

*The review of the MA Thesis*  
*Bibimaryam Ibragimova: The paradigms of Uzbek identity*

Searching for Uzbek national identity and historical narrative formation processes remains still delicate and controversial topic for the research. The story of Uzbek origin has been long-term studied and still not resolved topic at least since the end of 19th century. Moreover limited and narrow scope for research inside Uzbekistan as well as the attempt to create the single historical narrative inside the country make this work more challenging.

The author, however, was able to deal with this challenge relatively successfully regarding the fact that we are reviewing Master and not Ph.D. thesis. She analyzes several key concepts of Soviet and Post-Soviet theories of Uzbek origin starting from Yakubovskii in 40s (i. e. deep Stalin's period with its emergence of modern national historiographies in Central Asian republics) ending up with highly controversial Alisher Ilhamov's theory of Uzbek nation origin compared to the official contemporary Uzbekistan narrative. We have to admit the very fact the author successfully kept the distance from all concepts and she does not search for her own truth. She examined strong and weak parts of each paradigm balancing delicately among the concepts of ethnos, nation and nationality.

The inconsistency of text on some places, including jumping from one idea to another, could be considered as the downside part of the thesis. Despite her effort to put the text into some order, the text swings between several topics according to an author's momentous ideas. The final part of Chapter 2 is particular example. Here, the text goes from the concepts of identity, ethnos, nation and nationality up to the historical development of Uzbek society. I would suggest the author to analyze the theory on the first place and its application to Uzbekistan could be included in the second part of the chapter.

Chapters 3 and 4 are much better from this point of view, although the author could add more on the discussion or, rather, ideological concept of Uzbek nation in contemporary Uzbekistan historiography and ideology apart of the reaction to A. Ilkhamov's publication.

Considering the formal aspects of the thesis, incomplete and inconsistent norm of citations could be evaluated as the major mistake of the author (some footnotes provides only partial bibliographical note, while others are competed).

In sum, despite some problems mentioned above, the thesis presented by Ms. Ibragimova can be accepted for the defense with the grade 2 (very good)

Within the defense, the author could analyze deeper the problem of Sart identity, which was only partially mentioned . How could the author explain the correlation between ethnonym *Sart* and tribal affiliation in pre-Soviet Central Asia/Turkestan? How does the author look at the correlation between Uzbek and Sart? Which factors are included in both identities and which factors (if any) are specific for each identity?

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