



**THE ROLE AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MEMOIRES (BABUR- NAMA) IN A
WORLD LITERATURE**

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ANNOTATION

The most romantic figure, and perhaps, the most complex character in Indian history, stands revealed in his Memoirs. Soldier, statesman, philosopher, a hunter of big game, Baber was also a Persian poet of no mean order and in his native Turkish master of prose and verse and his description of his country and of the people who composed his father's court are those of a born artist.

Key words

Content, style, Emperor, exaggeration, reflect, manners, habits, cultural dealings, garble, copy.

Babur is one of the great characters of Asiatic history, and his memories are a magnificent contribution to the field of literature. If Babur has an interesting story of building, an empire, and the memories is a transparent narration of blooming of a human character.

This style of Babur-nama is plain, lively and of matter of facts. It is said in this respect, it is almost the only specimen of real history in Asia. That is why we can say that it's one of the best pieces in the world literature, and possibly the best autobiography of medieval history. It contains the literary beauty of poetry and the dignity of an empire builder.

Babur's Dairy or memories was originally written in the Chagatai of Turki. We also know that his son Humayun himself copied his father's Babur-nama and added, at least one marginal note. In Akbar's time it was translated into Persian and Jahongir in his Tuzuki- Jahangiri speaks of his, having seen the Manuscript of Babur's own blessed handwriting, to which he himself added four passages, so we have thus strong testimony to the fact that Babur own autograph manuscript existed in India and was a highly prized at among his imperial, descendants, for nearly 200 hundred years after it was written.

The internal evidence of the teat leaves no doubt that he wrote it in India. India. We may still cherish the hope that its original may be found someday and



possibly fill up the gaps that now exist in the text. The agreement of the different ins Turki and Persian implies that we have the text substantially as it was written by Babur.

In Turki literature, Babur occupies, a very high place and more than 68 ins shown that the memories were equally prized in India.

Over European scholars, they have exercised such a fascination that we may practically study his life and the personality completely from European translations and monographs, articles alone. The Russian Ilminskiy produced a text which was printed in 1857, and afterwards translated into French by Mr. Pavet de Courtielle Leyden and Erskine produced in 1826 and excellent the English translation from Turki and Persian, ins to which was prefixed a valuable historical and geographical introduction.

This translation has been edited, revised and the bought up-to-date by Lucas King and published in 1921. Mrs. Beveridge also published her own scholarly translation into two volumes in 1921. Her translation is closer to the original, but Lucas King's is more handy for the general reader.

Mr. Stanely Lane Pool has published a most admirable summary of Babur memories, and it is nightly considered to the best volume of Babur's of India series. Erskine's history and Caldewt's Life of Babur on other contributions to Babur's Literature in English. Today we have more than 30 translations of memories into different language today the main task in to find original ins to learn and analyze them because the diary is not completed.

They lived and died, as brave and generous men. His hardly life fitted in with his love of nature. His adventures, failures and successes never dried up the milk of human kindness in him. His reading was refined by what he learn from life. The sincerely of his soul in strength and the weaknesses, shines from every page of his self-revealing record.

THE CONTENT AND

STYLE OF THE "MEMOIRES" OF Z.M.BABUR

As we know that Emperor Babur's autobiography is one of the precious books that will always be most highly regarded and enlightening, within literary circles. This wonderful work is considered as literary, social cultural and historical heritage even in today's world.

"Babur-nama" is free from unnecessary exaggeration and hypocrisy. Babur's style and mode of expression is *simple, clear, pure, interesting* and *attractive*. It reflects the live pictures of his contemporaries and fellow countrymen as clear as a mirror. Their life style, manners, habits, social and cultural dealings and activities are described, presented and articulated so beautifully that the actual picture is visible to the reader. One cannot, but admire and praise the author. This is the



reason that this book is justifiably considered as a historical document among all the books on this subject in Asia.

“Tuzuk-e-Baburi” or “Babur-nama” comes down to us in many forms: in official and illustrated 16th century Persian translations, in relatively faithful copies of the original. Turkish work and in garbled Turkish versions that appear to have been partially retranslated from Persian. Notably, no manuscript survives from Babur’s time. The earliest and most complete Turkish copy dates from more than a century after his death. Found in Hyderabad, India, this version of “Babur-nama” is thought to be a copy of a master text in the Babur imperial library because it adheres closely to the official Persian translation commissioned by Akbar, Babur’s grandson.

In short, although Babur’s original text was in Turkish, among the surviving manuscripts the Persian translations predate the Turkish versions.

Sadly, the records of nearly eighteen (18) years – 1502 to 1503, 1508 to 1519, and January 1520 to November 1525 have been lost.

It was Babur’s habit to write the day’s events while they were fresh in his mind.

He tried to preserve his voluminous text. It was after establishing himself as the emperor of Hindustan, that he began dictating his memoirs in 1527. That gives his narrative a coherent flow.

He was acutely conscious of the value of his chronicle as well as the vital importance of being objective: *“I do not write this in order to make complaint, I have written the plain truth, he asserts”*.

Babur’s book is a rich compendium. It contains descriptions of his domains and the administrative set – up, the battles and the territories he won and lost, the outbreak of rebellious and their suppression, the rise and fall of his adversaries and allies, his marriage and children his banishment to a hill tract and near death, the biographies of his parents and near relatives...

The “Babur-nama” is *outstanding* in *content* as *well as style*. Its range of subjects is impressive. It covers geography, astronomy, state craft, military strategies and weapons, battles, large and small, flora and fauna, biographies and family chronicles, pen portraits of potentates, countries and artists, social workes, poetry, music and paintings, rowdy wine parties, tours of historical monuments and reflections on the human condition. Babur’s prose is astonishingly sinewy and lucid, devoid of hyperbole or embellishment.

Some of the phrases and words in the “Babur-nama” are now part of everyday language in India, Pakistan and Asia also: *nimak haram* – being false to ones salt, *hamesha* – always, *maidan* – plain, place, and *julab* – laxative...



Instead of writing: So and so died, Babur often uses, *So and so went to mercy God's marry, see his father's death.*

Judging the author merely by the quality of his work, one can confidently visualize Babur today excelling as much as a geographer or travel guide as a naturalist poet, journalist or general – as a professor of creative writing.

His advice to his son Humayun on the letter's prose style has a contemporary resonance: "Although your letter can be read if every sort of pains be taken, yet it cannot be quite understood because of that obscure wording of yours", he tells Humayun. "In future write without elaboration. Use plain, clear words".

Babur witnesses through as a master of vivid, precise prose, highly economical.

Babur meticulous of events, resulting from his boundless curiosity and acute observation, his description of a Mughal ritual is a model of informed compression and so on.

The style of "Baburnama" is plain, lively and of matter of facts. While narrating his personal problems, Babur had opened a grand vista of vision into the contemporary life. It is in this context, a panorama of visions are found. People are collecting firewood, some of them are freezing in the snow, many are making love, and so on. It is said, in this respect, it is almost the only "specimen of real history in Asia", "Baburnama" is a story of laughter and weeping. Babur has recorded both. This effort, to portray Babur as he himself had done in his Memoirs, tries to make a comparative study of a number of situations in similar conditions.

The "Babur-nama" does much more than merely keep the memory of his conquests alive. In its pages Babur opens his soul with a frankness and lack of inhibition.

Through out his Memoir, we are admitted to Babur's innermost confidence as he examines and questions the world around him. He compares the fruits and animals of India and Afghanistan with as much inquisitiveness as he records his impressions of falling for men or marrying woman or weighing up the differing pleasures.

The uniqueness of "Babur-nama" was immediately recognized by all Babur's contemporaries, who quickly had it translated from Babur's colloquial Turki to literary Persian, from Persian it was first translated into English in 1826 by W.Erskine and J.Leyden and became a favorite text of the Orientalists of the whole world.

According to the Victorian administrator and Persian scholar Henry Beveridge, husband of the translator of this volume Annette Beveridge the "Babur-nama" is one of those priceless records which are for all time and is fit to rank with the confessions of St. Augustine and Rousseau and the Memoirs of Gibbon and Newton. In Asia it stands almost alone.



What makes it stand out and remain relevant and moving today is its universal humanism and its unusual honesty, sensitivity and self-understanding.

As his latest scholarly biographer Stephen Dale puts it:

“Babur transcended the narrative and historical genres of his culture to produce a retrospective self – portrait of the kind that is usually associated with the most stylishly effective European and American autobiographies. No other author in the Islamic world – or in pre-colonial India – offers a comparable autobiographical memoir, a seemingly ingenuous first – person narrative enlivened with self-criticism as well as self-dramatization and evocation of universally recognizable human emotions”.

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