

THE DEPICTION OF SULTON HUSAYN BAYQARA'S ERA AND
PERSONALITY IN KHONDAMIR'S WORK "HABIB AL-SIYAR"

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Annotation: *This article is dedicated to the life and political activity of the last major representative of the Timurid era — Sultan Husayn Bayqara, based on the work "Habib al-Siyar fi Akhbar Afrad al-Bashar" by the famous historian Ghiyasuddin Khondamir. The article provides a detailed analysis, based on facts presented in the source, regarding the author and the history of the work, Sultan Husayn's lineage, his struggles for power, his internal and external policies, specifically his relationship with Alisher Navoi, as well as his cultural and construction activities.*

"Habib al-Siyar", Ghiyasuddin Khondamir, Sultan Husayn Bayqara, Timurids, Herat, Alisher Navoi, Abulkhair Khan, rebellions.

INTRODUCTION: ABOUT THE WORK AND THE AUTHOR

In studying the history of the Timurid era, the work "Habib al-Siyar fi Akhbar Afrad al-Bashar" ("The Friend of Biographies Regarding the News of Individuals of Humanity"), penned by the famous historian Ghiyasuddin Khondamir, holds incomparable significance. Written in the genre of general history, this fundamental research is considered the logical continuation of the work "Rawzat as-Safa" by the author's grandfather, Mirkhond. The chronology of events presented as primary source material in the work mainly covers the period from the 1490s to 1523. It provides a detailed account of the history of Amir Timur and the Timurids, Genghis Khan, and his descendants who ruled in Moghulistan, Dashti Qipchaq, Turan, and Khorasan.

Furthermore, the work is not limited to political events alone; it contains valuable information regarding important socio-economic issues—land ownership, tarkhans, soyurghal holders, their status in society, and the administrative structure of the Timurid state.

The author, Ghiyasuddin Khondamir, was born in Herat in 880 Hijri (1476). His family was close to scientific and political circles; his father, Khoja Humamuddin, served as a vizier in the service of the Timurid Sultan Mahmud Mirza ibn Sultan Abu Said. The fact that the famous historian Mirkhond (1433–1498) was Khondamir's maternal grandfather had a significant influence on his development as a historian. Renowned source study scholars such as N. Miklukho-Maklay, B. Ahmedov, and D. Yusupova have conducted research on the "Habib al-Siyar".

Sultan Husayn Bayqara: Lineage and Birth

In "Habib al-Siyar", the figure most frequently mentioned and whose activities are most extensively covered among the Timurids is undoubtedly Sultan Husayn Mirza. The work serves as an important source in creating the ruler's political portrait, and in many places, he is referred to by the name "Mansur Khagan".

Khondamir indicates Husayn Mirza's date of birth as the month of Muharram in the year 842 Hijri (1438) (between June 24-23 and July). In the chapter titled "The Description of the Noble Lineage of Sultan Khagan Husayn Mirza and the Mention of the Auspicious Birth of That High-Ranking, Victorious King," it is specifically emphasized that his lineage traces back to Amir Timur on his father's side and to Genghis Khan on his mother's side. His full name is presented in the source as Ghiyasuddin Mansur ibn Amirzada Mirza ibn Umarshaykh Bahadur ibn Amir Timur Guragan. The author highly praises his dual noble lineage through the following verse:

Bunday nasab olam aro hech kimda yo'qdur. (Such a lineage exists in no one else in the world).

Entering the Political Arena and Initial Struggles

The first steps of Husayn Mirza's political activity are reflected in the chapters dedicated to his youth. According to the information, at approximately 14 years of age, he served in the army of the then-ruler of Khorasan, Abulqasim Babur, and participated in the battle for Samarkand against the ruler of Transoxiana (Movarounnahr), Abu Said. However, Abulqasim Babur's defeat in this battle caused Husayn Mirza to be detained in Samarkand for nearly three years.

Khondamir marks the date of Husayn Mirza's independent entry into the political arena as 861 Hijri (1457). Initially, he separated from the military unit of Muiziddin Sanjar Mirza, the leading force between Merv and Khiva. In 1458, he defeated a commander named Hasan Arlot, who belonged to that very Muiziddin Sanjar, and seized the provinces of Nisa and Astrabad. Interestingly, Khondamir recorded that in this victorious battle, Husayn Mirza's army consisted of only 300 men.

However, in 1459–1460, Sultan Abu Said Mirza marched on Astrabad. To establish a truce between the two, Abu Said sent the famous historian Abdurazzoq Samarqandi as an ambassador. As noted in "Habib al-Siyar", as a result of this embassy, Astrabad passed to Abu Said's control in 1460, and Husayn Mirza was forced to live in Khorezm for about a year.

Until he ascended the throne of Khorasan, Husayn Mirza's strongest rival was Abu Said. Whichever territory Husayn Mirza captured, Abu Said would appear shortly after and drive him out. In the work, these events are detailed through the examples of the cities of Urgench, Khiva, Hazarasp, and Vazir during the years 1461–1467.

The "Tobug" Incident at the Court of Abulkhair Khan

In 1467, after capturing Urgench, Husayn Mirza received news of Abu Said's next campaign and was forced to seek external assistance out of desperation. He headed to the court of the ruler of Dashti Qipchaq, Abulkhair Khan. "Habib al-Siyar" vividly describes the details of this visit and just how proud a personality Husayn Mirza was.

According to the traditions of the Khan's palace, individuals who came asking for help and acknowledging his sovereignty were required to perform the "Tobug" ceremony. In this ritual, the guest had to remove his headgear, hold one ear with his thumb and forefinger (similar to the gesture of intention in prayer), and bow double to the Khan. According to Khondamir, Husayn Mirza categorically refused to perform the "Tobug" act. This situation caused dissatisfaction and a minor conflict among the palace officials. Although Husayn

Mirza refused to bow, Abulhair Khan promised to help him. However, upon returning to Khorezm, the Mirza saw that the promised aid had not arrived and was forced to flee once again.

The Capture of the Khorasan Throne and the Role of Alisher Navoi

Husayn Mirza's eventual ascent to the throne of Khorasan is interpreted in "Habib al-Siyar" in connection with the death of Abu Said. In 1469–1470, Abu Said's son, Sultan Mahmud Mirza, suffered several defeats and lost control of Khorasan, which had belonged to his father.

However, while battles were ongoing with Mahmud Mirza, Yadgar Mirza, a descendant of Shahrukh Mirza, took advantage of the situation to seize Herat in 1470 and had the khutba (sermon) read in his own name. Hearing this news, Husayn Mirza convened a great council in Merv. When Alisher Navoi was asked for advice at the gathering, he did not deem it appropriate to speak his mind in front of everyone; fearing that word might reach Yadgar Mirza's men, he indicated he would give his advice to the Mirza in person. Although the work does not reveal exactly what advice Navoi gave, it emphasizes that Navoi's secret counsel played a decisive role in the decisive battle that took place at the Chinaran plain near Herat, which ended in Husayn Mirza's favor.

Internal Rebellions and Family Conflicts

After capturing the throne for the second time, definitively, Husayn Mirza's activities were mainly focused on defending the country and suppressing rebellions. For instance, when Abu Said's son, Ulugbek Mirza, attacked Merv in 1470, Husayn Mirza formed an alliance with his former enemy, Ulugbek's brother Mahmud Mirza, and repelled the attack.

But peace did not last long. "Habib al-Siyar" discusses Mahmud Mirza capturing Balkh and declaring himself an independent ruler, as well as the treacheries of his own officials. Specifically, the rebellion of Amir Moghul, the governor of the Astrabad province, is noteworthy. Amir Moghul had been appointed governor of Astrabad after Alisher Navoi. He had succeeded in turning Husayn Mirza against Navoi through various intrigues, and after the poet resigned, he took his place. Khondamir evaluates Amir Moghul's rebellion as a logical continuation of the palace conspiracies directed against Navoi, writing that after the rebellion was suppressed, Husayn Mirza's suspicions regarding his friend Navoi were dispelled.

The heaviest blow against the ruler came from his eldest son, Badiuzzaman Mirza. The conflict intensified following Badiuzzaman's transfer from Astrabad to be the governor of Balkh. According to Khondamir, Badiuzzaman had expected his son, Muhammad Mumin Mirza, to be appointed in his place in Astrabad. However, Husayn Mirza appointed another son—Muzaffar Husayn Mirza—to Astrabad. As a result of this decision and the incitement of officials in Balkh, open hostility began between father and son. It was only due to his father's military superiority that Badiuzzaman was forced to return to his father's service in 1505.

Socio-Economic Reforms and Cultural Life

"Habib al-Siyar" covers not only battles and conflicts but also the construction and social life in the country. Immediately upon ascending the throne, Husayn Mirza, taking

into account that the population was suffering from tax collectors, issued a decree to regulate the tax system and improve the condition of the subjects.

During his era, immense landscaping and improvement works were carried out in Herat. He ordered the construction of the "Jahanara" garden in honor of his coronation ceremony and renovated the mosques, hospices, and hospitals remaining from the time of Shahrukh.

In religious policy, Husayn Mirza honored the Sayyids and religious leaders. However, there is an interesting fact presented in the work and other sources: at the beginning of his reign, Husayn Mirza planned to glorify the Imams of the Hashimite (Shia) sect and add their names to the khutba and minted coins. Mature representatives of the Hanafi school, particularly Abdurahman Jami and Alisher Navoi, succeeded in dissuading him from this intention (Khondamir does not list these individuals by name in the work, but refers to them generally as "mature figures of the Hanafi current").

Furthermore, the source reflects that the ruler himself created poetry under the pseudonym "Husayni" and created a high creative atmosphere in the country.

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