Website:https://worldsiencepub.com/index.php/Imc Volume:6,Issue 01,October-2026

WESTERN VIEWS ON THE BABURID EMPIRE: HISTORY AND INTERPRETATION

Koraboyev Mirzokhid Khoshimovich
Namangan State Institute of Foreign Languages, Dotsent
(Associate Professor) of the Department of English Language and Literature
+998906408467

Abstract: The works of Western historians, literary critics and orientalists dedicated to Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur and the Baburid dynasty are discussed in the article. As well as, the works written by American writer Farzana Moon, are also analyzed, the author of six novels devoted to the representatives of the Great dynasty of Babur ruled in India more than three centuries.

Key words: western historians, literary critics, orientalists, dynasty, rule, tradition, pseudonym, heritage, India, Central Asia, empire, territory, general, ruler, symbol of wealth, recognize.

Аннотация: В статье рассматриваются произведения западных историков, литературоведов и учёных-востоковедов посвящённых Захириддину Мухаммаду Бабуру и династии бабуридов а также, рассматривается анализ произведений американской писательницы Фарзоны Мун написавщей серию исторических романов посвящённую представителям Великой династии бабуридов правявщие в Индии более трёх веков.

Ключевые слова: западные историки, литературоведы, учёные-востоковеды, династия, править, традиция, псевдоним, наследие, Индия, Центральная Азия, империя, территория, полководец, правитель, символ богатства, признать.

Western interest in the Baburid dynasty began through the accounts of travelers, diplomats, and early historians who visited India and described its court life, society, and rulers. Over time, these early observations were developed further by Orientalist scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, who translated and analyzed key historical sources such as the Baburnama and various Persian chronicles. Their works played an important role in shaping the Western understanding of Mughal history.

The dynasty, more widely known in global historiography as the Mughal Empire, represents one of the most significant political, cultural, and intellectual formations in early modern Eurasia. Founded by Zahiridddin Muhammad Babur in the early sixteenth century, the dynasty not only established a powerful state in the Indian subcontinent but also generated a rich legacy of literature, historiography, and cross-cultural exchange. The works of world translators and writers have played a crucial role in interpreting, preserving, and disseminating the history and cultural achievements of the Baburids to a global audience.

Founded in 1526 by Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, the dynasty lasted for 332 years and left an indelible mark on Indian culture, literature, art, architecture, in short, on all aspects of Indian life. The period of rule of 5 generations after Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur forms the basis of this dynasty. After the death of the last of these five great dynasties, Aurangzeb, Babur's great-grandson, in 1707, the great empire the Baburids had built over many years and with great difficulty began to collapse and officially continued in the form of scattered states until 1858. Representatives of this generation have an incomparable place not only for their skillful state management, but also for the rich literary heritage they left to their descendants.

The study of the history and culture of Babur and the Baburids attracted and aroused great interest not only in our country's scientists and writers, but also in foreign scientists, including those from Western countries. Western knowledge of the Mughals initially came through travel accounts - Bernier, Tavernier, and Manucci among them - whose depictions combined ethnographic curiosity with imperial wonder. The later Orientalist scholars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such as William Jones, H. M. Elliot, and John Dowson, sought to “scientize” these impressions through translation projects like The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians, the book comprising translations of medieval

© 2026 International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Applications . All Rights Reserved.

Persian chronicles based on the work of Henry Miers Elliot. It was originally published as a set of eight volumes between 1867-1877 in London.

According to information, the first work about Babur created in Europe is the scientific and educational work “Travels in the Mogul Empire” by François Bernier, a French traveler and physician who lived in India from 1658 to 1669 and served as a physician at the Baburids’ court. This work was created in 1670-1671 and was translated into English, Dutch, German and Italian over the next five years, and was highly appreciated and considered a unique source in political circles of that time[1]. The first Russian edition of this work was published in 1936, translated by Yu.A. Muravyov, and the second, supplemented edition was published in 2008 under the editorship of Yu.I. Semenov. François Bernier's "Travels in the Mogul Empire" was published in Uzbek in the 8th issue of the World Literature Journal in 2008, translated by Amir Fayzulla and Fayzi Shahismail[2].

Later, Westerners heard the name of Babur in 1697 through the French orientalist Barthélemy d'Herbelot de Molain-ville. He first introduced French readers to Alisher Navoi and Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur in his article "Babur or Babar" in the "Library of the East" (the Bibliothèque orientale) encyclopedia[3]. Europeans first began to express interest in the Baburnama in the 18th century, after a partial Dutch translation was out in 1705 that has been credited to statesman and scholar Nicholaes Witsen[4]. The book was seen as an emperor's manual. The first Russian-language translation of Babur's autobiography was published in 1857 by Nikolay Ilminksy, a professor of Turkic languages in Kazan. Nikolay Ilminsky had obtained an 18th century copy from Bukhara.

If we look at foreign Babur studies, the study of Babur and his work in Western Europe began mainly in the 18-19th century. The merits of French and English orientalists in this regard were invaluable. By the beginning of the 19th century, "Baburnama" was known to all European scholars. The merits of English orientalists in particular is great in the world fame of Babur's legacy. They are the first not only in translating and publishing "Baburnama", but also in researching and promoting it. On April 12, 1816, William Erskine, in a letter from Bombay to publishers in London, expressed his joy at having found an inexhaustible treasure and announced that he was translating "Baburnama". W. Erskine's translation, in collaboration with John Leyden, was published in 1826. This is the first complete English-language publication not only in Europe, but also in the world. The translators based their translation on the Uzbek and Persian versions of the work. W. Erskine wrote a lengthy introduction to the book, in which he introduces Babur and his works to English readers: “We rarely meet among the rulers of Asia such a brilliant and talented person as Babur. In the smooth activity of his mind, his cheerfulness and coolness, the freshness of his spirit despite the tricks of unfaithful fate, his generosity, courage, talent, love for science and art, and his active involvement in them, there is no Asian king who can compare with Babur.[5]” Frederick Gilbert Talbot published abridged editions of this edition twice (Memoirs of Baber, Emperor of India, first of the great Moghuls), in 1878 and 1909, and in 1921 the English orientalist A. Beveridge independently retranslated “Baburnama” from the original. In England alone, translations of “Baburnama” were published 9 times.

In 1828, the German scholar A. Keizer abridged the work from the English translation by W. Erskine and J. Leiden and published it in Leipzig. In 1871, “Baburnama” was published in French by the famous French orientalist Pave De Kurteil. After these translations, interest in the personality of Babur increased in Europe, and many works were created about him in various European languages.

Annemarie Schimmel a German scholar of Islamic studies, Persian literature widely regarded as one of the most important Western interpreters of Islamic culture in the 20th century. Schimmel was

[1] Ф.Бернье. История последних политических потрясений в государстве Великого Могола (Ю.И.Семёнов муҳаррирлигидаги русча нашри).-Москва: 2008.

[2] www.ziyouz.uz/ilm-va-fan/tarix/fransua-berne-boburiylar-saltanatining-songgi-tarixi/?ysclid=m6dgmkbmxo94098941

[3] Муҳамммадиева Д. Бобурноманинг Европа тилларидаги таржималари тахлили. Сўз санъати журнали. –Тошкент: 2019. 31-38 б.

[4] Иброхимов А. Бобурнома – буюк асар. – Тошкент: 2000. 13 б.

[5] Умаров Н. “Бобурнома” асари тарихий манба сифатида. Science box журнали, Жилд-02, Нашр-04. 2020. 127 б.

© 2026 International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Applications . All Rights Reserved.

born in 1922 in Germany, and she was multilingual-besides German, English, and Turkish, she spoke Arabic, Persian, Urdu, and Punjabi-and her interests ranged across the Muslim landscape[6]. Annemarie Schimmel occupies a unique position in the study of the Mughal Empire because her work does not follow the traditional model of political or military historiography, instead, she approaches the Baburid world through literature, mysticism, and cultural history, offering an interpretation of the Mughal period as a deeply spiritual and poetic civilization rather than only a political structure.

Schimmel emphasized internal intellectual traditions, especially Persian literary, as the key to understanding the cultural world of the empire founded by Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur and developed by rulers such as Akbar, her most directly relevant work is The Empire of the Great Mughals: History, Art and Culture, in which she presents a synthesis of Mughal political history with artistic, architectural, and literary developments, showing how Persian language and aesthetics shaped imperial identity and court culture, and how rulers were also patrons of poetry and calligraphy. In this work, the Mughal Empire is presented not only as a territorial state but as a cultural system where political authority and artistic expression were deeply interconnected, particularly through traditions that influenced administration, literature, and elite identity.

The Scottish historian, travel writer, and broadcaster William Dalrymple is known for his influential works on South Asian history, particularly the Mughal period and the British colonial encounter in India. Born in 1965, he studied history at Cambridge University and later developed a career combining academic research with narrative storytelling, making complex historical events accessible to a wide general readership.

Dalrymple's work is especially significant for reshaping modern understanding of the late Mughal Empire. His book The Last Mughal: The Fall of a Dynasty, Delhi 1857 is based heavily on Persian sources, particularly the diary of the poet-king Bahadur Shah Zafar. In this work, he presents the Mughal court not as a decaying relic but as a vibrant cultural and intellectual center destroyed by colonial violence.

In addition to his books. His work has played a major role in popularizing Mughal history for global audiences while also encouraging critical reassessment of empire, particularly the decline of the Mughal state under figures like Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur's successors and the rise of British power in India[7].

Even today, many English-speaking scholars and writers are creating numerous works dedicated to Babur and the representatives of the Babur dynasty, and such significant work continues. In particular, the poet, writer and playwright Farzana Moon is one of the leading representatives of world literature who has created a number of works about Babur and the Baburid rulers. Farzana Moon is an American writer of Pakistani origin, and many of her works have been published in the USA, Canada and India. She is the author of a number of works on the history of India. Farzana Moon reflected the life of the common people of India and oriental culture in her works. In addition, she created works of art dedicated to the six kings of the Great Dynasty who ruled India for more than three centuries and made a great contribution to the development and progress of this country. F. Moon writes in the preface to her work: "This book of mine encompasses the rich history, culture and customs of India." Farzana Moon's works are as follows:

1. Babur, The First Moghul In India
2. The Mogul Exile
3. Divine Akbar and Holy India
4. The Mogul Hedonist
5. Glorious Taj and Beloved Immortal
6. The Mogul Saint of Insanity

[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Annemarie_Schimmel
[7] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Dalrymple

© 2026 International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Applications . All Rights Reserved.

F. Moon's first book is called "Babur, The First Moghul In India" and is dedicated to Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur. It states that Babur is the sixth descendant of Timur on his father's side and the fifth descendant of Genghis Khan on his mother's side. This work tells about Babur's rule in Kabul and India, the famous Koh-i-Noor diamond. The work also provides information about Babur's decree on the construction of a highway from Agra to Kabul, along with the construction of gardens, palaces, mosques and madrasas. The author describes Babur not as a king who fought for material wealth, but as a king who fought for the wealth of science. The work notes that Babur received the nickname "Tiger" for his bravery, and after distributing wealth equal to the treasury of five kingdoms to the poor and needy, he took the pseudonym Qalandar Shah. His death ended as proudly as his life, and he gave a literary interpretation based on historical truth. In addition, Babur sacrificed his life so that his beloved son Humayun would survive, and at the end of his life, Babur convincingly told his son Humayun, “Do nothing against your brothers, however much you think they might deserve it..”[8]

From the sources, we know that Babur spent thirty-six years of his life in power and founded a dynasty that ruled India for more than three hundred years. Along with the works left by the Baburids, the construction projects they built continue to amaze the whole world today. The author’s second book is called “The Mogul Exile” and is dedicated to Nasiruddin Muhammad Humayunshah. This work begins with the scene of Humayun's struggle against the treachery of his blood brothers and the Afghan nobles in India in Agra. The author also describes in his work the loss of Humayun's throne due to the treachery and deceit of his brothers. In addition, the work provides information about Humayun's marriage to Hamidabanu, the birth of Akbarshah. The work describes how Humayun and his relatives had to flee the country after Akbar was born, and how little Akbar was taken as a weapon, that is, as a hostage, by Humayun's brother Kamran. It also describes how Humayun and his wife found refuge in the palace of Shah Tahmasp in Iran, where all the conditions were created for him, and their relationship is described through wonderful plots.

From the above thoughts, we can conclude that one of the most important tasks of literature, regardless of the language in which it is created, is to describe the truth of life not exactly, but through artistic textures and artistic images. The writer Farzana Moon has also artistically expressed the life path of Baburids, the traditions of statehood, the priceless historical monuments and heritage left by them, and the history of their art based on clear historical evidence. The skill of the writer F.Moon is that she was able to artistically create artistic texts that are her creative products. Through her works, she wants to express human feelings, emotions, emotions, suffering and sorrows, thereby influencing the listener or reader. In such cases, she sometimes uses figurative means such as exaggeration, sometimes analogy and comparison. Any reader who reads Farzana Moon's works will be aware of the lifestyle of that era, the battles for peace and prosperity, various relationships between people, and most importantly, the socio-political life of that era, and will directly absorb the spirit of the Baburid dynasty.

The global image of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur and the Baburid dynasty has been constructed through a wide range of scholarly and literary works. Western historians and Orientalist scholars provided early systematic frameworks for understanding Mughal history, while modern literary critics deepened textual analysis of primary sources such as Baburnama. In contrast, Farzana Moon’s historical novels reinterpret Mughal history for contemporary audiences through narrative storytelling.

These works are mainly devoted to the empire established by Babur and the Baburids in India and the deeds they accomplished there. Foreign literature covers not only the personality of Babur and his deeds, but also the life and activities of the entire Babur dynasty. For example, W. Erskine's "History of India under Baber", F.Bernier's "Travels in the Mogul Empire", S.R.Sharma's "Mughal Empire in India" and many other works describe the activities of Babur and the Baburites in India.

[8] Alex Rutherford. Brothers at war (*A Kingdom Divided*). Book 2 of 6: Empire of the Moghul Series. Headline Review; edition (2010-11-25). ISBN-13: 978-0755347551

© 2026 International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Applications . All Rights Reserved.

USED LITERATURE AND RESOURCES:

1. Бернье Ф. История последних политических потрясений в государстве Великого Могола (Ю.И.Семёнов муҳаррирлигидаги русча нашри).-Москва: 2008.
2. Schimmel, Annemarie. The Empire of the Great Mughals: History, Art and Culture. Reaktion Books, 2004.
3. Dalrymple, William. The Last Mughal: The Fall of a Dynasty, Delhi, 1857. Bloomsbury, 2006.
4. Moon Farzana. Babur the first Moghul in India. Preface. Mehra Offset Press, Delhi. 1997
5. Муҳаммадиева Д. Бобурноманинг Европа тилларидаги таржималари тахлили. Сўз санъати журнали. - Тошкент: 2019. 31-38 б.
6. Alex Rutherford. Brothers at war (A Kingdom Divided). Book 2 of 6: Empire of the Moghul Series. Headline Review; edition (2010-11-25). ISBN-13: 978-0755347551
7.https://catdir.loc.gov/catdir/enhancements/fy1307/2011006910-s.html#:~:text=Do%20nothing%20against%20your%20brothers,expression%20was%20bleak%20and%20unfathomable.
8.https://ziyouz.uz/ilm-va-fan/tarix/fransua-berne-boburiylar-saltanatining-songgi-tarixi/?ysclid=m6dgmkbmxo94098941
9. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Annemarie_Schimmel
10. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Dalrymple

© 2026 International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Applications . All Rights Reserved.