Linguocultural Modelling Of Historical Concepts In Timurid Chronicles

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Abstract: This study investigates the linguocultural modelling of key historical concepts in Timurid chronicles, focusing on how cultural knowledge, ideological values, and socio-political worldviews are encoded and transmitted through language in classical historiographic discourse. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Evans, 2019). Drawing on a corpus of primary Timurid-era sources—including Temurnoma, Zafarnoma, and related chronicles — the research employs an integrated methodology combining cognitive linguistics, conceptual analysis, and discourse-oriented cultural linguistics. The analysis reconstructs culturally salient concepts such as authority, justice, statehood, rituality, military ethos, and territoriality, revealing their semantic evolution and symbolic configurations within Timurid intellectual culture. Through the identification of conceptual metaphors, culturally grounded lexical markers, and narrative framing strategies, the study demonstrates how historical concepts were linguistically modelled to shape collective cultural memory and legitimize political power. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of Central Asian historical discourse, offering an innovative linguocultural framework applicable to the study of pre-modern texts across diverse cultural traditions. This research provides a theoretically grounded and empirically supported model useful for modern cognitive-historical studies, comparative cultural linguistics, and the interdisciplinary analysis of historical narratives.

Keywords: Linguocultural modelling, Timurid chronicles, historical concepts, cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, conceptual metaphors, cultural memory, socio-political ideology, semantic evolution, Central Asian historiography.

Introduction: The Timurid era (14th–15th centuries) represents a pivotal period in the history of Central Asia, characterized by political consolidation, territorial expansion, and remarkable cultural and intellectual achievements. The empire established by Amir Temur and his successors not only exerted significant military and political influence but also fostered an environment in which historiography, literature, art, and architecture flourished. (Yazdi; Tashkandi) Among the most significant outcomes of this intellectual flourishing are the Timurid chronicles, including Temurnoma, Zafarnoma, Majma' at-tavorix, and other contemporaneous sources. These texts, often authored by court historians and scribes, provide detailed accounts of political events, military campaigns, dynastic successions, and social norms, while simultaneously encoding the ideological, ethical, and cognitive frameworks that governed Timurid society.While these chronicles have traditionally been studied from historical, philological, or literary perspectives, recent advances in cognitive and cultural linguistics suggest that historical texts also serve as complex repositories of linguocultural knowledge(van Dijk, 2008; Wodak, 2015). Language in these texts is not a neutral medium; rather, it is a tool for constructing, transmitting, and legitimizing cultural and socio-political concepts. Through careful linguistic choices, metaphorical structures, and discourse strategies, chroniclers embed notions of authority, justice, statehood, ritual practice, and military ethos into the textual fabric, shaping collective understanding and reinforcing social hierarchies.

The interdisciplinary approach of linguocultural modelling allows researchers to systematically reconstruct the conceptual and cognitive structures underlying historical narratives. This approach focuses on how culturally significant concepts are represented in language, how they evolve over time, and how they interact with social and ideological factors. Applying such a framework to Timurid chronicles enables the identification of conceptual metaphors, culturally grounded lexical markers, and narrative framing techniques that collectively form a model of Timurid socio-political thought and cultural worldview. Despite the richness of the Timurid textual heritage, there is a noticeable gap in research: while historians have long examined the content and events described in these chronicles, systematic linguocultural analyses of historical concepts remain limited. Most existing studies focus either on philology, historical accuracy, or literary style, leaving the cognitive and cultural dimensions largely unexplored. Addressing this gap, the present study combines methodologies from cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, and cultural studies to analyse how key concepts—such as authority, justice, statehood, rituality, military ethos, and territoriality—are linguistically encoded and culturally modelled within Timurid chronicles.The significance of this research is twofold. First, it provides an innovative framework for understanding the interplay between language, culture, and socio-political ideology in historical texts, illustrating how narratives construct collective memory and cultural identity. Second, it contributes to the broader field of historical cognitive linguistics, demonstrating how linguocultural modelling can be applied to pre-modern texts across diverse traditions. (Sharifian, 2017; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980)By mapping the conceptual and semantic networks of Timurid chronicles, the study sheds light on both the specificities of Central Asian historiography and the universal mechanisms by which historical knowledge is linguistically and culturally structured. Ultimately, this study not only enhances our understanding of the Timurid textual tradition but also offers a methodological model applicable to other historical corpora, emphasizing the centrality of language as a vehicle for cultural cognition and ideological construction. By integrating cognitive, discursive, and cultural perspectives, the research

underscores the value of a linguocultural approach for interpreting historical narratives, revealing the intricate ways in which the past is encoded, transmitted, and interpreted through language.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach, combining cognitive linguistics, cultural linguistics, discourse analysis, and historical semantics to investigate the linguocultural modelling of key historical concepts in Timurid chronicles. The methodology is structured to ensure a systematic, replicable, and theoretically grounded analysis of textual, semantic, and cognitive dimensions of historical narratives.

1. Corpus Selection

Definition and Purpose: Corpus selection refers to the careful identification of textual sources that form the empirical foundation of the study. A well-defined corpus ensures reliability, historical authenticity, and relevance to the research objectives.

Implementation in this Study: The corpus consists of primary Timurid chronicles, including:

Temurnoma (by Salokhiddin Tashkendi),

Zafarnoma (Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi),

Majma' at-tavorix, and others.

Additional contemporaneous historiographic texts documenting political, military, and cultural events of the Timurid period.

Rationale: These texts were chosen because they provide rich linguistic and cultural information, accurately reflect the ideological and socio-political context of the Timurid era, and contain recurring cultural and historical concepts suitable for systematic linguistic and cognitive analysis. Critical editions and verified manuscript copies were prioritized to maintain textual authenticity.

2. Linguistic Analysis

Definition and Purpose: Linguistic analysis involves the systematic examination of words, phrases, syntax, and semantic structures to uncover the meaning, usage patterns, and cultural significance of linguistic items. It allows researchers to trace how language encodes conceptual and cultural knowledge.

Implementation in this Study: Lexical items related to

authority, justice, statehood, military ethos, rituality, and territoriality were identified and categorized.

Semantic fields and collocational patterns were examined to detect culturally specific meaning. Syntactic and rhetorical structures were analyzed to understand how narrative emphasis, hierarchy, and conceptual importance are linguistically constructed.

Significance: This step ensures that historical concepts are not only identified but contextualized linguistically, revealing their nuanced meanings and interconnections within Timurid historiographic discourse.

3. Cognitive Modelling

Definition and Purpose: Cognitive modelling refers to the reconstruction of mental frameworks, conceptual schemas, and metaphorical structures that shape human understanding. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Evans, 2019).In historical linguistics, it reveals how authors and societies perceive, organize, and communicate knowledge.Implementation in this Study: Conceptual schemas underlying key historical concepts were reconstructed using cognitive linguistic tools. Conceptual metaphors (e.g., authority as "vertical hierarchy" or statehood as "body") were identified to understand mental representation patterns. Interactions between language, thought, and culture were mapped to illustrate how Timurid chroniclers structured and transmitted knowledge. Significance: Cognitive modelling provides insight into the mental and cultural frameworks behind historical narratives, going beyond literal interpretation to uncover the underlying worldview.

4. Discourse and Cultural Analysis

Definition and Purpose: Discourse and cultural analysis examines how language functions in context to construct ideology, identity, and collective memory. It focuses on narrative strategies, framing devices, and cultural norms embedded in textual discourse. Implementation in this Study: Narrative strategies and rhetorical devices encoding ideological, ethical, and cultural values were examined. Recurring patterns of cultural memory and socio-political representation were identified.

Intertextual and contextual factors were analyzed to understand how historical concepts functioned in broader Central Asian socio-political and cultural landscapes.

Significance: This step allows researchers to see how language reflects and shapes culture, linking textual analysis with socio-political and historical interpretations.

5.Definition and Purpose

Data extraction involves systematically collecting relevant lexical, semantic, and conceptual information from the corpus. Conceptual mapping visualizes relationships among historical concepts, metaphors, and discourse patterns. Implementation in this Study: Lexemes, expressions, and idiomatic phrases corresponding to predefined conceptual categories were extracted.

Recurrent conceptual metaphors, semantic networks, and narrative structures were identified. Conceptual maps, flowcharts, and tables were created to visualize interconnections between historical concepts, cultural markers, and discourse strategies. Significance: This step ensures clarity and replicability, making complex semantic and cognitive relationships tangible and systematically analyzable.

6. Theoretical Foundation

Definition and Purpose: The theoretical foundation provides the conceptual and methodological justification for the study, aligning it with current scholarly standards and ensuring scientific rigor. Implementation in this Study: Cognitive Linguistics: Used to reconstruct mental representations and conceptual metaphors. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Evans, 2019). Cultural Linguistics: Focuses on the encoding of cultural knowledge, values, and social norms. Discourse Analysis: Examines how narrative, rhetoric, and textual framing construct ideology and collective memory. Significance: A strong theoretical basis ensures that the study is methodologically coherent, scientifically rigorous, and aligned with contemporary trends in modern linguocultural research.

Conclusion of Methodology Section

By combining corpus-based analysis, linguistic examination, cognitive reconstruction, and discourse-cultural interpretation, this methodology allows for a comprehensive understanding of how historical concepts were linguistically and culturally modelled in Timurid chronicles. The approach is replicable,

theoretically grounded, and empirically robust, making it suitable for both new synchronic standards and future comparative studies in historical linguistics and cultural discourse analysis.

By integrating cognitive, discursive, and cultural perspectives, the research underscores the value of a linguocultural approach for interpreting historical narratives, revealing the intricate ways in which the past is encoded, transmitted, and interpreted through language.

RESULTS

For the empirical basis of our linguistic-cultural modelling, we selected major illustrated manuscripts of Timurid historiography — notably Zafarnama and a Safavid-era copy of Timurnama (Epic of Timur, Walters Ms. W.648) — preserved in international collections. The Timur Hunting folio from a 16th-century Central Asian copy of Zafarnama (Harvard Art Museums, object 1965.477) vividly illustrates princely hunting under Timur's rule. Another folio, "Timur Celebrates His Conquest of Delhi," from a mid-15th-century illustrated Zafarnama (Harvard Art Museums, object 1960.198) depicts a celebratory scene of conquest and rulership legitimation.

The Timurnama manuscript W.648 from the Walters Art Museum is a later Safavid copy of the same historiographic tradition, featuring early modern Persian text and illustrations describing Timur's life and campaigns. These manuscripts serve not only as historical chronicles of events but also as cultural artefacts — combining text, illumination, pictorial representation, and calligraphy — thereby offering a rich data set for a linguocultural-cognitive analysis. Their very structure reflects an integrated discourse in which political ideology, visual symbolism, and cultural memory are interwoven.The Timurnama (W.648) manuscript and various copies of Zafarnama present Timur's dominion as a unified political and cultural space, often invoking geographical names like Mawarannahr, Turan, etc., linking diverse ethnic and regional entities into a single imperial identity.

Through portrayal of conquests, governance, construction of cities and monuments (mosques, palaces), administrative and cultural reforms, the manuscripts weave a narrative of imperial cohesion — not simply as military domination, but as

cultural-political integration across a vast territory. The illustrated folios (cities, court scenes, conquests) alongside the textual narrative create what might be called a "cognitive cartography" of the Timurid empire: a map in the collective imagination binding land, people, culture, and rulership into a coherent whole.Lexical-Semantic Fields and Distribution of Core Concepts. The corpus analysis of major Timurid-era chronicles (notably Zafarnama — the versions by Shami and Yazdi, and Timurnama) reveals a systematically structured lexical-semantic network dedicated to central political, social, and cultural concepts such as "authority / rulership," "statehood," "military ethos," "territorial domain," "justice," and "ritual / ceremonial order."

Terms referring to statehood and sovereignty — e.g. "mulk," "saltanat," "ulus," "arkān-i dawlat" — frequently co-occur in passages describing governance, succession, and the territorial extent of the realm. This lexical field encapsulates the notion of the polity as both a tangible domain and a socio-political edifice.

For authority / rulership, the chronicles employ titles and epithets such as "amir," "hukmdor," "padshoh," "sohib-qiran", alongside references to elite social statuses (religious scholars, nobles, court officials). This suggests a concept of rulership that is multi-dimensional — combining military-political power, administrative legitimacy, and religious-moral authority. The semantic field related to military ethos and territorial expansion is rich with war-related vocabulary: "yurish" (campaign), "zarba" (strike), "qonun/farmon" (decree/edict), "qamal" (siege), "ishg'ol / zabt" (conquest/occupation). These lexemes are used recurrently in narratives about conquests, siege campaigns, and administrative consolidation, reflecting how the discourse frames expansion as both strategic and normative.

Thus, the lexical-semantic analysis demonstrates that Timurid chronicles do not treat historical events as isolated occurrences; instead, they embed them within a structured cultural-political ontology, where vocabulary is curated to reflect a worldview of rulership, statecraft, and culturally sanctioned violence.

Cognitive Schemas and Conceptual Metaphors.Applying cognitive-linguistic modelling to

the corpus allows reconstruction of underlying mental frames that shaped Timurid historiographic discourse. Several recurring conceptual metaphors and cognitive schemas emerge:

"State as Body" metaphor: The polity is metaphorically conceptualized as a living organism — the "state" («dawlat» / «saltanat» / «mulk») functions like a body whose integrity depends on order, loyalty, and hierarchical unity. This metaphor conveys the idea of the empire as an organic whole that must be maintained, protected, and purified."Rulership as Vertical Hierarchy / Divine Mandate" schema: The hierarchy of titles (from amir to padshoh, from nobles to religious scholars) combined with recurring references to farmon (edict) or buyruq (command) indicate a mental model in which authority flows top-down, legitimized by divine sanction and moral-political order. "War as Sacred / Moral Struggle" metaphor: Military campaigns and conquests are frequently framed in morally-laden terms — not merely as territorial expansion, but as acts of justice, divine favour, or civilizational duty. This framing elevates war beyond mere politics, presenting it as a culturally and ideologically sanctioned mechanism for establishing order and legitimizing rulership.

These cognitive schemas show that Timurid chroniclers did not just record events — they actively modelled a worldview, structuring historical reality according to culturally intelligible patterns of authority, legitimacy, and morality.

Discourse Strategies and Ideological-Cultural Functions. The discourse analysis of the chronicles reveals that historical narrative is used as a vehicle for cultural memory, political legitimation, and identity construction:

The persistent use of honorific titles and mythologizing of rulers (e.g., "sohib-qiran") serves to legitimize the dynastic lineage and to anchor rulership in a moral-political paradigm rather than pure might. This repetition functions as a discursive strategy of legitimation. Chronicles do not simply describe conquests or governance; they embed social norms, religious values, and ethnic/political identities — contributing to the formation of a collective memory shared across disparate populations within the empire. For instance, the Zafarnama chronicles not only military

campaigns but also administrative and cultural reforms, construction of religious and civic institutions, thus portraying the Timurid realm as a morally just and civically ordered polity.

The historical narrative in these works becomes an ideological instrument: by constructing a coherent image of the Timurid state as righteous, divinely favoured, ethnically inclusive yet politically united, the chronicles contributed to the cultural consolidation of imperial identity. Hence, the linguistic-discursive strategies employed by chroniclers reveal a purposeful modelling of identity, power, and collective memory — not just chronicling but constructing history. Semantic Transformation and Adaptation over Time Comparative analysis across different versions and later chronicle editions shows semantic shifts and adaptation of conceptual vocabulary: Words originally carrying narrower religious or tribal connotations (e.g., "mulk", "ulus") are increasingly used in broader political and administrative contexts — reflecting a shift from tribal / clan-based semantics to imperial, bureaucratic statehood discourse.Ethno-cultural identifiers, regional names, tribal affiliations, and toponyms are systematically recorded, often within the same historical narrative, suggesting that the chronicles intentionally preserve ethnic and cultural diversity while simultaneously situating them within the unified imperial structure.Such semantic evolution indicates that the Timurid historiographic discourse was dynamic: chroniclers adapted language to reflect changing political realities, state structures, and cultural self-understanding.This adaptability underscores the chronicles' role not just as passive records, but as active participants in the shaping of evolving socio-political identity. Proposed linguocultural model of Timurid historical discourse.Based on the above findings, the study proposes a multi-layered linguocultural model of Timurid historical discourse, composed of the following interrelated strata: Lexical-semantic stratum: a curated vocabulary set referring to statehood, authority, military, territory, justice, ritual, social hierarchy.

Cognitive-metaphorical stratum: conceptual metaphors and mental models that structure understanding of polity (state as body), authority (vertical hierarchy), and conflict (war as moral struggle).Discursive-ideological stratum: narrative

strategies that serve legitimization, cultural memory building, identity construction, and political-moral discourse.Historical-cultural stratum: preservation and articulation of ethnic, regional, and cultural diversity under an imperial identity; continuity and adaptation across time.This model demonstrates how Timurid chronicles operated as more than mere historical records: they functioned as instruments of cultural cognition and political ideology — encoding, mediating, and transmitting a worldview that shaped Central Asian historical memory. Limitations and critical reflection.The survivability and availability of manuscripts is limited; many works are fragmentary or exist only in later copies, which may reflect editorial changes, interpolation, or intentional rewriting. This affects the reliability of lexical and semantic analysis.The presence of panegyric language and hyperbole (common in medieval court literature) introduces a bias: the modelling of concepts may reflect an idealized vision rather than factual socio-political reality. For example, as scholars argue, some works once attributed to the Timurid period (e.g., alleged "autobiographical" collections) have been exposed as later forgeries and thus disregarded as primary sources by modern historians. The researcher's own interpretative framework (choice of conceptual categories, mapping of metaphors) influences outcomes; different theoretical lenses might yield differing models.

1. Use of lexical fields and titles: "statehood / rulership / rulership legitimation"

From Zafarnama (Yazdi) and Timurnama, one observes frequent use of lexical items and honorific-titles that together construct a culturally and politically loaded concept of rulership and statehood. For example, in Zafarnama the ruler is repeatedly referred to by epithets such as "Sahib-qiran" (Lord of the World/Conqueror of the Age), "amir", "padshoh", marking him not only as a military leader but as a legitimate sovereign with divine and moral authority. This lexical-title field is not neutral: by consistently framing the ruler as "Sahib-qiran" or "padshoh," the chronicle embeds a model of rulership as divinely sanctioned, hierarchical, and culturally legitimate.

Similarly, the realm/state is often conceptualized via terms like "mulk", "saltanat", "ulus/arkān-i dawlat" / "territorial domain/state structures" — lexical indicators of state as structured political entity, not simply a collection of tribes. This lexical field contributes to modelling a "statehood ontology" within the Timurid worldview.

This demonstrates that historically-significant political concepts are linguistically encoded in a culturally loaded manner, reflecting a constructed ideological and social order — not just descriptive but normative.

2. Representation of military campaigns and conquest — war lexicon and moral/ideological framing.The chronicles do not merely list conquests as events; they frame them using lexicon and rhetorical strategies that imbue war with moral, religious, and civilizational meaning.In Zafarnama, the narrative of e.g. the 1401 conquest of Baghdad is accompanied by glorifying, elevated language; in illustrated copies, such as the "Conquest of Baghdad by Timur" folio, the dramatic visual plus textual framing turns a military event into a symbolic act of dynastic legitimacy and imperial grandeur. The war-lexicon used (words for campaign, siege, conquest, sovereignty, decree, divinely-sanctioned rule) along with metaphorical depictions of the army, the ruler on horseback, the subjugation of peoples — all contribute to a cognitive-cultural model in which conquest equals righteous, divinely-blessed order. As one quote from a translation of Yazdi's text phrases: "Timur's only aim till his death was to excite the Muslims to make war on enemy of their religion…"

Thus, the discourses of war and conquest in these chronicles are not neutral chronicles of events, but part of a larger ideological narrative where military might is fused with moral-religious justification — a clear case of conceptual metaphors and cultural modelling.

3. Cultural memory, identity, and spatial-territorial modelling

The chronicles also work to map and define the territorial and cultural identity of the Timurid realm — not just through facts, but through linguistic-cultural modelling.

In Zafarnama illustrations (e.g. "Timur's entry into Samarkand" folio) the arrival of Timur and his troops into Samarkand is depicted in rich visual and textual form, emphasizing not only the conquest but the transformation of the city into a splendid imperial capital.The textual narrative often uses terms that fuse

ethnic, cultural, religious, and political identities: references to "Turan," "Mawarannahr," and other regional-political identifiers show that the Timurid state is conceptualized as a culturally and territorially coherent political-cultural space.

This means that the chronicles do not simply record events, but actively participate in the construction of a collective cultural memory and imperial identity: through lexical choice, narrative structure, and even visual-textual synergy (in illustrated manuscripts), they model a worldview in which Timurid rulership, territory, and culture are unified under a shared symbolic-political framework.

4. Literary & rhetorical stylization: Panegyric language, hyperbole, metaphor — shaping perception and memory because both Zafarnama (Yazdi) and Timurnama are not purely annalistic histories but also literary/panegyric works, their language is stylized, metaphorical, and often hyperbolic — which itself is part of the linguocultural modelling.The use of elevated, poetic, hyperbolic expressions when describing Timur, his army, or his victories — e.g. vast armies "as numerous as the stars and heavens," invincible warriors, divine favour, cosmic metaphors — serves to create a mythic-heroic image rather than a sober historical account. This literary stylization influences how subsequent generations perceive Timur and his era: rather than neutral memory, the chronicles transmit a culturally mediated ideal — of imperial grandeur, heroism, divine sanction — through language that is itself part of the historical discourse.Hence, such works function not only as historical records but as instruments of cultural memory, identity formation, and ideological legitimation.

Interpretation: What does this mean for a linguocultural model of Timurid historiography.From the examples above, we can infer that: The lexical-semantic layer of the chronicles is carefully curated: rulers get high-status titles; the state is conceptualized via formal political lexicon; wars and conquests are framed with morally and culturally loaded vocabulary — all contributing to a structured political-cultural ontology.The cognitive-conceptual layer uses metaphors (state as body, rule as divine mandate, war as righteous act) to shape how the historical reality is mentally modelled — not as chaotic

tribal raids, but as ordered, legitimate, culturally sanctioned imperial action. The discursive-ideological layer uses narrative strategies, panegyric style, repetition of honorific/title lexicon, and symbolic representations to legitimize authority and shape cultural memory. The cultural-identity / spatial-territorial layer offers a model of a multi-ethnic, multi-regional empire unified under one political and cultural identity — mediated via language and narrative. Together, these layers show that Zafarnama, Timurnama, and related chronicles operate as linguocultural models — not mere historical records — shaping the worldview, ideology, and collective memory of the Timurid period.

However, some caution is needed: Works like Zafarnama and Timurnama are influenced by panegyric tradition: their aim was often to glorify the ruler, legitimise dynastic rule, and shape posterity's memory. Thus, their language may exaggerate, idealize, or omit inconvenient facts. This means the model reflects ideological representation, not purely objective history.The survival of manuscripts is uneven; later copies and illustrations may reflect post-Timurid retouching, reinterpretation, or political-cultural agendas of copying patrons. This affects reliability of lexicon / metaphor analysis.Translations, redactions, and copying errors over centuries may have altered original phrasing, making semantic or metaphorical analysis challenging.

Thus — while the linguocultural model emerging from these texts is rich and meaningful, any interpretation must be contextual, critical, and aware of genre, purpose, and historical transmission.By analysing real passages, titles, war-descriptions, lexical fields, and narrative-literary strategies in Zafarnama and Timurnama, we demonstrate that Timurid chronicles encode a complex, multi-layered linguocultural model of rulership, imperial identity, conquest, and collective memory. These texts are not neutral records — they actively shape how history, authority, and culture are conceptualized and remembered.

2. Lexical Semantics and Titles: Construction of Rulership and Statehood

Analysis of the textual content (in Persian script) and the socio-cultural context of titles, honorifics, and political lexicon reveals a carefully curated vocabulary

aimed at constructing a worldview of legitimate rulership and imperial authority.

From illustrated manuscripts like Zafarnama, chronology and rulership are often introduced with honorifics such as "Sahib-qiran" (Lord of the Age), "Shāh-e-Jahān" (King of the World), "Amir", "Padshāh" — each carrying connotations not only of political power, but also divine sanction, universal sovereignty, and cosmic order. For instance, in the folio "Timur Celebrates His Conquest of Delhi," the visual representation of ruler enthronement is matched with regal titles, reinforcing the conceptual metaphor of sovereign as world-ruler. This lexical-semantic stratum functions as the base layer of the linguocultural model: the repeated use of high-status titles and state-related lexicon (e.g., "saltanat" / "mulk" / "ulus/arkān-i dawlat") encodes a state ontology in which the polity is conceptualised as a structured, legitimate, and divinely sanctioned entity, rather than a loose confederation of tribal groups. The manuscript context — courtly patronage, illustration, calligraphy — further underscores the performative dimension of this lexicon.

3. Military Discourse, Conquest, and Moral-Symbolic Framing

A prominent theme in the chronicles is martial activity, conquest, and territorial expansion — but these are never presented as mere historical events; rather, they are embedded in moral-symbolic and ideological discourse.The Timur Hunting folio does more than depict a royal pastime; it invokes the image of ruler's control over nature, his sovereign right to hunt, and the symbolic mastery over land and beasts — implicitly asserting dominion and power. The folio "Conquest of Baghdad by Timur" from the 1436 Zafarnama (commissioned by Ibrahim Sultan) dramatizes the 1401 siege in a visually and rhetorically charged mode: the defeat of enemies is depicted not only as military victory but as a divine/historical mandate — a restoration of order, of righteousness. The textual descriptions in such manuscripts frequently employ war-lexicon combined with religious, civilizational, and moral overtones — framing conquest as not mere power-politics but as legitimate, ideologically justified actions in service of a universal civilizational order.This discourse-level analysis reveals that military and territorial expansion in Timurid historiography is not

neutral reporting; it is part of a cognitive-cultural model in which war, rulership, and statehood are intertwined with moral legitimacy, religious duty, and imperial identity.

4. Spatial and Territorial Representation: Imperial Identity and Cultural Memory

Another dimension of the linguocultural model concerns how space — land, territory, empire — is conceptualised and mapped linguistically and visually in the chronicles.

This supports the hypothesis that Timurid chronicles function as instruments of collective cultural memory and identity formation — encoding a vision of empire that transcends tribal or ephemeral loyalties and fosters an imperial-civilizational consciousness.

5. Interplay of Text, Image, and Materiality: Multimodal Cultural Narrative

One of the strongest features of the manuscripts under analysis is their multimodal nature: they are not only textual documents, but also illuminated artworks, with miniatures, calligraphy, ornamentation, and material craftsmanship (gold, pigments, paper quality).The physical analysis of Timurid manuscripts preserved in national collections (for example, those studied in Uzbekistan) reveals high-quality paper, meticulous illumination, and durable binding — indicating deliberate production for long-term preservation and circulation. The illustrated pages serve as visual rhetoric, reinforcing the written discourse: scenes of conquest, rulership, courtly ceremony, and urban grandeur complement the textual portrayal of authority, legitimacy, and empire.This combination of text + image + materiality amplifies the cultural resonance of the chronicles, ensuring that the messages they encode — about power, identity, legitimacy — were not only read but also visually experienced. As a result, the manuscripts operate as powerful cultural-ideological artefacts, not just historical records.In the framework of linguocultural modelling, this multimodality constitutes a separate yet interconnected stratum: a discursive-ideological stratum that works in tandem with lexical-semantic, cognitive, and cultural memory layers to produce a comprehensive model of Timurid historical consciousness.

6. Toward a Multi-Layered Linguocultural Model of

Timurid Historiography

Based on the above empirical analyses and manuscript evidence, we can outline a proposed multi-layered model of how historical concepts (rulership, statehood, empire, conquest, collective identity) are constructed in Timurid chronicles:

Stratum / Layer Key Features / Mechanisms Function in the Model Lexical-Semantic Titles, honorifics, state-related vocabulary (saltanat, mulk, ulus, sahib-qiran, etc.) Encodes legitimacy, authority, and political ontology/Cognitive-Metaphorical Conceptual metaphors (state as cosmos / universal realm; ruler as world-king; war as righteous struggle) Provides mental models for interpreting political and historical reality. Discourse-Ideological / Narrative Text + visual narration of conquest, rulership, court life; panegyric style; moral/religious framing Constructs moral-political ideology, cultural memory, imperial identity Spatial-Cultural / Territorial Geographic naming, depiction of territories, cities, monuments; mapping of empire across regions Integrates diverse lands and peoples into a unified imperial framework, shapes collective identity Material / Multimodal Manuscript production, illumination, miniatures, calligraphy, binding — physical preservation and aesthetic appeal Enhances durability and symbolic power; ensures cultural transmission and visual-textual impact. This model demonstrates that Timurid chronicles are not passive, neutral records. Rather, they function as active, culturally embedded systems that encode, construct, and transmit a worldview — one that legitimizes rulership, valorizes conquest, defines cultural-territorial identity, and shapes collective memory.

7. Limitations, Critical Reflections, and Methodological Cautions

While the analysis above draws on concrete manuscript evidence and a robust theoretical framework, several limitations must be acknowledged:

Manuscript Variability and Transmission: Many manuscripts are later copies (e.g., Safavid-era Timurnama) rather than contemporaneous with Timur himself. Thus, textual and illustrative modifications, editorial interventions, or later ideological influences may affect the fidelity of the representation. In such cases, the linguistic-cultural model may reflect a later reinterpretation rather than the original "Timurid" worldview. Panegyric Nature and Genre Bias: Works like Zafarnama were composed under patronage, intended to glorify the ruler. Their stylized, hyperbolic, elitist language and imagery may exaggerate or idealize historical reality. Therefore, the model captures normative, ideological constructs rather than a neutral historical account. Access and Rights Limitations: Many manuscript images and texts are under "all rights reserved" or limited-access policies. For scholarly publication, acquiring high-resolution images, permission, and accurate transcription is necessary.

Linguistic Complexity and Interpretation Risk: Transliteration, translation, and interpretation of Persian-Arabic texts require deep philological competence. Metaphorical and symbolic readings are interpretative and may vary depending on researcher's theoretical framework. The empirical examination of major Timurid manuscripts — Zafarnama and Timurnama — reveals that these chronicles operate as complex linguocultural artefacts: through their lexical choices, conceptual metaphors, narrative-visual strategies, spatial mapping, and material form, they encode a coherent worldview of rulership, empire, conquest, and collective identity.The multi-layered model outlined above demonstrates how historical texts of the Timurid era served not only to document events, but also to construct and transmit ideological, cultural, and cognitive frameworks — shaping collective memory and identity for subsequent generations.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study reveal that Timurid chronicles constitute a highly structured, multi-layered system of linguocultural representation in which historical events, political ideology, and cultural worldview are interwoven through language, narrative, and visual symbolism. The findings underscore that the chroniclers of the Timurid period were not passive recorders of historical realities; rather, they were active agents in constructing, legitimizing, and transmitting a particular vision of statehood, rulership, and imperial identity. This discussion contextualizes these findings within broader scholarly debates on historical discourse, cultural memory, and cognitive-linguistic modelling.

1. Linguocultural Encoding and the Function of Power Discourse

. One of the central observations emerging from the analysis is the deliberate linguistic construction of political hierarchy and legitimate sovereignty. The use of epithets such as Sahib-qiran, padshah, and amir—repeated consistently across the corpus—reflects not merely descriptive nomenclature but a discursive strategy aimed at embedding political authority within a moral-cosmic order. This supports existing scholarship arguing that medieval Islamic historiography, especially at courts, functioned as a vehicle of dynastic legitimization rather than neutral historical documentation. The findings thus reinforce a key argument in cultural linguistics: lexical choices serve as cognitive tools that naturalize ideological structures. In Timurid chronicles, linguistic repetition and formulaic honorifics codify an understanding of rulership as divinely sanctioned, hierarchical, and universalistic. This aligns with studies on Persianate political culture that emphasize the ritualized language of kingship and its role in reinforcing socio-political norms.

2. Conceptual Metaphors and the Cognitive Mapping of Empire

The identification of conceptual metaphors—such as "the state as a body," "rulership as vertical hierarchy," and "war as sacred struggle"—highlights the cognitive frameworks through which Timurid chroniclers structured political reality. These metaphors are not merely stylistic devices; they shape how readers conceptualize the empire's organization, the ruler's role, and the moral value of expansionist warfare. This has broader implications for cognitive-historical research: it demonstrates that pre-modern historiographic texts encode mental models that continue to influence collective historical consciousness. The Timurid cognitive schema of empire as a moral and organic entity provides a coherent ideological narrative that frames political expansion as both natural and divinely mandated. This resonates with cross-cultural studies of imperial historiography (e.g., in Chinese, Byzantine, or Mughal traditions) showing that metaphoric modelling is a universal mechanism for naturalizing political order.

3. Multimodal Discourse: Text, visuality, and material culture

. A significant insight of this study is the recognition of Timurid manuscripts as multimodal cultural artefacts, combining language, illustration, calligraphy, and material craftsmanship. The visual program of illustrated Zafarnama and Timurnama manuscripts—depicting scenes of conquest, kingship, and court rituals—reinforces and amplifies the ideological messages embedded in the text. This suggests that linguocultural modelling in the Timurid era was not confined to written discourse, but extended into aesthetic and material domains. Iconographic elements such as royal enthronement scenes, symbolic spatial arrangements, and representations of urban grandeur function as non-verbal metaphors of authority, legitimacy, and imperial unity. This echoes contemporary theories in cultural semiotics and visual anthropology, which argue that historical narratives are constructed through multiple modes of meaning-making rather than text alone.

4. Territoriality, Identity, and the Construction of Collective Memory

. The textual and visual evidence demonstrates that Timurid chronicles not only describe territorial expansion but conceptualize space as a culturally and politically integrated imperial domain. The chroniclers' frequent references to Mawarannahr, Turan, or other geopolitical entities serve to create a discursive cartography that binds diverse populations into a unified ideological framework.This implies that historical writing in the Timurid context was part of a broader project of identity construction, contributing to the formation of a shared cultural memory. The interplay between ethnic diversity and imperial unity visible in the chronicles supports the idea that Timurid historiography sought to cultivate a supra-ethnic imperial consciousness—one that transcended tribal affiliations while respecting regional identities. This finding resonates with recent scholarship in Central Asian studies that emphasizes the role of Timurid rule in shaping long-term cultural and political identities across the region.

5. Historiographic Bias and the Dynamics of Ideological Representation

. A recurring theme in the analysis is the panegyric nature of the chronicles. The hyperbolic language, stylized metaphors, and idealized depictions of war and rulership suggest that these texts present constructed ideological narratives rather than factual historical accounts. This invites reflection on the epistemological status of the texts: Timurid chronicles

should be understood not as objective repositories of historical data, but as curated representations shaped by courtly agendas and literary conventions.However, these ideological biases do not undermine their scholarly value. Rather, they highlight the necessity of a linguocultural approach: understanding what the texts claim is less important than understanding how and why they make such claims linguistically and cognitively. The presence of exaggeration, idealization, or selective omission is itself evidence of the cultural and political work performed by historical discourse.

6. Contribution to Linguocultural and Cognitive-Historical Scholarship.

This study contributes to ongoing debates in cognitive linguistics and historiography by offering a structured model that integrates lexical-semantic analysis, cognitive metaphor theory, discourse analysis, and cultural anthropology. By demonstrating how Timurid chronicles operate as semiotic systems that encode complex worldviews, the research provides a replicable methodological framework for analysing other pre-modern historiographic traditions. The model also emphasizes the continuity between linguistic representation and cultural cognition, showing that historical texts shape not only memory of the past but also the conceptual frameworks through which societies interpret political legitimacy, identity, and moral order.

7.Implications for Future Research.

Several avenues emerge from the findings of this study: Comparative research: The linguocultural model can be applied to Ottoman, Mughal, Safavid, or Chinggisid historiography, enabling comparative mapping of political metaphors and ideological narratives.Deep philological analysis: Further work is needed to examine variant manuscripts, marginalia, and later copies to trace semantic evolution across time. Digital humanities approaches: Corpus-linguistic tools and visualization technologies could enhance the mapping of conceptual networks and metaphorical patterns. Interdisciplinary expansion: Combining linguistic analysis with archaeology, art history, and manuscript studies could yield a fuller picture of Timurid cultural production.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Timurid chronicles function as complex linguocultural systems in which political ideology, cultural memory, and historical consciousness are constructed through language, narrative strategies, and multimodal representation. By integrating lexical-semantic analysis, cognitive metaphor theory, discourse analysis, and cultural-historical interpretation, the research reveals that the chronicles do not merely record events but actively model a worldview that legitimizes rulership, moral order, and imperial identity. The analysis shows that key historical concepts—such as authority, justice, statehood, military ethos, territoriality, and ritual practice—are systematically encoded through specific lexical fields, honorific titles, cognitive schemas, and visual-symbolic elements. Conceptual metaphors such as "state as body," "rulership as divine mandate," and "war as righteous struggle" demonstrate that chroniclers shaped readers' cognitive understanding of empire by framing political realities within culturally intelligible mental models. The multimodal nature of illustrated manuscripts further strengthened these ideological messages, combining text, image, and material craftsmanship to reinforce collective memory and political legitimacy. Moreover, the study highlights the dynamic evolution of semantic fields and the adaptive nature of Timurid historiographic discourse. The shift from tribal terminology to imperial political vocabulary reflects broader socio-political transformations of the period, while the integration of diverse ethnic and territorial identities into a unified narrative underscores the chronicles' role in constructing a cohesive imperial consciousness. At the same time, critical reflection on genre conventions and manuscript transmission reveals that these works must be interpreted not as objective historical accounts but as ideologically charged representations shaped by patronage, literary convention, and political purpose. Their value lies precisely in this interpretive dimension: they offer insight into how pre-modern societies conceptualized power, identity, and history through culturally embedded linguistic forms.Overall, the study provides a multi-layered linguocultural model applicable to the analysis of pre-modern historiographic traditions beyond the Timurid context. By demonstrating how language structures cultural cognition and ideological meaning, the research contributes to the fields of cognitive linguistics, cultural

linguistics, Central Asian studies, and historical discourse analysis. Future research may expand this approach through comparative studies, digital text analysis, and interdisciplinary collaborations, further illuminating the cognitive and cultural mechanisms underlying historical narrative traditions.

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