Chapter-V

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The eighteenth century saw the culmination of the Indo-Persian historiography. It is also saw the ascendancy of Scholars of Hindu community who left their everlasting imprint on the varied fields of Persian literature\(^1\). Persian being the official language was important pre requisite for imperial services. Newly emergent class was Kayasth. The Kayasth become expert in the Persian and were suited for the post of munshī\(^2\) and by late seventeenth century they started to take keen interest in history writing. This new class of historians generally adopted a simple language and recorded not only political events but narrated the social economic and the cultural conditions of that period which they had personally experienced. Due to their contribution in this field, this period became enriched with sources and several primary sources were written by them. Shāhnāma\(^3\) is one of the eyewitness contemporary accounts of the early eighteenth century.

Unfortunately, very little information is available about the life of the author in his own work and even contemporary writer have not mentioned about him. For the construction of Shiv Dās’s life, we have to depend on extremely scanty details. Perhaps out of modesty, Shiv Dās avoids referring to himself in his Shāhnāma. The only thing we know about him from his writing is that he was a native of Lucknow and served under a noble as munshī.

On the occasion of the journey of Saʻādat of Bārha (Saiyid Brothers) from Fatehpur Sikrī to Akbarābād and after the departure of Ajit Singh the writer with some of his friends visited the shrine of the Shaikh Salim Chishti in the town of Fatehpur Sikrī and through his blessings he got much prosperity\(^4\). Shiv Dās seems to

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\(^1\)Core and the Periphery: A contribution to the Debate on the Eighteenth Century, op. cit., p. 167.

\(^2\)ʻĀlam Muzaffar and Sanjay Subramanyam Writing the Mughal World, Eds., New Delhi, 2011, p. 397.

\(^3\)Shāhnāma-i-Munawwar-Kalām is one of the eyewitness contemporary primary accounts of the eighteenth century. Rotograph of Shāhnāma is available in the Research Seminar Library, Department of History, A.M.U, Aligarh; it is the photo copy of a transcript copy of British Museum. It consists of 87 folios with 15 lines to each side of a page. The name of scribe is Mohammad Rasheed, but there is no date of transcription.

\(^4\)Ibid., f. 32a.
have been emotionally attached to the Saiyids and the fall of Saiyids by Tūrānī group caused severe grief to him. On several places, a noble Khalil Khān has been described as a hamrāḥī (companion) of amārat and ayālat panāh (asylum of government and administrative). Nawāb Sanjar Khān has been frequently mentioned and also highly eulogized by author. It is not clear either he retired from the state service voluntarily or was dismissed. It seems that he settled down in Shāhjahānābād with other nobles and composed this work over there. From the lines, it also appears that Khalil Khān and others who were present on the occasion of Nawāb Husain ‘Alī Khān’s murder chose a retired life in Delhi. It may also be possible that at the instance of Nawāb Sanjar Khān Lucknowi, the book was compiled. These two nobles Nawāb Khalil Khān and Nawāb Sanjar Khān would have been the compatriots of author and both were the natives of Malihābād (Lucknow).

This incorporation of royal farmāns issued by Farrukh Siyar and Muhammad Shāh and the ‘arzdāshī submitted by the nobles to the Emperor, suggest that Shiv Dās was an official in the royal chancery (department of official records) and had full access to the farmāns, ‘arzdāshī and official correspondence.

The exordium of Bismillāh is not inconsistent with the religious views and faith of this Hindu writer. It was a trend of these historians (non Muslims) that they generally started with Bismillāh and the ordinary profession of faith in the unity of the Supreme Lord, followed by the laudation of prophet (אֱלֹהִים), his companions (אֱלֹהִים) and descendants and indulged in all the most religious and orthodox prescriptions of Muslims. The internal evidence contained in this Shāhnāma tends to suggest little about his religious frame of mind and also about his political views. His faith in religion becomes clear from his references to Hemraj Jaiti, a faqīr who belonged to Seora Order of mendicant, and was also the spiritual guide of Raja Ratan

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5 Khalil Khān of Malihabād was a supporter of Saiyid Brothers and fought bravely against Jahāndār Shāh. He was wounded in this battle and was given a mansab 2000/1000 and Jagīr in the suba of Awadh, Shāhnāma, op. cit., p. 3a.

6 Sanjar Khān Lukhnawi was a Dwadjāi Afghan and posted at this time at Palwal. He has been given a mansab of 2000/2000 suwār and Jagīr in Awadh by Emperor Farrukh Siyar, The Reign of Muhammad Shāh, op. cit., p. 16.

7 Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 6b.

8 Historians of India as Told by its Own Historians, op. cit., Vol VIII, p. 331.

9 Historians of India as Told by its Own Historians, op. cit., Vol I, pp. XXI-XXVII.
Chand. This writer refers to him as faqīr-i-kāmil (perfect saint)\(^\text{10}\). He had also faith in Majzub (meaning of it, who being attracted by Divine Grace had renounced all worldly affairs). He also believed that the death of wazīr Mohammad Amīn Khān was a punishment for the inhuman treatment meted out by him to a faqīr named Niranjan\(^\text{11}\).

Shiv Dās also praise the Saiyid Brothers for their religious belief such as sacred celebration of the first decade of the blessed month of Rabī’ I\(^\text{12}\) which Husain ‘Alī Khān celebrated with enthusiasm and personally took care of the pious and learned invitees\(^\text{13}\). The author tried to give a very balanced picture of all court nobles, but only in some places, unnecessarily he has exaggerated the role of Nawāb Sanjar Khān. Like his contemporary authors, he has focused much on political aspect but he was also interested in writing about society.

**Purpose**

The purpose of writing of this work is that he had been allowed to remain for long time in the society of learned scientific and highly talented men and had passed his life in the service of the great scholars. He had learned the art of writing from them. So he was determined to write such a work in which he wanted to show his society. The author named his work Shahnāma or Munawwar-i-Kalām, because he had been on terms of closeness with great men and derived advantage from them.

\(\text{تحزيد همذات تاسٍ فیض عذالت او کہ هوجة توًثہ جفاکیؼاى و تاعث عثزت کوتہ}
\)

\(\text{اًذیؼاى گؼتہ اگز چہ درطالت و لذرت ایي تی تضاعت سرٍ احمز عمیذت اطاص}
\)

\(\text{ػیوداص لکھٌوی ًیظت ًثود اهاچوى هذتی در هجلض والاهٌؼاى عالی فطزت}
\)

\(\text{تزتیت یافتہ و عوزی در}
\)

\(\text{خذ هت تا فیض و تزکت تشرگاى در کظة اًؼا و اختیار}
\)

\(\text{کار باگنراتنیدة تا از تاثیر صحبت ایشن شمم اوزان بقیذ قلم اورد وبشاه نامه منور}
\)

\(\text{کلام موسوم ساخت ١٤۔}
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\(^\text{10}\text{Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 46a.}
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\(^\text{11}\text{Ibid., f. 66ba.}
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\(^\text{12}\text{The first twelve days of the third Arabic month Rabī’ I are held as sacred by the Muslims according to whom both birth and death of the Prophet of Islam took place within these twelve days called Bāra wafāt.}
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\(^\text{13}\text{Ibid., f. 35b.}
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\(^\text{14}\text{Ibid., f. 2ba.}
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He wrote the recent happening in his work, as the warning to the oppressors and lesson for the short sighted. It is and was beyond the ability and competence of Shiv Dās Lakhnawi, who was of no merit, was a mere atom of steady loyalty; but as he had long been in the assembly of the high minded and supremely exalted and had passed his life in the service of the learned whose kindness and blessing had enabled him to acquire skill in the act of eloquent composition and attitude of performing duties so much so that the association with them brought within the purview of his pen something which he has named Shāhnāma Munawwar Kalām).

He hoped that recapitulation of bare facts relating to the imperial nobles, provincial governors and soldiers might give lessons (‘Ilbrat) to others. His other intention was to write for futurity (barai yadgīrī) as well\(^\text{15}\). As he quotes;

\[ \text{من نوشتم صرف کردم روزگار} \]

(I have written and I have spent my time. I may not live but my work would remain as my souvenir)

Its colophon says that he has recorded these particulars till the 4\(^\text{th}\) R.Y of Emperor Muhammad Shah. He wanted to make his work as a souvenir as well. This work starts from the reign of Emperor Farrukh Siyar and covers up to early year of Emperor Muhammad Shah\(^\text{17}\). It contains copies of official letters, imperial \textit{farmāns} relating to the reign of Emperor Farrukh Siyar and the first four years of the reign of Muhammad Shah. This work contains day to day account of transaction in the imperial court and good deal of biographical and anecdotal matters.

\textbf{Style}

Though, he was a Hindu writer, he followed the fashion of other historians of the period. He starts with \textit{Bismillāh} on Muslim pattern and with a beautiful line in praise (\textit{hamd}) of God and there after moved ahead without any index, chapters, heading and concluding notes. He quotes some verse in praise of Supreme Lord as

\(^{15}\text{Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 2b.}\)
\(^{16}\text{Ibid., f. 2a.}\)
\(^{17}\text{Ibid., f. 87a.}\)
(Is it within the competence of the hand or tongue? To discharge the debt of gratitude due to Him. The qualities of his benevolence defy language. His justice and kindness are beyond description.)

It is written in simple Nastāliq style of writing and the style of expression is straightforward. Hijra era with Arabic months and Turk system for pagination has been used. The whole account is a detached narrative and is written in simple and unadorned style\(^{19}\). His account is written in plain language and is free from major defects and prejudice or partisanship. The style of expression of this author is unaffected and spontaneous. He uses short and pithy sentences with colloquial touch. There are many things in the narrative of events in the Shāhnāma which is not compilations or redaction of older information. But he has tried to give a very unique eyewitness account\(^{20}\).

The author does not follow the usual pattern of allegorical history and it is largely free from poetical and Arabic quotations. Other contemporary information is neither similar to other sources of that period nor derivative or borrowed. It is also true that this work is not fully integrated narrative and much has been eschewed. There is no day to day, month wise, or year by year flow of events and is topically arranged into regular division. Most of the narrations are on the selective basis and generally in historical sequence. But there are much additional and new information in the Shāhnāma, which has not been observed in any other contemporary sources. Whatever he has recorded is based on either his personal knowledge or information which he received from trustworthy courtiers and others\(^{21}\).

It seems history for him was a narration of events rather than study of their causes. He simply narrates the events under the heading of waqā’ī without making

\(^{18}\)Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 2b.
\(^{19}\)Reiu Charles, Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum op. cit., Vol Ist, P. 274.
\(^{20}\)Mughal Bibliography, op. cit., p. 144.
\(^{21}\)Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum op. cit., Vol Ist, P. 274.
any link with earlier narration. Further he puts a kind pledge before readers, ‘if any statements or particular was contradicted by other historians or writers, he should be pardoned’. In other word, his work should not be made target with arrow of censor, but the pen of kindness may be drawn over his hasty statements. Originally he quotes as;

az fizishteh mansehayan ugam wal aferjam amidan dard k ibr jaga bur ibr jamboi khatyan k halashe beshrih ast rah yafteh basad fillam achelor branj gareh dard mend brahamer

(He is hopeful that the great, the exalted and learned would draw the pen of forgiveness on the errors and mistakes wherever they might have crept in, as to error is the essence of human nature. This would place this humble one under a debt of gratitude).

This work is compilation of court news and its detailed transaction, every narration is prefixed by the heading waqā‘īʻ (occurrence). There are 123 waqā‘īʻ and 42 official letters, out of which 22 are farmāns, which have been brought together in a single work. These documents are important in order to know real character, views and motives of the writers. There is no doubt that all the farmāns had followed uniform pattern of writing, but it throws light on some unique information and their historical values cannot be denied as well. The anecdotes are written on a selective basis, but these are distinctive in nature and are not found in any other source. Though, the political information of this source is also covered by other several contemporary histories, however, his short anecdotes related to the society are too lively, to be ignored.

The author starts his waqā‘īʻ with description of Amīr-ul-Umarā, as he was sent to Jodhpur to punish Ajit Singh, who did not send the congratulatory letter and peshkash wa nisār to Emperor Farrukh Siyar. The Raja was unable to maintain his opposition and realizing that the destruction of his country was inevitable, he gave way and chose the path of obedience and submission and agreed to send dola of his

22 Šahānāma, op. cit., f. 2a.
23 Historians of India as Told by its Own Historians, op. cit., Vol VIII, p. 331.
daughter as *peshkash* with lot of wealth. Here, author writes about the celebration of Emperor’s marriage with the daughter of Ajit Singh and details of expenses in the ceremony. He quotes as;

حکم والالزینت نفاظ يافت ك لوازم شادى ونکاح تابدولت باذختر راج ابیت سنگ

لوازم شادی تیار شده س روپیه را انش بازى ولک روپیه د روشانى ودبکر

لوازم شادی تیار شده س روپیه شادی درمیان ماند بند گان حضرات

قدرو قدرت خود بهدولت در برج مسمن نشسته اشتبازى که بربی کتناره در يا جنما

(Emperor ordered for making necessary arrangements for the celebration of his wedding and *nikāh* with the daughter of Ajit Singh. So around one lakh of rupees was spent on fireworks and same amount was also spent on illuminations and other preparation for marriage. The celebration continued for three nights and days. Emperor seated on the octagonal tower witnessed the fireworks that had been arranged on the sands of Jamuna, and enjoyed entertainment dancing girls, jugglers and tumblers.)

For the other details he writes that emperor ordered the distribution of perfumes and betel leaves and also other rewards among his slaves and attendants of Raja Ajit Singh. On this occasion the *sadr-us-sudur*, the *qāzi-ul-quzāt*, the *muftīs* and other respectable religious persons were present. In the ceremony of *nikāh*, fifty *Krores* of gold *mahr* were settled as the dower money (*mahr*). The Emperor conferred robes of honour (*khilāt*) on every religious divine and nobles. They (nobles and courtiers) also presented presents as a *peshkash* to Emperor.

24 *Shāhnāma*, op. cit., f. 4ba.
25 A daughter named Bai Indra Kaur was given in marriage to Emperor Farrukh Siyar by way of tribute. She was first converted to Islam then married to Farrukh Siyar. After the deposition of Emperor she was allowed to convert from the new faith by Saiyid Brothers and was allowed to return to her *watan* with lot of treasure. Khafi Khān criticised this act of Saiyids and also says that it happened for the first time in Mughal history, *Muntakhāb-ul-Lubāb*, op. cit., p. 833.
26 *Shāhnāma*, op. cit., f. 4a.
27 This amount of *mahr* varied in different sources as Kamwar Khān mentions only one lakh of *asharfis* and also writes that she was first converted to Islam by the mother of Farrukh Siyar then she was married with Farrukh Siyar, *Tazkirat-us-Salātīn Chaghtā’ī*, op. cit., p. 213.
28 For details see *Shāhnāma*, op. cit., f. 5b.
In this anecdote, he has written about the ignorance of the Mughal soldiers and suffering of innocent people of Patna. During the journey of Mīr Jumlā, when he arrived in the vicinity of Araul a group of peasants (ra yahā-i-dihī) from the neighboring villages came to complain against the oppression of some robbers (ghāratghran). In response of complain, Mīr Jumlā ordered a Mughal officer for their arrest. The Mughal officer without any inquiry arrested 13 men, some of them were vegetable sellers (sabzī Faroṣh) and grass vendors (kāh Faroṣh) and produced them before Mīr Jumlā Bahādur. They were ordered to be put on death.

Sanjar Khān who was a Sardar (umdahāi) of suba Awadh arrived near Araul along with his sons. As he heard about arrest of some daily wage earner by the officials of Mīr Jumlā, he rushed on foot to secure the release of innocent captives. But before he reached that place, seven out of them had been already executed. Among them, there was a very old vegetable seller along with his son, who was just a young boy, the old man requested to executioner to kill him in place of his son and spare the boy, but the merciless officers put to death both the son and father. Sanjar Khān arrived after this incident and succeeded in securing the release of the rest.

Shiv Dās writes about the oppression done by unemployed soldiers on common people. When Mīr Jumlā Bahādur arrived near the city of Patna he dismissed all his troops and gave them leave to depart. The Hindustani soldiers returned to their homes. But the Tūrānī soldiers roamed about in every lane and

29 He was earlier appointed to the post of qāzī in Suba Bengal. He got a mansab of 7000/7000 with a title of Mīr Jumlā Bahādur. He was appointed on the post of dārogha-i-khwāsān and ghusul khāna. He was assigned the Choicest Jāgīr in the suba of Lahore and this time he was appointed in Patna.

30 It is a town about forty miles south of Patna in Jahānābād subdivision of Gaya District, Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 2b.

31 Sanjar Khān Lucknawī was a Dwadjai Afghan and was posted at this time at Palwal. He was companion of Mīr Jumlā in Bihar and he got audience, precious Jewels, mansab of 2000/2000 and jagir in Awadh through Samsām-ud-Daulā by Emperor Farrukh Siyar, The Reign of Muhammad Shāh, op. cit., p.16.

32 For details see Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 6b.
market, dead drunks and carrying in their hands cups and bottles of wine. They shed the blood of innocent people. Sometimes they themselves were killed\(^\text{33}\).

A strange incident that occurred was that a Mughal entered a house in dead drunk condition with a bottle of wine and cup in his hands. By chance there was none in the house except a girl. When she saw the situation, she pretended to be polite. She seated the Mughal on the bed (chārpāi) and stood before him. The Mughal whose death was at her hands, gave the bottle of wine in her hands and began to indulge himself in drinking of wine (nosḥidan). The girl kept herself safe by her cunning way and went away to another place.\(^\text{34}\)

In the same way, another Mughal entered the house of a potter (kulāli). He had a young and beautiful daughter. The Mughal desired to marry her. As affirmation and consent (ijāb and qabūl) are the necessary perquisites for a nikāh, the Mughal one day came to the potter’s house saying “Are you pleased and satisfied with me? As the simple man was unaware of the trick he replied with simplicity “Yes! I am pleased and agree”. The next day the Mughal came again to the potter man’s house and in their presence, deceitfully that man expressed his consent in the form of dialogues as told earlier. Thereafter, he called for sweet (shirīnī) which he distributed (among those present). After this the Mughal caught the man’s daughter by his hands and dragged her towards himself. The potter man, his wife and children raised a hue and cry and called for help. Saying, “Is there anyone to care for helpless? (Ke ist ki baghour e hāl o rsad)” The Mughal took away the daughter by force and married her\(^\text{35}\).

There is another similar strange incident quoted by Shiv Dās. Here again he noticed about the oppression of Tūrānī. He writes that a village held in maʾash (rent free grant) was situated near the highway (Shāh rāh). The grantee (arbāb-e-maāsh) of the village had his house on the road side\(^\text{36}\). He was a blind

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\(^{33}\) Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 6a.  
\(^{34}\) Ibid., f. 7b.  
\(^{35}\) Ibid., f. 7b.  
\(^{36}\) Ibid., f. 7a.
and old man. He had four daughters and a little son. He used to serve water to the thirsty troopers through his children. One day some Mughals came to his house and asked for water. As the children carried the water to the Mughals, they seized all the four daughters and the little boy, lifted them up on the backs of their horses and tied all of them with their own waists. When the old man requested for release they killed him and carried away their captives with them. No other person came forward to help the grantee and his children. The Mughals brought all the captives to the bank of the river Ganges and board them in a boat. When the boat was in the middle of the deep stream (darya-i-āmīq) the children decided for dying rather delivering themselves. So they planned to hold the little boy and jump into the water to die. Finally they did accordingly.

Watching of animal fight of Mīr Jumlā Bahādur, is also written by author Shiv Dās. He writes that a zamīndār of the neighborhood sent a living tiger in an iron cage to Mīr Jumlā. He ordered that an enclosure be erected in the compound of mansion. It was erected at the site of enclosure built by Prince Muhammad ‘Azim-ush-Shān. They drove the tiger into the enclosure. At first the infuriated tiger jumped, from place to place and then stretching out both his front paws sat on the ground. Mīr Jumlā Bahādur ordered that wild buffaloes and elephants be brought and thrown into the enclosure. They brought first female buffalo which was driven inside with the keeper (nigahbān) riding on her back. The tiger jumped upon the keeper and seizing him, thrown on the ground, sat on his body and killed him.

After this, an elephant was brought and driven into the enclosure. The tiger began to roar, then leaving that place; he sprang upon the elephant and sunk his claws in to the trunk of the elephant. The elephant became wild with pain and rushed out from the fence. The tiger returned to its place and sat down. The roaring of the tiger and flight of the elephant created much confusion (tah u bāla) among the people who

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37 Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 7a.
38 For details see Ibid., f.7a.
39 Prince ‘Azim-ush-Shān was the second son of Bahādur Shāh and was appointed as the governor of Bengal and Patna. During his father’s reign he was one of the influential princes and after the death of his father, was killed in the civil war of Lahore, Jahāndār Nāma, op. cit., ff. 10a-20b.
40 Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 7a.
had collected there for the spectacle. At last they brought another female buffalo and drove her into the enclosure. That buffalo approached the tiger with great courage. As the tiger tried to attack her, she lifted that tiger upon her horn and threw away on the ground and killed. Mir Jumlā Bahādur awarded 500 rupees and a khilāt to the wife of the man who was keeper of the buffalo (zān-i-mutawaffā) and had been first killed by the tiger\textsuperscript{41}.

Here Shiv Dās tries to give an idea of the enormity of the city Patna and richness of bankers (mahājanān) of that city. An imperial order had been issued, for summoning Mir Jumlā Bahādur (to imperial court). In response the imperial call, the noble started preparation for his journey and demanded loans from the bankers of the city. The banker of the city collected 13 lakhs rupees in the form of a single commodity, the salt, which was delivered. Mir Jumlā distributed the salt among his soldiers and followers. The soldiers lowered the price a little and changed (it) into cash\textsuperscript{42}.

In this anecdote, author has given very unusual information related to bloodshed of a religious Guru and his family and followers. ‘Abdus Samad Khān Nāzim of the Sūbā of Lahore and his son, Zakariya Khān, captured the Guru Banda Bahādur\textsuperscript{43}, who had rebelled in the neighbourhood of the Lahore and brought him handcuffed along his wife, son and followers numbering around1300\textsuperscript{44}. At the time of the entrance into the city of Shāhjahanābād, the Gurū was clad in an embroidered garment and then led by the presence of the Emperor. A huge crowd was collected to witness the event.

\textsuperscript{41}\textit{Shāhnāma}, op. cit., f. 8b.
\textsuperscript{42}\textit{Ibid.}, f. 8b.
\textsuperscript{43}Just after the murder of last Gurū Govind Singh, his follower brought forward a man who exactly resembled to that Guru. It was not clear who this man was, he is generally spoken of either as Banda (the slave) or as false Guru. His purpose was to take revenge of the murder of Gurū Govind Singh and his Children. His menace continued till 1715, \textit{Sikh uprising under Banda Bahādur} by Muzaffar ‘Ālam, \textit{P.I.H.C}, Hyderabad, 1978, pp. 509-519.
\textsuperscript{44}Total number of prisoner were varied in different sources, mostly sources write that they were around 740, every day one hundred of them were killed and it took one weak to finish them, \textit{‘Ibrat Nāma}, by Mirza Muhammad bin Mu’tamād Khān, op.cit., f. 52b.
Next day, the royal order was issued every day around one hundred followers of the accused Guru should be executed at the platform (chabūtra-i- kotwālī) and it was done as ordered. The author was surprised to see the steadfastness of the devotion and firmness of faith of that band of people in their spiritual master, for they had no fear of death and slaughter and were instead pleased and happy to suffer. They gave the executioner the name of muktimān (the giver of salvation), and each one of them said with the pleasure (to the executioner) “oh! Muktimān killed me first (ai muktimān awwal mārā bakushan)”.

Every day one hundred men were killed. Not one of them desired to be set free.

Among them, there was a young boy. A woman submitted a petition to ‘Abdullah Khān through his mutsaddī Ratan Chand, and requested for the release of her son, saying that she is widow and have only son, who has been unjustly captured along with the Guru. He is not among his disciples and devotees. She requested that he may be set free. The Emperor issued the parwāna for his release to the kotwāl, but the young boy did not accept (his liberation) and finally the boy was killed by kotwāl. Shiv Dās quotes as:

چون ان زن پرواگی خلاصم او نزد کوتوال برد بموجب حکم اورا ازمحبوسخانه بر اورد کچیفت حال باوگفت و رخصت دادن جوان قبول نکرد و گفت کم من این زن راںی سناسم کم کیست و مقصود او چیست من از مریدان صادق الاعتقاد و صافی منہاد گردایم درجناب مرشد خون داده ام حالت مرشد و رفیقش بر چہ بشت بمال حالت من است از خود خلاص نشتو بمراه امانہ خود را از خود بکشتند.

45 Chabūtra means a platform of earth masonry raised slightly above the surface of the ground. This name was given to the office of the head police office of Delhi. It was situated in the Chadnī Chauk, the main street leading from Lāhorī Gate of the city to the Lāhorī Gate of the citadel. It was also the platform where criminals and their severed heads were exposed to public view, Sarkār Jadunāth, Mughal Administration, Fourth edition, M.C Sarkar, Calcutta, 1952, pp. 66-71.

46 Shahnāma, op. cit., f. 11b.

47 For details of fighting with the Sikh see Ibid., f. 11b.

48 Ibid., f. 11b.

166
(When that women showed the paper of the release of his son to the Kotwāl, according to the order, released the boy and told him what had happened. The boy did not accept his libration and says “I do not recognise who the woman is, nor do I know what her purpose is? I am one of the true disciples of my Guru, and I have surrendered my life to my spiritual master. Let my fate be the same as that of my spiritual Guru and his supporter”. He refused to be set free and surrendered himself to be slain).

Furthermore, he writes about the measurable end of that Guru. At the end, the order was issued that the accused Guru, too along with his son be tortured and put to death. He was clothed in glittering attire and was seated on an elephant in the same manner as had been led into the royal audience, and was publically paraded and taken outside the city. Then, he was brought down from the elephant and seated on the ground and his seven year old son was placed in his lap. He was demanded to kill his child with a knife and with his own hands. The Guru denied from doing it. Eventually, the executioner killed the son with knife and taking out his liver (jigar) thrust it out into the Guru’s mouth. After this he cut down the Guru gradually (naubat b naubat), piece by piece, and after sometime the Guru also ceased to exist. The wife of Guru was converted to Islam and became one of the slaves (parastarān) of Mahalsarāṅī.

The author had written about the heavy rain of that year, which had increased the suffering of masses. When the rainy season started, Emperor generally got busy himself in enjoyment and pleasure. But that year it rained so heavily that the 1300 havelīs of Shāhjahānābād fell down and 2600 men perished under the debris. The kotwāl of the city prepared a ward-wise list (mahalla-ba-mahalla) of the houses that had fallen or had been damaged and of the men who had been killed.

Shiv Dāś pointed out about the oppression of the Jāts. The Jāt leader Churaman had became the source of discomfort and trouble for the travelers and

49 Shahnāma, op. cit., f. 11a.
50 Ibid., f. 12b.
51 Ibid., f. 12b.
52 After the death of Rajaram the leadership of the Jāts had passed to Churaman, who was the son of Bhajja and nephew of Raja Ram. Churaman also carried on the usual plundering activities. But during the battle of Jaju, he joined Bahādur Shāh and obtained the rank of 1500/500. He supported with
used to plunder the villages and towns. Sanjar Khān and Shamshīr Khān⁵³ who were appointed as the guardians and protectors of the highways, used to escort the caravan from the Hodal⁵⁴ in their own supervisions, to Faridābād⁵⁵ and from Faridābād to Hodal. One day there arrived at Hodal a caravan of merchants carrying with them 1300 carts full of clarified butter (raughthan-i-zard) and other articles to sell.

The general rule was that the leaders of the caravan informed of their departure to them so that they could escort it with their troops. As (on this occasion) the merchants had with them about one thousand matchlock men (banduqchiyān), due to this confidence, they did not inform these Khāns and stared from Palwal⁵⁶. When they reached around two kuroh further, the Jāts and other robbers plundered the cāravān, which property was nearly 20 lakh of rupees. As soon as Sanjar Khān and Shamshīr Khān heard about this incident, they immediately reached there but as the neighboring villages were in the jāgīrs of wazīr ʻAbdullah Khān and so they fell into dilemma (waswas) and did not venture (jurāt) to take any step further.⁵⁷

In the same year, the author writes about another miserable condition of common people. Rain had not taken place till the end of that year. For further problems he writes:


Dilāwar Khān Lucknow played a very courageous role, even before the battle with Jahāndār Shāh and the final victory; he had caused the Khutba to be recited and coins to be struck in the name of Farrukh Siyar. With the support of Samsām-ud-Dualā Khān-i-Bahādur, he was honoured with special robe and embroidered headdress. He was also entitled Shamsir Khān and was favoured with a mansab of 2500 zāt 2200 suwār mansabdārī e barawardi and was assigned Pargana of Haveli-i-Lucknow as his Jāgīr, Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 3a.

Hodal is situated around 56 miles south Delhi and 11miles from Chhath, An Atlas of Mughal Empire by Habeeb Irfan, New Delhi, 1972, p. 6a.

Ibid., p.4a, Faridābād is around 30 miles south of Delhi.

Ibid., This ancient town of Palol or Palwal is situated 38 miles from Delhi.

Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 14b.
The price of grains shot up. The food commodities which were sold at the rate of 20 seers pukhta per rupee gradually went down to 4 seers per rupee and even most of the time lesser than that. All the living being suffered very much trouble and hardship. Many people used to go jungles for collecting the leaves and blossoms of Karhali (Hibiscus Syriacus) and those were boiled to make edible for them. When even these became scarce, incident of death began beyond the control of hunger. Approximately, every day about one hundred lives were being pushed in the well of death from villages and towns. Many migrated to other places and some of them sold their wives and children at a very low price and some of them sold without money. Any how they want to feed themselves.

For the relief measure he writes that every day Sanjar Khān who was appointed in that area, offered 2000 tanka of flizz-i-siyāh (copper coins) to poor as relief.

The author mention about the end of Farrukh Siyar and the reaction of the common people on his death. But he avoids saying anything directly about the murder of the Emperor. He quotes;

58 Shāhnamā, op. cit., f. 14ba.
59 A weight of about two pounds, A Dictionary of Urdū Classical Hindi and English, op. cit., p.711.
60 In the first year of Farrukh Siyar’s reign the prices of wheat, rice and pulses were extra ordinary high. For one rupees only three seers of these grain could be purchased, Tazkīrat-ul-Muluk, op. cit., f. 122a.
62 Ibid., f. 14a.
(Because of the hardship of imprisonment and suffering from pain in his eyes caused by the iron needle run across them by the oppressors he soon passed away from this mortal world to the immortal world. The body of the deceased was wrapped in a gold embroidered cloth and was sent to graveyard with a suitable contingent. World was sad and mournful at his death. A group of men (God knowing and recluses) weeping and crying accompanied the bier to the graveyard. The persons who accompanied the bier distributed cash in charity, but nobody accepted it deeming it to the money of oppressors. After the burial of the deceased Emperor, they distributed food and ate themselves.)

Here Shiv Dās tries to shed light over the disbelief of the Saiyid Husain ‘Alī Khān in omen and ill treatment of one of the innocent saint at the hand of imperial servants. After receiving he bid farewell from elder brother Saiyed Abdullah Khān and other nobles like Muhammad Amīn Khān. He (Saiyed Husain ‘Alī Khān) pitched camp at a place seven karoh from Akbarābād, midway between it and Fatehpur Sikrī. From this instant, author narrates a strange incident related to belief in omen. A faqīr, whose name was Hemraj Jaithi belonged to the Seorā (Saiva) order, had a very good relation with Raja Ratan Chand. The Raja had also a perfect faith (itiqād-i-kāmil) in him. The author Shiv Dās also believed that he is a real saint. The saint, on the request of the Raja Ratan Chand went to meet Saiyid Husain ‘Alī Khān to tell about the omen for his journey against Nizām-ul-Mulk in Deccan. The saint went on foot with an infantry (piyāda) through a forest. As that forest was the royal park (ramma) for hunting, the watchmen (qarāwulan) who were employed for guarding the parks...
caught the saint thrashed him and handle of him roughly and put him under arrest. The watchmen charged him for hunting in the royal park. However, the saint repeated continuously that over the request of Raja Ratan Chand and Amīr-ul-Umarā, he had to come through forest, and he had nothing to do with hunting. Thus he should be released. But watchman overlooked his excuse and did not let him go. At last, the *piyāda* who had gone with the saint managed to come to Amīr-ul-Umarā and Raja Ratan Chand and conveyed to them about the whole incident. They secured the release of the saint and summoned him in their presence. The saint told them that the time was not propitious for this journey. So this should not be continued. But Amīr-ul-Umarā did not pay attention to him and continued his march from there66.

Under next individual anecdote (*waqā‘ī*), author has written about the plan for the murder of Amīr-ul-Umarā Husain ‘Alī Khān. When, Saiyid Abdullah and Saiyid Ghaīrat Khān67 had planned for the dismissal of Haidar ‘Alī Khān68 for the post of artillery. Hearing it Ītimad-ud-Daulā Muhammad Amīn Khān and Haidar ‘Alī Khān decided to take action as soon as possible. They gave anxious thought and reflected much over this question but could not work out a plan of action. Mīr Haidar Beg Khān69 a Tūrānī Mughal and one of the followers of Ītimad-ud-Daulā Muhammad Amīn Khān Bahādur, who since the day of confinement killing of martyred King (Farrukh Siyar) had been having painful sigh, and used to say “I am the killer of the murderer of deceased King” (*kushandgān-i-Badshāh marhum manam*) and said to Ītimad-ud-Daulā Muhammad Amīn Khān Bahādur “entrust this

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66 *Shghnāma*, op. cit., f. 46a.
67 *Ibid.*, f. 48ba, Ghaīrat Khān was the son of Sayed Nasir-ullāh Khān and of the sister of the King makers. He had acted as the deputy of his uncle, Husain ‘Alī Khān in Bihar when the later marched with Farrukh Siyar towards Agra in September, 1712. He remained in Bihar till February 1715 when Mīr Jumlā replaced him. He was subsequently appointed to Agra and was killed on October, 1720 with his uncle Amīr-ul-Umarā.
68 His original name was Muhammad Rīza Ishfānī. He was an Iranī immigrant who was raised under Prince ‘Azīm-ush-Shān and held many offices such as the *diwān* of the Deccan and of Gujarat and of Surat. During the time of Emperor Farrukh Siyar through the intervention of Mīr Jumlā he received the title of Haidar Qūl Khān. He got the post of Mīr Ātish and mansab of 8000/7000 during the time of Emperor Muhammad Shāh, Tazkīrat-us-Salātīn Chaghtā’ī, *op. cit.*, p. 206.
69 Khāhī Khān wrote about him that he belonged to *Chaghtāi* race. Ashub tells us that he was the great grandson of Mirza Haider Dughlat, the author of *Tārikh-i-Rasheed*, he was also trooper in Amīn Khān’s force, Parsād Ishwarī, *India in Eighteenth Century*, Ghugh publication, Allahābād, 1973, p. 15.
duty to me, and I shall manage and perform it”. Ítimad-uDaulá applauded his resolve and committed the task to him. The author has written a very lively account for the murder of Husain ‘Alí Khān. It also seems that it is an eye witness account but the writer has not mentioned any clue about his presence. On the 6th of Zil-hijjā 1132 A.H, on Wednesday exactly at two pahar (around six hours) of the day, Saiyid Hussain ‘Alí Khān accompanied by the Emperor and many nobles arrived near Toda Bhīm.

It was in accordance with the same practice that Emperor Muhammad Shah accompanied by Haidar Qūlī Khān, Muhammad Amīn Khān, Qamr-ud-Dīn Khān, Saiyid Ghairat Khān and other high nobles and mansabdārs arrived in the camp, dismounted and then retired to his private apartment (diwan-i-khas). Muhammad Amīn Khān and Qamr-ud-Dīn Khān stayed back in front of their own tents. In the mean time Amīr-ul-Umarā Saiyid Hussain ‘Alí Khān arrived with his troops and reached the royal tent. The Amīr-ul-Umarā with Mīr Musharraf Khalil Khān, Mīr Nawāb Aulia, and few others of the nobles and followers went inside the royal tent and sat there for some time. As the Emperor had retired to his private apartment he sent betel leaves from inside and allowed them to depart. The Amīr-ul-Umarā, having taken the betel leaves, came out of the tent with his companions. He then got into palanquin in the courtyard and holding the tube of pipe (huqqa) with his left hand engaged himself in smoking as he used to carry along him.

Mīr Haidar Beg Khān, who was standing at that place with a few other Mughals, held in his hand a petition against Ítimad-uDaulá Mohd Amīn Khān complaining of oppression. He submitted the same. As the Amīr-ul-Umarā had the tube of huqqa in his left hand he took the petition with his right hand and began to read it. Meanwhile Mīr Haidar Beg Khān who had resolved to sacrifice his life for

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70 Shāhnāma, op. cit., f.47b.
71 One pahar is equal to one quarter of the day or three hours, Ma‘asir-i-‘Alamgīrī, op. cit., p. 328.
72 Toda Bhim was under Sarkār Ranthambhor in Suba Ajme. It included village Nasrija (Nasrida) and Rajmahal, An Atlas of Mughal Empire, op. cit., p.6A.
73 Qamr-ud-Dīn Khān was the son of Muhammad Amīn Khān. He was great drunkard, for he held the office of wizārat for quarter century (1724 to 1748 A.D), Sarkār Jadunāth, Fall of Mughal Empire, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1932( Reprinted 1997), Vol Ist, p. 6.
the cause of his master came close to palanquin, and drawing a dagger which he had in his belt struck it into the stomach of the Amīr-ul-Umarā with great speed and agility and killed him. The other Mughals who were with him surrounded the palanquin overturned it, and threw out the corps of Amīr-ul-Umarā upon the ground. Mīr Haidar Beg severed Amīr-ul-Umarā Hussain ‘Ali Khān’s head from his body.

Mīr Musharraf, who was renowned as a good and brave warrior, and the son of Nawāb Aulia who was very closely related to Amīr-ul-Umarā and enjoyed much confidence, rushed with sword, in hands. Mīr Musharraf, who was protégé of Amīr-ul-Umarā and held the rank of 5000 zāt, 5000 suwār, attacked the Mughal and received two wounds with sword and arrows. The son of Nawāb Aulia who was a mere young boy, grappled with Mīr Haidar Beg Khān with small arms and killed him there. He himself was killed and fell on the dead boy of Amīr-ul-Umarā. A sweeper, who had been in the service of Amīr-ul-Umarā for long time and had reduced many favours from him, drew his sword, over the master’s corpse and after much fighting and killing sacrificed his life for the sake of his master. The vagabonds of the camp then came up and thrust a stick of (thorny karhal) tree (chobi as karhal khardār) into the rectum (muaqqad) of the Amīr-ul-Umarā.

Author quotes one peculiar event for the month of January 1721 A.D some person fastened a flag (bairāq) on the platform chabūtrā-i-kotwālī of the city and disappeared. The flag was engraved statement of warning in Persian with the words, “When the Emperor comes out of the fort let him beware (Bādshāh as qilā bar āyed khabārdār shawad)” In order to penalize for the evil act, an order was issued to find out the owner of flag.

A mendicant (faqīr) named Niranjan who was a Musalmān and belonged to a sect of devotees called azād (liberated). He used to stay bare head and wore a loincloth (lung poosh). He confessed “it was I who placed the flag there”. When he was produced, the chief wazīr Amīn Khān took the faqīr to his house, according to one version, the wazīr beat and flogged him very

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74 Shāhnama, op. cit., f. 47a.
75 Ibid., f. 48b.
76 Ibid., f. 66b.
77 Ibid., f. 66b.
severely and then released him. After this the wazīr was seized with the disease of pain in the stomach. Although he was treated by both Indian and Greek physician but it went vain and disease went on increasing and he died within weak from that illness. It is said that at the time of beating and whipping the faqīr uttered, wazīr-ul-mulk is true to the salt that he eats and that whatever happened he would bring that upon himself. Here Shiv Dās try to say the death of the wazīr was the result of the curse of that faqīr.

Shiv Dās also did not fail to mention about very strange happening of that period. On the basis of the oral report of Shankar Rao, the harkārā of the metropolitan area, he writes that it was submitted to Emperor Muhammad Shah that in the house of Lachmi Narain, qānūngo of pargana Nāgpur, in the sarkār Narnaul, a woman gave birth to triplets, one son and two daughters, then she died immediately after, and when her dead body placed on the pyre, (as per the customs of Hindu for attaining peace to the sole of deceased) and about to be lit with fire for cremating the same, another daughter was born to that dead women thus bringing the total to four, three daughters and one son. But the three of the infants died only one daughter survived. Emperor replied that this is the proof of the power of the Allah.

Shiv Dās seems very keen for writing about the natural calamities. He writes about the earthquake which occurred during the reign of Muhammad Shāh. For details he quotes as

78Muhahammad Kāmwar Hādī Khān has also written about this act of Amin Khān, Tazkirat-us-Salātīn Chaghtā’i, op.cit., p.332; Şohnāmā, op.cit., f. 66ba.
79For detail see Şohnāmā, f. 66b.
80Qānūngo was an officer appointed in each district he was acquainted with its customs, nature and tenure of the lands.
81Sarkār Narnaul was under the suba of Agra, later it as transferred to suba Delhi with Sarkār Tijara, An atlas of Mughal Empire, op. cit., p. 4A.
82Şohnāmā, op. cit., ff. 67a-68b.
(At the capital Shāhjahānābād, there occurred an earthquake with very loud rumbling and violent shaking. It was felt many times both day and night. It produced a sound as if carts and chariots were rolling over a floor of stones and bricks. Building was trembling in this way, people got disturbed and came out from their houses and stood outside. The shock would sometimes last for awhile and sometimes for one quarter of a ghari (6minutes) and then it would subside. Tremors continued for twelve days continuously two to three times each day. The residence of Delhi were much alarmed and upset. Due to the frequency and intensity of tremors mansions and other places in capital were cracked and destroyed).

Here, author narrates a story about a mansabdār who was involved in robbery directly or indirectly. A man named Khānna a beef butcher (Qassāb) by profession and his other name was Khān Muhammad and was in the service of Koka Khān. He was resident of Shāhjahānābād. He committed theft and helped the thieves (dūzd afsāri). The houses of mansabdārs and moneylenders (mahajanān) were frequently and repeatedly burgled and goods and property were plundered and men were killed in Delhi. Orders were issued to arrest those thieves.

On the recommendation of city kotwāl, Khanna was arrested by the servants (qūlān). The kotwāl had beaten and flogged him at incarcerate, an amount of 20,000 rupees in cash and other stolen goods were recovered from his house. He gave clue of other man named Muhammad Ghaus, who was one of the Emperor’s servants holding mansab of 500 and a selected jāgīr. He also produced much stolen property. In this way other unsusceptible persons who were thieves or supporter of thieves were arrested.

When Khanna perceived that there is no hope of his life and thought that the Emperor is very fond of shows (tamāshā), he sent a petition through the

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83Shāhnāma op. cit., f. 80a.
84Yār Mumhammad Koka was the nurse son of Emperor Muhammad Shāh. He got a mansab of 4000/3000, with the title of Yār Muhammad Khān, The Reign of Muhammad Shāh, op. cit., p. 319.
85Shāhnamā, op. cit., f. 86b.
86Ibid., f. 86a
superintendent (dārogha) of the prison saying that he likes to fights with tigers, if the tiger kills him so far so good but if he kill the tiger, his life be spared’. It was accepted by Emperor, but Nizām-ul-Mulk who was a wise man and thought that to be put to death a man to death is an inhuman act. When he learnt about the matters he made his request to Muhammad Shāh and said that Khanna the thief was guilty of many crimes and he can provide clues about the properties of men and at the movement only a part of cash has been recovered from him and a major portion of the stolen property has yet to be recovered. Therefore, it is not expedient to kill him or to release him from prison and should leave him to himself. So the fight with the tiger was postponed and finally it was accepted87.

On the 2nd of Rajab in a year 1134 A.H./April 1722 A.D., Quraish Khān who belonged to the family of the Shaikhzādas of the East and who held the office of the Chaklādār of Kora Jahānābād and had a mansab of 2000 zālī 1,000 suwār. He came to the court on the recommendation of Qamar-ud-Dīn-Khān and he was raised to the rank of 4000 zālī 2,000 suwār88.

Quraish Khān took a house on rent, at street (guzar) in Beghampura and started residing there with his family and his other belongings. Accidentally, a dispute was arose between a man of Quraish Khān and the owner of the house regarding the rent. A eunuch (khwāja Sara) who was the neighbour, started quarrel on the side of owner and got some wound by the man of the Khān. The eunuch who had some connection with the eunuch of the palace went and lodged a complaint as well as brought one of the imperial servants (qūl) along with him. On taking side of the eunuch; they exaggerated the affair several times. In order to settle the dispute, an order was issued to Khān-i-Zamān, who was the superintendent of the royal artillery, should go and bring the Khān and if he resist (istādgī numāin) he should be forced to come. Accordingly, Khān-i-Zamān deputed hazārī89 in a body surrounded the house of the Khān. When the Khān perceived that his honour is at danger he drew his sword and began to fight ultimately, the hazārī fired on the Khān from all sides and killed

87 Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 87b.
88 Ibid., f. 87b.
89 Hazārī is analogous with Minagbashī it meant commander of a thousand and they are generally artillery captain, Muhammad Kamwar Hadi Khān had also mentioned this incident and gave the name of Kosal Singh hazārī who was sent to arrest him, Tazkirat-us-Salātīn Chaghtā’ī, op. cit., p. 338.
him. Then the troops severed his head from his body laid it before Emperor Muhammad Shāh.\textsuperscript{90}

The unique style of author for collecting and mentioning trivial matters in short anecdotal form has not been seen in other historical work. These different short stories about common men, their related events and response of Emperor and officials, supplies good information of the society of that period.

This work supplies sufficient information about Mīr Jumlā but the author does not mention his presence and the name of any person from whom he heard these accounts. Details like Mīr Jumlā’s mismanagement of affairs; political and financial; and instances of excessive cruelties and oppression practiced by his Tūrānī soldiers have been referred to by other contemporary writers also; but the rich minutiae furnished by Shiv Dās are not to be found anywhere else\textsuperscript{91}. This work gave glimpse of the life of common men. It provides living account of the assemblies and day to day life was also reflected in it. Furthermore, much information is available about the dire suffering due to divinely ordained or men made calamities like famines and varying rates of prices of food grains, robbery and theft of the early eighteenth century.

This work has been described as detailed historical narrative and court news enriched with many official letters and farmāns. It gave contemporary view of court life. No other contemporary work gives such a vivid picture and details of the daily life of the court of these Emperors. Though basically it is anecdotal but information supplied by him is very valuable. These documents reflect the imperial relation with provincial nobles and also serve up as the main source material of the contentious period and fill some very important gaps of early 18\textsuperscript{th} century. Shiv Dās has written one of the controversial period of later Mughals, but he has avoided all debates and to the best of his judgment, stick to a bare sketch of events. Consequently it is difficult to know his personal views on the prevalent controversies. This author who was in the employment of some of high rank noble has also narrated his eye witness

\textsuperscript{90}For details see Shāhnāma, op. cit., f. 87a.

\textsuperscript{91}Ibid., ff. 6b-8b.
account of military activities by referring to the movements of artillery, sieges and conduct of negotiating war and peace in that turbulence time.

This work also help us in understanding the character of six Emperors, their leading nobles and other mansabdārs as such full of political and cultural interest. It also seems, he aimed at contributing some inspired literature based upon reality and experience. The real charm of this work lays in these trivial details of common people. It is considered as a very valuable document in the life and period of Farrukh Siyar. The copies of official documents those are inserted in this single work have its own importance. These sources give us an illuminating insight into the real character, views, and the real purpose of the writers. It seems most of the official documents are written in same style and followed the same content and are full of deception and prevarication. But all these yield much information of historical values. For example, behind the high sounding words and expression in the correspondence between the Saiyids and Nizām-ul-Mulk, one can easily see the deceit and pretense.

The ‘arzdāshi of Girdhar Bahādur and ‘Abd-us-Samad Khān provides us with some new information which is not found elsewhere. Other copies of similar farmāns issued to Nizām-ul-Mulk, Girdhar Bahādur, ‘Abd-us-Samad Khān and Raja Jai Singh directs them to rally round his throne. All these farmāns written to different governors contain the same type of information with sole exception that head of Husain ‘Alī Khān was sent to Nizām-ul-Mulk to be demonstrated in the Deccan. In short, these letters are important source materials of history and they help us in filling gaps by those who know how to analyse and interpret the thoughts and act of men. Mīr Jumlā’s mismanagement of affairs; political and financial and instances of excesses; cruelty and oppression practiced by his Mughal soldiers have been referred to by other contemporary writers also. But the rich details furnished by Shiv Dās are not to be found anywhere else.

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92Shāhnāma, op. cit., ff.39b-40b.
93Ibid., ff. 52a-54a.
94Ibid., ff. 49a-51a.
95Ibid., ff. 49a-50b.
References to the saints are helpful in understanding the nature and extent of contact of these saints with the leading nobles of that period. The incident also shows that there is hardly any respect of these mystics saints during the early eighteenth century. Notwithstanding his clarity of expression, chronological sequence and systematic cataloging of events, the author lacked in that vision which could help him in putting all these details in some coherent framework. By denouncing the deeds of Saiyids of Bārha and passing remarks on the attitude of imperial ladies, he provides information for the political trend of the time.

The shortcomings of this work, is that it contains only information related to Northern India. Though the author was contemporary of events, fails to provide a connected history. The last years of Farrukh Siyar’s reign that was full of tension, but Shīv Dās is trying to avoid entirely into controversy or making value judgment. What considerations and attitude were involved in the process, do not concern him, nor do the consequence of it. This author fails to provide much chronology to these events. He also seems somewhat biased towards the Tūrānī’s and especially about Mīr Jumlā and he has given enough space in his work about the cruelties of the noble.

One can conclude that these interesting anecdotes furnish very unique type of information, which we could not find be in other sources. This source provides details of natural calamities like famines, droughts and earthquakes that terrified the people of Shāhjahānābād and manmade calamites like hoarding, profiteering, and soaring prices of essential commodities which have not been mentioned elsewhere. The colourful accounts of festivals and celebrations on occasions of accession, marriages and idain, are given in details. There is long description for gifts, grants, and presents, review of animals and music performance of the court. Many copies of official letters and farmāns which are inserted in full, shows the diplomatic relations among

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96 Shāhnāma, op. cit., ff. 46a & 66ba.
97 Ibid., f. 32b.
98 Ibid., ff. 6b-8b.
nobles and Emperor. It is a political chronicle but written with different slant and special motivation. The facts which lay scattered in these anecdotes help us in reconstructing a picture of the social and cultural life of the northern India. This work constitutes an important primary source mainly for the study of society of the period.