



## AUTHORSHIP, LANGUAGE, AND REPRESENTATION OF “TEMUR'S CODE” IN HISTORICAL SOURCES

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**Abstract.** *This article analyzes the authorship, language, and the reflection of early manuscripts of Temur's Code compiled by Amir Temur in historical sources. It presents evidence that the original work was written in Turkic (Chagatai) language, supported by testimonies from Spanish envoys and historians such as Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi. The study also traces the translation of the code into Persian in the 17th century based on historical documentation. The article includes a critical analysis of Western and Soviet historiographical perspectives on Temur's Code, particularly refuting the unfounded criticisms by scholars like Bartold and Yakubovsky using historical and source-critical methodology.*

**Keywords:** *Temur's Code, historical source, Chagatai language, source studies, authorship issue, translation history, Bartold, Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi.*

**Annotatsiya.** *Mazkur maqolada Amir Temur tomonidan tuzilgan “Temur tuzuklari” asarining muallifligi, tili va ilk nusxalarining tarixiy manbalardagi aks ettirilishi tahlil etilgan. Asarning turkiy (chig'atoy) tilida yozilganligi haqidagi dalillar, ispan elchilari va Sharafuddin Ali Yazdiy kabi tarixchilarning guvohliklari, hamda XVII asrda fors tiliga tarjima qilingan nusxalar tarixiy manbalar asosida ko'rsatib beriladi. Tadqiqot davomida “Temur tuzuklari”ga nisbatan G'arb va Sovet tarixchiligi nuqtai nazarlari ham tanqidiy tahlil qilinadi. Xususan, Bartold va Yakubovskiy kabi olimlarning salbiy munosabatlari tarixiy asoslardan yiroqligi manbashunoslik mezonlari asosida rad etiladi.*

*Kalit so‘zlar: Temur tuzuklari, tarixiy manba, chig‘atoy tili, manbashunoslik, mualliflik masalasi, tarjima tarixi, Bartold, Sharafuddin Ali Yazdiy.*

*Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются вопросы авторства, языка и отражения ранних рукописей «Уложений Темура», составленных Амиром Темуром, в исторических источниках. Приводятся доказательства того, что оригинальное произведение было написано на тюркском (чагатайском) языке, что подтверждается свидетельствами испанских послов и таких историков, как Шарафаддин Али Йаздий. Также рассматривается история перевода «Уложений» на персидский язык в XVII веке на основе исторических источников. В статье критически анализируются взгляды западной и советской историографии на «Уложения Темура», в частности, необоснованная критика таких ученых, как Бартольд и Якубовский, опровергается с позиций источниковедческих критериев.*

*Ключевые слова: Уложения Темура, исторический источник, чагатайский язык, источниковедение, проблема авторства, история перевода, Бартольд, Шарафаддин Али Йаздий.*

**Introduction.** Amir Temur, who holds a distinguished place in the history of Central Asia, is recognized not only as a great commander and statesman but also as a thinker of high political acumen. His experience in state governance, his efforts in developing a legal-administrative system, and his related views are reflected in the historical and legal work known as the Temur Tuzuklari (“The Code of Temur”). Although this work has been interpreted differently across various historical periods—especially under colonial and Soviet ideological influences—modern historiography focuses on an objective study of its essence, questions of authorship, and linguistic characteristics.

There is substantial historical evidence that the earliest version of the Tuzuklar was compiled during the time of Amir Temur, within his court, and originally written in the Turkic (Chagatai) language, later translated into Persian. Linguistic features of the text, along with sources such as Qissai Temur, Malfuzoti Temuriy, and other manuscripts documenting Temur's direct political activities, call for in-depth analysis of the authorship and stylistic attributes of the work.

This article explores the issues of authorship, linguistic features, and representation of the Temur Tuzuklari in historical sources from a source-critical perspective. It also offers a critical review of the controversial approaches to the work found in Western and Russian historiography, including the views of scholars such as Bartold, Ivanin, and others. The article aims to demonstrate how the Tuzuklar are being reassessed today as an authentic and reliable historical source.

**Main Part.** When examining the issue of authorship of the Temur Tuzuklari ("The Code of Temur"), we encounter a variety of perspectives. For many years, the question of who authored the work has been the subject of ongoing scholarly debate. There are three primary approaches: the first group of scholars argues that Amir Temur himself is the sole author of the text; the second group suggests it was compiled by his scribes under his direction; and the third group believes the work to be a later compilation, created in the 17th century. However, according to modern source criticism, historical evidence, and the accurate reflection of events directly related to Temur's life, the first view appears to be the most scientifically substantiated.

According to academician I. Mo'minov, Temur personally reviewed the text several times, edited it, verified its historical accuracy, and officially endorsed it through his state chancery. Temur's own words—"I ordered that these events be recorded in my book"—confirm his direct involvement in the writing process.

There are varying opinions regarding the original language of the text. Nonetheless, strong historical, linguistic, and stylistic evidence supports the claim

that the original version was written in Turkic (Chagatai). Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi testified that the life and deeds of Temur were documented separately in both Turkic and Persian. The Spanish envoy Ruy González de Clavijo also noted that administrative affairs in Temur's court were conducted in a Turkic language based on Uighur script. The text itself contains very few Arabic or Persian expressions, exaggerations, or poetic lines; instead, it is written in a concise, clear, and practical style—consistent with traditional Turkic documentary language.

The term *tuzuk* itself is of Turkic origin, meaning “regulation,” “code,” or “decree.” Even in Persian translations of the text, many Turkic lexical elements remain, indicating that the work was originally developed in a Turkic linguistic environment.

Manuscript copies of the *Temur Tuzuklari* have been preserved in several archives. The oldest known copy was discovered in the 17th century by Abu Talib al-Husayni in a library in Yemen and later translated into Persian. He presented this version to the Mughal emperor Nuruddin Jahangir in India. In later historical records, this manuscript became known as the *Tuzuki Temuri*, and it has been translated into English and French. Scholars such as Major Charles Stewart and Professor John White introduced these translations to academic circles. However, these versions do not fully reflect the authenticity or fidelity of the original source.

Historical evidence shows that certain events described in the *Temur Tuzuklari*, such as the appointment of Muhammad Jahangir as heir apparent and his life up to his death (in 1376), coincide with Temur's lifetime. If the text had indeed been created in the 17th or 18th century, such precise details would likely have been altered or updated—further supporting the conclusion that the work was written during Temur's own era.

A positive assessment of the *Temur Tuzuklari* emerged relatively early in Western historiography. For example, the French scholar L. Langlès described the work as a “treatise on the art of state governance.” Likewise, the German historian

F. Schlosser emphasized that through his system of laws and regulations, Temur established a just order in opposition to the violent legacy of Mongol-Tatar domination.

In contrast, within the framework of Russian imperial and Soviet historiography, both Temur's legacy and the *Tuzuklar* were often subject to negative interpretations. Scholars such as T.N. Granovsky, V.V. Bartold, A.Yu. Yakubovsky, and M. Ivanin attempted to deny Temur's authorship of the work. Bartold, for instance, went so far as to label the *Tuzuklar* a "forged" document created in India—an assertion that lacks support from historical documentation.

In recent decades, these biased perspectives have come under increasing criticism. A more objective scholarly approach has emerged, exemplified by researchers such as D.N. Logofet and S.G. Klyashtorny, who advocate for a balanced and evidence-based evaluation of the *Temur Tuzuklari* as an authentic historical and legal source.

**Conclusion.** The Temur Tuzuklari is a product of Amir Temur's political thought, compiled under his direct supervision as a historical-legal document. Among the scholarly debates surrounding the authorship, language, and original versions of this work, the most substantiated and historically grounded view is that it was written in the Turkic (Chagatai) language within Temur's own court. The testimonies of historical figures such as Sharafuddin Ali Yazdi, Ruy González de Clavijo, and Abu Talib al-Husayni, along with the stylistic characteristics of the text—its conciseness, clarity, and lack of exaggeration—support this conclusion.

The contrasting evaluations of the Temur Tuzuklari in Western and Soviet historiography are largely rooted in ideological and political motives rather than scientific rigor, often shaped by geopolitical interests. Nevertheless, modern historiography is increasingly committed to studying the work impartially and based on rigorous source analysis.

Clarifying the authorship and linguistic origins of the Tuzuklar is not only key to understanding Amir Temur's personality and legacy, but also to illuminating the intellectual and legal foundations of Central Asian history. Therefore, a thorough scholarly investigation of the Temur Tuzuklari and its integration into international academic discourse remains a pressing task for contemporary historical research.

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