

## THE PERSONALITY OF ZAHIRIDDIN MUHAMMAD BABUR AND HIS LITERARY HERITAGE

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**Annotation.** *This article discusses the difficult life of the great ruler and poet Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur who stood among the most gifted scholars—as evaluated by historians. It examines how Babur's personality is represented in historical and memoir-type literature. In addition, the article emphasizes Babur's poetic and literary potential as the sovereign who conquered the great state of India.*

**Keywords:** *Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, history, memoir literature, poetry, creativity, India, personality.*

**Introduction.** The name Zahiriddin means “a flourishing tree,” reportedly given by the famous Naqshbandi shaykh Khwaja Ahror Vali; the name Babur (“tiger/lion” in Arabic) was chosen by his parents. The life and literary legacy of this great ruler have been studied by many scholars. Reliable information about Babur's life is found primarily in his major historical-memoir work “Baburnama,” as well as in Gulbadan Begim's Humoyunname, Muhammad Haydar Dughlat's Tarikh-i Rashidi, and Hasan Khoja Nisari's Muzakkir al-Ahbab (1566).

European scholars also played a significant role in studying Babur's biography. W. Erskine produced a 600-page study titled A History of India under Babur and Humayun: The Dynasty of the Timurids. Notable works were also written by Pavet de Courteille, Denison Ross, Mrs. Beveridge, Lane-Poole, W. H. W. Vetse, and John Leyden. Among Russian and Uzbek scholars, S. Polyakov, N. Pantusov, N. Ilminsky, A. Qayumov, Y. Gulomov, and V. Zohidov made valuable contributions.

**Methods.** In the course of this study, theoretical-deductive, comparative historical, comparative-typological, and comparative methods of analysis were employed.

**Results.** Excerpts from Baburnama were first published in 1908 in Abdurauf Fitrat's anthology Samples of Uzbek Literature. After Uzbekistan gained independence, new artistic interpretations of Babur's life appeared—especially in Pirimqul Qodirov's novels Yulduzli Tunlar (Starry Nights) and Avlodlar Davoni (The Destiny of Generations), which vividly describe Babur's turbulent life, his hardships, and his struggle to establish rule in India through relentless battles.

**Early Life and Rise to Power.** According to Baburnama: “On Monday, the fourth day of Ramadan, 899, my father Umarshaykh fell from the pigeon tower together with the dovecote and died. He was only thirty-nine.” At that time, Babur was only twelve years old; thus his independent political life began very early.

He writes: “Through the grace of the Almighty and the intercession of the Prophet, aided by the four righteous caliphs, I ascended the throne of Fergana at the age of twelve.” (Baburnama, p. 7)

Facing endless turmoil, Babur captured Samarqand three times, but was unable to retain it due to internal conflicts among the Timurid princes. Determined to restore order and build a strong state, Babur fought Shaybani Khan but ultimately lost the struggle due to betrayal and fragmentation among Timurid nobles. With no support left, and realizing he could not restore centralized rule in Movarounnahr, he decided to leave his homeland and march toward Khorasan.

In 1504, after years of wandering, he captured Kabul and Ghazni without resistance and established a new center of power. He later sought alliance with Husayn Bayqaro against Shaybani Khan, but the sudden death of Husayn Bayqaro and the internal conflict between his sons thwarted Babur's hopes. When Herat fell to Shaybani Khan in 1507, Babur declared himself king in Kabul an important symbolic act marking the foundation of the Mughal dynasty.

Shaybani Khan's death in 1510 at the hands of Shah Ismail of Iran created new opportunities. With Qizilbash support, Babur briefly recaptured Samarqand, but resistance from the Uzbeks prevented him from restoring Timurid rule.

#### The Conquest of India

Between 1519 and 1525, Babur launched five major campaigns into India. His 12,000-man army confronted Ibrahim Lodi's force of 100,000. Drawing upon tactics learned in battles with Shaybani Khan—especially the “Tulgama” maneuver—Babur achieved a decisive victory at the Battle of Panipat in 1526. On April 25, 1526, he had the khutba read in his name in Delhi, officially establishing the Mughal (Baburid) Empire. Babur initiated major political, economic, cultural, and administrative reforms. After his death in 1530 in Agra, his body was moved—according to his will to the “Garden of Babur” in Kabul. Babur as a Scholar and Literary Figure Despite spending most of his life in warfare, Babur mastered many sciences and left behind an invaluable intellectual heritage. Before his death, he presented his son Humayun with two symbolic gifts: His memoir “Baburnama” (Vaqoyi) Amir Temur's legendary “Sword of Justice”.

Babur wrote significant literary and scholarly works: “Muxtasar” on prosody (aruz) “Mubayyin”, a poetic treatise on Islamic fundamentals. A poetic translation of Khwaja Ahror Vali's Volidiya. Lost works on military science and music theory. He invented the “Boburi Script” in 1503 Compiled the Kabul Divan (1519) and Hindustan Divan (1528–1529). Babur was a courageous, compassionate ruler with refined tastes and a deep love for books. Even the great poet Mulla Binoi admired Babur's honesty and praised him in a lengthy poem.

Babur's Poetic World. Babur, like Navoiy, regarded sincerity and simplicity of language as marks of purity in style. His lyrical poetry is filled with emotions such as joy in victory, disappointment in betrayal, deep longing for his homeland, and reflections on human fate.

His famous ghazal “Kim ko ‘rubdur...” addresses the impossibility of expecting goodness from a corrupt world. He dedicated this poem to Alisher Navoi, though it never reached Navoi due to his death.

In the ghazal “Topmadim,” Babur laments loneliness, betrayal, and the loss of Samarqand—painful memories written in 1507 on the road to Kabul. The ghazal “Qoldimu” expresses his sorrow at losing political support and wandering far from his homeland. Leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru described Babur as “a charming personality, a typical Renaissance ruler—brave, energetic, fond of literature and art”. Hasan Khoja Nisari also praised Babur as the bravest and most capable of rulers.

#### Views on Women and Education

Babur held progressive views about women, associating their status with the flourishing of science and art. Gulbadan Begim's Humoyunnama records touching details of Babur's respect toward women, including his mother and wife. His rubais express tenderness, humility, and love.

#### The Artistic Brilliance of Baburnama

Babur's Baburnama remains the greatest prose masterpiece in the Turkic language. Its precision, clarity, honesty, and detailed descriptions of geography, flora, fauna, society, and politics make it an invaluable historical source. It documents the lives of rulers such as Amir Temur, Ulughbek, Husayn Bayqaro, Shaybani Khan, and many others.

Babur also provides detailed accounts of regions like Fergana—its climate, agriculture, fruits, cities, and people.

**Conclusion and Recommendations.** Babur's life was full of hardship and struggle, yet he succeeded in building a vast empire and creating immortal literary treasures. Although he lived only 47 years, his intellectual and cultural legacy continues to illuminate the world—just as bright stars light the dark sky. His works enrich the spirituality and cultural consciousness of today's youth.

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