

THE WORK BOBURNOMA AS A HISTORICAL SOURCE.

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Abstract: The poet narrates his memoirs in an artistic storytelling style that is simple and fluent. The work describes events that took place in Central Asia, Afghanistan, and India from the year 1494 to 1530. The beautiful illustrations adorning the Boburnoma manuscripts also contributed to the fame of its translation. The miniatures created for the Persian versions of the Boburnoma are considered outstanding examples of Eastern painting art. The great king Babur continued the grand architectural traditions characteristic of the Timurids in India.

Key words: Boburnoma, king, creativity, customs, work, place names, virtues, terms, culture, ethnographer, naturalist, linguist. Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur does not limit himself to merely recording historical facts or providing chronological information about wars and campaigns; rather, he recounts events in a lively and engaging language, describing nature and ethnographic situations, and bringing the features of the era to life. In the Boburnoma, he creates vivid character portraits of dozens of historical figures, paints landscapes of nature, and embellishes the book with various plots, romantic adventures, and poetic excerpts. The personalities, appearances, behaviors, habits, pasts, and genealogies of the individuals mentioned are described one by one in detail.

The central figure in the work is, undoubtedly, Babur himself. His heart, rich with emotions and feelings, vividly comes to life before our eyes. He clearly and reflectively portrays the biographies of his contemporaries—their appearances, customs, aspirations, interests, and behaviors—as if seen in a mirror. In this respect, the Boburnoma is regarded as the only true historical descriptive example in Central Asia. Babur provides extensive information about the geography, fauna, and flora of Central Asia, Khorasan, and India. In particular, the Boburnoma contains valuable facts about the ethnography,

science, art, and culture of the Indian people. Due to its comprehensive nature, encyclopedic character, and the way it showcases the immense expressive capacity of the Uzbek literary language, the Boburnoma is considered a cultural monument on par with Alisher Navoi's Khamsa. The rapid rise in its fame and its translation into Persian several times already during the 16th century serve as evidence of this claim.

The Boburnoma was first translated into Persian in 1589 by Abdurahimkhan ibn Bayramkhan, who served at the court of Babur's grandson, Akbar. The translation was widely copied and disseminated throughout Eastern countries under the titles Waqoti Boburi and Tarikhi Boburshohi. In his translation, Abdurahimkhan was able to preserve Babur's unique narrative style, and the work was accepted as a major innovation in Persian literature and historiography. The historical events it covers are presented with honesty and accuracy, and it is not only rich in scholarly facts but also distinguished by its fluent style, simplicity, and charm. Babur's work had a profound influence on historical memoirs written after it.

The progressive intellectuals of the East, recognizing the great prestige of literature written in the Turkic language (Old Uzbek), began to encourage scholars to study this language. They considered it an important task to translate the brilliant works of Navoi and Babur and make them accessible to Persian-speaking audiences.

The fame of the translation of the Boburnoma was also due to the beautiful illustrations adorning its manuscripts. At Akbar Shah's court, 104 artists worked regularly. The translator Abdurahimkhan himself was also involved in drawing. Dozens of books were illustrated at Akbar's court. The miniatures created for the Persian versions of the Boburnoma are regarded as outstanding examples of Eastern painting art.

By the beginning of the 19th century, the Boburnoma had become known to the scholarly community throughout Europe. In the global recognition of Babur's legacy, English orientalists played a particularly significant role. They took the lead not only in translating and publishing the Boburnoma, but also in researching and promoting it. Translators based their work on both the Uzbek and Persian versions of the text.

W. Erskine wrote a substantial introduction to the book, in which he introduced Babur and his work to English readers: "Among the rulers of Asia, we rarely encounter individuals as brilliant and talented as Babur. His intellectual vitality, sense of humor and composure, resilience in the face of the tricks of cruel fate, generosity rarely seen among kings, bravery, giftedness, and passionate engagement with science and art make Babur unmatched among the monarchs of Asia." In 1921, the *Boburnoma* was published for the second time in multiple volumes by Oxford University Press. In this edition, Professor L. Kieft of Dublin University wrote a foreword providing information about the various editions of the *Boburnoma*, its manuscript versions held in global collections, its translations, and edited the English version.

In the scholarly essay that makes up half of the first volume, the history and geography of Mawarannahr and Khorasan are extensively covered, along with detailed descriptions of cities mentioned by Babur, such as Samarkand, Andijan, Ura-Tyube, Kabul, and others, highlighting their current condition. Another noteworthy quality of this publication is the abundance of annotations and commentaries in the footnotes, provided to ensure the scientific accuracy of the translation. The book also indicates to whom the poems belong and in which language they were originally written. Furthermore, the dissemination of Babur's works in Turkey owes much to the efforts of the prominent scholar Rashid Rahmat Orat. A number of specialized monographs dedicated to the study of Babur's life and literary legacy in English have also been produced.

The meanings of several words used in modern Uzbek literary language differ from their meanings during the era of Old Uzbek. For example, the word *qopur* had meanings such as "to erect," "to restore," "to remove," and "to stir up." Its root *qop* was used in ancient Turkic with the meanings "to rise" or "to fly."

In the *Boburnoma*, the term *qishloq* (village) appears in its original lexical sense, different from its modern usage—it meant "a house or dwelling place for wintering." For instance: "It is necessary to build a winter dwelling in the fortress... For several

days, they stayed on the steppe until the winter houses were ready.” In ancient Turkic, qishlaq meant “a place for wintering.” The word qishloq is derived by adding the suffix -la to the root qish (winter), and then the suffix -gh to form a noun. It referred to “a place where people leave for the fields in summer and return to live in winter.”

Today, the term refers to a settlement whose population is primarily engaged in agriculture. The use of the word qishloq in the sense of “a house for wintering” provides insight into the transformation of this term from an object or dwelling designation in Old Uzbek literary language to an administrative-territorial term.

A number of words used in the language of the Boburnoma have become archaisms. The nature of such words can be explained through the following examples: The word ilik is an archaic term that meant "hand." From this, the verb ilikla was derived, meaning "to seize" or "to take possession of." For example: “We assigned the beks and young men to go and take over the summer fortresses of Yor either through negotiation or by force...” The terms charga and jarga referred to a “circle,” “ring,” or “enclosure,” and also meant “to encircle” or “to surround.” For instance: “The hunters formed a circle and drove the deer down from the mountain.” These terms were also used metaphorically. For example: “We shall remove the one who has committed treason from the circle of office and exile him from the region and district.” Here, mucha means “office” or “rank,” and mucha chargasi refers to the “sphere of authority” or “circle of duty.”

Other English and American scholars who studied the history of Eastern peoples also gave high praise to Babur’s personal abilities and accomplishments. A renowned contemporary Orientalist, J.L. Bonté-Grammont, produced a new French translation of the Boburnoma. He visited our country several times and became closely acquainted with the lifestyle and history of the Uzbek people.

In 1912, Togay Murad Qorluq Khatloniy translated the Boburnoma into Persian once again. This manuscript translation is currently preserved in the manuscript collection of the Institute of Oriental Studies named after Abu Rayhan Beruni at the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Between 1944 and 1946, the work was translated into Ottoman Turkish and published in two volumes in Ankara. In Russia, the Boburnoma had appeared much earlier. At the end of the 19th century, certain excerpts from the Boburnoma were partially introduced to Russian readers through the translations of I. Pantsov, S. Polyakov, and V. Vyatkin. However, a complete Russian translation had not yet been produced.

This honorable and noble task was undertaken by the skilled translator and scholar M. Salye, and the work was published in Tashkent in 1958. M. Salye devoted more than ten years of labor to this translation, thoroughly studying the language of the text. He successfully preserved Babur's "manly style" of writing and provided the transcription of a vast number of terms, phrases, and names.

Nonetheless, many ambiguities remain in Salye's translation. A number of names in the Boburnoma are rendered incorrectly. For instance, Ahmad Mirzo's beloved Qutluqbegim appears as "Katak Begim"; and words like bukhalaamun ("chameleon") and mucha ("rank/office") were presented without translation or explanation, making them unclear to the Russian reader. Most of the shortcomings in the translation and publications stem from the need for a scholarly critical edition of the text. Шунга ўхшаш талай ноаниқликларни бартараф этиш учун "Бобурнома"нинг энг эътиборли қўлёзма нусхаларини чоғиштириб, унинг илмий матнини тайёрлаш зарур эди. Ниҳоят, бу ишни япониялик бобуршунос олимлар амалга оширдилар. Асарнинг танқидий матни яратилиб, нашр этилди.

It is evident that the life and work of Mirzo Babur are being studied in various countries and are becoming a means of international scholarly cooperation. This also serves as a sign of the great talent and pride of the Uzbek people. Every nation has its great kings, renowned scholars, and prominent writers and poets who define its historical and cultural identity. Among such great figures of world literature stands Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, who rightfully holds his place.

In the history of mankind, individuals possessing such extraordinary personal potential, talent, and virtues as Babur are exceedingly rare. Babur was a great king, a classical poet, a literary theorist, a jurist, a linguist, an art expert, and an ethnographer, as well as a scholar of the animal and plant worlds—his work and creativity spanned many diverse fields.

Muhammad Babur was a courageous and resourceful individual. Among cultured and charismatic people, Babur was one of the most accomplished. He was far removed from narrow-mindedness and careerism.

What makes Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur's Boburnoma particularly noteworthy as a historical and literary source is that it contains information about numerous historical figures, place names, representatives of literature and art, religious leaders, kings and princes, beks, emirs, and nobles. In the Boburnoma, several hundred historical personalities are depicted, along with descriptions of their activities and adventures.

In the Boburnoma, great importance is given to figures of science, art, and literature. Babur provides information about a number of poets and artists such as Navoi, Jami, Binoiy, Muhammad Solih, Hiloliy, Sayfi Bukhariy, Mir Husayn, Muammoniy, Shaykhim Suhayliy, Yusuf Badavaniy, Ahmad Khojibek, Behzod, Sultan Ali, Hoji Abdullah Marwariy, Shah Muzaffar, Ghulom Shodiy, and Husayn Udiy. He praises them, quotes samples from their works, and at times shares interesting observations about their lives, activities, or personal qualities.

In conclusion, it is worth emphasizing that the Boburnoma plays a significant role in studying the lives and contributions of these individuals, as well as in determining their place in the cultural history of their time. As a result, we become acquainted with the statesmen and cultural figures who lived during Babur's era and held an important place in our history and spiritual heritage. The events of each year are recorded separately in the work. All of the valuable information and reflections provided in the Boburnoma are of great importance to historical research. Thus, it becomes clear that the Boburnoma is a crucial source for studying the events that took place across the

three major regions during the late 15th and early 16th centuries. According to researcher M. Abdullaeva, who studied the work, a total of 1,540 individuals are mentioned by name in the Boburnoma. Of these, 357 are historical figures from the region of Mawarannahr. The remaining names belong to historical personalities who lived in different periods and countries. In the narrative of each historical event, either before or during its description, there is often a digression to depict the location where the event took place.

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