R. D. McCHESNEY
(New York University)

A FARMAN ISSUED BY AMIR SHIR 'ALI KHAN IN 1877

The document presented here is, as far as this writer knows, the seventh document to be published dating from the reign of the Afghan amir, Shir 'Ali Khan (r. 1863–5, 1868–1879). Furthermore, it is the only one of the seven that concerns tax collection, in this instance arrears owed from parts of the Hazarahjat region. Examination of the docu-

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1 Amir Shir 'Ali Khan’s regnal dates are derived from the information in Fayd Muhammad, Siraj al-tawarikh, v. 2, (Kabul, 1331–1913) and are at variance with those given by C. E. Bosworth, The Islamic Dynasties, (Edinburgh, 1967), p. 214. There the dates are given as 1863–1866, 1867–1868.

2 Four of the documents, published in facsimile only and without commentary are:
   a. A farman dated 1289 to Muhammad 'Umar Khan (Fufalzai) specifying the salary to be paid the sadr-i a'zam. 'Aziz al-Din Fufalzai, Tidhkar-i Diwan-i Humayun-i A'la, (Kabul, 1334), facing p. 42.
   b. A farman dated Sha'bán 1290 affirming the rights of Mulla 'Abd Allah Akhundzadah Alikuzai, the mutawallî of the Shrine of the Prophet's Cloak (khir-qah) in Qandahar, as set forth in farmans of earlier padshahs of the Saduzai line. 'Aziz al-Din Fufalzai, Timur Shah Durrani, (Kabul, 1346), v. 1, facing p. 301.
   c. A farman dated Dhi Qa'dah 1290, like the above affirming rights granted by earlier Saduzai padshahs, in this case to the descendants of Mulla Zali Khan, a prominent scholar in Qandahar in Ahmad Shah’s time. Ibid. v. 2, facing p. 328.
   d. A travel permit (khatt-i rahdari) in the name of Muhammad Rafiq Khan, the son of Muhammad Siddiq Khan Fufalzai, for a trip from Qandahar to Kabul and dated 17 Rabi' I (?) 1292. The document also lists his companions. idem, Timur Shah Durrani, (Kabul 1333), p. 152.
   e. The fifth document is a farman dated Ramadan 1290 conferring the title “Hishmat al-mulk” on ‘Inayat Allah Khan Ghiljai and is published in transcription only in Tarikh-i adabiyat-i Afghanistan, (Kabul, n. d.), p. 401.
   f. The sixth is a waqf-namah also published only in transcription issued by the viceroy of Turkistan, Naib Muhammad ‘Alam Khan in 1290 on behalf of the ‘Alid
ment brings to the fore the issue of bureaucratic procedures and their regulation during Shir ‘Ali Khan’s two reigns.

Afghanistan’s political, specifically dynastic, history has been relatively well-studied, as have its foreign relations, in particular the diplomatic exchanges, treaties, and agreements with British India. However, the internal operations of its government, including the processes of decision-making, record-keeping, and bureaucratic procedures remain substantially less well-known. Recently, Saidanvar Shokhumorov, in a study of the extensive archives of ‘Inayat Allah Khan (a son of the amir, Habib Allah Khan), noted, “the history of bureaucratic procedures (de-loproizvodstvo) is one of the least studied issues of Afghan history. Not only are there no special studies of the problem but it is not even touched on in any of the research devoted to the general issues of the history of Afghanistan.”

Although Šokhumorov’s remarks are generally correct, there have been noteworthy contributions to the subject of Afghan bureaucratic history. These include the work done by M. A. Babakhodžaev on the governmental restructuring undertaken by the amir, ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan (r. 1880–1901); Hasan Kakar’s book on the same period; ‘Aziz al-Din Fufalzai’s studies of Timur Shah (r. 1773–1793) and Zaman Shah


It should be added here that many items of official correspondence are published in abbreviated or paraphrased form in Fayd Muhammad, op. cit., Nur Muhammad Nuri, Gulshan al-imarah, (Kabul 1335), and Mirza Ya’qub ‘Ali Khafi, Padshahan-i mutaakhkkhir-i Afghanistan, (Kabul, 1336), v. 2.

3 Among the most valuable general studies are V. M. Masson and V. A. Romodin, Istorija Afganistana, 2 v., (Moscow, 1965) (in particular v. 2, chapters 3–10 and the appendices); V. Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, (Stanford, 1969); Fayd Muhammad Katib, op. cit., 3 v. in 2, a comprehensive study based on Afghan, Iranian, and European sources of Afghanistan’s political history from the beginning of Ahmad Shah’s reign (r. 1747–1773) until the last years of ‘Abd al-Rahman’s regime (r. 1880–1901). The published part of the work ends with the events of 1896.


6 M. A. Babakhodžaev, Očerki social’no-ekonomičeskoi i političeskoi istorii Afganistana (koniec XIX v.), (Tashkent, 1975).

McChesney, R. D. (1793–1801) and his valuable little study of the central diwan; and the pioneering work of Ashraf Ghani on documents from the shar'i court in Kunar.

But even with these works, the available information on bureaucratic practices remains small while the publication of governmental documents with commentary remains practically non-existent. In this light, the publication of any document, no matter how routine, is useful in understanding the workings of government in 19th century Afghanistan.

The document which is translated, transcribed, and facsimiled here is probably the file copy of a farman sent from Kabul to the Hazarahjat in early 1877. It measures 6.75 x 9.00 inches (17.2 x 22.9 centimeters). The assumption that the document is a copy and not the original sent to the addressee, Mirza Muhamad Ibrahim Khan, is based first on the absence of the amir's seal (the only seal impression is that of the dabir al-mulk) and tughra and secondly on the small format of the document.

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7 Sokhumorov refers only to a review of Fufalzai's work and may not have been aware at the time of writing of the wealth of documentary material contained in his books. For example, in the 1333 edition of Timur Shah Durrani, Fufalzai published six documents in facsimile from various periods of Afghan history. In the 1346 edition, he included more than forty-five documents, either in facsimile or in transcribed form. These include marriage contracts, correspondence, administrative regulations, real estate deeds, grant documents, et al. In Durrat al-zaman, (Kabul, 1337), Fufalzai published some fifty or more documents of various types, either in facsimile or transcription, most from the Zaman Shah period (1793–1801) but some as late as the time of 'Abd al-Rahman Khan.

8 idem, Tidhkar-i Diwan-i Humayun-i A'la, (Kabul, 1334).


10 Compare for example a., b., and c. in note 2 above, on all three of which the amir’s seal appears on the face of the document. A collection of over one thousand farman sent to Sardar Shindil Khan during his administrative career under 'Abd al-Rahman Khan all bear the amir's seal. (Collection reported now to be in the Afghan Archives. Photographs of more than one hundred of them are in the author's possession.) In addition, in Siraj, v. 1, p. 160 there is an account of forgeries of "tughra-farmans", that is farman with the ruler's (in this instance Shah Shuja) seal and signet which clearly shows that only seal-bearing documents were considered authentic and binding and that forgeries were rare and treated with the utmost seriousness. Finally, the text of the present document refers to the document itself as farman-i muhr lam'an, i.e. the "seal-bearing farman".
and the absence of the formula "wa-huwa" customary on such documents of this time.\textsuperscript{11}

TRANSLATION

(1) It is His Exalted Majesty’s Order that the eminently loyal and faithful

(2) Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, vice-regent [naib al-hukumah] of the Hazarahjat, having been honored and ennobled with an abundance of royal favors, should know:

(3) concerning the outstanding balance of the past year – Tanguz Yil’s\textsuperscript{11a} – tax revenues and the current year – Sichqan Yil’s – revenues from the districts of Day Zangi

(4) and Bahsud, assessments and instructions [sar rishtah wa dastur al-'amal] for which [revenues] His Excellency, the sadr al-a'zam of the God-given nation, Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah

(5) has given you, as a year has passed and these arrears have not yet reached the state treasury [khizanah-i sarkar]

(6) nor been deposited, therefore, it is hereby ordered by the Luminous Presence [i. e. Amir Shir ‘Ali Khan] that when this seal-bearing farman arrives, the revenue arrears

(7) of last year and this year you are to send to the dar al-saltanah [Kabul] without delay. Whenever any revenue arrears

(8) should remain the obligation of the mirs, aqsaqals, and common people of that region and [whenever] in the payment of state revenues

(9) they may be remiss and negligent, then you should immediately so inform the Luminous Presence so a victorious army

(10) may be ordered made ready which would then go there without delay, collect the state revenues,

\textsuperscript{11} For instance on the farmans in the Shirindil Khan collection mentioned in note 10.

\textsuperscript{11a} The use of the solar Turki-year names here is clear proof that revenue collections, not surprisingly, were made according to the solar calendar, with the year beginning at the vernal equinox. Whether, as was common in the Ottoman state (see Halil Sahillioghlu, “Sivis Year Crises in the Ottoman Empire”, M. A. Cook, ed. Studies in the economic history of the Middle East ..., (London, 1970) appropriations were based on the lunar Hijri calendar and the incongruence of the two calendars led to periodic crises, is a subject for further study.
(11 and 12) punish any persons who have ignored, neglected, and been remiss in paying the state [diwani] revenues,
(13) chastise them with the rod and then return [to Kabul]. Otherwise, at your order, having recognized their obligations,
(14) they should immediately discharge them by paying the taxes. Naturally, this will lead to
(15) the contentment of the royal mind whereupon royal favors, encompassing
(16) their condition and ensuring their welfare, will be dispensed. Written on Sunday, the 11th of
(17) Safar al-Muzaffar in the year 1294. [Sunday, the 25th of February 1877]
[reverse] [seal impression] "Muhammad Nabi 129[2?]"\(^\text{12}\)

**COMMENTARY**

*The Political and Administrative Context:*

On Tuesday, the 21st of Dhi Hijjah 1279 (9 June 1863), the then-reigning monarch, the amir Dust Muhammad Khan, died in Herat leaving twenty-four surviving sons.\(^\text{13}\) Three days later, at the suggestion of his fifth son (and later amir) Muhammad A'zam Khan, leading political and military figures gathered in Herat's congregational mosque and before Friday services began offered their allegiance to Dust Muhammad's sixth son, Shir 'Ali Khan. Muhammad A'zam proved instrumental in the transfer of the title to Shir 'Ali Khan and later that day performed one of the principal symbolic acts of dynastic succession by announcing the name of the new amir at the appropriate place in the Friday sermon.

It was not long however before rival claims to the amirate began to be asserted by Shir 'Ali Khan's brothers, especially the two elder ones, Muhammad Afdal (Dust Muhammad's eldest surviving son) and Muhammad A'zam himself. Although the new amir returned to the amirate seat, Kabul, he received little cooperation and only token recognition of his sovereignty from two of the most important provinces of Afghanistan, Qandahar and Afghan Turkistan. The latter region was governed by

\(^\text{12}\) The last numeral in the seal date is illegible. *Siraj*, p. 336 mentions the appointment of Muhammad Nabi as *dabir al-mulk* in 1292.

\(^\text{13}\) Fayd Muhammad, *op. cit.*, pp. 250–251
Muhammad Afdal and the former by a younger brother, Muhammad Amin.

Despite his political problems, at least one chronicler of his reign, Fayd Muhammad Khan, remarks on the new amir's administrative abilities and accomplishments. He refers to military reforms for which Shir 'Ali Khan would gain considerable renown and characterizes governmental affairs as "acquiring a new luster" while religious matters "enjoyed a revival" under his auspices. Nur Muhammad Nuri, author of Gulshan al-imarah, speaks more specifically about administrative reforms (see below) while the author of another nearly contemporary work, Padshahan-i mutaakhkhhir-i Afghanistan describes in some detail the extent of the military reforms.

In 1281 (late 1864), Shir 'Ali Khan succeeded in removing Muhammad Afdal from Turkistan and placing his own officials there. Qandahar was a more difficult problem and although the amir was able to oust Muhammad Amin and gain control over the city and its province by a military campaign in Dhi Hijjah 1281 (April 1865), the success came at great personal cost. His oldest and, by all evidence, favorite son was killed in the course of the campaign in a tragic and random way. Distraught, the

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14 For the most complete accounts of his first regime see Ibid., pp. 250–289; Khafi, op. cit., v. 1, pp. 39–212; Nuri, op. cit., pp. 45–113
15 Fayd Muhammad, op. cit., p. 252; Sayyid Qasim Rishtiya, Afghanistan dar garn-i nuzdahum, (Kabul, 1346), p. 188 writes, "The amir also undertook reforms in other areas. He established for the first time civilian and military schools according to the program which Sayyid Jamal al-Din Afghani had given him at the time the latter departed his homeland. He brought in factories for manufacturing cannons and rifles and encouraged industry. He formed a regular army ... and founded the newspaper Shams al-nahar and the Lithograph Press, printed the first postage stamps, and organized a regular postal system ... He undertook new building projects ... (and for all this) he is reckoned to be the builder of a 'new civilization' in Afghanistan." Masson and Romodin, op. cit., provide similar, though somewhat more detailed information. In an unpublished paper, "The System of taxation of Afghanistan in the nineteenth century", Hassan Kakar devotes a page to the reforms of Shir 'Ali Khan in the fiscal area.
16 Mirza Ya'qub 'Ali Khafi, op. cit., pp. 97–8 provides more information about the military reforms. The amir's motives for and partial construction of a new city (Shirpur or Shirabad – the latter according to Nuri, op. cit., p. 186) are to be found in Rishtiya, loc. cit., Nuri, loc. cit., and Fayd Muhammad, op. cit., p. 318 The reason for the construction was linked to his military reforms although the building took place during his second regime.
17 Siraj, p. 261
amir renounced the throne and went into seclusion. In the words of Fayd Muhammad, "for seven months he lived an ascetic life, ate no meat, did not sleep on a soft bed, and memorized eight sections (juz) of the Quran".\(^{18}\) News of the amir's abdication touched off a wild scramble among his brothers for the throne. By the time Shir 'Ali Khan recovered from his grief and decided to recoup his authority, loyalists of Muhammad Afdal had retaken Turkistan and much of his political base had vanished. In Dhi Hijjah 1282 (April or May 1866), the former amir was turned back at Sayyidabad, on the road between Ghazni and Kabul, in an attempt to regain control of the capital. By the end of the lunar year (i.e. mid-May 1866), Kabul, Ghazni, and Turkistan were under Muhammad Afdal's authority.\(^{19}\) In Muharram 1283 (May/June 1866), the latter formally assumed the amirate throne in Kabul.\(^{20}\)

Shir 'Ali retreated first to Qandahar and finally Herat which he made his headquarters until the middle of 1285 (autumn 1868). At that time, he recovered Kabul from Muhammad A'zam, who had succeeded Muhammad Afdal as amir at the latter's death in Jumada II 1284 (October 1867). A decisive battle fought by the supporters of Shir 'Ali and Muhammad A'zam at Zanah Khan near Ghazni in the winter of 1285 (1868–9) put an end to the main fraternal opposition to Shir 'Ali Khan's amirate.

His second regime lasted until 1879. To outside observers it has been noteworthy less for domestic political circumstances than for the amir's diplomatic relations with the British government in India and the Russian government in Central Asia.\(^{21}\)

At home, political challenges came now from his sons, especially Muhammad Ya'qub Khan and Muhammad Ayyub Khan. The former, based in Herat, repeatedly confronted his father on the question of the heir-apparency which he felt he deserved.\(^{22}\) (On 2 Shawwal 1288/December 15, 1871, Shir 'Ali Khan named a younger son, 'Abd Allah Jan, as heir-apparent, thereby bringing the whole matter to a head.\(^{23}\))

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\(^{18}\) \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 261–268; 273–274

\(^{19}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 277

\(^{20}\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 288

\(^{21}\) e.g. P. Sykes, \textit{A History of Afghanistan}, (London, 1940), v. 2, pp. 76–96; W. K. Fraser-Tytler, \textit{Afghanistan}, Third Edition, (London, 1967), chapters VII and VIII. These works are fairly characteristic of British writing about this period in Afghan history.

\(^{22}\) \textit{Siraj}, p. 289

\(^{23}\) \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 326–330, 332–3
Muhammad Ya'qub's challenge to the amir ended with incarceration in Kabul in early spring 1289/1872. But Herat remained a source of anti-Kabul sentiment even after his removal. His role as symbol of opposition to Amir Shir 'Ali Khan's regime was now filled by his younger brother, Muhammad Ayyub. The latter's attempt to lead a full-scale rebellion failed, however, and by the end of Rabi' II 1289 (July 1872), he was in exile in Iran.

For the next seven years, Shir 'Ali's problems seem mainly to have been concentrated in his conduct of foreign policy. Relations with Britain, which the amir tried to keep formal but cordial, he was finally unable to maintain at arms-length. For several reasons—his acceptance of British arms during his first regime, the terms reached at the Umballa Conference with Lord Mayo in 1869, and participation with the British in the border commission which demarcated the Afghan-Iranian line through Sistan in 1871—Anglo-Afghan relations became more tightly interwoven. In 1872, the amir alarmed the British when he opened indirect communication with Russian authorities in Tashkent. He had his governor, Naib Muhammad 'Alam Khan, write the amir of Bukhara who in turn forwarded the messages on to Tashkent. The amir's only object seems to have been reassurance that the Russian governor-general would keep his nephew, 'Abd al-Rahman Khan, under tight surveillance and would not allow him to reenter Afghanistan and threaten the stability of Shir 'Ali Khan's government. The very fact of the correspondence, however, disturbed the British who had obtained Afghan agreement at Umballa, in exchange for a subsidy and weapons deliveries, to resist any attempt by a Russian force to invade India through Afghanistan. Any sign that the amir's government might seek some understanding with the Russians, even though it pertained to purely domestic concerns, could not help but create anxiety in India.

At home, the amir's attention was also taken up with administrative problems. One particular group of circumstances, mentioned briefly by Fayd Muhammad, is connected with the document published here and so is of special interest. Under the chapter heading "Events of 1293 (1876)", the author of Siraj al-tawarikh writes,

The papers of the diwan and daftar had become dispersed due to misconduct and malfeasance on the part of bureaucrats who were

24 On Umballa see ibid., pp. 315–318; on Sistan, pp. 331–2
25 Ibid., p. 335.
of righteous demeanor but larcenous heart. As a result, government affairs had suffered grievously at the hands of venal finance officials and large shortfalls had appeared in government revenues. Therefore, Amir Shir ‘Ali Khan, with no alternative but to direct his attention to correcting matters called Mirza Habib Allah Khan, mustawfi, from Herat to Kabul for the express purpose of investigating the accounts of the finance officials (‘ummal wa dubbat) and reorganizing the bureaucracy and everything connected with this."

What effect the mustawfi was able to achieve is not recorded. But it is of interest that shortly after his arrival, one of the officials named in the present document, Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah, the sadr-i a'zam, was sent off at the head of a delegation to Peshawar to meet with Lord Lytton and discuss British concerns about Anglo-Russian contacts. During the mission, Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah suddenly died. When word reached Kabul, Mirza Habib Allah Khan was named to replace him. There is nothing linking Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah’s participation in the mission with the investigation of diwan accounts in Kabul. However, as sadr-i a'zam, he was the chief diwan official and might reasonably have been seen to bear some of the responsibility for the state of his department’s affairs. But there is not the slightest hint in Siraj that he was held in any way accountable for the irregularities that had obliged the amir to call in the mustawfi from Herat.

The contents of the present document indirectly corroborate Fayd Muhammad’s reference to problems in the diwan und daftars. Obviously, one of the regions in which revenue shortfalls had occurred was the Hazarahjat. Given the fact that the investigation began in 1293 (1876) and the document is dated 1294 (1877) it would appear that the farman is a direct result of the auditing of accounts in Kabul.

Whether the problems persisted after 1293 (1876), whether similar farmans were issued to other provinces, whether even in the Hazarahjat the farman had the desired effect are all questions that remain to be answered. All one can reasonably conclude at this point is that problems did exist and that the amir was trying to correct them through an internal investigation. The Gulshan al-imarah, completed on the 13th of Safar 1287 (15 May 1870), well before these diwan problems came to

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26 Ibid., p. 336–7
light, provides other evidence of the amir's efforts to reform administrative practices and curb abuses. In a regulation apparently issued in 1286, he ruled that governors and fiscal officials were henceforward to draw their salaries by voucher (barat) from the public treasury (khazinah-i 'amirah) rather than directly from the provincial collections. The practice of paying soldiers by voucher which they would use to claim revenue directly from the tax-paying public was to cease as was the advance collection of one-third of the taxes due for the coming year, a collection which usually took place in the first three months after Nawruz (the vernal equinox). As in the case of the divan audits, the consequences of these new regulations are difficult, if not impossible, to assess. What they clearly show however is the amir's concern with rational bureaucratic procedures in which abuses might be minimized.

Procedural matters: titles, terms, and functions

As a first step towards understanding the bureaucratic procedures of Amir Shir 'Ali Khan's period, it is essential that the meaning of the terms used in this document be fixed in their proper context. The terms which appear in the document and have official significance fall into five categories:

1. Official bureaucratic titles—naib al-hukumah, sadr-i a'zam, dabir al-mulk
2. Non-bureaucratic titles — mir, aqsaqal
3. Documents — farman, sar rishtah, dastur al-'amal
4. Offices and bureaus — divan, daftar, khizanah-i sarkar
5. Revenues — maliyat, baqiyat

1. Official titles

Naib al-hukumah: Generally speaking, the title naib al-hukumah designated the governors (intendants, viceroys, viceregents) of the major provinces. Governors of lesser administrative units were more typically styled hakim (pl. hukkam). The terminology, however, should be seen

27 Nuri, op. cit., p. 186
28 Kakar's equating hakim and hukmran (Government and Society, p. 49) needs some modification. Siraj usually restricts usage of the term hukmran in a technical sense to the governors of major provinces (for example, p. 252 where Sardar Muhammad Afdal Khan — later amir — is called hukmran-i Turkistan)
as somewhat flexible with the latter term sometimes used generically to include even the naib al-hukumah. In the late 18th and early 19th century, the title naib al-hukumah is given to the individuals who administered the major provinces while, at least nominally, subordinate to a prince of the royal family who himself might be styled wali or hukmran. (This type of administrative arrangement is familiar to students of Safavid history in the mirza-lalah or prince-tutor relationship and students of post-Timurid Central Asian history in the sultan-ataliq or prince-guardian relationship.) In the Afghan case we find numerous references to the assignment of a major provincial government (e.g. Herat, Qandahar, or Afghan Turkistan) to a prince as the wali and to a leading military figure as his naib. The terms iyalat and niyabat (the regency and vice-regency) are often linked. 29

In the middle and late 19th century, the term naib al-hukumah comes to stand alone, especially with the diminished importance of the appanage system and the less-frequent appearance of princes (the wali) in charge of major provinces. The naib al-hukumah comes to stand as the chief administrative officer of the major provinces. Perhaps in the con-

...and hakim to smaller less important regions. But hakim is often used in a non-technical way, e.g. ibid., p. 333 where it is used in a generic sense to refer to the head of the Herat government.

29 e.g. ibid., p. 59 (appointment of a prince to the iyalat of Herat and a military man to the niyabat; p. 73, a prince to the iyalat of Qandahar, a military man to its niyabat; ditto p. 318. The translation of naib al-hukumah into English as “deputy governor” (see e.g. Who’s Who of Afghanistan, (Graz, 1975), ed. L. Adamec, p. 159) is misleading. The titles “viceroy”, or “vice-regent” are more appropriate. The picture that emerges from the period before 1880, when ‘Abd al-Rahman began fundamental changes in the system, is one of an administrative structure predicated on appanage principles. That is, it was a system in which members of the ruling Afghan clan (Saduzai and then Barakzai) had a legitimate recognized right to participate in the governing of the country. And aside from individual obligations to the reigning padshah, regional government was the prerogative of the clan member who held it as his appanage. Members of the ruling clan can usually be identified by the title sardar. When deviations from the appanage division of territory occur, they usually involve non-sardars, that is men who were not of the ruling clan and not privy to its inherent sovereignty. One assumes that when such men men, for example Naib Muhammad ‘Alam Khan in Turkistan and Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim Khan in the Hazarahjat, took up their duties, they considered themselves more directly responsible to Kabul than did, for instance, Sardar Muhammad Afdal Khan when he held Turkistan during Amir Shir ‘Ali Khan’s first regime. Such men were naib al-hukumah (viceroys) par excellence.
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temporary political perspective the governor was now seen as deputy (naib) to the throne rather than to the provincial wali.

Kakar and Babakhodžaev designate the major provinces of Afghanistan as Kabul, Qandahar, Herat, and Afghan Turkistan (Mazar-i Sharif). In the present document, the title naib al-hukumah is given to the governor of a region, the Hazarahjat, which neither of the above scholars, at least, considers major. The status of the Hazarahjat as an administrative unit may be inferred from a passage in Siraj al-tawarikh when the then-amir, Muhammad Afdal (r. May 1866–October 1867), named four of his brothers and nephews to the governments of “Kuhestan (-i Kabul), Kabul, Jalalabad, and the Hazarahjat”. That the latter region was considered sufficient for a member of the royal family indicates its importance although it did not have the status of Herat or Qandahar.

Sadr-i a'zam – The Afghans appear to have borrowed the term from contemporary Qajar usage. In Iran the term had evolved by the beginning of the 19th century from its use in Safavid times to designate the state official in charge of religious affairs. Under the Qajars, the title was equivalent to prime minister and was patterned on the Ottoman model. The title does not appear in Saduzai titulature (i. e. for Ahmad Shah, Timur Shah, or Zaman Shah’s time) and its origin in Afghan use is not certain although it clearly post-dates 1224/1809-10 when it first appeared, in the new sense, in Qajar usage. After the death of Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah, the sadr-i a'zam of the present document, the title seems to have disappeared from official use in favor of mustawfi or

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30 Kakar, op. cit., p. 49; Babakhodžaev, op. cit., p. 99; also see Angus Hamilton, Afghanistan, (London, 1906), chapter X.
31 Ibid.
32 Siraj, p. 289; also see p. 295 where Muhammad Afdal’s successor, Muhammad A’zam, appoints his nephew, Sardar Muhammad Isma’il Khan, the son of Sardar Muhammad Amin Khan to the government of the Hazarahjat.
36 Hasan-e Fasa’i, loc. cit.
mustawfi al-mamalik. Kakar, however, notes at least an honorary use of the title during 'Abd al-Rahman’s time. Under Amir Shir ‘Ali Khan, the sadr-i a’zam was the minister for financial affairs, the head of the diwan-i a’la, the main function of which was the assessment, collection, and regulation of tax revenues. Fufalzai states that the positions of sadr-i a’zam and mustawfi al-mamalik were identical and that they corresponded to the (modern-day) minister of finance (wazir-i maliyiyah). But in light of the predominance of the revenue assessment and collection function in the bureaucracy of Shir ‘Ali Khan’s regime, the head of the diwan-i a’la was not a simple minister, but the prime minister.

Dabir al-mulk – Although this office is not referred to in the document’s text, the dabir al-mulk’s seal appears on the document’s reverse and a word or two about this official’s role in the bureaucratic process is worthwhile. According to Kakar, the dabir al-mulk was chief of the Persian section of the dar al-insha, or secretariat, and was responsible for the amir’s Persian correspondence. Ordinarily, the man who held the post was of Iranian origin (a “Qizilbash” in Afghan terminology). It is quite likely that, as in the Bukharan case described by ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan in the Pand-namah, a transcript or oral version of a royal order or letter was carried to the dar al-insha, probably located in an office close to the royal audience hall. There an official document would be drafted and checked and approved by the dabir al-mulk before being returned to the amir for comments and revisions. Afterwards, a copy of the final document would be filed at the dar al-insha with the dabir al-mulk’s seal attesting to its being a true copy.

2. Non-bureaucratic titles

Mir, aqsaqal – These terms require little explanation. With other analogous titles, rashsafid, arbab, khan, malik, kadkhuda – these titles designated local leaders, of villages, clans, or tribes. From the bureaucratic point of view, these individuals were important as the links be-

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37 Kakar, op. cit., p. 27
38 Fufalzai, Tidhkar, p. 39
39 Kakar, op. cit., p. 44; Fufalzai, Timur Shah, 1346 edition, p. 331 for remarks on the origin of this office in Afghanistan.
tween the tax-paying public and the tax-collecting bureaucracy. The field agents of the fiscal administration (collectively known as the ‘um-mal and dubbat) dealt through these representatives of the people. As leaders of their communities, they were responsible for payment of the local assessment (hence the reference in the document, line 8), were personally liable in cases of non-payment by their constituents, and served to mediate between government representatives and their own people.\(^{41}\)

3. Documents

*Farman* — A royal edict, the word *farman* often appears in the document’s opening line in the phrase *farman-i humayun shud* (It is the royal edict, order) or some variant thereof.\(^{42}\) Another term used for a royal edict is *manskur*. The term *hukm*, although apparently synonymous, is used in a more general way pertaining to the contents rather than the document itself. The present *farman* follows the classical form (absent the *wa-huwa* invocation) of the narrative, including the address and statement of the problem (lines 1–6), the disposition in which instructions are given (lines 6–16) and the date (lines 16–17) written in Arabic (except for the name of the day which is given in Persian).\(^{43}\)

*Sar rishtah* — This term is often encountered in the agentive form *sar rishtahdar*, the official in charge of the *sar rishtah*. In Qajar usage, the *sar rishtahdar* was an accountant.\(^{44}\) In the *diwan* reorganization instituted by the Afghan amir, ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan, the *sar rishtahdar* ranked just below the *sar daftar* or bureau chief and was the comptroller.\(^{45}\) The term *sar rishtah*, as used in this document probably referred

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\(^{41}\) See Kakar, *op. cit.*, pp. 58–64 for further discussion.

\(^{42}\) See e. g. Fufalzai, *op. cit.*, p. 329 for another *farman* of Amir Shir ‘Ali Khan with the opening *farman-i humayun-i wala shud*.


\(^{44}\) Didkhuuda, *Lughat-namah*; from Ahmad shah’s time there is a document published by Fufalzai (*Timur Shah*, v. 2, p. 368) to which is affixed the seal of a *sar rishtahdar* of the *daftar-i hudur* (court bureau) as well as a *sar rishtahdar* of the (dar) *al-insha* (secretariat).

\(^{45}\) The term *sar rishtah* was used by ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan as part of the title of a pamphlet he had published — *Sar rishtah-i Islamiyah Rum*, (Kabul 1303, 1886–1887) — in the sense of an audit or appraisal, i. e. *An Appraisal of*
to a detailed accounts record issued by the diwan-i a'la to regional administrations.

**Dastur al-'amal** – The term designated a set of instructions or regulations. The use of the *dastur al-'amal* was prevalent under 'Abd al-Rahman Khan who made numerous attempts to rationalize governmental procedures, especially in provincial centers, through the promulgation of regulations under this rubric. One of the most famous sets of these statutes is the "**Dastur al-'amal for governors and officials**" issued in 1884 containing sixty-three regulations on governmental procedures.46

4. Departments and offices

**Diwan** and **daftar** – The two terms are often linked when general reference to the bureaucracy is being made. Fufalzai defines these terms in the Afghan context as: "**Diwan** – A department in which civil (mulki) affairs are audited and regulated. **Daftar** – A revenue register or accounts book."47 In fact, as Sokhumorov says, the term *daftar* could mean both the register and, by extension, the bureau or office which kept the register. Usually, the term *diwan* had a more inclusive sense than *daftar* and corresponded to "department" (e.g. *diwan-i qada* – department of the judiciary, *diwan-i awqaf* – department of religious endowments) while *daftar* retained the more limited sense of "office", often within a *diwan*. In Ahmad Shah's time (r. 1747–1773), the term *diwan-i a'la* (supreme *diwan*) designated the entire bureaucratic apparatus at whose head was the *diwan-begi* who received the honorary title *wakil al-dawlalah*.49 Under his son, Timur Shah, the *diwan-i a'la* contained at least twenty-six separate *daftars*.50 The title given to the chief bureaucrat changed over the years (by Shir 'Ali Khan's time *sadr-i a'zam* and *mustawfi* had replaced *diwan-begi*) but the relationship between *diwan* and *daftar* and the use of the terms remained fairly stable.51

**Sarkar** – The term *sarkar* has a fairly wide semantic range. Depending on context, it can mean either an office or the person who held the

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46 Siraj, v. 3, pp. 762–770
47 Fufalzai, op. Cit., p. 406
48 Sokhumorov, op. cit., p. 25
49 Fufalzai, op. cit., p. 313
50 Ibid., p. 318
51 Kakar, op. cit., p. 30 for the *diwan-i a'la* in 'Abd al-Rahman's time.
office. It is found with the meaning “estate” or “personal finances”, especially of a political leader or wealthy private individual. In the present case, the word, used as a qualifier, has the meaning “government” or “state” (i.e. the state treasury — khizanah-i sarkar). Within the present document, the word is synonymous with diwani (of or pertaining to the diwan). In line 10 appears the phrase maliyat-i sarkar and in the next line, maliyat-i diwani, both referring to the same revenues. The term khizanah-i sarkar (line 5) denotes the state treasury as distinct from the amir’s privy purse (khizanah-i khassah-i sharifah). (A synonymous term for state treasury found in both Shir ‘Ali Khan and ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan’s times is khizanah-i ‘amirah or its variant khazinah-i ‘amirah.)

5. Types of revenues

Maliyat — A general term for tax revenues. Whether it encompassed both cash payments and payments in kind as used here is not certain. Preceded by the word wajh (pl. wujuh, wujuhat), the inference is cash but this is by no means certain.

Baqiyat (-i maliyat) — Taxes for which an assessment had been made but which had not been remitted.

Persons mentioned in the document

Two officials, excluding the amir himself, are mentioned by name in the document. These are Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim Khan and Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah. The name of a third official, Muhammad Nabi, appears on the seal imprint on the document’s reverse. Two of the three men, Muhammad Nabi and Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, were of


53 A good example is the sarkar of the powerful, late 16th century Bukharan shaykh, Khwajah Sa’d al-Din Juybari. According to Ivanov, P. P. Ivanov, Khoz­jaistvo Džujbarskikh Shejkho, (Moscow, 1954), p. 65, the khwajah’s sarkar was divided into four sections. It was headed by an official called the daftardar (registrar) who had forty clerks under him and some seventy-two collectors in the field. The sarkar managed the khwajah’s extensive agricultural and commercial properties.

54 Kakar, op. cit., p. 32; Nuri, op. cit., p. 186
Iranian origin, in all probability Shi'ite, and, moreover, related to each other by blood. The former was the fraternal nephew of the latter. Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah's national and sectarian affiliations are uncertain. Fufalzai, without citing a specific source, calls him "Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah Fushanji Qandahari" (i.e. from Fushanj near Herat and from Qandahar).

Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim Khan

A brief entry for Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim Khan appears in the biographical dictionary compiled in 1888 by the government of British India under the title "Biographical Accounts of the Chiefs, Sardars, and Others in Afghanistan". (This work forms the basis for Part 2 of Ludwig Adamec's *Who's Who of Afghanistan*.) Up to now, this writer has not succeeded in finding a reference to him in other sources of the period although references abound to Sardar Muhammad Ibrahim Khan, a son of Amir Shir 'Ali Khan and active in the politics of the area (as governor of Ghazni) where Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim Khan also appears. According to *Who's Who*, the mirza is named in British intelligence reports of 1877 (probably compiled by the British agent in Kabul, Nawwab 'Ata Muhammad Khan) as governor of the Hazarahjat and later, in 1882, after 'Abd al-Rahman Khan had come to the throne, as governor of "Kara Bola" in the Hazarahjat. ("Kara Bola" is probably to be identified with Bula Qarah, one of the villages of Day Zangi.) It should be noted, however, that at the very outset of his regime (enthronement date: 5 Ramadan 1279/11 August 1880), 'Abd al-Rahman Khan appointed governors to various areas adjacent to Kabul. He named Naib Sultan Khan Afshar (a Qizilbash) to Day Zangi and Day Kandi, Muhammad Husayn Khan Farari Jawanshir (also a Qizilbash) to Hazarah-i Bahsud, and Dilawar Khan to Hazarah-i Jaghuri. The two former jurisdictions were clearly under Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim Khan in 1877 when the *farman* was issued. Although it is possible that he retained some authority as late as 1882 in "Kara Bola", as the British agent reported, it may not have been authorized by Kabul. There is indirect, although perhaps irrelevant, circumstantial evidence that he may have had problems with

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55 Siraj, p. 337 on some of his activities.  
‘Abd al-Rahman’s regime. The palace of his brother, a former dabir al-mulk, in the Murad Khani quarter (a Qizilbash district) of Kabul was seized by the new amir for temporary quarters in 1880.\(^{57}\) However, the same man’s son, Muhammad Nabi (of the present document), not only survived the transition but flourished under the new regime, as will be seen below. In any event, other than the information contained in the British report, no evidence that Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim Khan was politically active after 1880 has turned up.

Muhammad Nabi

The career of Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim Khan’s nephew, Muhammad Nabi the son of Muhammad Hasan Khan, a former dabir al-mulk, did survive the change of regimes and prospered. Muhammad Nabi was born in 1244 (1828 or 1829)\(^{58}\) and died in 1892.\(^{59}\) He was from the Murad Khani Qizilbash, one of the six principal Qizilbash groups whose names appear in contemporary sources.\(^{60}\) According to British reports, Mirza Muhammad Nabi (as he was styled) succeeded his father as dabir al-mulk at the court of Shir ‘Ali Khan in 1291 (1874) when the governor of Turkistan, Naib Muhammad ‘Alam Khan, died and Muhammad Hasan Khan was sent to Turkistan as a member of the new administration there.\(^{61}\)

The circumstances under which Muhammad Nabi became ‘Abd al-Rahman’s dabir al-mulk when the latter came to the throne remain unclear. Part of what may have attracted the new amir to him was his aloofness from court politics.\(^{62}\) The fact that he was also a renowned literary figure would also have appealed to ‘Abd al-Rahman whose interest in and patronage of literature is frequently mentioned by the Siraj al-tawarikh.\(^{63}\) Muhammad Nabi’s nom de plume was “Wasil”. Ghulam

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\(^{57}\) Siraj, p. 379

\(^{58}\) Tarikh-i adabiyyat-i Afghanistan, p. 361

\(^{59}\) Kakar, op. cit., p. 42

\(^{60}\) Others were Chandawal, Wazirabad, Sipah-i Mansur, (Siyah Mansur?), Afshar, and Jawanshir. Siraj, p. 335; Elphinstone, op. cit., p. 321


\(^{62}\) Kakar, loc. cit.,

\(^{63}\) Lord Curzon, Tales of Travel, (London, 1923), pp. 65–66 also mentions, albeit with considerable condescension, ‘Abd al-Rahman’s interest in the arts.
Muhammad Ghubar, writing in Part 5 of *Tarikh-i Adabiyat-i Afghanistan*, describes Muhammad Nabi "Wasil" as a man with a remarkable, perhaps photographic, memory—a not inconsiderable gift for a bureaucrat. Besides poetry, according to Ghubar, Muhammad Nabi wrote an account of the royal family at the time of Amir Shir ‘Ali Khan, a manuscript of which existed in Kabul at the time Ghubar was writing.  

Muhammad Nabi’s relations with ‘Abd al-Rahman were not uniformly good. British reports state that he was suspended in 1883 from “management of the postal arrangements and relieved of charge of Amir Abdur Rahman’s seal. Afterwards reinstated, he accompanied the amir to Rawalpindi in 1885 and was present at the meetings between Amir Abdur Rahman and the Viceroy of India and the Foreign Secretary.”

**Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah**

Far less is known about Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah although he appears to have achieved at least as high a position in Amir Shir ‘Ali Khan’s government as the other two men discussed above. He did not merit an entry in the *Who's Who*, perhaps because he was already dead when the work was compiled. The *Siraj al-tawarikh*, Fufalzai’s *Tidhkar*, and *Gulshan al-imarah* are the only sources for his career and the information in them is scanty.

Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah is depicted in *Siraj* and *Gulshan* principally in diplomatic roles, although his title, *sadr-i a'zam*, is mentioned in the former work. On the fifth of Jumada I 1286 (13 August 1869), he was sent by the amir as part of a delegation to welcome the Bukharan prince who was on a visit to Kabul. Later in 1286, he accompanied Shir ‘Ali Khan to Umballa (Anbalah) for a summit meeting with the British viceroy, Lord Mayo. Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah is one of seven men in the amir’s party whom the author of *Siraj* considers worthy of mention. Another of those named was Muhammad Nabi’s father, then still the *dabir al-mulk*. Nothing is said about any part either man may have had in the actual talks.

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64 *Tarikh-i adabiyat-i Afghanistan* is not dated but it appears Ghubar was writing in the 1950s.

65 *Who's Who*, pp. 205–6

66 Nuri, *op. cit.*, p. 174

67 *Siraj*, p. 314
As already mentioned, Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah was sent to Peshawar in 1273 (1876) at the head of delegation. The mission came about as the result of a request made by the new viceroy, Lord Lytton (successor to Lord Northbrook in 1876), that British operatives be allowed residence in Turkistan, Herat, and Qandahar, as they were allowed in Kabul. The amir, who had earlier convinced Lord Mayo at Umballa to withdraw a similar request, again said no. In order to forestall any British military response, according to Fayd Muhammad at least, the amir sent Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah and a small delegation to Peshawar to “remind the British of the bilateral treaty of friendship already concluded (at Umballa) and to try and re-affirm the existing terms of the treaty”. The discussions were underway when Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah suddenly died.

Fufalzai gives much the same information as the other two sources. He does add that Sayyid Nur Muhammad Shah was appointed to head the diwan-i a’la in 1289 (1872) at the time of the celebration of Prince ‘Abd Allah Jan’s heir-apparentness and ascribes his origins to Fushanj and Qandahar. He also reproduces an interesting document from the amir to Sardar Muhammad ‘Umar Khan Fufalzai in which Sayyid Nur Muhammad’s salary as sadr-i a’zaam is set. He notes too that although the sayyid remained something of an unknown to students of Afghan history, he was mentioned in the Shams al-nahar, a gazette founded by Amir Shir ‘Ali Khan and generally reckoned Afghanistan’s first newspaper.

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This brief examination of the 1877 farman and the context in which it appeared yields a considerable amount of information about bureaucratic procedures in 19th century Afghanistan. It outlines the backgrounds and careers of some of Shir ‘Ali Khan’s top bureaucrats, provides some insight into the way in which bureaucratic abuses were checked and rectified, and gives a sense of the scope and concerns of government in mid-19th century Afghanistan. The study of other documents and the eventual comparison of these materials with each other should considerably improve our knowledge of the development of bureaucratic institutions and processes in Afghanistan.

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68 Ibid.
69 Fufalzai, Tidhkar, pp. 40–41
به نام ساعون والا عزه علیه عاده و متاهل نوامن

(1) در خصوص وجد باقیت مالیات سه گانه داریم. یکی محل و این محل علیههای مالیت سه است. در اصل دولت عاده سید نور مصدقه و سید داوزدیکی

(2) به هر که سره و دستور العمل علیههای مالیت سه اعمال می‌کند. سید نور مصدقه

(3) پس داده است جهن حال آخر عاده و وجد باقیت مالیات سه مالک برگزار نمی‌شده

(4) و حسین نعیه پناه کننده از حضرت ائمه امیر مسعود که برگزار است. مالک

(5) و وجد باقیت سه کننده و این رامی باقیت مالیات سه مالک برگزار جزئی از وجد باقیات

(6) بر یزد مسلمان و رضایای انویل بانده باند و در اندی مالیات سگنار

(7) تکمیل و اعمال کننده پس بروده. احوال حضرت حضرت ائمه که لفکه فیزیکی

(8) آمده و تبار است حکم خود علیه باقیت مالیات سگنار و مالیات سگنار و محل (marginal text)

(9) تعهد کانیکه در انجام مالیات دیوانی
A FARMAN OF SHIR 'ALI KHAN

جیه و امال و غلت کرده باهته سرپر و کوشمال داده
(12)

و بهر و پرک حادب کرده مراجعه نمایند و الا حسب الأثر در عهده
(13)

عنایته بروده عودا از اداه مالیات فارغ نمایند البته باعث
(14)

حویسهی عامل عواه بود و الفاظ عظیمی عامل
(15)

حال و کافل احوال هان عواه فیوصد
(16)

ضریر بیم یکنیه 11

(17) خبر صفر حفظ سه 124
فرمان فرمان است که آن مرا به برگزاری مراکز مطالعاتی و خداحافظی می‌نماید.

می‌توانید از این مکان‌ها به خط تیم‌های علمی تخصصی و علم‌دانان که در آن‌ها مشغول به کار هستند، استفاده کنید و در هر مورد بهترین کاربرد و کیفیت محصولات نگهداری کنید.

درخت که قبلاً طی مدت‌ها و مراکز علمی بوده است، به دستور زباله‌هایی که از آن‌ها استفاده شده‌اند، کاربردی و کیفیتی است که در مبحث‌های علمی مطرح می‌باشد.

در هر مورد، باید از این محصولات بهترین کاربرد و کیفیتی را به دست آورد و در هر کاربرد بیشترین کیفیت و کاربردی را از آن استفاده کنید.

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