

Literary significance of Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri

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The Mughals were not only world famous warriors and statesmen, But they were also keen readers of literature, philosophy, theology, Traditional sciences, so on and so forth. Therefore, all of the Mughal emperors possessed cultured and polite literary taste and had the God given ability to evaluate critically each and every thing. Emperor Babur wrote his autobiography in Chughtai language which was his native language and this is known by the number of names and captions e.g., Babur Nama, Tuzuk-i-Baburi, waqati-i-Baburi etc. Similarly king Jahangir wrote his memoirs in Persian language and is named as Waqat-i-Jahangiri and Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri. In these Autobiographies both the kings write down their experiences of the battle field and diplomatic affairs, Public personal life and socio-economic and cultural conditions of the Indian people during their reign. Here in this research article we would like to lay focus on the literary importance of the Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri.

In the year 1605 A.D, Emperor Jahangir started writing his memoirs. As already mentioned that when Babur wrote his memoirs, so it is obvious that the emperor Jahangir was inspired by this and thus he began to write his own Tuzuk in order to depict his experiences of the battle-field and other aspects of his life in the shape and form of memoirs. We are aware that the king Jahangir ruled about twenty two years, but unfortunately due to his bad health he then quit writing it in the year 1622 A.D. In the 17th year of his reign Motamid Khan Bakshi The court historian of Jahangir under his supervision and guidance continued the memoirs up to the beginning of the 19th year of his accession to the throne and finally Mr.Mohammad Hadi brought it down to the end of his rule with an introduction. In 1864 when Sir Syed Ahmad edited the Tuzuk-i-Jahangir his edition includes both these continuations. Renowned historian and orientalist

Henry Beveridge argues that the chapters written by the Motamid Khan are nothing but recreation of his own monumental work, Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri were Mirza Hadi has reproduced extracts from the works of Khawaja Kamgar Hussaini the author of the well-known contemporary book namely Maasir-i-Jahangiri.1

Emperor Jahangir's style is simple lucid and archaic. It was the period that when Sabk-i-Hindi (style of writing) was in vogue. About the lucid and simple style used by the Mughals especially by the king Jahangir, a great critic of the Persian language Mohammad Taqi Bahar in his famous work says about the style of the writing during this period:

در این دوره نثر عمومی ساده و روان بود-----این شیوه در اواخر عهد صفویه در ایران و هند رواج یافته و به اوج کمال رسیده است

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The Author begins his book with out bringing the pompous and oriental Phraseology which was the trend of the day. So he begins with these lines:

از عنایات بی غایت الهی ساعت نجومی از روز پنج شنبه هشتم جمادی الثانی هزار و چهارده هجری گذشته در دارالخلافة آگره در سن سی و هشت سالگی بر تخت سلطنت جلوس نمودم-

3

In his memoirs emperor Jahangir compares Indian currency with the Iranian and Central Asia denominations of those days along with this he also mentioned and described geography of cities while narrating the political events of his sultanate he writes about the maintenance and reconstructions of Agra Fort in the following lines:

پیش از تولد من آن را انداخته قلعه ای از سنگ سرخ تراشیده بنا نهادند-----سی و پنج لک روپیه که یک صد و پانزده هزار تومان رائج ایران و یک کرور و پنج لک خانی به حساب توران خرج این قلعه شده آبادانی این معموره بر هر دو طرف دریای مذکور واقع شد-

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The Mughals were also well informed about the political and cultural development of their contemporaries. Emperor Jahangir was a gifted poet like Babur's memoirs his Autobiography is filled with the verses of the classical poets like Masood saad salman lahori :

حصار آگره پیدا شده از میان گرد
 بسان کوه برو باز های چون کوهسار

5

The Emperor's love for wine is well known he refers to it in one of his verse:

ساگر می بر رخ گلزار می باید کشید
 ابر بسیار است می بسیار می باید کشید

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At the time of his accession to the royal throne different poets and writers composed verses eulogizing him on this auspicious occasion. One of these courtiers namely Maktoob Khan writes about this important event:

صاحب قران ثانی شهنشاه جهانگیر
 با عدل و داد بنشست بر تخت کامرانی
 اقبال بخت و دولت فتح و شکوه و نصرت
 پیشش کمر به خدمت بسته به شادمانی

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Emperor Jahangir himself writes about this event also in these following lines:

تاریخ های به جهت جلوس من گفته بودند همه را نوشتن خوش نیآمد به همین تاریخی که
 مکتوب خان داروغه کتاب خانه و نقاش خانه از بنده های قدیم من است گفته
 بود، اکتفا نمودم-

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In addition to the narration of the Military, Political and Socio-Cultural events, he also gives a sufficient information about some poets and quotes verses their or other books related to the poetry. It should be mentioned that during the Jahangirs era we see a good number of Hindu poets also like Raja Suraj Singh, Mirza Minochar Turani

etc.9.Jahangir quotes some verses of a poet known as Charn and comment's that poetry with such fresh themes, ideals and new ideas are rarely composed by the Hindus:

گر پسر داشتی جهان افروز
شب نه گشتی همیشه بودی روز
که زشت کار گشتن آن شاه
کس به ماتم نه کرد جامه سیاه

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He also encouraged Amirs and Nobles in his court. We may estimate the literary and academic activities of that age from numerous narrations, discussions, poetry competition etc. Besides this uncounted poetic exchanges have been recorded between the emperor Jahangir and his favorite consort Nurjahan.Jahangir once said:

بلبل نیم که نعره کنم در دسر دهم
پروانه ام که سوزم و دم برنیاورم

Nurjahan quickly replied:

پروانه من نیم که به یک شعله جان دهم
شمعم که شب به سوزم و دم برنیاورم

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Similarly we find many Indian proverbs used by the king Jahangir with their translated versions in Persian language. Few of them are as under:

چنپه ،تالاب،سنگهاسن،گولی،مگر مچه،گچهری،داک چوکی،جهروکهو وجز آن

Like typical classical poet of Persian, he was also lover of nature. In this connection he visited Kashmir many times and was very much amazed by the natural beauties, elegance and mostly by its cheerful

climate which is main component of this beauty. So Jahangir explains his feelings about the valley of Kashmir in these lines as under:

کشمیر باغی است همیشه بهار، قلعه ای است آهنین حصار، پادشاهان را گلشنی است عشرت
افزاء، درویشان را خلوت کده ای است دلکشا-----در بهار جان نگار، کوه و دشت از اقسام شگوفه
مالا مال، در دیوار صحن و بام خانه، از مشعله لاله بزم افروز-

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In fact Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri comprises of plenty of Persian verses and words, and also Terminologies of Indian origin. Which cannot be mentioned here in it thoroughly. Therefore, the Magnum opus of King Jahangir is having a great and important literary significance. His records about his rule or daily account of his personal life has always fascinate the attention of the western scholars too. it is perhaps unnecessary to say anything about the importance of Jahangir's memoirs. They give a vivid picture of India in the early decades of 17th century and are valuable supplements to the Abul Fazl's Akbar Nama. About the importance of the Magnum opus of Jahangir Alexander Roger quotes like this:

“The royal authority of the east had more blend in them, then therefore king whose works have been catalogued by Horace Walpole and certainly the memoirs of Jahangir are far more human and fuller of matter then the story of Gallic wars”.

Emperor Jahangir's records of his life and reign have always attract the attention of the western scholars before the full translation of Alexander Rogers and Henry Beverdges extracts were translated by several western authors like, James Anderson, Francis Gladwin, W.H Lowe and first 9 years by Eriskine. As memoirs of Jahangir was translated by Alexander Rogers from the edition of the Sir Syed Ahmad and edited by Henry Beverdge. Sir Syed published his compilation in the year 1864 A.D. Unfortunately, the literary significance of the Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri till date has not been taken into the consideration in such a

way so that all the literary aspects may be displayed. Because it provides us the authentic knowledge about the concerned era. In this article the author attempted to throw the light on some of the literary aspects of this book in order to depict the literary magnitude of the Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri. so that the importance can be made available to the students, researchers, scholars, teachers and to the keen readers of the Persian literature.

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