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History of Ardalānids (1590-1810) by Sharaf al-Dīn bin Shams al-Dīn | Sara Zandi Karimi[±]

Abstract

This article is a critical translation of the “History of the Ardalānids.” In doing so, it hopes to make available to a wider academic audience this invaluable source on the study of Iranian Kurdistan during the early modern period. While a number of important texts pertaining to the Kurds during this era, most notably the writings of the Ottoman traveler Evliya Chalabi, focus primarily on Ottoman Kurdistan, this piece in contrast puts Iranian Kurdistan in general and the Ardalān dynasty in particular at the center of its historical narrative. Thus it will be of interest not only to scholars of Kurdish history but also to those seeking more generally to research life on the frontiers of empires.

Keywords: Zayl; Ardalān; Kurdistan; Iran.

ABSTRACT IN KURMANJI

Dîroka Erdelaniyan (1590-1810)

Ev gotar wergerêke rexneyî ya “Dîroka Erdelaniyan” e. Bi vê yekê, merema xebatê ew e ku vê çavkaniya pir biqîmet a li ser Kurdistanê Îranê ya di serdemê pêş-modern de ji bo cemarê akademîk berdest bike. Hejmareke metnên girîng li ser Kurdên wê serdemê, bi taybetî nivîsînên Evliya Çelebî yê seyyahê osmanî, zêdetir berê xwe didine Kurdistanê di bin hukmê Osmanîyan de. Lê belê, di navenda vê xebatê de, bi giştî Kurdistanê Îranê û bi taybetî ji xanedana Erdelaniyan heye. Wisa jî ew dê ne tenê ji bo lêkolên dîroka kurdî belku ji bo ewên ku dixwazin bi rengekî berfirehtir derheq jiyanê li ser tixûbên împeratoriyan lêkolînê bikin jî dê balkêş be.

ABSTRACT IN SORANI

Mêjûy Erdellan (1590-1810)

Em wutare wergêranêkî rexneyî “Mêjûy Erdellan”e, bew mebestey em serçaweyê girîngê le ser Kurdistanî Êran le seretakanî serdemî nûwê bixate berdest cemarê ekademi. Jimareyek serçaweyê girîng le ser kurdekan lew serdeme da hen, diyartirînyan nûsînekani geridey ‘Usmanî Ewliya Çelebîye, ke zortir serincyan le ser ‘Kurdistanî ‘Usmanî bûwe. Em berheme be pêçewanewey Kurdistanî Êran be giştî, we emaretî Erdellan be taybetî dexate senterî xwêndinewekewe. Boye nek tenya bo twêjeranî biwarî mêjûy kurdî, belku bo ewaney le ser jîyan le sinûre împiratoriyekean twêjînewe deken, cêgay serinc debêt.

Introduction for translation of the zayl

The “History of the Ardalānids”¹ manuscript is a *zayl* (appendix) to the *Sharafnāme* (The Book of Honour) and is one among eleven *zayls* that have survived to this day. The *Sharafnāme*, written by Sharaf al-Dīn Bidlīsī² in Persian in the late 16th century, is the first large scale study detailing the origins and

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¹ I have used the Persian text of this *zayl* as it appears in the edition prepared and edited by Anwar Soltani and Nasrine Bornha and published, along with a Kurdish translation, in 1997.

² For more on the life of Sharaf al-Dīn Bidlīsī see for example Glassen (2016).



history of the Kurdish princely houses.³ As such, it quickly gained currency amongst Kurdish notables, many of whom had their own copies produced. Moreover some Kurdish rulers commissioned their scribes or court secretaries to write the continuation of their own family's dynastic history to add to their copies of the *Sharafnāme* as *zayls* (Soltani, 1998). While these scribes or copyists made modifications to the style and structure of the text, they also acted upon the text in a more important way, often through adapting the text to reflect the socio-political realities of their time and space. Sacha Alsancakli (2017) explains that these adaptations could range from added laudatory attributes that presented the Kurdish princes as independent rulers, to including a distinctly pro-Safavid and Shi'i disposition in the example of the two *Sharafnāme* manuscripts produced by Mīrakī b. Ahmad Qahramānī Hamadānī upon the request of the Ardalān ruler Khan Ahmad Khan.

These odd addendums, composed in various parts of the Kurdish regions from the 17th century onwards, and appearing mostly in Persian—with only two in Turkish and one in Kurdish—also included modifications and additions made to, or spread throughout, the *Sharafnameh* and its translations into Arabic, Kurdish, and Turkish. According to Anwar Soltani (2008), who has extensively researched the manuscripts of these works, there are two *zayls* on the history of the Ardalānids; there is no clear information regarding the content of the first. Our manuscript, being the second, was written in Persian in the early 19th century by Mohammad Ibrāhīm Ardalān. This History records the life and military campaigns of the Ardalān *wālīs* (governors) who governed the Ardalān dominions from 1597 to 1810. Our chronicler begins this history where the author of the *Sharafnāme* ends his.

Soltani notes that Amānullāh Khan I commissioned his scribe Mohammad Ibrāhīm Ardalān to write the “History of the Ardalānids” as a gift for Sir John Malcolm, the first political representative of Great Britain to Iran, during his travels through Kurdish lands in the autumn of 1810. In his *History of Persia*, Sir Malcolm footnotes how the *wālī* provided him with the history of the Ardalān family. Of the Ardalāns he writes:

Among the latter chiefs, the Waly or Prince of Ardalān, is far the most powerful... The revenues of this tract are not great; but its princes, who maintain almost regal state, boast their descent from the celebrated Salladin... The government of this province has continued in the same noble family more than four centuries... Though the kings of Persia have seldom interfered with the internal administration of Ardalān, and have never attempted to set aside the family who govern it, they have often exerted their influence and power to alter the direct line of succession; and, by supporting the pretensions of younger branches, they

³ The *Sharafnāme* is divided into four sections relating to the history of the rulers of Kurdistan: those rulers who had claims to royalty and independence; those who had struck coins and had the *kebotbeh* recited in their names; those rulers and princes remembered in Kurdistan; and finally the author's own forefathers. For more on the *Sharafnāme* see for example Bajalan (2012).

have created feuds, which have rendered its rulers more dependent upon them.⁴

A decade later, Claudius James Rich travelled through Kurdistan and in his narrative of this journey recounts meeting the 'Khans' of Ardalān, amongst them a brother of Subhān Virdī Khan, who asked "after Malcolm with great interest... They all wore the court-dress, and were very gentlemanly, elderly men. They talked of the antiquity of their family, which they said had been Princes of Sinna for nearly 700 years."⁵ From these two firsthand accounts we can gather that the "History of the Ardalānids" was mainly written to glorify the House of Ardalān for outside consumption, and interestingly enough for western consumption.

While seminal works on the Kurds and their history, such as Martin van Bruinessen's *Agha, Shaikh and State* or David McDowall's *A Modern History of the Kurds*, include information about the Ardalāns, and while orientalist literature of the late 19th and early 20th centuries touch on aspects of their culture and language, there is very little in the English language on the House of Ardalān. More can be found of course among French and Persian sources. Sheerin Ardalān's *Les kurds Ardalān entre la Perse et l'Empire ottoman* attempts to trace the history of her family, from its founder Baba Ardalān in the twelfth century until the death of Khosraw Khan II in the late 18th century. As a direct descendent of the last Ardalān *wālī*, she draws on rare documents and resources from her family archives to present an especially detailed narrative, narrowing the focus of her book mainly on the Ardalāns' relationship with the Zands, and the life and legacy of Khusraw Khan II. Kūrosh Hādīān, in his *Sadehāye Sarvari: Negāhi be Tārikh va Joqrāfiyā-ye Kordistān Ardalān*, examines the geographical, socio-political, religious, and administrative aspects defining the territories under Ardalān control and the changes they underwent in different periods. Moreover, he looks at the Ardalāns' relationship to Iranian and Ottoman royal authorities, and the local Ardalān government's role on the borderlands between Iran and the Ottoman Empire. Both remain largely descriptive.

⁴ Elsewhere he writes that the Ardalāns traced their lineage to Salah al-Dīn (Sultan of Egypt and Syria, r. 1174-1193) through female descent, but adds "in the history of Kurdistan their title to their possessions rests on an actual occupation for four centuries and a succession of twenty-five heirs" Malcolm, 1829: 134. Sir John Malcolm travelled to Persia on three diplomatic missions (1801, 1806 and 1810) and travelled through Kurdistan in the autumn of 1810. He authored the first history of Persia in English based on Persia sources. On his writings see for example Lambton (1987: 329-332).

⁵ In this meeting he learned that the Ardalāns invest their money in their houses, leading him to conclude that "if Aman ullah Khan were deposed, not a single man would follow him except some menials whom he could afford to pay." C. J. Rich (1836: 214-5) details his impression of Amānullāh Khan, namely that he "possesses ... a rage for building," and has built so far a mosque, some baths, caravanserais, a large bazaar, and improvements in the palace. But while "the traveler admires the magnificence of Aman ullah Khan ... the unfortunate citizen and peasant groan when his buildings are mentioned." Moreover Rich describes Amānullāh Khan as vindictive, implacable and cruel.

During the 19th century, we witness a proliferation in the number of histories on the house of Ardalān. From amongst these Persian sources, I have mainly referred to Mastūreh Ardalān's *Tārikh Al-Akrād* and Ali Akbar Vaqāyi' Negār's *Hadiqih-yi Nāseriyye*. As a poet with a proclivity for writing, Mastūreh Ardalān, who was married to Khosraw Khan II, set out to compose a comprehensive history of the Ardalāns based on the family's private collection. She finished the fourth work to be done on the family in 1848. Works on the Ardalāns that had appeared prior to her history included the celebrated *Sharafnāmeḥ*, *Zobdeh Al-Tavārikh-e Sanandāji*, and *Lab-e Tavārikh*. As the first book to chronicle the history of the great rulers of Kurdistan, the first chapter of the second book of the *Sharafnāmeḥ* covers the annals of the family of Ardalāns. *Zobdeh Al-Tavārikh-e Sanandāji* was penned by Mulā Muhammad Sharif Qādī in 1800 upon Khusraw Khan II's request, and while most Kurdish histories coming after this book have made reference to it, it is replete with errors and considered to be one of the weaker works on the princely family. The author of *Lab-e Tavārikh*, Khusraw bin Manūchehr Ardalān completed his history in 1833 during Khusraw Khan II's rule. Being a member of the House of Ardalān himself, he used the private libraries of the *wālīs* as well as the *Sharafnāmeḥ* and other oral sources.

Ali Akbar Vaqāyi' Negār, who in addition to being the official court historian and amanuensis held the titles of *moshāver* and *amārghar*,⁶ wrote *Hadiqih-yi Nāseriyye* in 1891. Drawing extensively on local sources, government documents, and his own personal account of events, he systematically covers the geography of Ardalān lands and presents a history of not only the Ardalān *wālīs* but other local rulers in the region as well.⁷ A decade later, in 1901, another official at the Ardalān court by the name of Mīrza Shokrollah Sannadāji wrote another history of the family, entitled *Tohfa-ye Nāseri dar Tārikh va Joqrafiyā-ye Kordistān*, based heavily on, and stylistically similar to, the *Hadiqih-yi Nāseriyye*. It is important to note here that while we see the Ardalāns' interest in their own dynastic history grow in the 1800s, Mastūreh Ardalān's *Tārikh Al-Akrād* and Ali Akbar Vaqāyi' Negār's *Hadiqih-yi Nāseriyye* did not appear in print until much later. It was not until 1947 that Mastūreh's work was compiled and published by Nāser Azādpūr in Iran and in fact under a different title than the original – *The History of the Ardalāns* instead of *The History of the Kurds* – due to the political climate of the country at the time and the controversies surrounding the short-lived Mahābād Republic of 1946. Moreover, it was not until 2003 that Mohammad Ra'ūf Tavakkolī published the first edition of Ali Akbar Vaqāyi' Negār's *Hadiqih-yi Nāseriyye*. This is significant because it reflects the failure of the Kurdish movement in Iran and subsequently illustrates the reasons for a lack of academic interest in the Kurds of Iran. We are witnessing a gradual reversal to this trend and it is my hope that English language scholarship on the Kurds of Iran and the history of the House of Ardalān in particular continues

⁶ *Moshāver* and *amārghar* mean consultant and statistician or financial officer respectively.

⁷ For a comparison of Persian sources on the Ardalāns, see Hādiān (2010: 12-16).

to grow and that this translation will encourage students of Kurdish studies to carry out further research on the Kurdish tribes and peoples of Iran.

In translating this manuscript, I have endeavoured to preserve the integrity and rhythmic quality of its style and structure wherever possible. Much like the Qajar chronicles of its time, our author uses florid language, especially embellishing his praise of Ardalān rulers, and much like his contemporary chroniclers, Mohammad Ibrāhīm Ardalān omits subjects from sentences to use his paper more prudently. This becomes somewhat problematic at times to translate and therefore I would like to thank Mustafa Dehqan for reviewing this translation and helping me make sense of the awkward areas of the text. Any and all errors however remain solely my own.

In transliterating the text, I adhere to the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*⁷ system and apply the scheme for Persian words to all names of people and places, regardless of whether those names are of Kurdish, Turkish, or Arabic origin. However, I refrain from using macrons with words that have long been Anglicised, such as shah or khan.

Sara Zandi Karimi

In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate

The author of the history of the Kurds Sharaf al-Dīn bin Shams al-Dīn, peace be upon him, in the ‘History of the Kurds’ known as the *Sharafnāmeḥ* has authored a detailed narrative of the governors and rulers of Ardalān, tracing their lineage, from Halo Khan⁸ bin⁹ Sultanalī Beg back to Bābak bin Sāsān¹⁰, as such: Halo Khan bin Sultānalī Beg bin Sorkhāb Beg bin Bigeh bin Ma’mun Beg bin Monzar bin Bāblu bin Hasan bin Khiḍr bin Elyās bin Khiḍr bin Kālul bin Bābā Ardalān, from among the descendants of Bābak bin Sāsān and has mentioned and written about the events, attributes and significance of each of their incumbencies in the *Sharafnāmeḥ*. The narration of the events and accounts

⁸ *Khan* and *beg* are originally feudal titles given to chieftains of tribes. The term ‘*beg*’ was often used to refer to urbanised Kurds who held administrative positions and were absentee landlords. According to sources known to Martin van Bruinessen (1992: 80-81), the title of ‘*beg*’ as it existed around Diyarbakir in the 1920s implied that the *beg* was literate, civilised, and engaged in politics, often with large land-holdings.

⁹ *Bin*, meaning “son of” in Arabic, appears as *ibn* in the original text according to the editors of this manuscript.

¹⁰ Bābak bin Sāsān is the father of the legendary founder of the Sāsāniān Empire, Ardešīr. The Persian poet Ferdowsi, writing at the turn of the tenth century, recounts his story in his literary masterpiece and epic poem, the *Shāhnāmeḥ* (the Book of Kings). Ferdowsi’s *Shāhnāmeḥ* weaves the mythical into the historical narrative of the Persian Empire; in its final cycle, we learn of the Sāsāniāns legend. According to Katouzian (2009: 54) Ferdowsi claims that Sāsān, the father of Bābak, was a shepherd who married the daughter of a local king named Bābak. Al-Tabari, Ferdowsi’s contemporary and a prominent Persian scholar and historian, on the other hand, tells a different story, that Sāsān was in charge of a fire temple in Pars and married the local king Barzangi’s daughter, who gave birth to Bābak.

of the reign of this honourable class, who have been attributed with an esteemed lineage, an elevated, honourable household, a noble nature and the best of characteristics, from Halo Khan to this day, in the year 1225 Hijra [1810] and in the time of the reign of Amir al-Omarā¹¹, the honourable and venerable embodiment of the saints Amānullāh Khan¹², the high ranking governor, that creation of God whose days go according to his wishes and the stars are aligned to his desires, whose place is in heaven¹³, to Khusraw Khan II¹⁴, has not been mentioned in the *Sharafnāme*. This humble and impoverished one, Muhammad Ibrāhim son of the deceased Mulla Muhammad Hussein Ardalāni has seen and studied the *Tārikh-i ‘Ālamārā-yi ‘Abbāsī*¹⁵ and *Jahāngoshā-yi Nāderī*¹⁶ as well as the books of my forefathers who have always, in solitude or with an audience, while away on a journey or in residence, as a confidant at special gatherings or a companion at special banquets¹⁷, recorded the events of this fortunate dynasty; it is worth noting that I have obtained conclusive information concerning the truth about their circumstances and traditions, and in a comprehensive manner will chronicle an account of the fortunate conditions of the rulers and governors of this elevated class and honourable dynasty, writing about each individually.

In reciting the reign of rulers and governors of Ardalān and the manner of their circumstances from Halo Khan bin Sultanalī to the present day, the year 1125 [1810 AD]

In the year 998 Hijri [1590], Halo Khan, the son of Sultanalī Beg, was placed at the helm of Ardalān, Shahrazūr¹⁸, Koy, Harir, and other towns. For two years

¹¹ Amir al-Omarā, meaning supreme commander, was a military title used from the 4th/10th century first in Iraq and then in Iranian lands. For more details on its usage see Savory and Bosworth (2016).

¹² Amānullāh Khan I ruled Ardalān for twenty-seven years, from 1214 to 1240 Hijra, [1799-800 to 1824-5]. He was one of the more powerful and influential governors of Ardalān whose patronage led to the prosperity of Sanandaj. For more on his life see Mastūreh (2005: 185-220).

¹³ This rather grandiloquent epithet appears in Arabic and indeed many Arabic words and phrases are peppered throughout the document. This was very common both in speech and in written texts, most notably to denote the level of sophistication and education of the orator or author.

¹⁴ Khusraw Khan II, the son of Khan Ahmad Khan, ruled over Ardalān for thirty years. He was known to be just and compassionate towards his people and came to be known as ‘*buẓurg*’ (great). *Hadīqih-yi Nāserīyye* describes Khusraw Khan as wise, judicious, courageous, and competent. For a more detailed account of his life see Sheerin Ardalān, 2008: 109-222.

¹⁵ Written in the 17th century by the royal secretary to Shah ‘Abbās I Eskandar Beg, it is a chronicle of the reign of Shah ‘Abbās I (r. 1588-1629) and is considered to be one of the greatest work of Safavid historiography.

¹⁶ Written by Mirza Mahdi Khan Astarābādi in mid-18th century, it is a history of the life and reign of Nāder Shah Afshar (r. 1736-1747).

¹⁷ *Baẓm*, meaning banquet, is defined by the *Dehkhoda* Dictionary as a gathering or occasion for merrymaking and the drinking of wine.

¹⁸ Shahrazūr refers to a city and the plains between the city of Sulaimani and Darbandikhan, located in today’s Sulaimani province in the northern Kurdistan region of Iraq. The city gained significance as the Ardalān capital at the beginning of Safavid rule. The Ardalāns first lost the area to the Ottomans under Sulaimān Khan Ardalān; it was regained and lost on other occasions

he broke away from obedience and service to Shah Tahmāsb (r. 1524-1576) and upon realising his power and establishing his place, no longer suffered being in the service of the Shah of Iran or the Ottoman Sultans¹⁹, [instead] ruling Ardalān, Shahrazūr, Koy, Harir and other towns independently. He added the fortress of Zolm²⁰ and the Palangān citadel²¹, the capital of the Gurāni people, to his provinces and thereby elevated himself. With great might, he spent his time rebuilding mosques and mausoleums, doing good works and tending to the welfare of the weak and destitute. And though the Shah of Iran and the Ottoman Sultan bestowed upon him every kindness and favour, he wholly refused to serve either of them or become obedient. Because of such a stance, Shah ‘Abbās²² (r. 1587-1629) marched from Isfahan with a force and army beyond compare. Reaching the village of Mayham, a dependency of Isfandābād²³, he began deliberations with his state officials and trustees regarding the defense and frustration of Halo Khan and his governorate. After the exchange of many missives and countless goings and comings, they took his [Halo Khan’s] son Khan Ahmad Khan as hostage, [with the condition that] he would never return.²⁴ From Mayham they turned towards the direction of Azerbāijān province. After some time, Shah ‘Abbās, whose dwelling is in paradise, made Khan Ahmad Khan, the son of Halo Khan, who had been raised for some years in the Qizilbāsh²⁵ tradition and [subsequently] made to turn away

during the Ottoman-Iranian conflicts that continued through the Safavid and Qajar periods. On the importance of the city see Hādīān (2010: 31-35).

¹⁹ The text refers to the Ottoman Sultans as the Sultans of Rūm and to Anatolia as the province of Rūm. While the term Rūm itself means Roman and originally referred to the Byzantine Empire, it came to denote Anatolia under the Seljuq dynasty (1077-1308). Persian elites, scholars, and poets continued to use the term Rūm and Sultans of Rūm when referring to Anatolia and Ottoman sultans.

²⁰ The Fortress of Zolm is in Shahrazūr. Its construction solidified Ardalān rule in the region.

²¹ Palangān is located in the township of Sanandaj, near the river Sirvān.

²² The reconstruction and fortification of the fortress at Dimdim alarmed Shah ‘Abbās, who considered this a move by the Kurds to vie for more power and independence and thus potentially threaten Safavid power in the northwest. After a bloody siege, Shah ‘Abbās ordered a general massacre according to Eskandar Beg’s history and deported many Kurdish tribes to the province of Khorāsān, in the most northeastern part of Iran. This policy of forced relocation towards some of the Kurdish tribes was meant to bring the province under firmer control. While Persian histories depict the battle of Dimdim as a just response to mutiny and treason, Kurdish oral tradition and literary works tell the story of struggle against foreign domination (Hassanpour, 1995).

²³ Isfandābād, is a rural district of the county of Qorveh, in the Kurdistan region of Iran.

²⁴ This tradition of hostage taking continued through the Qajar period, despite the loyalty of the house of Ardalān to the Qajars. The Qajar state often used its power to alter the line of succession or support rival claims with the aim of rendering these semi-autonomous governors more dependent. For more on the relationship between the Qajars and the Kurds of Ardalān, see McDowall (2004: 66-86).

²⁵ The Qizilbāsh were the Shi’a militant groups of Anatolia and Kurdistan, most notably the Turcoman tribes of Eastern Anatolia and Azerbāijān who contributed to the founding of the Safavid dynasty at the beginning of the 16th century under Ismā’il I. He established Shi’ism as the official religion of the state, placing it in direct conflict with the Ottoman Empire and its Kurdish

from Kurdish and tribal traditions and habits, and obliged to adopt the habiliments and affluent ways of the Qizilbāsh, the object of royal attention and honoured him with marriage to a chaste woman from the royal harem. He [Khan Ahmad Khan] obtained permission from the shah to leave [for Ardalān] so that his arrival might hearten his father with the king's compassion and send him on his way towards that exalted camp [court]. In a short time he reached the outer limits of the fortress²⁶ and made his way inside the fortress at nightfall. He assured his father Halo Khan in every respect of the king's compassion and sent him bound for the royal court. He established himself in his father's stead and became ruler.²⁷ Immediately upon Halo Khan's arrival at the capital of Isfahan and receiving an audience, he was honoured with the most opulent robes and the grandest quarters and boundless favours of all kinds from the shah and he lived in complete opulence and pleasure. In the year 1025 Hijri [1616], Khan Ahmad Khan son of Halo Khan by order of Shah 'Abbās replaced his father and enjoyed the rule of Ardalān, Shahrazūr, Koy, Harir, and others and [thus] he began his encroachment into the Anatolian province. He raided and pillaged the Bilbās tribe from among them, a tribe that had never bowed in obedience to the Ottoman or Iranian leaders. He killed and captured its rebels and notables and enslaved the women and children, fettering them to a life of servitude and so debasing and blinding that community. In accordance with the dictate of Shah 'Abbās, he also conquered and brought under his control the provinces of Bēbē, Sorān, Āku, Qandil, 'Amadiya and Mosul. Fame of his bravery and manliness spread to all corners of the world so that no one could boast of being his rival. However, since Shah Safi²⁸ (r. 1629-1642) had blinded his son Sorkhāb Beg, who was the offspring of the royal harem's bridal chamber, Khan Ahmad Khan was overcome with anxiety and paranoia and

vassals, most of which identified themselves as Sunnis. The Qizilbāsh formed the basis of Safavid political and military power. For more on the Qizilbāsh see Babayan (2002) and Savory (1980).

²⁶ Here reference is made to the fortress of Hasanabād, a day's journey to the south of Sanandaj and the Ardalān's seat of power.

²⁷ Khan Ahmad Khan is among the most consequential rulers of House Ardalān, most notably because of his ability to navigate local politics in a context of cooperation with the state – a direct result of his relationship to the Safavid court and his marriage to the shah's sister – and his ability to bring the most territory under Ardalān rule. For the story of his life and the events that led to him deposing his father, Halo Khan, see Mastūreh (2005: 50-56). For an analysis of the sources discussing Khan Ahmad Khan and his reign see Hādīān (2010), especially chapter 4. It is important to note that his father Halo Khan had ruled independently from the Persian and Ottoman courts while simultaneously cultivating relations with both. Upon leaving, he is recorded as having said to his son "Oh son! I no longer desire to rule and of course the heritage of the father is given to the son, but I truly fear that you will tear away the veil from Kurdistan [here an idiom is used, meaning to make something vulnerable] and bring it under the domination of the Iranian state." From Abdul Qāder ibn Rostam Bābāni, *Sayr al-Akrād: Tārikh va Joqrāfīya-ye Kurdistan* (1377) found in Hādīān (2010: 130).

²⁸ According to Newman (2006: 73-81) Shah Safi I, formerly Prince Sam, was the son of the murdered Prince Safi, the son of Shah 'Abbās I. He ruled Iran after Shah 'Abbas I from 1629 to 1642. During his reign, the Ottomans succeeded in occupying Tabriz and recapturing Baghdad and other parts of Mesopotamia.

therefore turned away from obedience and service to Shah Safi and allied with the Ottoman Sultan. And no matter how Shah Safi attempted to win him over with promises of generosity, it was to no avail. Eventually, he [Shah Safi] chose Zāl Khan and Siyāvash Khan to command a large force; the Ottoman Sultan [too] designated a commander and army to reinforce and relieve Khan Ahmad Khan. The two forces faced one another at Marivān, a dependency of Ardalān, and the Iranian army prevailed and Khan Ahmad Khan, along with a large contingent, went to Mosul and in the same year, 1048 Hijri [1638] he passed away.²⁹ In the year 1048 Hijri [1639] Sulaimān Khan, son of Mir 'Alam al-Dīn, son of Teymour Khan, who was a member of the royal court, was exalted with the robe of honour³⁰ and the governance of Ardalān, Shahrazūr, Koy, and Harir. Because of his many great services, Shah Safi sent him towards his own hereditary lands with great honour and respect. And after his independence in the affairs of state, on order of the shah he destroyed the fortress of Hasanābād, which was his ancestors' seat of power. In Senneh, today known as Sanandaj, he laid the foundation for development and prosperity. For twenty-two years he ruled with utmost splendour and majesty in the provinces of Ardalān, Shahrazūr, Koy, Harir and others. However his issuance of some decrees arose the suspicion of Shah 'Abbās II (r. 1642-1666) who recalled him and raised his son Kalb'alī to Khan and in the year 1068 [1658] honoured him with the provinces and the governance of Ardalān, Shahrazūr, Koy and Harir. For twenty-two years he ruled and after his death in the year 1089 [1678], Khan Ahmad Khan, son of Kalb'alī Khan, rebelled and ruled for one year and six months. His [paternal] uncle Khusraw Khan, who was in control of Marivān, a dependency of Ardalān, reported to Shah Sulaimān (r. 1666-1694) the circumstances of Kalb'alī Khan's death and his nephew, Khan Ahmad Khan's bad behavior and misconduct; upon hearing the petition, in the same hour, Shah Sulaimān entrusted the governance of Ardalān, Shahrazūr, Koy, Harir and others to Khusraw Khan, son of Sulaimān Khan. Khusraw Khan traveled from Marivān to the seat of power in Sanandaj where he established himself and ruled for three years. In the year 1099 [1688], Khan Ahmad Khan, son of Kalb'alī Khan, on behalf of Shah Sulaimān became the governor and protector of the dominion of Ardalān, Shahrazūr, and other provinces. He spent most of his time fishing and hunting, living in luxury and horse riding; he ruled for five years in this manner and in the year 1105 [1694] Shah Sultan Hussein (r. 1694-1722) was seated on the throne and Muhammad Khan, son of Khusraw Khan,

²⁹ In *Kholāse al-Seyr*, Muhammad Ma'sum notes that Khan Ahmad Khan died in Mosul of melancholia and according to some tales, the news of his death did not reach the Safavid court until seven years after. Hādiān, 2010: 72.

³⁰ *Khil'at*, as used in the text, refers to a tradition of gift giving in Iran, particularly a robe of honour from a ruler to a subordinate. The granting of this gift was a political process signifying royal favour or confirmation in holding a high office. It was an event that took place in a grand ceremonial fashion where the ruler also bestowed other elaborate gifts such as jeweled sabers, daggers, gold woven shawls and valuable horses (Floor, 2013).

who was a member of the royal court, was honoured with the governorship of Ardalān, Shahrazūr, Koy and Harir and began his journey towards the province.

He ruled independently for six years. Because ‘Abbāsqolī Khan, son of Muhammad Khan, had shown salient service, bravery and exemplary valor during his travels to Qandahār and Herat, Shah Sultan Hussein bestowed upon him the governorship of Ardalān, Shahrazūr and others; for six/seven years he ruled in extreme kindness and influence. Thereafter, Shah Sultan Hussein relieved him of his rulership and in his place appointed Alīqolī Khan, son of Jāhāngir Sultan, son of Kalb’alī Khan. In the year 1129 [1717], Alīqolī Khan became independent and established, but the vilification of those who bore him ill will led to Alīqolī Khan’s dismissal in 1132 [1720] and again ‘Abbāsqolī Khan was placed on the seat of power and ruled for three years. In those days, Sulaimān Beg Bēbē, who like his forefathers before him, was companion and retainer to the dynasty of Bābā Ardalān in the vicinity of Surdash and Saruchak³¹, began to take part in banditry and the stripping naked of caravans; for this reason a group of ragtag ruffians had gathered around him and so his actions had become lucrative [to the point that] he conquered the provinces of Gol’anbar and Qaradāgh. ‘Abbāsqolī Khan, son of Muhammad Khan, appointed a relative of his to defeat him; they faced each other at Qaradāgh and a battle ensued. Sulaimān Beg prevailed; with his adventures becoming more profitable and [the number of] his men increasing, he conquered Shahrazūr province and on behalf of Shah Sultan Hussein appointed ‘Abbās Khan Ziyād Ughli Qajar Ganjeh as commander of a reasonably sized contingent to defeat Sulaimān Beg Bēbē. The two sides met at the district of Marivān where a great battle ensued and a large number of Sulaimān Beg’s army fell to the sword of the victorious army of Iran. Sulaimān Beg Bēbē escaped towards Vādi and the provinces of Shahrazūr and others, which, as before, came under the occupation of Governor ‘Abbāsqolī Khan. In the year 1140 Hijri [1728] when Mahmūd Afghan (r. 1722-1725) came to Isfahan and complete disorder and disarray befell the affairs of Shah Sultan Hussein and Iraq-e ‘*Ajam*, in those days, Governor ‘Abbāsqolī Khan sent his entire force, which exceeded six thousand invaders, under the command of one of his mirs³² towards Isfahan to aid Shah Sultan Hussein. Mahmūd Afghan received word of the arrival of the Ardalān army immediately after they reached Chāl Siyāh³³, which is two day’s journey from Isfahan. Ashraf³⁴ (r. 1725-1729) who himself had, after Mahmūd,

³¹ Surdash is a small town between Dukan and Sarchinar in the Sulaimani Province of today’s Kurdistan Region of Iraq; Saruchak is near the city of Bāneh in northwestern Iran.

³² *Mir*, much like *beg*, referred to the head of a tribe, confederation of tribes, or Kurdish principalities. According to van Bruinessen, “the *mir*’s authority appears to have been strong and unquestioned, his commands to have been obeyed by all his subjects.” Bruinessen, 1992: 74.

³³ The name of a village located in the northwest of Isfahan and is near Sultanābād.

³⁴ According to Katouzian (2009: 134) Ashraf led a coup against his cousin Mahmud and declared himself king after his death. Wanting recognition from the Ottomans, he sent an envoy to Constantinople but this only led to a declaration of war from the Ottomans. While Ashraf was able to make peace with the Ottomans, he still had to contend with Shah Tahmāsb II who had

become successor and Shah Ashraf, along with seven/ eight thousand Afghan riders went to confront and destroy the Ardalān army. The two forces converged on Chāl Siyāh and from sunrise until the hours of sunset the battlefield was arrayed with carnage and combat; waving their swords and hurling their spears, they freed those bodies of their souls. Like the setting star of the Safavid's fortune, their fortune declined. [Despite] announcing that "upon his return, chains would break asunder" their struggle and strife, the bravery and valor of the Ardalān army rendered no gain and the Ardalān army suffered a terrible defeat. And so, because of the Afghan conquest and control and the defeat of the Ardalān army, which threw the affairs of Governor 'Abbāsqolī Khan into complete turmoil, Khāneh Beg son of Sulaimān Beg Bēbē considered the moment opportune and occupied Shahrazūr in alliance with the Ottoman commander Ahmad Pasha.³⁵

From that date onwards, that is from 1134 [1722] until the date of this narration in 1225 Hijri [1810], the province of Shahrazūr has no longer been under the dominion of the Ardalāns and has belonged to the house of Bābān.³⁶ In those days, Shah Sultan Hussein and the ministers of state sent Shah Tahmāsb³⁷ (r. 1729-1732), clandestinely, from Isfahan to Qazvin to agitate for the defeat of the Afghans. After entering Qazvin, the aforementioned Shah Tahmāsb found no alternative but to seek out the help of Sultan Ahmad Khan (r. 1703-1730), the Ottoman Kh^wandkār.³⁸ After sending an envoy and beseeching the help of the Sublime Ottoman Porte, Ahmad Pasha, governor of Baghdad, was chosen to lead a contingent of thirty or forty thousand riders to defend against Mahmūd Afghan. After the commander's arrival to the province

the support of the Qajar chief and the young Nādir Shah along with his 2000 Afshār troops. Ashraf was defeated in the battle near Damaqān and fled to Shiraz only to be followed by Nādir and defeated twice more before being killed by a force that Mahmud's brother, the ruler of Qandahār, had sent to meet him.

³⁵ According to Bagley's study (1969) in the Ottoman invasion of Iran in 1723 Ahmad Pasha, the then governor of Basrah, along with his father the governor of Baghdad Hasan Pasha captured Kirmānshāh. Following his father's death there, the troops pushed Ahmad Pasha to take his place, which the Porte approved.

³⁶ Hādiān (2010: 74) writes that towards the end of the Safavid period in 1136 [1724], the Bābān Pasha who was a mir of the Ottoman Empire began ruling Kurdistan. In *Tārikh Al-Akrād*, Mastūreh does not note the dates of his rule, only that Nādir Shah defeated him and was able to take back the province of Ardalān. Mulā Muhammad Sharīf Qādi, in *Zobdeh Al-Tavārikh Sanandaji* purports that the Ottoman viziers took advantage of the chaos of war during the Afghan conquest of Iran and were able to place the Bābān Pasha as governor of Ardalān.

³⁷ Shah Tahmāsb, the third son of Shah Sultan Hussein, left Isfahan while it was under siege and travelled to the former capital Qazvin to mobilise resistance to the Afghans. His father, however, abdicated to the Afghan victor Mahmud Khan and was murdered by Ashraf who feared that he might still be regarded as the legitimate ruler of Iran. Nādir Shah, having defeated the Afghans placed Shah Tahmāsb on the throne. Eventually however in a meeting called by Nādir Shah, Tahmāsb was deposed by the council of chiefs and notables, who collectively decided to declare Nādir as their new sovereign.

³⁸ Kh^wandkār, meaning lord or God in Persian, was used as a name for Sultan Murad I (r. 1362-1389) and is used here to mean lord.

of Hamadān, Ashraf Shah Afghan, who after Mahmūd's death had replaced him, murdered Shah Sultan Hussein and rode from Isfahan with the Afghan army and auxiliary forces to confront the Ottoman commander. The two forces collided at Damaq village, a dependency of Hamadān, and after much struggle and strife, the Ottoman forces suffered a terrible defeat and the Afghan army prevailed. After this striking victory, Afshār Shah Afghan adopted a position of compromise and reconciliation towards the Ottoman commander by drawing on their shared religion; he then returned to Isfahan. Ahmad Pasha too victoriously brought the lands from Hamadān [westwards], not including Kirmānshāh³⁹, Ardalān and Sāvōjbulāgh, into his possessions. In those days, the Ottoman commander granted the lands of Ardalān with its royal title, along with Shahrazūr, to Khāne Beg, son of Sulaimān Beg Bēbē. Once Nādir Shah (r. 1736-1747) arrived victorious in Isfahan and placed Shah Tahmāsb on the throne and cleansed Iran from the foul presence of the Afghans, Shah Tahmāsb, in the year 1142 [1730], appointed Subhān Virdī Khan⁴⁰, son of Muhammad Khan and younger brother to 'Abbāsqolī Khan, as autonomous ruler of Ardalān, elevating him and bestowing upon him the robe of honour. Ahmad Khan, son of Subhān Virdī Khan, was foremost amongst the courageous Ardalāns and present in all foreign campaigns, most especially in Hindustān and Dāghistān, where he displayed meritorious service. In the year 1155 Hījri [1742] [Nādir Shah] recalled Subhān Virdī Khan because of his old age and appointed his eldest son Ahmad Khan to the governorship of Ardalān; bestowing upon him the robe of honour, he exalted him and sent him to Ardalān.

In those days, excessive royal duties and taxes, compounded by the scarcity of goods in the province of Ardalān, flamed the fires of famine and inflation to such heights that the people were ensnared in ruin for want of bread, their hearts cracked open like that of the split wheat.

Nādir Shah had stored twelve thousand *kharvār*⁴¹ of goods, transported from the lands of Iraq, in Ardalān and its warehouses to serve as the military's provisions. Having experienced a great snowfall in those days, which had blocked all roads and passageways to such an extent that the way for any coming or going back and forth from the outside to obtain any provisions had been completely blocked, the people of Ardalān implored Governor Ahmad Khan, saying that we will take the provisions as a subsidy. With the coming of spring and the melting away of snow from Ardalān and its neighbouring provinces by

³⁹ Kirmānshāhān, known also as Kirmānshāh or Bākhtarān in different periods of its history, refers to both the province in the western part of Iran and its capital city.

⁴⁰ Subhān Virdī Khan was officially appointed as the Ardalān *wālī* by Nādir Shah (r. 1736-47) when he rode through Sanandaj. It is unclear when he began his *wālikship* due to the inconsistencies in local sources. Some place it in 1147 [1734] and others in 1143 [1730]. Based on these local sources however, he was appointed to rule Ardalān a total of seven different times. For a comparison of these sources about Subhān Virdī Khan, see Hādīān (2010: 75-77).

⁴¹ One *kharvār* was a unit of measurement in Iran equal to 360 tons.

[the hand of] God, one *men-e Tabriž*⁴² reached two thousand⁴³. Replacing the royal provisions and paying the Nādiri duties and taxes was beyond the scope of Khan Ahmad Khan and the people of Ardalān. Fearing the repercussions of Nādir Shah and feeling compelled and helpless, in the year 1155 Hijri [1742] they [Khan Ahmad Khan and his men] defected to the Ottomans and with an equivalent of five hundred men⁴⁴ from amongst the nobles and notables they went to the Ottoman Sultan Mahmūd Khan (r. 1730-1754). Since fame of Ahmad Khan's courage and generosity, and tales of his presence and wisdom had reached the Turks and Tajiks, both those near and far, the Ottoman Sultan considered his arrival dear and welcome, honouring him with various kindnesses and all manner of favours. After some time, he chose Ahmad Khan, along with Abdullāh Pasha Chatchi, to lead, and sent him to confront Nādir Shah in battle. Nādir Shah too appointed Nasrollāh Mīrzā, his own son, to defend against them. The two sides came together in the vicinity of Mosul and the Ottoman army was routed and Ahmad Khan, for the second time, returned to Istanbul and Sultan Mahmūd Khan [and Nādir Shah]⁴⁵ honoured Ahmad Khan Kh^wandkār with the governorship of Edirne, dispatching him there with utmost respect and honour. After three years of governing there, on the date 1159 Hijri [1746] his soul joined the divine. After Ahmad Khan's escape to the Ottoman lands, Subhān Virdī Khan, again by order of Nādir Shah, was honoured with the governorship of Ardalān. In the year 1160 [1747] Nādir Shah was murdered and in the year 1162 Hijri [1749] during the reign of Ibrāhim Pasha⁴⁶ (r. 1748-1749), Hasanālī Khan, son of 'Abbāsqolī Khan and fraternal nephew of Subhān Virdī Khan, gained the honour of being appointed governor of Ardalān. In the same year Ibrāhim Shah was murdered and chaos and disorder befell the lands of Iran; from one corner Karim Khan Zand (r. 1750-1779) and from the other Imāmqolī Khan Zanganeh, who were motivated to rebel and began multiplying the occasions for plunder and harassing their neighbours, near and far. Karim Khan Zand with his forces and reserves descended on Mehr Ali Khan Takollū, who was the ruler of Hamadān and Mehr Ali Khan with his army and reserves rushed to meet Karim Khan in battle. The two forces came together around Malāyer. Mehr Ali Khan was routed and sought refuge with Hasanālī Khan, governor of Ardalān. Governor Hasanali

⁴² One *men-e Tabriž* was a unit of measurement in Iran equal to 6.4 Kilograms.

⁴³ Here two thousand refers to an amount of Iranian currency and was equal to two riyals.

⁴⁴ Vaqāyi' Negār (2005: 105-6) recounts in *Hadiqih-yi Nāseriyye* that Nādir Shah had sent a delegate to collect the provisions from Ardalān. Once the delegate reached Ardalān and saw the warehouse empty, he intentionally, it is said, aroused the rage of Nādir Shah, who then ordered the death of Ahmad Khan. Seeing no other choice, he fled to the Ottomans with two thousand riders.

⁴⁵ The name of Nādir Shah appears here, as if to imply that he was somehow agreed on the appointment. We know this to be incorrect.

⁴⁶ According to Katouzian (2009: 136) Ibrāhim deposed his brother Aliqolī Khan who had crowned himself king after Nādir Shah. Ibrāhim took the throne for himself in 1748 and blinded his brother but was killed soon after by his own soldiers.

Khan too, with his army and auxiliary troops, moved to avenge him and in the vicinity of Pariye they confronted each other and Karim Khan Zand and the Zand tribe suffered a humiliating defeat. Many of their men fell prey to the swords of the brave-hearted Ardalāns. Governor Hasanālī Khan reinstated Mehr Ali Khan in Hamadān and returned to his seat of government in Ardalān, victorious and triumphant, carrying back the spoils of war. After one year, Imāmqolī Khan Zanganeh gathered around himself a large following of around ten/ fifteen thousand men from the provinces. Entertaining the notion of battling Hasanālī Khan, the governor of Ardalān, he raised his banner and moved from Kirmānshāhān and arrived in Bilāvar. Governor Hasanālī Khan with the troops he previously had mobilised in the city of Senneh and its surrounding areas hastily went to defend against him. The two sides met in the area of Bilāvar of Kirmānshāhān and Imāmqolī Khan Zanganeh and his army suffered a crushing defeat and most of his men shed their blood in the arena of [their enemies'] swords. Hasanālī Khan, governor of Ardalān, returned to his seat of governance in Ardalān victorious and triumphant. Towards the end of this year, Sulaimān Pasha Bēbē was put to flight by Salim Pasha, his uncle's son, who during Nādir Shah's reign was the Pasha of Shahrazūr and had most of the time rode with a thousand Bābān riders in Nādir's entourage. And so he sought refuge with Hasanālī Khan, the governor of Ardalān. Governor Hasanālī Khan too moved with his many reserve forces from Ardalān to frustrate [the efforts of] Salim Pasha. Because Salim Pasha in those days was allied with the vizier of Baghdad, he sought help from the vizier of Baghdad; Muhammad Efendi Kahyāy⁴⁷ mobilised seven/ eight thousand cavalry men and chose the pashas of Koy and Harir and some other areas to assist him. The two sides met in battle upon arriving in the area of Marivān. After much struggle and strife, using the implements of war and combat, Governor Hasanālī Khan was put to flight and Salim Pasha in pursuit of him entered Sanandaj. Consequently Hasanālī Khan in hopes of receiving assistance and reinforcement went to Āzād Khan Afghan⁴⁸, who in those days claimed sovereignty in the regions of Azerbāijān and ruled autonomously. Salim Pasha too, fearing that Hasanālī Khan may be plotting and Āzād Khan would come to his aid, fast following in his trail, set out for Āzād Khan's camp. Āzād Khan, who saw Hasanālī Khan as weak and Salim Pasha as extremely strong and financially powerful, chose for himself the shame of inhumanity and the greed for worldly possessions, which Salim Pasha gave to him in vast amounts and made promises of services [to be rendered]. He placed Hasanālī Khan in the hands of Salim Pasha⁴⁹ and in those same days,

⁴⁷ Kahyāy is the title of *sakhlī* (garrison) commanders in the Ottoman army.

⁴⁸ According to Perry (1987) Āzād Khan Afghan was second-in-command to Amīr Aṣlān Khan Qerqlū Afšār, the *sardār* (governor) of Azerbāijān at the time of Nādir Shah's assassination. He helped in the defeat of Aṣlān Khan by defecting in the field. He became a major contender for power in northwestern Iran but was defeated by the Qajars at Urmia.

⁴⁹ According to *Hadīqih-yi Nāseriyye* (2005: 108), Āzād Khan received four thousand tumans from Salim Pasha in exchange for sending him Hasanālī Khan.

he [Hasanalī Khan] met his death.

Salim Pasha too, for those reasons, turned from obedience to the vizier of Baghdad, becoming obedient to and the subject of Āzād Khan. Moreover in those days, no one remained from amongst the notables of the great dynasty of Bābā Ardalān. The leadership of the great dynasty had gone to Khusraw Khan⁵⁰ bin Ahmad bin Subhān Virdī Khan bin Muhammad Khan bin Khusraw Khan bin Sulaimān Khan bin Mīr 'Alam al-Dīn Khan bin Teymour Khan, brother of Halo Khan bin Sultanalī Beg bin Sorkhāb Beg bin Ma'mūn Beg bin Bīgh Beg bin Ma'mūn Beg bin "Monẓer" bin "Bāblu" bin Hasan bin Khiḍr bin Elyās bin Khiḍr bin Kālūl bin Bābā Ardalān, a descendent of Bābak bin Sāsān, who was in his twenty second year. In those two or three years of Āzād Khan Afghan, because of the enmity Salim Pasha Bēbē bore towards the dynasty of Bābā Ardalān nothing seemed to bring profit until the sound of Muhammad Hasan Khan Qajar⁵¹ came from Astarābād, Māzandarān towards Moghān, Azerbāijān, with claims to sovereignty. Khusraw Khan, being over ambitious and zealous, always waited for such opportunities and escaped from the royal seat of Qazvin -which in those days, Qazvin was no longer the capital of Iran- with a few of his companions and sought an audience with Muhammad Hasan Khan Qajar in Moghān, Azerbāijān, where he was honoured with various favours and until the altercation between Muhammad Hasan Khan Qajar and Āzād Khan Afghan, he enjoyed new graces and endless kindnesses every day and was gladdened and assured with the promise of the governorship of Ardalān and rulership of Shahrazūr.

In the space of three or four months, in the year 1169 [1756], the battle of Muhammad Hasan Khan Qajar with Āzād Khan Afghan, who was accompanied by Salim Pasha Bēbē, took place in the province of Urmia, Azerbāijān where Āzād Khan and Salim Pasha suffered the most terrible defeat. And in the same battle, Khusraw Khan committed great acts of valor. Āzād Khan Afghan escaped towards the direction of Hakkari and Salim Pasha Bēbē travelled to the outer limits of Bābān [emirate], which in those days was under [the rule of] Sulaimān Pasha, his cousin, who was appointed by the vizier of Baghdad to rule the Bābān province. Sulaimān Pasha Bēbē, because of the jealousy he harbored towards the dynasty of Bābā Ardalān, made a duplicitous peace with him. Together -meaning Salim Pasha and Sulaimān Pasha- they sent a reasonably heavy offering carried by a few of their most reliable men to the court of Muhammad Hasan Qajar in hopes of bringing the Ardalān province

⁵⁰ For a list of the important events of Khusraw Khan's reign see Hādiān (2010: 86-87).

⁵¹ According to Hambly (1991: 104-144) Mohammad Hasan Khan became the Qoyunlū chief after the death of his father and was a serious contender for power in Iran, especially in 1756-1757 when he ruled much of north, northwest and central Persia. He was betrayed by one of his commanders after failing to take Shiraz and was killed while trying to escape. His son, Aqa Muhammad Khan, who had been castrated as a child would go on to become the founder of the Qajar dynasty after conquering much of Iran and consolidating power over its numerous warring tribes.

under the rule of Salim Pasha. Muhammad Hasan Qajar due to his natural dignity and innate zeal did not receive their offering and refused to accept their supplication and in reply mentioned, “On every occasion Salim Pasha does us a service, we grant him a province of the lands of Iran.” Khusraw Khan, in that same hour, was summoned to his [the shah’s] presence and he was, in the year 1170 Hijri [1757] honoured with the robe of governorship, a gold bridled horse and a jewel-studded sword and dagger and was sent towards the province of Ardalān. After Governor Khusraw Khan’s arrival in the district of Bāneh, a dependency of Ardalān, Salim Pasha Bēbē blocked the path of Governor Khusraw Khan with a thousand riders, so as to further their chance at victory. The two forces met at the district of Bāneh and after much struggle and strife, Salim Pasha Bēbē experienced a crushing defeat and three/ four hundred of Salim Pasha’s men fell prey to the swords of the brave-hearted Ardalāns. After being defeated, Salim Pasha Bēbē believed his salvation was to go to Baghdad. It is said, “When death comes to prey, towards the hunter it goes,”⁵² [and so] immediately upon arriving in Baghdad, in the square of Imām Ali, the highest of all martyrs, he was murdered on order of the vizier. Governor Khusraw Khan, victorious and triumphant, entered Ardalān and ruled with complete authority until the year 1199 Hijri [1785], of which two years were under the reign of Muhammad Hasan Qajar, twenty years under the reign of Karim Khan and seven years under Alimorād Khan (r. 1781-1785). No noteworthy events took place during these twenty-nine years for this humble servant to narrate and in the aforementioned year Alimorād Khan Zand passed away.

The tribes, which Karim Khan Zand, in those days of his authority had relocated from Kirmānshāhān and its domains to Shiraz, and had during his rule spent his entire time training and supporting, migrated from Shiraz to Isfahan *en masse* after the death of Alimorād Khan Zand, and gathered around Allāhḡolī Khan Zanganeh and he in turn, in hope of increasing his army and swelling the numbers of his troops, claimed sovereignty and raised the banner of rebellion, aiming to march towards Iraq. After passing through the area of Bīsītūn, he dispatched five thousand cavalymen from his army, under the charge of a group of his commanders and cousins, towards Ardalān and himself went towards Hamadān. Five thousand chosen cavalymen reached Mirābād, which is at the outer limits of Ardalān. Upon hearing this news, Governor Khusraw Khan immediately set out with his forces and reserves, which were standing ready at the city of Senneh and its surrounding areas, and with sunrise on Friday, the 6th day of the month of Jumādā in the aforementioned year 1199 Hijri [17 March 1785] he went with all haste to defend against that force. He reached them with an hour left to sunset. The brave hearts of Ardalān swept him away with one attack, bringing many of them to fall to their swords. Under the descending darkness, those who had barely survived were able to escape and join Allāhḡolī Khan’s camp in the area of Sunqur, a dependency of

⁵² A well-known Persian proverb.

Hamadān. Allāhqolī Khan Beglarbegi too, after the defeat meted to his army, gave up any hope of returning to Hamadān and went on to confront Governor Khusraw Khan. On the next day, while there was victory and triumph, Governor Khusraw Khan advanced a day's journey and Allāhqolī Khan too travelled a day's journey. The two forces met on the Sunday, in the village of Rizleh, in an area of Sunqur. The zephyr of victory and triumph blew the banner of coming glories for Governor Khusraw Khan. As soon as the brave hearts of Ardalān began riding, the order of Allāhqolī Khan's brigades came undone and they were put to flight. In that same hour, Allāhqolī Khan was killed at the hands of a man named Mirza Beg and they brought his head to present to Khusraw Khan. Because Governor Khusraw Khan was not pleased with his murder, the killer was deprived of his reward and was forever ostracised. Sending Allāhqolī Khan's body with due honour and respect towards Kirmānshāhān, he [Khusraw Khan] began his march and chose for his campsite the area outside the fort of Kirmānshāhān. The notables and nobles of Kirmānshāhān, using the word of God as their intermediary, entered the presence of Governor Khusraw Khan to plead for their safety.

Governor Khusraw Khan too, with compassion and humanity accepted their petition, saying, "Let it be known I was not pleased with what occurred but now God's will and Allāhqolī Khan's pride have brought these events to pass and no longer shall we harm another soul." Governor Khusraw Khan turned Kirmānshāhān over to Hājīrī Ali Khan, the paternal uncle of Allāhqolī Khan, who in those days was the chief of the Zanganeh tribe. After a few days he returned to the seat of Ardalān province and after a year, in the year 1200 Hijri [1786], Ja'far Khan Zand⁵³ (r. 1785-1789), who after Alimorād Khan Zand became the successor of Karim Khan and Alimorād Khan, from the lands of Fars arrived in Isfahan and sent his paternal cousin Isma'il Khan as commander towards the domains⁵⁴. Isma'il Khan, after arriving in the small town of Borūjerd⁵⁵, began rebelling and acting against Ja'far Khan. After hearing of this, Ja'far Khan Zand marched from Isfahan towards Borūjerd with the aim of uprooting him. Isma'il Khan could not withstand carrying out a resistance, his men scattered, and he appealed to Governor Khusraw Khan. Since the traditions and ways of Bābā Ardalān's dynasty were not marked by sedition or rebellion, and in all matters they strived for justice and fair-mindedness, they turned Isma'il Khan away and he went towards Garrūs. After Ja'far Khan arrived at the city of Hamadān, without reason, he laid the grounds for confrontation with Governor Khusraw Khan; demands for Isma'il Khan to be

⁵³ According to Katouzian (2009: 139) Ja'far Khan rebelled against Alimorād Khan in 1785 and took power in Isfahan while Alimorād was campaigning in the north. He ruled for four years before being killed by his own men who mutinied in response to his treacherous behavior. He was the son of Sādiq Khan, a claimant to the throne after the death of Karim Khan Zand, who was killed by Alimorād Khan, who in turn became the undisputed Zand ruler in 1781.

⁵⁴ Here it is unclear to which domain Isma'il Khan is sent.

⁵⁵ Borūjerd is the capital of Borūjerd County in the Lorestān Province of western Iran.

handed over were a pretext for he wanted to destroy Kurdistan. Governor Khusraw Khan sent petitions, couriers and letters, imploring and pleading, but to no avail and so Governor Khusraw Khan was compelled out of necessity, to march from Ardalān, and resolved to confront him. As it is said, “When at time of necessity there is no escape, the hand reaches for the sharpened sword.” Along the way, Ali Khan Beglarbegi Khamseh and Muhammad Hussein Khan from Garrūs joined his army and in Yiknābād, a dependency of Hamadān, the two sides met and Ja’far Khan suffered a great defeat and fled towards Isfahan. Governor Khusraw Khan moved towards the city of Hamadān and sent Ja’far Khan Zand’s letters, couriers, gift offerings, *naqāreh khāneh*⁵⁶, artillery and *zānbūrak khāneh*⁵⁷ to the court of the pivot of the earth, the shadow of God Aqa Muhammad Khan Qajar (r. 1794-1797), who in those days had chosen the vicinity of Shahryār, a dependency of Tehran, as his campsite.⁵⁸ He [Khusraw Khan] spent almost a month in the city of Hamadān pleasantly, after which he returned to his own seat of power. And after a year, in the year 1202 [1787] the aforementioned Isma’il Khan gathered a division of around ten or fifteen thousand individuals from the province of Iraq and besieged Kirmānshāhān. Hājji Ali Khan Zanganeh, the Beglerbeg of Kirmānshāhān, sent some members of his clan along with a *pishnamāz*⁵⁹ to assist Governor Khusraw Khan. Governor Khusraw Khan too immediately, along with his force and reserve troops, marched towards Kirmānshāhān. Isma’il Khan, upon hearing of Governor Khusraw Khan’s march, could not stomach staying any longer and leaving Kirmānshāhān behind, with the force and reserve units which he had, scurried towards Borūjerd and Sarband. Hājji Ali Khan, Beglerbegi of Kirmānshāhān, was saved from the predicament of undergoing a siege and in a place came to greet Governor Khusraw Khan. Governor Khusraw Khan camped at Kirmānshāhān to allow his army rest and there he raised his banner to defeat Isma’il Khan Zand. Marching from Borūjerd, he entered Sarband. In the place of Charkhistān⁶⁰, Isma’il Khan Zand with the aim of confronting [Khusraw Khan] arrayed his many troops into battle formation and prepared to give battle.

Governor Khusraw Khan, too, depending upon the grace of God, launched an attack on Khan Isma’il Khan Zand’s army. Since all the hidden graces of God were bestowed upon Governor Khusraw Khan after launching the assaults, he meted a crushing defeat to Ismail Khan Zand and sent him fleeing. Many fell prey to the sword, some were captured, and the remaining swordsmen barely escaped with their lives from that day of reckoning. Governor Khusraw

⁵⁶ *Naqareh Khāneh* refers to the area wherein important news such as victory or times of mourning were announced and accompanied by the playing of drums.

⁵⁷ *Zānbūraks* were small portable cannons which were usually mounted on the back of camels during battle.

⁵⁸ On the nature of tribe-state relations during this period see Beck (1990).

⁵⁹ *Pishnamāz* is a clergyman who leads Muslims in prayer.

⁶⁰ Charkhistān is a village in Lorestan Province near Borūjerd.

Khan sent Isma'il Khan Zand's store of ammunition, *naqāreh kbāneh* and *karnā kbāneh*⁶¹ to the court of that refuge of the world, Aqa Muhammad Khan Qajar.⁶² And from amongst the subjects of the shadow of God, Aqa Muhammad Khan Qajar, too elevated and honoured Governor Khusraw Khan by bestowing upon him an opulent robe of honour and a horse with an azure golden harness and signing the royal deeds to the Sunqur, Asadābād, Tuy, Sirkān, Saḥneh, Dīnawar, Bilāvar, Qal'eh Zanjir and Kirind - dependencies of Kirmānshāhān and Hamadān, he added them to the province of Ardalān. Governor Khusraw Khan too went back to his seat of power, victorious and triumphant, returning with spoils and in great health. For another four years he governed with complete autonomy and kingship in the province of Kurdistan and its annexed lands. In the year 1205 Hijri [1791] he visited the court of the shadow of God Aqa Muhammad Khan Qajar and those subjects of the shadow of God also welcomed him honourably and lovingly.⁶³ Mustafa Khan Dablū, who was the greatest of the Qajar officials, was sent to greet him with a large party and [he] was granted a royal audience with utmost respect and honour. For four months, he spent time in the royal presence in friendliness and companionship. Each day he was honoured with new patronages and endless kindnesses. As the exigencies of the traveling stars in the sky dictate however, "what follows every happiness is hardship and it is destined that after every summit there is a slope" and [so he became] afflicted with a severe illness. His Majesty, the shadow of God, put all the skilled physicians to the task of curing him and around fifty days they performed every essential effort, but nothing was effective. The shadow of God, His Majesty, after losing hope of his recovery, honoured Lutfālī Khan, his uncle, who four years ago was sent as hostage by Governor Khusraw Khan to the royal court, to the governorship of Ardalān in the year 1205 Hijri [1791]⁶⁴. After two years he was honoured by the shadow of God to lordship over Arabistān⁶⁵ and made to collaborate with Hasan Khan Fīlī along with three thousand men from the armies of Iraq and Kirmānshāhān and was

⁶¹ *Karnā kbāneh* refers to the military unit of trumpeters in Iran at the time.

⁶² Sir John Malcolm (1829: 135) writes that "the defeat of Jaffar Khan near Hamadan was chiefly ascribed to the valour of the troops of Ardalān" and that after sending the spoils of war to Aqa Muhammad Khan Qajar, "Khoosroo became one of the most powerful supporters of the Kājir monarch, who, when he overcame the Zand dynasty, had a right to expect that the allegiance of the Waly of Ardalān would ensure the submission of all such districts of Kurdistān as had formerly acknowledged the supremacy of the King of Persia."

⁶³ Vaqāyi' Negār (2005: 117) notes that Aqa Muhammad Khan summoned Khusraw Khan to the capital thrice without him heading the call and instead sending his relatives or sons with offerings to the court. He finally journeyed to the court in 1203 [1788]. Mastūreh (2005: 166-173) provides a more detailed account in *Tārikh Al-Akrād*.

⁶⁴ According to Hādīān (2010: 88) in 1201 [1787] Khusraw Khan sent his uncle Lotfālī Khan to Aqa Muhammad Khan after receiving a summons from him. Lotfālī Khan was sent along with many gifts meant to compensate for his absence.

⁶⁵ 'Arabistān during the Qajar and Safavid periods referred to the southern parts of province, today known as Khuzistān. This region, along with Ardalān and Lorestān, enjoyed the special status of a semi-autonomous frontier province.

appointed to conquer ‘Arabistān. Governor Lutfalī Khan in the same journey conquered the expanse of Shūshtar and Dezful and its surrounding areas, sending offerings, hostages and two year’s taxation to the royal court, and himself after completing this service returned to Ardalān and in the same year, which was 1207 [1792], Governor Khusraw Khan passed away in the capital Tehran and after two/ three years Lutfalī Khan passed away from a stroke.

In those days his son Hasanālī Khan⁶⁶, who had been a member of the royal court in the journey to Kirmān, was honoured with the robe of governorship and arrived in Ardalān in the year 1203 [1789]. After four years of ruling, as though his rule was condemned, His Majesty, the Refuge, the most powerful Shadow of God Fathalī Shah Qajar (r.1797-1834), with only God as his sovereign and sultan in heaven, until the day of reckoning, exalted Amānullāh Khan, the descendent of the righteous and deceased Governor Khusraw Khan, in the year 1214 Hijri [1800] with the robe of honour and governance of Ardalān and sent him towards Ardalān. Amānullāh Khan had hoped for such a day since that time which the deceased Khusraw Khan had arrived at the court of the shadow of God Aqa Muhammad Khan Qajar, and had been placed among the servants to the court of the dynastical monarchs.⁶⁷ He governed with complete command and power upon arriving in the province for an entire year. After a year, some of the rebellious and corrupt elements in Ardalān, who due to Hasanālī Khan’s neglect and inexperience had become addicted to obstinacy and demanding more than is their right, had begun laying the foundation for intrigue, and ever slowly Governor Amānullāh Khan’s position weakened and the truth of his circumstances were made obvious to the shah, that royal adornment of the world.

After the grace of God, from the boundless royal kindness and endless kindly favours, he conquered the rebellious and seditious people of Ardalān and cleared the expanse of the Ardalān territory of the contamination of their sedition and rebelliousness and became established and independent in the affairs of state. After three or four months Hasanālī Khan escaped from the royal prison in the capital of Tehran, and came among the tribes of Bilbās and Bābān, gathering a force from the people of Bilbās, and the ragtag and ruffians of Bābān and Mukrī. With the intention of confronting Governor Amānullāh Khan, he arrived in Marivān, a dependency of Ardalān. Governor Amānullāh Khan immediately upon receiving this news, moved from the capital of his province along with his mobilised forces to eliminate him and reaching him in Marivān, he defeated Hasanālī Khan, capturing him and putting his men to the

⁶⁶ In *Hadīqih-yi Nāserīyye* (2005: 118-119) Vaqāyi’ Negār says of Hasanālī Khan that “betrayal and service have no difference to him, he spent his time fishing and hunting, or would spend his time in solitude praying and in worship, and he would leave the reigns of governing in the hands of his servants.” He ruled for a total of four years.

⁶⁷ Vaqāyi’ Negār (2005: 119) writes that Amānullāh Khan had the support of a courtier who encouraged him to present his request to the Qajar Shah to become the governor of Ardalān and imprison Hasanālī Khan.

sword. Governor Amānullāh Khan, victorious and triumphant, arrived in the city of Senneh and placed Hasanālī Khan under the care of his brother Sulaimān Khan to transport to the royal court. Hasanālī Khan passed away after a year. [Regarding] other events, in the year 1225 Hījri [1810] Ali Pasha, the vizier of the capital of Baghdad, based on the fact that Abdulrahmān Pasha Bēbē had appealed to the eternal royal state [Iran] and was squatting on the borderlands of Kurdistan⁶⁸, feared his encroachment upon Khalid Pasha Bēbē, his relative, and the borderlands of the province of Baghdad and [so] marched from Baghdad. As the saying goes, “as the days darken for the man, all his efforts are brought to naught.” From the path of pride he came to the threshold of Taq-e Kisra.⁶⁹ As this news reached the threshold of the throne of the highest, that splendour of the sovereign’s eye, that pride of the shah, Ḥusām al-Dowleh the great Ali Mohammad Ali Mirza⁷⁰, may his days of glory last forever, was appointed to defeat the vizier, Ali Pasha. After the arrival of the victorious banners bearing the insignia of the shahzādeh, that prince of noble descent, to the city of Kirmānshāhān, Ali Pasha, the vizier, and his forces and reserves could not withstand the assault and escaped towards Kifri and Zanqābād⁷¹. The representatives of the great shahzādeh chose Noruz Khan Qajar to command a force from the victorious army, with the purpose of attacking and pillaging the Ottoman borderlands up to the surrounding areas of Baghdad. The chosen force attacked and pillaged [the areas] from Zohāb to ten *farsakh*⁷² of Baghdad. In those areas, it was the fire of injustice that burned instead of Ali Pasha’s pride. Ali Pasha, the vizier of Sulaimān Pasha, sent his kahyā with around eight thousand men and Khalid Pasha Bēbē, who in those days had conquered Shahrazūr on behalf of Vizier Ali Pasha, and Sulaimān Pasha Bēbē, who was the pasha of Koy and Harir, along with the daring Arab riders⁷³ and the remaining tribes with the assigned task of raiding, if they were able, the borderlands of Ardalān, to take what they could from Abdurrahmān Pasha Bēbē who resided in the borderlands of Ardalān. On behalf of His Majesty,

⁶⁸ The text uses the word *sarhaddat*, meaning borderlands. On the evolution of the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands and their transformation into delineated and demarcated borders see Ateş (2013).

⁶⁹ Meaning the arch of Khusraw, it is a Sassanid-era Persian monument located in Al-Madāen, Iraq.

⁷⁰ According to Katouzian (2009: 143) the eldest son of Fathālī Shah Qajar, Muhammad Ali Mirza was the governor-general of the western regions of Iran and led military expeditions against the Ottomans, at times without authority from Tehran, to prove his superiority and courage. He died of cholera in 1821.

⁷¹ Kifri is a city in Diyālā governorate in Iraq, south of Sulaimani province.

⁷² Meaning league, one *farsakh* is equivalent to almost six kilometers and was measured as the distance a horse could travel in an hour.

⁷³ The phrase ‘Fars al-Jaraba (or Jarba) ‘Arab’ here could mean either one of the following two: a. Fars could mean knight or rider and *jaraba* mighty or daring, understood then as the daring Arab riders. b. Jarba could refer to the Shimmar tribe in Iraq with Fars al-Jarba Arab referring to a historical character who moved between the Euphrates area and the Arab Peninsula. See Nakash (1994) and Williamson (1975).

most powerful, Governor Amānullāh Khan was elevated to the command of the Ottoman borderlands, being honoured and exalted with an expensive robe of honour, a horse and an ornate harness of azure gold. Farj Allāh Khan Afshār, the *nasaqchibāshī*⁷⁴ of the great auspicious court, together with Governor Amānullāh Khan were appointed to install Abdurrahmān Pasha Bēbē in the province of Shahrazūr.

After the arrival of Amānullāh Khan, commander and governor of Ardalān, with Abdurrahmān Pasha and Farj Allah Khan, the *nasaqchibāshī* of the great auspicious court, to the area of Marivān, a dependency of Ardalān, with Sulaimān Pasha, the Kahyā of Baghdad and Khalid Pasha Bēbē and the rest of the pashas of Koy and Harir and Zohāb, the two forces met and for almost two hours the flames of battle and combat burned in the battlefield. After much struggle and strife, [because of] the favours of the almighty creator and the everlasting fortune of the venerated monarch, the breeze of victory and triumph began fluttering the flag of victory and fortune in favour of the sultan's chosen army. The armies of the Ottomans and Bābāns suffered a crushing defeat. Kahyā Sulaimān Pasha was captured in the battlefield and fell into the hands of those valiant brave hearts. Amānullāh Khan, commander and governor of Ardalān, sent Kahyā Sulaimān Pasha and three hundred prisoners, two hundred rounds of ammunition and a few *zanbūraks* along with one of his trustees to the all-powerful royal court. Marching he came to Qazaljuh⁷⁵, a dependency of Shahrazūr. From the other direction, Ali Pasha the vizier of Baghdad called on his eminence the honourable Sheikh Muhammad Ja'far Najafi, who is from amongst the ulema and pious men of the time, along with the great word of God to serve as his intermediary, and sent him to the court of the all-powerful shahzādeh, the successful and most pious and exalted representative Muhammad Ali Mirza. The sublime delegate also forgave him his faults by the great word of God and the intervention of his eminence, of the aforementioned epithets, Sheikh Muhamad Ja'far Najafi. He issued a grand decree to Ali Pasha, the vizier of Baghdad, to send the *kūrūk*⁷⁶ of the province of Shahrazūr to Abdurrahmān Pasha Bēbē. After a few days, since Amānullāh Khan, commander and governor of Ardalān, victoriously and triumphantly returned to his seat of power until the time of this narration, which is the year 1225 Hijri [1810], he is well-established and continues to govern the province of Ardalān. Thanks be to almighty God, all the inhabitants and dwellers of Ardalān, because of the blessings and abundance of his justice and generosity lived in considerable safety and security and with the benefit of the virtue of his wisdom the expanse of the state of Kurdistan became the envy of heaven. Hopefully the shadow of his benevolence and mercy [lengthens] and beneath the shadow of his justness and generosity and that of his descendants' until the return of

⁷⁴ *Nasaqchibāshī* refers to the military position responsible for keeping order within the ranks and exacting punishment during the Qajar period. The *nasaqchibāshī* was appointed by the shah.

⁷⁵ A small village in the province of Sulaimani.

⁷⁶ *Kūrūk* refers to the robe of honour or *kihil'at*.

the last Imām, with the aid of the munificent *Malik al-Mulk*⁷⁷ and the graciousness of the prominent king Sulaimān Shah, will endure and enhance.

*Glory be to Muhammad and his family. Amen. Amen. Amen.
In the month of Rajab al-Murajjab, year 1225 [August 1810].*

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⁷⁷ An Arabic epithet of god, meaning the possessor of the world.

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