CHAPTER - IV

LITERARY IMPORTANCE OF TUZUK-I-BABURI AND
TUZUK-I-JAHANGIRI

From historical point of view both the Memoirs, Tuzuk-i-Baburi and Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri are important texts. Their historical importance lies in the fact that they carry full potential to reconstruct the political and cultural history of Central Asia and Mughal India from 1494, when Babur succeeded to the throne of Farghana, to the third decade of seventeenth century, when Jahangir stopped writing his Memoirs due to illness and old age.

As a student from literary background, it is incumbent upon me to evaluate the literary and linguistic importance of these two Memoirs also.

TUZUK-I-BABURI: Also styled as Babur Nama, was written in Chaghatai Tuiskish. In this book Babur recorded the political, military and social events from the time of his accession to the throne of Farghana in 1494, till September 7th 1529, when it comes to an abrupt end, while the date of his death is 26th December 1530 A.D.

We have no way of knowing what prompted Babur to write his open, frank and occasionally quite intimate Memoirs. Aside from a few internal references to the work as a history and his stated determination to be absolutely truthful and unbiased
in his record, he gives no hint of his motivation or inspiration. According to a group of historians, the earlier Central Asian rulers possessed the habit of writing their Memoirs. It is said that Amir Timur, the great ancestor of Babur, had also Memoirs to his credit. We may not agree to this view, but it is well known that Mughal rulers seriously believed that Amir Timur had also written his autobiographical Memoirs. Moreover royal Memoirs flourished in Central Asia, around Babur's time. Some what earlier than Babur, Sultan Husain Mirza wrote in Chaghtai Turki, what has been called an apologia. Thacktson rightly says, "it is not autobiographical in any real sense". (1) It is all probable that inspired by the prevalent trend of Memoirs writing as percieved by the Timurid princes, Babur decided to pen down his experiences of the battle field and other arenas of human life, viz. family affairs, education, entertainment, society and culture etc.

The linguistic style adopted by Babur to write the Memoirs is once plain and graceful. On the authority of Mirza Haider, Thacktson writes, "Babur's Chaghtai is fluid, idiomatic and colloquial - written in a simple, unaffected and yet very pure sytle". (2) Unlike other writers of the time he comes straight to the subject, does not give elaborate introduciton and is matter of fact, brief and yet exhaustive in his description. Babur's native tongue, Chaghtai Turki had little or no literary pretensions. Therefore his style is devoid of the sumptuous Persianate artifice and literary contrivance and is characterized by straight forward and to the point

2. ibid, p-14.
narration of events. Candour and freshness are another characteristics of his narrative. The entire work reads like a romance with the military events and natural beauty also. Once a reader commences reading, his interest remains in the narrative, till it is completed. He also gives pen-pictures of notable celebrities of the age. Therefore it can be of immense help for writing a *Tazkira*. The detailed description of physical features, animals, birds, flowers and trees lift the Memoirs to literary levels also. The Memoirs reveal Babur as one intensely fond of beauties of nature. Therefore, A.L. Srivastava correctly writes, "They (Memoirs of Babur) are considered to be one of the most enthralling and romantic work in the literature of all time". (3)

Babur has preserved a great deal of history of his period, not found in any other source. Khawand Mir, author of *Habib-us-Siyar* and Mirza Haider Dughlat, author of *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* were reliable contemporary historians and knew Babur personally, the latter was even his cousin brother. Both authors used Babur's Memoirs as a primary source for their own reports, and insofar as they treat the same material as Babur does, they corroborate his date. As a prime historical source *Babur nama* is equally important from literature point of view. Though Mir Ali Sher Navai is considered as the greatest scholar of Chaughtai Turki language and he produced many masterpiece in this language. At the same time Babur is also considered as a great scholar of Chaughtai Turki and his style is termed to be

flawless. His position as a scholar of this language ranks second to Nawai. Both of them are unanimously regarded as pioneer of modern Chaghtai Turkish. Babur has many other literary works to his credit like, _Arud Risalei_, a Chaghtay treatise on prosody; _Mubayyan_, a _mathnawi_ dealing with some problems of Hanafi law shows that he was interested in jurisprudence also; translation of Khwaja Obaidullah Ahrari's treatise _Risala-e-Walidiya_ and finally a collection of his poetry, bulk of which are in Turki and some are in Persian. But his Memoirs are also interspersed with Chaghtai and Persian verses. The verses also find place in his _Diwan_, due to which the literary value of _Babur Nama_ increases considerably. Moreover its colourful and lively descriptive passages also suggest that it is one of the finest example not only of Chaghtai but of entire Turki prose. Till this day the _Babur Nama_ is one of the longest example of sustained narrative prose in Chaghtai Turki language. Earlier also poets and writers had sporadically dabbled in Chaghatai from the beginning of the Timurid period. Under the patronage of Babur's elder contemporaries in Herat, Sultan Husain Mirza and Ali Sher Nawai, Chaghtai poetry enjoyed short lived florescence at the end of fifteenth century. The continuing strife in Central Asia and the continuous threat to Timurid rulers from Uzbek and Safavid sides, also adversely affected the development of Chaghtai language and literature. Since Safavids primary cultural identification was with Iran, their cultural language was Persian. In fact they were also ethnically Turkic and even their home language remained Turkish throughout the dynasty's long history but their Turkish was the
dialect of the Turcoman of eastern Anatolia and Azerbaijan and not the eastern Chaghtai dialect of the Timurids. On the other hand, the Uzbeks suffering from a cultural inferiority complex, concentrated on the cultivation of Persian, mainly by importing talent, both voluntarily and involuntarily from Timurid Herat. They seem to have little time or inclination for patronage of their own Turkish language. Therefore by opting not to write in Persian, the universal language of culture and literature of his time and place, and keep his Memoirs in Chaghtai, the Timurids spoken language - indeed of the whole Turco-Mongolian world at the time, Babur along with Mir Ali Sher Nawai attempted to turn his native language into a viable literary vehicle. But later like the Safavids, his descendants in India too opted for Persian language and patronized its development. The rise of Abdullah Khan Uzbek had overshadowed all smaller dynasties and kingdoms in Central Asia due to which, development of Chaghtai language and literature received a major setback. Therefore it will be appropriate to say that by the turn of events Chaghatai could not prosper and the efforts of Babur and Mir Ali Sher Nawai turned out to be a flash in the pan.

As mentioned above, Babur's descendants in India soon opted Persian as their official language, but it is sure that Humayun knew Chaghtai well and as an avid reader, he read his father's Memoirs too. "Babur even corresponded with him in that language and often corrected his spelling and commented on his style". (4) But

it is nearly impossible that Humayun's son and successor, Akbar also knew Chaghtai, for Akbar was only fourteen years old when Humayun died in 1556 and the young emperor was raised by the regent, Bayram Khan, a Turcoman of eastern Anatolia and Azerbaijani origin, whose father and grandfather had earlier joined Babur's service. Bayram Khan wrote poetry in Chaghtai and Persian and his son Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan was fluent in Persian, Chaghatai and Hindi and composed poetry in all the three languages. During Akbar's long reign however Chaghtai was on wane, as was the Central Asian Timurid character of Babur's empire, and the dominant Persian language and Persianate culture of the sub-continent rapidly drove the Central Asian Turkic element into oblivion. It is difficult to imagine that how many at the Mughal court could read a book in Chaghtai by the end of Akbar's long reign. One of the few who could read and understand Chaghtai was Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan who translated the Babur Nama into Persian on the order of emperor Akbar. But prior to his translation, two Persian versions of Babur Nama were already in existence. The first Persian translation was done by Zain Khan, next by Payanda Khan and subsequently by Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan and Mir Abu Talib Turbati.

After completing the Persian translation Khan-i-Khana presented it to Akbar in 1589, aptly after Akbar had visited Babur's tomb in Kabul. Till now it is the most popular Persian version of the Turkish text. It is almost certain that the Khan-i-Khanan used Babur's own text to translate the work into Persian. It is
extremely unlikely, given the turmoil after Babur's death and Humayun's years of exile in Iran (1542-55), that there had been time to have many copies of the Memoirs produced. The Persian translation of the Babur Nama incorporates into the text a marginal note Humayun made on Babur's mention of Humayun first shave. The inclusion of Humayun's comment implies that Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan was working from the original manuscript, on which Humayun had made marginal notes. Later also many copies of the Persian translation were produced, however some of them lavishly illustrated by artists in the Mughal workshops.

The importance of translating the Chagtaí Babur Nama into Persian lies in the fact that, during the Timurid's foray in Central Asia, there had been a great deal of translation of Persian texts into various sorts of Turkish dialects over the centuries, like Babur translated the Persian Risala-e-Walidiya into Chagtaí Turki. But there was no precedent at all for the translation of Turkish literature into Persian. As the Chagtaí language was gradually going into oblivion in India and many of the descendants of Babur were unable to read and understand Chagtaí, it was incumbent upon the successive Mughal descendants to get it translated into a language, popular during those days and understandable to them as well.

The style of translation adopted by Khan-i-Khanan has also been an issue of debate among the scholars. W.M. Thackston who translated the Babur Nama into English from the Persian version, says that, "the Khan-i-Khanan must have chosen as a model, the type of translation with which he was most familiar, that is, the
interlinear translation of Koranic Arabic to Persian or Turkish. In those translations, every word is translated verbatim, without much regard to the syntax of the target language". Therefore he says that Khan-i-Khanan opted for literal and word by word translation. Thacktson is quite right in his assessment of Khan-i-Khanan's Persian translation. The translator's limitation becomes evident when he directly uses the Turkish words without giving their Persian equivalents like, etc.

As it is mentioned above, Babur's memoirs are also full of Chaghtai and Persian verses. This characteristic adds another aspect to the literary and linguistic characteristics of the text. While some of the verses are Babur's own composition others are quoted from various famous poets or Babur's own nobles. Almost all the Chaghtai verses are composed by Babur himself and the Persian verses are quoted from famous Persian poets like Saadi Shirazi, Nezami Ganjavi, Amir Khusrow, Khwaja Hafiz Shirazi, Mir Ali Sher Nawai etc. In an incident when one of his nobles Hasan-i-Yaqub rebelled against him and got killed accidentally by the arrow shot by his own men. Babur quoted a complet from Nezami Ganjavi's Khusrow-o-Shireen.

On another occasion Babur quotes a quartain from Saadi Shirazi's Gulistan when he

5. ibid, p-13.
6 Babur, Babur Nama, Persian translation-Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khana, Bombay, 1891, p. 17
came to know that, people of Samarqand were unable to bear with the oppressive rule of Sultan Mahmud Mirza and finally opened their mouth to curse him and lifted their hands for redressal.

When Babur was mustering support from the Mongols and Turks to launch a united attack against Uzbek ruler Shabani Khan, he cites following verses from Saadi's Gulistan as an example.

When Babur came to India, he was surprised to see many new things which were not available or produced in Central Asia. One of these things which surprised him was mango fruit. He writes in his Memoirs that though he did not give it preference over the musk melons of Farghana, but still it is the best fruit of India and he cites a couplet from Khwaja Khusrow in this regard.

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7 Ibid, p. 16
8 Ibid, p. 64
In addition to some great Persian scholars, Babur also quotes couplets composed by his own nobles. He quotes the satirical couplet composed by one of his nobles named Khwaja Kalan, which the latter had written on a wall of his house and fled from India.

""آرگریز واستمانت گزرند کنم"" سیاه روی شوم گزرنا بر کنم ""(10)

Babur says that such jest of Khwaja Kalan and his departure doubled his vexation and he felt disheartened on such attitude.

Babur's own compositions are also cited to suit the narrative of certain incidents. Once he got infatuated with a young boy whom he saw in the camp bazar, he composed the following couplet to commemorate that occasion.

""چهکس پولاد نم گزار مسی و رمیاپاد"" پیچ کلی پیدا تا رمی چپ وا سپاد ""(11)

At another occasion while he was in the company of his nobles, he writes that a verse came to his mind spontaneously.

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9 Ibid, p. 198
10 Ibid, p. 525
11 Ibid, p. 49
After his victory against the Rajput ruler Rana Sanga in the Battle of Khanwa, fought in 1527, Babur took the title of ghazi. He mentions it in poetic form in the following verses.

Babur also acknowledges the poetic excellence of his other contemporaries and quotes their couplets in his memoirs. He quotes a verse composed by Yaqub bin Hasan.

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12 Ibid, p. 448
13 Ibid, p. 214-II
14 Ibid, p. 220-II
At another place where he mentions about the poetic excellence and scholastic accomplishment of Mir Ali Sher Nawai, he quotes Nawai's following verse.

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Like Babur, his Kinsmen also possessed literary taste and creativity. Acknowledging the talent of his uncle Bai Sunghar Mirza, the ruler of Herat, he mentions a couplet composed by him.

(17)

Therefore in a nutshell it can be said that with respect to narration of events and its content, Babur's Memoirs are of great historical importance. But the writing style, quoting couplets in between the narrative and its various translated versions especially the Persian one, and the style adopted by the translators give it immense literary and linguistic importance as well.

TUZUK-I-JAHANGIRI: Emperor Jahangir had started writing his Memoirs in

15 Ibid, p. 10
16 Ibid, p. 14
17 Ibid, p. 44
1605. As it is already mentioned that the Central Asian Timurids and Indian Mughals widely believed of a Memoir written by Amir Timur and Babur had also written his Memoirs, Jahangir got inspired by his forefathers to jot down his experiences of battle field and other aspects of his life, in the form of Memoirs. Jahangir ruled for 22 years, but due to ill health, he stopped writing it in 1622 A.D. and assigned the task of writing the Memoirs in his own dictation, to his noble Mutamad Khan. But Mutamad Khan could write it till the next two years only, later Muhammad Hadi completed the *Tuzak-i-Jahangiri*, mentioning the events from Jahangir's 19th regnal year till the latter's death, in the beginning of 18th century. He also added a preface to this great work. The famous historian and orientalist Henry Beveridge argues that, the chapters written by Mutamad Khan are nothing but recreation of his own monumental work *Iqbal-Nama-i-Jahangiri*, whereas Mirza Hadi has reproduced extracts from the work of Kamgar Husaini known as *Ma'asir-i-Jahangiri*\(^{18}\). Therefore to highlight the literary and linguistic importance of *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, we have to evaluate the style of writing of three writers collectively.

*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* is the creation of a period when *Sahk-i-Hindi* was in vogue. According to some literary critics *Sahk-i-Hindi* starts from the writing of Amir Khusrow Dehlawi and in the entire period, till the writing of *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, the characteristics attached to this Indian style of literature

writing is found in most of the works produced in India. This is much more manifested in poetry, but we can trace its ingredients in prose works also. Bahar Mashhadi has defined Sabk-i-Hindi as using difficult and ambiguous diction, out of fashion allegory and use of Indian metaphors in Persian. Akbar Nama, Ain-i-Akbari and Shah Jahan Nama by Abdul Hamid Lahori are the true representatives of Sabk-i-Hindi. But Jahangir has used a style in his book which is qualitatively different from the style of writing practiced by Abul Fazl Allami in both of his works.

Jahangir's style is simple, lucid and without archaic. The author begins his book without bringing the pompous and ornamental phraseology which was the custom of the day. In starts with the following words

١٩ جهانگیر, تذکر-جاهانگیری, از سوی سایید احمد, الیگر, ١٨٦٤, ص. ١

Jahangir also describes the geography of cities while narrating the political events of his realm, he even minutely describes the geographical boundary of different cities. To substantiate this line of argument we can quote from his book where he writes about the city of Agra.
In the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* we find that Jahangir compares Indian currency with Iranian and Central Asian denominations of those days. This proves the hypothesis advanced by R.C. Foltz in his book 'Mughals and Central Asia' that Indian Mughal empire was, in true sense, an extension of Iranian and Central Asian culture. (21) Jahangir writes about the renovation of Agra fort which had reached its completion in Akbar's time, in the following words.

Comparing the Indian style of architecture with that of Iraq, Iran and Central Asia, Jahangir writes.

We get the impression from the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* that the Mughal elites were always well informed about the political and cultural developments of contemporary Iran nd Transoxiana.

One of the chief characteristics of Jahangir's writing is quoting verses from the famous Persian poets as the context demands. For example, he quotes a couplet from one of the Qasidah's of Mas'ood Sad Salman.

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20 Ibid, p. 2
22 Jahangir, Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri, p. 2
23 Ibid,
Some times Jahangir quotes the famous couplet of Nizam-ud-din Auliya and Amir Khusrow, which suggests that Jahangir adopted liberal policy towards other religions also and had deep respect and gratitude for all religious ideologies.

Our author, not only mastered the art of Persian prose writing but possessed a critic eye and often pointed out the errors in the poetry composed by others. At the time of his accession to the royal throne, some poets composed verses eulogising him and the auspicious occasion. Jahangir selected some of them on the merit of its qualitative and poetical value. he himself writes about the event in following words.

Like his eclectic father, Jahangir also shows deep interest in the various sect and cults prevalent during that period and he goes into argument and discussion with religious and spiritual leaders of varying and divergent faith. In these circles, question of metampsychosis and monotheism were the most debated topics.

24 Ibid,
25 Ibid, p. 81
26 Ibid, p. 5
Jahangir praises Akbar's love for knowledge in the following words:

The *Tuzuk* also gives sufficient information about the customs and rituals, prevalent during the reign of Akbar. Therefore this book is indisposable for the reconstructoin of history of Akbar's reign.

In addition to the narration of political, military and soci-cultural events, Jahangir also gives sufficient information about some poets, and quotes verses from their *Diwans* or other poetry books. Therefore this texts is all important for the evaluation of *Tazkira* writings of Mughal period. Jahangir himself had evaluated and passed his judgement on some literary features and poetics also. It should be mentioned that in Jahangir's reign we find a number of Hindu poets writing in Persian. Jahangir describes Manohar as a person well versed in Persian literature and quotes a couplet from his works,

Inspite of the fact that Turkish was the mother tongue of the Mughal rulers and princes, they used Persian language to excel in the field of literature and poetry.

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27 Ibid, p. 14
28 Ibid, p. 8
The Mughal princes and princesses composed many couplets in Persian language. 

Jahangir has quoted a couplet by his brother Daniyal in his text.

"از شوقی شکری تو شوہ چان تو چاپا کر
پرمر کر خود چمتو یکد و جنما " (29)

Jahangir quotes a couplet of Saif Khan whose lineage goes back to Central Asia.

"بنا تال کا از ما آتی پرخاست
پچانے میں گوشت آن تال شر راست " (30)

At another place in the Memoirs, Jahangir quotes some verses of a poet called Charan and comments that poems with such fresh themes and new ideas are rarely composed by Indians.

"دگر پربر درکتی جھان افرز
شب شو کچھ سخیش لغزت روز
زان که پنچان اور نئند امسر
پ جامودی کہا کوشا پیور
شکرک کہ باذ آن پنچان پری
پر مستگھن شائی این تیام شتی
کر زهگتار خشی آن شیا
کس پ جام شد کردو جام سیا " (31)

29 Ibid, p. 15
30 Ibid, p. 20
31 Ibid, p. 67
In order to make the text beautiful and interesting, Jahangir follows the pattern of earlier poets and historians and quotes verses from other poets. Sometimes he also puts his own composition.

In Jahangir's court the nobles and Amirs composed poems extempore and Jahangir encouraged them. We can surmise, the literary and academic activities of that age from such narrations, as Jahangir himself describes an event,

32 Ibid, p. 76
In his Memoirs Jahangir uses many terminologies and words of Hindi language, which shows that this language had made itself acceptable and popular in the ruling establishment. Like Akbar, Jahangir also had a fascination to give new names to many things, usually the nomenclature was done in Hindi language.

Jahangir writes at one place,

"بکالیا پاک کے روہد کی پزبان سنگرمارآب سیاہ".

At another place he mentions

"ناحیہ سنگرمار آپڑ کے حضرت پزبان سنگرمر آب سیاہ مرآب سیاہ"

Similarly we find many Indian proverbs used by him with their translated version in Persian language. We come across, hundreds of Indian terminologies, specially in Hindi language, few of which are mentioned below.

33 Ibid, p. 111
Like typical classical poets Jahangir was also a nature lover. He mentions with obsession the names of Indian flowers and also describes their features. The flowers mentioned in the memoirs are,

گل سپیده گل سیاهه، گل زرد، گل عصاره نکجا، گل سیاه، گل سیاهه، گل خوشخیل، گل خوشخیل

These were a few examples of Persian couplets quoted in the memoirs and of Hindi words and terminologies. In fact the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* comprises of plenty of Persian verses and words and terminologies of Indian origin which cannot be mentioned here in its entirety. Therefore like the *Babur Nama*, the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* also carries immense literary importance. Both the memoirs, bring their respective writers at par with each other, as author and compiler of literary masterpiece.