



ḤOSAYN KHAN ŠĀMLU

ḤOSAYN KHAN ŠĀMLU, b. ‘Abdi Beg Šāmlu, Safavid governor (d. 941/1535), brother of Durmeš Khan Šāmlu (q.v.) and a nephew of Shah Esmā‘il I, his father having married the shah’s sister (Ḥasan Rumlu, ed. and tr. Seddon, I, p. 238; tr., II, p. 263, n. 5). Upon the death of his brother Durmeš Khan, Ḥosayn Khan was appointed the governor of Herat in his place in 931/1524-25 (Ḥasan Rumlu, ed. and tr. Seddon, I, p. 189. Eskandar Beg, I, p. 52; tr. Savory, I, pp. 86-87), or 932/1525 (Dickson, p. 72). He also assumed the responsibilities of *lala* (guardian) of the young prince Sām Mirzā, the shah’s brother (Haneda, p. 91, n. 174, quoting *Ḳvāndamir*, fol. 124a; for details of Ḥosayn Khan’s administration of the province of Khurasan, see Dickson, pp. 74 ff.).

In 931/1525-26, and again in 932/1526-27, ‘Obayd Khan Ozbeg launched major invasions of Khurasan (Dickson, pp. 79 ff.); and in 934/1527 he besieged Herat for seven months; but Ḥosayn Khan held out valiantly until the city was relieved by the arrival of the royal army (Ḥasan Rumlu, ed. and tr. Seddon, I, pp. 205 ff.). Ḥosayn Khan’s gallantry during the battle of Jām, at which Shah Ṭahmāsp won a major victory over the Uzbeks (on 10 Mo-ḥarrām 935/24 September 1528, according to Dickson, p. 135), was rewarded by the shah by his appointment as the governor of Khurasan (Ḥasan Rumlu, ed. and tr. Seddon, I, p. 220) and also, it would appear, by his selection as *lala* of Sām Mirzā. However, after the shah and the royal army had marched back to ‘Erāq-e ‘Ajam in the following year ‘Obayd Khan invaded Khurasan again and this time succeeded in forcing Ḥosayn Khan to surrender Herat (in Šafar 936/October 1529). Ḥosayn Khan was allowed to withdraw to Sistan, where he



was welcomed by the local ruler, Malek Solṭān Maḥmud Kiāni. In gratitude, Ḥosayn Khan led his troops against a band of rebels and highwaymen beyond Zarah into Baluĉestān (Dickson, pp. 195-96), before making his way slowly back in the direction of Isfahan via Kerman and Shiraz.

Ḥosayn Khan halted at Shiraz, unwilling to proceed toward Isfahan, despite a royal summons to do so, because of the uncertain political climate at the court, where Čuha Solṭān Takkalu, one of a triumvirate of *qezelbāš* amirs who had wrested political power from the young Ṭah-māsp in 931/1525, had just triumphed over his fellow triumvirs and had thus made himself *de facto* ruler of the state (Savory, 1987, V, pp. 67-68). On receiving a royal safe-conduct, however, he joined the shah, who was encamped at his summer quarters (*yeylāq*) at Gandoman near Isfahan, “and was distinguished among his peers and equals by the abundance of royal favor and affection” (K̄voršāh b. Qobād Ḥosayni, *Tāriḳ-e Ilĉi-e Nezām-šāh*, B.L. Ms. Or. 153, fol. 470a). Čuha Sultan determined to rid himself of this new challenge to his authority and made plans to murder Ḥosayn Khan at a banquet; but the latter, forewarned of the plot, decided to pre-empt these plans and led a band from the Šāmlu tribe to Čuha’s tent at nightfall. Čuha fled, pursued by Ḥosayn Khan’s men, and a skirmish took place in the royal tent, two arrows actually striking Shah Ṭahmāsp’s crown. The royal guard, consisting of members of the Du’l-Qadar tribe, sided with the Šāmlus, and Čuha Sultan was mortally wounded (Savory, 1987, V, p. 69). The conflict between rival *qezel-bāš* tribes continued for several days, pitting the Takkalus against the combined forces of the Ostājlus, Rumlus, Du’l-Qadars, and Afšārs. Finally, the shah exerted his authority and ordered the general massacre of that “misguided tribe” (*ān ṭāyefa-ye gomrāh*, Ḥasan Rumlu, ed. and tr. Seddon, I, p. 236). This event is dated to 937/1530-31 by the appropriate chronogram *āfat-e takkalu* (“the Takkalu disaster”). The shah then appointed Ḥosayn Khan Šāmlu as *amir-al-omarā’* (Ḥasan Rumlu, ed. and tr. Seddon, I, p. 238) and *wakil-e šāh-e din-panāh* (Ḥasan Rumlu, ed. and tr. Seddon, I, p. 253; on the confusion in this period of Safavid history between the “bureaucratic” *wakil*, or *wazir*, and the “military” *wakil*, or *amir-al-omarā’*, see Savory, 1987, V, p. 72), thus initiating three years of Šāmlu hegemony following the four years of Takkalu dominance. According to the *Tāriḳ-e Ilĉi-e Nezām-šāh*, Ḥosayn Khan was elected *amir-al-omarā’* by the consensus of the *qezelbāš* chiefs and the *arkān-e dawlat*, or principal officers of the state, who subsequently informed the shah of their decision (fol. 471a). Although ‘Abd-Allāh Khan Ostājlu seems to have been appointed joint-*amir-al-omarā’* (Ḥasan Rumlu, ed. and tr. Seddon, I, p. 238), the latter, “did not figure



prominently in political affairs, and spent most of his life in Širvān” (of which province he was governor; Ḥasan Rumlu, ed. and tr. Seddon, I, p. 433). As a further mark of royal favor, the shah appointed Ḥosayn Khan Šāmlu *lala* of his own son Moḥammad Mirzā, who was born in 938/1531 (Ḥasan Rumlu, ed. and tr. Seddon, I, p. 496). Ḥosayn Khan, however, did not draw the obvious conclusions from the fate of Čuha Sultan, but proceeded to repeat the latter’s mistakes, appointing members of the Šāmlu tribe to provincial governorships and fatally underestimating the shah’s new determination to rule *de facto* as well as *de jure*. Ḥosayn Khan angered the shah by arresting and putting to death the joint-*wazir* Mir Ja‘far Sāvaji; he aroused the shah’s suspicions that he was plotting to overthrow him and put his brother Sām Mirzā on the throne, and there were even rumors that he intended to defect to the Ottomans. In 940/1533, Shah Ṭahmāsp had Ḥosayn Khan summarily put to death (Ḥasan Rumlu, ed. and tr. Seddon, I, p. 253; the *Tāriḳ-e qezelbāši*, fol. 5a, states that he was executed in 941/1534-35). This marked the end of a decade of *qezelbāš* inter-tribal factionalism, and the reassertion of royal authority.

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