

سواد بر قومه علی مردان خان و محمد رشید خان و حمید خان بختیارس بابدال خان و

Note
L1

آقا محمد صالح بختیارس

انشاء الله تعالی همواره نهال امانی و آمال عالی جاهان معالی جایگاهان اخوان ابدال

Text
L2

خان و آقا محمد صالح سلامها الله تعالی

از رشحات فیوضات فضل حضرت ذوالجلال عز اسمه شادان و مشرب باثمار

L3

گامرانی باد

بعد از طی گذارش و نگارش که همواره واقعات مشهور رای مخلصان

L4

اقتضای میدارد که مراسله

یک جهتی ترجمه صادقین بنامزد مجانب قلمی و ارسال داشته بودید در وقتی

L5

نیکو عز و ورود یافت

چون محتوی بر سلامتی آن عالی جاهان اخوان ارجمند بود اطمینان

L6

و خاطر جمعی رخ نمود

در خصوص ورود مجانب و ملاقات کرامی رسیدن و اظهار اینکه باید بدستور

L7

مرحومان آباء ما با هم متفق و برابر و یک جهت بوده و مصلحت امورات با شصواب
 هدیگر دیده شود اخوان بجلال قدر الهی قسم که در برادری برادران حرف
 و سخنی نداریم و این خواهش از طرفین است و از صلاح خیریت آن عزیزان هم
 بیرون نیستیم البته که هرگاه انشاء الله تعالی بدستور گذشته گان پیشین که
 غیرت و تعصب هدیگر را میکشیدند و حفظ الغیب هدیگر منظور میداشتند
 دست از هدیگر برنداشته بحدی که آن عزیزان و محبان بعضی دیده و بعضی
 بسن کوچک شنیده ایم براه برویم بعون عنایت آلهی بدی نخواهیم دید در میان
 دوست دشمن بوطه نخواهیم افتاد و حسب الواقع امور طرفین بوجه احسن
 و نام نیک خواهد گذشت در باب برادری تمام دنیا میداند که برادریم در باب
 [لا] اتفاق آن سخنی است که پوشیده نیست که [لا] اتفاق باعث دولت و نفاق
 بیدولتی است پس دولت به از بی دولتی بجان برادران قسم که از اول
 تا آخر خواهش ملاقات را داشتیم خصوصی حال که نوشته آن عزیزان رسید
 نهایت بجهاتی چند در عزیمت مجد و شدیم انشاء الله تعالی حیات باقی است
 عنقریب ملاقات هم خواهیم رسید در باب صلاح امور و بنای کارها

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دتر نیستیم حالت یکی است اختیار هر دو طرف با آن عزیزان است

L22

بنام مبادی [؟] که خیریت ایلیت باشد بگذارند حرفی نداریم و حسب القوا هتش

L23

برادران بفعل خواهد رسید توقعی در برادری نیست هر طور است که تادریافت

L24

ملاقات همه اوقات احوالات سلامتی را قلمی و ارسال و هر قسم مهماتی که

L25

بوده باشد اعلام که انشاء الله مقصوری نگردد والسلام

L26

سبع مهرهای پشت کاغذ

Seals

(علی مردان عالم را امیر است) (خدا یا بختش برده تو امان محمد رسید است این زمان)
۱۱۶۲ ۱۱۶۳

(شود چون بختیار از لطف داور رسد نسل علی مردان به خیدر)

تاریخ ۱۳ صفر ۱۳۲۹ مطابق ۱۳ فروردین ۱۹۱۱ مطابق ۲۴ دلو اینست میل

حسب الامر حضرت اشرف

آقای سردار اسعد ضد ظله چون اصل کاغذ خواندن اش خیلی دشوار بود

Note

سواد نوشته شد (اوزنگ منشی شیرازی)

Letter of 'Alī Mardān Khan 1162-63/1748-50.

A copy of the letter of 'Alī Mardān Khan and Muḥammad Rashīd Khan and Haydar Khan Bakhtiyārī¹ to Abdāl Khan and Āqā Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ Bakhtiyārī.²

God, most high, willing, may the sapling of the desires and hopes of the persons of exalted rank and eminent station, [our] brothers Abdāl Khan and Āqā Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ--may God give them peace--be happy and endowed with the fruits of success from the outpourings of the abundance of the presence of Him who possesses glory, may His name be honored.

After completing the writing of the petition which is always true [i.e., the introductory compliments] it is brought to the sight of the minds on which our loyal selves depend that the message filled with friendliness which you [lit.: those sincere ones] had written and sent, addressed to us [lit.: those devoted ones] did the honor of arriving at an auspicious time.

Since it contained news of the [your] well-being [lit.: of those exalted ones] of our noble brothers, confidence and peace of mind were produced. With regard to [the suggestion] of our loving selves coming and a meeting of dear ones [taking place] and the expression of the opinion that, in accordance with the custom of our lamented fathers, we should be united, brothers and at one, and that [our] policy toward affairs should be settled with each other's approval. Brothers, we swear by the Glory of God's power, that we have no word to say or remark to make against the brotherhood of brothers. This desire [for brotherhood] is held by both sides; nor do we dissent from your beneficent opinion [lit.: of those dear ones] [i.e., you]. Certainly if, God, most high willing, we proceed according to the customs of our departed forefathers, who acted with [true] partisanship and family loyalty towards each other,³ who defended each other's interest in his absence and who did not desert each other, as you [lit.: those dear ones] [i.e., you] and we [lit.: these loving ones]

have some of us seen and some of us heard in our youth, by the help of the Divine Kindness, we shall not meet with any misfortune, and shall not fall into [a trap of] destruction [set by] friends who are really enemies, and, in reality, the affairs of both sides will go forward in the best way and with good repute.

On the matter of brotherhood, all the world knows that we are brothers. On the matter of unity, that is a word [the meaning of] which is not hidden, for unity causes good fortune and discord bad fortune. Well, good fortune is better than bad fortune. We swear by your life [lit.: of our brothers] that, from beginning to end we have wanted to meet, especially now that your [lit.: those dear ones'] letter arrived. Only, for a number of reasons, we have excused ourselves from setting out. If God, most high, wills, life still remains [to us] and soon we will come to meet [you] as well. With regard to policy over business and the undertaking of affairs, we are not two. Our state is one. The choice for both parties lies with you [lit.: those dear ones]. Let them begin undertakings and projects to the benefit of tribal interests, we have no objection, and matters will be carried into effect as you [lit.: our brothers] desire. There is no expectation [of profit] in brotherhood [; a brother does not expect to gain by helping his brother, but will help him anyway]. In any case, until we meet, let them always write the news of their well-being and send it, and let us know if any important matter arises, so that, if God will, there may be no failing [on our part]. And peace upon you.

The legends of the seals on the back of the original letter: ('Alī Mardān is the ruler of the world 1162/1748-49) (Oh God. Give security on the Day of Judgment. Muḥammad Rashīd is the son of Zamān [his father but also lit. the Age]. 1163/1749-50) (Since, by God's favor, luck [bakht] is a friend [yār], the line of 'Alī Mardān reaches Haydar.)

Dated the 13th of Šafar 1329, conforming to the 13th of February 1911, conforming to the 24th of Dalv the eleventh month of the solar calendar, Bahman or Aquarius in the Year of the Dog, by the order of His Excellency Āqā Sardār As‘ad,⁴ since the original document was very difficult to read, a copy was written.) (Aurang Munshī Shīrāzī)

I. NOTES

¹‘Alī Mardān Khan and Muḥammad Rashīd Khan and Ḥaydar Khan Bakhtiyārī. ‘Alī Mardān, co-ruler with Karīm Khan Zand of Central Iran in the name of Isma‘īl III (1163/1750-1164/1751), and Muḥammad Rashīd were the sons of Zamān Khan. Nineteenth century Chahār Lang leaders of the Kiyānūrsī trace their descent from these brothers. Ḥaydar Khan was an important Chahār Lang leader and supporter of ‘Alī Mardān, but his relationship to him is unknown.

²Abdāl Khan and Muḥammad Šālīḥ Bakhtiyārī. Abdāl was the son of ‘Abd al-Khalīl (see, Genealogical Table) and in subsequent documents Abdāl is identified as the Haft Lang leader. Muḥammad Šālīḥ was ‘Abd al-Khalīl's brother.

³Partisanship and family loyalty towards each other. Ghairat and ta‘assub in this context are commendable qualities.

⁴Āqā Sardār As‘ad. Sardār As‘ad--Ḥājji ‘Alī Qulī Khan--was the son of Ḥusain Qulī Khan and Bībī Mihrijān. In the first decades of this century he was an important Bakhtiyārī leader, a hero of the Constitutional Revolution, and a literary figure with antiquarian interests. He was responsible not only for copying this document, but for collecting many of the extant Bakhtiyārī documents. Sardār As‘ad died in 1917.

II. THE DOCUMENT (Sardār As'ad collection)

Sardār As'ad ordered a copy made, because the original was in bad condition. The note by the copyist, Aurang Munshī Shīrāzī, mentions that the original was very difficult to read. By this he must have meant faded and worn, for the original's script could hardly have been more difficult to read than some of the other documents in the same collection. The copy itself measures more than 23.8 x 20.2 cm.

III. SIGNIFICANCE

1. The vagueness of this letter and its metaphorical style are especially frustrating; the letter to which this was responding is not extant. From this letter we can be certain of only three things: this letter answers an earlier one, the writers reject the suggestion of a meeting, and the writers make a plea for unity. Consequently, this letter raises more questions than it answers: why was it not addressed to 'Alī Sālīh Sardār, who, from earlier documents, was the Rīsh Safīd of the Haft Lang--not to mention that he was father and brother to the two who were the recipients of the letter. Evidence in Nādir Shah's documents (Appendix I, Documents 2-5), indicates Afshār support for 'Alī Sālīh, and a subsequent Raqam (Appendix II, Document 2), contemporary with this letter, provides evidence of continued Afshār support--in the case of the Raqam by Shāhrukh, Nādir's grandson.

Did Abdāl and Muḥammad Sālīh originally propose a meeting to discuss joint Haft Lang and Chahār Lang support for Shāhrukh? Or were they covering family options, in offering support for 'Alī Mardān in his cause in return for concessions? Or, had Abdāl and Muḥammad Sālīh broken with 'Alī Sālīh? (The uncle [FBr]-nephew [FBrS] tie in the Bakhtiyārī is either one of great tension

or of close support.) Or had 'Alī Mardān learned of Abdāl's support for his co-ruler, but rival, Karīm Khan Zand? Within a year, 1164/1751, Karīm Khan appoints Abdāl as the Governor of 'Iraq (Appendix II, Document 3).

In this letter 'Alī Mardān stresses that in brotherhood there is no expectation of gain, help is given to one's brother regardless. He may have been alluding to the obligation to support him on the basis of qanōn-Kamzur (See, Digard, "Le systeme segmentaire . . . IXc Congress . . . Anthrop . . . 1973). If Abdāl and Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ were khīn-chūq to 'Alī Mardān--khīn-chūq deliberately cut across kin lines--they would have been obligated to support 'Alī Mardān against 'Alī Ṣāliḥ, and 'Alī Mardān may be suggesting in his letter that they were temporizing. No historical references have been found on qanōn-kamzur. And Abdāl and Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ may have been trying to block 'Alī Ṣāliḥ or 'Alī Mardān, or both, for Abdāl certainly supports Karīm Khan by 1164/1751. (It is probable that 'Alī Ṣāliḥ dies about this time.)

At the least, this letter corroborates Haft Lang and Chahār Lang rivalry.

2. The letter relates unity to "the benefit of tribal interests." This echoes traditional political ideology, but would, of course, be important in terms of a tribal identity and in building a power base within a confederation.

3. This copy appears to represent 'Alī Mardān Khan's only extant document. The seals are but copies; nevertheless, they, too, stand as the only extant ones issued by 'Alī Mardān Khan.