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## THE GERMAN KNIGHT CAPTURED BY AMIR TIMUR

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqolada Amir Temurga asir tushib Temuriylarga xizmat qilgan nemis ritasari Hanns Shiltberger haqida va uning yozib qoldirgan esdaliklari haqida bayon qilinadi. Maqolada Hanns Shiltbergerning esdaliklari qanday darajada haqiqatga yaqinligi, uni o'rganliganlik darajasi, Temuriylar saroyida yurgan davrda sodir bo'lgan jarayonlar haqidagi ma'lumotlarni tahlil qilinadi.

**Аннотация:** В данной статье рассказывается о немецком рыцаре Хансе Шильтбергере, который попал в плен к Амиру Темуру и служил в Тимуридах, а также о его оставленных воспоминаниях. В статье анализируется степень достоверности воспоминаний Ханса Шильтбергера, степень их изученности и информация о событиях, происходивших в период его пребывания при дворе Тимуридов.

**Annotation:** This article discusses the German knight Hanns Schiltperger, who was captured by Amir Timur and later served the Timurid Empire, as well as his memoirs. The article analyzes the degree of authenticity of Hanns Schiltperger's memoirs, the extent to which they have been studied, and the information they provide about the events that took place during his time at the Timurid court.

**Kalit so'zlar:** Amir Temur, Hanns Shiltberger, Sgizmund, Anqara jangi, Albrext III taqvodor Valentin langmantel, Xitoy elchisi

**Ключевые слова:** Амир Темур, Ханс Шильтбергер, Сигизмунд, Анкарская битва, Альбрехт III, благочестивый Валентин Лангмантель, китайский посол.

**Key words:** Amir Timur, Hanns Schiltperger, Sigismund, Battle of Ankara, Albrecht III the Pious, Valentin Langmantel, Chinese ambassador.

### Introduction

Amir Timur is widely acknowledged for his military genius and the significant political achievements of his reign, which have been recognized by historians of his time. Among the many European sources providing information about Amir Timur, the memoir of the German knight Hanns Schiltperger, titled *Reisebuch* ("The Travels"), is particularly valued by historians. The question naturally arises: who was Hanns Schiltperger, and what information did he provide about Amir Timur and the Timurids?

### Results and Discussion

At the end of the 14th century, the Ottoman Empire began to pose a threat to Europe. Sigismund, the king of Hungary and a member of the Luxembourg dynasty, called on Europeans to participate in a crusade against the Ottomans in 1394. As a result, Europeans began to unite under Sigismund's leadership. The citizens of Munich also joined this call, and Hanns Schiltperger eagerly accepted it.

Hanns Shiltberger was born in 1381 in a family of knights from the region between Munich and Freising in Bavaria, which was struggling with financial difficulties. In a society where the system of primogeniture existed, as historians note, being a second or third child, Schiltberger sought to restore his family's knighthood title, improve his financial situation, and participate in the holy war against the Ottomans. He joined Sigismund's army as a servant under the Munich knight Leonhart Rexartinger. Schiltperger himself writes: "I, Hanns Shiltperger, left my homeland, the city called

Munich, which is located in Bavaria. This event took place in the year 1394, the year of the birth of Jesus Christ. Then I came to the King of Hungary, Sigismund, and joined him". [1]

In 1396, a battle occurred between the European forces and the Ottoman Turks near the town of Nikopol in Bulgaria. Sigismund's army, under his leadership, was defeated by Bayezid I Yildirim. After this defeat, Hanns Schiltperger was captured by the Ottomans and served them as a prisoner until 1402.

In 1402, a major battle took place between two of the world's greatest generals: Amir Timur and Bayezid Yildirim, near Ankara. Hanns Schiltperger participated in this battle and was taken captive by the Timurids, who brought him to Samarkand, where he served in the court of Amir Timur until 1405. After the death of Amir Timur, Schiltperger moved to the service of Shah Rukh Mirza. Later, Shah Rukh's son, Mironshah, granted him as a gift to his brother Abu Bakr Mirza, and he remained in his service until 1412. Schiltperger states: "After Mironshah was captured and executed, I served his son Abu Bakr Mirza for four years". [2]

In 1427, Schiltperger returned to his homeland, Munich, and worked at the court of Duke Albrecht III the Pious. He wrote his memoirs with the help of learned men at Albrecht III's court. There are nearly ten manuscript copies of Schiltperger's *Reisebuch* that have survived to this day. Most of these copies are incomplete, with some consisting only of fragments. The nearly complete copies are held in the Bavarian State Library in Munich, the Baden State Library in Karlsruhe, the National and University Library in Strasbourg, and the University Library in Heidelberg.

Schiltperger's memoirs were first published in 1475 in the German city of Mainz and again in Augsburg in 1477. The publication was simple and not artistically refined. However, the work contains many fictional tales and miraculous stories.

Many historians describe Schiltperger's *Reisebuch* as an exaggerated, embellished work filled with fictional stories. Historians from the 15th to the 18th centuries utilized Schiltperger's memoirs in their own works. For example, the German historian and military commander of the 16th century, Leonhart Fronsberger, mentions Schiltperger's memoirs in his *Kriegsbuch* (Book of War), where he refers to the Battle of Ankara in 1402. [3] Schiltperger's memoirs began to be critically examined and studied in the 19th century. In 1813, the German historian and philologist Abraham Jacob Panzel published a work titled *The Capture of Schiltperger by the Turks at the Battle of Nikopol in 1395, his conversion to unbelief, and his return to his homeland in 1427: A Journey East and Wonderful Events*. However, Panzel's publication was incomplete, with some place names and dates being inaccurate. In 1824, the first Russian translation of this work was done by D.D. Yazikov. In 1859, Karl Friedrich Neumann published a revised edition after further analysis. Neumann was particularly notable for analyzing several manuscript versions of Schiltperger's memoirs. [4] However, in 1885, Valentin Langmantel published a scientific analysis of Schiltperger's work based on the Nuremberg manuscript, using historical sources to critically evaluate the memoirs.

Schiltperger's accounts provide valuable information about Amir Timur and the Timurids. In particular, they offer insights into Timur's internal conflicts and how European historians of the 15th and 16th centuries became aware of his persona and state despite being cut off from the outside world.

The memoir provides information about Timur's conquest of Sivas, his relations with the ruler of Egypt, the Battle of Ankara, the conquest of Baghdad, his campaign against China, as well as details about Shah Rukh Mirza, Mironshah, and Abu Bakr Mirza. Regarding Timur's campaign against China, Schiltperger writes: "At that time, when Timur went on a campaign, the great king of China sent an ambassador to Timur, offering him 400 horses and agreeing to pay him previously owed tribute. If he had not paid it earlier, he would pay it for five years. This ambassador was kept in Timur's court for a long time. Later, when Timur returned to his capital, he sent the ambassador back

to his ruler, informing him that Timur would not pay the tribute and would not submit to him, but hoped that the Chinese ruler would pay the tribute and submit to him.[5]

The ambassador then parted ways with Timur. Timur began preparations in his own territories because he wanted to launch a campaign against China. He gathered an army of 1.8 million soldiers and began his march towards China. After a month of travel, they crossed a great desert, which lasted for 70 days. They traveled for 10 days in this desert, and during this time, the soldiers and animals suffered greatly due to a severe lack of water, especially the horses that suffered from the cold. Seeing the massive losses, Timur decided to return and went back to his capital, where he fell ill".

It is evident from Schiltperger's account that there are some inconsistencies in the details. The author himself notes: "And I will write down what I learned in my journey against unbelief during that time. However, I cannot write everything down in full, because I have forgotten some things". [6]

Historians have pointed out that Schiltperger might have written his memoirs with the help of learned men who had knowledge of the East at the time.

### Conclusion

The significance of Schiltperger's memoirs lies in their depiction of many events that took place at the end of the 14th century and the early 15th century. These events help us understand the political landscape of the medieval period and the major military actions of the time. Through his travels, Schiltperger not only presents historical events but also provides information about many of the countries and peoples of that era. Despite some inconsistencies, Schiltperger's work remains a valuable historical source for studying the period.

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