

## ZAHIRIDDIN MUHAMMAD BABUR: MULTIFACETED PHILOSOPHY AND LITERARY TALENT

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### Abstract:

The article explores the works of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, focusing on his unique philosophical perspectives and thoughts on society. Babur is recognized not only as a prominent ruler and military leader but also for his intellectual and literary contributions, as well as his deep reflections on human nature and society. The study particularly examines how his works, especially the Baburnama and his poetry, address themes such as human nature, life's purpose, justice, love, and the value of humanity. Babur's philosophical views and creations remain highly relevant for contemporary society.

**Keywords:** Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, Baburnama, philosophy, literature, humanitarianism, justice, society, poetry.

### Introduction

Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur is not only a great military leader and statesman but also a remarkable literary talent who left an indelible mark on world history. His works and activities provide significant insights into the social, political, and cultural aspects of 15th–16th-century Eastern society. Babur stands out not only as a political leader but also as a profound thinker, offering unique philosophical reflections on society and humanity.

Babur's works, particularly his poetry and Baburnama, vividly reflect the social, economic, and spiritual aspects of the era in which he lived. In his writings, he pays special attention to themes such as the role of the individual in society, humanitarian values, justice, nature and its beauty, and the instability of life. Babur's philosophical views are deeply intertwined with his personal life and the realities of society, making it clear how closely his thoughts are connected to both his individual experiences and the larger social context.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The life and works of Babur were shaped by the rapidly changing conditions of his time. The political tensions, hardships, and persecutions he faced enriched his worldview and influenced his approach to social issues. Through the social and philosophical foundations in his works, Babur left a significant spiritual legacy not only for his contemporaries but also for future generations. Analysing the main ideas in his works allows for an understanding of the complex relationship between society and individuals. Babur's views on socio-historical realities, his reflections on the meaning of human life, and their contemporary relevance are central themes of scholarly research. In his creative work, Babur thoroughly addressed the social issues of his era. The following aspects are particularly important in his works:

- Babur saw just governance as a key factor in the development of both individuals and society.



In his political activities, justice and the rule of law played a crucial role;

- In the Baburnama, detailed information about the economic life and social relations of different regions and societies is presented. He paid great attention to the lifestyles of people and the balance between social strata;

- Babur placed great emphasis on knowledge and enlightenment, considering education a primary tool for the spiritual development of individuals.

Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur's works gained widespread attention as early as the 16th century. His difficult and complex life journey, as well as the profound philosophical nature, sincerity, and naturalness of his creativity, captivated the hearts of those eager for enlightenment. Babur's works were widely circulated during his time, and extensive information about them is found in historical and biographical sources. His rich legacy has been translated into numerous languages, including English, Turkish, French, Russian, German, Japanese, Spanish, and Italian, and has been the subject of various academic studies. Interest in Babur's works has remained strong to this day, as evidenced by international scholarly conferences, special publications, monographs, and articles dedicated to his creativity.

One such study is by American scholar S.M. Berk in his work Akbar Shah – The Greatest of the Mughals. Before discussing Akbar's history, Berk places particular focus on the lives and activities of his ancestors – Amir Timur, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, and Humayun. In discussing Babur, Berk emphasizes the greatness of his lineage, stating: "... in his veins flows the blood of two of Central Asia's most renowned military leaders—on his father's side, the fifth descendant of Timur, and on his mother's side, the twelfth descendant of Genghis Khan". This recognition further underscores the significant historical and ancestral value of Babur's legacy.

#### **METHODOLOGY & EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS**

S.M. Berk's work holds significant importance in the study of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur's life and works from an international perspective. In creating this work, the author conducted extensive research, successfully addressing certain shortcomings and misconceptions in Western scholarship. One distinctive feature of the work is that the author relied on rare primary sources such as the Baburnama, Humayunnama, Tarikh-i Rashidi, and Abulfazl's Akbarnama to draw conclusions about Babur and the history of the Timurid dynasty. This approach provides the work with solid scientific grounding and reliability. Berk's study is regarded as a pivotal academic step in advancing the in-depth and unbiased study of Babur's contributions in the West.

In his work, Berk thoroughly examines the history of the Timurid dynasty, analysing global Babur studies in depth and offering comparative interpretations to draw accurate conclusions. His efforts to clarify certain controversial issues are notable. For instance, he addresses the incorrect view regarding the naming of the empire established by Babur in India as the "Great Mughal Empire." Berk clarifies this term's origins, emphasizing that Babur referred to himself and his army as Turks in his memoirs. However, during the 13th-14th centuries, the people of India, who faced invasions by the Mongols, referred to all invaders from the north as "Mughals," which resulted in the term being used to describe Babur's army as well.

Through this clarification, Berk corrects Western misconceptions and contributes to a more accurate interpretation of the Timurid dynasty's history. His research aids in understanding the true historical and ethnic heritage of the Mughals, shedding light on a topic that has long been



debated. This explanation is crucial in grasping the genuine ethnic and historical roots of the Timurid dynasty. Therefore, S.M. Berk's work helps correct misconceptions in Western Babur studies and ensures a more truthful representation of the subject.

When discussing Babur Shah, Berk primarily relies on Baburnama to explain all historical evidence. The author interprets Babur's military campaigns, battles, leadership skills, and strategies, as well as his views on weapons, through a thorough analysis of Baburnama as a unique source. Additionally, Berk describes Babur's relationships with his relatives and his letters to his sons, presenting his inner world as a person and as a creative individual. In doing so, the author emphasizes Babur's personal traits and his role in the history of the Timurid dynasty and the great empire they created.

S.M. Berk acknowledges Babur not only as a great military leader but also as a person of high moral qualities and a unique talent. He praises Babur's creative personality, human values, and artistic talent, highlighting their importance. Berk's elevated assessment of Babur reflects the international significance of his creative and spiritual legacy and further fuels interest in his personality. The author strives to present Babur as a multifaceted figure—general, king, father, ordinary man, poet, historian, and exceptional scholar—with high regard. He draws attention to Babur's urban planning works, such as the beautiful landscapes and organized gardens along the Yamuna River, which were admired by the people of India, who referred to these man-made nature wonders as "Kabul."

Based on primary sources, Berk's information reveals the vast scale of Babur's urban development activities in India. The extent and impact of these works underscore Babur's significant role in shaping his legacy in the region. In the initial chapter dedicated to Babur, Berk provides a comprehensive and complete portrayal of his life, analysing his military, creative, and political activities, as well as his personal characteristics. By presenting Babur's life and legacy clearly and accurately, the author emphasizes the important stages in understanding his personality.

## RESULTS

Since the Baburnama is a historical work, Babur's persona is depicted as a historical figure within it. The scope of the events he participated in and the ideas he expressed are primarily shaped from a historical perspective. This aspect often leads literary scholars to associate Babur's poetry with his personal circumstances when evaluating it. This connection is also observable in Western Babur studies. However, when we carefully examine Babur's poetry, we see that the nature of the lyrical protagonist is more complex than we might initially expect.

Babur's philosophical worldview, his approach to understanding the essence of the world and humanity, and the degree of connection between events and essence leave clear marks in his poetry. His inner world and spiritual realm are vividly and richly expressed through the nature of the lyrical protagonist in the Baburnama. If we closely analyse the realm of symbols and their meanings in Babur's poetry, we find that his works are filled with philosophical thoughts and mystical wisdom. Therefore, it is crucial to analyse Babur's poetry not only from an aesthetic standpoint but also in a deep philosophical and spiritual context.

Babur's creative works revolve around philosophical ideas such as the meaning of human life and one's role in society. Some key themes in his poetry include:



- A deep reflection on the transient nature of life, where Babur encourages people to remain hopeful and always strive for goodness, far from despair;
- The depiction of nature as an essential part of human life, with the beauty of nature being one of the central themes in his poetry and the Baburnama;
- Babur viewed spiritual values as the core meaning of human life, giving particular emphasis to love, loyalty, and tolerance in the human heart.

## CONCLUSIONS

The works of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur represent a unique cultural heritage, encapsulating the social-political events of his time and profound philosophical reflections on human spirituality. His works, especially the Baburnama and his poetry, address some of the most important social and moral issues, such as the instability of life, human nature, justice, loyalty, love, and humanitarian values. Babur criticized the injustices in society while also placing deep emphasis on the inner world of the individual and their emotional experiences.

Babur's social and philosophical views were shaped by his personal experiences and the impact of historical events. His works profoundly highlight themes such as patience in overcoming difficulties and the drive toward creativity despite life's complexities. Babur held great significance not only in his time but also as a spiritual and intellectual leader in subsequent centuries.

Approaching Babur's works with analysis offers not only a better understanding of historical and social processes but also allows for deep contemplation of human nature, values, and the individual's role in society. The ideas expressed in his works, particularly the aspiration for humanity to live based on universal values, remain highly relevant for modern society.

Thus, Babur's social and philosophical foundations are clearly reflected in his personal life, creative works, and his relationship with society. His writings inspire light and hope, urging the appreciation of justice and humanitarian principles. Babur's spiritual legacy continues to serve as a unique moral school for each generation.

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