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QUEEN TEMURI GAVHARSHODBEGIM

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Abstract: This article examines the life, scientific and literary activities and political significance of Queen Gavharshodbegim (1411–1457), a prominent representative of the 15th century Timurid dynasty, known as a poet, patron of the arts and statesman. Based on the works of primary sources - Khandamir, Davlatshah Samarkandi, Abdurazzok Samarkandi and Mirkhand, the article analyzes the place of the queen in history, her contribution to the Herat madrasa and khanaqohs, and her poetic heritage. The research clarifies the image of Gavharshodbegim not only as a representative of the dynasty, but also as an independent creator and patron.

Keywords: Gavharshodbegim, Timurids, 15th century, Herat madrasa, poetic heritage, cultural patronage, Khorasan, Sufism, manuscripts.

Introduction. In the 15th century, the cities of Herat and Samarkand in Central Asia became one of the brightest centers of world civilization. During this period, the Timurid dynasty was distinguished not only by military and political power, but also by its great cultural and educational traditions. Gavharshadbegim, who was born among the daughters of the great representative of this dynasty, Shahrukh Mirza (1377 - 1447), was a unique personality for her time, who left her mark on the pages of history as a poet, patron of culture, politician and educator. The first information about Gavharshadbegim is found in the masterpieces of 15th-century historiography - the work "Habib us-siyar" by Khandamir, the collection "Tazkirat ush-shu'aro" by Davlatshah Samarkandi, and the chronicle "Matla' us-sa'dayn" by Abdurazzaq Samarkandi. These sources describe the queen as highly educated, deeply versed in poetry, and known for her humanitarianism.

Gavharshadbegim was born in Herat in 1411. She belonged to the second generation of the Timurid dynasty, her father was Shahrukh Mirza (1377–1447), the fourth son of Amir Timur, and her mother was the famous Gavharshad Begum (1378–1457). The nickname “Gavharshadbegim” in the queen’s name was taken from her mother’s name, which was in keeping with the court etiquette of the time. In some sources, she is also referred to by the nickname “Begim.”

The reign of Shahrukh Mirza (1405–1447) is considered the “Golden Age” of Timurid culture. During this period, when Mirzo Ulugbek, Kamoliddin Behzod and Alisher Navoi were worthy predecessors, many educational institutions, libraries, and mosques were built in Herat and Samarkand. It was in this environment that Gavharshodbegim was brought up and received a comprehensive education.

According to Khandamir, the princess studied Arabic and Persian from a young age, showed interest in poetry, and took music lessons [1. – P. 287]. This indicates that the education provided to girls in the Timurid palaces was at a high level. Also, the princess's interest in collecting manuscripts and creating a library also indicates her intelligence.

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Politically, Gavharshodbegim married Abulqasim Babur Mirzo, and this union played an important role in the internal politics of the Timurids. The fact that the famous poet and statesman Zakhiriddin Muhammad Babur addressed Gavharshadbegim with special respect in his work "Baburnama" also testifies to the high level of his influence and position.

Gavharshadbegim's most important contribution to the field of culture is associated with the madrasa and khanaqoh he built in Herat. Abdurazzaq Samarkandi's work "Matla' us-sa'dayn va majma' ul-bahrayn" records that the queen built a huge madrasa in the Western Gate neighborhood of Herat in 1447. This madrasa is known as one of the most prominent educational institutions of its time [2. – P. 212 – 214].

Mirkhand in his work "Ravzat us-safo" describes in detail the construction of this madrasa and provides information about the subjects taught there – fiqh, kalam, logic, arithmetic and poetry. The madrasa played an important role in the scientific life of Herat; among the scholars who taught there was the famous 15th-century scholar Mawlana Husayn Voiz Kashifi. Kashifi himself praised Gavharshodbeg as a patron of science and enlightenment.

Gavharshodbeg's patronage included more than 100 buildings and architectural monuments, and she heralded a new era of female patronage, which shaped the aesthetics of the Timurids.

Gavharshodbeg supported the region's trade and agriculture by financing shrines, bridges, dams, canals, and roadside hotels outside Herat. The Gavharshod mausoleum, built after her death, was the first Islamic tomb for women in Herat.

Gavharshad Beg was instrumental in the flourishing of Persian art and culture during the Timurid period. He published illustrated manuscripts such as anthologies of Persian poetry and historical chronicles. The queen's palace housed miniaturists who created the classic Timurid style. He also employed master calligraphers to copy rare books for the Timurid library in Herat. Gavharshad Beg patronized artisans and acquired valuable examples of metalwork, pottery, and textiles from across Eurasia. He established a workshop in Herat, where he established the production of fine glazed tiles, jewelry, glazed glassware, and lacquerware. To support the state's economy, he created an industry that provided local and international markets for carpet weaving and other local crafts. Gavharshadbegim's taste and perception, reflected in his clothing, personal belongings, furnishings, and lifestyle, influenced court fashion.

Gavharshadbegim generously patronized poets, authors, and scholars, turning Herat into a center of literary and scientific activity. In particular, Abdurahman Jami, a famous poet of his time, also found a place in the Timurid rulers' court and wrote his magnificent works. He also had close contacts with such masters as Alisher Navoi. Thanks to his efforts in collecting rare books and manuscripts, the state library expanded significantly. Gavharshadbegim sponsored historical chronicles about the campaigns of Amir Temur, authored by Sharafiddin Ali Yazdi and Nizamiddin Jami, which glorified the reign of the Timurids. Gavharshadbegim also awarded scholars in astronomy, philosophy, mathematics, and mysticism for their scientific achievements. In turn, the Friday sermons in the public mosques often glorified her intellectual potential and noble spirit [5].

Many manuscripts were copied or brought into book form at the behest of Gavharshadbegim. Among these manuscripts were such classic works as Firdawsi's "Shahnama", Nizami Ganjavi's "Khamsa" and Sa'di's "Guliston". These manuscripts are now kept in libraries in Istanbul, London and Tashkent; many of them have colophon inscriptions stating that they were copied at the behest of the queen.

Gavharshadbegim also patronized Sufi orders. The khanaqohs belonging to the Naqshbandi and Qadiriya orders were provided with her donations. This fact shows the breadth of the queen's religious

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and spiritual outlook, presenting her as not just a court scholar, but also a person who was interested in the science of Sufism.

Gavharshadbegim wrote poetry under the pseudonym "Gavhar". Her poems were mainly written in the classical genres of Persian-Tajik literature - ghazal, qut'a and rub'oi. Davlatshah Samarkandiy devoted a separate section to the queen's poetry in his famous work "Tazkirat ush-shu'aro" (1487) and called her "the queen of poetry among women" [3. – P. 310]. The poems written by the queen, preserved in the memoirs of Davlatshah, show that Gavharshadbegim was able to skillfully combine the themes of love and asceticism. In her ghazals, the demarcation of divine love and human love - the method of reaching "true love" through "metaphorical love" in the mystical tradition - prevails. In this respect, she continued the tradition of Hafiz Shirazi and Jami.

One of the queen's ghazals begins with the following couplet:

“Chu Gavhar dar dili daryo nihonam / Ba daryo gum shavam, gum mekuham” (Meaning: If I hide like a gem in the heart of the sea, / I disappear in the sea, I wish to disappear.). This couplet demonstrates that the queen mastered the poetics of the Persian language and was able to lyrically express philosophical depth.

Gavharshodbegim, who was close to Mirzo Ulugbek's scientific circles in Samarkand, was also interested in Turkish (Chigatoy) literature. Some researchers (including E.E. Bertels in his monograph “Navoi and Jomi”) argue that the queen was a contemporary of Alisher Navoi and was critical of his work.

It should also be noted that only fragments of Gavharshodbegim's poems have survived. Her separate divan has not yet been found; existing samples of poetry are found scattered in tazkira and bayoz manuscripts. This situation reflects the general problem in studying the heritage of female poets of the 15th century: their works are preserved mainly in collections compiled by male scholars, and are sometimes given incorrect proportions.

Gavharshodbegim also actively participated in the political life of the Timurids. After the death of Shahrukh Mirza in 1447, at a time when the struggle for the throne in the Timurid dynasty was at its peak, the queen was distinguished by her influence and initiative. Being related by marriage to Abulqasim Babur Mirza, who held Herat under his control, Gavharshadbegim acted as an intermediary in the communication between the two sides.

According to Khandamir in “Habib us-siyar”, the queen repeatedly held consultations with the elite of the city of Herat - officials, jurists and representatives of the trade union - and provided material assistance in ensuring the defense of the city [4. – P. 301]. This information indicates that Gavharshadbegim was active not only in the cultural, but also in the economic and military-administrative spheres.

Gavharshadbegim died in Herat in 1457. Like contemporary sources, Khandamir recorded her death as a painful moment, giving a brief but profound assessment that the queen "had no equal in knowledge and generosity." Gavharshodbegim died in the same year as her mother Gavharshod Begum, a fact that is specifically noted by historians and manuscript writers of the time.

Conclusion. The Timurid princess Gavharshodbegim left a deep mark on the scientific and cultural life of Central Asia in the 15th century. On the one hand, she continued the political traditions of her father, Shahrukh Mirza, and her mother Gavharshodbegim, and on the other hand, she took her place in history independently of the dynasty through her poetic talent and cultural patronage. However, it is worth noting that information about Gavharshodbegim is almost not mentioned in historical sources relating to the Timurid era. However, the information provided in the works of Khandamir, Davlatshah Samarkandiy and Abdurazzok Samarkandiy indicates that the Timurid princess Gavharshodbegim was a talented poetess, patron of science and culture.

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