

Feminine Portraits in Baburnama: A Historical Perspective

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Abstract: The "Baburnama" offers a rich repository of insights into Babur's life and the literary milieu of his era. Through this text, one can meticulously piece together the biographies of renowned poets who thrived in Central Asia during that period, contributing to Persian and Turkish poetry. The narrative within the book unfolds a vivid tableau of Babur's contemporaries, featuring statesmen, artists, musicians, and historians. Notably, the article hones in on the Timurid princesses closely associated with Babur, providing a direct glimpse into their relationships with him. The princesses, intricately portrayed in the "Baburnama," serve as key figures, shedding light on their roles and connections in the historical and cultural tapestry of the time.

1 INTRODUCTION

The "Baburnama" as a historical and literary heritage holds the attention of world scientists. The richness and variety of materials, language, and style of the work surpass any historical chronicle compiled by the palace chroniclers of that period. Therefore, it is not surprising that this work and its world have attracted the attention of scholars at different times. We can say that the "Baburnama" depicts Babur's activities, successful and unsuccessful military campaigns, all the twists and turns of a rich adventurous life. The history of the creation of the "Baburnama" is unknown. According to his daughter Gulbadanbegim in her book "Humayunnama," in India, there was a tower in a garden in Sikri, and Babur tended to write a book on top of it.

One of the most important aspects of Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur's personality is honesty. He writes truthfully about historical figures, the palace environment, events, and even his character. In evaluating his contemporaries, he is responsible and demanding, and speaks openly about shortcomings.

The "Baburnama" contains a wealth of information about Babur himself and the literary environment in which he lived. Based on this information, it is possible to reconstruct the biographies of many famous poets of that time who lived in Central Asia and wrote poems in Persian and Turkish. The book depicts a number of the poet's contemporaries, statesmen, artists, musicians, and historians. The following is a list of Timurid

princesses who were close to Babur and knew him directly.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

One of the characteristics of the Timurid state is the attitude towards women. After all, women also had a great position. This quality is also evident in the example of Babur. Each "khanim" and "begim" had property, a residence, a share in the treasury, and servants who performed various services. Faqihs, judges, sheikhs, and dignitaries have, in some cases, taken their views into account. Even Babur says that his great-grandmother Aisan-daulat Begim had an army of Mongols personally belonged to. (I. A.).

Some research has been done in recent years, but it is worthwhile to study this issue in a monograph. In particular, the Kyrgyz scholar Asilbek Aliyev, in his article "The attitude of the founder of the Great Mongol dynasty to women (based on 'Baburnama')," focuses on the various data, characteristics, and evaluations it provides. This material will help to make serious corrections to the common beliefs about women in the Middle East and to supplement the information about Babur's identity.

In "Baburnama," the opinions of kings, sultans, khans, mirzas, in particular, Umar Shaikh Mirza, Yunas Khan and Sultan Ahmad Mirza, Sultan Mahmud Mirza, Husain Baikara in the chapter "Avlodi" and "Khavotin va sarori" data are given. In this chapter, women are listed by name, and

comments, brief, and concise analyzes are given, in which Babur emphasizes the complex palace life of his time and makes new remarks.

3 ANALYSIS

Babur's mother, Kutluk Nigar Khanim, is mentioned in thirteen places in the "Baburnama." She is depicted as the most common image of a woman in the book, referred to as "mother," "my mother," "Khanim mother," "my Khanim mother," and others. Summing up all the plots about Kutluk Nigar Khanim, the following information emerges: she is Yunas Khan's and Aisan-daulat Begim's second daughter. A devoted mother to her son Babur, she is portrayed as a weak mother who sought to join her brothers when the time came but "saw no mercy and compassion." She found refuge and protection in the only tent of the king's son without a throne. Through her efforts, she married Babur to the daughters of his relatives, Aisha Sultanbegim and Zaynab Sultanbegim, and like her son, she "had many worries" and "did not receive much reward." Kutluk Nigar Khanim passed away at the foot of the mountain in the garden built by the wise king Ulugbek Koragon, known as "Garden Navruz," where Babur gave a thousand coins to the owners of the garden, as noted by Gulbadanbegim in "Humayunname." These portrayals reveal one aspect of Babur's personality: his spiritual virtue, the ability to find a suitable situation for his mother in any circumstance, even during unstable times, and the dedication to fulfilling his mother's rights with compassion. This particular quality of Babur holds significant educational value - Gramota.net (2012).

One of the princesses mentioned in the "Baburnama" is Babur's maternal grandmother, Aisan Daulat Begim, who later became the wife of Yunas Khan, the governor of Tashkent and Sayram. Wise and kind, Aisan Daulat Begim took an active part in governing the kingdom.

In "Baburnama," information about Aisan Daulat Begim begins with the details of her marriage to Babur's grandfather, Yunas Khan. "At those times, Sher Haji Beg, the eldest of the Sagri princes, took the opportunity to marry his daughter, Aisan Daulat Begim. With the help of the Mongols, the khan and Aisan Daulat Begim were seated on a white felt and made khans.

Babur elaborates on the daughters of Aisan Daulat Begim: his mother and aunts. "The Khan had three daughters from Aisan Daulat Begim. Mihr Nigar Khanim was the eldest, Sultan Abusaid Mirza set her aside for his eldest son, Sultan Ahmad Mirza; she had

no child. ... Kutluk Nigar Khanim, my mother, was Yunas Khan's second daughter. She was with me in most of my guerrilla expeditions and throneless times. She went to God's mercy in five or six months after the capture of Kabul, nine hundred and eleven. Khub Nigar Khanim was his third daughter. She was given to Muhammad Husain Kurkan Duglat. She had one son and one daughter by him.

Babur consistently speaks about Aisan Daulat Begim with deep respect and reverence, showcasing his sincere love for his grandmother. While acknowledging the woman's human qualities, intelligence, and wisdom, Babur's deep respect for her is evident. "Among the women's, my great-grandmother, Aisan Daulat Begim, was very intelligent and polite. Her advice had always been needed." - Rajabova, Burobiya (2013).

Another event highlighting Babur's high belief and love for his grandmother is one of his most important decisions to explain his choice to leave Samarkand voluntarily. He summoned his teacher Khoja Mavloni and Aisan Daulat Begim. He said, "Such letters! So anxious, so beseeching, coming from my mothers, that is from my own and hers, Aisan Daulat Begim, and from my teacher and spiritual guide, that is, Khwajai Maulanai Kazi, with what heart would a man not move? We left Samarkand for Andijan on a Saturday in Rajab." - Rajabova Burobiya (2013).

Another fact is that one of the people Babur directly trusted, advised, and relied on in his life was Aisan Daulat Begim. This is evident when, after a long siege, he left Samarkand for Shaibanikhan. Aisan Daulat Begim first stayed in the city and later joined Babur when his sister Khanzodabegim was married to Shaibanikhan. He left Samarkand with his relatives and soldiers. Babur does not disclose the real reason for this due to his pride and stubbornness. In fact, Aisan Daulat Begim held the wedding of her granddaughter Khonzodabegim (of course, with Babur's mind (I.A.) and then left Samarkand - Zakhiriddin Mukhammad (1989).

"A few days later, my grandmother, Aisan Daulat Begim, who, when I left Samarkand, had stayed behind, arrived with our families and baggage and a few lean and hungry followers."

Mirza Muhammad Khaydar's "History of Rashidi" referred to the high courage and bravery of Aisan Daulat Begim. The incident is related to the arrest of Tashkent by Sheikh Jamal, nicknamed "Khar," Yunas Khan, and his imprisonment in the basement for a year. At that time, the khan's harem was also in Tashkent. As a result, Yunas Khan's three daughters were given to Abu Said's three sons. Yunas

Khan's wife, Aisan Daulat Begim, was sentenced by Sheikh Jamal to one of his beys, Khoja Kalon. Aisan Daulat Begim obeyed the verdict, and at night she greeted Khoja Kalon with humility and beat him to death with a stick.

In practice, Aisan Daulat Begim sentenced herself to death and preferred death to humiliation and shame. The honor and dignity of Aisan Daulat Begim's husband and children were above all. Sheikh Jamal Har finds out what happened and interrogates Aisan Daulat Begim. During the interrogation, she proudly stood up and said that she was still Yunas Khan's wife and that this was not in accordance with Muslim law. Seeing this, Sheikh Jamal Khar abolished the punishment and sent Aisan Daulat Begim to prison with her husband Yunas Khan.

Such courage and will are rare among princesses, and in most cases, the fate of princesses has been to submit to fate - Zakhiriddin Mukhammad (1989).

Khonzoda Begim, the daughter of Umar Sheikh Mirza (1456–1494) and sister of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur Mirza, was born in 1478 in Andijan. According to historical sources, Khonzoda Begim was intelligent and sharp-witted. When she reached puberty, her father Umar Sheikh Mirza accidentally fell from a cliff and died. This event marked the beginning of the fate of 12-year-old Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur Mirza, who ascended the throne.

Young Babur Mirza, desiring to seize the throne of his ancestor Amir Temur, conducted several military expeditions to Samarkand. In 1501, he finally captured Samarkand. However, Shaibanikhan withdrew his army and besieged the city, leading to famine and death. Many of Babur Mirza's people fled the city, and he became too weak to break through the siege. In this dire situation, Shaibanikhan proposed a truce. Babur Mirza, in his famous work "Baburnama," described this event, stating, "Meantime, Shaibanikhan interjected talk of peace, if there had been hope or food from any side. It had to be a sort of peace was made, and we took our departure from the town, by the Shaikhzada's Gate, somewhere about midnight. I took my mother Khanum out with me. Two other women folk went too, one was Bishka Khalifa, the other, Minglik Kukuldash. At this exodus, my elder sister, Khanzada Begim fell into Shaibanikhan's hands" - Rajabova Burobiya (2013).

However, Babur's statement that "At this exodus, my elder sister, Khanzada Begim fell into Shaibanikhan's hands" does not align with the actual situation. In reality, according to the terms of the truce, Shaibanikhan proposed to Babur Mirza that he

marry Khanzada. If Babur Mirza agreed, he would allow him to safely take his harem out of Samarkand. Gulbadan Begim, the daughter of Babur Mirza, corroborated this version in her book "Humayunnama," stating, "At that time, Shohibek (Shaibanikhan) khan said, if you give Khanzada begim to me as a wife, a truce will be made between us and a bond of solidarity will be established. In the end, Khanzada begim was given to khan and they had to return." Haydar Mirza, the author of "Tarixi Rashidiy," also affirmed this account, noting that "he had no choice but to make peace with Shaibanikhan and gave his sister to him as a wife."

An article by R. Shamsutdinov and M. Abdullaev in 2008, titled "On the lost pages of the Baburnama" ("The Role of Babur and the Baburids in the history of world culture"), mentioned that Khanzada Begim was later married to a man named Sayyid Hodi. However, their marriage did not last long, and Khanzada Begim's marriage to Mahdi Khoja was cited as a historical fact.

The historical reality, as indicated by the written sources, is that Khonzoda Begim, born in 1478, married Shaibanikhan in Samarkand under the terms of a peace treaty concluded between Babur and Shaibanikhan in August 1501. From this marriage, Khurramshah was born in May 1502. Three or four years later, Shaibanikhan divorced Khanzada Begim on suspicion of poisoning her. Following the divorce, Shaibanikhan agreed to marry his widow's cousin, Sayyid Hadikhoja bin Murtazakhoja. Sayyid Hodikhoja was both the son of Shaibanikhan and a brave emir who was 50 years old at that time. Khanzada Begim was 28 years old. On November 15, 1506, Shaibanikhan conquered Balkh and appointed his talented son Khurramshah as the governor of Balkh and its provinces.

About Khurramshah, the Central Asian historian wrote in the work "Musakhhir il-bilod": "When his father was under the siege of Marv, Khurramshah was the first to rush to his father's aid with the army of Balkh... After his father left the world with martyrdom, Khurramshah also hurried to the hereafter. There was no descendant from Khurramshah."

Due to her ingenuity and entrepreneurship, Khanzada Begim earned high regard among the queens of the palace. Both Khanzada Begim and her heir to the throne, Humayun, served as advisers in the royal palace. Khanzada Begim passed away in 1544 in a place called Kabulhaq and was later brought to Kabul, where she was buried in the tomb of Baburshah three months after her death.

Khadija Beg was the beloved wife of Sultan Husein Mirza Baykara. Born in Herat in 1451, Khadijah Begim was one of the original maids presented to Sultan Abu Sayid Mirza in 1457 when he took Herat. In 1465, Sultan Abu Sayid Mirza married Khadija Begim. After the death of Sultan Abu Sayid Mirza in Iraq, Sultan Husein Mirza Baykara, who ascended the throne of Herat, saw Khadijah in the harem of the late Sultan Abu Sayid Mirza and fell in love with her.

Khadija Begim was a young, beautiful, attractive, light-skinned woman, but she was also prone to darkness and deceit. Babur wrote about Khadija: "She took herself for a sensible woman but was a silly chatterer, may also have been a heretic." In fact, with her charming and insidious compliments, Khadija soon conquered Sultan Husein Baykara and took the place of the great princess in the harem. Sultan Husein Baykara's wives and concubines had 14 sons and 11 daughters. Shahgarib Mirza and Muzaffar Husein Mirza were born from Khadija.

Khadijah Begim was eager to elevate her son, the noble and ambitious Muzaffar Hussein Mirza, above all the sons of the Sultan. She used various tricks to provoke conflicts between father and son, leading to bloody battles. Sultan Husein Baykara became increasingly vulnerable to Khadija Begim's tricks and did not show much courtesy to his sons apart from Muzaffar Husein Mirza, putting him in danger. Khadija initiated a secret operation to appoint her son Muzaffar Husein Mirza as the successor, despite custom dictating that the throne belonged to the Sultan's eldest son, Badiuz-Zaman Mirza.

Although Sultan Husein Baykara did not hold much affection for Badiuz-Zaman Mirza, he had to please him as the throne rightfully belonged to him. Most courtiers, led by Alisher Navoi, considered the 11-year-old son of Badiuz-Zaman Mirza, Mumin Mirza (1486–1497), worthy of the throne, openly expressing their views to the Sultan. Naturally, such speculations among the archon state did not leave Khadija Begim indifferent.

In the spring of 1497, the Sultan marched against Hisar. According to the Sultan's decree, Badiuz-Zaman, who ruled in Astrobod, replaced his son Muhammad Mumin Mirza and joined his father's army. After the battle, Sultan Husein appointed Badiuz-Zaman Mirza, son of Baykara, governor of the Balkh province, and his beloved son Muzaffar Husein Mirza governor of Astrobod. This decree was significant for Badiuz-Zaman Mirza, who wanted to give Astrobod to his son Mumin Mirza. Thus, a conflict arose, leading to a bloody confrontation between the Sultan and Badiuz-Zaman Mirza on May

2, 1497. Badiuz-Zaman's army was crushed, and Muzaffar Husayn Mirza's army captured Astrobod, bringing Muhammad Mumin Mirza to Herat and imprisoning him at Ikhtiyariddin's fortress.

Khadija Begim, who had been waiting for a long time, took advantage of the Sultan's drunkenness in the presence of Minister Nizam-ul-Mulk at the Murgab military base to seal the order for the immediate execution of Muhammad Mumin Mirza, and the sentence was carried out that night.

In April 1506, Sultan Husein Baykara died. Due to Khadija Begim's short-sighted interference in the kingdom's affairs, two princes, Badiuz-Zaman Mirza and Muzaffar Husein Mirza, ascended the throne. When Shaibanikhan attacked Khurasan, the two princes resided in two districts - Badiuz-Zaman in Kararabat and Muzaffar Husein Mirza in Tarnob. From the first blow, the two princes fled to Turkey via both sides - Badiuz-Zaman to Kandahar and Muzaffar Hussein Mirza to Astrobod. The defense of Herat was entrusted to three or four incompetent individuals, led by Khadija. Shaibanikhan easily captured Herat. Khadija Begim lived under house arrest without leaving Herat. In 1509, upon hearing that her son Muzaffar Husein Mirza was in Astrobod, she went to see him with the permission of Jon Vafu Mirza, appointed governor of Herat by Shaibanikhan. When Khadija arrived in Astrobod, her son Muzaffar Husayn Mirza fell ill and was on his deathbed. He would die soon. After offering condolences to her son, Khadija returned to Herat - Hazratkulova, E. (2019).

In the Baburnama, an incident that greatly "impressed" Babur is related to Zuhra Begi agha, the mother of Sultan Ali Mirza. As Shaibanikhan conquered Bukhara and approached Samarkand, Zuhra Begi agha, either by her own will or deceived by traitorous princes, (... Abu Yusuf Arghun must have known of this plan; indeed, he will have been the traitor inventing it (Babur 1989) made a plan to hand over Samarkand to him, risking her son's future. "When we had been a few weeks in Kesh, news came that Sultan Ali Mirza had given Samarkand to Shaibanikhan. The particulars are these. The Mirza's mother, Zuhra Begi agha, in her ignorance and folly, had secretly written to Shaibanikhan that if he would take her (to wife), her son should give him Samarkand and that when Shaibanikhan had taken (her son's) father's country, he should give her son a country"... "As for that calamitous woman who, in her folly, gave her son's house and possessions to the winds to get herself a husband, Sheibanikhan cared not one atom for her, indeed did not regard her as the equal of a mistress or a concubine."

4 CONCLUSION

The more Babur appreciates the positive qualities in people, especially women, the more strongly he condemns their negative qualities. To his evident embarrassment, Babur openly expresses his anger and hatred. In the words of his mother, he writes about the situation of Sultan Ali Mirza, who lost his wife: "The story of this man cannot be over. This glorious movement cannot be heard anymore" - Rajabova Burobiya (2013).

In the "Baburnama," Babur describes the image of about sixty women to varying degrees, based on the nature of their work. These images and their attitudes are also crucial in defining some aspects of Babur's character. Babur strives to be objective in presenting the images of the women he describes, using a historical-comparative method.

Research in this area will provide an opportunity to clarify the many historical facts and issues that await a solution.

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