



THE CHARACTERIZATION OF AMIR TEMUR'S PERSONALITY AND THE INTERPRETATION OF HIS MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE VIEWS OF THE GERMAN HUMANIST HARTMANN SCHEDEL.

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20727236>

Abstract: This study briefly examines the life and work of the famous German humanist Hartmann Schedel from the late 15th and early 16th centuries, as well as his work *"The Nuremberg Chronicle"*. It also presents Schedel's views on the life of Amir Temur, his state-building activities, military campaigns, and military-strategic capabilities. The research discusses European Humanism's perception of the figure of the Great Amir (Sohibqiron). It further addresses certain interpretations of Amir Temur's personality within European historiography. In addition, the study highlights how Hartmann Schedel's views on Amir Temur influenced European historical writing and historiography.

Keywords: German Humanism, Hartmann Schedel, Amir Temur, *"The Nuremberg Chronicle"*, conquered territories, Bayezid, Asia Minor, European historiography, Parthia, fictional legends about Amir Temur.

In the second half of the 15th century, humanistic ideas began to spread widely in German society. During the late 15th and early 16th centuries, one of the most prominent humanists in German society, Hartmann Schedel, had a significant influence not only on German historiography but also on European historiography through his works. Hartmann Schedel was born on 13 February 1440 in the city of Nuremberg, Bavaria. He began his studies in 1456 at the University of Leipzig. He also attended lectures influenced by humanist ideas at Italian universities and studied across various European cities. From 1481, he began working as a physician in his hometown of Nuremberg. In addition to being a doctor, Hartmann Schedel had a deep knowledge of history, geography, art, and languages. In 1485, he began to engage in historical research. He died in 1524 in Nuremberg. He is known for writing one of the first "World Chronicles" in Europe. This work is also known as the *Nuremberg Chronicle*. It was written in Latin in 1493 and later translated into German by Georg Alt. The work describes cities, countries, and great historical figures and is rich in woodcut illustrations and maps. At the time the chronicle was created, many cities and countries that existed or had already disappeared were presented to Western European readers





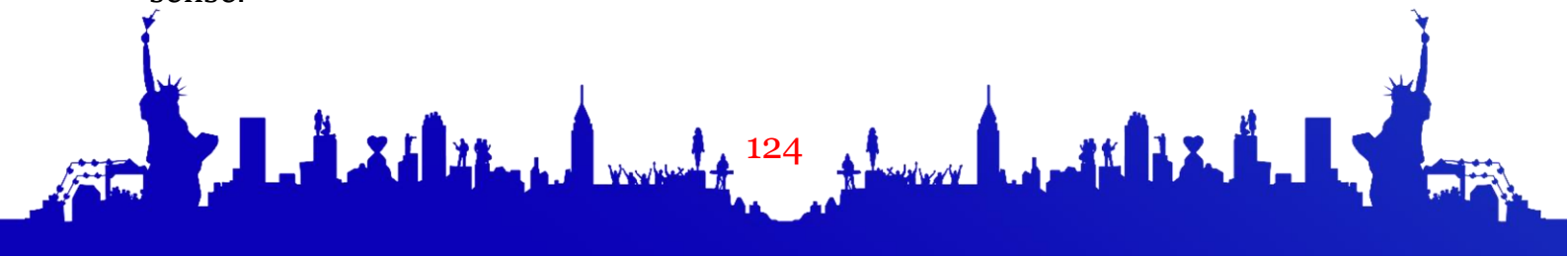
for the first time. Schedel was able to produce many of his works thanks to the development of printing in German lands, made possible by Johannes Gutenberg's invention[1].

Hartmann Schedel also discusses the figure of Amir Temur in his book "The Nuremberg Chronicle." The work contains a separate section titled "Tamerlanes, the Great Ruler of the Tartars," in which information is provided about Amir Temur's origin, his establishment of a state, his military campaigns, and his war with the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid Yıldırım[2].

Hartmann Schedel describes Amir Temur as follows: "Tamerlanes, the great king of the Tartars or Parthians, died in the 1400s." This description reflects Amir Temur's image in European historiography as a powerful Eastern ruler. Schedel's use of the term "great king" can be interpreted as a high assessment of Sohibqiron's military and political capabilities[2].

Hartmann Schedel states that Amir Temur was born to an ordinary Parthian family. He further writes that he initially served as the leader of a small armed group and describes him as follows: "However, through his courage, physical strength, and remarkable energy, he distinguished himself to such an extent that in a short time he rose to the rank of commander and ruler over many peoples. After this, he gained control over the dominion of the Parthians"[2.1].

Regarding Amir Temur's origin, Schedel portrays him as coming from a humble family and explains his rise through personal talent and military capability. Schedel does not provide information about the sources from which he derived these claims. However, the critical medieval historian Ibn Arabshah also describes in his work that Amir Temur came from a poor family [Ibn Arabshah, p. 64]. In fact, modern historical research has shown that such claims are inaccurate. At the same time, it is evident that Hartmann Schedel highly valued Sohibqiron's military abilities. Therefore, he particularly emphasizes his courage, physical strength, and organizational skills. The author also notes that Amir Temur conquered the dominion of the Parthians. Many European historians describe Amir Temur as the founder of a state in Transoxiana, whereas Schedel refers to Parthia. Considering Schedel's education in Italy, it is important to note that in Roman historiographical tradition, Parthia was regarded as the main eastern rival of the Roman Empire, and eastern territories were often associated with Parthia. From this perspective, Schedel may have referred to Amir Temur either as a Parthian ruler or as someone associated with Parthia in a geographical-historical sense.





Schedel interprets Amir Temur as a world-conquering ruler and writes that after gaining power, he subdued the peoples of Scythia, the Iberians (Iberos) of ancient Caucasian Iberia, the Albani (Albanos) of Caucasian Albania, Persia, and Media. He also notes that he conquered Mesopotamia and, crossing the Euphrates River, launched a military campaign into Armenia[2.2].

Hartmann Schedel gives special attention to Amir Temur's campaigns in Asia Minor. He writes that, marching against Bayezid Yıldırım, Temur devastated Asia Minor with an army of 400,000 cavalry and 600,000 infantry. He further notes that, in the territory of Armenia, he fought against the most powerful Turkish ruler Bayezid and decisively defeated his army of 200,000 soldiers. The author also states that Sohibqiron captured Bayezid, placed him in an iron cage, and took him across Asia. From this, it can be seen that Schedel evaluates Amir Temur's military campaigns, and especially his victory over Bayezid, as a clear demonstration of his outstanding military leadership. Thus, in Schedel's work, Amir Temur is portrayed as one of the great rulers of the East in 15th-century European historical thought.

Hartmann Schedel's status as a humanist and historian, as well as his good command of languages, provided him with certain advantages in presenting the figure of Amir Temur. Temur's victory over Bayezid, who posed a threat to Europe, led to a more extensive interest in his history. In this context, Temur was presented as an example in the struggle against the Turks, who, after Bayezid, had re-emerged as an even stronger and seemingly invincible force threatening Europe. It is therefore natural that he was portrayed as a model not only for rulers but also for ordinary people in Europe.

Hartmann Schedel does not portray Sohibqiron solely as a conquering ruler or military commander, but also as a creator of a strong and disciplined military system based on strict order and administration. This is evident from his following statement: "His military camp or wagon-based defensive encampment was organized like a city. Representatives of various crafts and professions were assigned to designated areas. All necessities for human life were sufficiently available there. Moreover, neither robbery nor theft had any place there"[2.3]. This also shows that the comparison of Amir Temur's military encampments to a city, the allocation of spaces for various professions, and the high level of internal order were considered key indicators of military administrative efficiency. This reflects that in European historiographical perceptions of Amir Temur, his state-building and military organizational abilities occupied a significant place.





In describing the scale of Amir Temur's military campaigns, the author presents his activities as a military expansion extending from the Danube River to Egypt, covering almost the entire territory of Asia. He also gives special attention to strong and major cities such as Smyrna, Antioch, Sivas, Tripoli, and Damascus, portraying Amir Temur as a powerful commander capable of conquering fortified castles and cities. These descriptions reflect perceptions of Sohimbqiron's military power within European humanistic historiography.

He also notes Amir Temur's victory over the Sultan of Egypt. Furthermore, he portrays Amir Temur as a commander who employed both military stratagems and economic methods. The widely circulated European historiographical legend about Sohimbqiron erecting white, red, and black tents before capturing a city or fortress is presented as a form of advance warning, symbolizing the consequences of surrender or resistance. There is also a famous European legend associated with Amir Temur's phrase, "I am the wrath of God"[2.4]. However, such a narrative is not found in Eastern sources. These kinds of accounts are generally considered literary constructs created by European authors to express his military campaigns and destructive power.

The purpose of Hartmann Schedel in presenting this information was likely to portray Sohimbqiron not merely as an ordinary ruler, but as an instrument of divine punishment. Through this perspective, he interpreted Amir Temur's successes as a form of divine retribution sent by God upon sinful peoples.

Hartmann Schedel also compares Amir Temur to Hannibal, the ancient Carthaginian general who crossed impassable routes to wage war against the Roman Empire. He writes: "Those who saw Temur said that he resembled Hannibal." Through this comparison, the author seeks to emphasize his military talent and strategic skill[2.5].

In conclusion, it can be stated that in Hartmann Schedel's work, the image of Sohimbqiron is presented in a dual interpretation. On the one hand, he is portrayed as a great commander and statesman who conquered vast territories and possessed strong strategic capabilities. On the other hand, he is depicted as a cruel and fearsome ruler who left devastation as a result of his wars. This interpretation reflects the historical thinking of late 15th-century Europe and its perceptions of the East, thereby creating one of the earliest images of Amir Temur in European historical memory. From this perspective, it can be said that Hartmann Schedel's information about Amir Temur is not only a historical source but also holds special significance as a key historiographical reference for studying the formation of Sohimbqiron's image in European historiography.





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