

Sayyid Ajall's Reasons for Serving the Mogul Invader

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Abstract

According to Modern attitudes, serving the foreign invader by an Iranian who witnessed the attacks on his motherland and the bloody massacres of his people, means a betrayal, while in Medieval Iran, especially for those who lived in Upper Oxiana and experienced many times the foreign supremacy such as Skytian, Greece, Kushanian, Heptalian, Arab and Turk dynasties, it had a different meaning. Apparently, nationalism wasn't essential issue for Iranians in the 12th -13th centuries, they didn't believe in nation as a common notion, which is one of the fundamental elements of patriotism. Instead, they felt strong loyalty to their religion, Islam. It means that nation was replaced by religion; so it was Islam that could unify different races under one flag and their loyalty to Islam substituted their loyalty to nationalism.

Even from this point of view, Sayyid Ajall's serving the pagans was against the moral values of his time too. For a better understanding of why Sayyid Ajall, who probably belonged to the clergy, ignored this moral value, we should consider the religious situation in Upper Oxiana during the 12th -13th centuries, with a special concentration on the factors which were responsible for weakening the relations between Muslims.

Due to the lack of sufficient historical documents about Sayyid Ajall's motivations to serve the Moguls, this paper tries to describe the background that led to the social, religious and economic discontent that was common among the people of Upper Oxiana at that time.