



Cultural and Social Factors of Expansion and Stabilization of Imāmī Shiism in Mazandaran

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Abstract

Today, the importance of cultural and social factors and their impact on all aspects of human life, including religion, is obvious to everyone. Mazandaran, a province in Iran, is also an ancient land that has faced different cultures in different ages, the most important of which is the Shiite school, as the emergence of Shiism in the east part of the Islamic Caliphate in the first centuries happened with the presence of the Alevi Shiite school. This study by examining the factors of the formation of Shiism in Mazandaran is going to answer the basic question, "Which cultural and social factors have been effective in expanding and stabilizing Imāmī Shiism in Mazandaran?" The research method is descriptive-analytical and data collection has been done using library resources. In conclusion, cultural factors such as the activity of Shiite scholars, the role of writers and poets, the convergence of Sufism with Shiism, respect for Sādāt (those who are in the lineage of the Prophet Muhammad), art, architecture and religious places, in addition to social factors such as the social function of shrines, holy tombs and common religious rituals, have been effective in the expansion of Imāmī Shiism in Mazandaran.

Keywords: *Cultural Factors; Social Factors; Shiism; Imāmīya; Mazandaran*

Introduction

After the conquest of Iran by Muslims, Iranian society became a part of the Islamic world and the dominant thought, i.e. Sunnism, was accepted by people, but this did not prevent the formation of Shiism. In Mazandaran through various activities and efforts, Shiism became the dominant thought in those areas. It was independent of the nature of the Shiite school, influenced by characteristics such as cultural and social conditions; according to the special geographical and historical features of Mazandaran, we conclude that the introduction of Shi'a could only be done by certain methods and the influence of cultural

and social factors in this regard cannot be denied, that itself was an important factor for the acceptance of Shiism in Mazandaran. The people of Mazandaran saw their spirit as compatible with Islam, especially Shi'a, who paid more attention to the Prophet's family and found the true meaning of Islam in the eyes of the Prophet's family. Despite the influence of such factors, except in rare cases, the role of cultural and social factors in the emergence of Shiism in Mazandaran has been ignored, and cultural and social factors have been mentioned sporadically and under other topics. So, through examining the role of the aforementioned factors in the expansion of Shi'a in Mazandaran, in addition to identifying the important cultural and social factors in this regard, in this research we will find out the effect of these factors on preserving the Shi'a through and transferring it to all societies in all ages.

The Concept of Mazandaran or (Tabaristān)

The southeastern shores of the Caspian Sea, which has been divided into Mazandaran and Golestan provinces, have been known as Tabaristān throughout the history of Mazandaran and especially in periods of the history of Islamic Iran. (E'temad al-Saltanah, nd. p. 110). However, ambiguities and differences are observed in various historical and geographical sources regarding the meaning of the words Mazandaran and Tabaristān, some of which are as follows:

A: Tabaristān: There are several views regarding the naming of Tabaristān, some of which are mentioned here: The oldest source that has presented the concept of the word Tabaristān is Mu'jam al-Buldān by Yāqout Himawī. According to him, the word Tabaristān is a combination of tabar and province. This area is named Tabaristān because its people used to carry a tabar (cutting tool-axe) with them. (Himawī, 1410 AH, vol. 6, p. 10). Zahūr al-Din Mar'ashī believes that in Tabarī language, Tabar means mountain. So, Tabaristān means mountains. (Mar'ashī, 1982, p. 5)

B: Mazandaran: Mazandaran is also one of the names given to Tabaristān throughout history. Ibn Esfandīyār says: "Mazandaran is as far as the west, and it means the area inside the Movz Mountain which is a mountain that extends from the border of Gilan Talār, Qasrān, Jājarm, and Tabaristān." (Ibn Esfandīyār, 1987, p. 56). Yāqout Himawī says: "Tabaristān is in the famous region of Mazandaran, which is mentioned in the old books. I didn't see it, I don't know when it became common and there is no doubt that Mazandaran is the same as Tabaristān (Himawī, 1410 AH, vol. 4, p. 6). Certainly, from the Mongol period onwards, the word Mazandaran replaced Tabaristān, although the word Mazandaran was sometimes used before that, as Ferdowsi's Shahnameh mentions the name of Mazandaran many times. Today, Mazandaran is usually used in the same sense as Tabaristān, and the name Tabaristān has become completely obsolete.

The Cultural and Social Factors of Spreading Shiism in Mazandaran

In this part, we examine the most important cultural and social factors that have played a role in spreading Shiism in Mazandaran:

1- Cultural Heritage

Among the cultural factors that played a prominent role in the spread of Shiism, we can mention the role of scholars, writers and poets, the homogeneity of Sufism and Shiism, respect for Sadat, and religious places, which are discussed below.

1-1-The Role of Shiite Scholars in Expanding Shiism

Twelver Shiism was revealed in a connected political-religious chain. In this manifestation, the services of Shiite scholars in its growth and expansion cannot be ignored.

Since there is no detailed information about the influence of these scholars on the religious issues in Mazandaran, and it is not possible to understand their possible influence in the growth and expansion of the Imāmī tendency there, because they spent their childhood and adolescence in this region and learned the basic teachings from the scholars of Mazandaran, we conclude that they must have been influential there.

1-1-1-Sheikh Balavī Zāhid Āmolī (d. 730 AH)

Sheikh Balavī was a great ascetic, Sufi and mystic of the 7th and early 8th centuries (died 730). He was one of the elders of the dervish leaders of Tabaristān, who conveyed his spiritual leadership to Bayezid Bastāmī through eleven mediators (Mar'ashī, 1368, p. 330). The time of Balavī Zāhid was the period of the Mongol Ilkhans, whose endless oppressions cut the knife to the bones of the people, and provided the ground for rebellions in all corners, including the north of Iran. Accordingly, Balavī Zāhid should be considered one of the intellectual leaders of the revolutionary dervish movement of that time, of which the Sarbedārān movement was one of its forms, for Balavī Zāhid, with several mediators, was master of Mir Qawām uddīn Mar'ashī, the leader of the Sadat Mar'ashī Uprising of Mazandaran and he is master of Amīrkāy Malātī, the leader of the uprising of Sadat Lāhījī in Gilan; Therefore, Balavī was the intellectual father of Sarbedārān uprising, Mar'ashī'ans of Mazandaran and Sadat Lāhījī of Gilan.

1-1-2-'Imād al-Din Tabarū (d. 698 AH)

Another Shiite scholar is Hassan bin Ali bin Ahmad bin Ali bin Hassan Tabarī, who was nicknamed 'Imād al-Din and 'Imad al-Islam. The date of his birth is not known, but the time of his death was in 698 AH. He was a contemporary of Nasir al-Din Tousī, Ibn Maitham Bahrānī and Allameh Hillī, he had a connection with them. 'Imād al-Din travelled to Boroujerd, Qom and Isfahan in his lifetime. Great scholars such as Shahīd Awwal, Shahīd Thānī and Qādī Noorullah Shoushtarī have mentioned him in their works (AffandīIsfahani, 1987, vol. 1, p. 305).

1-1-3-Sheikh Khalifa (d. 736 AH)

Sheikh Khalifa was one of the other scholars from Mazandaran, who for a while became a disciple and follower of Sheikh Bālavī Zāhid living in Āmol. He was not content to stay in the presence of Sheikh Bālavī Zāhid, but, a while later he began to associate with Sheikh Ruknuddīn 'Alaa al-Dawla Semnānī. When 'Alaa al-Dawla Semnānī found out about his religious thought (Mirghwand, 1954, vol. 5, p. 605), rejected him, and Sheikh Khalifa travelled from one city to another in search of his desired goal, until he reached Sabzevar, where he stayed in a mosque. He did not consider it permissible to just sit and preach. So, with the encouragement of the Ahl al-Bayt (as), especially the Commander of the Faithful (as), and Imam Hussain (as) who had stood up for Islam and against tyranny, he preached the fight against oppression and corruption and encouraged the people to come forward to Imam al-Zaman and the elimination of oppression and tyranny (Āzhand, 1984, p. 76). The oppressed villagers joined him to assert their rights and fight against the government of the time. Sheikh Hassan Jourī, who had reached the position of a teacher after studying religious sciences and had many followers, became his disciple there. Hassan Jourī's joining to him and the Shiite and Sufi teachings of the Sheikh, which were mixed with a social atmosphere and aggressiveness against the oppression of the rulers (Mar'ashī, 1968, p. 334), had accumulated such fear in the hearts of rulers and jurists that they were looking for conflict and enmity (Āzhand, 1984, p. 75). However, since they could not kill the sheikh publicly, they conspired in secret and according to Mīr: "Meanwhile, they found Sheikh Khalifa hanging from a pillar in the morning, and they saw several bricks stacked on top of each other under the pillar as if he had tied himself to a rope and be hanged" (Mirghwand, 1954, vol. 5, p. 450). Regarding the Sheikh's influence on the growth and expansion of Shiism in Mazandaran, it is enough that the teachings of Mīr Qawāmuddīn are derived from the Shiite and Sufi teachings of Sheikh Khalifa.

1-1-4-Sheikh Muhammad Al-Tabarī (d. 707 AH)

His nickname is Shams al-Din and one of the great leaders of the Tarīqat. He is one of the close followers of Sheikh Saad al-Din Muhammad Himawī. Muhammad Marāgheī praised him immeasurably. During the time of al-Jāyitu Sultan Muhammad Khodābande (716 AH), he was a teacher at Soltānīyeh School and always used to debate and argue with Qāzi 'Izuddīn 'Ijī (756 AH). The year of his death was 707 AH. in Tabriz and his grave is attached to Qasim Beyg Alley, in the same place as the grave of Khwaja Najmuddīn Barg Bāf (Barzegar, 2001, p. 165). There is no information about his influence in the religious sphere in Mazandaran.

1-1-5-Sayed Ruknuddīn Āmolī (d. 860 AH)

Sayed Ruknuddīn Āmolī is one of the other scholars who was present in the Mar'ashī'an government. He lived for some time in Fars, Kerman and India and finally went to Herat and settled there. He was under the special attention and respect of Sultan Baqarā there (Nafisi, 1984, vol. 1, p. 35). In addition to being proficient in mathematics and astronomy, Sayed Ruknuddīn was also skilled in jurisprudence and hadith. This scholar had some precious works. His most important works are *Zīj Mafātih al-'Amāl*, *Zīj Jāmi'* Saīdī named Abu Saeed Teimourī in the revision of *Zīj Īlkhānī* by Khwaja Nasir al-Din Tousī, which he wrote in (860 AH.) (Farshad, 1986, vol. 2, p. 910). There is no detailed information on how he interacted with the Mar'ashī family. The exact date of his death has not been obtained, but according to the investigations carried out, it can be said that this personality finally passed away after the year 860 AH (Ra'si Atiti, 1969, p. 24).

1-2-The Role of Writers and Poets in Expanding Shiism

Poetry and writing are among the most innovative tools in preaching systems; for it is a soft and pleasant language for things that increase the effect of speech. On the other hand, this kind of speech in the ruling environment was less harmful to the Shiites. In this section, we discuss the role of writers and poets who played a role in the spread of Shiism in Mazandaran:

1-2-1- Awlīyā'ullah Āmolī (lived in 805 AH)

Mawlānā Awlīyā'ullah Āmolī is one of the historians and writers of the 8th century of Hijri. He was born in Āmol where he studied science (Āmolī, 1969, introduction). He was under the consideration and attention of Malik Fakhr al-Dawlah Hassan bin Shah Kī Khosrow, the king of Mazandaran, from the Bāvandīān dynasty of Kānkhvārīeh. For this reason, according to his own words, he was happy in Āmol (ibid). It wasn't long before he decided to write a book on the history of Royan at the suggestion of King Royan. In the year 764 AH. he finished writing it (Barzegar, vol. 1, p. 136). The date of his death is not exactly known, but it can be said that after the year 805 AH. he refers to the children of Sayed Qawām al-Din Mar'ashī. So, it must be said that he was alive until this year (Shujā' Shafī'i, 2007, p. 253)

1-2-2-Sayed Zahīruddīn Mar'ashī (d. 892 AH)

Sayed Zahīruddīn Mar'ashī is one of the politicians and scholars of Iran who was born in the year 815, 817 or 818 AH. in Āmol (Mar'ashī, 1982, p. 76). Sayed Zahīruddīn was born in a family of piety, science and politics. He was able to hold positions and officials under Āl Kīā and was appointed by Kārkiyā Mirza Ali as the successor of Kārkiā Sultan Muhammad to the governorship of Gurjān province and remained in the same rank and position until the end of his life (Mudarrisī, nd.: 5/80). Sayed Zahīruddīn was considered one of the most capable writers of his era. He has two major works: the history of Tabaristān and Royan and Mazandaran and the history of Gilan and Deilamistan, which are complementary to each other and are considered among the reliable sources related to the history of Sadat

in Mazandaran and Gilan (Āzhand, 1984, p. 11). He finally passed away in 892 AH. (Samadī, 1991, vol. 2, p. 134).

1-2-3-Hossein Tanhījānī (8th Century AH)

Hossein bin Haji Tanhījānī is one of the calligraphers and inscription writers of the 8th century. Roy's engraving in Plāsīd tomb in the Sadat neighbourhood of Ramsar is an example of his calligraphy and inscription writing art (Yousefūnīyā, 2001, p. 150).

1-2-4-Amir Pazvari (Ninth Century of Hijra)

Amir Pazvari was a resident of Pazvar (a village between Babol and Babolsar). He was a pious person whose religion ruled his whole life. This committed Muslim is proud of being a Shiite and his love for the infallible Imams (as) is evident in his poems ('Enāyatī, 2014, p. 25). He is from the line of Sadat Mar'ashī, who was among the exiles and returned to the Mazandaran region during the period of Shahrukh Azad. Also, he is one of the most famous local poets in the history of Mazandaran literature, who is the author of Amir Pazvari's Poem Divan in Mazandaran (Tabarī). Bernhard Darren was the first person who collected his poetry collection and published it under the title *Kanz al-'Asrūr* (Bashūrnejād, 2004, p. 48). One of the themes that has made Amir's poetry last more than any other is his devotion to the Ahl al-Bayt (as) (Bashūrnejād, 2004, p. 51).

1-2-5-Sheikh Hassan Kāshī (d. 738 AH)

Sheikh Hassan Kāshī is one of the scholars and poets of the Shiite school, who lived at the end of the 7th century and the beginning of the 8th century of Hijri. His hometown is Āmol, and he was a contemporary of Sultan Muhammad Khodābandeh in his Shiism (Shukrullāhī, 2008, p. 312). According to Mirza Abdullah Affandī, a prominent historian and bibliographer, Sheikh Hassan had an important and influential role in Shiism in Iran during this period. A writing called *Ta'rīkh Muhammadī* or *Ta'rīkh Rashīdī* or *Ta'rīkh 12 Imams* or the list of Imams, has survived from him, who wrote this book in the year 708 Hijri in Hilla and Baghdad and presented it to Sultan Muhammad Khodābandeh (Storey, 1983, p. 899).

1-3-Convergence of Sufism with Shiism

Among the functions of Iranian thought in the period under discussion is the issue of the growth and strengthening of Shiism. The convergence and companionship of Shi'a teachings and Sufi teachings is one of the most important and prominent features of the history of Sufism from the 7th century AH onwards. Especially, this closeness is one of the main reasons for the politicization of Sufism. Until now, conflicts and alignments between these two currents have been observed. Among the factors of the convergence of Sufism and Shiism, we can mention intellectual factors, political and social factors, which we will examine in this section:

1-3-1-Intellectual Factors

When the Mongols arrived, the public's tendency towards Sufism increased. This incident and trend can be seen as the result of the Mongols' widespread oppression and looting and the Iranians' inability to deal with them (Turkamanī Āzar, 2000, p. 75).

On the other hand, the oppressive activities of some sects of Sufism in this period had a prominent appearance; Sheikh Najm al-Din Kubrā, a mystic of the 7th century, was a person who the military and political activities of his followers started with the arrival of Mongols in Iran. After the

assassination of Sheikh Najm al-Din by the Mongols, his school, that is, the Kubravīyeh school, was formed in the west of Iran and spread throughout Iran. After Sheikh Najm al-Din, the Kubravīyeh school took on a more Shiite direction and colour and gradually provided the basis for better relations between Sunnis and Shiites (Zarīnkoob, 1983, p. 88). Sayed Bahauddin 'Obaidī Āmolī is the greatest Shiite personality who established reconciliation and compromise between Imāmī school and Sufism and even achieved relative mysticism for himself, tracing its roots to Bayazīd Bastāmī. The book *Jāmi' al-Asrār wa Manba' al-Anwār* is the most important surviving work of Sayed Haider, in which he examined the agreement between the Sufi thought and the Imāmī school (Madelung, 1997, vol. 5, p. 570). Sayed Haider's *Jāmi' Al-'Asrār* shows the pinnacle of Shiite mysticism (Nasr, 1996, p. 35). He called the Sufis special Shiites. Some Shiite scholars disagreed with his interpretation and belief about Sufism, but others agreed so this agreement was influential in the development of Shiite Sufism (Hosseini, Aghānourī, 2015, p. 124)

1-3-2-Political and Social Factors

The existence of numerous monasteries and the growth of Sufism were among the important factors in the approach of Sufism to Shiism in this period. The people, due to reasons such as the excessive pressure of the Mongols and the loss of most of the population, destruction and class differences, are not aware of everything. They had lost hope and sought refuge in the monastery to relieve their pain and protect their religion, life and property. On the other hand, Sufi great scholars used this opportunity and invited people to the monastery and asceticism. In this direction, they used the sayings of Amīr al-Mo'minīn (as). For this reason, the example of the Prophet's words in this period and the previous periods caused a tendency towards Amir al- Mu'minīn (as) and Shiism and made Sufis supporters of Shiites. Sufism gradually took on the colour of Shiites. Sufism found a special social base in the society and became a refuge for the people who were tired of the Mongol attack. Later, this sect became one of the supporters of Shi'a, but also the promoter of Shi'a.

The efforts of great scholars from the Kubravīyeh and Shaykhīya Jūrīya dynasties, as well as Sayed Haider Āmolī and Sayed Qawām caused the spread of such thought. Sayed Qawām, who was influenced by Sarbedārān's movement and received the title of Sheikh from Sayed 'Izz al-Din Sughandī, went to this region in search of a suitable solution to organize the situation in Mazandaran. Therefore, the teachings of Sayed Qawām were the same as the teachings of Sayed 'Izz al-Din Sughandī and the continuation of the ways of Sheikh Khalifa and Sheikh Hassan Jūrī. It was nothing but a revolutionary Shiite religion that was combined with the ideology of believing in the emergence of Imam Zaman (as) (Āzhand, 1984, p. 272).

1-4- Respect for Sadat

The Sadats were people whose ancestry reached the Twelve Imams of Shi'a. The status and respect that the people of plain regions gave to this class have had two reflections on the history of Tabaristān:

First: the passage of time has become a factor in honoring Sadat.

Second: This belief caused Mazandaran to be mentioned as the origin and seat of two local Shiite governments, namely, the Alevism and the Mar'ashītes, in the history of Iran.

Sadat living in Tabaristān sought refuge in this area in two historical periods. The first phase in the early Abbasid era was due to the persecution of the Shi'a caliphate after the uprising of Yahya bin Zayd in Kufa (Āmolī, 1969, p. 85). Many Alevites fled to distant parts of the Caliphate. During the second period of the reign of the eighth Imam, during the caliphate of Ma'mun Abbasi, many Sadats on

the way to Khorasan found out about the assassination of the Imam and sought refuge in distant places, including Tabaristān. With the formation of the Tabaristān Alavi government, many Sadat Hassanī and Hosseini came to this region from Hejaz and Iraq and held positions in the Alavi system, some of them were killed in these battles (Muntazar al-Qā'im, 2014, p. 246).

Sadat, who fled to Mazandaran, was influenced by the culture and many native traditions of the region. For example, they talked in the local dialect of Mazandaran (Mar'ashī, 1982, p. 194). Merging and coherence of Sadat with the native culture of the district and the sharing of Sadat's justice-seeking spirit with the people of the district have been one of the main factors in the attraction and belief of the people of Mazandaran in Sadat and his sanctity in public opinion. The attribution of many Sadats from the mother's side to the local families of Mazandaran, such as Estandādrān and Bāvandān, who were respected and powerful in the region, should be considered as the other factor of connection and sanctity of Sadat and Imāmzādegān (children of Imams). Sayed Ghīyāthuddīn and Sayed Abdulhaq were buried in Sari among Imāmzādegān who were attributed to the local families of Mazandaran from the mother's side (Mar'ashī, 1982, p. 324).

1-5-Art and Architecture

Art and architecture are other very effective tools for sending different messages in Shiism. Art must create a spiritual atmosphere arising from Shiite ideas. Shiite artists try to convey their beliefs to their Shiite and non-Shiite audiences in the form of beautiful works. It is done in different ways, such as religious inscriptions in buildings, painting, music, using certain colours, or lighting holy places.

Another thing that was prepared by artists for holy tombs was the wooden chests. These boxes are considered Shiite art because they were made and carved for the graves of Imams and Imāmzādegān. On the chest of Imāmzādeh Qāsim's tomb in Qa'imshahr, which was prepared in 859 AH., in addition to verses from the Holy Qur'an, blessings on the Imams (as) are written ('Alvīrī, 2005, p. 209). The shrine of Sayed Mohammad Dabīr Kīyār Sālihānī is located in Sālihān village around Kajour; There were two chests in this tomb: in the first box, after Bismillah, Āyat al-Kursī and blessings on the Prophet and the 12 Imams (as) are seen (Sotoudeh, 1995, p. 203)

1-6-Religious Places

1-6-1-Mosque

Mosque is one of the religious and holy places of the Muslims. Besides its religious function, from the very beginning of Islam, it has also assumed other roles. Propagation and education are two examples of the mosque's functions (Tabrīzī, 2006, vol. 4, p. 29). In addition to prayer, educational activities were also carried out in mosques. In Mazandaran, during this period, there were mosques in almost all the cities (Mar'ashī, 1968, p. 195). Unfortunately, there is no detailed information in the sources about what religious activities were performed in Mazandaran mosques during this period, apart from prayer.

1-6-2-Schools

One of the manifestations of educational activities is educational facilities. Along with mosques and other educational places, schools play a central role. In history, apart from the school that Nasser Kabir built in Āmol and the Nizāmīyeh of Āmol, we come across several schools, some of which only their names remain in history, such as Langā School, Yahya Faqih School, and Bāmsī School, which according to the history of the oldest Tonekābon, it was located in the village of Bamsī Sakhtsar (today: Ramsar). Also, it was considered one of the famous schools of the 8th century in eastern Gilan and

western Mazandaran. There is no information about the exact time of the construction of the school and the famous professors and students who were educated there (Ibn Esfandīyār, 1984, p. 510).

1-6-1-Monastery (Khānqāh)

Considering that the alignment of Sufism with Shiism is considered one of the factors in the spread of this religion in Iran, then Khānqāh, after the mosque, school and Sadat's tomb, may be considered an influential tool in the spread of Shiism in the 7th, 8th and 9th centuries of Hijri (Kīyānī, 2010, p. 63). Sufis began to establish their special centres for gathering and performing rituals around the third century of Hijri, and these centres were expanded and formalized from the fourth and fifth centuries of Hijri (Rāzī, 2010, p. 104).

2. Social Factors

Among the social factors that have been influential in the expansion and stabilization of Shiism in Mazandaran, it may be mentioned of the social function of the Imāmzādegān's tombs and religious ceremonies.

2-1-The Social Function of Holy Shrines and Tombs

In the spiritual culture of Muslim Iranians, the place of martyrdom of the martyrs for freedom, justice and humanity became shrines that are being respected by the people. Visiting Imāmzādegān's sites are considered among the spiritual centers of Islam throughout Iran. Most of these Imams were Alevi Shiite Sadats who were martyred following the authority of the Umayyad caliphate until the end of the Abbasid caliphate in opposition to the caliphate system, for the realization of the justice of the family of Ali (as). In general, one of the important motivations in the construction of the blessed shrines is the Shiite thoughts, whose main focus was in Iran. As a political-religious factor, the tombs played an important role in their domination of power and it was an important motive for the construction of tombs in Mazandaran during the Mar'ashī period. Also, by supporting the Shiite thought, respecting Sadat and building a tomb for them, the Mar'ashītes provided a kind of popular base for themselves.

2-2-Popular Religious Rituals

Religious customs and rites are among the most important influential social factors in Mazandaran in this period, for the spread and promotion of these customs in Iran led to the formation of the powerful Shiite Safavid State after the discussed period.

2-3- Reading Manqabat (Praises)

Among the common Shiite customs in Iran was Manqabat reading, which was popular publicly in centres where Shi'a had a strong presence. Manqabat reading means organizing moral virtues and honouring them, organizing and remembering the virtues and greatness of Imams Athar (as) (Mohaddithī Khorāsānī, 2009, p. 47) When Āl-e Bouyeh became Shi'a at the hands of Tabaristān Alevites and their sphere of power expanded, they turned to the revival and expansion of Shiite rituals and paid special attention to the issue of 'Āshourā. They held Hossein's mourning ceremony, which they probably learned from Tabaristān Alevites. According to historians, in Muharram 352 Hijri, the markets were closed by the order of Mu'izu al-Dawlah Deilamī, and people openly mourned and chanted (Ibn 'Athīr, 1965, vol. 12, p. 5091).

During the Mongol period, with the support of Ghāzān Khān and Khodābandeh and the conversion of some Mongol rulers to Shiism, Shiite centres were expanded and Shiite rituals such as

Manāqib reading and mourning became popular again (Mazāhirī, 2008, p. 52). During the Timurid era, the tradition of Manāqib reading and mourning continued and many poets turned to dirges. Nizām Astarābādī, Kamaluddin Ghiyath Astarābādī, etc. have left many manāqib and mourning works. In the 9th century of Hijri, Amir Pāzawārī was one of the poets who wrote poems in praise of Ahl al-Bayt (as). After the book of Rawzah al-Shuhadā' from Mulla Hussein Wā'iz Kāshifī, the unprecedented reception of this book and the prosperity of the gatherings of Rawzah al-Shuhadā', manāqib readings gradually decreased and replaced it by rawdah readings (Mahjoub, 1983, p. 420).

2-4-'Āshourā Mourning

After centuries of suffocation and challenges with autocratic rulers, in the middle of the 4th century, the Shiites achieved admirable security and freedom to hold religious ceremonies and mourn the martyrs. Parallel to the formation of official Shiite traditions, Shiites announced the day of 'Āshourā as a day of mourning, and during the Āl-e Buyeh period, it became a huge ceremony that covered the whole city (Ibn Juzī, 1992, vol. 14, p. 150). Because the Mar'ashītes are Shiites, it can be said that the formation of the Mar'ashītes government in the Mazandaran region with Shiite tendencies could have provided the grounds for holding the 'Āshourā ceremony. As a result, it can be said that in these periods mourning for the Imam was not mentioned by the local governments, but the dynasty had Shiite thought and because of their tendency, they certainly mourned for the Imam on the days of Muharram and 'Āshourā. This statement of Mar'ashī can confirm that a mourning ceremony was held during Mar'ashī's time. According to Mar'ashī, when Mir Qawām al-Din's son Sayyid Abdullah was killed, Mir Qawām al-Din ordered to bury his son's body with a bloody shirt and clothes like the martyrs of Karbala, so that he would be like the martyrs of Karbala (Mar'ashī, 1982, p. 189). This act could have kept alive the virtues of the martyrs of Karbala and had a deep impact on the customs ceremonies and mourning culture of Shiites. On the other hand, the Ilkhōnī and Timurid sultans, even though they are Sunnis mourned for the Imam as well.

2-5-Establishing Friday Prayer

Establishing Friday prayers was one of the most important issues of that period. This issue is considered one of the most controversial jurisprudential issues of the 7th century (Rōzī, 2010, p. 395). In the 7th century, Ibn Esfandīyār, in the history of Tabaristān, mentions Prim and Hazar Garī (separately) among the cities of Tabaristān that "have a comprehensive mosque, a prayer hall, markets, villages, scholars, and pulpits." (Ibn Esfandīyār, 1984, p. 74).

2-6-The Custom of Waiting for the Reappearance

Waiting for the Reappearance of Qā'im Āl-Muhammad is something that Shiites have been familiar with since the beginning. The promise of the Emergence of the Qā'im from the Imams repeatedly has been stated and the Shiites have been asked to wait for the arrival of the Qā'im and the Day of his rise. Such a waiting has become a special official form in Shi'a and many people tried to act in such a way to prove their readiness. Waiting for Mahdī (as) has been very effective in the opinions of the people who carried out the movements of the 8th century in Iran, especially in Mazandaran.

One of the actions of Āl-e Buyeh was that they minted coins in the name of Sahib al-Zaman and called themselves the representatives of the rights of Hazrat Mahdī (as) (Shooshtarī, 1973, vol. 2, p. 386). Mahdism has been claimed about Fazlullah Astarābādī, the leader of Huroufiya. It has been said about Sheikh Hassan Jourī, who was one of the intellectual leaders of the Sheikhī movement, that he made the central core of his activities the imminent appearance of the 12th Imam and that all people should prepare themselves for the appearance of that Imam (Āzhand, 1984, p. 15).

Conclusion

In this research, the social and cultural factors of the expansion and stabilization of Shiism in Mazandaran were investigated. Cultural factors include the activities of Shiite scholars, the role of writers and poets, the convergence of Sufism with Shiism, respect for Sadat, art and architecture, and religious factors; Among the most important social factors, we may also mention the social function of shrines and common religious rituals. In general, it should be said about these factors, the role that culture and society can play in the growth of religion is of fundamental importance compared to factors such as politics; Because in some cases, cultural and social factors have a spiritual effect and will be effective on people's psyche. On the other hand, the effect they leave behind is more lasting and durable and their importance will not decrease with time; If the influence of writings written by the scholars of that time or art and architecture and holding religious ceremonies, etc. remains strong today, and in a world where we are witnessing apostasy and distancing people from religion every day, these are the factors that may renew the religion and spread it. So, Mazandaran, as one of the regions that had a major contribution to the expansion of 12th-century Shiism in Iran, and as a Shiite base, played a special role in Shiite beliefs and Imāmī thought in this land. It is full of the cultural and social elements that have been able to play a special role in the expansion of the Shiite school through these elements, and we should try to preserve the Shiite school by identifying and using these elements.

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