

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES IN THE STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract:

This article examines the methodological issues involved in studying the history of Uzbekistan within the framework of modern historiography. The research emphasizes that historical knowledge is not merely a collection of facts but a complex, multi-layered socio-cultural process that requires a solid methodological foundation. Special attention is paid to the role of methodology in ensuring the scientific rigor, objectivity, and reliability of historical research. The article analyzes key methodological principles such as historicism, objectivity, critical thinking, and periodization, highlighting their significance in interpreting historical processes within their specific social, political, and cultural contexts.

Keywords: history of Uzbekistan, historiography, historical methodology, source studies, historicism, periodization, national historical consciousness, interdisciplinary approach

The study of the history of Uzbekistan is intrinsically connected with society's attitude toward its own past, the understanding of national identity, and the process of restoring historical memory. Through historical scholarship, the path traversed by the people, the stages of socio-political development, cultural and spiritual achievements, as well as complex trials and contradictory processes are examined on a scientific basis. In this sense, historical research represents not only a system of academic knowledge but also an important factor shaping the spiritual life of society and social consciousness.

By studying history scientifically, society draws lessons from its past, comprehends the trajectory of its present development, and determines strategies for the future. This is particularly significant for a country such as Uzbekistan, which possesses a rich centuries-old history and a complex historical experience formed at the crossroads of various civilizations. In such a context, methodological issues in the study of history acquire particular relevance, since the misinterpretation of historical processes based on inappropriate methodology may lead to distortions of national historical consciousness and to the formation of a one-sided historical memory.

Prior to independence, the history of Uzbekistan was often studied under the influence of dominant ideological approaches, with historical processes interpreted through the lenses of class ideology, political interests, and doctrinal criteria. As a result, certain periods, historical

figures, and events were not presented in a sufficiently objective manner, and the continuity and internal logic of national history were not fully revealed. This situation further deepened methodological problems within historical scholarship.

Following independence, a fundamental process of methodological renewal began in Uzbek historiography. This process was characterized by efforts to restore historical truth, to study national history free from ideological constraints, and to strengthen scholarly approaches grounded in source studies. Opportunities expanded for analyzing history in close connection with global historical processes and for applying civilizational and interdisciplinary approaches. Consequently, methodological issues became one of the central scientific problems in the study of the history of Uzbekistan.

Today, historical research faces not only the task of identifying new facts but also of interpreting them correctly, revealing causal relationships, and explaining the internal regularities of historical processes. This requires reliance on solid methodological foundations, objectivity, the principle of historicism, and critical thinking. Therefore, the scholarly analysis of methodological issues in the study of Uzbekistan's history represents one of the most urgent and priority tasks of contemporary historiography.

Methodology represents an integrated system of the theoretical foundations, scientific principles, and research methods of historical cognition. It determines how historical reality should be approached, which methods should be employed, and how historical facts are selected, analyzed, and generalized. In this respect, methodology constitutes the theoretical foundation of historical science and serves as the principal factor ensuring the scientific rigor and reliability of historical knowledge.

In historical research, methodology is not merely an auxiliary tool but a key criterion that defines the direction of historical thinking. Without a methodological approach, historical facts become a fragmented and unsystematic collection of data. Methodology makes it possible to interpret historical facts within a coherent conceptual framework, identify their internal interconnections, and reveal the general patterns governing historical processes.

In the study of Uzbekistan's history, methodology is not limited to presenting events in chronological sequence. On the contrary, it aims to identify the socio-political, economic, and cultural causes of historical phenomena, their consequences, and their impact on societal development. In this sense, methodology forms the conceptual foundation of historical science and enables a deep and systematic understanding of historical processes.

In conducting a scientific study of Uzbekistan's history, the methodology of source studies occupies a leading position. The reliability of historical knowledge depends primarily on the culture of working with sources, as well as on the methods used to select and analyze them. Historical sources appear in the form of written documents, archaeological findings, epigraphic inscriptions, numismatic materials, and oral history. Each source is a product of a

specific historical period, social context, and authorial perspective; therefore, drawing historical conclusions without critical analysis of sources is scientifically unfounded.

The source-studies approach requires identifying a source's origin, authorship, purpose, socio-political context, and intended audience. Equally important is determining the reliability, subjectivity, and limitations of sources. Rather than relying on a single source to reach general historical conclusions, scholars should compare and correlate multiple sources in order to approach historical truth more closely.

Following independence, expanded access to archival documents and the introduction of previously restricted sources into scholarly circulation created favorable conditions for reexamining Uzbekistan's history and formulating new scientific conclusions. This process further enhanced the significance of source-studies methodology and demanded a critical, objective, and responsible attitude toward sources on the part of historians.

The principle of historicism constitutes one of the main methodological criteria in the study of Uzbekistan's history. This principle implies analyzing historical events and processes in connection with the socio-political conditions, cultural level, economic relations, and mentality characteristic of the period in which they emerged. Evaluating historical events based on contemporary viewpoints or present-day values may distort their essence and lead to scientific errors.

The principle of historicism allows history to be understood as a dynamic process. It requires interpreting historical events as interconnected, consistent, and continuously developing phenomena, thereby enabling a deeper understanding of causal relationships within historical developments.

The issue of periodization also holds significant methodological importance in historical research. Dividing the history of Uzbekistan into ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary periods should be based not only on chronological criteria but also on socio-economic, political, and cultural transformations. Scientifically grounded periodization helps accurately reflect the internal logic of historical processes, identify key turning points, and understand directions of historical development.

For this reason, a thorough methodological approach to the principles of historicism and periodization constitutes an essential condition for the scientific study of Uzbekistan's history. The methodological issues involved in studying the history of Uzbekistan are among the key factors determining the theoretical foundation of historical science and ensuring the scientific rigor and reliability of historical knowledge. The methodological approaches examined in this study demonstrate that history should be analyzed not merely as a collection of facts but as a complex, multi-layered, and continuously evolving socio-cultural process. It is precisely methodology that enables a deep understanding of historical reality, the disclosure of causal relationships, and the identification of internal patterns within historical processes.

The role of methodology in historical cognition lies in elevating historical facts from a random accumulation of information to the level of scientific knowledge. In the study of Uzbekistan's history, methodological approaches facilitate the analysis of historical processes in close connection with socio-political, economic, and cultural factors, thereby moving historical science from a descriptive level toward conceptual analysis.

The leading importance of source-studies methodology is that the reliability of historical knowledge directly depends on the correct selection and critical analysis of sources. The comprehensive use of written documents, archaeological and epigraphic materials, numismatic findings, and oral history sources ensures the robustness of scientific conclusions. The expansion of the source base after independence created new methodological opportunities in historiography and laid the groundwork for reassessing historical truth.

The principles of historicism and periodization represent essential conditions for a scientific understanding of Uzbekistan's history. Analyzing historical phenomena in connection with their period of origin, social environment, and mentality ensures historical justice, while scientifically grounded periodization enables scholars to grasp the continuity of historical processes, identify major turning points, and understand trajectories of development. This approach allows history to be understood not as a fragmented set of events but as a coherent and progressively developing system.

The principles of objectivity and critical thinking possess particular methodological significance in the study of Uzbekistan's history. Historical research must remain free from ideological pressure, scientifically grounded, and balanced. Especially when evaluating complex and contradictory historical periods, it is crucial to avoid one-sided interpretations and to acknowledge the multifaceted nature of historical processes. This, in turn, enhances the scientific and moral authority of historical scholarship within society.

In conclusion, the methodological issues involved in studying the history of Uzbekistan play a vital role in the development of historical science, the formation of national historical consciousness, and the maintenance of societal spiritual stability. Methodologically well-structured historical research contributes to an objective and scientifically grounded interpretation of national history, the preservation of cultural heritage, and the education of younger generations in the spirit of historical memory and patriotism. In this sense, methodology emerges as a key factor determining not only the theoretical but also the practical development of Uzbek historiography.

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