

## THE IMAGE OF THE RULER IN THE NOVEL "STARRY NIGHTS" BY PIRIMKUL KODIROV

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### Abstract

In *Starry Nights*, the image of the ruler can be interpreted as a symbol of oppression and authority. This object is crucial to the story's central conflict, as it reflects the protagonist's struggle against external control and internal limitations. The ruler's association with precision and measurement contrasts with the protagonist's desire for unpredictability and freedom. As the character grapples with their environment and personal desires, the ruler becomes a metaphor for the restrictive forces they must navigate to achieve self-liberation. The juxtaposition of personal dreams against the rigid social order provides a critical commentary on the struggle for individual autonomy.

**Keywords:** Symbolism, oppression, authority, freedom, self-expression, identity, struggle, societal constraints, liberation, conflict.

### Introduction

In *Starry Nights*, Pirimkul Kodirov masterfully weaves a narrative that explores the complexities of human existence in a world dominated by societal norms and expectations. The protagonist, caught between personal aspirations and the harsh realities of their environment, finds themselves in constant conflict with the established order. The image of the ruler is not just a simple object in the story; it is a multi-layered symbol that reflects the forces of control, measurement, and restriction that shape the character's journey. It is through this symbol that Kodirov highlights the paradox of human life: the desire for freedom and self-actualization versus the undeniable presence of societal structures that seek to measure and limit one's potential.

The ruler, often associated with precision, order, and authority, stands in stark contrast to the protagonist's yearning for unpredictability, creativity, and personal liberation. This contrast is particularly significant as it underscores the broader theme of the novel—how individuals, particularly in oppressive societies, are forced to confront and navigate the boundaries set for them. As the protagonist struggles to assert their identity, the ruler becomes a representation of the societal constraints that they must either accept or overcome. The image of the ruler, then, becomes a powerful metaphor for the limitations imposed by both external forces and the internalized beliefs that individuals carry within themselves.[1]

### DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Kodirov's portrayal of the ruler is more than just a commentary on external authority; it also serves as a reflection on the human condition. The tension between the ruler's rigid structure and the protagonist's desire for freedom mirrors the broader existential struggle faced by many



individuals seeking to define themselves outside the boundaries set by others. This conflict, central to *Starry Nights*, speaks to the universal human experience of wanting to break free from limitations and to live authentically. Through this powerful symbol, Kodirov encourages readers to reflect on the ways in which they too confront the "rulers" in their own lives—whether those be societal, familial, or self-imposed—and to consider the price of liberation and self-expression.[2]

The life and activities of Babur Mirza present a wealth of topics for exploration, and many literary works could be dedicated to his story. *Starry Nights* is one such literary creation. Kodirov began writing the novel in 1972, but due to the oppressive political climate, it took six years before it was finally published. In his foreword, the author describes the immense emotional burden he felt during the writing process, particularly under a repressive regime. The novel emphasizes Babur's efforts to preserve the Timurids' legacy and his achievements in rescuing the dynasty from destruction. Babur's journey across different lands, including India, Afghanistan, and beyond, is a testament to his perseverance and vision.[3]

The novel paints a picture of the decline of the Timurid Empire, the infighting among its rulers, and the bloody conflicts that ensued. It explores the disastrous consequences of the internal conflicts and the political instability that weakened the Timurid dynasty. As a result, Babur's rivals, like Shaybani Khan, easily defeated the fragmented and weak Timurids. The novel is split into two sections: the first focuses on the events in Movarounnahr (the region surrounding the Oxus River), while the second details the events in Afghanistan, Khorasan, and India. These two parts are united by Babur's persona. The narrative incorporates detective-like elements, psychological monologues, and dramatic dialogues, bringing the historical events to life.[4]

In the 1980s, Kodirov wrote a continuation of *Starry Nights* entitled *The Generations' Pass*, which focuses on the lives of Babur's son Humayun and his grandson Akbar Jaloliddin Muhammad. *Starry Nights* has been translated into many languages, including Russian, Qaraqalpaq, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, Urdu, Turkmen, Hindi, and Bengali.

Babur, born in 1483 in Andijan, was a descendant of Amir Timur, his father being the ruler of Fergana, Umar Shaykh. Babur's mother, Qutlug' Nigor Khanim, was a learned and wise woman who played a significant role in his education and military endeavors. Following his father's death when Babur was only 12 years old, Babur ascended to the throne and began his efforts to restore his grandfather Timur's empire. His first major goal was to regain the ancient city of Samarkand, which he managed to capture after several battles.

Despite his deeply religious beliefs, Babur was not inclined towards sectarianism and was known for his political pragmatism. He was respectful toward different religious figures but did not allow them to interfere with his political decisions. Though a devout Muslim, Babur did not support the divisive nature of religious extremism. Throughout his reign, Babur cultivated friendly relations with Afghan and Indian rulers, balancing both political and personal diplomacy.[5]

The novel also portrays the struggles of common people through characters like Tohir and Robiya, who are from a humble farming background. Their love story unfolds amidst the tumult of war, particularly during the siege of Quva. Tohir and his friends display extraordinary courage by sabotaging a bridge to prevent the enemy's army from crossing, which leads to a



significant victory for the people. This moment of heroism shows the importance of patriotism and love for one's homeland.

After the death of his father, Babur faced numerous political challenges and was forced to think critically and strategically. One of these moments was when he opposed Ahmad Tanbal's desire to marry his sister, Xonzoda Begim. Despite his personal feelings, Babur decided to protect his sister and prevent any further internal conflict. The character of Xonzoda Begim is notable for her bravery and loyalty to her family, even in the face of great danger. Like the warrior-queen Tomiris from history, Xonzoda Begim's sacrifices demonstrate her fierce dedication to her people and her land.

The novel also touches upon Babur's governance in India, where he successfully established a peaceful and prosperous state. Though he could not restore the empire of his grandfather Timur, Babur laid the foundation for a stable and effective government in India. His rule was marked by political savvy and the establishment of a dynasty that would continue to govern for over three centuries.

Babur's legacy continues to be recognized by scholars and writers worldwide. As noted by renowned historian Rumer Goden, while Babur's empire did not expand to the vast regions his grandfather had once conquered, he established a powerful dynasty that ruled for 332 years. Babur's ability to consolidate and govern his realm is acknowledged as a significant achievement in the history of Central Asia and India.[6]

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, *Starry Nights* by Pirmkul Kodirov is a monumental literary work that vividly portrays the life and struggles of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur. Through a rich narrative that blends historical events with profound character development, Kodirov not only highlights Babur's personal journey but also explores the complex political, social, and military landscapes of the time. The novel sheds light on the tragic decline of the Timurid Empire, the internal conflicts that plagued it, and Babur's remarkable resilience in overcoming these challenges to establish his own rule in India.

The author's meticulous research and emotional investment in the project are evident throughout the novel, which reflects both historical accuracy and artistic creativity. *Starry Nights* captures the essence of Babur's character, depicting him as both a visionary and a pragmatic ruler. Moreover, the novel offers a deep exploration of loyalty, bravery, and the human spirit, as exemplified through the actions of the secondary characters like Xonzoda Begim, Tohir, and Robiya.

Kodirov's work goes beyond a mere recounting of historical events; it serves as a testament to the enduring legacy of Babur, whose achievements and hardships resonate with readers across generations. The novel's universal themes of sacrifice, leadership, and the quest for justice continue to inspire, making it a vital part of Uzbek literature and a crucial contribution to the understanding of Central Asian history. Ultimately, *Starry Nights* is not just the story of one man but a reflection of the strength and resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity.



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