THE MILITARY CAMPAIGN OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE AGAINST THE EMIRATE OF BUKHARA IN MIRZA ABDULAZIM SAMI'S "TARIKH-I SALATIN-I MANGHITIYA"

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The subsequent course of events is described in the work as follows: "The commander of the Christians, Chernyaev, having lost hope of concluding a truce, withdrew without starting a battle. Two months later, having put his arms and equipment in order, he set about besieging the city; opening fire from cannons and rifles and raising a great uproar, he brought the news of war to the ears of the arrogant. On the first day he rained so many bullets on the Jizzakh fortress that even in springtime such rain does not fall. Yet although the bullets fell like rain, the wounded were few. Seeing this, the emirs grew conceited and their spirits did not fall. Among the besieged was the Afghan general Iskandar Khan, a descendant of the Afghan kings, with two hundred Afghan soldiers. He addressed the emirs thus: "Do not be deceived by what you see. Be on your guard. The Russians are a strong enemy; do not wall up the entrances and exits of the fortress with rammed earth (pakhsa).

First of all, defensive measures must be taken. If things go wrong and you are defeated, this is the only way of salvation for the troops. Should victory turn its face away, it is enough that the armed men survive. Do not force them to fight and drag them into the snare of destruction." But the haughty emirs, regarding him as an outsider and disdaining his words of counsel, set about blocking the entrances and exits of Jizzakh. They walled up the mouths of all the gates with rammed earth, intending to rest at ease behind the walls. Upon this, the next day Chernyaev ordered his troops to surround the fortress and open fire, and a hail of cannon and rifle shot was unleashed. Signs of the Day of Judgement appeared in the Jizzakh fortress. Every bullet found its mark, and a single cannon shot cost hundreds of people their lives. Whenever they wished to make one last effort, they could not see the enemy behind the walls, and so their valor and bravery served no purpose other than making them targets. Meanwhile the Russians breached the fortress walls with blows of their cast-iron cannons, filled the deep moats with mud and earth, and broke into the fortress. As soon as the besieged warriors saw the Russians, like donkeys scattering in flight at the sight of a lion, they had no choice but to seek shelter and hide by burying their heads in one another's bosoms. Since the escape routes had been blocked, everyone collided with one another and fell. Weary of slaughtering and killing people, the Russians finally set the fortress on fire. All the people there were caught in the flames, beheld the Day of Judgement in this world with their own eyes, and began to burn one by one"[1].

"Among the emirs in the Jizzakh fortress, Olloyor Devonbegi Mang'it, Odil Dodkhoh Khitoy, Abdusattor Inoq Husanbiy, Juyonkhoja Toqsoba, General Iskandar Khan and many other commanders fell as martyrs. The emirs whose hour of death had been deferred, Yoqub Qoshbegi and some others, defeated, fled on foot to Samarkand without proper clothing and came before the Emir"[2].

"Feeling his own spiritual weakness at every moment, the Emir began to take measures. After the Jizzakh events, His Highness the Emir left Samarkand, came to Karmana and settled there. In Samarkand he left Abdulmalik Tura, governor of G'uzor; Rahmonqul Parvonachi, governor of Hisor and Shodmon; the remnants of many fortress garrisons and of the Qo'ng'irot troops; the Miyonqol army; the Bukharan

[1] Mirza Abdulazim Sami. Tarikh-i salatin-i mangitiya [History of the Manghit Sovereigns]. – Moscow, 1962. – P. 65.
[2] Mirza Abdulazim Sami. Tarikh-i salatin-i mangitiya [History of the Manghit Sovereigns]. – Moscow, 1962. – P. 66.

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navkars; and the ghazis of other provinces. He also fortified the Brick Bridge (G‘isht Ko‘prik) and stationed troops there to block the Russians’ path.

At that time, Jizzakh had been captured by the Russians at dawn. It was in the year 1283, the Year of the Leopard (1866–1867), on the night before Wednesday, the sixth day of the blessed month of Rajab. When the countless horrors of plunder and pillage appeared to people’s eyes as the Day of Judgement, around midnight the stars suddenly began to scatter and fall to the earth as if in a rain of stars; approaching the ground, they vanished one by one at the height of a spear. Just like the countless people killed in the Jizzakh fortress, the stars too rained down upon the earth[3]”.

In October 1866, troops led by General N. A. Kryzhanovsky besieged the city of Jizzakh and cut off its water supply. During the week-long siege, fierce assaults on the city gates were courageously repulsed by the defenders, while at night the defenders launched sudden counterattacks against the enemy, throwing it into confusion. When the enemy broke in, the defenders of the fortress, unwilling to surrender, entered the powder magazine and blew themselves up. A great many people perished in the defense of Jizzakh. Some 1,000 men had gathered to defend Jizzakh, and they had 53 cannons”[4].

In conclusion, in covering events and incidents in his work, Mirza Sami, through irony, wit and bitter truth, clearly and convincingly showed the policies pursued by the Russians and by the Emirate, and that the defeat in the war with Russia was the fault of the Emir and his short-sighted officials. However, in narrating the events, Sami mainly seeks to vindicate the Manghit rulers. In his interpretation, the Russian invasion:

– is presented as the result of the superiority and military might of an external force;
– the Emirate of Bukhara is depicted as a state that resisted as far as it could;
– although he acknowledges internal weaknesses, he does not sharply criticize them;
– the main emphasis is placed on the powerful army and political pressure of the Russian Empire;
– the actions of the Emir and his entourage are portrayed in a relatively favorable or exculpatory light.

In Sami’s work, the Russian invasion is largely the result of the superiority of an external factor, and the defeat of the Emirate of Bukhara is explained by the imbalance of forces rather than by internal crisis. He therefore narrates the events not in a critical but in a cautious, courtly spirit.

It is also noteworthy that during the Russian assault on the Jizzakh fortress, the defenders, in order to protect themselves from the enemy, walled up their own passages with rammed earth and thereby gave the enemy an advantage: because they had blocked the fortress gates with pakhsa, when the enemy attacked they could not escape anywhere, and all of them perished. Such information can be found in this work.

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3. Mirza Abdulazim Sami. Tarikh-i salatin-i mangitiya [History of the Manghit Sovereigns]. – Moscow, 1962. – P. 59.

[3] Mirza Abdulazim Sami. Tarikh-i salatin-i mangitiya [History of the Manghit Sovereigns]. – Moscow, 1962. – P. 67.
[4] Ziyaeva D. Kh. O‘zbekistonda harbiy ish tarixidan [From the History of Military Affairs in Uzbekistan]. – Tashkent: Sharq, 2012. – P. 161.

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4. Mirza Abdulazim Sami. Tarikh-i salatin-i mangitiya [History of the Manghit Sovereigns]. – Moscow, 1962. – P. 60.
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