

REGARDING AMIR TIMUR'S VIEWS ON EVALUATING THE BATTLEFIELD

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Artikbayev Dilshod Tashpulatovich

*Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor, Department of Combat Support, University of
Military Security and Defense of the Republic of Uzbekistan.*

Abstract

The following article discusses Amir Timur's views on the preliminary study and assessment of the battlefield, as well as the influence of the region on the outcome of the battle. A. Timur's views on the study of the territory during military campaigns against the Khan of the Golden Horde, Tokhtamysh Khan, and the Turkic Sultan, Yildirim Bayazid, were analyzed.

Keywords

Amir Timur, Battle of Ankara, selection of territory, assessment of territory, Timur's Laws, Yildirim Bayezid I, Chubuk River, Kunduzcha Battle, Tokhtamysh Khan.

Among the world's greatest commanders, Amir Timur is rightfully recognized as a skilled military organizer and renowned commander.

Through his military activities, Amir Timur was able to make changes to the tactics and strategy of warfare, thereby ending all his campaigns with victory, and emerged as an undefeated commander. In conducting military operations, he paid serious attention to all directions.

Amir Timur paid great attention to the selection of the battle zone and the location of the army, the careful study and assessment of the territory before battle.

In his military campaigns, not only a strong army and tactical actions to overcome the enemy, but also the effective use of the geographical and climatic features of the terrain played an important role.

When analyzing the campaigns of Amir Timur, the application of the natural features of the terrain in military strategy manifested itself in a number of aspects. For example, adapting mountainous, valley, and desert regions to their tactics, they used methods such as forcing the enemy to move in the wrong direction and position themselves in unfavorable areas, concentrating troops in safe places, and maintaining long-term control over strategic points.

In the section of Timur's Laws on "Struggle, Entering the Field of War, Arranging the Army, and Breaking the Enemy's Army," he commanded his

commanders:... "when choosing a battlefield, the amir ul-umaro should consider the following four things. **The first** is its proximity to the water. **The second** is the security of the soldier's territory. **Third** - to be higher than where the enemy army is stationed and not to face the sun, so that the sun's rays do not blind the soldiers. **Fourth** - the front of the battlefield should be open and spacious." [1]. The expression of these requirements can be seen in the example of the battles waged and won by A. Timur.

In all his military campaigns, Amir Timur paid great attention to conquering the battlefield much earlier than the enemy, and he did so. In his military campaigns, he occupied a suitable territory in advance, carried out the necessary equipment, dug trenches, erected engineering barriers, built hills for observation and control, expanded water sources or changed the course of rivers to create inconvenience for the enemy, and buried wells.

During military campaigns, the camp where the army was stationed (resting places, stops, and the area around the camp when entering the battlefield) was surrounded by barriers. As a barrier, carts (kuran) connected to each other by chains and ropes, dug trenches, spear-like branches buried in the ground (mondu), and branches were used. Barriers (chapars) were installed along the soil piles emerging from the trenches [2, 3].

The selection of the future battlefield and the deployment of troops before the battle can be seen in the example of the battle between the troops of Amir Timur and the Turkish Sultan Yildirim Bayezid I, which took place on July 20, 1402, near Ankara. About 200 thousand soldiers of Amir Timur and 160 thousand soldiers of the Sultan of Turkey participated in it.

Amir Timur besieged Ankara. This action of Sahibkiran was essentially a tactical maneuver, and the experienced commander's goal was to force Bayezid to deploy his main forces to the city's defense and then deliver a crushing blow. Bayezid I, stationed near the city of Tokat with his main military forces, learned that Sahibkiran's troops had besieged Ankara and rushed to help the besieged. Amir Timur lifted the siege of Ankara and began preparations for open battle. With this action, he forces Yildirim Bayezid to fight in the place he chooses.

Amir Timur chose a convenient location for the deployment of his army in the area of Chibukabad, northeast of Ankara. Trenches are dug around the camp, and security measures are taken. The headquarters of Amir Timur's army was located on the bank of a small, multi-branched river called Chubuk, which flowed behind the camp (Fig. 1).

In addition, Amir Timur ordered all the wells in Ankara to be sealed and poisoned[4]. With this action, we can see the fulfillment of **the first** requirement of the Regulations.

In our opinion, another purpose of A. Timur's choice of this territory was to protect against a sudden attack from behind the army headquarters with the help of a natural barrier, and **the second** requirement specified in the Regulations was observed.

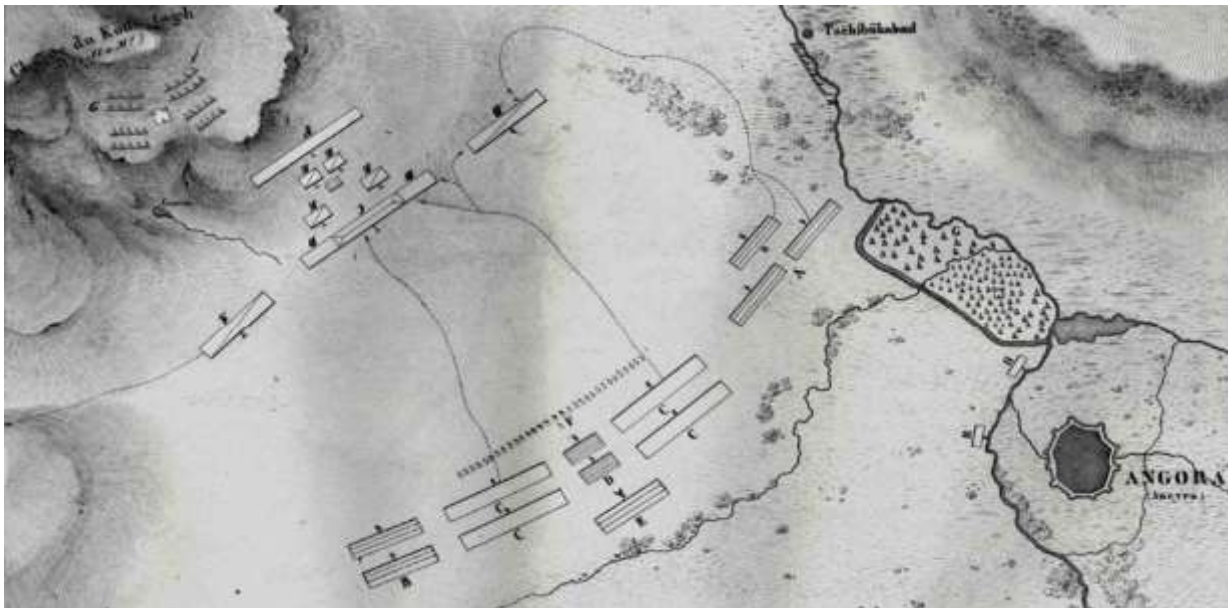


Figure 1. Deployment of Amir Timur and Yildirim Bayezid's troops in the area before the battle

Chains and thick ropes, which were previously stretched between the stakes, were used by Amir Timur as a barrier to stop the attack of Yildirim Bayezid's war chariots in the battle near Ankara [5].

A. Timur's army, stationed in the area of Chibuqabad on the wide plain northeast of Ankara, forced Yildirim Bayezid, who was advancing from the south, to settle in a mountainous area where there were no inconvenient water sources. We can see that these measures fulfill the **fourth** requirement specified in the Regulations.

One of the main problems of cavalry campaigns of that time was the feeding and watering of horses. For example, we can approximately calculate the number of horses in Amir Timur's army based on the number of soldiers who participated in the battle. If A. Timur's army consisted of approximately 200,000 warriors, we can assume that the number of horses was 500,000 (excluding pregnant horses).

During the summer season, horses drink approximately 60-80 liters of water per day, requiring at least 30,000 m³ of water per day to water army horses.

For feeding horses, each horse requires at least 0.25 hectares of meadow area per day, and 500,000 horses require 1250 km² of meadow per day for feeding[7].

Based on these calculations, it can be seen that A. Timur, when choosing a territory for the deployment of troops, took into account all the negative and positive aspects, based on study and assessment.

Analysts of this battle may have a legitimate question: why did Amir Timur's army, positioned in the north, enter the battle facing the sun, that is, why was the third requirement indicated in the Code of Laws rejected?

In our opinion, A. Timur, taking into account the following conditions, deployed troops north of the enemy:

Firstly, A. Timur's troops were forced to settle in open terrain, while the enemy neighbor was forced to settle in mountainous terrain;

secondly - A. Timur's army occupied the water sources in the region;

Thirdly, the army's headquarters was protected from possible attacks by the multi-branched Chubuk River.

Analysis of the situation and deployment of troops in the Battle of Ankara shows that the fate of the battle was predetermined and that the defeat of Yildirim Bayezid was certain.

The factors that influenced the outcome of this battle are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Factors that influenced the outcome of the battle in Ankara

| No | Factors | Amir Timur | Yildirim Bayezid I |
|----|--------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. | Army headquarters location. | Chibukabad Plain, northeast of Ankara. North of the battlefield. | In a mountainous area near Ankara. South of the battlefield. |
| 2. | Availability of water sources. | Full control of the Chibuk River and other water sources. | Partially. The army suffered severe thirst after a long march. |
| 3. | Relief. | An open plain, convenient for mounted troops to maneuver. | Mountainous terrain, unfavorable for limited maneuvering. |

| | | | |
|----|--------------------|---|---|
| 4. | Military command. | In the center, full control of the flanks. | In the center, wing control is limited. |
| 5. | State of the army. | Rested, prepared for the battle in advance. | He was tired after the long march. |
| 6. | Mental state. | Strict discipline. | Decline in mental state due to thirst and heat. The army hasn't been supplied with money for a long time. |
| 7. | Political factors. | The presence of allies and deserters. | The transfer of Tatar mercenary troops to the side of Amir Timur. |

As a result, Bayezid I's army was forced to engage in battle under extremely unfavorable conditions. The Sultan's army especially suffered from thirst caused by water scarcity.

At the end of the battle, Amir Timur decisively defeated his neighbor Bayezid I, capturing himself and his second son, Musa.

At the same time, Amir Timur's military campaign against the Golden Horde has been and continues to be studied by many specialists. In these studies, we can see that the determination of the territory where the battle took place was carried out by Russian scientists in accordance with the "Code of Laws" of Sahibkiran Amir Temur, that is, the requirements that must be followed when choosing the battlefield. For example, the determination of the battlefield in the Kunduzcha River valley between the armies of Amir Timur and Tokhtamysh Khan on June 18, 1391, was carried out by linking the requirements specified in the "Tuzuk" to the territory [8].

During archaeological excavations and research, the battle area was identified at the confluence of the Sok and Kunduzcha rivers. There are 13 km of hills and ravines here that have survived to this day and were built by human labor. With the help of these artificial and natural obstacles: the Kunduzcha and Sok rivers, Amir Timur ensured the defense of the army's camp and, during battle, the left flank. The Sok River here forms a valley of 3 km, and the Kunduzcha River - 10 km, and is a very convenient area for organizing a military camp (Fig. 2) [8].



Figure 2. Deployment of Amir Timur's army before battle (reconstruction) [8]

We can see that the army of Amir Timur, lined up for battle, relying on the Kunduzcha valley, occupied a favorable position compared to the army of Tokhtamysh Khan. These are:

1. A. Timur's army's headquarters, encampment, and left wing relied on artificial and natural obstacles. These obstacles limited Tokhtamysh Khan's army's ability to attack through the flanks and bypass from behind to attack the headquarters. The right flank of the army was pressed against an impassable ravine, making it impossible to bypass the army. This location prevented the use of the "Tolg'ama" technique, which could have been carried out by Tuhtamish Khan's army (at that time, Tuhtamish Khan's army skillfully used the "Tolg'ama" technique in all battles[9]).

2. The slope of the terrain in this place is from 3 to 5 degrees, and we can conclude that the army of Amir Temur, lined up for battle, was located higher than the army of Tokhtamysh Khan.

3. Amir Timur's army was located south of Tokhtamysh Khan's neighbor, and at this time of year, the sun was behind Amir Timur's army and dazzled the eyes of the enemy soldiers.

4. Amir Timur led the battle from a pre-built hill and was capable of controlling all flanks.

Summarizing the above studies, it can be seen that A. Timur entered the battle in a more favorable position than Tokhtamysh Khan, and the outcome of the battle was largely decided in advance. To achieve this result, we can compare the views of the troops on the study of the territory and its engineering equipment (Table 2).

Table 2

Comparative table of the troops of Amir Timur and Tokhtamysh Khan on the preparation of the territory for battle and convenient location

| т/р | Territorial requirements in the "Tuzuk" | Amir Temur's army | Tokhtamysh Khan's army |
|-----|---|---|--|
| 1. | The first requirement is the proximity of the land to the water. | Located in the valley of the Sok and Kunduzcha rivers | Unavailable |
| 2. | The second requirement is the safety of the land on which the camp is located. | Protection of artificial hills and ravines, tributaries of rivers was used. | Unavailable |
| 3. | The third is to be higher than where the enemy army is stationed and not to face the sun. | Amir Timur's army was positioned higher than Tokhtamysh Khan's. | Tokhtamysh Khan's army was located lower than Amir Timur's. |
| 4. | The fourth requirement is that the front of the battlefield be open and spacious. | The battle took place on a large open field. The wings are protected by cliffs and hills. | The battle took place on a large open field. The wings are not protected by artificial barriers. |

In conclusion, Amir Timur's deep intellect, thorough preparation for each battle, the ability to choose a battlefield and force the enemy to fight in the chosen location, and his impeccable tactics led to victory in many battles. The military doctrine of Sahibkiran has not lost its relevance even today.

Consequently, information about the terrain, topographic elements, and tactical features of the terrain remain relevant and important for the troops even during the reign of Amir Timur; comprehensive study of the terrain, reconnaissance and reconnaissance, and engineering equipment of the territory remain important and relevant.

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