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978-1-108-05603-8 - The Tezkereh al Vakiat or, Private Memoirs of the Moghul Emperor Humayun: Written in the Persian Language, by Jouher, a Confidential Domestic of His Majesty
Translated by Charles Stewart
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The Tezkereh al Vakiat; or, Private Memoirs of the Moghul Emperor Humayun

The Mughal emperor Humayun (1508–56) ruled over parts of modern-day India, Afghanistan and Pakistan during his eventful reign. He came to the throne at the age of twenty-two in 1530 and thereafter faced a series of challenges to his control. Throughout this time he was served by his water-bearer, Jauhar, who later wrote these memoirs of his master and his campaigns. This translation from Persian to English was first published in 1832 by Charles Stewart (1764–1837), who had been a professor of oriental languages at the East India College, Haileybury. Jauhar gives a valuable eyewitness narrative of events during a fraught period of Indian history, also providing an insight into Humayun’s character. The work begins with an account of his victory over Bahadur Shah and the conquest of Gujarat in the 1530s. It goes on to describe battles with Sher Shah Suri and other campaigns until his death.

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OR

PRIVATE MEMOIRS

OF THE

MOGHUL EMPEROR HUMĀYŪN,

WRITTEN IN THE PERSIAN LANGUAGE BY

JOUHER,

A CONFIDENTIAL DOMESTIC OF HIS MAJESTY ;

TRANSLATED BY

MAJOR CHARLES STEWART,

OF THE HONOURABLE EAST INDIA COMPANY'S SERVICE,

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

EARL OF MUNSTER,

VISCOUNT FITZ-CLARENCE, BARON TEWKESBURY,

g.c. g.c. g.c.

MY LORD,

I have the honour to dedicate to your Lordship the Memoirs of Humāyūn, Emperor of Hindūstan; the vicissitudes of whose reign bear a great resemblance to those of our Royal Stuart family, and of the late Bourbon dynasty.

It affords me great pleasure to have an opportunity of dedicating these pages to a Personage who, from his own knowledge of the Oriental tongues, can duly appreciate the difficulties of clothing in European language the ideas and idioms of the natives of Persia and Hindūstān.

That you may long continue to support that praise-worthy Institution, of which you are the Founder, is the sincere wish of,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient, very humble Servant,

CHARLES STEWART.

*Royal Crescent, Bath,
March 1st. 1832.*

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P R E F A C E.

DURING the period I was engaged in translating the Memoirs of the Emperor Timūr, I received, from my friend Major William Yule, a Persian manuscript, containing Private Memoirs of the Emperor Humāyūn, son of the celebrated Baber, and father of the no less famous Akber, sixth in descent from Timūr, and cotemporary with our King Henry VIII. with a recommendation that I should translate it. In compliance with my friend's recommendation, and at the request of the Oriental Translation Committee, I have undertaken the task.

As the Author of this Work was not a learned person, it has no claims to erudition ; I have therefore not thought it requisite to give any part of the original text ; and although, in conformity to the practice of the times, he has ornamented his book with various quotations from the *Korān*, with many passages from Persian poets, and historical anecdotes, I have not taken the trouble of following him in these his prolix digressions.

This book being written with the greatest sincerity and naïveté, sometimes to the disparagement of his hero, I have no doubt of its authenticity. The manuscript was purchased at Lucknow, the capital of Oude, and is, I believe, the only copy *now* in England : it is a large octavo volume, written in the common hand, and is about a century old.

The Anglo-orthography of this work is nearly the same as that of the Memoirs of Timūr, viz. a free use of the Persian letters ; and the short e, representing the vowel *zubber* of that language.

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PREFACE.

I take this opportunity of declaring that I have scarcely ever met with an idea in any European poet, or a passage in any historian, that I have not found a parallel to it in Oriental writers. I must also request the readers who are inclined to criticise the style of this work, or my other Translations, that they will previously compare them with English books of the *same period*, not with those of the present day.

CHARLES STEWART.

P. S. I beg leave to add, that the book mentioned in my Preface to the Memoirs of Timūr should have been *Ajaib al Mukdūr*, “Wonders of Destiny,” instead of *Ajaib al Mukhlūkāt*.

INTRODUCTION.

Humāyūn, Emperor of Hindūstān, was the son of Baber, son of Omer Shykh, son of Abū Saied, son of Muhammed Myrzā, son of Myran Hussyn, son of Timūr.

His descendants, or successors, were the Emperors Akber, Jehangyr, Shāh Jehān, Aalumgyr-Aurungzyb, Behadur Shāh, Ferrukhsyr, Muhammed, Ahmed, Aalumgyr II. Shāh Aalum, Akber II.

Humāyūn was born at Kabul (A. H. 913, A. D. 1508), being the same year in which his father had taken the title of Padshāh, the second brother was named Kamrān, the third Hindal, the fourth Askery: they all bore the title of Myrzā (Prince) *following* their names, and will make a conspicuous figure in this history.*

When Baber invaded Hindūstān (A. H. 932, A. D. 1525), he gave the command of the right wing of his army to Humāyūn, and he was the first general that engaged the Afghans. After the battle of Paniput he was sent on to secure the city of Agra, and the treasures of Sultān Ibrahīm; he also commanded the army sent against the combined forces of the chiefs possessing the country on the eastward of the Ganges: in all of which measures he succeeded, and was rewarded by his father with a present of one crore and seventy laks of dāms,† and a palace at Agra with all its contents. He afterwards took the city of Joanpūr, and then joined the imperial army previous

* As all Muhammedan names have meanings, I will explain that, Humāyūn signifies *Auspicious*, Kamrān *Successful*, Hindal *Indian*, Askery *Born in Camp*: he was probably illegitimate, as his birth is not mentioned in the portion we have of Baber's Memoirs.

† Forty of which make a rupee.

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to the bloody battle fought with the Hindū Princes near Biana, in which he highly distinguished himself.

It has been deemed requisite to state these circumstances, because the Memoirs do not commence till his mounting the throne ; and he has been accused of want of energy as a monarch ; nay, it has been even said, that if he had been a worse man, he would have been a greater king. See Memoirs of the Emperor Baber, by William Erskine, Esq. London, 1826, and Dow’s History of Hindūstān.

As the Author has seldom inserted any dates, I have been under the necessity of supplying them from other sources.

P. S. Although the dynasty of Timūr are in India called Moghuls, the family do not acknowledge themselves to be so ; they are properly *Jagtay Tūrks*, of a very superior clan to the Moghuls or Tartars ; but in order to discriminate them from the Turks of Constantinople, the former title has been continued to them both in this work and in the Memoirs of Timūr.

It is necessary also to observe here that the Tukhti Soleyman mentioned in the XIVth Chapter is *not* the Persepolis of the Greeks : I have not been able to discover the European name of it.