



Ana Fatma, Ali (Oli), and Muhammad in Raa Haqi Belief and Folklore

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Summary

This entry examines the place of Ana Fatma, Ali, and Muhammad within the world of Raa Haqi belief and folklore, treating these figures not as independent historical personalities but as a relational whole whose elements complement one another within sacred lineage, cosmic order, moral values, and everyday ritual practices. In the local classification, Muhammad, Ali, and Ana Fatma constitute the “Three”; with the addition of Hasan and Husayn, they form the “Five,” and with the addition of Zayn al-Abidin and Ja‘far al-Sadiq, the “Seven.” This classification transforms familial relationships into a cosmological model used to explain sacred time, the human body, and universal order. In local narratives, Muhammad and Ali are frequently referred to together as Ali Mihemmed or Muhammad Ali, representing two manifestations of a single sacred existence. Gabriel’s encounter with Muhammad and Ali—described as having “one body and two heads”—inside a dome beneath the waters, together with the establishment of the first musahiplik between them, expresses the idea that existence can only be completed through “one’s own counterpart.” The “Çar,” consisting of Allah, Gabriel, Muhammad, and Ali, connects this idea of unity with creation, the four elements, and the doctrine of the Four Doors. In the narratives of the Mi‘raj and the Forty, Muhammad is distinguished by humility and devotion to the Path, while Ali is associated with the mystery of the Batın and sacred guidance. Ali also represents wisdom, justice, courage, generosity, and an ethics of service; the conclusion that “service comes first” in the narrative of Zaloğlu Rüstem gives concrete expression to this moral framework. In addition to being Muhammad’s daughter, Ali’s wife, and the mother of Hasan and Husayn, Ana Fatma is the intercessor of women, the giver of girls’ good fortune and marriage prospects, and the sacred embodiment of pure lineage, innocence, abundance, and maternal suffering. The moon is regarded as her countenance and Ali’s sacred light, while the sun is considered Muhammad’s sacred light. Prayers recited before the full moon, the fast known as Rozê Ana Fatma, observed on the twentieth day counted from the first day of the Feast of Sacrifice, and Wednesday practices associated with mourning for Karbala incorporate her sacredness into ritual time. Expressions such as Dezgê Ana Fatma, Saja Ana Fatma, and Loqmê Ana Fatma connect this sacredness with bread, women’s labour, sharing, and abundance. Motifs involving a deer, milk, a cauldron, and white water in narratives associated with Kemerê Duzgı integrate Ana Fatma into the sacred geography. The meanings of these three figures are thus continually



reproduced through prayers, oaths, fasts, narratives of the Cem and musahiplik, the ethics of service, the sharing of bread, and relationships established with sacred places.

Keywords: Abundance, Ali, Ali Mihemmed, Ana Fatma, Ay, Bereket, die Drei, die Vierzig, Fruchtbarkeit, Karbala, Kerbela, Kirkklar, Mond, Moon, Muhammad, Muhammed, Musahiplik, Raa Haqi, the Forty, the Three, Üçler

A Relational Order of Sacredness [1]

In *Raa Haqi* narratives, Ana Fatma, Ali, and Muhammad are understood less as three independent historical individuals than as complementary elements of sacred lineage and cosmic order. Ana Fatma is Muhammad's daughter, Ali's wife, and the mother of Hasan and Husayn. The continuation of the Prophet's lineage through the Imams is explained through this unity. In the local classification, Muhammad, Ali, and Fatma constitute the "Three," which correspond to the three divisions of the day: morning, noon, and evening. The sun is regarded as Muhammad's sacred light, while the moon is considered Ali's sacred light and Ana Fatma's countenance. With the addition of Hasan and Husayn, they form the "Five"; with the addition of Zayn al-Abidin and Ja'far al-Sadiq, they form the "Seven." Familial relationships thereby become a model used to explain sacred time, the human body, and universal order (Gezik and Çakmak 2010; Gezik 2009, 4-34).

Muhammad and Ali are often invoked together as *Ali Mihemmed* or *Muhammad Ali*. According to one creation narrative, when Gabriel descends to earth, he encounters Muhammad and Ali inside a dome surrounded by water, where they appear with "one body and two heads." The narrative portrays them as two figures who retain their distinct identities while complementing one another within a single sacred existence. It is believed that the first *musahiplik* was established between Muhammad and Ali. This example is a fundamental expression, on both earthly and divine levels, of the idea that existence can only be

completed through its own counterpart. The fact that prayers addressed to the sun begin with the words “*Ya Xade / Cemalê Ali Mihemmed*” likewise suggests that Muhammad and Ali are perceived within a shared countenance and sacred light (Gezik and Çakmak 2010; Gezik 2009, 4-34).

This dual unity forms part of a broader sacred cosmology. Allah, Gabriel, Muhammad, and Ali constitute the sacred fourfold grouping known as the “Çar.” Within this order, *Şeriat* is associated with Gabriel and earth, *Tarikat* with Ali and fire, *Marifet* with Muhammad and air, and *Hakikat* with Allah and water. Gabriel’s position as Allah’s counterpart in the otherworld, and Muhammad and Ali’s status as the first *musahips* on earth, connect the principle of cosmic completion with *musahiplik* as a social institution.

Muhammad, Ali, and the Truth of the Batın

In *Raa Haqi* narratives, Muhammad’s journey of the Mi’raj is recounted as a journey into the realm of the *Batın* and a discovery of Ali’s mystery. Muhammad encounters a lion on his way and is only able to continue after giving it his ring. When he reaches the place where the Forty are gathered, the door remains closed to him for as long as he invokes his prophetic status. He is admitted only after introducing himself as an ordinary follower of the Path. He later sees his ring on Ali’s hand and understands that the lion was Ali’s manifestation in the *Batın*. The extraction of enough sherbet for the Forty from the single grape brought by *Salmani Fars*, and the community’s performance of the *Cem* as “one body,” complete this idea of unity. In this narrative, Muhammad is associated not only with the prophetic station but also with humility and devotion to the Path, while Ali is associated with the mystery of the *Batın*, the unity of the Forty, and sacred guidance (Gezik and Çakmak 2010; Gezik 2009, 4-34; Düzgün 1989, 35-35).

Ali is regarded as the first of the Twelve Imams and one of Haq’s most important representatives on earth. Local narratives identify him with moral virtues such as wisdom,

justice, patience, courage, valour, and generosity. The belief that, following Ali's death, the power of *Zülfükar* passed into lightning and its voice into the crane extends Ali's existence beyond historical time. The understanding of fire as a sacred trust bestowed upon humanity by Haq through Ali forms part of the same world of meaning (Gezik and Çakmak 2010; Gezik 2009, 4-34).

Folkloric narratives about Ali translate his moral guidance into everyday conduct. A prominent example is the narrative in which Hasan and Husayn ask whether spiritual rank or service leads a person to divine guidance, prompting Ali to send them to Zaloğlu Rüstem. Rüstem recounts that, while alive, he fed a sick and impoverished stranger and allowed him to sleep in his own bed; in the otherworld, he received a reward only for this act of service. Hasan's conclusion that "service comes first" expresses a *Raa Haqi* ethics that privileges service, sharing, and care for other human beings over spiritual rank (Gezik and Çakmak 2010).

Ana Fatma: Intercession, the Moon, and Sacred Lineage

In *Raa Haqi*, the title "Ana" is used, on the one hand, for women belonging to the families of *pirs*, *raybers*, and *mürşids*. When a *pir* has died or is absent, his wife may perform certain services in a limited capacity. Among female saints, however, the title "Ana" is bestowed only upon Ana Fatma, indicating her unique position. Ana Fatma is regarded as the intercessor of women in the hereafter, particularly as the giver of girls' good fortune and marriage prospects, and as the embodiment of pure lineage, abundance, and innocence. The expression "*Ana Fatma bo*," used in everyday speech, is one of the common oaths sworn in her name (Gezik and Çakmak 2010).

The moon is regarded as Ana Fatma's countenance and as the visible manifestation of beauty, purity, and sacred light. When the full moon rises, people turn their hands towards it and pray: "*Ya Ana Fatma / Safaté xo re ma mahrum meke /*

Zav zece ma ra cemeke.” They kiss the place touched by its light and make a wish. While children are being bathed, the prayer “*Ana Fatma tali exbalo xêr, bexto xêr to do*” asks that the child be granted an auspicious future and good fortune. In these practices, Ana Fatma’s intercession is connected with the continuation of the lineage, family unity, lawful sustenance, and good fortune (Gezik and Çakmak 2010).

Mourning, Fasting, and the Memory of Karbala

Ana Fatma’s sacredness is also shaped by maternal suffering and the memory of Karbala. In one narrative, Gabriel takes her to Paradise, where he shows her two children, one with a green head and the other with a red head. He tells her that they are her future sons, Hasan and Husayn: Hasan will be poisoned, while Husayn, described as *porê sor/serê sor*, will be killed at Karbala. Ana Fatma thus begins mourning her children even before they are born (Gezik and Çakmak 2010).

According to certain local practices in Dersim, women observe a fast known as *Rozê Ana Fatma* to share in her suffering and seek her intercession. The Fast of Ana Fatma is observed on the twentieth day counted from the first day of the Feast of Sacrifice, one day before the Fast of the Twelve Imams. The prayers ask for well-being in the hereafter, protection from the pain of losing a child, continuation of the lineage, good fortune, and the privilege of not being deprived of Ana Fatma’s intercession. Wednesday is associated with mourning because it is believed that news of Karbala reached Ana Fatma on that day. The practice of not setting up a cauldron for bathing on Wednesdays is regarded as one of the ways in which this memory finds expression in everyday life (Gezik and Çakmak 2010).

Bread, Abundance, and Sacred Geography

The world of meanings associated with Ana Fatma is embodied in practices concerning bread, women’s labour,

and abundance. The collective set of implements used for making bread-including the kneading trough, dough, griddle, and rolling pin-is called *Dezgê Ana Fatma*, while the bread griddle itself is known as *Saja Ana Fatma*. A morsel given to passers-by while bread is being baked is called *Loqmê Saca Ana Fatma* or *Loqmê Ana Fatma*. The recipient says, “*Qewule Ana Fatma bo,*” expressing the wish that Ana Fatma accept it. Women’s practice of refraining from drinking water as far as possible while making bread, pouring a small amount of water onto the edge of the griddle before drinking when they must do so, and placing the griddle outside during severe hailstorms are likewise associated with Ana Fatma’s abundance and protective power (Gezik and Çakmak 2010).

Ana Fatma is also a *kewani*, a sacred figure who milks the wild deer (*male peske*). In a narrative associated with *Kemerê Duzgı*, a cauldron of milk is overturned by a deer’s kick, rolls down the rocks, and leaves traces of the spilled milk upon the stone. This cauldron, known as *Leyê Ana Fatma*, becomes a focus of practices involving wishes and supplication. A similar event occurs again at Ana Fatma’s own place, to which she subsequently withdraws. Where the milk from the broken cauldron is spilled, a spring of white, milk-like water emerges. It is believed that Ana Fatma became hidden from the visible world at this place. Her sacredness thereby acquires a material presence not only in narratives of lineage and history, but also within the sacred geography through rock, water, milk, deer, and cauldron (Gezik and Çakmak 2010).

Conclusion

Ana Fatma, Ali, and Muhammad constitute a relational structure in *Raa Haqi* belief and folklore that brings together sacred kinship, cosmic unity, and everyday ethics. The understanding of Muhammad and Ali within a single sacred countenance provides the sacred model for *musahiplik* and the principle of “existing through one’s own counterpart,” while the narratives of the Mi’raj and the Forty emphasise

humility, unity, and devotion to the Path over spiritual rank. Ali's ethics of service, embodied in the narrative of Zaloğlu Rüstem, explains the social expression of sacredness. Ana Fatma, meanwhile, occupies a central place in women's ritual and everyday worlds through her associations with the moon, intercession, lineage, mourning, bread, and abundance. Narratives associated with *Kemerê Duzgı* integrate her presence with nature and sacred place. The meanings of these three figures derive not only from their historical or genealogical positions, but also from their continual reproduction in prayers, oaths, fasts, narratives of the *Cem* and *musahiplik*, the sharing of bread, and relationships established with the sacred geography.

Endnotes

[1] This entry has been adapted to an encyclopaedia format on the basis of the entries "Ana Fatma," "Ali (Oli) Mihemmed / Eli Mehemed," and "Ali (Oli) / Eli" in Erdal Gezik and Hüseyin Çakmak's *Raa Haqi - Riya Haqi / Dersim Aleviliği İnanç Terimleri Sözlüğü* (Raa Haqi - Riya Haqi: A Dictionary of Terms Relating to Dersim Alevi Belief), together with supplementary information from the entries "Ana," "Rozê Ana Fatma," "Asme / Hiw," "Çar," "Cebrail," "Mısayiw," "Mirac," "Adır," "Desudı İmami," "Kervela," and "Zılfeqar."

References & Further Reading

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