



SOURCES OF LAW OF THE UZBEK STATE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Khidirov Davlatbek Anzorovich

Employee of the Tashkent City Department of the Customs Committee

Article history:	Abstract:
Received: October 4 th 2023 Accepted: November 4 th 2023 Published: December 6 th 2023	The legal sources of Uzbek statehood in the Middle Ages were multifaceted and complex, reflecting the colorful and dynamic nature of the socio-political landscape of the region. The convergence of nomadic traditions, Islamic legal guidelines, and imperial administrative systems created a multifaceted legal framework that provided for the governance and social structure of Uzbek territories. This article is aimed at an in-depth study of these legal sources and their role in the formation of the legal identity of Uzbek statehood in the Middle Ages.
Keywords: History of Uzbek statehood, legal sources, management of the region, administrative structures, customs, Islamic jurisprudence.	

The history of Uzbek statehood in the Middle Ages is rich and complex, characterized by the interaction of various nomadic and settled societies, and the evolution of unique legal and administrative systems. The emergence of Uzbek statehood was influenced by various legal sources that shaped the administration, social structure and cultural identity of the region. Understanding these legal sources is necessary to understand the foundations of Uzbek statehood and the enduring legacy of its legal traditions. Uzbek statehood in its manifestation in the Middle Ages was deeply rooted in nomadic traditions and absorbed the influence of the settled civilizations of Central Asia. The governing legal framework is not established separately; rather, it was formed as a result of a combination of local nomadic customs, Islamic law, and the administrative practices of the empires that ruled the region. Consequently, the synthesis of various cultural, religious and socio-political influences was reflected in the legal sources of Uzbek statehood in the Middle Ages.

Customary laws and traditions of nomadic tribes occupy a central place in the legal structure of Uzbek statehood. Before the emergence of formal administrative structures, nomadic communities governed themselves through a system of customary laws and unwritten rules of conduct. These customary laws, often derived from oral traditions, regulated various aspects of social organization, property rights, and dispute resolution in nomadic societies. The concept of *adat* or customs provided the legal order of the Uzbek nomads and ensured governance and social cohesion.

At the same time, the spread of Islam to Central Asia brought serious changes to the legal landscape of Uzbek statehood. As Islam took root among Uzbek nomads and settled residents of the region, Islamic legal principles intersected with existing customs and began to influence them. The implementation of Sharia

law derived from the Qur'an and Hadith introduced new dimensions to the legal system, particularly in matters of family law, inheritance and personal conduct. As a result of the gradual integration of Islamic legal rules along with nomadic traditions, a legal hybridity emerged that determined the legal sources of Uzbek statehood in the Middle Ages. In addition, the territorial expansion of powerful empires such as the Somanids and the Timurids brought more complexity to the legal environment of Uzbek statehood. These empires included various ethnic and cultural groups and ruled vast areas across Central Asia. The administrative structures and legal institutions of these empires deeply influenced the legal norms and practices of the Uzbek regions and contributed to the unification of various legal sources. The fluency and flexibility of legal sources in the Uzbek statehood was also clearly demonstrated in the mechanisms of legal pluralism. The coexistence of different legal traditions, including nomadic traditions, Islamic jurisprudence, imperial edicts, and urban commercial law, has produced a legal pluralism that embodies the complexities of a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional society. Legal pluralism has facilitated conflict resolution, administration of justice, and governance of diverse communities, embodying the robustness and flexibility of legal sources in Uzbek statehood.

In addition, the legacy of medieval legal sources echoes in the modern legal system of Uzbekistan, as the country continues to have problems with the harmonization of traditional legal norms with modern legal frameworks. The permanent influence of historical legal sources emphasizes their relevance in the formation of the developing legal identity of Uzbekistan and indicates the lasting influence of the legal traditions of the Middle Ages.

The emergence of written legal texts and codifications was also a significant development in the legal sources of Uzbek statehood. As the Uzbek domains



moved from oral to written practice, various legal treatises and manuscripts appeared covering the evolving legal principles and norms of the time. It is noteworthy that the Chagatai Khanate, a medieval Central Asian state founded by the descendants of Genghis Khan, witnessed the composition of legal codes and administrative regulations that reflected the maturity of legal institutions in the territory of the Uzbeks. Customary laws and traditions of Uzbek nomads formed the main legal source of statehood in the Middle Ages. These customary laws, known as *adat*, were deeply embedded in the nomadic way of life and regulated various aspects of governance, property rights, and social behavior. *Adat*-based legal norms were orally passed down from generation to generation, emphasizing collective ownership of resources, honor-based dispute resolution, and hierarchical leadership structures within nomadic tribes. The strength and flexibility of these customary laws greatly contributed to the harmony and stability of Uzbek nomadic societies and created a solid legal basis for statehood.

The influence of Islam on the legal sources of Uzbek statehood cannot be overestimated. With the gradual spread of Islam throughout Central Asia, the Islamic legal principles enshrined in the Qur'an and Hadith began to intersect with the traditions of the existing nomads, contributing to a profound change in the legal landscape. Sharia laws, which provide instructions on the behavior of a person, family relations and inheritance, gradually strengthened in the territory of Uzbekistan and began to influence the daily life and legal practice of the population. The synthesis of Islamic legal rules with nomadic customary laws formed the legal identity of the Uzbek statehood in the middle ages and created a delicate legal system mediating between the religious and secular spheres of governance. In addition, the Uzbek statehood was deeply influenced by the administrative and legal institutions of the powerful empires that ruled the region in the Middle Ages. The Somani and Timurid kingdoms, including the Uzbeks, helped various ethnic and cultural groups in the region to establish their own administrative structures and legal norms, and to harmonize legal sources and practices. The codification of administrative regulatory and legal documents, the establishment of courts, the establishment of imperial decrees served the complex legal tapestry of Uzbek statehood, the integration of various legal sources into a single administrative system.

The emergence of written legal texts and codifications was a decisive stage in the legal sources of Uzbek statehood. The composition of legal treatises and manuscripts, in particular, the transition from oral to

written records during the Chagatai khanate, reflected the developing legal principles and standards of that time. Legal codes such as "Chingiz Khan's Yasasi" and "Temirla's Code" strengthen the norms of public administration, property rights and criminal justice, which reflect the maturity of legal institutions in Uzbek territories and strengthen the legal identity of the state. In addition, the role of judges, i.e., Islamic judges, in the interpretation and application of legal principles in Uzbek regions has shown the influence of Islam on the legal sources of statehood even more vividly. Judges appointed to administer justice according to Sharia law played an important role in resolving disputes, regulating social behavior, and maintaining the sanctity of laws within Uzbek communities. Their influence helped harmonize legal sources, bridging the gap between customary law, Islamic jurisprudence, and imperial decrees.

To sum up, the legal sources of Uzbek statehood in the Middle Ages were a complex combination of nomadic customs, Islamic legal principles, imperial administrative systems, and the period of transition from oral to written records. This legal mosaic shaped the management, social organization and cultural identity of Uzbek territories, created a strong and flexible legal framework that defined the Uzbek statehood in the Middle Ages. The immutable legacy of these legal sources is reflected in the modern legal systems and cultural practices of Uzbekistan, emphasizing the eternal importance of the legal traditions of the Middle Ages. In the Middle Ages, the legal sources of Uzbek statehood reflected the complex interaction of nomadic customs, Islamic law, the influence of the empire, and the transition from oral to written writings. The unique combination of legal traditions and administrative practice created a unique legal landscape that characterized the Uzbek statehood, shaped its governance, social structure and cultural identity.

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