

ANALYSIS OF THE STAGES OF FORMATION OF THE UZBEK PEOPLE

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Abstract:

The final stage in the formation of the Uzbek people is characterized by the consolidation of the ethnic group and the emergence of modern Uzbek national identity. This process was influenced by historical, social, and political factors, including the formation of a unified state, the development of the Uzbek language, and the integration of various cultural elements. This article explores the key stages of the Uzbek people's formation, with a focus on the factors that led to the creation of a distinct Uzbek identity. The period of the khanates plays a crucial role in the development of Uzbek ethnic and cultural foundations.

Keywords: Formation of the Uzbek people, ethnic group, national identity, historical processes, cultural integration, Uzbek language, khanates period, Republic of Uzbekistan, cultural heritage.

Introduction

The formation of the Uzbek people is a complex and long historical process that spans several stages. Uzbeks are a people shaped by the influence of Turkic, Iranian, and Islamic cultures over many centuries. The formation of the Uzbek people is not only linked to major historical changes in Central Asia but also influenced by the existence of various khanates and states and their interactions with neighboring peoples. This article analyzes the final stage of the formation of the Uzbek people, focusing on the factors that contributed to the creation of Uzbek national identity, including the period of the khanates and the post-independence era.

Stages of the Formation of the Uzbek People

1. Ancient History and the Early Uzbeks

The historical foundations of the Uzbek people are tied to ancient Turkic and Iranian tribes. The ancestors of the Uzbeks were Turkic tribes living in the Mediterranean and Central Asian regions before the Common Era. During this period, historical states such as Sogdiana, Khwarezm, and Bukhara began to unite the people of the region.

2. The Arrival of Islam and the Khanate Period

The arrival of Islam in Central Asia significantly impacted the formation of the Uzbek people. During the 9th-13th centuries, large states and khanates were established in the region. Cities

like Samarkand and Bukhara became centers of Islamic culture and science. The spread of Islam united many Turkic peoples and ethnic groups, contributing to the consolidation of the Uzbek people.

The introduction of Islam was not limited to religious changes; it had deep impacts on cultural, political, and economic spheres as well. Islam became a key factor in the formation of national identity. The lifestyle, ethics, art, and science of the Uzbek people evolved under Islamic influence, leading to greater cultural integration and national unity.

Islamic Influence:

- **Religious Influence:** Islam provided a unifying religious system, establishing shared practices and values such as prayer, fasting, and charity. This strengthened moral and religious values among Uzbeks.
- **Cultural and Scientific Influence:** Samarkand and Bukhara became major centers of Islamic learning. Scholars, scientists, and musicians from these cities made significant contributions to the world's knowledge.
- **Political Influence:** Islam's arrival led to the establishment of Islamic states in Central Asia, including the Bukhara Khanate, Khiva Khanate, and Kokand Khanate. These khanates played an essential role in the political and social unity of the region.

3. Ethnic Formation during the Soviet Union

During the Soviet period, following the establishment of the Uzbek SSR in the 1920s, the Uzbek national identity further strengthened. Although the Soviets attempted to formalize Uzbek language and culture, the integration of multiple ethnic groups also shaped the formation of the Uzbek people. Despite various cultural and political factors, the historical traditions and national values of the Uzbek people were preserved and further developed.

4. Independence and Modern Uzbek Identity

In 1991, following the independence of Uzbekistan, the national identity of the Uzbek people entered a new phase. The official recognition of the Uzbek language as the state language, the revival of cultural heritage, and the strengthening of national unity marked this new stage. Attention was given to the restoration of historical and cultural landmarks, and the distinctiveness of the Uzbek people was emphasized.

The Role of the Khanate Period in the Formation of the Uzbek People

The khanate period, particularly the Bukhara, Khiva, and Kokand Khanates, played a vital role in shaping the Uzbek people. Each khanate contributed to the economic, political, and cultural heritage that helped form the Uzbek national identity.

- **Bukhara Khanate:** Known as a center of Islamic learning and culture, Bukhara played a crucial role in the intellectual and religious development of the Uzbek people.

- **Khiva Khanate:** Situated as a major trading and cultural hub, Khiva facilitated interactions between different ethnic groups and played a key role in shaping the Uzbek cultural landscape.
- **Kokand Khanate:** Kokand was a political and social nexus for Uzbeks and other Turkic peoples, further solidifying their identity.

The Current Nature of Uzbek National Identity

Today, Uzbek national identity is a complex phenomenon encompassing not only language and culture but also historical experiences, religious values, and multiple ethnic and cultural influences. One of the key features of Uzbek identity is the distinctive historical path and worldview shared by the Uzbek people.

Conclusion

The formation of the Uzbek people and the development of national identity emerged through the harmonious interaction of historical, political, and social factors. The khanate period contributed significantly to the unification and cultural consolidation of the Uzbek people. Post-independence, Uzbekistan's national identity entered a new phase, characterized by the strengthening of cultural unity and the revitalization of the Uzbek language and heritage.

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