimea, the main Ottoman army was led by Mustafa Pasha had conquered Georgia, Azerbaijan and Shirvan, which completed the operation it planned in the year, leaving Özdemiroğlu Osman Pasha to the protection of Shirvan. He had returned to Erzurum to spend the winter with most of the soldiers (Ebubekir bin Abdullah, yz. 366,4a). It was still quite evident that it would be extremely difficult for Osman Pasha to conquer the rest of Shirvan with the small number of troops under his command; consequently, Mustafa Pasha continued to seek support from the Crimean Khan. But in the following year, the tide turned, and Osman Pasha's forces were thoroughly defeated by the troops of the Prince of Safavid and lost Shamakhi, Eresh and Shirvan's most significant defensive fortresses as well (Kütükoğlu, 1993, p. 138). By 1583 both sides were never challenges, the administration in Caucasia has been continuing to change hands. However, despite suffering heavy losses, with Crimean force's help and Osman Pasha's great endeavour, major Ottoman triumph take place that time. This practically closed the first phase of war in favour of Ottoman, and this position has continued until 1590.

However, from a military perspective, Tatar participation in this Ottoman-Safavid war can be divided in two parts. Firstly, a large Tatar army of 10-25 thousand men who fought under the leadership of the Khan or the Kalgay, were going to be alongside the Turkish army in fortress sieges and field battles in Caucasia. Secondly the small troops of Tatars spent the winter in the theatre of war with Ottoman forces. Now we evaluate these two shape one by one:

In the first type of participation stated above, the Tatars were used to occupy the relief troops, cut supply lines, break up the Safavid camps and help holding Ottoman force which were surrounded by Safavid army. This participation kind happened two

times. Firstly, Crimean force under Mehmed Giray, received the sultans order to help Osman Pasha's force, and marched to Shirvan after peace was concluded between Crimea and Poland in September 1578 (Kortepeter, 1973, p. 57). Khan of Crimea's forces, which varies between twenty and thirty thousand including the forces of the Shirvan Şah Ebubekir Mirza and the beg of Azak arrived in Shirvan (October 1578) (Kütükoğlu, 1993, pp. 90-106; Kırzioğlu, 1976, p. 313). On the other hand, according to Ottoman sources, when the main Ottoman army departed from Shirvan, under the command of Safavid Aras Khan, an army of 20,000 men was sent to Shirvan in October 1578 for taking advantage. Aras Khan, who captured Eresh in a short time, then marched on Shamakhi. He besieged the fort in early November. In front of the castle for a few days Osman Pasha's soldiers were very successful in the battles that took place. Although they achieved results, they were insufficient in the face of the enemy's numerical superiority. They were staying. On November 11, at a time when all hopes were lost, Ottoman troops heard this news by Abdi Çavuş, the Battle of Shamakhi was already commenced on the afternoon at 9 Ramazan 986 /3 November 1578 and continued for three days at the end of which the Tatar force under the Crimean Khan's brothers -Adil Giray, Gazi Giray, Saadet Giray- and the Khan's son Mübarek Giray including Khan's deputy Hacı Mustafa Beğ and former ruler of Shirvanshah Sultan Burhan's son Ebubekir Mirza appeared on the theatre of war. Thus, Safavid forces were caught between the Crimean and Ottoman forces (Ebubekir bin Abdullah, yz. 366, 5b) and at the afternoon of third day of the battle, they broke the Persian resistance. The situation changed in favour of the Ottomans.

When the conflict had subsided, the Tatar leaders and their troops were warmly thanked and greatly honoured by the Ottomans for their timely arrival. But although Osman Pasha urged the Tatars to protect the lives and properties of the Muslim inhabitants, Tatars quickly overrun the position and acquired more booty and slaves then they could carry off. As a result, this generally mobile force incautiously loaded itself with an excess of pack animals (Eravcı, 2009, pp. 58-59). Meanwhile the main Persian army, numbering thirty to forty thousand men had successfully sacked Eresh, now moved in the direction of Shamakhi under the command of Selman Khan the vizier of Shah Khodabanda. In the evening of 24 Ramazan 986 (24 November 1578) the Safavid army began its siege of Shamakhi and led the bulk of his army against the Tatars. On the last day of Ramazan 986/ 30 November 1578, the Tatars and Safavids clashed on the plain near Mahmudabad (Molla Hasan) and fierce fighting followed for three days between the Tatars and superior Safavid forces.

According to famous Ottoman Historian Mustafa 'Âlî, the Tatars had gained a considerable advantage over their adversary until a terrible rainstorm which swept over the battlefield. This storm greatly hampered the Tatars, who relied heavily on their bows and arrows and the manoeuvrability of their mounts. Their horses, also become mired in a sea of mud (Eravcı, 2014, pp. 220-221). The Tatars disengaged and retreated in the direction of Derbent, Adil Giray become a prisoner of Safavids. Meanwhile, Osman Pasha having heard the results of this latest clash, decided to

withdraw from Shamakhi to Derbent before Selman Khan could concentrate his forces around Shamakhi (Kütükoğlu, 1993, pp. 91-102).

All efforts ended in failure by the end of the first year of the war. So much so that at the beginning of 1579, Osman Pasha and his weary forces were content with supplying the Derbent surroundings and protecting their position there. Despite bad situation of Osman Pasha and its army, Mustafa Pasha and main Ottoman army spent the year (1579) by rebuilding the fortress at Kars instead of giving military support to Osman Pasha in Derbent (Kütükoğlu, 1993, pp. 102-104). Meanwhile Mustafa Pasha convinced the Porte to make pressure on the Crimean Tatars to fill the gap in the South Caucasus.

From a military point of view, it seems logical that the Ottoman army tried to secure the Caucasian flank before embarking on any adventure in the Tabriz plain. In order to provide this military strategy and to avenge his brother, Mehmed Giray was asked to move to Derbent with a military force that would not be less than the previous year. In this connection first, the Khan was officially appointed commander-in-chief of the Ottoman army in Dagestan (987/1579) (Kütükoğlu, 1993, p. 107). Mehmed Khan and about 20000 Tatars departed for Derbent from Bahçesaray on 26 July 1579 and had completed the journey in thirty days (BOA, MD 38:332; Gelibolulu Mustafa 'Âlî, 2000, p. 359). Neither the Ottomans nor the Tatars remained in Derbent. Both of them moved to Şabiran, where a large force was detached and send ahead. This scout army defeated Muhammed Halife the Persian general and governor of Shirvan, in two separate clashes, made him a prisoner and sent the remainder of the Persian forces scurrying across the Kura river to Karabakh and Mugan. After Shirvan had once again been conquered by Ottoman forces, special combat forces were sent against Baku and other important cities. Thereafter, the Tatars spread out and collected booty and slaves throughout the countryside (Eravcı, 2009, pp. 90-92).

Osman Pasha and Tatar Khan expected the arrival of Lala Mustafa Pasha to Shirvan, but they learned that the main army in Erzurum would not return to Shirvan that year (Ebubekir bin Abdullah, yz.366,18a). Therefore, the Tatar Khan held council with his brothers and the other Tatar dignitaries, and together they resolved to return to the Crimean. Osman Pasha was able to dissuade them from this action for a time by suggesting a raid into the provinces, south of the Kura. Thus, the Khan and his horsemen crossed the river and concentrated on the province of Ganja where plundered (Eravcı, 2009, pp. 92-96). In fact, after gathering booty an entire month, as winter was approaching and as the Serdar was withdrawing forces from Kars to Erzurum, the Tatars left Ganja, rested a few days in Eresh, and then started for Crimea. He only consented his brother Gazi Giray and Saadet Giray to spend the winter in the Caucasus with a few thousand Tatars (Eravcı, 2009, pp. 100-101).

The troops of Tatars spent the winter in the theatre of war, which is more significant than direct military participation because the Turkish command could not leave behind a sufficient number of garrisons with ample supplies in the fortresses to maintain possession of the newly occupied territories in the dead of winter, the Tatars were therefore posted in Caucasus to provide them with military support and supplies. It is common knowledge that the Turkish army required at least two months to reach

the Caucasus from İstanbul, so the task of the Tatars wintering there was to support the united forces of the Turkish garrisons in Caucasus when necessary and prevent the enemy from initiating major operations prior to the arrival of the Turkish main army. Therefore because of these conditions and continuing heavy pressure of Safavid forces Osman Pasha had requested Mehmed Giray to spent winter in Shirvan (BOA, MD 45: 123/150).

Although by military view, the Tatars were not a match for the royal troops of Safavids, Tatars were operating in the border fortresses in late autumn or early spring, and they did manage to disrupt Safavid's manoeuvres and caused delays with their destruction. With this connection the Turks were forced to maintain a permanent force of 2-3000 Tatars in strategic locations to supply garrison to the fortresses. For example, after Adil Giray fell captive to Safavids in Molla Hasan battle towards in the last of 1578 year, the main Tatar army under the command of Mehmed Giray returned to home land Crimea at the beginning of 1579 but Gazi Giray remained, with about 2000-3000 Tatar soldiers, in Caucasus from that time to summer of 1581. In fact, these Tatars decided the fate of the Ottoman and Shirvan troops who were besieged in Shamakhi. In this process, Gazi Giray gained political and military experience under the tutelage of the brilliant commander Osman Pasha, playing an important role as a back-aid supporter of eight to ten thousand Ottoman and Shirvan soldiers from time to time with his small strike force and sometimes as a pioneer unit. For example, he, with his horsemen, carried out a great raid on Kura' and Shamakhi after Tatar Khan's return to his homeland in 1579 and extended his attacks to Baku. (Ebubekir bin Abdullah, yz. 366,14a; Hussein bin Mehmed, yz. 0118/2, 28a). Apart from these attacks, Gazi Giray played an important role in strengthening the position of Osman Pasha in Dagestan and consolidating the Ottoman dominance in the northern Azerbaijani geography.

Towards the end of 1580, a large Safavid force under the leadership of the *vizier*, Selman Khan, had begun to concentrate on the Mugan Steppe, where was the most appropriate assembly area from which to launch an attack on the Ottoman-held strong points of Baku and Derbent. Contrary to this Safavid pressure, Osman Pasha and Gazi Giray conceived a plan which would delay and harass the Safavid preparations for expected offensive. A mixed force of Tatar and Ottoman cavalry was sent against the Safavid winter quarters (*kışlak*) in a night raid. In order to take the enemy by complete surprise, this force of two or three thousands would have to attack the position from an unexpected quarter. Gazi Giray effectively carried out this raid with the assistance of his cousins Murad Giray, and Safa Giray, sons of the Khan. The Safavid camp was thrown into great disorder and Selman Khan only barely managed to escape capture by galloping away on a draft horse. As a result of this victory of Tatars on Safavids Gazi Giray received a personal commendation (*hükm-i şerif*) from the Sultan in 28 February 1581 in which he was informed of a 50000 *akçe* increase in his annual subsidy (BOA, MD 44: 231/255).

In the spring of 1581, Gazi Giray and Dal Mehmed Çelebi, former treasurer (*defterdar*) of Shirvan and author of *Şecaatname*, were decisively defeated and two commanders could only just escape from theatre. Thereupon after this Ottoman and

Tatar forces were defeated Osman Pasha left a garrison at Baku and withdrew to Derbent. Persian forces led by Piri Muhammed Beg and İmam Kulu Khan, harassed their withdrawal along the Caspian shore to the ramparts of Derbent and advanced to the Ottoman strong points. Therefore, Gazi Giray selected by Osman Pasha, led a diversionary action against Safavid forces with Tatar Prince, who held up somewhere between Shabiran and Shamakhi. According to Ottoman Sources, at the end of the first day, the two forces disengaged and after hosting a night watch, Gazi Giray took his repose, and during the night Ebubekir Mirza suddenly left Osmanlı side (Çetin, 1998, pp. 29-45; Ebubekir bin Abdullah, yz. 366,14a; Hüseyin, yz. 0118/2, 28a-b). Taking advantage of the confusion, Safavids moved into the melee. Gazi Giray, put into prison by Safavid, was sent to the castle of Alamut where he languished in prison for much of the next four years (İskender Münşi, 1978, p. 334).

On the other hand, Gazi Giray escaped from Tabriz, crossing the border dressed as a dervish. He took refuge in Van and from there, he was sent to Erzurum by Cıgalazade Sinan Pasha, the governor (*beylerbey*) of Van. After mutual rejoicing, Osman Pasha gave Gazi Giray the command over all of Tatar and Circassia troops in his army and ordered the advance to Tabriz. They followed this order and participated the Tabriz siege (1585) (Rahimizade İbrahim Çavuş, yz. 2372,74b-75b).

In addition to their contribution to the campaigns and wintering, the Tatars carried out certain tasks in the areas of supply and logistics as well. In the course of a campaign, the Tatars provided not only for themselves but also for the Ottoman's supply service particularly in the areas where the Turkish command was unable cope with. For example when Tatar forces moved to Derbent, they transported cannon, supply and ammunition, which were necessary for Ottoman army, and stocked them in Derbent (Kütükoğlu, 1993, pp. 91-2). The Khan, long before his departure for Derbent from Bahçesaray on 26 July 1579, had furnished Mehmed Beg, sanjak bey of Azak with 10000 Tatars. This advance party and supply train reached Derbent in exactly 74 days.

Apart from the military service, the Tatars played an important diplomatic role as well. The Safavids conducted Adil Giray and Gazi Giray to Qazvin, where they received particularly good treatment. During this troubling period, they offered the young Tatar princes great opportunities for intrigue. It soon become rumoured that Adil Giray had intimate relations with the Begum Hayrun Nesa, Shah's wife, who, controlled the Safavid state. With the help of these relations the Safavids were aiming to advance the political relations with Tatars (Peçevi, 1283, p. 233; İskender Münşi, 1978, p. 355). Moreover, in connection with these diplomatic attacks the Safavids used Adil Giray as a peacemaker between Ottomans and Safavids by forcing him to send letters to İstanbul (Eravcı, 2011, p. 34). In addition to all of these diplomatic functions of the Tatars, they were used as messengers too. According to one Ottoman source called Tarih-i Osman Pasha, whilst the Ottoman army was staying in Derbent, the Sultan's letter (*hüküm*) was delivered to Derbent by a few Tatar messengers (*ulak*) before Mehmed came to Derbent (1579). Moreover, messengers sent from İstanbul, were escorted by Tatar combat forces from Kefe to Derbent (Zeyrek, 2001, p. 62).

Apart from the above stated roles of Tatars they controlled the trade relations between Iran, Moscow and West. For example, during the 1580 summer, they traded with English merchants and prevented their actions with Persia (Jenkinson, 1885, pp.130-150). Moreover, they help the Ottoman holding force to order the customs at the ports in Black and Caspian Sea.

After Mehmet Giray was killed by the conqueror of the Caucasus, Özdemiroğlu Osman Pasha, in 1584 on the orders of the central government, the influence of the Ottomans on the Crimean Khanate gradually increased during the Islam Giray and Gazi Giray Khanates. So much so that in the time of Islam Giray, the name of the Ottoman Sultan began to be read in front of the Crimean Khan in Friday sermons (Halim Giray Sultan, 2019, p.77). It has become a procedure. Moreover, Khans used to be kindly invited to Ottoman expeditions, but now they come on orders. Islam Giray (1584-1588) and especially II. Gazi Giray (1588-1607) fulfils every order from Istanbul unconditionally. They drew a Khan profile suitable for this new period.

Crimean Tatar Military Forces as Ottoman Raiders on the Ottoman-Iranian Border in the XVIIth Century

In 1603, Safavid ruler Shah Abbas moved to reclaim the land which was granted at Ottoman with the Treaty of Ferhat Pasha in 1590, by knowing the opportunity the Ottomans to be at war in Europe. Safavid main army prepared, captured the important Ottoman castles in Azerbaijan such as Tabriz and then Nakhchivan, Revan and Ganja in a short time. On the other hand, even the Safavid armies, captured Meskhetian and Kars, Derbent in the following year. However, after the Habsburg war was over, the Ottomans were able to send an army under the leadership of Kuyucu Murat Pasha to both the Celali rebellions in East Anatolia and to Tabriz. In this process, although the Crimean Khan Gazi Giray was invited to this expedition, this was not possible after Gazi Giray caught the plague and died (1607). (Feridun Ahmed Bey, 1277, pp. 25-27).

On the other hand, the peace of 1612, in spite of the operation of Shah Abbas in Georgia and after two and a half years, it was destroyed by the Ottomans. In the spring of 1615, the Persian expedition with the start of preparations, messengers demanded military aid was sent to Crimea again with letters on the order from the central government. Crimean Khan Canibek Giray, under the head of Ateş Mirza, has close to 3,000 Tatar soldiers were sent to Istanbul to join the main army of the chief commander (Küpeli, 2014, p. 168). Although this much force is sufficient for now, when Grand Vizier Mehmed Pasha arrived in Aleppo, a letter came from Tahmures Khan, Prince of Kakheti. In the letter sent, the Georgian prince Tahmures Khan stated that he defeated the Safavid elements with the support of the regional powers, that the Dagestan beys were in alliance and ended the Safavid domination in Derbent region. So much so that in this letter He even stated that if Tatar force comes, he could guide him (İskender Münşi, 1978, pp. 1246-48).

In the context of this information and new developments, the reason Tahmures Khan wanted Tatar army to come was to secure herself. Because with support of Tatar he would be able to defeat the Safavid forces who had reproved him. After the defeat,

Shah Abbas sent a larger army to Georgia. Because the Ottoman army is in the winter quarters it was not possible for him to arrive in Georgia before spring. So fast and the arrival of the highly mobile Crimean forces in the region it was most suitable for in line with the news from Tahmures, the Ottoman Empire. Despite the order of the sultan, the Crimean khan refused to go to Derbent avoided. Because the Safavid army under the command of Shah Abbas himself marched on the Georgians and defeated them, Tahmures Khan while fleeing and taking refuge in the Ottomans, many of his supporters were captured and killed or exiled (İskender Münşi, 1978, p. 1245).

Like this The Safavids regained control of eastern Georgia and Shirvan. This operation frightened Canibek Giray to go to Shirvan from via Derbent. Instead of this way, he asked permission from the capital to use the Kefe-Trabzon seaway. However, the Sultan did not allow this and immediately insisted in order to went to Derbent by land way. Upon the insistence of the central government, the Crimea Khan said that he would send his brother Fetih Giray to Derbent with a force of 20,000 people, but he did not do that either. (Küpeli, 2014, pp. 161-177).

On the other hand, upon the failure of the siege of Revan Grand Vizier Mehmed Pasha was dismissed and Halil Pasha became the Grand Vizier. The first task of the new vizier was to go to Iran. In this context the war was declared to the Safavids. As the preparations for the expedition started immediately, the Crimea Khan Canibek Giray was requested in participation in ordered expedition by sending an edict him (Hacı Halife Mustafa, 1286, p. 377; Naima, 2007, p.428). This time, Crimean Khan was not in a position to make excuses like previous requests and, according to the order given, he went with his army. He boarded the ships from Kefe and moved to Trabzon with Crimean forces. When the Crimean army landed in Trabzon, the Ottoman soldiers also reached Diyarbakır, had been in the barracks, and dispersed. Before the Crimean Khan Canibek Giray came to Diyarbakır, he asked Halil Pasha for permission to plunder Ganja, Nakhchivan and Julfa. This request was seen on the spot, and Tatar soldiers raided the Nakhchivan region and brought about 30,000 captives and plentiful booty to the main army in Diyarbakır. Canibek Giray was rewarded by commander in chief (*serdar*) for his successful raid and the vicinity of Cizre was allocated to the Crimean forces for winter (Defterdar Sarı Abdullah Efendi, yz. 2139, 106a-107b; Peçevi, 1283, p. 364).

When the soldiers returned from the winter quarters in the spring of 1617, the Ottoman army moved towards Tabriz. It was also informed to the Crimean Khan near Cizre that the Tatar soldiers was requested to raids Safavid lands as a pioneer. Upon this order, 4–5,000 Tatars were sent to plunder under the command of Bahadır and Sufi Mirzas. They gathered 30–40,000 sheep, 4–5,000 horse 2,000 camels, and about 3,000 captives, around Nakhchivan and returned with those captives to near around Tatvan where joined the Ottoman army. (Defterdar Sarı Abdullah Efendi, yz. 2139, 110a-111b).

When there is no result from diplomatic contacts, the Ottoman army continued its forward operation and came as far as Tabriz. After City was burned and destroyed, it was decided to go to Ardebil. However, based on what Osman Ağa, the newly arrived Ottoman ambassador from Iran, saw on the Iranian side, the idea that the attack of the

Crimean cavalry would both deal a significant blow to the Safavid forces and provide a large amount of booty was put up for discussion in the war council. Some experienced statesmen, especially *Defterdar* Baki Pasha, opposed this idea. According to them, the soldier who quickly covered the distance of seven or eight days, would not have a chance to rest, such an attack would not be successful. Despite this, the Grand Vizier Halil Pasha approved the operation as a result of the pressures of the Crimean Khan Canibek Giray and the Aleppo Governor Abaza Mehmed Pasha, Diyarbakır Governor Mustafa Pasha, Van Governor Elmacı Mehmed Pasha, Sivas Governor Osman Pasha, Rumeli Governor Arslan Pasha. Thus Aleppo Governor Abaza Mehmed Pasha and Crimean Khan Canibek Giray Khan were in charge of this operation. Governor of Erzurum Hasan Pasha was appointed as the chief of commander. The pashas and the Crimean khan, who wanted to set out as soon as possible with the greed of booty, set out with two cannons on 22 August 1617, covered the eight-day distance in two and a half days without rest and reached the Serav area (Halim Giray Sultan, 2019, p. 91; Peçevi, 1283, pp. 364-366; Hacı Halife Mustafa, 1286, pp. 391-392; Naima, 2007, p. 443).

Shortly after Ottoman and Crimean forces reached Serav in exhausted and distracted, they were ambushed by the Safavid Vizier Karchakay Khan, who had foretold the raid. This war was also known as the Kırıkköprü (The Broken Bridge) defeat, lasted for a few hours. At the end of the conflict, Hasan Pasha, Arslan Pasha and Mustafa Pasha died. Many high-ranking officers, especially Elmacı Mehmed Pasha, were taken prisoner. Many soldiers were killed by Safavid elements (Uzunçarşılı, 1988, p. 68).

Contrary to the role of Canibek Giray in this battle, Iskender Münşi explains the role of the other Tatar prince Şahin Giray and his adherents among Canibek Giray's elements: "Canibek Giray's cousin Şahin Giray Khan, who had declared his allegiance to the Shah when the latter was in Georgia, was stationed in the Safavid vanguard, and the two cousins therefore confronted each other. Some of Canibek's experienced men, apprehensive of some harm coming to the Khan, had persuaded him to move some distance away from his standard. When the Ottoman ranks broke, Canibek Giray at once turned and fled. Most of his men, however, fell beneath his standard, and his proxy Mirza Bey who wielded immense power among the Tartars was taken prisoner" (İskender Münşi, 1978, p. 1154).

After the defeat, some of the pashas wanted to return but the majority advocated for the army to continue the forward movement. Halil Pasha also supporting their decision, gave the order the army moved in the direction of Ardabil. On the other hand, Tatar soldiers began to plunder around Ardabil. Although the surrounding villages were evacuated and burned, many Tatars seized the secret ware houses of grain and supplied. They brought very much the barley and wheat to the army in distress. Thus the Shah Abbas, alarmed by the attempt of Grand Vizier Halil Pasha, accepted the peace within the framework of the conditions and the parties signed an agreement in the Serav desert. With the establishment of peace, Crimean Khan Canibek Giray and Tatar soldiers returned to their homeland (*Defterdar Sarı Abdullah*, yz. 2139, 115a-116b).

The Ottoman-Safavid war was started again with the capture of Baghdad, the most important city in Iraq-i Arab by Shah Abbas at the beginning of 1624. To take back Baghdad the Ottomans launched two major expeditions in 1625 and 1630, but each of them was failed (Uzunçarşılı, 1988, pp.68-9). There is no information in the sources about whether Tatars force participated in these expeditions. However, for the expedition to be organized by Hüsrev Pasha on Baghdad in the spring of 1631 in which the Crimean Khan was requested to participate with 30,000 soldiers with the order of Sultan IV Murad. In line with this request, the Crimean forces were in Mardin in the middle of 1631 (Bayır, 1994, pp. 16-17, 122,123; Hacı Halife Mustafa,1286, pp. 132-133; Naima,2007, pp. 686-687). Although they reached the Koçhisar Plateau near the Mardin, the expedition was cancelled due to the internal conflicts of the Ottomans and the inability to make the necessary preparations. With the expedition cancelled for the time being, the Crimean forces could not carry out any looting, thus returned to their homeland (Hacı Halife Mustafa,1286, p. 138; Naima,2007, pp. 693-94).

The fact that Baghdad has been in the hands of the Safavids for years, developments and finally in 1633, the Van Castle was taken by the Safavids, encouraged the Ottomans to once again embark on an eastern expedition. For the first time in years, a sultan went on an expedition at the head of the army. The preparations started months ahead of schedule. By the way, to Canibek Giray and his successor İneyet Giray on Iran although invitation and warning letters were sent by the central government to send soldiers to the expedition to be organized, they did not participate in the expeditions, citing their activities on the Polish border. Due to her disobedience to the orders and her volitional acts, İneyet Giray was also dismissed and replaced by Bahadır Giray as the new Khan (1637 June of the year) (Halim Giray, 2019, p. 99).

Contrary to his predecessors, the new Crimean Khan Bahadır Giray sent 4,749 Tatars under the command of his brother to Sinop from Kefe in August 1638 for the Baghdad campaign. Tatar soldiers, passing from Sinop to Erzurum with the land road, were tasked with plundering the Shamakhi Ganja, Sheki and Revan. During this raid Tatars aimed at keeping Safavids busy in Azerbaijan. Moreover, Tatar forces sported defeat of Safavid commander Kelb Ali Khan to Kenan Pasha, Ottoman chief commander of Georgia. As a result of these actions, they received plentiful booty from the Shirvan side (Danişmend, 1965, p. 350; Ziyaeddin İbrahim, yz. 1054, 79b-80b; 121a-125a).

Kasr-ı Şirin peace between the Ottoman and Safavid states signed in 1639 with which started a long-term peace process between the two states. This period continued until the last period of the Safavids. However, after the forces of Afghan clans invented Iran in 1722, the ensued taking advantage of the turmoil, Tsar Peter I of Russian got in the Trans Caucasus and the shores of Caspian Sea. On the other hand, Ottomans intervention to this new political situation was not delayed (1723) (Külbilge, 2010, p. 89-106).

Crimean Tatar Military Forces on the Ottoman-Iranian Border in the First Half of the XVIIIth Century

With the start of the war with Iran, it come up the military support of Crimean Khanate to the Ottomans from Caucasus. As a matter of fact, in 1725 II. Mengli Giray was asked to send soldiers to the expedition. In this connection under the commander of Kalgay Safa, 5000 Tatar soldiers, set out in July 1725. They reached Istanbul and were immediately dispatched to Tabriz. Sources are silent about the activities of the Tatar force sent to Tabriz, but after making some raids in the border region, these forces returned to their homeland (Külbilge, 2010, pp. 180-200; Derin, 2003, p. 465-66; Halim Giray Sultan, 2019, p. 67). In addition, in the context of Nadir Shah's Baghdad and Georgia expeditions, Tatars were asked for help and the Safavid armies were tried to be stopped. However, these efforts could not be sustained within the framework of Ottoman internal problems.

Finally, in the context of Nadir Shah's invasion of Ottoman lands in 1743 while taking some measures to defend its environment of border, as is often the case, Ottoman asked the Crimean khan to send soldiers found. The next year, when Nadir Shah headed towards Kars, this time 10,000 Tatar cavalry was demanded. Crimean forces in April 1745 arrived in Istanbul and were immediately dispatched to Kars. After reaching Kars Tatar cavalry, who were then asked to raid Iranian lands, never as they did not receive any response, they even tried to capture Maku Castle. (Külbilge, 2010, pp. 207, 255-285). At the end of the year, although the Ottomans again asked the Khan for soldiers, since peace talks with Nadir Shah resumed, this soldier no need to come. Since the war with Iran ended in 1747, the Crimean forces had not been taken place in the east. This was the last troop demands for the expedition.

As a result of these closer co-operations between Ottoman state and Crimean, the latter were becoming more dependent on the Ottomans. It was also in the interest of the Khan to assure the Tatar troops permanent employment and the opportunities for plundering which the Turkish campaigns afforded them (Fisher, 2000, p. 12-13). Moreover, if a conclusion is to be set, it can be said that The Tatars were one of the important parameters of the Ottoman-Safavid wars because of their important roles in military, diplomatic and trade as stated above.

Extended Abstract

From the beginning of the XVI century until the beginning of the XVIII century, The Ottoman-Safavid struggle, which continued for about two centuries, took place in this buffer geography stretching along the North-South directional Caucasus-Iraq-Arab line, which is the natural borders of both powers. These conflicts, which took place in the Southern Caucasus, Tabriz-centred Southern Azerbaijan and the Iraqi-Arab geography, were largely carried out by the coalition elements of both states. In this context, the Crimean Tatars stand out as the most important coalition element in the Eastern Campaigns of the Ottomans. The Porte had encouraged the personal involvement of the Crimean Khans in the Turkish east campaigns since the late 16th century and even demanded them to remain in the winter quarters at the theatre.

Although The Porte had encouraged the personal involvement of the Crimean Khans in the 1514, 1534 and 1548 of Ottomans East Campaigns Tatar leader as Khan and the large numbers of Tatar troops deployed only as late as 1578. In the first type of participation in this war, the Tatars were used to occupy the relief troops, cut supply lines, break up the Safavid camps and help holding Ottoman force which were surrounded by Safavid army. This participation kind happened two times. Firstly, Crimean force under Mehmed Giray, marched to Shirvan in September 1578. When Tatar forces arrived in Shamakhi the Tatars and Safavids clashed on the plain near Mahmudabad and fierce fighting followed for three days between the Tatars and superior Safavid forces. the Tatars had gained a considerable advantage over their adversary until a terrible rain storm which swept over the battlefield. This storm greatly hampered the Tatars, who relied heavily on their bows and arrows and the manoeuvrability of their mounts. Their horses, also become mired in a sea of mud. The Tatars disengaged and retreated in the direction of Derbent, Adil Giray become a prisoner of Safavids.

Secondly, at the beginning of 1579, Mustafa Pasha persuaded the Porte to put pressure on the Crimean Tatars to fill the vacuum in the Southern Caucasus. In this context, Mehmed Khan and about 20000 Tatars moved from Bahçesaray to Derbent on 26 July 1579. After a thirty-day journey, he united with the Ottoman forces led by Osman Pasha in Derbent and moved to Şabiran. Here a large force was separated and sent from the front. This army of scouts defeated the Iranian general and governor of Shirvan, Mohammed Khalifa in two separate conflicts, captured him and sent the remaining Persian forces across the Kur river to Karabakh and Mugan. After Shirvan was once again conquered by Ottoman forces, special combat forces were sent against Baku and other important cities. Later, the Tatars dispersed all over the country and collected booty.

On the other hand, while the Tatars were no match for the Safavid royal troops, the Tatars were operating in the frontier forts in late autumn or early spring and were able to disrupt the Safavid manoeuvres and delay their destruction. In this context, apart from the main Tatar armies above, the Ottomans had to maintain a permanent force of 2-3000 Tatars in strategic places to garrison the castles. Gazi Giray remained in the Caucasus with 2000-3000 Tatar soldiers from then until the summer of 1581. In fact, these Tatars determined the fate of the Ottoman and Shirvan troops besieged in Shamakhi. In this process, Gazi Giray, who gained political and military experience under the tutelage of the brilliant commander Osman Pasha, played an important role as a rear supporter of eight to ten thousand Ottoman and Shirvan soldiers with his small offensive force.

In this Ottoman-Safavid conflict in the last quarter of XVI.th century, Tatars took on some duties in the fields of supply and logistics, as well as their contribution to the campaigns and wintering. During this expedition, the Tatars provided the Ottoman's supply service not only to themselves, but also to the regions that the Turkish command could not cope with. Besides military service, Tatars also played an important diplomatic and commercial role.

On the other hand, during the reign of Shah Abbas (1587-1639), the Safavids regained control of eastern Georgia, Shirvan and Iraq-I Arab. This operation scared the Tatar Khans to go to Shirvan via Derbent and instead they used the Kefe-Trabzon sea route. Crimean khans were often indifferent to these expeditions organized by the Ottomans to seize the lands they lost on the eastern front, but in a few of them they sent small groups and served as raider elements in these expeditions. The first of these is the XVII. at the beginning of the century. The Crimean Khan Canibek Giray supported Halil Pasha, a member of the main Ottoman army, and resulted in the Tatar soldiers plundering the Nakhchivan region.

Secondly, when the soldiers returned from the winter quarters in the spring of 1617, the Ottoman army moved towards Tabriz. It was also informed to the Crimean Khan near Cizre that the Tatar soldiers was requested to raids Safavid lands as a pioneer. Upon this order, 4–5,000 Tatars were sent to plunder under the command of Bahadır and Sufi Mirzas. They gathered 30–40,000 sheep, 4–5,000 horse 2,000 camels, and about 3,000 captives, around Nakhchivan and returned with those captives to near around Tatvan where joined the Ottoman army. Secondly, when the soldiers returned from the barracks in the spring of 1617, the Ottoman army moved towards Tabriz. It was also reported to the Crimean Khan, near Cizre, that Tatar soldiers were asked to raid Safavid lands as pioneers. Upon this order, 4-5 thousand Tatars under the command of Bahadır and Sufi Mirzas, plundered around Nakhchivan and gathered many prisoners and joined the Ottoman army near Tatvan. Thirdly, Contrary to his predecessors, the new Crimean Khan Bahadır Giray (1637) sent 4,749 Tatars under the command of his brother to Sinop from Kefe in August 1638 for the Baghdad campaign. Tatar soldiers, passing from Sinop to Erzurum with the land road, were tasked with plundering the Shamakhi, Ganja, Sheki and Revan. During this raid Tatars aimed at keeping Safavids busy in Azerbaijan.

Unlike the previous ones, Tatar elements joined the main army from the Bahçesaray-Istanbul route to the Iranian campaigns organized in the context of the eastern problem that emerged in the last period of the Safavids. Two Tatar elements that took place in this period assumed the task of raiding like the previous ones.

As a result of these closer co-operations between Ottoman state and Crimean, The Tatars were one of the important parameters of the Ottoman-Safavid wars because of their important roles in military, diplomatic and trade.

Sources

A. Archival Documents

BOA (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi). *Mühimme defteri* (32, 38,44,45).

B. Books and Articles

- Bayır, Ö. (1994). *IV. Murad'ın Hatt-ı Hümayunları*, (Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi). Marmara Üniversitesi, İstanbul.
- Danişmend, İ. H. (1965). *İzahlı Osmanlı tarihi kronolojisi*. (Vol. IV). İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi.
- Defterdar Sarı Abdullah Efendi. *Gazânâme-i Halil paşa*. Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi. Esad Efendi, 2139.
- Derin, D. (2003). *Abdulgaffar Kırımı'nın Umdetü'l-Ahbar'ına (Umdetü't-Tevarih) göre Kırım tarihi*, (Yayımlanmamış yüksek lisans tezi). Ankara Üniversitesi, Ankara.
- Ebubekir bin Abdullah. *Şark seferlerinde surhserler ile vâki olan ahvelleri ve Şiroan'da Osman paşa ile sürhserlerin muhareberin beyan eder* (Şark Seferleri). Ali Emiri Kütüphanesi. Tarih Kitapları, 366
- Eravcı, H. M. (2014). *Gelibolu Mustafa Âli ve Nusretname*. Ankara: TTK Yayını.
- Eravcı, H. M. (2011). *Mustafa 'Âli's Nusret-nâme and Ottoman-Safavid conflict*. İstanbul: MVT Yayıncılık.
- Eravcı, H. M. (2008). *Asafi Dal Mehmed Çelebi ve Şecaatname*. İstanbul: MVT Yayıncılık.
- Feridun Ahmed Bey (1287). *Münşe'atü's-Selâtin*. (Vol. II), İstanbul.
- Fisher, A. (2000). *The Crimean Tatars*. Paris: Hoover Institution Press
- Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali. (2000). *Künhü'l-ahbar*. (Vol. III), (F. Çeri, haz.). Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi Yayını.
- Hacı Halife Mustafa b. Abdullah. (1286). *Fezleke*. (Vol. I), İstanbul:
- Halim Giray Sultan. (2019). *Gülbin-i hanân*. (İ. Gültekin, haz.). Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı yayını.
- Hammer-Purgstall, J. V. (2010). *Büyük Osmanlı tarihi*, (Vol. 7), (M. Çevik, haz.). İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları.
- Hüseyin bin Mehmed. *Gazavat-ı Özdemiroğlu Osman Pasha*. Atatürk Belediye Kütüphanesi, 0118/2
- Iitzkowitz, N. (1972). *Ottoman empire and İslamic tradition*. Chicago: Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Inalcık, H. (1995). *The Ottoman empire*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson Hardcover.
- İbrahim Peçevî. (1283). *Târih-i Peçevî*. (Vol. III), İstanbul.
- İskender Münşî Türkmen (1978). *Târih-i Âlem-ârâ-yı Abbâsî*. (R. Savory, trans.). Colorado: Westview press.
- Jenkinson, A. (1885). The travels of Anthony Jenkinson) *Early Voyages and Travels Russia and Persia*. (Vol. I), (E. D. Morgan & C. H. Coote, ed.). London: Hackney.
- Kütükoğlu, B. (1993). *Osmanlı-İran münasebetleri*. İstanbul: İstanbul Fetih Cemiyeti.
- Kırzioğlu, F. (1993). *Osmanlıların Kafkasellerini fethi (1451-1590)*. Ankara: TTK Yayını.
- Kortepeter, C. M. (1973). *Ottoman Imperialism During the Reformation: Europe and The Caucasus*. London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd
- Külbilge, İ. İ. (2010). *18. yüzyılın ilk yarısında Osmanlı-İran siyasi münasebetleri (1703-1747)*. (Yayımlanmamış doktora tezi). Ege Üniversitesi, İzmir.
- Küpelî, Ö. (2014). *Osmanlı-Safevi Münasebetleri*. İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi
- Küpelî, Ö. (2014). Kırım Tatarları ve Osmanlıların İran seferleri, *КРЫМСКОЕ ИСТОРИЧЕСКОЕ ОБОЗРЕНИЕ*. № 1, 161-177.
- Naki, E. (2016). Osmanlı'ya karşı İran'la ittifak: 16. yüzyılın siyasi ve iktisadi rekabet ortamında Avrupa'nın müttefik arayışları. *TAD*, 35/ S. 59, 115-129
- Naîmâ Mustafa Efendi. (2007) *Târih-i Na'îmâ* (Ravzatü'l-Hüseyin fi hulâsati ahbârî'l-hâfikayn. (Vol. II), (M. İpşirli, haz.). Ankara: TTK
- Rahimizade İbrahim Çavuş. *Gonca-i Bağ-ı Murad*. İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi, TY. 2372.
- Sungur, Ç. (1998). *Rahimizâde İbrahim Harimi Çavuş'un "Zafername-i Sultan Murad Han" adlı eserinin transkripsiyonu*. (Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi). Kırıkkale Üniversitesi, Kırıkkale.
- Uzunçarşılı, İ. H. (1988). *Osmanlı tarihi*. (Vol. II). Ankara: TTK Yayını.
- Zeyrek, Y. (2001). *Tarih-i Osman Paşa*, Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayını
- Ziyaeddin İbrahim. *Fetihnâme-i Bağdad*. Österreichische National Bibliothek, 1054.