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THE INTERPRETATION OF AMIR TEMUR'S PERSONALITY AND STATECRAFT IN ISMAIL AKA'S WORK "THE GREAT STATE OF TEMUR".

Annotation: This article discusses the interpretation of Amir Temur's personality and statecraft as presented in the work "The Great State of Temur" by the Turkish scholar of Temur studies, Ismail Aka, who is one of the founders of the Temur studies school in Turkey.

Keywords: Modern Turkey, historiography, Amir Temur, Ismail Aka, "The Great State of Temur", Movarounnahr, Tokhtamysh Khan, Tughlugh Timur, qurultay, "Zafarnama", Jalair, Barlas, Golden Horde, Qazi Burhanuddin, "Alliance of Four".

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada turkiyalik temurshunos olim, Turkiyadagi temurshunoslik maktabining asoschilaridan biri Ismoil Akaning "Buyuk Temur davlati" asarida Amir Temur shaxsi va davlatchilik faoliyatining talqini o'rin olgan.

Kalit so'zlar: Zamonaviy Turkiya, tarixshunoslik, Amir Temur, Ismail Aka, "Buyuk Temur davlati", Movarounnahr, To'xtamishxon, Tug'luq Temur, qurlutoy, "Zafarnoma", jaloyirlar, barloslar, Oltin O'rda, Qozi Burxoniddin, "To'rtlar ittifoqi".

Аннотация: В данной статье рассматривается интерпретация личности и государственной деятельности Амира Темура, представленная в работе «Великая держава Темура» турецкого учёного-темуроведа Исмаила Аки, одного из основателей школы темуроведения в Турции.

Ключевые слова: современная Турция, историография, Амир Темур, Исмаил Ака, Великая держава Темура, Мавераннахр, Тохтамыш-хан, Туглук-Темур, курултай, «Зафарнаме», джалаиры, барласы, Золотая Орда, Кази Бурхануддин, «Союз четырех».

In modern Turkish historiography, the revival and development of the study and coverage of the history of Amir Temur and the Timurid era are directly associated with the name of Ismail Aka. He is the author of numerous works, scholarly articles, and theses focusing on the life, personality, statecraft, and military campaigns of Amir Temur. In pursuit of improving his knowledge of Persian and conducting scientific research in Iran, Ismail Aka won a scholarship from the Iranian government in 1968-69. During those years, he conducted research related to his academic topic in Iran. Upon his return to Turkey in 1971, he defended his doctoral dissertation titled "The Struggle for Power after Temur's Death and Shahrukh's Accession to Power (1405-1411)." In 1978, he earned the academic title of associate professor with his dissertation titled "The Timurid Empire during the Reign of Shahrukh Mirza (1411-1447)." Throughout his academic career, he authored numerous works, including "Ulughbek and His Era", "Temur and His State", "Shahrukh Mirza and His Era – 1405-1411", and "The Timurids". [12]

In his work "Temur va davlati," Ismail Aka attempts to objectively discuss the history of Amir Temur and the Timurid state based on various sources. The author notes the political situation in Movarounnahr on the eve of Amir Temur's rise to power, emphasizing that during this period, political leadership in Movarounnahr had shifted from the Jalair and Barlas clans to the Qaraunas, who were relatively minor tribes. [3, P.6]

It is known that in 1360-61, Tughlugh Timur invaded Movarounnahr and seized control of the region. Ismail Aka highlights that in this situation, Temur acted wisely. Notably, while many local leaders fled, Temur stayed in his homeland after reaching an agreement with Tughlugh Timur, which the author describes as a prudent political measure. [3, P.6]

When addressing the deterioration of relations between Temur and Tughlugh Timur, the author mentions that after Ilyas Khoja became the ruler of Movarounnahr, oppression in the region increased, and some local leaders sided with Ilyas Khoja and unjustly treated the local population. [3, P.7] It should be noted that Amir Temur made the right political decision in this situation. Specifically, it was at this point that his decision to seek refuge with Amir Husayn instead of joining Ilyas Khoja and his oppressive supporters marked a turning point in his political and military career.

Based on the above, it can be said that Amir Temur was compelled to make an agreement with Tughlugh Timur in 1360-61 for several political and strategic reasons. At that time, Temur was not yet the powerful ruler he would later become; he was one of the local leaders trying to consolidate his position in the region. Considering this, rather than resisting Tughlugh Timur outright, he chose a more pragmatic approach. By pursuing reconciliation, Temur avoided a confrontation that could have led to his defeat or complete political marginalization. This strategy benefited his future ambitions, enabling him to gather forces and strengthen his position in the region. Unlike other leaders who fled during Tughlugh Timur's invasion, Temur's decision to stay and negotiate showcased his political acumen. He knew that balancing resistance and diplomacy was essential in such a situation. Temur understood the importance of patience and timing in the struggle for power. He recognized that it was not the right time to confront Tughlugh Timur and that temporarily making peace would give him the opportunity to weaken his opponents and establish dominance in the region. Temur's actions during this period reflect his high level of political foresight and strategic thinking.

Ismail Aka also attempts to explore the relationship between Amir Temur and Tokhtamysh Khan. Historical records show that after the death of his father, Tokhtamysh came to Amir Temur seeking assistance and was welcomed. The author interprets Temur's reception of Tokhtamysh as a calculated move to prevent the reunification of the divided Golden and White Hordes. He emphasizes that there is no doubt about Temur's strategic insight and foresight. [3, P.11]

Adding to Ismail Aka's views, it can be noted that Amir Temur's support and assistance to Tokhtamysh had unique political and strategic reasons. By supporting Tokhtamysh, Temur sought to weaken the power of the Golden Horde, which at that time was the dominant force in the region with vast territories. Assisting Tokhtamysh allowed Temur to extend his influence northward, which was a crucial factor in expanding his state's sphere of influence and building a great empire.

Amir Temur viewed Tokhtamysh Khan as a potential vassal who could serve his interests in the region. By helping Tokhtamysh ascend to the throne of the Golden Horde, Temur hoped to secure a loyal ally. Additionally, by supporting Tokhtamysh, Temur aimed to balance the growing powers and threats in the Dasht-i Qipchaq and create a buffer zone between his territory and potential enemies by placing a ruler dependent on his support on the throne.

When discussing Amir Temur's campaigns against the Golden Horde, Ismail Aka emphasizes their significant importance for the Timurid state, noting that after two campaigns within five years, the Golden Horde lost its former status and became a secondary power. [3, P.24-25]

The defeat of Tokhtamysh Khan by Amir Temur had a profound impact on the political landscape of Central Asia, Southern and Eastern Europe, and Russia. The 1395 defeat of the Golden Horde weakened this once-mighty state, leading to internal fragmentation and the emergence of successor states such as the Crimean Khanate and the Kazan Khanate. Tokhtamysh Khan's defeat put an end to his final major attempt to restore the former glory of the empire. Moreover, it eliminated a potential threat to the political future of Amir Temur's state in the region.

Amir Temur's victory allowed him to control the main routes of the Silk Road, enhancing his economic power. The Silk Road was a crucial trade network connecting Europe and Asia, and controlling it not only brought wealth but also significant influence over regional politics. The defeat of Tokhtamysh by Amir Temur marked a turning point that reshaped the political, economic, and cultural landscape of Central Asia and its neighboring regions.

Ismail Aka also provides a detailed account of Amir Temur's seven-year campaign. The author notes that during this time, Sultan Bayezid, Tokhtamysh Khan, Qazi Burhanuddin, the ruler of Sivas, and Mamluk Sultan Barquq formed an alliance known as the "Alliance of Four" to oppose Temur. The author emphasizes that this alliance was born out of conflicting interests against Amir Temur. [3, P.26-28]

The author identifies two main reasons for the alliance's disintegration and its inability to effectively resist Amir Temur. The first reason is Tokhtamysh Khan's complete defeat by Temur. The remaining members of the alliance could not provide any practical assistance to Tokhtamysh. At that time, Sultan Bayezid was focused on consolidating his power in Eastern Europe and strengthening his position in Anatolia. The ruler of Sivas, Qazi Burhanuddin, was preoccupied with internal conflicts. As a result, Tokhtamysh, who had been one of the main leaders and initiators of the alliance, was left isolated against Amir Temur and was pushed out of the political scene. The second reason, according to the author, is the assassination of Qazi Burhanuddin in 1398 by Kara Yuluk Osman, the ruler of the Aq Qoyunlu. [3, P.28]

These observations by the author can be considered valid, as after this event, Sultan Bayezid began to expand his territory eastward. His forces even advanced into the lands of the Mamluk Sultan. This indicated that the "Alliance of Four" had completely disbanded.

The author also discusses the Battle of Ankara between Amir Temur and Sultan Bayezid. Ismail Aka highlights that Temur's unexpected change of direction caught Bayezid off guard. According to Ismail Aka, Bayezid had been expecting Temur in Tokat. However, Temur altered his route, heading from Sivas to Kayseri, and advanced along the Kızılırmak River to lay siege to Ankara. Consequently, Bayezid was forced to confront Temur in the Chubuk Valley. When discussing the location of the Battle of Ankara, the author mentions that it took place over a vast area and attempts to describe the specific places where the battle was fought in detail. [3, P.31]

The author notes, based on Ibn Arabshah's account, that the battle took place on July 28, 1402. [3, P.32] Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi writes that the Battle of Ankara began on July 20, 1402. [2, P.261] Other Turkish historians, such as Hoca Saadeddin Efendi, Ömer Harris Beyiktaş, and Yılmaz Örtünalar, also recognize July 20 as the start date of the battle, based on Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi's records.

The author states that the Ottoman army in this battle numbered around 70,000, while Amir Temur's forces, although their exact number is not provided, were larger in size. Ismail Aka highlights that this defeat delayed the fall of the Byzantine Empire by another 50 years and reignited struggles for power in the Anatolian region. [3, P.32]

It can be added to the above observations that the Battle of Ankara led to a political crisis in the Ottoman Empire that lasted until 1413. Turkish historians refer to this period as the "Interregnum" (Fetret Devri). For a brief time, the Anatolian beyliks regained their independence. [13] Amir Temur allowed the rulers of Karaman, Germiyan, Aydın, Mentеше, and Hamid to rule in their respective beyliks. Although Amir Temur established political control in Anatolia and Asia Minor, he did not strive for permanent dominance in these regions. His empire was vast, and his main focus remained on Central Asia and Persia. The Battle of Ankara created a temporary power vacuum and weakened the Ottoman Empire for some time. Although the Ottomans eventually recovered, the post-battle period allowed local powers to regain strength and temporarily halted Ottoman expansion. This period also

opened a short window of opportunity for neighboring powers, such as the Byzantine Empire, to recover and strengthen.

Some of Ismail Aka's views on Amir Temur's governance can be considered debatable. Specifically, he claims that Amir Temur adhered to the concept of absolute power and did not give importance to working with the council (qurultay). [3, P.111] However, Temur's governance style was diverse and multifaceted. During his reign, the qurultay functioned as an advisory body where key decisions related to war, diplomacy, administration, and succession were made. Amir Temur, who ruled over a multi-ethnic empire, understood the significant role of the qurultay in maintaining control over various tribes and regional elites. By involving them in the qurultay and allowing them to vote on important matters, he reinforced their loyalty, which was crucial for stabilizing his state's policies. In our opinion, even though Amir Temur was an absolute ruler, he paid particular attention to the qurultay. Reliance on the qurultay enabled him to delegate authority over distant regions to local rulers and military commanders while maintaining oversight over broader political decisions, thus ensuring effective management of his empire. The timing of the qurultay during Temur's reign was not fixed. It could be convened multiple times a year or not at all, depending on the importance and urgency of the situation.

The qurultay was also convened before major military campaigns. Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi provides the following information: "A supreme decree was issued: 'Calculate and specify how many men each lord is assigned and how many will mount on the day of the campaign, ensuring all is detailed!' The scribes and commanders went around collecting detailed reports from the lords and handed them to the officers, with the instruction that anyone who failed to mobilize the specified number of men would be guilty of a transgression. Such regulations were firmly enforced." [2, P.128]

Based on the above, it is clear that Ismail Aka's views on the importance of the qurultay are unfounded, and the significance of the qurultay in Amir Temur's state administration can be understood to be substantial.

Additionally, Ismail Aka states that Amir Temur relied more on amirs and beks than on scholars. [3, P.112] In our view, this statement lacks sufficient sources and logical basis. It can be said that Temur appointed scholars, religious figures, as well as amirs and beks according to the needs of the situation. The great ruler always sought to involve scholars and religious figures in state affairs. Nizam al-Din Shami also provides evidence for this: "Amir Sohirqiron selected a group of distinguished and trustworthy scholars, appointing each one along with a trusted aide to various distant regions, so that they could oversee the management of state affairs. If any injustice had been inflicted upon the oppressed, or violence committed against the weak, they were instructed to remove the thorn of oppression from the feet of the victims and, if proven, compensate them from the treasury of that region. They were also tasked with reporting on the situation and presenting their findings at the court, ensuring that measures were taken to eradicate such practices in the future." [1, P.383]

Amir Temur, recognizing the importance of state administration and the elevation of cultural and educational heritage, maintained a positive relationship with scholars and religious leaders. While often seen as a military leader, Temur well understood the importance of involving intellectuals, scholars, and religious leaders in governance. These scholars served as legal experts, diplomats, and advisors on state management issues, playing a crucial role in maintaining order within the empire. Temur viewed science and scholarship as essential tools for the development of his empire. He was aware that scholars and religious leaders could contribute significantly to administrative efficiency, legal knowledge, and military advancements, thereby enhancing state governance. In short, Amir Temur created a rich intellectual environment by involving scholars in state administration, thus strengthening both the spiritual and intellectual foundations of his reign.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Ismail Aka's works play an essential role in the development of Temur studies within modern Turkish historiography. In his writings and academic articles, the author has drawn accurate and scientifically based conclusions on the political situation preceding the formation of Amir Temur's state, the establishment of the state itself, his military campaigns, and their consequences.

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