

## Questions:

- What is this document saying?
- How did being abroad impact the lives of each individual?
- What can it tell us about the Sogdians as a community of people?
- What can it tell us about the world they lived in?
- What does a personal letter tell us VS an official court document

## Sogdian Ancient Letter No. 3

To my noble lord and **husband Nanai-dhat**, blessing and homage on bended knee, as is offered to the gods. And it would be a good day for him who might see you healthy, happy and free from illness, together with everyone; and, sir, when I hear news of your good health, I consider myself immortal!

Behold, **I am living badly, not well, wretchedly, and I consider myself dead**. Again and again I send you a letter, but I do not receive a single letter from you, and I have become without hope towards you. My misfortune is this: that I have been in Dunhuang for three years thanks to you, and there was a way out a first, a second, even a fifth time, ... but he refused to bring me out. I requested the leaders that support should be given to Farnkhund for me, so that he may take me to my husband and I would not be stuck in Dunhuang, for Farnkhund says: I am not Nanai-dhat's servant, nor do I hold his capital. ... **I have become ... a servant of the Chinese!** ..., then you write to me so that I should know how to serve the Chinese. In my paternal abode I did not have such a restricted ... as with you. **I obeyed your command and came to Dunhuang and I did not observe my mother's bidding nor my brothers**. Surely the gods were angry with me on the day when I did your bidding! I would rather be a dog's or a pig's wife than yours!

Sent by your servant Miwnay. This letter was written in the third month on the tenth day.

[*Added in the margin*] From his daughter Shayn to the noble lord Nanai-dhat, blessing and homage. And it would be a good day for him who might see you healthy, rested and happy. I have become ... and **I watch over a flock of domestic animals** ... and I know that you do not lack twenty staters to send. It is necessary to consider the whole matter. Farnkhund has run away; the Chinese seek him but do not find him. **Because of**

**Farnkhund's debts we have become the servants of the Chinese, I together with my mother.**

**On letter No. 1 Miwnay adds:** I live wretchedly, without clothing, without money; I ask for a loan, but no-one consents to give me one, so **I depend on charity from the Zoroastrian priest.** He said to me: If you go, I will give you a camel, and a man should go with you, and on the way I will look after you well.

Source: <https://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/sogdlet.html>

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