

AGRICULTURE AND AGRARIAN RELATIONS DURING THE TIME OF AMIR TEMUR

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Abstract. This article provides a scientific analysis of the development of agriculture and the specific features of agrarian relations during the reign of Amir Temur. The study examines the forms of land ownership in the Middle Ages, the land-use system, economic relations between peasants and landowners, and the main directions of the state's agrarian policy. In addition, issues related to irrigation systems, the construction of canals and ditches, and the repair and efficient use of existing irrigation structures are also analyzed.

The article studies, on the basis of scientific sources and historical data, the role of agriculture in the economic development of the Timurid period, the growth of farming culture, the rational use of land resources, and the measures taken by the state to support the rural population. The impact of agrarian relations on the socio-economic structure of society and the influence of these processes on the development of subsequent periods are also analyzed.

The research results contribute to a deeper understanding of the formation and development of agrarian relations in the era of Amir Temur, and make an important contribution to enriching scholarly research on the economic history of medieval Central Asia.

Keywords: Amir Temur, agrarian relations, agriculture, land ownership, irrigation system, farming, medieval history.

Introduction

Throughout the history of human civilization, agriculture has played an important role as the primary pillar of economic stability, social progress, and state power. Particularly during the Middle Ages, the organization of land relations, the rational use of water, and the establishment of farming and livestock systems were closely linked to the political stability of the state. In this sense, studying the state and development of agriculture during the era of Amir Temur — the great military commander and statesman who established a highly centralized state in Central Asia in the 14th–15th centuries — holds special scholarly significance.

The state established by Amir Temur in the second half of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th century in Mawarannahr and adjacent territories emerged as a period of political stability, economic prosperity, and cultural advancement in the history of Central Asia. The economic foundation of this progress was agriculture: agrarian production was of decisive importance not only for providing the population with food, but also for the stable functioning of the state's financial system, military campaigns, and urban crafts. Under Amir Temur, the agricultural system was restored on the basis of earlier traditions, improved, and subordinated to the interests of the centralized state. Amir Temur ended 150 years of Mongol oppression and put a stop to mutual strife; through his efforts a powerful centralized state emerged. This, in turn, created the ground not only for a revival but also for a flourishing of cultural life in the great empire. Amir Temur himself personally supported this process as state policy — he defined his constructive activities as a matter of state policy[1.].

During the reign of Amir Temur and the Timurids, many agricultural products served as raw materials for the craft industry. A large part of the raw materials used in textiles, ceramics, construction, confectionery, and other sectors was obtained from agriculture. At the same time, agricultural production became increasingly specialized to supply raw materials for the craft industry[2.]. These processes continued in subsequent periods, and products made by craftsmen



were actively traded in the markets of Samarkand. Samarkand merchants established active trade relations with neighboring territories and foreign countries[3.].

Materials and Methods

Today's reforms in the agrarian sector and the issues of efficient use of land and water resources are closely linked to historical experience. The land ownership relations, tax system, and irrigation infrastructure that took shape during Amir Temur's era not only ensured the socio-economic development of that period but also served as the foundation for the economic policy of the subsequent Timurid state.

The theoretical and methodological basis for analyzing the organizational and legal foundations of the agricultural system, land relations, irrigation systems, and labor relations of Amir Temur's era consists of the principles of historicism, objectivity, and systematicity. As sources, the works of medieval historians were used, including the Zafarnama and the Tuzukat-i-Timur as well as scholarly works of modern historians. The methods of comparative-historical analysis, source studies, and a systematic approach were applied during the research process. The scientific novelty of the work lies in the fact that the agricultural system of Amir Temur's era is analyzed comprehensively — from the perspectives of land relations, tax policy, irrigation networks, and labor organization — as a unified system. The agrarian policy of this period is also evaluated comparatively in relation to modern agrarian reforms. The research results contribute to a deeper understanding of the history of statehood and economic thought in Central Asia, and demonstrate the possibilities of making effective use of the historical heritage in the agrarian sector.

Analysis of Results and Discussion

During the reign of Amir Temur, agriculture and agrarian relations formed an important component of the economic life of Central Asia. In this era, land use, the development of irrigation systems, support for farming, and the regulation of land relations occupied an important place in state policy. Medieval historical sources are of special significance in studying these issues, as through them it is possible to determine the content and features of agrarian relations in the Timurid period.

Regarding the material history of agriculture in the Timurid empire, the studies of A. Zhukovsky [4.], S.K. Kabanov[5.], G. Gulyamov, M.E. Masson, I.A. Sukharev[6.], and Yu.F. Buryakov contain a number of valuable data about the reforms in the Zarafshan territory (the Zarafshan valley, in turn, is divided by its natural characteristics into three parts — upper, middle, and lower Zarafshan valleys) that have survived to the present day from the Timurid era[7.].

Among the written sources related to the era of Amir Temur, the works of Ghiyath al-Din Ali, Nizamuddin Shami, Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi, Ruy González de Clavijo, Ibn Arabshah, the Baburnama, and others are of great importance as primary sources.

V.A. Zhukovsky's work Ruins of Ancient Merv is devoted to the study of the Merv region. Drawing on written sources and archaeological data, Zhukovsky provides important information for describing the irrigation system of the Merv oasis and the state of agriculture in the region during the Timurid period[8.].

S.K. Kabanov conducted archaeological research on the division of the ancient Anhor canal into three branches during Amir Temur's era[9.]. As a result of his research, he interprets it as a major canal — the successor to the ancient irrigation system — restored and expanded at the end of the 14th century. In addition, several reconstruction works were carried out, including the organization of a water withdrawal system from the Chirchiq river, and irrigated lands were expanded through new branches. According to Kabanov, this process was the result of centralized state policy aimed at strengthening the economic position of the capital regions.



Ya.G. Gulyamov's work *History of Irrigation of Khwarezm* is of great importance in studying issues related to the irrigation and agriculture of Khwarezm[10.]. In it, the author draws on rich archaeological materials and written sources to arrive at his conclusions.

Research conducted by I.A. Sukharev identified the location of the Bagh-i Dilkusha garden built during Amir Temur's era[11.]. At the same time, one of the major researchers of this period, M.E. Masson, also identified the location of the Davlatabad garden built by Amir Temur[12.].

Yuri Buryakov conducted archaeological research in the city of Shakhrukhiya and discovered ceramic vessels widely used for storing grain, grain products, and other goods. In particular, a large pottery area — large khums used for storing grain — was found and studied[13.].

Although the sources on the history of the Timurid dynasty are extensive, they are incomplete on the history of agriculture. Historical works recently translated into Uzbek and published in the years of independence served as a basis for studying agricultural issues.

The work *Rozname-yi Ghazavat-i Hindiya* ("Diary of the Campaign to India") by Ghiyath al-Din Ali ibn Jamal al-Islam Yazdi[14.] was written between 1399 and 1403. This work by Ghiyath al-Din Ali is considered a valuable source for studying the history of Amir Temur and his era. However, it focuses more on the military campaigns and political aspects of India than on agricultural or economic matters.

Nevertheless, the diary contains indirect information about the agricultural or economic situation of the territories conquered by Temur during his campaign. For example, he describes the landscapes through which he and his army passed, and mentions the cities and villages they traversed, providing information about the type and level of agriculture in these territories.

One of the sources that has survived from the era of Amir Temur is the *Zafarnama*[15.], written by Nizamuddin Shami (died 1409) at the request of Amir Temur between 1402 and 1404. It also contains information about waqfs, waqf systems, and other matters.

The work *Diary of the Journey to Samarkand — A Visit to Amir Temur's Court* by Spanish ambassador Ruy González de Clavijo is of great significance for studying the history of agriculture during the reign of Amir Temur. Clavijo traveled to Mawarannahr as an ambassador from Spain — then a powerful country — between 1403 and 1406. During his time as ambassador, Clavijo recorded what he observed in Mawarannahr and the royal territories[16.].

In the book, Samarkand and its surrounding areas are depicted as a very "rich" land — Mawarannahr's gardens, fruits, agricultural crops, grain, and other products are described: agricultural products including grain (cereals) and fruits were plentiful, and these goods were sufficiently delivered to the capital's markets. Clavijo speaks especially positively about fruits — sweet fruits and garden products such as grapes and pomegranates — acknowledging that they were produced in great abundance during the season and were widely available in the markets. According to the descriptions in the work, the lands were fertile and irrigated; and even if grain is not directly enumerated, information is given about the fertility and productiveness of the land and the sufficiency of food supply in the city. In the work, descriptions are found of food and the lifestyle of daily life, in which fruits and foodstuffs were presented to guests at reception and travel ceremonies — this shows that agricultural products were sufficiently produced at that time and were organized at the state level.

Another famous source on the history of farming in Amir Temur's era is the *Zafarnama*[17], written by Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi (died 1454). Although it is devoted to the life and activities of Amir Temur and the victories he achieved in his lifetime, it also contains information about agriculture and agrarian relations.

In Yazdi's work, the territories under Temur's control and their wealth are described, including agricultural lands. The work contains information about how Temur administered these lands, the agricultural policies he introduced, the tax systems he used, and the socio-economic relations that existed among the various strata of the population.



Ibn Arabshah — Shihabuddin Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim (1389–1450) — wrote the work *Aja'ib al-Maqdur fi Akhbar al-Taymur* ("Wonders of Destiny in the News of Timur") [18.]. It is one of the important sources related to the era of Amir Temur. The work contains information about Amir Temur's irrigation systems, gardens, fruits, and other agricultural products. However, the work places the political and military activities of Temur — wars, diplomacy, and strategic events — at the center, and therefore does not provide a structural, systematic account of agriculture, irrigation systems, or horticulture.

Another important work on the history of statehood in Amir Temur's era is the *Tuzukat-i-Timur* [19.]. In the *Tuzukat-i-Timur*, information can be found about farming, the opportunities created for peasants, the taxes imposed on them, and the waqf and *suyurghal* systems.

In the work *Muntakhab ut-Tavarikh-i Mu'ini* by Mu'inuddin Natanzi [20.] information can be found about waqf property, taxes and other payments during Amir Temur's era, as well as a number of other matters related to land ownership and the tax system in Amir Temur's era.

Shahab al-Din Abdullah ibn Lutfullah ibn Abd al-Rashid al-Khavafi — Hafiz-i Abru (died 1431) — is also considered one of the best historians of Amir Temur's era. He is the author of several works, including *Majmu'a-yi Hafiz-i Abru* and *Zubdat ut-Tavarikh-i Baysunghuri* ("The Cream of the Chronicles of Baysunghur"). The *Zubdat ut-Tavarikh-i Baysunghuri* occupies an important place in the study of the agricultural history of the Timurid empire.

One of the historians of Amir Temur's era is Fasih Ahmad ibn Jalaluddin Muhammad al-Khavafi. His work *Mujmal-i Fasihi* ("The Compendium of Fasihi") [21] was written in 1441–1442. It also contains information about agriculture and livestock systems. In *Mujmal-i Fasihi*, information about gardens established around cities — particularly Samarkand and other centers — during the Timurid era is found. These gardens are provided with quite specific dates, such as in which year they were established in a given territory, meaning the historian recorded them as direct events. The work does not appear to contain a separate section or broad analysis on which crops were grown, grain production, or fruits or livestock products. Sources indicate that the work is more of a chronicle of events, providing more information about individuals, rulers, political events, and cultural life, while also recording the construction of monuments such as gardens, mosques, and madrasas.

One of the historians who described events of Amir Temur's era is Kamaluddin Abdurrazzaq ibn Mawlana Jalaluddin Ishaq al-Samarqandi (1413–1483), whose work *Matla' al-Sa'dayn wa Majma' al-Bahrayn* ("The Rising Place of the Two Fortunate Stars and the Confluence of the Two Seas") [22.], was written in 1470 and contains valuable information about the agricultural history of Amir Temur, Shah Rukh Mirza, Ulugh Beg, and other Timurid rulers.

Abdurrazzaq Samarqandi provides information to Abu Sa'id about waqf property and land ownership, as well as the tax system in the Timurid state from the beginning of Shah Rukh's reign. In *Matla' al-Sa'dayn*, we find information about certain taxes not mentioned in research, for example, the income tax (*dudi*).

The work *Rawzat al-Safa* ("Garden of Purity") by the famous historian Mirkhond (1433–1498) and his grandson Ghiyath al-Din ibn Humam al-Din Khondamir (1475–1535), *Habib al-Siyar fi Akhbar* and *Afruz al-Bashar* ("A Friend's Life in the News and Duties of Mankind") [23.], and other works [24.] also occupy a special place in source studies for the era of Amir Temur. Although this work was completed in 1524, it was finalized in 1529 following additions.

In *Rawzat al-Safa* (parts VI–VIII), we can find rich information on many issues related to agricultural history: land ownership and the tax system of the Timurid state, covering the period up to the rule of the last Timurids, especially Sultan Husayn Bayqara.

Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur (1483–1530) [25] contains valuable information about the cities of Temur and the Timurid era, their water reservoirs, fruits, and other agricultural products.



The Baburnama — the memoirs of Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur — contains some information about agriculture and the social division of labor in agriculture. Babur describes the various places he visited during his travels and discusses the types of soil, climatic conditions, and agricultural methods he observed there.

For example, he mentioned the crops grown in a particular region, the irrigation methods used, and the difficulties that agricultural workers might face due to natural conditions.

Babur wrote very important information about the nature of land ownership in several regions of Central Asia at the end of the 15th century. In the Baburnama, we find the most detailed descriptions of the various agricultural crops cultivated in different regions of Central Asia. The Baburnama is considered a valuable source for shedding light on a number of issues related to the socio-economic history of Central Asia and Khorasan at the end of the 15th century. In writing this article, we drew on valuable information from the agricultural technology treatise *Irshad al-Zira'at*, compiled by Fazil Harawi in the first quarter of the 16th century. It is preserved in the archives of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan. This work contains information about various types of grain: new plants, fruit trees, grape varieties, vegetables, and others. The treatise mentions the Herat oasis, but since the climatic conditions of most southern regions of Central Asia did not differ much from those of the Herat oasis, it can be assumed that most of the plant species and varieties mentioned in *Irshad al-Zira'at* were also found in Central Asia[26.].

The *Irshad al-Zira'at* was actually written and completed in 1515 by Qasim ibn Yusuf Abu Nasr al-Harawi. This manual is an important source on agricultural practices during Temur's era and the subsequent Timurid period.

This manual is an agricultural handbook written on agrarian practice and agronomy in Central Asia and the Perso-Iranian cultural sphere in the 13th–16th centuries, traditionally classified among the works attributed to Fazil Harawi. General scholarly information is provided about the meaning of this treatise and the main directions covered therein on agrarian topics — plants, fruit trees, grapes, vegetables, and horticulture:

Irshad al-Zira'at — a classical agronomic manual divided into 8 chapters:

- Types of soil and their effect on productivity
- Irrigation, determining sowing times, and soil protection
- Cultivating grain and other small crops
- Viticulture (grape growing)
- Horticulture — vegetables, flowers, and other crops
- Arboriculture — fruit trees and their cultivation
- Grafting, variety assessment, product storage, apiculture (beekeeping)
- The multi-partite garden (*chahar bagh*) and its organization

From this structure, it is clear that the work is a source comprehensively covering agricultural theory and practice — it provides systematic accounts on soil, irrigation, crops, grapes, gardens, and the cultivation of trees.

Furthermore, the work provides scholarly descriptions of soil types and their influence on productivity. This chapter covers agrarian practices such as proper tillage, fertilization, and the scheduling of irrigation. A dedicated section exists on techniques for growing grain, legumes, and other field crops — listing crop varieties, seed selection, sowing schedules, and methods of care. A separate section on viticulture provides precise guidelines on grape varieties, vine cultivation, irrigation, and agrotechnics integrated with arboriculture. Vegetables and greens are considered as highly productive crops, with technical measures defining planting, cultivation, and harvest times; practical knowledge on grafting fruit trees, adapting them to various conditions, storing produce, legitimate harvesting, and processing agricultural products is also included.



Therefore, studying this source helps us better understand the agricultural practices of the region, including those of the Timurid period, and their evolution over time.

The second category of sources includes documentary materials. In particular, one of the important sources in this regard is a collection of copies of documents titled *Tarassul* ("Letters") by Abdullah Marvardi.

This collection contains many copies of original documents, most of which relate to the reign of Sultan Husayn Bayqara. In particular, copies of decrees (signatures) appointing several individuals as *Sadr* are valuable for research. These decrees provide information about the waqf management system of the country, the rights of *sadrs*, taxes levied from waqf property in favor of the *sadr* and his officials, and other matters. *Tarassul* also contains copies of foundation documents and several decrees. This is very important for studying waqf land ownership in Timur's era. In addition to documents related to waqf land ownership and management, this collection supplements information drawn from general historical sources on the tax system of Timur's state. There are also a number of original fundamental documents from the Timurid era that are of interest, most of which have been published by researchers. Among them is a fundamental document from Timur's era [27.]; the waqf deed of the *Ishratkhana* [28.] and a document on the donation of Nasir Khusraw's tomb [29].

O.D. Chekhovich's collection of Samarkand documents from the 15th–16th centuries (the holdings of Khoja Ahrar in Central Asia and Afghanistan) also contains relevant information and was used in the process of writing the scholarly article [30]. Chekhovich discussed the relationship between agriculture and politics during Timur's era and that of his successors, including the influence of religious and cultural factors on the organization of agriculture and land use. He also advanced certain approaches to agriculture and land use. In particular, he examined the influence of theologians alongside large landowners in agriculture.

Conclusion

The sources related to agriculture and agrarian relations during the reign of Amir Timur were analyzed from a scholarly perspective. The analysis of sources demonstrates that during the Timurid era, agriculture was one of the principal branches of the state economy, and special attention was paid to its development. Measures such as efficient use of land resources, restoration and expansion of irrigation systems, and encouragement of farming were important factors in ensuring the economic stability of the country. It was established that the works written by medieval historians — including the *Tuzukat-i-Timur* and other historical sources — contain valuable information about agriculture, land-use procedures, and relations between peasants and landowners. These sources emphasize that great importance was placed on regulating state agrarian policy, protecting lands, and increasing agricultural productivity through the development of irrigation systems.

Furthermore, source analysis demonstrates that agrarian relations during Amir Timur's era were closely linked to the socio-economic life of society. Forms of land ownership, the tax system, and labor relations had a certain influence on the development of farming. This situation further reinforced the important role of agriculture in the state economy.

In conclusion, the policy aimed at regulating agriculture and agrarian relations during Amir Timur's era was of great importance in ensuring the economic development of the country and the welfare of the population. Source analysis demonstrates that the experience of agrarian governance formed during the Timurid era is of important scholarly significance for studying the economic history of medieval Central Asia and the development of agrarian relations. Agriculture and agrarian relations, as an important and stable component of the state economic system, are determined on the basis of source analysis: the rational use of land resources, the restoration and development of irrigation facilities, the encouragement of farming, and the regulation of agrarian relations were priority directions of state policy.



Thus, the experience of agrarian governance and agricultural policy formed during Amir Temur's era serves as an important scholarly source for understanding the medieval economic development of Central Asia, and is of important theoretical and methodological significance for researching the agrarian relations of this period.

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