

**SOURCE STUDIES OF THE HISTORY OF AMIR TEMUR'S MILITARY CAMPAIGNS**

Imamov Ulug'bek Ismailovich

Master's student of the Historiography and  
Source Studies of Samarkand State University  
imomovulugbek59@gmail.com

**ANNOTATION**

In the history of world civilization, there are many battles and how strong the composition of the army is, it is constantly studied chronologically. However, information about the purpose of these battles and the appearance of the troops, its true nature and subsequent consequences is rare. A similar phenomenon is observed in the topic of Amir Temur's military campaigns. There is very little information about the combativeness of Amir Temur's army and how it moved, as well as the directions of its invasion and the issues of its control. This article presents specific facts about the historiography of Amir Temur's military campaigns and the composition of the army based on scarce information.

**Keywords:** Military army, Izofa, Burungor, Juvongor, Center, Georgia, Mud battle, Ankara, Tavochi, Levant, Seistan, Historiography.

**АННОТАЦИЯ**

В истории мировой цивилизации немало сражений и насколько силен состав армии, постоянно изучается в хронологическом порядке. Однако сведения о цели этих боев и появлении войск, их истинном характере и последующих последствиях встречаются редко. Аналогичное явление наблюдается и в теме военных походов Амира Темура. Очень мало сведений о боеспособности армии Амира Темура и о том, как она двигалась, а также о направлениях ее вторжения и вопросах управления ею. В данной статье на основе скудных сведений представлены конкретные факты историографии военных походов Амира Темура и состава армии.

**Ключевые Слова:** Военная армия, Изофа, Бурунгор, Джувонгор, Центр, Грузия, Грязевая битва, Анкара, Тавочи, Левант, Сейстан, Историография.

**ANNOTATSIIYA**

Dunyo sivilizatsiyasi tarixida ko'plab janglar yuz berganligi hamda qo'shinlar tarkibining qanchalik kuchli ekanligi doimiy ravishda xronologik jihatdan o'rganib kelinadi. Ammo ushbu janglar hamda qo'shinlarning qanday maqsadda paydo bo'lganligi, uning asl mohiyati va undan keying oqibatlar to'g'risida ma'lumotlar kam uchraydi. Xuddi shunday hodisa Amir Temur harbiy yurishlari mavzusida ham kuzatiladi. Amir Temur qo'shining jangovorligi hamda uning qanday tartibda harakatlanishi, shuningdek, uning bosqinchilik yo'nalishlari va uning nazoratga olinish masalalari to'g'risida nihoyatda kamyob ma'lumotlar uchraydi. Ushbu maqolada kamyob ma'lumotlar asosida Amir Temur harbiy yurishlari tarixshunosligi hamda qo'shin tarkibi to'g'risida aniq faktlar bayon etilgan.

**Kalit So'zlar:** Harbiy qo'shin, izofa, burung'or, juvong'or, markaz, Gurjiston, Loy janggi, Anqara, tavochi, Shom yurti, Seiston, Tarixshunoslik.

## INTRODUCTION

The first military campaigns were organized at the time when Amir Temur was trying to restore the borders of the country within the Chigatai ulus. These campaigns included five military campaigns against Khorezm and seven against Mongolia during the years 1370-1390. The second group consists of military operations carried out in order to ensure the security of the country. Campaigns against the Golden Horde in 1389, 1391, 1395, against Egypt and Ottoman states in 1399-1402 can be included in the second group. As a result of these campaigns, the state of Timur became the most powerful kingdom in the world. The third group of military campaigns can include military campaigns carried out in response to letters written by ordinary citizens of neighboring countries who have fallen into an extremely difficult situation as a result of feudal disunity and have suffered oppression.

These campaigns mainly covered the territories of present-day Iran. It should also be noted that these marches were also in the interest of Timur's state. Because at that time, the conflicts in Iran, which was divided into more than twenty countries, were hindering Amir Temur's efforts to restore the southern branch of the Great Silk Road.<sup>1</sup> We included the military campaigns carried out under the banner of Islam in the fourth group. Such campaigns include military campaigns behind the Caucasus, to India and against China. Now we will give more detailed information about these walks. All governors and governors of Movarunnahr declared that they are ready to submit to the will of Temur, who rose to power at the congress.

Amir Temur faces some resistance only when solving the Khorezm issue. The fact is that the territory of Khorezm, which is the main support of the Khorezmshah state, is divided into two by the order of Genghis Khan in order to completely destroy the possibility of restoring its former power. Southern Khorezm will be given to Chigatay, Northern Khorezm will be given to Jochi descendants, and as a result, Northern Khorezm will be included in the Golden Horde state. The disintegration of the Golden Horde gave Husayn Sufi, a Genghisian descendant, the opportunity to separate Northern Khorezm from the Golden Horde. Husayn Sufi, who wanted to turn Khorezm into a powerful state like before, conquered South Khorezm.

## MAIN PART

According to Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi, Amir Temur sent an ambassador to Khorezm in 1372 and asked to return the lands of South Khorezm and expressed his desire to establish cordial and friendly relations between the two countries. In response, Husayn Sufi replied that he had taken this country by the power of the sword, and he had to take it by the power of the sword. In 1372, Amir Temur's soldiers moved vigorously and occupied the very strong Qiyat fortress, which was defended by an experienced army.<sup>2</sup> Husayn, who did not expect Temur to be so powerful and experienced, hides in Urganch and soon dies of an illness. His brother Yusuf Sufi will sit on the throne. Trying to establish good neighborly relations with Khorezm, Yusuf offers

<sup>1</sup> Valikhajhaev B. Madrasahs of the era of Timurids. 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Arabshah. Amazing history of Taimur. 1992.

Sufi to make peace. According to the terms of peace, South Khorezm will be included in the Timur state, and the daughter of Husayn Sufi will be betrothed to Jahangir, the son of Timur. Yusuf Sufi soon broke the terms of the truce. He refuses to hand over his nephew to Jahangir and recaptures the city of Qiyat.

For this reason, Amir Temur again drew troops to Khorezm in 1373. But the case does not go to war. Yusuf Sufi quickly leaves Qiyat and fulfills the other terms of the contract. As a result, Khanzodabegim was married to Jahangir and became Temur's favorite daughter-in-law. In 1375, Yusuf Sufi took advantage of Timur's preoccupation with the fight against the White Horde and recaptured Southern Khorezm. Only by 1379, Temur was able to take an army to Khorezm, and Southern Khorezm was annexed to the state of Temur. In 1388, Temur makes his last campaign to Khorezm. Because Suleiman Sufi flew to Tokhtamysh and started a war against the state of Timur. The state of Timur was located in the center of the Great Silk Road, and therefore played the role of a kind of bridge between the East and the West. But at the same time, there were negative aspects of the geopolitical location of Temur's state. For example, from the earliest times to the 11th century, the Movaraunnahr region was a battleground between settled and nomadic populations. Most of the civilizations in human history during ancient times and the Middle Ages were under the pressure of nomads.

For example, Attila carried out continuous military operations against the Ancient Roman Empire, Scythians and Sarmatians against Greece, Achaemenids against Iran, Khorezm, Sogdiana and Bactria, and Huns against China. Such conflicts continued in the Middle Ages. Countries have tried to take various measures to prevent the invasion of settlers. For example, the Chinese built the Great Wall of China for the same reason. The Movaraunnahr people fortified large villages and cities with defensive fortifications.<sup>3</sup> During the Samoni period, the issue of protecting Movaraunnahr with a wall was raised. Realizing how difficult it was and that it was possible to organize protection through other measures, Ismail Samoni exclaimed: "I am the wall."

During the time of Amir Temur, protecting the country from the pressure of nomadic hordes was one of the most pressing issues. In order to fulfill this task, Temur first of all took measures to strengthen the defense of cities. Because in 1370, even the capital of the country, Samarkand, did not have defensive fortifications. Of course, the construction of protective walls around the cities of Movaraunnahr strengthened the security of the territory to some extent. But this measure could not fully ensure the security of the country. For this, it was necessary to subjugate Dashti Kipchak or, if not, put a ruler close to him on the throne. A large part of Malumki Dashti Kipchak belonged to the Joji clan. Ulus, in turn, consisted of the Golden and White Hordes. In the second half of the XI century, feudal disunity reigned in the Golden Horde. During the years 1360-1380, 25 khans were exchanged there. In the meantime, the White Horde, which did not lose its unity, began to interfere more and more in the internal affairs of the Golden Horde.

He set himself the task of uniting the Hordes. Realizing that the emergence of a single and powerful Horde in the north could pose a great danger to his country, Temur began to take steps to prevent it. A good opportunity came soon. Uzbek sultan Toykhoja, who refused to participate

---

<sup>3</sup> Valikhojhaev B. Madrasahs of the era of Temurids. 1997.

in the military campaign against the Golden Horde, was killed by the order of Uruskhan. His son Tokhtamish came to Timur asking for refuge and help. Timur gathered an army for him twice, but both times he was defeated by Uruskhan. In 1379, Timur himself marched against Uruskhan, and in the end, he put Tokhtamishkhan on the throne of the White Horde. But Tokhtamysh, whom Timur called his son, did not live up to his hopes and trust. He continued the policy of Uruskhan and subjugated the Golden Horde.<sup>4</sup> Tokhtamysh did not stop there and began to threaten the state of Timur. He first invaded the regions behind the Caucasus and Azerbaijan and captured Tabriz in 1385. Then, in 1387-88, he took advantage of Timur's absence to invade Movaraunnahr and plundered the villages around Samarkand, in the Kesh region.

He burned Zanjirsarai and scattered the ashes on the blue sky. After informing about this to Timur, who was busy with the Iran campaign, he returned his army to Movaraunnahr with an unprecedented speed for that time (on average, 40 km in one day: both on foot and on horseback). Tokhtamysh did not expect Timur to turn back so quickly. In the battle near Jizzakh, Tokhtamysh's troops were defeated. He wrote a letter to Timur and repented. But in fact, he does not stop his actions. As a result, in 1391, Timur was forced to take an army to the Golden Horde. Timur's army of 200,000 men through the territories of Otrar and North Kazakhstan defeated Tokhtamish Khan's army of approximately the same number of men near the Kunduzcha river between Samara and Chistopol.

In this battle in June 1391, Timur used a new method. He divided the soldiers into two ranks. Each line had right and left wings and a center. He also allocated a large number of soldiers to the reserve. Having received a large amount of booty, Timur limited himself to looting the cities near the border and returned to Samarkand.<sup>5</sup> Although the Golden Horde was defeated, it was still powerful. Relying on the help of the rulers of Poland and Lithuania, Tokhtamysh takes the throne of the Golden Horde again, and while Timur is busy with the Iranian campaign, he invades the land of Ozar and Shirvan belonging to him. As a result, Timur will be forced to start a battle against Tokhtamish for the third time. The decisive battle began on April 15, 1395 and ended with the victory of Sahibgiron. In this battle, the Tatars, who were superior in terms of numbers, put Timur's army in a difficult situation, just like in the second battle. Timur's entrepreneurship, ability to skillfully use the reserve army, heroism of soldiers and well-preparedness for battle ensured the victory of Timur's army.

After the battle, Timur's troops continued to pursue Khokhtamish, giving him a series of blows and plundering the cities of the Golden Horde. A. Yakubovsky, B. Grekov, M. Ivanin point out that the Golden Horde is a completely decadent service of Timur and note that it was of great importance in the liberation of Russia.<sup>6</sup> In the books of the Soviet era, it was noted that Timur's military campaigns were campaigns of an invasion nature. The evidence presented above clearly shows that Timur's campaigns against the White and Golden Horde were carried out in order to protect the country's borders and ensure its security. Of course, the booty was taken,

---

<sup>4</sup> Kattaev Kamolxon. Samarkandnama. Tashkent, 2001.

<sup>5</sup> Alisher Navoi. Sophisticated gatherings. Tashkent, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Abramov M.M. Timur and improvement of the cities of Uzbekistan. 1991.

and the army's interest in the booty cannot be denied. The legality of taking booty was mentioned in the Koran. Taking booty was one of the goals of Timur's campaigns.

However, booty was not his main goal in any of his campaigns. For example, Timur gave up his share of 25% of the booty taken in the 1395 campaign in favor of the navkars. In order to strengthen the northern borders of the country, along with the wars against the Golden Horde, he organized military campaigns to Khurasan and Iran. The reason for these marches is that this area was divided into several states. More than 20 independent states were formed in the territory of Persia alone. There was constant fighting between this state and small states. The ordinary citizen was suffering a lot from these wars. The order and fair rule established in Movaraunnahr, the righteous ruler did not fail to impress them. In hundreds of letters addressed to Amir Timur, residents asked him to establish order in their country. The state of Sarbadors voluntarily became part of the state of Timur. The rise of the state of Timur was largely dependent on the development of trade and commerce.

As a result of the headships in Movaraunnahr, Khurasan and Iran, the southern branch of the Great Silk Road declined, and the northern branch passing through Khorezm and Golden Orda developed. At the heart of Timur's military campaigns was the intention to restore the southern network. The main goals of Timur's campaigns in Iran and Khurasan were to end the feudal disunity, restore justice, and establish a trade route. Amir Timur carried out 3-year campaigns against Iran from 1386, 5 years from 1392, and 7 years from 1399 and completely conquered Iran. Among these campaigns, he conquered Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. French scientist Jean Paul Rooney in his book "Tamerlan" emphasizes that due to Timur, peace, stability and decision were found in Iran, trade, agriculture and handicrafts developed, people's standard of living increased. Timur increased construction works in this region. In 1398, the Indian campaign begins. This march was carried out due to the need to protect the population of the Muslim sect. Victories in Iran put Timur's state on the border with the Ottoman Turks. Timur did not dare to fight with the Turkish sultan Bayazid, who was fighting against the Christians. The development of trade and economic relations and the establishment of good neighborly relations fully corresponded to the interests of both countries. Timur wrote a letter to Bayazid and expressed his desire to develop mutual relations, and for the establishment and strengthening of mutual trust, he demanded to send Karayusuf, who had fought several times against Timur and who is currently under Bayazid's refuge, to his custody. In response, Bayazid severely insults Timur and writes to Timur: "...I know that these words will drive you towards our country without stopping, if you do not come to our side, let your wives be divorced three times; if you come to my country, and I do not fight against you, then let my wives be divorced three times." such a letter made war inevitable. The decisive battle began on July 20, 1402 in Chubuq near Ankara.<sup>7</sup> 400,000 soldiers took part in the battle from both sides. Timur manages to turn the Tatar soldiers in Bayazid's army to his side. When the battle begins, they close and move towards Timur, and as a result, the Turkish soldiers are completely crushed. Bayazid was captured along with his wife Alevera, sons Musa and Isa. Timur continued the attack and completely occupied Asia Minor. The last guard of the rebels will be destroyed. But Timur was not in favor of destroying the state of the Turks. Because this country was at the

---

<sup>7</sup> Omonulla Boriev. Military potential of Amir Timur, Tashkent, 2001.

forefront of the struggle of Muslims against Christians. Timur was well aware that the rise of Christians would threaten the entire Muslim world. Therefore, after the death of Bayazid, he handed over the throne of the Ottoman Empire to his son Musa. Having taken control of the territories from Movarunnahr to the Mediterranean Sea, from India to the Dnieper, Timur began to prepare for the march to China. In fact, preparations for this campaign began in the 1380s. Because Temur had planned to increase the food supply by moving 20,000 livestock farmers to the territories of Eastern Turkestan.

Temur specifically emphasized that this campaign was carried out in order to spread Islam to China. Timur's army starts the campaign on November 27, 1404. In January, due to severe winter, he is forced to stop around the city of O'tror. Timur's illness and death put an end to the Chinese campaign. Amir Temur is known to the world as one of the greatest generals in human history. The structure of his army, the tactics and strategy he used during military campaigns, and the methods of fighting are studied and taught in military educational institutions all over the world, including leading countries. Amir Temur is considered one of the 3 greatest generals of ancient and medieval times (A.Macedonsky, Genghis Khan, Amir Temur). Russian general M. Ivanin, in his work "Two great generals", while evaluating the military arts of Genghis Khan and Amir Temur, emphasizes that Amir Temur is somewhat superior in this field.<sup>8</sup>

French researchers, comparing the activities of Amir Temur with Macedonian, they also emphasize the advantages of Temur. He made a huge contribution to the development of world military art. Amir Temur's army consisted of infantry and cavalry. However, the infantry were also provided with cavalry during long desert journeys, and most of the cavalry were trained to fight on foot when necessary. Timur's troops, which had a very strict, iron-like order and discipline, were divided into tens (Ayl), hundreds (Khushun), thousands (Hazara), and tens of thousands (Tuman), headed by tumanoga or emirs. 12 of the 12 clans subordinate to Amir Temur were selected from Barlos, Argin, Jaloir, Tulkichi, Duldoz, Mongol, Sulduz, Tugoi, Kipchak, Arlot, Tatar and Tarkhan chiefs. Amirs were divided into 12 levels. Their rank was determined according to the number of soldiers provided by their tribes, the prestige among the soldiers, the experience gained in battles, and their loyal service to Timur.

Each of the twelve emirs was given one flag and one drum. Amirul-Umar was given a flag, a drum, and an army of ten thousand. These special symbols distinguished the army units from each other. Cavalrymen in Amir Temur's army were divided into ordinary and elite warriors, forming light and heavy cavalry. Besides, Amir Temur also had his own soldiers, like the guard. In addition to these main types of troops, Amir Temur's army had the following: 1) pontoon workers (people engaged in building portable bridges) and shipmen. They were mainly selected from people engaged in shipbuilding in the Amu and Syrdarya rivers and used to build ships and bridges, 2) Naftandoz (Gregorian or Greek flamethrowers), 3) warriors who know how to work with siege engines and stone-throwing kuolks.<sup>9</sup> This organization of Timur's troops shows that they were divided into ranks to one degree or another, that each warrior had to know his

---

<sup>8</sup> Omonulla Boriev. Military potential of Amir Temur, Tashkent, 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Jumanazar A. History of Bukhara education system. 2004.

place in tens, tens were divided into hundreds, hundreds were divided into thousands (and so on), and they had to know in which way they should be positioned.

Strict discipline and organization ruled the hundred-thousandth army, accuracy, correctness and exact observance of the speed of movement, formation of ranks and constant regularity were required. According to Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi, the movements of Timur's troops were carried out with precision, before the battle with Bayazid, all the warriors from Samarkand wore special colored uniforms. For example, the units with a red flag had shields, saddles, harnesses, arrows, belts, spears, maces and other weapons of the same color, while the units of warriors dressed in yellow, white, etc. were equipped with weapons and other weapons of the same color. The units were distinguished by the types of their weapons. Extimol cavalry units can also be distinguished by the color of their horses. Amir Timur, who built the great kingdom of his time, which included about 30 independent countries, did not declare himself the legal head of the state - khan. The reason for this was that he did not belong to the generation of Genghis.

According to the customs of that time, the throne and the title of khan should belong only to Genghis Khan. This opinion was supported not only by Genghis and Mongols, but also by other layers of the population. For example, Bahavuddin Naqshbandi, the greatest and most respected scholar of that time, did not have the influence he deserved in Timur's court.<sup>10</sup> Although he was free to work, he was not invited to the palace. Because he was in favor of putting one of Genghis on the throne and actually ruling the country. Timur could not completely deny the demand of these sections of the population. At the same time, he did not want to give up power. Therefore, he officially put Suyurgotmish (1380-1388) on the throne. After that he declared Sultan Mahmud (1388-1402) as Khan. Labels were issued in the name of these khans, money was minted.

But they were khans in name only and did not interfere in the political life of the country and Timur's orders. Nevertheless, in order to give a legal tone to his rule, Timur married Sarai Mulk Khanim, the daughter of Kazan Khan, and added the title of "Koragon" (Khan's son-in-law) to his emirship. Amir Timur divided his huge country into governors. According to the structure of Amir Timur's empire, it consisted of independently governed uluses, and according to its administration, it was in the form of an absolute monarchy.<sup>11</sup> This state was distinguished from other empires by its fairness and justice. Amir Timur divides all territories except Movoraunnahr into uluses. He gives Balkh region to his eldest son Muhammed Jakhangir. After the death of Jahangir, the territories of Afghanistan, Pakistan and North India were added to this nation and it was entrusted to Pirmuhammadbek.

The center of the ulus was first Balkh, then Ghazna, and finally Balkh again. The southern part of Iran - Fars province was given to Umarsheikh. The center of the nation was the city of Shiraz. The Ulus of Azerbaijan, Iraq and Armenia (the center of Tabriz) was given to Mironshokh. Khorasan, Jurjon, Mozondaran, Seyston ulus (Khirot center) was given to Shakhruk. While the nations were subject to the central authority, they had some

---

<sup>10</sup> Khanykov N.V. Description of the Bukhara Khanate. 1983.

<sup>11</sup> Yusupova D. A letter written by Ghiyasiddin Koshi from Samarkand to Koshan. Tashkent, 2009.

independence during the time of Timur. Nations had their own government, army, treasury. Ulus was independent, governed without the intervention of the Central Power. Their subordination to the central government consisted in sending a certain part of the tax to Samarkand and participating in military campaigns with their army at the request of the ruler. This situation later became one of the main reasons for the disintegration of the Timurid state. Nevertheless, the management system formed by Temur was a system that reflected the traditions of statehood during the times of Somonids, Karakhanids, Seljuks, Ghaznavids, and Khorezmshaks, took into account their best aspects, and was adapted to the needs and exigencies of the new historical period.

### CONCLUSION

Amir Temur, while consistently following the following 8 principles of Uzbek statehood, which had been formed before him, made a significant contribution to their content enrichment: 1) the state must first of all be politically independent in order to fulfill its mandate; 2) the integrity of the state and society should not be violated; 3) the state and society should be managed on the basis of certain laws, procedures, and ideas; 4) it is necessary to form a certain system that coordinates various links, directions, branches of management; 5) the state (progress) of social and economic relations in the society should be in the center of attention of the state.; 6) Constant concern for the development of science and culture should be considered as a strict policy of the state; 7) according to the conditions and procedures of each era, it is necessary to solve the issues of the state, society, and internal development using existing factors in the external world; 8) the governing forces of the state should understand the past, present and future with deep thinking, strong faith, extremely high spirituality and nationalism.

Along with the development of the foundations of national statehood, Amir Temur added an important ninth foundation, which is to envisage the activities of all social classes in the development of society and ensure their interests. Based on this, Amir Temur was one of the first in the history of the world to divide the social structure of society into 12 classes, and defined the separate position and benefits of each of them, as well as the corresponding relations between the state and the society.

1. If the main powerful force of Alexander the Great's army was made up of infantry, Genghis Khan's army consisted mainly of cavalry. Amir Temur paid great attention to both types of troops and skillfully used the advantages of infantry and cavalry depending on the situation during battles.

2. Amir Temur's army was armed with the newest weapons of its time. It also included military units formed for the purpose of performing special tasks. Among them were special units such as pontoonmen, boatmen, naphthandos, and a military unit operating in the mountains.

3. Amir Temur developed separate tactical rules for each of the 10,000, 40,000, 100,000 and even larger army units and special units. After each battle, these rules were refined.

### REFERENCES

1. Abramov M.M. Temur and improvement of the cities of Uzbekistan. 1991.
2. Alisher Navoi. Sophisticated gatherings. Tashkent, 2006.
3. Ibn Arabshah. Amazing history of Taimur. 1992.

4. Jumanazar A. History of Bukhara education system. 2004.
5. Kattaev Kamolxon. Samarkandnama. Tashkent, 2001.
6. Khanykov N.V. Description of the Bukhara Khanate. 1983.
7. Omonulla Boriev. Military potential of Amir Temur, Tashkent, 2001.
8. Valikhojhaev B. Madrasahs of the era of Timurids. 1997.
9. Yusupova D. A letter written by Ghiyasiddin Koshi from Samarkand to Koshan. Tashkent, 2009.