

PERSPECTIVES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF WORLD HISTORY

(Based on the Example of Ethnology)

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***Abstract.** The article explores and analyzes theoretical approaches to the emergence of nations in the world. Theoretical and methodological views on the issues of ethnos and ethnicity, ethnogenesis, and ethnic history are considered based on the approaches of primordialism, constructivism, and instrumentalism. The main goal of analyzing these approaches is to reveal the current situation and future development of the Uzbek people, as well as the views related to its formation. In this context, the article also examines the significance of historical, cultural, and social factors that have shaped the identity of the Uzbek nation over time. By integrating various theoretical approaches, the paper aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Uzbek ethnic identity has developed through centuries of historical interaction with neighboring peoples and cultures. Furthermore, the study explores the role of historical memory, language, and traditions in preserving ethnic identity, while also reflecting on the impact of modern political and economic transformations on the development of ethnic consciousness.*

***Key words:** primordialism, constructivism, instrumentalism, theory of ethnos, ethnicity, scientific view, concept, methodology, historiography, ethnology.*

With the development of science, there has been a significant increase in interest in studying the origin of humanity, as well as its laws, causes, and consequences of various events. This has become the foundation for the formation of numerous views, approaches, and theories that attempt to explain how and why humanity emerged.

Against this backdrop, scientific research centers have been actively established, focusing on in-depth studies of anthropology, archaeology, genetics, and other disciplines. These studies were often influenced by the social and political conditions that existed in different countries. The diversity of political systems—from democratic to authoritarian—shaped which theories became popular and which were criticized or ignored.

The contradictions between different countries and their ideologies also shaped the approaches to studying human history. For example, in some cases, the emphasis was placed on collectivism and cultural characteristics, while in others, the focus was on individualism and the achievements of outstanding individuals. Thus, the interest in the origin of humanity not only enriches the scientific community but also reflects broader social and political contexts.

Currently, the following are the main theoretical and methodological approaches to the formation of nations:

Primordialism (from Latin "primordialis" — "original," "primitive," "initial") or essentialism is one of the widespread theories in ethnology. Its proponents argue that ethnicity or ethnos is a specific phenomenon with an objective basis in nature or society[2;134]. In other words, almost all ideas of primordialists suggest that a people developed on its own, without external influences or constructs.

The term "primordialism" was introduced in 1957 by American sociologist E. Shils. Within the framework of primordialism, the ethnic question is defined as an intrinsic heritage of human society and culture[3]. There are two main approaches to primordialism. According to the sociobiological approach of Pierre Van den Berghe, an ethnic group is considered a form of extended kinship, whereas the evolutionary-historical approach of Clifford Geertz places greater emphasis on cultural characteristics.

Prominent representatives of this direction include Western scholars such as C. Geertz, E. Wolf, R. Gambino, W. Connor, A. Greeley, T. Parsons, P. Van den Berghe, A. Wallace, paleontologist G. Simpson, and sociologist J. Yinger. Among Russian ethnographers and historians, notable figures include S. Shirokogorov, L. Gumilev, and Yu. Bromley. Among Uzbek scholars, key figures are K. Shaniyazov, A. Askarov, U. Abdullaev, and I. Dzhabbarov.

Supporters of the theory of constructivism (from Latin "constructo" — "building," "structure") completely reject the concept of "ethnos," its historical principles, and the idea of its self-evolutionary formation, as well as the notions of a natural course of this process. The main ideas of proponents of this approach are based on identifying the primary role of external influences, specific signs, laws, rules, and customs in the formation of each people or nation.

There are quite a few supporters of this direction, including Western scholars such as B. Anderson, E. Gellner, F. Barth, and E. Hobsbawm. Among Russian scholars, notable figures include V. Tishkov, V. Voronkov, V. Malakhov, S. Kardinskaya, E. Belkov, Yu. Oleinikov, S.

Madyukov, and K. Reznikov. Among Uzbek researchers, A. Ilkhamov, V. Khan, I. Khojakhonov, M. Askarov, and others are recognized.

Representatives of the constructivist approach such as F. Barth, E. Gellner, E. Hobsbawm, V. Tishkov, and others define ethnicity as a broad category of social identity. They argue that ethnic feeling and the concepts and doctrines formed within it are "mental constructions" consciously created by writers, scholars, politicians, or social institutions. Although the number of researchers in Uzbekistan directly studying this issue within the framework of the constructivist approach to ethnology is still small, it is evident that the number of researchers using these theoretical perspectives in their scientific work is increasing. This is due to the fact that local researchers have begun to delve more deeply into scientific theories developed in Europe and the United States, understanding that the concept of "ethno-theory" has become outdated both in meaning and methodology, and recognizing that more constructivist perspectives are better suited for understanding contemporary phenomena.

Instrumentalism, developed by American philosopher John Dewey, views ideas, concepts, and theories as tools that are used to achieve practical results and adapt to changing environmental conditions. In this context, knowledge and theories are not seen as final truths, but as means to solve real-world problems.

Proponents of instrumentalism emphasize that the policies implemented by governments, state institutions, or influential individuals play a key role in the formation of various peoples and nations. They argue that political actions and ideologies can be used to manipulate public opinion and create identities, thereby shaping communities based on shared interests or goals.

Thus, instrumentalism focuses on the functionality and application of knowledge, stressing that ideas should be tested and evaluated based on their practical effectiveness in real-world conditions. This approach helps to better understand how social, cultural, and political factors interact and influence the processes of identity and nation formation. Supporters of the instrumentalist approach believe that differences between groups in society can serve as a basis for forming the ethnic identity of each group, which in turn defines the nature of intergroup relations and mobilizes ethnic groups. Therefore, instrumentalist concepts are often grounded in socio-psychological views that treat ethnicity as an effective tool for overcoming alienation and restoring ethnic equality, as well as a tool for stabilizing the social situation.

The three main scientific theories mentioned above continue to hold their place in the fields of ethnology and anthropology today. However, with the development of contemporary Western

research, new directions such as "neoconservatism," "postmodernism," and "ethnosymbolism" have emerged, aiming to address certain shortcomings of previous scientific-theoretical views by testing their viability and ability to adapt to new conditions.

In the 19th century, ethnic adjectives began to be used more frequently in their modern sense, denoting membership in a group that shares common racial, cultural, religious, or linguistic characteristics. These terms came to serve as labels for racial or other groups within a broader social system. Thus, ethnic adjectives began to reflect more complex aspects of identity, including not only physical traits but also cultural customs, religious practices, and linguistic features, which allowed for a more precise definition of membership in a particular ethnic group[4].

The most commonly used definitions in science are as follows:

1. The word originates from the Greek "ethnos" and its corresponding adjective "ethnikos."
2. "Ethnos" is defined in encyclopedias and specialized studies as a group of people who share a common language, common economic and cultural customs, and common ancestry.
3. Louis Laurent Gabriel de Mortillet (1821–1898), a physical anthropologist and follower of French paleoethnological traditions, was one of the first to demonstrate the influence of landscape on the nature of ethnic relations. In his writings, one can find the word "ethnie," which is similar to the term "ethnos."
4. Ethnographer D. Arzyutov writes that the French origin of the concept of "ethnos" and its adaptation to the Russian context is not the only bridge in the field of anthropology between countries[1].

In the context of contemporary Uzbekistan, it is crucial to incorporate advanced theoretical and methodological approaches into local science. Only under conditions of competition, conflicting opinions, and scientific debates can the national mentality, the Uzbek spirit, and the ancient cultural heritage be realized while also addressing the contemporary problems faced by the people today.

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