



CONFERENCE ARTICLE

**STAGES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORICAL SCIENCE IN UZBEKISTAN DURING THE YEARS
OF INDEPENDENCE**

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the measures undertaken for the development of historical science in Uzbekistan during the years of independence, as well as their outcomes in subsequent periods. It aims to analyze and present the achievements and challenges in the field through a comparative approach.

Keywords: Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, Mirzo Ulugbek National University of Uzbekistan, “Excellent Worker of Higher Education” badge, “History of Uzbekistan” textbook.

INTRODUCTION

Independence is an invaluable supreme value of every state, and its preservation, protection, and transmission to future generations constitute the responsibility of every nation. In this regard, safeguarding the historical and national heritage within the territory of the country is the duty of every citizen. This principle is also reflected in the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan in its new revised edition, which states: “Historical, spiritual, cultural, scientific, and natural heritage is protected by the state” [1].

The long historical continuity of Uzbekistan, its role as a center of numerous states and dynasties, and its significant contribution to the development of human civilization necessitate its comprehensive and objective study. The Head of State has also paid particular attention to this issue, stating: “I would like to call on all of you to be even more attentive and active in studying history. Only a person who observes history with vigilance can live with constant awareness and alertness. Such a person is able to provide an objective and truthful assessment of both the present situation and future developments. This, in today’s complex and rapidly changing world, is the most important condition for ensuring peace, stability, and achieving high-level development”[2].

The First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, also emphasized the importance of how history is written and its significance for educating young people through textbooks, stating: “I do not consider the history written during the Soviet period as true history. I am strongly opposed to teaching a history written by others. When has a colonizer ever given an objective and just assessment of the people under its control? They directed all their efforts toward belittling the past of Turkestan and separating us from our history. For a person, being separated from history means being separated from life” [3].

The development of historical science in Uzbekistan can, in turn, be analyzed by dividing it into three main periods. These are as follows:

Period I: 1991–1997 During these years, the Republic had just gained independence, and history was actively revisited as a foundation for ensuring the country’s future development. As a

result, large-scale efforts were undertaken to restore objective historical narratives and to re-establish historical consciousness.

Period II: 1998–2016 In this period, the Head of State paid particular attention to the field, focusing on the scope and quality of the work carried out. Specific tasks were defined, and significant results were achieved in improving historical research and strengthening its methodological foundations.

Period III: from 2017 to the present This stage is characterized by the continuation and further deepening of reforms in the field, with a strong emphasis on modernization, academic renewal, and integration with global scientific standards. Undoubtedly, the work carried out in the field of historical science during these periods has served as one of the key instruments in strengthening national sovereignty, fostering national pride and patriotism among youth, and reinforcing the country’s spiritual and cultural development.

Period I: 1991–1997

During this period, a wide range of articles related to our cultural and historical heritage—national and universal values, customs and traditions, as well as materials connected to the formation of national independence ideology and scholars’ reflections— attracted significant public interest.

In 1997, at Mirzo Ulugbek National University of Uzbekistan, under the editorial supervision of Professor R. Kh. Murtazaeva, a team of authors prepared for the first time in the republic a 22-print-sheet educational manual entitled “History of Uzbekistan” for higher education students. The manual covered the history of Uzbekistan from ancient times up to 1997, making extensive use of research conducted during the years of independence and emphasizing an objective interpretation of history.

The publication was recommended by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education for use in all higher educational institutions. In 2000, lecture materials based on this manual were published, and seven of its authors were awarded the badge “Excellent Worker of Higher Education”.

As a result of these developments, students received deeper knowledge of the history, economy, and legal foundations of Uzbekistan. Departments of social sciences and history were

established in higher education institutions. History teaching was introduced in all types of schools, and historical knowledge played an important role in educating students in the spirit of patriotism, humanism, and awareness of the value of independence [4].

Period II: 1998–2016

As noted by the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, historical science plays a crucial role in the formation of national ideology, since the lessons of history strengthen the intellectual consciousness and collective will of society [5]. In this regard, particular attention was paid to the content and quality of textbooks prepared for general secondary schools. A clear example of this is the reform of textbooks on ancient history. In particular, the textbook “History of Uzbekistan” for the 6th grade (A. Sagdullayev, V.A. Kostetskiy, N. Norqulov; 1998, 2000) covered only the ancient history of Uzbekistan. Later, in order to form a comparative understanding of the history of Uzbekistan and world history among pupils, this textbook was revised and republished under the title “History of the Ancient World.” It was subsequently reissued several times between 2003 and 2017. [6].

International conferences play an important role in the broad dissemination of historical knowledge and in fostering a sense of pride in the past. In this regard, the international conference held on May 15–16, 2014, in the city of Samarkand, entitled “The Historical Heritage of Medieval Eastern Scholars and Thinkers and Its Role in the Development of Modern Civilization,” was of particular significance [7]. The study of the scientific heritage of Eastern scholars, the popularization of modern research findings, and their dissemination to the public through the press and mass media produced positive results. This stage, spanning nearly twenty years, was significant for the development of historical science along a new and objective direction, as well as for the introduction into scholarly circulation of previously under-researched or entirely unexplored historical periods.

III period: from 2017 to the present

During the years 1937–1953, the authoritarian regime subjected more than 100,000 compatriots to repression. Among them were statesmen and political figures, scholars, writers, religious scholars, military and judicial-law enforcement personnel, as well as ordinary citizens. Approximately 13,000 people were executed, while thousands were unjustly labelled as “kulaks” and deported or exiled. In 2021–2024, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan rehabilitated more than 1,200 victims of political repression. Furthermore, Presidential Resolution No. PL–270 dated 19 July 2024 expanded measures aimed at studying, promoting, and perpetuating the memory of their lives and activities [8].

During the years of independence, the science of history in Uzbekistan has been developed in a gradual and phased manner. In the first stage, emphasis was placed on the creation of textbooks and the formation of a unified scientific approach, which laid the foundation for subsequent educational materials. In addition, the state-level programme for the “Preparation and Publication of the New History of Uzbekistan” was strongly supported.

In the second stage, meetings between the President and historians helped define urgent tasks facing the discipline, while conferences and academic forums facilitated broad scholarly discussion of ongoing research. In the third stage, greater attention was given to the popularization of history, particularly through television and mass media dissemination to the wider public. Overall, these staged reforms played an important role in the development of historical science and, despite certain shortcomings, resulted in effective and meaningful outcomes.

In conclusion, in the field of historical science—particularly in the teaching of the History of Uzbekistan in secondary and higher education institutions—significant attention has been paid to

ensuring an objective, evidence-based approach in textbooks. This process continues to evolve through ongoing research and the introduction of new scholarly findings into academic circulation. Collaborative works of leading scholars, as well as conferences involving both local and international researchers, have created a foundation for new methodological approaches. Thus, textbooks and academic literature have been developed that enable students not only to memorize facts but also to develop an independent and analytical understanding of history, which remains a key priority for any state.

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