



MILITARY INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS EMPLOYED BY AMIR TEMUR TO ENSURE THE EXTERNAL SECURITY OF THE STATE

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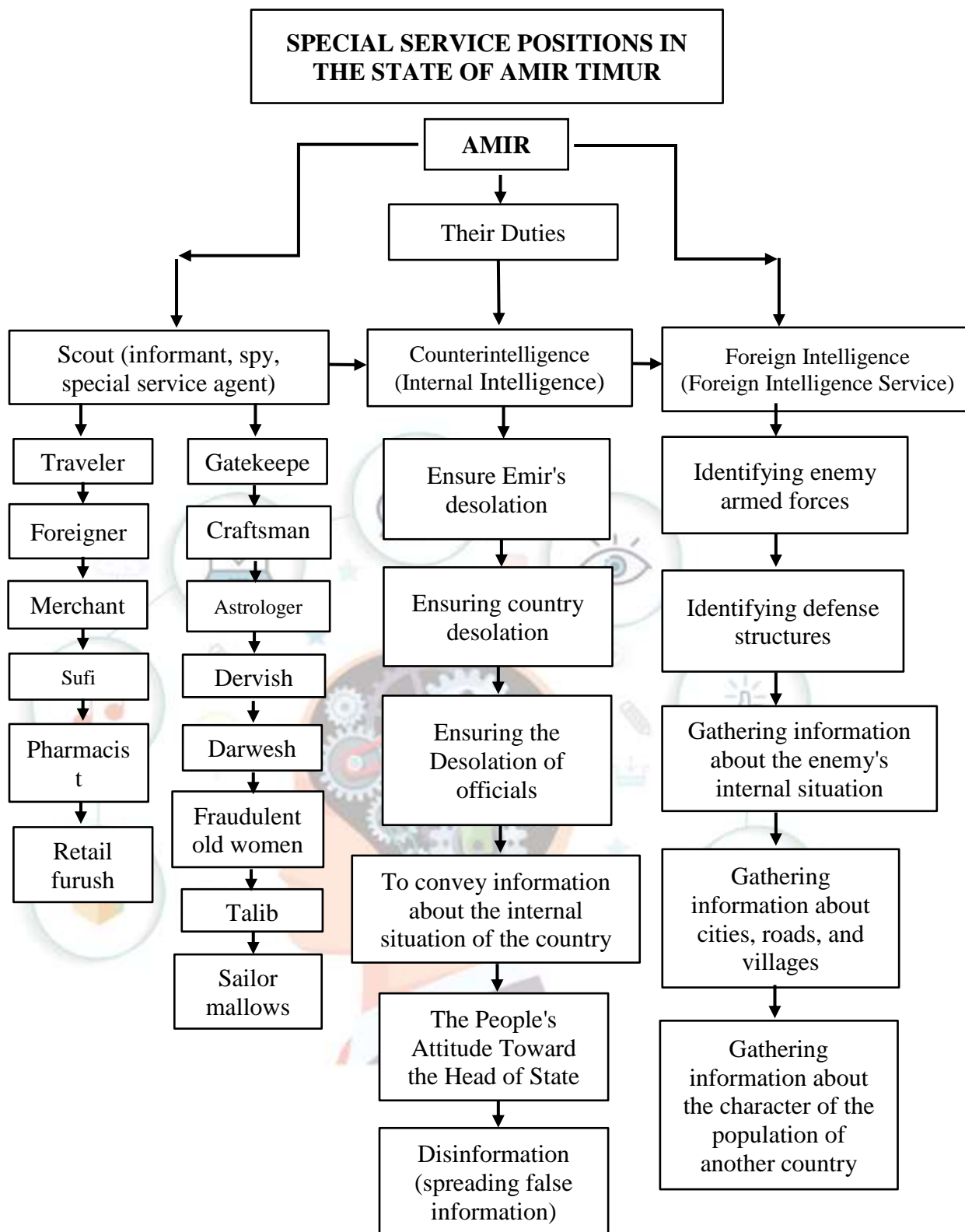
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Annotation: *This article discusses the role of intelligence agencies in ensuring external security within the state of Amir Timur. It covers the processes of gathering, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from information, as well as decision-making. Additionally, the article addresses secret meetings, maintaining the confidentiality of information, and the indicators used in evaluating the enemy's position.*

Keywords: *Amir Timur, state security, risks, threats, intelligence agencies, military forces, military-political situation, light cavalry units, trade caravans operating covertly under the guise of commerce (merchants), ambassadors, dervishes (wandering mystics), travelers, officials appointed by Amir Timur.*

The global reputation and fame of the great conqueror Amir Timur can be largely attributed to his military genius, his talents and skills as a commander, and his immense contributions to the world of military affairs. Numerous discussions, scholarly, and literary works have been dedicated to these aspects of his legacy. However, it is equally important to recognize Amir Timur's significant attention to preventing external threats and ensuring the independence and territorial integrity of his empire. He made considerable efforts to eliminate these threats in a timely manner. In this regard, Amir Timur states in his *Timurid Code*: *"I ordered that a thousand swift riders on camels, a thousand horsemen, and a thousand fast-footed foot soldiers be appointed as scouts, tasked with gathering news from various countries and borders, learning the goals and intentions of neighboring rulers, and reporting back to me so that measures could be taken before any trouble arose."* [1]

Looking back in history, we find that over different periods, works such as *"Jangnoma"* and *"Jahongirnama"* were created. These works provide historical accounts of the bravery of national heroes and commanders, their individual battles on the battlefield, the use of cold weapons, the armor of soldiers, the movements of warriors, and the preparation of weapons, offering valuable insights into military matters [2].



Methods of Intelligence Used to Ensure External Security

Ensuring national security, preventing threats, addressing risks, and maintaining the territorial integrity and independence of a country are primary objectives in any state. One of the main goals is to avoid falling under the influence or control of other states.



To protect the country from foreign hostile forces, prevent threats, and ensure state security, it is essential to have sufficient information about the enemy. At the same time, it is crucial to be able to direct the army properly against the enemy, gain the initiative, and gather timely and necessary information to defeat the attacking enemy swiftly. Amir Timur understood this need very well.

In his "Temur's Code," Amir Timur writes: "I ordered that – in every region, city, and military camp – writers be appointed to record daily events so that the governors, the people, the soldiers, and the army know about the behavior of their own army as well as the enemy's actions. Reports must be made about incoming and outgoing property, foreigners entering and leaving, merchants from foreign lands, neighboring kings, their words and actions, and the activities of scholars and intellectuals who come from distant countries to my court" [3]. Amir Timur established a systematic communication system to ensure state security, focusing on the collection of information and its timely delivery to the relevant authorities. He also emphasized that, based on the nature of the information, the army should always be in a combat-ready state.

To ensure external security, Amir Timur used intelligence agencies (spies). External security was primarily based on espionage services, with spies operating in various countries, performing the following roles (similar to modern-day intelligence agencies):

1. Units composed of light cavalry;
2. Merchant caravans operating undercover for trade (merchants);
3. Envoys;
4. Dervishes (Qalandars);
5. Travelers;
6. Specially appointed officials by Amir Timur.

Through these intelligence agencies, a data base, or the "Unified Information Field" (relevant even today), was created. Amir Timur personally implemented these intelligence agencies, regularly monitoring their operations.

Let's review these intelligence agencies established by Amir Timur, based on the following historical sources:

Russian General Mikhail Ignatievich Ivanin, in his work *"Two Great Commanders: The Military Art, Strategy, and Tactics of Genghis Khan and Amir Timur"*, provides information about the methods Amir Timur used to gather intelligence about other states.



1) Units Composed of Light Cavalry

Amir Timur gathered vital information about neighboring states through his 1,000-strong light cavalry units. These units, which moved on camels across waterless desert areas and on horseback or on foot in other terrains, would collect intelligence on the intentions and military activities of neighboring states. The cavalry often employed various tactics and deception to learn about the enemy's plans, such as who they intended to attack and when, as well as the goals of their rulers [4]. Based on the information provided by these units, Amir Timur would take the necessary measures.

Moreover, in his *Temur's Code*, Amir Timur states: "I ordered that 1,000 swift riders on camels, 1,000 riders on horses, and 1,000 foot soldiers be appointed as scouts, who should gather information about foreign lands, borders, the intentions of neighboring rulers, and bring the reports to me so that I could take action before any event occurs."

2) Merchants Operating Undercover for Trade

Another means of gathering intelligence was through the use of merchant caravans under the guise of trade. Amir Timur sent trading caravans to various parts of Asia, including China, India, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Georgia (Georgia), and even European countries. After their return, merchants, posing as dervishes, would provide detailed reports on the conditions in the countries they visited, the customs of the people living there, and most importantly, how the rulers of those countries treated their subjects.

Amir Timur supported travelers, merchants, and caravan leaders by providing financial backing. He appointed trustworthy officials, often heads of intelligence, to collect the necessary information from foreign merchants and travelers. These officials would gather information on foreign rulers' relationships with Amir Timur and convey these reports in a timely and precise manner.

3) Envoys

In his work, M. Ivanin also highlights the use of envoys as another intelligence-gathering tool. "If these reports were not enough, envoys were sent, who, in turn, would bring the necessary information to Amir Timur" [5].

4) Dervishes (Qalandars)

Amir Timur also used dervishes for gathering additional intelligence on other states. The appearance of the dervishes was often disguised, allowing them to operate without suspicion, making them a safer option for gathering covert information.



5) Travelers

Travelers were another key source of intelligence for Amir Timur. He would financially support them and send them with merchant caravans to acquire useful information. After receiving the information, it was cross-checked for accuracy, ensuring that the data was as reliable as possible, and there were virtually no restrictions on the flow of information. This ensured that intelligence was gathered more effectively.

6) Specially Appointed Officials

Amir Timur relied on specially appointed officials to engage in covert discussions with foreign travelers, facilitate trade, and exchange information. Through these methods, Amir Timur maintained a sophisticated network of intelligence channels and ensured the constant flow of accurate information [6].

Amir Timur provided spies with special insignia made of gold, silver, and copper, which served as a type of badge or certificate of legitimacy. This allowed the authorities to identify the messenger, confirm their credentials, and verify the reliability of the information they brought.

Ibn Arabshah left valuable information about Amir Timur's efforts to secure state security. As a result, his spies, who were stationed in various locations, would deliver reports on ongoing events and provide firsthand accounts of activities. They would describe the weight, prices, and market conditions, the locations of cities, villages, and routes, and even details about the leaders, nobles, and common people. These reports would include information on the social and economic conditions, the names, titles, and relationships of important figures, as well as their professions and wealth.

Amir Timur, through his understanding of the gathered intelligence, was able to extend his influence beyond his borders. When visiting a city, he would engage in conversations with local elites, asking about various incidents and analyzing events from different perspectives. Through these discussions, he would gain insight into the real situation and often surprise his interlocutors with his detailed knowledge. Many people believed that Amir Timur had access to information from across the world through his scholars or that he had lived in places like Solaria. Some even claimed to have seen him among the poor in Sham (Syria).



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