

The History of Hussain Shahi

Abdul Hai Habibi

Emamuddin Hussain, author of Tarkeh-e Hussain Shahi (History of the Hussain Shahi family), was a descendent of a famous family from Chist, Herat. He lived during the later half of the 18th century and traveled widely in India and for a time lived in Lucknow, Delhi, and Peshawar. At the time the empire of Shah Zaman Ghazi stretched all the way to India. This was the time when the last kings of the Babur family ruled in India.

Emamuddin was born in a holy family that lived in Delhi. Their spiritual leader was Khwaja Abu Muhsin Hussain Chisti. Emamuddin wrote a book about Ahmad Shah Durrani, Timur Shah and Shah Zaman under the supervision of his Chisti spiritual leader. This invaluable book contains priceless information about the Afghan Sadozai kings.

Two original copies of the book exist, one in Banki Pur India and the other in London. The Banki Pur library copy is of better quality. The book begins with a description of Ahmad Shah's reign over Multan, Kandahar and parts of India. It outlines his life from the beginning of his coronation until his death. In later chapters there are descriptions of the life of Timur Shah and Shah Zaman.

Emamuddin was a skilled writer and whatever he heard or saw he described vividly. His writing is clear and objective. Beside providing descriptions of royal courts Emamuddin also directed his writing to describe the life of the common people, their personalities, clothes and mode of life. The book contains narrations about the people of Multan and Nuristan. He writes about the budget of the Afghan Sultanate of Multan, Dera Jat and Peshawar. At the time the provinces of Badakshan, Shahrstan, Dera Jat, Kashmir and Balochistan were ruled by the Sadozai kings. The book contains descriptions of the lives and history of these rulers. He also provides descriptions of minor historical incidents which other authors have failed to include in their writings.

The information about the life, administration and government of all the Mughal rulers is very accurate. Writing about Shah Zaman he says: "He was of fair complexion, with rosy cheeks, dominated by a tan. He was of medium build, lanky and had a long neck and round beard. His torso and arms were longer than his legs and pelvis. In 1798 he was about 30 years old and had four children Sultan Haider, Sultan Qaiser, Sultan Naser and Sultan Mansur. The princes were 11, 10, 8 and 3 years old respectively."

Emamuddin finished the book in 1798 in the keeping of his spiritual leader. The holy man advised the author to add a narrative of political events of the Sadozai kings at the end of the book. This part of the book is most valuable since here we find out that until that time the Babur family kings considered the center of their power to be in Afghanistan. It was from there they approved the selection of the crown prince of the Delhi throne.

The book contains the credentials of Mirza Akbar presented by his father Shah Alam to the Sadozai ruler, Shah Zaman: "Previously according to the rules we had appointed our praiseworthy brother, Mirza Akbar as crown prince. The appointment of this esteemed person we now renew. We herewith send our accomplished brother our royal benevolence and a horse through Said Mohammad Khan."

Other mandates and documents which the book contains are:

- the order of Shah Zaman to Lanha Sing to recruit Ahmad Khan to gather information about Shahar Pur and Jahan Abad;
- Shah Zaman's order to Maharaja Denheraj commanding him to escort them on their journey through his territory;
- the command of Shah Zaman to Raja Gisroot appointing Ahmad Khan envoy to Rehtas and Rawalpindi;
- the order of Timur Shah to Najibullah Bahadur and Muzafarullah Gagnat Ram;
- the order of Timur Shah to the ruler of India to give Wajihaluddin and Ghulam Ahmad Khan, the chroniclers, their wages;
- the command of Shah Zaman to prince Akbar to send back the ambassador to India, Mahmud Khan;
- the order of Shah Zaman to Mirza Akbar to appoint Ghulam Ahmad Khan as chronicler to India;
- the order of Ahmad Shah Abdali to Nawab Mueen-al-Malik stating that only 500,000 rupees have been received from Kashmir and Multan;
- the order of Timur Shah appointing Asadullah Nourzai ambassador and Ghulam Ahmad Khan chronicler;
- the order of Timur Shah given on the arrival of Indian ambassador, Wajihaluddin Khan in 1791 at his court;
- the order of Timur Shah extending Ghulam Ahmad Khan's term of office as chronicler;
- the order of Shah Zaman to Ghulam Ahmad in 1793;
- the letter of Shah Zaman to Shah Alam in 1796 written in Kabul saying that the ambassador from Delhi, Mirza Ghulam Mohammad Khan, arrived at the royal court and

will soon present his credentials.

Beside the aforementioned mandates, which are only one of their kind found in this precious book, it also contains details about Afghanistan's history also.