

The Babar-Nama: A Passage Judged Spurious in the Haydarabad Manuscript

Author(s): Annette S. Beveridge

Source: *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Jan., 1911, (Jan., 1911), pp. 65-74

Published by: Cambridge University Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25189821>

---

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



Cambridge University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*

JSTOR

### III

#### THE BABAR-NAMA

##### A PASSAGE JUDGED SPURIOUS IN THE HAYDARABAD MANUSCRIPT

By ANNETTE S. BEVERIDGE

IT is with regret that I now find it impracticable to accept as authentic a passage in the Haydarābād MS. which had been welcomed there, (1) because being with that good text, it accredited the same passage in Ilminsky's imprint and in the *Mémoires de Baber*, and (2) because, however ineffectually, it provides something to fill the Bābar-nāma gap of 908 A.H.

As it concerns Bābar's escape from impending death it may be distinguished as the Rescue Passage. In the Hay. MS. it begins on fol. 118*b*, l. 2, and runs on for a folio and a half; in Kehr's MS. it is on fol. 385 [455], in the Kāsān imprint on p. 144, and in the *Mémoires* in vol. i, p. 255. It occurs also in the St. Petersburg University Codex which is copied from Kehr's MS.

On the other hand, it is not with the Elphinstone MS. (fol. 89*b*) or with its archetype (a fact learned from a scribe's note, fol. 90). As it is not found in either of the Wāqī'āt-i-bābarī it is safe to say it was not with their original when they were translated (1586 A.D. and 1590 A.D.). Consequently, it is not with the Memoirs, the lineal descendant of the Elphinstone MS. and of the second Wāqī'āt-i-bābarī.

A few preliminary words must be said about the gap of 908 A.H. Its presence in the Elph. MS. and archetype does not prove that Bābar left it, but shows merely that the gap existed before the Elph. MS. was copied (1556-67) and before either of the Persian translations was made.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> JRAS., 1907, p. 137, and 1910, p. 882 [H. Beveridge].  
JRAS. 1911.

It appears to me due to loss of pages; in this, however, I regretfully differ from my husband. A textual detail which supports my view is that in the Elph. MS. the sentence before the gap lacks the terminal verb.<sup>1</sup>

If for a moment it is considered why the gap of 908 A.H. should have been filled by an annotator (as we suppose it to have been filled) while the next gap, that of 914 A.H., remains empty, an explanation is found in the following salient difference between them. It is well known that the section of Bābar's writings of earliest date as to contents is a composed narrative put together at the end of his life. It breaks off within 914 A.H. and a gap of some eleven years separates it from the next and diary section beginning with 925 A.H. The gap of 914 A.H., even if the broken sentence preceding it suggests some loss of pages, appears due to the author's last illness. On the other hand, the gap of 908 A.H. occurs within the composed narrative and can reasonably be attributed solely to loss of pages, perhaps during Humāyūn's wanderings in exile. Its abrupt ending at a critical point of Bābar's story offers to an annotator the temptation of devising a *dénouement*.

## I. THE PREVIOUS CONTEXT AND THE ENGLISH VERSION OF THE RESCUE PASSAGE

### (a) *The context in various sources.*

Elph. MS., fol. 89b :

قویتوم باغ کوشه سی غه باردیم اوزوم بیله اندیشه قیلدیه دیدیم  
کیم کیشی اکر بوز واکر مینک یاشاسا آخر هیچ

Hay. MS., fol. 118b : Varied ending آخر اولماک کیراک

Wāqī'āt-i-bābarī, I.O. 215, fol. 96b, Pāyanda Ḥasan's trans. :

برخاسته ودر کوشه باغ رفتیم بخود اندیشه کرده گفتیم که اکر  
کسی صد سال یا هزار سال عمر داشته باشد آخر هیچ است

<sup>1</sup> Pāyanda Ḥasan's Wāqī'āt supplies the verb, and, moreover, so far supports rejection of the Rescue Passage that it agrees verbally with the Elph. MS. (e.g. it reproduces its word *hech*); this agreement suggests manipulation of the Haydarābād text for the reception of the Rescue Passage.

It will be noticed that the Elph. MS. and No. 215 agree as to the final <sup>هیسج</sup>.

Wāqī'āt-i-bābarī, I.O. 217, fol. 79, 'Abdu'r-raḥīm M.'s trans. :

برخواستم و بکوشه باغ رستم بخود اندیشیدم و گفتم که اگر  
کسی صد و اکرهزار سال عمر بیابد آخر

The final آخر is followed by اینجا, which may be a part of the next heading.

Muḥ. *Shirāzī's* lith. ed., p. 75, ends with آخر خود باید مرد, a translation of what is in the Haydarābād Codex.

Kehr's MS., fol. 383 [454], (Ilminsky, p. 144) :

قویتم باغبنک بیر بورجی غا باریب خاطریم غا کیلتوردم کیم  
اگر آدم یوز ییل و اکر مینگ ییل تیریک بولسا آخر اولماک دین  
اوزکا چاره یوقتور

Attention is asked to the peculiarities of the last extract : (1) to its studied verbal changes from the Wāqī'āt-i-bābarī, which yet reproduces Bābar's own words; (2) to its singular "I brought it to my mind" (lit. caused to come); (3) to its free completion of the broken ending.

(b) *English translation of the Rescue Passage.*

[N.B. The numbers refer to "III, General grounds for Rejection"; the letters to "IV, Grounds of Style and Diction urging Rejection".]

(Persian couplet, in Kehr's MS. only.) "If you remain (*mānī*) a hundred years, on the one day (*yakī*) it must be gone from this heart-rejoicing palace."

I steadied myself for death (*qarār bīrdīm*). In that (*aushāl*) (a) garden a stream came flowing (b); I made ablution; I recited the prayer of two inclinations (*ra'kat*); having raised my head for silent prayer, I was making earnest petition when my eyes closed in sleep (c). I (2) am seeing (d) that Khwāja Yaq'ūb (3), the son of Khwāja Yaḥyā, and grandson of His Highness Khwāja 'Ubaidu'l-lāh, came facing me, mounted on a piebald horse, with a large company of piebald horsemen (e). He said: "Lay sorrow aside! Khwāja *Ahrār* (i.e. 'Ubaidu'l-lāh) has sent me to you; he said, 'We having asked help for him (i.e. Bābar), will seat him on the royal throne (*masnad*) (f); wherever difficulty befalls him, let him look towards us (lit. bring us to sight) and call

us to mind; there will we be present.' Now, in this hour, victory and success are on your side; lift up your head! awake!"

At that time (or, in that state, *hāl*) (*g*) I awoke happy, when Yūsuf and those with him (*h*) were giving one another advice. "We will make a pretext to deceive; to seize and bind (*i*) is necessary." Hearing these words, I said, "Your words are of this sort, but I will see which of you will come to my presence to take me." I was saying this when outside the garden wall (*j*) came the noise of approaching horsemen. Yūsuf *darogha* said, "If we had taken you to Tam̄bal our affairs would have gone forward. Now he has sent again many persons to seize you." He was certain that this noise might be the footfall of the horses of those sent by Tam̄bal. On hearing those words anxiety grew upon me; what to do I did not know. At this time those horsemen, not happening to find the garden gate, broke down the wall where it was old (and) came in. I saw (*kursam*, lit. might see) that Qutluq Muḥ. *Barlās* and Bābā-i *Pargharī* (4), who (were) my life-devoted servants, having arrived [with], it may be, ten, fifteen, twenty persons (*k*), were approaching. Having flung themselves (*tāshlāb*) (*l*) from their horses, bent the knee from afar and showed respect, they fell at my feet. In that state (or time, *hāl*) such ecstasy (*hāl*) came over me that you might say (*goyā*) (God gave me life from a new source (‘ *bāsh*)). I said, "Seize and bind that Yūsuf *darogha* and these here (*tūrghān*) hireling manikins." These same manikins had taken to flight. They (i.e. the rescuers), having taken them, one by one, here and there, brought them bound. I said, "Where do you come from? How did you get news?" Qutluq Muḥ. *Barlās* said: "When, having fled from Akhsī, we were separated from you in the flight, we went to Andijān when the Khāns also came to (5) Andijān (2). I saw a vision that Khwāja ‘Ubaidu’l-lāh said, 'Bābar *pādshāh* (*m*) is in a village called Karnān; go and bring him, since the royal seat (*masnad*) has become his possession (*ta'alluq*).' I having seen this vision and become happy, represented (the matter) to the Elder Khān (and) the Younger Khān. I said to the Khāns, 'I have five or six younger brothers (and) sons; do you add a few soldiers. I will go through (*dīn*) the Karnān side (*ḥarf*) and bring news.' The

Khāns said, 'It occurs to our minds also that (he) may have gone that same road (?)'. They appointed ten persons; they said, 'Having gone in that direction (*sārī*) and made very sure, bring news. Would to God you might get true (*zāhirā*) (n) news!' We were saying this when Bābā-i *Pargharī* said, 'I too will go and seek.' He also having agreed with two young men, (his) younger brothers, we rode out. It is three days (9) to-day that we are on the road. Thank God! we have found you." They said (*dādīlār*, ۴ for *dīb*). They spoke (*atīlār*), "Make a move! Ride off! Take these bound ones with you! To stay here is not well; Tam̄bal has had news of your coming here; go, in whatever way, and join yourself to the Khāns!" At that time we having ridden out, moved towards Andijān (6). It was two days that we had eaten no food; the evening prayer had come when we found a sheep, went on, dismounted, killed, and roasted. Of that same roast we ate as much as a feast. After that we rode on, hurried forward, made a five days' journey (9) in a day and two nights (9), came and entered Andijān (6). I saluted my uncle the Elder Khān (and) my uncle the Younger Khān, and made recital of past days. With the Khāns I spent four months (7). My servants, who had gone looking in every place, gathered themselves together; there were more than 800 persons (8). It came to my mind, "How long must I wander, a vagabond (*sar-gardān*), in this Farghāna country? I will make search (*ṭalab*) on every side." Having said, I rode out in the month of Muḥarram to seek Khurāsān, and I went out from the country of Farghāna.<sup>1</sup>

## II. REASONS AGAINST THE REJECTION OF THE RESCUE PASSAGE

Two weighty facts urge against the rejection of the passage: (1) its presence with the Haydarābād MS. and (2) its earlier acceptance by Dr. Ilminsky and M. de Courteille.

As to the first of these facts, it must be admitted that it does give value to the passage, and that it gives it the

<sup>1</sup> The last sentence here is an adaptation of Bābar's first of 910 A.H. A surmise of mine as to this sentence (JRAS., 1902, p. 749) is now abandoned.

more value because there is no second item of extra matter with this codex. Nevertheless, I hope to show that the passage cannot owe its place of honour to intrinsic merit; that it owes it to distinguished authorship appears probable. Something as to its source may be gleaned by comparing it with other royal writings; Jahāngir and Shāh-jahān were both prone to annotation. When time allows, it shall be compared in detail with other anonymous writings included in Kehr's volume, notably with the Fragments.

I shall now explain how it seems to me even natural that the two above-named Turkī scholars should accept the Rescue Passage without comment. The strong argument, on linguistic grounds, of their acceptance against my own rejection will seem weaker if the specialities of their text (Kehr's) are considered.<sup>1</sup>

Of those specialities the one pertinent here is this: Kehr's text down to the entry of the Rescue Passage is corrupt so continuously and in such a manner as to be explicable only by regarding it as a re-translation into Turkī of the second Persian Wāqī'āt.

This being so, its corrupt diction would set up in the minds of those who, like Ilminsky and de Courteille, were initiated in the Bābar-nāma through it only, a false standard of Bābar's style and vocabulary. Most books of any merit demand re-perusal of their earlier portion to give freedom in their authors' style and diction; amongst those imperatively needing this re-perusal is assuredly the Bābar-nāma in European hands. Both the Turkī scholars having studied first the corrupt text, would come to the Rescue Passage with impressions differing from those made by the true text; they would the less feel transition to its un-Bābar-like Turkī. Their unquestioning acceptance of the passage seems to show that they were not conscious of any transition. On the other hand, a student working

<sup>1</sup> JRAS., 1908, pp. 76 ff.

*ab initio* on the true text experiences a literary shock when passing from it to the passage.

Of course, to all this it may be opposed that granting a wrong standard would be set up by Kehr's corrupt text, that standard would or could be corrected by the true text which in his volume succeeds the passage. In words this objection is sound, no doubt, and such reflex criticism is now easy. It was not easy, however, when Ilminsky and de Courteille were working; they had no second text; the *Bābar-nāma* is a lengthy book, needing time to poise and grasp. It is a difficult book to handle even with the literary gains since the seventies; work on it is still tentative.

I would further point out that few of the grounds authoritative with us for rejection were known to the two Turki scholars; of these it suffices to mention three major ones, viz. the testimony of the Elphinstone and Haydarābād Codices and the collateral help given by Teufel's critique on the Fragments. Several useful Oriental histories, again, were not easily accessible to them; for myself there is the great gain that my husband's thought accompanies my work and the guidance of his great knowledge of related Oriental literature is at my service.

In sober truth, looking back to the drawbacks of those two earlier workers on Kehr's text, their acceptance then appears as natural as our to-day's rejection.

### III. GENERAL GROUNDS FOR REJECTION

These mostly need here only recapitulation from my husband's article in the JASB., 1910, p. 221. They are as follows:—

1. The passage is in neither of the *Wāqī'āt-i-bābarī*.
2. The dreams are too *à propos* and miraculous for credence.
3. *Khawāja Yahyā* is not known to have had a son named *Yaq'ūb*.



4. The names of the rescuers do not appear in the *Bābar-nāma*.

5. The *Khāns* were not in *Andijān*.

6. *Bābar* did not go to *Andijān*, but to the *Khāns* in *Kand-badām*.

7. He did not set out for *Khurāsān* after spending four months with the *Khāns*, but after their deaths and after about a year in *Sukh* and *Hushiār*.

8. Not over "300" followers gathered to him, but "under 300 and over 200".

9. The "three days" and a "day and two nights" and "five days" road were some seventy miles.

10. The passage is singularly insufficient for filling a gap of some eighteen months, during which events of the first importance occurred both to *Bābar* and to his uncles, the *Khāns*.

11. *Khwāja Ahrār's* promises came to nothing as far as *Bābar's* wishes in 908 A.H. were concerned, and those of *Yaq'ūb* for immediate victory were closely followed by defeat and exile. *Bābar* knew the facts; the passage seems the product of an annotator looking back after the conquest of *Hindūstān*.

#### IV. GROUNDS OF STYLE AND DICTION URGING REJECTION

Between the style of the true text and that of the Rescue Passage stands the gulf between the master's and the tyro's; moreover, as can be seen in the English translation, there is marked change in the choice of the details recorded; e.g., when *Bābar* mentions prayer, he does so simply; at a crisis he would not note down signs of ceremonious respect; when, as once, he tells a dream one feels that it was a true one. The passage leaves a general impression that the writer did not think in *Turkī*; did not write it with ease; had not *Bābar's* thoughts; was of the class alien from *Bābar* who talk of "heart-rejoicing palaces".

The following are some of the many points of divergence in the Rescue Passage from Babar's habit in the true text. I omit numerous clerical errors and minor phrases unusual to him.

(a) and (b) Hay. MS., fol. 118*b*, l. 3: اوشال باغدا سو آقيب : اووشال باغدا سو آقيب The dem. pronoun اوشال is rare with Babar: it occurs seven times in the Rescue Passage. B.'s common phrase is سواقار. Cf. fol. 2, l. 2; fol. 3, l. 5; fol. 4, l. 7, etc.

(c) Fol. 118*b*, l. 5: گوزوم آويقيغا باريب تور. Cf. fol. 117*b*, l. 2 from foot: گوزوم آويقوغه باردی

(d) Fol. 118*b*, l. 5: کورا دور مين : lit. I am seeing. Cf. fol. 83, l. 5: توش کورار مين and id. توش کوردوم

(e) Fol. 118*b*, l. 7: ابلق سوار بيلان, lit. with piebald horse-men. Three points attract attention here: the odd use of "piebald"; the Persian *suwār* for 'T. *ātlīq*, or *ātlīq kīshī*; the form *bīlān* for Bābar's *bīla*.

(f) Fol. 118*b*, l. 8, and fol. 119*b*, l. 1. *Masnad* betrays Hindūstān; Bābar's word is *takht*. Cf. fol. 23, l. 3 from foot, and fol. 30, l. 2 from foot.

(g) Fol. 118*b*, l. 5 from foot, and fol. 119, l. 7 from foot. *Hal*, used as though for time, and *hain* (fol. 119, l. 4) are both unusual.

(h) Fol. 118*b*, l. 4 from foot: همرايلارى [sic] بربركا [sic] مصلحت : قیلا دورلار Here two clerical errors, and *qīlmāk* used for *bīrmāk*. *Hamrāh* is not a common word for "companion" with Bābar, who uses some one of several phrases with *bīla*.

(i) Fol. 118*b*, l. 3 from foot, and fol. 119*b*, ll. 5 and 7 from foot: باغلاماق — باغلاماق Bābar does not write of "binding", but of taking (*ālmāk*) or of seizing (*tūtmāq*). He uses *bāghlamāq* with the sense of putting together, e.g. an observatory or a *dīwān*.

(j) Fol. 118*b*, last line, and fol. 119, l. 5: *dīwār* for *tām*.

(k) Fol. 119, l. 6, the triple number for Bābar's 10-20; and fol. 119, l. 6 from foot, گویا for some form of لیک like.

(l) Fol. 119, l. 7: آت تین اوزلارنى تاشلاب. For "dis-mounting", Bābar does not use *tāshlāmāq*. 'Twice already he has

used this verb (fol. 94*b*, l. 5 from foot, and fol. 95, l. 3) as from *tāsh* "outside", of people who got out of forts by dropping from walls. If, however, it were taken as from *tāsh* "a stone", it might be metaphorical, i.e. flung themselves, but I have not found it in the *Bābar-nāma*.

(*m*) Fol. 119, last line. (*Bābar*) *pādshāh* is an anachronism. Cf. fol. 215.

(*n*) Fol. 119, l. 6: ظاهرًا خبر، definite news; *Bābar*'s phrases are made with حقيقه.

#### V. CONCLUSION

On the various grounds given, therefore, we judge that the Rescue Passage is no part of *Bābar*'s writings.