

Soltān Bāyazid and Soltān Qānşaw, the Ruler of Egypt, Fight against ‘Alā’oddawleh Dhulqadr

When Soltān Bāyazid, the Qayşar of Rum, learned of the collapse of ‘Alā’oddawleh Dhulqadr’s fortunes, the death of his sons, and everything else that had happened, he said, “What a disaster the scions of Shaykh Şafi have brought upon the hapless ‘Alā’oddawleh! We should offer him help and cooperation.”

“May that double-dealing wolf suffer even more!” said the grand vizier when he heard this. “O prince, I have heard an amazing thing about him. They say that the tribute he has been collecting every year from you and Soltān Qānşaw has been accomplished by trickery, in this way: Whenever an emissary would come to him from Soltān Qānşaw, he would write a letter in your name, dress up one of his men as an Anatolian, and give the letter to him. Then when that man entered the court, he would read it in a loud voice: ‘If you send us forty thousand men so that we can go fight and defeat Soltān Qānşaw, we will send you eighty thousand tumāns every year.’ ‘Alā’oddawleh would then say, ‘I do not want your gold! Soltān Qānşaw sends me twice that amount every year!’ And when our ambassadors went to him, he would do the same thing. In this way, through guile and trickery he took tribute from two rulers.”

The Qayşar was enraged, saying, “We must make him pay for this!” He ordered that a letter be written to Soltān Qānşaw thus: “In today’s world, there is no ruler like you or me. ‘Alā’oddawleh, who is holed up in the fortress of Darnā, has been collecting tribute from us by trickery this whole time. Now the army of the Qezelbāsh has rendered him helpless, so it is time to prepare to take back from him that which he has been taking from us all this time.”

When Soltān Qānşaw read the letter, his avarice stirred within him, and he took forty thousand men and headed for the fortress of Darnā. Soltān Bāyazid, too, raised sixty thousand men and went there. In this way those two great pādesihāhs, for each of whom an entire clime was too small, came together in one tent.

Spies reported this to ‘Alā’oddawleh, who first laughed and then burst into tears. His men asked him what the laughing and weeping meant.

He replied, “I laughed at the topsy-turvy celestial sphere, for these two pādesihāhs used to send me regular tribute, but now, upon hearing that the Qezelbāsh have driven us here, they have seized the opportunity to come and take back what they had been giving me for so long. I wept at the faithlessness of this inconstant world, which raises a man to daily greater heights when it

lifts him up, and casts him into the dust at one blow when it wheels around. But that which the Qezelbāsh have brought upon me, I will bring upon the heads of these two pādeshāhs; I may have been defeated by the Qezelbāsh, but I haven't been by the soltāns of Anatolia or Egypt, and I won't be." Then he swore an oath, saying, "I am going out in the very clothes I am wearing, and I will not return until I have captured these two alive and cast them on the ground before me—the Qayşar in Istanbul, and Soltān Qānşaw in Cairo—for punishment!" He called for his son Maşum Beg and said, "O my dear son, today the stars appear to me to be in your favor. You stay in the fortress and keep an eye out, for I am going to do battle with these two wretches who have taken the opportunity to come; I will take care of them and then return. If my fate is to be killed or captured by them in battle, you get yourself to Khān Moḥammad Khān, who is governor of Diyārbakr, and have him send you to the service of the king of justice and mercy, the pādeshāh of Iran, Shāh Esmā'il, so that our dynasty is not snuffed out all at once. Let that pādeshāh know of your situation."

Having made this testament to Maşum Beg, 'Alā'oddawleh hurried off to fight the Qayşar and Qānşaw. Four leagues from the fortress of Darnā he encountered them, and he set up camp face-to-face with the armies of Anatolia and Egypt. Then Soltān Bāyazid, the Qayşar, said to Soltān Qānşaw, "We have heard that Shaykh-oghli defeated the army of 'Alā'oddawleh, then immediately raised an army and came to fight us. God forbid we should be unable to overcome this man, or we will be shamed before the pādeshāhs of the earth."

"Fortune has abandoned him," Qānşaw replied; "he will be killed in this battle. Don't worry, we heard it from the astrologers."

The Qayşar said, "At any rate, let us tell him that if he is killed, we should not have to answer for it on Judgment Day."

"It is your prerogative," replied Qānşaw.

So the Qayşar ordered that a letter be written thus, in both his own language and the language of Qānşaw:

"Let it not be concealed from the lofty mind of that dear father, the tribute-taking pādeshāh, 'Alā'oddawleh Dhulqadr, that you are a man of worldly experience, one who has tasted the good and bad of fickle fortune; you know that these things which have happened to you could only happen at the pleasure of God Almighty, and there is no escape from death. No one can struggle with the celestial sphere. It is likewise fated that for all who set foot on this dusty sphere, if they raise their head to the heavens, they will wind up one with the dirt.

Even if your head reaches sun and moon
You end up as dust underneath dust.

“All, too, who scatter seeds of labor in this green field of the heavens reap exactly that which they sow; it is well known that good leads to good and evil to evil. That being said, do you have any idea what you have done to us over these eighty [*sic*] years, what you have taken either by force or by fraud and deception! Today, therefore, fate has roused us to avenge past wrongs, and to take from you in justice what you took from us by fraud. However, since at this time your fate has taken a turn and the heavens have trampled you underfoot, it would be far from chivalrous for us to come torment you as well. You know what you have taken from us; give it back in the name of satisfying your debt, and if you choose to fight the Qezelbāsh again and need help, let us know and we will send forces to aid you. Peace.”

The emissaries of the Qayşar and Qānşaw took the letter to ‘Alā’oddawleh. When they entered his court, they saw him sitting on his throne wearing a terrifying expression. They came forward and greeted him with prayers and praise, then placed the letter on the ground before his throne.

After ‘Alā’oddawleh examined the letter, he furiously ordered that it be torn up and thrown away. To the emissaries he said, “Go and tell your masters, ‘God willing, you will be captured alive tomorrow and carted off to Istanbul and Cairo, and in the middle of those cities I will punish both pādeshāhs!’ That is my answer; now go and bring it back.”

The emissaries went back and reported this. The Qayşar and Qānşaw were filled with dread when they heard it, but the next day, they both arrayed their troops and joined the battle. Many on both sides were killed and wounded, and in the end they abandoned the fight and returned to their respective camps.

The Qayşar, when he quit the battle, saw that his well-being lay in flight. He and Qānşaw both packed their things in the middle of the night, and then each went back to his own land. In the morning, when word of their flight reached ‘Alā’oddawleh, he ordered that the goods they had left behind be distributed among the Dhulqadr. Then he returned to the fortress of Darnā to see what Fate would bring next.

PART 3

Shāh Esmā'il vs. the Uzbeks

