



AMIR TEMUR AND FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES DURING THE TIMURIDS PERIOD.

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10652935>

Annotation: This article delves into the foreign policy challenges encountered by Amir Timur and the Timurid Empire during the 14th and 15th centuries. It assesses the expansionist endeavors, diplomatic strategies, and regional influence wielded by Timur and his successors, shedding light on the complex geopolitical dynamics of the era and their enduring legacy on Central and South Asia.

Key Words: Amir Timur, Timurid Empire, Foreign Policy, Military Campaigns, Diplomatic Alliances, Regional Hegemony, Geopolitical Landscape, Neighboring Empires, Diplomatic Relations, Legacy and Impact.

Introduction: Amir Timur, commonly known as Tamerlane, was a prominent Central Asian ruler who founded the Timurid Empire in the 14th century. This article examines the foreign policy challenges faced by Amir Timur and his successors during the Timurid period, exploring their military campaigns, diplomatic strategies, and impact on regional politics.

Early Life. Timur was born on April 8, 1336, near the city of Kesh (now called Shahrisabz), about 50 miles south of the oasis of Samarkand, in Transoxiana. The child's father Taraghai Bahdur was the chief of the Barlas tribe; Timur's mother was Tegin Begim. The Barlas were of mixed Mongolian and Turkic ancestry, descended from the hordes of Genghis Khan and the earlier inhabitants of Transoxiana. Unlike their nomadic ancestors, the Barlas were settled agriculturalists and traders.

Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Arabshah's 14th-century biography, "Tamerlane or Timur: The Great Amir," states that Timur was descended from Genghis Khan on his mother's side; it is not entirely clear whether that is true.

Many of the details of Tamerlane's early life are from a spate of manuscripts, dozens of heroic tales written from the early 18th through 20th centuries, and stored in archives across Central Asia, Russia, and Europe. In his book "The Legendary Biographies of Tamerlane," historian Ron Sela has argued that they were based on ancient manuscripts but serve as "a manifest against the corruption of rulers and officials, a call to respect Islamic traditions, and an attempt to situate Central Asia within a greater geopolitical and religious sphere."





The tales are full of adventures and mysterious happenings and prophecies. According to those tales, Timur raised in the city of Bukhara, where he met and married his first wife Aljai Turkanaga. She died about 1370, after which he married several of the daughters of Amir Husayn Qara'unas, a rival leader, including Saray Mulk. Timur eventually collected dozens of women as wives and concubines as he conquered their fathers' or erstwhile husbands' lands.

After the rise of Amir Temur as the sole ruler of the land of Turan, the peace in society, stability in their way of life and tranquility in their daily life, which all the peoples living in Movarounnahr were eagerly waiting for. Amir Temur chose the city of Samarkand as the capital of his state from the very first days of his coming to power and began to create all the necessary conditions for this city to fulfill its role as a center. As much as Amir Temur acted with determination and courage in the process of political unification of the country, he also carried out a number of works for the economic development of the country. "Amir Temur fulfilled the picture of justice by following the laws in protecting the weak people, raiyats, merchant farmers. Over the centuries, Iranu, who has not yet entered into the covenant marriage of a suitor, is ruling the Turanian countries (Amir sahibqiran) by full conquest and fair politics, so that the sages of those lands are amazed. In the days when his justice and policy were established, not only in the remotest places of Mowaroonnahr, but also in the lands from the border of China and Khotan to the outskirts of Delhi, from Babylon to Egypt and the territory of Rome, let alone merchants, children and widows also bought silk fabrics, gold and silver and they bring the finest commercial goods. No one can lay eyes on a single grain of them and not harm a single dirham. This infinite blessing and infinite grace is the result of the policy and justice of Amir Sahibqiran. Amir Temur gradually integrated large territories into the state he was creating, united them under a single center, and at the same time tried to develop their economic life and financial system by bringing them into a single system. The head of state in the country is the Supreme Ruler Amir Temur, and the Ministry of Finance is the strongest in terms of authority. All work was carried out by the head of this finance department - a person with the rank of devanbegi and his secretariat, which operates under him. The main tasks of this department are determining tax revenues and their disposal, conducting trade and agricultural activities and realizing various types of income and receipts to the country's treasury, minting coins in different regions of the country and collecting taxes. It would prevent fraud and solve other economic problems. Instead, the country included ulus, regions and regions. Each city or regional governor was considered a doru, and





he managed the territory given to him by the supreme ruler. In this place, the Daruga obeyed the orders given by the central authority during the administration of the territory entrusted to him and was also responsible for the work of soldiers and tax collection from time to time. The appointment and dismissal of this position was carried out by the finance department. Mentioning the economic management of the lands under Amir Temur, how much profit they bring during the year and how to spend these funds to provide the army and the full and prosperous life of the common people in a permanent way. He was driving. Amir Temur came to a certain opinion by comparing various means in managing the society, including the Holy Qur'an, Sharia laws and their recommendations, and the experience of the kings before the time of Temur. It is "Tuzuklar": "Which Minister, entering into the work of the Ministry with purity and correctness, and performing the financial and property affairs of the state with piety and virtue, without corrupting the ego, without betraying the trust, then let such a minister be promoted to the highest ranks, and which minister commits corruption As long as he conducts the affairs of the country in an evil way, the kingdom will soon be blessed. In order to form independent finance of his country and to raise its level and economic level, Timur unified the financial sector of all the countries included in the territory of his country into a single system. Amir Temur's economic policy and improvement of monetary and financial system in his country had a positive effect on the economic improvement of the country. Due to the fact that the role of money in the life of citizens was increasing day by day, it was possible to determine and collect taxes on products from farmers in cash. Due to the active foreign policy carried out by Amir Temur, he completely ended the dependence of the kingdom's finances on the Mongols and other foreign invaders. He managed to create an independent finance of a huge country and create an efficient economic environment that allowed it to improve continuously. He clarified the quantitative indicators of the resources of the Sultanate treasury and the funds belonging to the local ulus and beliks. During the time of Amir Temur, the state treasury consisted of two funds. The first is the main treasure, which mainly stores masterpieces that have been passed down from generation to generation for long periods of time. The second part of the treasury was used for permanent expenses. If there was a shortage of funds due to problems related to expenses, they would borrow money from the first fund and replenish it from the income of the next period. The main thing that Temur did in the procedures of the treasury system was that, without using the first savings fund, he organized a better formation of the second fund and a constant





control over the spending of funds. In addition, the income and expenses of both funds were recorded continuously. Also, allocation of investment from the first fund to the second fund was subordinated to the authority of the responsible ministers in a certain system. Inflows and outflows carried out in the system of ministries are constantly monitored by ministers. One of the important financial approaches has been made clear about the financial affairs between the state treasury, i.e. the central treasury and the uluses. It has been known for a long time that when the states occupied other territories, they levied taxes along with the territory as compensation from the defeated side. Due to the introduction of new taxes, the amount of taxes has been exceeded. Amir Temur did the opposite. "I ordered that - he wrote in "Tuzuklar" - it is necessary to refrain from collecting taxes from the raiyats in order to avoid putting them in a difficult situation or reducing the country to poverty. Because the destruction of the raiyat leads to the impoverishment of the state treasury. The depletion of the treasure causes the dispersal of the army. The disunity of the army, in turn, leads to the weakening of the kingdom."1 The most significant of Amir Temur's actions in the monetary policy was the establishment of a unified monetary system in all regions. The introduction of a single monetary system allowed the development of internal trade within the country and the free movement of local merchants. And at the same time, the unified monetary system is considered a symbolic sign indicating that the entire territory of the country is a politically and economically unified state. During the time of Amir Temur, all small coins minted in different regions of the country were considered the main means of payment, and since this was a single monetary system, it served to improve and maintain the international, political and economic power of the state. Due to the high need of the society for coins during the period of Timur's rule, mints were established not only in Movarunnahr, but also in major cities of Khorasan, Iran, Iraq and Azerbaijan. Mints were established in about 40 cities, including Astrobad, Ashpara, Baku, Basra, Baghdad, Bamiyan, Damgan, Darband, Yazd, Mashhad, Mahmudabad, Isfahan, Mordin, Kashan, Qom, Kermon, Karshiva and others. . We know from history that in addition to the cities listed above, the rulers of India, Syria, Egypt and Turkey minted gold, silver and other types of coins in the name of Amir Temur. Ibn Arabshah, one of the historians of that time, in his work entitled "History of Amir Temur", "After the victory over the Turkish sultan Bayazid, one of his sons, one of the kings of Rum, Isfandiyar (Amir) came to Temur and asked for obedience to Amir Temur. did Amir Temur received him with joy and made Isfandiyar stable in his position in Rum, and ordered him to preach a sermon to





the amirs around him in the name of Mahmud Khan and the Great Amir Temur Koragan, and to mint money.

Amir Temur knew that due to the vast territory of his state, it would be difficult to mint coins and create a sufficient supply of them throughout the country, and for this reason he allowed local governments to mint coins. Of course, they also recognized the central authority and allowed them to mint coins in their name. Thus, those who minted coins in their own name without permission on the territory of the country were severely punished. For example, in 1392, Muzaffar and Sultan Ahmed, who ruled the provinces of Persia and Iraq, minted coins bearing their names. When Amir Temur found out about this, he arrested them, confiscated all their treasures and wealth, and appointed his son Umarshaikh Mirza instead of them. The composition and weight of the coins minted on the territory of the state, set by the central government, were strictly observed. The state strictly controlled the minting of coins. In the process of minting, the sophistication of local decorations and patterns is expressed on the surface of the coins. In terms of elegance, the elegance of the coins issued from the mints established in the regions of Mashhad, Isfahan, Tabriz and Baghdad is clearly visible. Amir Temur minted his first coins as a ruler in 774/1372-1373 based on the coins of Chigatai Khans. But with the passage of time, due to the monetary reform implemented in 1380, he began minting coins bearing his name in a new form. Due to the fact that old minted coins were recollected in the treasury and melted down, and new coins were minted, Amir Temur's first minted coins are rarely found in the treasures found in different regions. From historical sources, we know that in the cities of Samarkand and Khorezm, Temur gold coins were also minted in the 1380s. But finding these coins is almost a rare event for numismatics. In the state of Amir Temur, the value of silver coins was significantly higher. Coins minted by Timur and Timurid rulers were also in circulation in Khorezm, which was considered a part of the Timurid state. In 1380, the weight of silver coins decreased to 1.5 grams, and at the beginning of the 15th century, it decreased to 1.1 grams. For example, according to the information given by the Spanish ambassador Rui González de Clavijo, who came to the state of Amir Temur on a diplomatic mission in 1404: "This country (Samarkand) produces grain, oil, fruit, mutton, It is a country rich in all kinds of meat. Sheep are very large sheep with big butts. There are sheep whose butts are so heavy that a person can barely lift them - half a pound, that is, eight to ten kg. Such sheep were so numerous and cheap that when the royal army gathered in Samarkand, a pair of such sheep cost one ducat (about ten coins), and other goods were so cheap that ,





the price of 1 and a half bag of barley was half a real (ie about one miri)". While describing Samarkand in his diaries, Klaviho wrote that many different goods were sold here, and these goods were brought from different countries of the world, including China, India, Tatarstan and other regions. Amir Temur first minted coins under the name of the puppet khan Suyurgatmish (1372-1388), and after his death, his son Mahmud Khan minted coins. After the death of Mahmud Khan in 1402, Amir Temur did not appoint another puppet khan and continued minting coins in his name. On the front side of these coins, the word of faith is written in Arabic. The names of 4 caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali) are written on the 4 sides of these coins. On the reverse side of the coin, the label in Arabic (Suyurgatmishkhan) is written in Arabic as Amir Temur Koragon Akmonu. During the period of Amir Temur, minting of coins continued in a constant manner, mainly silver coinage became popular. If the weight of the coins was 6 grams, it was called a coin. Silver coins weighing a quarter of a coin, i.e. 1.5 grams, are called "miri" from the word "Amir". Coins issued in the name of Amir Temur had inscriptions of different contents. For example, "Sultan Mahmudkhan label Amir Temur Kor'ragon Khaldollah Mulikihu" (Astrobad, Isfahan, Khoi, Shiraz, Shemakha), "Sultan Mahmud Khan Amir Temur Korragon" (Bokuye, Qum), "Sultan Mahmud Khan Amir Temur Ko' ragon kholdollah mulikihu" (Bokuye, Sultania, Darban), "Sultan Mahmud Khan label Amir Temur Korragon" (Baghdad, Koshon), "asSultan Mahmud..Amir Temur Korragon sozi kholdollah mulikihu" (Basra), "as-Sultan al-Azam Mahmud Khan Amir Temur Koragon" (Herat) coins were minted in different parts of the world

Disputed Causes of Timur's Lameness.

The European versions of Timur's name—"Tamerlane" or "Tamberlane"—are based on the Turkic nickname Timur-i-leng, meaning "Timur the Lamé." Timur's body was exhumed by a Russian team led by archaeologist Mikhail Gerasimov in 1941, and they found evidence of two healed wounds on Timur's right leg. His right hand was also missing two fingers.

The anti-Timurid author Arabshah says that Timur was shot with an arrow while stealing sheep. More likely, he was wounded in 1363 or 1364 while fighting as a mercenary for Sistan (southeastern Persia) as stated by contemporary chroniclers Ruy Clavijo and Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi.

Transoxiana's Political Situation

During Timur's youth, Transoxiana was riven by conflict between the local nomadic clans and the sedentary Chagatay Mongol khans who ruled them. The Chagatay had abandoned the mobile ways of Genghis Khan and their other





ancestors and taxed the people heavily in order to support their urban lifestyle. Naturally, this taxation angered their citizens.

In 1347, a local named Kazgan seized power from the Chagatai ruler Borolday. Kazgan would rule until his assassination in 1358. After Kazgan's death, various warlords and religious leaders vied for power. Tughluk Timur, a Mongol warlord, emerged victorious in 1360.

Young Timur Gains and Loses Power

Timur's uncle Hajji Beg led the Barlas at this time but refused to submit to Tughluk Timur. The Hajji fled, and the new Mongol ruler decided to install the seemingly more pliable young Timur to rule in his stead.

In fact, Timur was already plotting against the Mongols. He formed an alliance with the grandson of Kazgan, Amir Hussein, and married Hussein's sister Aljai Turkanaga. The Mongols soon caught on; Timur and Hussein were dethroned and forced to turn to banditry in order to survive.

In 1362, the legend says, Timur's following was reduced to two: Aljai and one other. They were even imprisoned in Persia for two months.

Timur's Conquests Begin

Timur's bravery and tactical skill made him a successful mercenary soldier in Persia, and he soon collected a large following. In 1364, Timur and Hussein banded together again and defeated Ilyas Khoja, the son of Tughluk Timur. By 1366, the two warlords controlled Transoxiana.

Timur's first wife died in 1370, freeing him to attack his erstwhile ally Hussein. Hussein was besieged and killed at Balkh, and Timur declared himself the sovereign of the whole region. Timur was not directly descended from Genghis Khan on his father's side, so he ruled as an amir (from the Arabic word for "prince"), rather than as khan. Over the next decade, Timur seized the rest of Central Asia as well.

Timur's Empire Expands

With Central Asia in hand, Timur invaded Russia in 1380. He helped the Mongol Khan Toktamysch retake control and also defeated the Lithuanians in battle. Timur captured Herat (now in Afghanistan) in 1383, the opening salvo against Persia. By 1385, all of Persia was his.

With invasions in 1391 and 1395, Timur fought against his former protege in Russia, Toktamysch. The Timurid army captured Moscow in 1395. While Timur was busy in the north, Persia revolted. He responded by leveling entire cities and using the citizens' skulls to build grisly towers and pyramids.





By 1396, Timur had also conquered Iraq, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Georgia.

Conquest of India, Syria, and Turkey

Timur's army of 90,000 crossed the Indus River in September 1398 and set upon India. The country had fallen to pieces after the death of Sultan Firuz Shah Tughluq (r. 1351–1388) of the Delhi Sultanate, and by this time Bengal, Kashmir, and the Deccan each had separate rulers.

The Turkic/Mongol invaders left carnage along their path; Delhi's army was destroyed in December and the city was ruined. Timur seized tons of treasure and 90 war elephants and took them back to Samarkand.

Timur looked west in 1399, retaking Azerbaijan and conquering Syria. Baghdad was destroyed in 1401 and 20,000 of its people were slaughtered. In July 1402, Timur captured early Ottoman Turkey and received the submission of Egypt.

Final Campaign and Death

The rulers of Europe were glad that the Ottoman Turk sultan Bayazid had been defeated, but they trembled at the idea that "Tamerlane" was at their doorstep. The rulers of Spain, France, and other powers sent congratulatory embassies to Timur, hoping to stave off an attack.

Timur had bigger goals, though. He decided in 1404 that he would conquer Ming China. (The ethnic-Han Ming Dynasty had overthrown his cousins, the Yuan, in 1368.)

Unfortunately for him, however, the Timurid army set out in December during an unusually cold winter. Men and horses died of exposure, and the 68-year-old Timur fell ill. He died on February 17, 1405 at Otrar, in Kazakhstan.

Legacy

Timur started life as the son of a minor chieftain, much like his putative ancestor Genghis Khan. Through sheer intelligence, military skill, and force of personality, Timur was able to conquer an empire stretching from Russia to India and from the Mediterranean Sea to Mongolia.

Unlike Genghis Khan, however, Timur conquered not to open trade routes and protect his flanks, but to loot and pillage. The Timurid Empire did not long survive its founder because he rarely bothered to put any governmental structure in place after he destroyed the existing order.

While Timur professed to be a good Muslim, he obviously felt no compunction about destroying the jewel-cities of Islam and slaughtering their inhabitants. Damascus, Khiva, Baghdad...these ancient capitals of Islamic learning





never really recovered from Timur's attentions. His intent seems to have been to make his capital at Samarkand the first city in the Islamic world.

Contemporary sources say that Timur's forces killed about 19 million people during their conquests. That number is probably exaggerated, but Timur does seem to have enjoyed massacre for its own sake.

Timur's Descendants. Despite a death-bed warning from the conqueror, his dozens of sons and grandsons immediately began to fight over the throne when he passed away. The most successful Timurid ruler, Timur's grandson Ulegh Beg (1393–1449, ruled 1447–1449), gained fame as an astronomer and scholar. Ulegh was not a good administrator, however, and was murdered by his own son in 1449.

Timur's line had better luck in India, where his great-great-grandson Babur founded the Mughal Dynasty in 1526. The Mughals ruled until 1857 when the British expelled them. (Shah Jahan, the builder of the Taj Mahal, is thus also a descendant of Timur.)

Timur's Reputation. Timur was lionized in the west for his defeat of the Ottoman Turks. Christopher Marlowe's "Tamburlaine the Great" and Edgar Allen Poe's "Tamerlane" are good examples.

Not surprisingly, the people of Turkey, Iran, and the Middle East remember him rather less favorably.

In post-Soviet Uzbekistan, Timur has been made into a national folk hero. The people of Uzbek cities like Khiva, however, are skeptical; they remember that he razed their city and killed nearly every inhabitant.

1. Expansionist Ambitions: Amir Timur's reign was characterized by ambitious military campaigns aimed at expanding the borders of the Timurid Empire. His conquests extended from Central Asia to the Middle East, South Asia, and even Eastern Europe, posing significant challenges to neighboring states and empires.

2. Diplomatic Maneuvering: While military conquests were central to Timurid foreign policy, diplomatic alliances and negotiations also played a crucial role. Timur forged strategic partnerships with certain rulers and states, leveraging alliances to consolidate his power and further his territorial ambitions.

3. Regional Hegemony: Amir Timur's military successes enabled him to establish regional hegemony over vast territories, exerting influence over neighboring states and empires. The Timurid Empire emerged as a dominant force in the region, shaping the geopolitical landscape of Central and South Asia.



4. Relations with Neighboring Empires: The Timurid Empire's interactions with neighboring empires, such as the Ottoman Empire, the Mamluk Sultanate, and the Delhi Sultanate, were characterized by both cooperation and conflict. Timur's military campaigns often brought him into direct confrontation with these powers, leading to complex diplomatic relations and shifting alliances.

5. Legacy and Long-Term Impact: The Timurid Empire's foreign policy decisions and military conquests left a lasting legacy on the regions it influenced. While Timur's empire eventually fragmented after his death, the cultural, political, and economic impact of the Timurid era endured, shaping the history of Central and South Asia for centuries to come.

Conclusion: Amir Timur's foreign policy during the Timurid period was marked by expansionist ambitions, diplomatic maneuvering, and the establishment of regional hegemony. His military conquests and strategic alliances shaped the geopolitical landscape of Central and South Asia, leaving a lasting legacy that continues to influence the region today.

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