

The Role of Written Sources in Shaping Historical Consciousness

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Abstract: This article examines the role and importance of written sources in raising historical consciousness and national identity in the life of society and the spirituality of the younger generation at the stage of development of New Uzbekistan. The purpose of the article is to reveal the conceptual influence of written monuments of the past, in particular, historical information reflected in the manuscripts of medieval Central Asian thinkers, on the formation of modern social thought. The research used the methods of historicism, chronological sequence, comparative historical analysis, and source studies. The article scientifically substantiates that written sources are not just material witnesses of past reality, but also an important factor serving as an ideological and methodological basis for building the foundations of the third Renaissance in society. As a result of the research, practical proposals were put forward to protect historical truth among young people through the integration of written heritage materials into the system of modern educational and cultural-enlightenment institutions and their digitization.

Keywords: New Uzbekistan, historical consciousness, historical thinking, written sources, manuscripts, awareness of national identity, historiography, third Renaissance, digitization..

Introduction

History is a set of knowledge about the past of mankind, which plays a key role in the understanding of the identity of society, in the formation of its national and cultural identity. Historical consciousness is a complex cognitive and affective system that reflects the attitude of a person or an entire society to the past, present and future. In the formation of this system, many factors - personal experience, mass media, education, traditions and, of course, written sources - play a decisive role.

At the moment, there are periods of radical renewal in the history of peoples, during which the genius of a particular nation, its desire to manifest its potential and creative activity reach their highest peaks. At the current stage of building a new Uzbekistan, radical reforms are being carried out in all aspects of social life [1, p.5]. The conceptual basis of these reforms was the idea of creating a third Renaissance foundation, which is directly related to the spiritual maturity, intellectual potential and, most importantly, high historical consciousness of the younger generation [2, p.44]. In a society without historical consciousness and historical memory, it is impossible to understand national identity, strengthen state independence and look to the future with confidence. Therefore, an objective and systematic study of our past history, the introduction of its primary sources into scientific circulation is one of the most urgent tasks facing historical science today. During the former Soviet regime, the history of Uzbekistan, in particular, its medieval period, the era of the khanates and the years of colonial rule, was often interpreted one-sidedly, based on the patterns of the dominant Marxist-Leninist ideology, from the point of view of the principles of class struggle [2, p.53]. Many written sources, manuscripts, were considered to be contrary to religious and class views and were hidden from the scientific community or falsified. During the years of independence, and especially in the conditions of New Uzbekistan,

this approach has changed radically. Now, the science of history has abandoned sociological patterns and relies on clear and objective facts - written sources.

Written sources are understood as all information carriers that are imprinted by humanity on various material objects using a specific language and writing system and reflect the reality of the past [2, p.15]. Among them, manuscripts, official documents, foundation certificates, inscriptions on coins and chronicles occupy a special place. The role of written sources in the formation of historical consciousness is incomparable, because they serve as a living bridge between the past and the present. By studying manuscripts, we determine not only the chronology of political events, but also the worldview, state traditions, legal norms and cultural values of our ancestors [2, p.18]. In the historical science of Uzbekistan, attention has always been paid to written sources. Such great thinkers as Al-Khwarizmi, Al-Beruni, Ibn Sina, Mirzo Ulugbek, Zakhiriddin Muhammad Babur left valuable written sources about their time. Their works are still of great importance in shaping the historical consciousness of the peoples of Central Asia. Especially during the period of independence - from 1991 to the present - great work has been done in the field of revising written sources, archival science and source studies, in the process of renewing national historical consciousness.

Methods

The study of the role of written monuments and manuscripts in the formation of historical consciousness and thinking has always been one of the urgent conceptual problems in historiography. In the context of laying the foundations of the third Renaissance in New Uzbekistan, attention has increased to the study of the scientific and theoretical foundations of this problem. The existing literature and research on the topic can be divided into four main groups according to their nature and direction.

The ideological and methodological basis of the study is the works and speeches of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in particular, the fundamental work "Strategy of the New Uzbekistan" [1, p. 8]. In this work, the understanding of national identity, the restoration of historical memory and the systematic study of the written heritage of our ancestors are defined as the priority areas of the spiritual development of New Uzbekistan.

The general historical and theoretical-methodological aspects of the problem are deeply analyzed in the scientific works of academician D.A. Alimova, in particular in her treatise "History and Historians of Uzbekistan in the 20th Century" [3, p. 431]. In her research, the author reveals the socio-philosophical essence of the concept of historical consciousness and scientifically substantiates the necessity of relying on primary sources in the formation of objective historical thinking, abandoning the one-sided ideological patterns of historiography of the former Soviet era. The textbook "Source Studies" (2019) (co-authored by the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan and a team of scientists from the National University of Uzbekistan) is a fundamental basis for working with written sources, studying their authentication (authenticity), paleographic and codicological features [2, p. 480]. This textbook systematically covers the chronological classification of written sources, heuristic methods of text interpretation, and the most modern approaches to the methodology of historical science.

Also, the manual "Fundamentals of Source Studies" (2008) by famous scientists A. Madraimov and G. Fuzailova also has a special place in the analysis of literature [4, p.264]. This work provides a detailed analysis of the principles of external and internal criticism of manuscripts, the art of bookkeeping, schools of calligraphy, and the social functions of written monuments of the past. This serves as an important methodological resource in revealing the educational and epistemological role of manuscripts in the formation of historical consciousness.

The merits of academician Buri Ahmedov in the direct study of primary written sources on the history of statehood and culture of Uzbekistan are incomparable. In his classic work "Sources of the History of Uzbekistan (Ancient and Medieval Times)" (2001), dozens of unique manuscripts in Arabic, Persian and Turkic languages (including the works of Narshahi, Tabari, Sharafiddin Ali Yazdi, Mirkhand, Khandamir, Munis and Ogahi) were analyzed from the point of view of source

studies [5, p.252]. B. Ahmedov's research shows us how to integrate factual information from manuscripts into modern social thinking. Professor T.S. Saidkulov's work "Excerpts from the Historiography of the History of the Peoples of Central Asia" (1992) studied the evolution of the formation of historiographic schools in the territories of Movarunnahr and Khorasan [6, p.4]. The author emphasizes that manuscripts are not just dry chronicles, but a mirror of the cultural environment of a particular era. The issues of periodization of the history of Uzbek statehood based on written sources and the creation of its conceptual system are widely covered in the work of Professor Azamat Ziya "History of Uzbek Statehood" (2000) [7, p. 368]. The author analyzed the sources from the oldest written monuments to the 20th century from a political and legal point of view, showing the role of this written base in the advancement of national statehood thinking.

In recent years, scientific articles have been actively studying the problems of preserving manuscript heritage in the context of globalization and digital transformation and their popularization in the information space. In particular, the issues of digitizing manuscripts and creating platforms for their virtual libraries were analyzed in articles published by scientists of the Abu Raykhan Beruni Institute of Oriental Studies in international and republican scientific collections. By comparing written sources from different periods, general patterns and specific situations in the formation of historical consciousness were identified. The comparative-historical method allows us to compare written sources not only in time but also in space - the similarities and differences between the traditions of Central Asia, Europe and the East were identified. Through discursive analysis of the texts of written sources, the forms of historical consciousness reflected in them, the linguistic means used and narrative strategies were studied.

Results and Discussion

The study of the ancient, medieval and modern periods of the history of Uzbekistan on the basis of primary written sources is the epistemological foundation for the formation of objective historical consciousness. It is impossible to develop conceptual historical thinking in society without systematizing sources that are material and written witnesses of the reality of the past. Based on modern methodological principles of source studies, the centuries-old written heritage of our people was classified into the following large typological groups according to the form of information carrier and content:

Epigraphic and numismatic sources: Inscriptions on ancient stones, walls of buildings and coins found during archaeological excavations. In particular, inscriptions on coins of the Kushan, Karakhanid and Timurid periods are the most objective (difficult to be subjectively changed by rulers) primary factual basis for determining state titles, tax system and territorial boundaries.

Narrative sources and chronicles: This group includes historical works written by Arab geographers (Ibn Hawqal, Al-Maqdisi), court historians of the Timurid and khanate periods (Sharafiddin Ali Yazdi, Mirkhand, Khandamir, Munis and Ogahi). These works cover the chronology of political events and socio-economic relations in a wide range[1,2].

Documentary (documents and archival) sources: These include khan decrees, diplomatic correspondence, qazi letters and endowment documents. Endowment documents are of extremely high scientific value in studying the economic foundations of land ownership, cultural life and the education system (the activities of madrasas) in Transoxiana. In the methodology of historical science, each source is considered as a socio-psychological product of a particular period [3,4]. Therefore, when introducing these sources into the modern educational system, it is necessary to correctly assess their information potential. In the process of working with the source text, the reader or researcher begins to analyze not only the past event, but also the social environment of that time, which forms a critical historical mindset in him.

In the process of source analysis of the history of statehood in the early Middle Ages and the developed Middle Ages in Uzbekistan, the content structure of narrative works in Arabic and Persian was studied. It is known that works created in the 9th–12th centuries were often of a compendial nature aimed at reflecting world history. However, Narshahi's "History of Bukhara" is a rare monument that reveals a specific historical oasis and urbanization processes at the local

level. The significance of this work in modern historiography is that it objectively covers ancient pre-Islamic cultural layers and ethnic processes.

By the time of the Timurids, a fundamental shift in the structural and linguistic characteristics of written sources is noticeable. The high development of the art of book-writing and calligraphy schools during the reign of Amir Temur and his successors ensured that written works had not only scientific, but also high aesthetic value [5,6]. Manuscripts written in the Nasta'liq script, perfected by calligraphers such as Sultan Ali Mashhadiy, are a vivid example of the intellectual potential of that era. Such elements of written heritage awaken in the minds of the younger generation a sense of legitimate pride in the contribution of their people to world civilization.

In the current conditions of globalization and the development of information technologies, the issue of forming historical consciousness and national memory has become an important direction of the ideological field. In the Internet space, attempts are being made to falsify the history of the peoples of Uzbekistan and Central Asia, to unilaterally condemn the activities of individual statesmen (for example, Amir Temur, Shaybani Khan or the rulers of the khanates), or to deny the roots of national statehood. In such circumstances, the only effective mechanism for defending objective scientific truth is to present primary written sources as direct evidence and make them available to the general public [7,8,9]. The Marxist-Leninist methodology that dominated the former Soviet historiography required the analysis of written sources only from the perspective of "class struggle" and "feudal exploitation" [10-11]. For example, the major works in the Uzbek language of the khanate period (Munis and Ogahi's "Firdaus ul-Iqbal", Bayani's "Shajarayi Khorezmshahi") were evaluated only as "works that served the interests of the ruling class", and their socio-cultural value was belittled. Today, in the conditions of New Uzbekistan, this approach has changed radically. When interpreting sources, sociological patterns are abandoned and they are viewed as a mirror of the development of national statehood and ethnocultural intellectual processes.

At the same time, the principle of scientific objectivity must be strictly observed in the interpretation of written sources. Any narrative source, by its nature, is not free from subjectivity [12-13]. Since court historians often wrote works on the orders of the ruler, they tried to idealize political processes and military campaigns in a certain sense. Therefore, the need to use source critical methods in modern research and teaching students was analyzed. The stages of the correct transformation of source information in historical consciousness are systematized below:

No	Stage name	Content	Source (explanation with examples)
1	Primary written source	Original written documents, manuscripts and primary information about historical events	The manuscript "Temur Tuzuklari", Nizamiddin Shami's "Zafarnoma", original Persian manuscripts of the era of Amir Temur
2	Source criticism	Determining the reliability of the source: paleographic, linguistic and authorial analysis	[1, p.43] — for example, A. Khojayevev or textbooks on source studies analyze the writing style and authorship of manuscript texts
3	Internal and external criticism	Evaluating the content, context and author's position of the text	In the work "Boburnoma", Babur wrote about his era based on personal observation, subjective interpretation of historical events
4	Comparative-historical analysis	Comparing various sources and drawing general conclusions	Comparison of the same events in the works "Boburnoma" and "Tarihi Rashidiy" by Muhammad Haydar Mirzo
5	Historical	Reconstructing and	Reconstruction of the state

	reconstruction	systematizing events on a scientific basis	administration system during the Timurid era based on Shami, Yazdi and other sources
6	Interpretation	Interpreting historical events based on an objective, national approach	Evaluation of Amir Temur's activities from the point of view of independent Uzbek historiography (for example, as a statesman and reformer)
7	Historical consciousness and thinking	Instilling the results obtained in the consciousness of society, education and youth	Textbooks, history lectures, teaching the Timurid heritage in the lessons of "History of Uzbekistan"

If this methodological chain is broken, historical information can lead to either absolute idealization or unfounded denial, which creates unhealthy historical thinking in the minds of the younger generation [14]. Another controversial aspect is the level of integration of the content of written monuments of the past into the modern information society. Today, young people have little interest in reading books, especially sources written in difficult languages (old Uzbek script, Persian or Arabic) and styles. If manuscripts of the past are stored only in archive and museum collections, are not digitized and are not presented in an interactive visual form, they cannot become an effective tool for forming the historical consciousness of broad segments of society [15]. Therefore, the "digital transformation" of sources, that is, the creation of their electronic platforms, mobile applications and multimedia applications for textbooks, is the most urgent socio-cultural need for source studies and historical science today. Written sources are the link between historical science and social consciousness. Their systematic classification, objective analysis free from ideological bias, and instilling in the minds of young people with the help of modern digital technologies are the main criteria for the formation of a healthy, scientifically based, and patriotic historical thinking in the conditions of New Uzbekistan.

Conclusion

In the conditions of new Uzbekistan, strengthening the spiritual and ideological foundations of social development, establishing the foundations of the third Renaissance, and forming a healthy national idea in the worldview of the younger generation directly rely on a systematic and objective historical consciousness. The source and historiographical analyses conducted within the framework of the topic "The role of written sources in the formation of historical consciousness" served as the basis for the formulation of the following fundamental conclusions:

Written sources and manuscripts are the only primary source that carries objective information about the centuries-old statehood traditions, intellectual potential, and cultural renaissance of the Uzbek people. The abandonment of the Marxist-Leninist methodology that dominated the historiography of the former Soviet era and analyzed sources only on the basis of class patterns has made it possible to reinterpret the reality of the past today based on national interests and the principles of nationalism [2, p.53].

In the current conditions of globalization and ideological struggles in the information space, the most effective means of counteracting the tendencies to falsify our national history and baselessly condemn the activities of great statesmen in the Internet environment is the widespread introduction of primary written monuments into scientific consumption. Written sources serve as absolute factual evidence (verification) in protecting historical truth.

Amir Temur and the Temurids, as well as the manuscripts of the highly developed schools of book art, calligraphy and miniature during the later Uzbek khanates, have an axiological (value) power that forms feelings of national pride and patriotism in the minds of young people not only as text, but also as material objects.

In the conditions of an information society, the use of manuscripts of the past only in the form of traditional archive and museum funds does not provide sufficient effectiveness in raising the historical thinking of the younger generation. Therefore, digitizing sources, creating their virtual platforms, and integrating them into the education system using interactive methods is the most urgent socio-cultural demand for historical science today.

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