

# CONCEPTUAL ISSUES IN THE PERIODIZATION OF ACADEMICIAN BURIBOY AKHMEDOV'S LIFE AND SCIENTIFIC LEGACY: NEW INTERPRETIVE MODELS

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## **Abstract:**

The article analyzes research dedicated to the life and scholarly activity of the prominent source scholar and orientalist, Academician Buriboy Akhmedov, who played a significant role in the development of Temurid studies in the region. The study seeks to identify the main directions and stages of the scholar's academic work, as well as his place within historiography.

**Keywords:** Academician Buriboy Akhmedov, historiography, source studies, oriental studies, Temurid studies, scientific school, periodization, scholarly legacy, methodological approach.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Although the works and scientific ideas of Academician Bo'riboy Ahmedov, who made a significant contribution to the development of historical science in Uzbekistan, have been widely used as a foundation in most scientific studies conducted in the late 20th and first quarter of the 21st centuries, his life and scholarly activity have not yet been systematically and specifically researched.

To date, a comprehensive, systematic study dedicated solely to Bo'riboy Ahmedov's scientific legacy and career has not been created. Nevertheless, the numerous articles, monographs, and scholarly works that utilize his research clearly indicate that his academic activity has been partially studied and that he established a unique scientific school in historiography. For this reason, the deep analysis of Academician B. Ahmedov's scientific heritage, the scholarly examination of his methodological approaches, his principles for working with sources, and his historical concepts, remains one of the pressing tasks of contemporary historiography.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY**

It is appropriate to divide the works relevant to the topic into two groups based on their content and essence. The first group comprises articles and memoirs written about the life and scholarly activity of B. Ahmedov, while the second group includes academic research that extensively utilizes the scholar's scientific legacy. Furthermore, these can be conventionally grouped into three categories based on chronological and geographical aspects: studies created during the Soviet period, those from the years of independence, and those produced abroad.

Works in the first group primarily provide general information about the scholar's personal qualities and the main directions of his professional and academic career. Although they are limited in scope and often written in a journalistic style, they are significant as crucial sources, having been written by B. Ahmedov's contemporaries, including colleagues and students who were in direct contact with him. In this regard, the works of A. Ishanov, A. Muhammadjonov, Y. Soliyev, O. Borisov, A. Madrahimov, M. Ali, M. Babakhodzhayev and M. Yunushojayeva, D. Yusupova, and H. Ziyoyev, which were created during the Soviet period [1], hold a special place. They illuminate B. Ahmedov's life, his hardships during the Second World War, his process of development into a source scholar and orientalist, and briefly analyze his scholarly works published during the 1960s–1980s of the 20th century.

During the years of independence, a number of works related to Academician B. Ahmedov's life and scholarly activity were published. The articles and other works by K. Norqulov, A. Samad, K. Normatov, T. Hojamberdiyev, M. Ali, S. Jo'rayev, and D. Yusupova [2] offer a general analysis of the key aspects of B. Ahmedov's professional and academic career. Among the works created in recent years, the articles by H. To'rayev and S. Rajabov, and Sh. Qo'ldoshev are notable for specifically analyzing B. Ahmedov's scholarly works across different fields. For example, the articles by H. To'rayev and S. Rajabov [3] reveal the place of B. Ahmedov's works in contemporary historiography and source studies. Sh. Qo'ldoshev's article briefly outlines the scholar's participation in the Second World War, his educational process, scholarly activity, and contribution to personnel training [4]. Furthermore, the author suggests that B. Ahmedov's research activity should be divided into three areas. However, research in the field indicates that it is more appropriate to divide B. Ahmedov's scholarly research into five areas, based on the chronology of his engagement.

Among the literature belonging to the first group, the collection of scientific-journalistic articles titled *Ziyobaxsh umr* ("An Enlightening Life") [5], prepared on the occasion of B. Ahmedov's 100th birthday, holds an important place. It compiles memoirs dedicated to B. Ahmedov's life and scholarly activity written by his contemporaries, friends, and students. Specifically, the collection includes the views and reflections of leading scholars from Uzbekistan, such as A. Asqarov, D. Yusupova, N. Ibrohimov, A. Ziyov, A. Sagdullayev, S. G'ulomov, H. Davron, A. Mannonov, M. Hasaniy, Q. Sodiqov, H. To'rayev, R. Hodjayeva, N. Abduazizova, B. Omonov, A. Madraimov, K. Kattayev, H. Karomatov, H. Sattoriy, Sh. Xalilova, J. Ergashev, as well as foreign experts like J. Tulibayeva and T. Tulibayev, concerning B. Ahmedov's personal qualities and his contribution to the development of history and science in Uzbekistan and Central Asia, including ethnic history, historiography, source studies, and Timurid studies [5: 59-242]. It should be noted that the authors of the collection attempted to cover all aspects of B. Ahmedov's life and work. For instance, it provides a popular account of B. Ahmedov's youth, his schooling and higher education processes, the events of his military service, his postgraduate and doctoral studies, and his activities at the Abu Rayhon Beruniy Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the International Amir Temur Foundation. Additionally, the value of the collection is enhanced by the inclusion of Bo'ribov Ahmedov's popular scientific and journalistic articles

and interviews, photographs detailing his life journey, and a complete bibliographic index of his scientific works. However, because the collection is journalistic in nature, the failure to use documents from his personal archive—which are the main sources concerning the scholar's activities—resulted in certain confusion and inaccuracies in the chronology of the stages of his career. Furthermore, the information in the differently titled sections of the collection is similar, consisting of tautological repetitions. Also, in the bibliographic index of the scholar's scientific works, co-authored works were listed as solo-authored, and editorial works not directly authored by B. Ahmedov were included in the list of the scholar's personal scientific works.

One of the important foreign works in the first group is the materials from the International Symposium [6] held at the Kyrgyz National University in Bishkek on May 30, 2024, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Bo'ribov Ahmedov's birth. The first—special—section of the symposium was dedicated to Bo'ribov Ahmedov's personality, his scholarly, and creative life, and featured presentations primarily by his students from Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Among them, the articles by M.K. Abuseitova, "Academician Buri Ahmedovich Akhmedov and Kazakhstan's Oriental Studies" [6: 35-43], T. Choroyev, "New Factors in the Study of the Life of My Teacher, Academician B. Ahmedov, and His Contribution to Kyrgyz Studies" [6: 49-54], and T. Mashrapov, "A Word About the Great Teacher" [6: 68-71], are significant as they are dedicated to aspects of the scholar's activity that receive less attention in our country. This collection serves as a crucial source for illuminating the multifaceted nature of Bo'ribov Ahmedov's scholarly legacy, its organic connection with the historiographical schools of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, and his services in researching the history of the peoples of Central Asia as a unified scientific process.

It is appropriate to classify the studies belonging to the second group according to the main directions of B. Ahmedov's scholarly works, and they should be analyzed chronologically based on the following generalized directions:

The first direction covers the works [7] dedicated to the issues of the formation and ethnic history of the Uzbek people, on which the scholar focused his attention early in his career. In a total of nearly twenty works, the scholar approached this topic with deep scientific analysis. He attempted to substantiate, based on medieval sources, that the formation of the Uzbek people dates back to ancient times, and that the Shaybani Uzbeks gave their name to the local Turkic population after their arrival in Mawarannahr. During the Soviet period, the scholar's works in this area were specifically studied first by V.P. Yudin [8] and A.I. Ishanov [9]. Subsequently, the scholar's works on the subject were analyzed by M. Ermatov, B. Karmisheva, A. Asqarov, V. Nikonov, X. Salimov, B. Litvinsky, G'. Abdurahmonov, and L. Shukurov [10]. During the years of independence, B. Ahmedov's views on this matter were specifically analyzed by a major specialist in the field, K. Shoniyozov. Specifically, the ethnologist endorsed the orientalist scholar's conclusion that "the Uzbek people were fully formed during the Karakhanid era," and noted that the issue would have been approached more accurately if the completion of the Uzbek people's formation as a distinct ethnic unity (*elat*) had been dated to the mid-11th to 12th centuries [11: 29-30].

Academician A. Asqarov [12: 46] and source scholar Sh. Kamoliddin [13: 62-65] also specifically noted the correctness of B. Ahmedov's conclusions regarding the formation of the term "Uzbek."

The conclusion made by B. Ahmedov that the first and main components of the Uzbek people were the Sak-Massagetae, Sogdians, Khorezmian, Chach people, Parkana people, and Bokhtars [14] is considered by specialists in the field to be based on the views of S. Tolstov, and it caused various discussions in academic circles at the time. For instance, in his commentary on this article, K. Shoniyozov clarified the terms "Turk" and "Turkic" people [15].

In recent years, V. Abirov has specifically studied the scholar's works dedicated to the history of the formation of the Uzbek people [15] and critically analyzed the conclusions put forward by the scholar on this issue. According to the researcher, B. Ahmedov considered the views of Soviet scholars on the formation of the Uzbek people to be valid [15: 217]. However, it is necessary to note at this juncture that although B. Ahmedov's research in this area may not have defined a consensus solution to the various views existing in science regarding the formation of the Uzbek people, it is significant for recording final conclusions on the formation of the term "Uzbek" with strong source-based evidence, and for providing necessary guidance on primary sources and topics requiring research in the field.

The **second direction** appropriately includes research dedicated to the study of the socio-political history of the Central Asian peoples from the 10th to the 19th centuries, which are essentially closely related, including the source studies and Timurid studies of that period. In this regard, B. Ahmedov's works on socio-political history and source studies were analyzed in the research carried out during the Soviet period by M. Salakhiddinova, V. Romodin, O. Chekhovich, O. Frolova, O. Akimushkin, and M. Abuseitova [16].

Among the studies published during the years of independence, B. Ahmedov's works on Timurid studies and source studies were subjected to analysis in the research of A. Ahmedov, T. Fayziyev, N. Norqulov, U. Uvatov, O. Bo'riyev, A. Ziyov, D. Obidjonova, D. Yusupova, B. Usmonov, F. Shamukaramova, X. Fayziyev, E.V. Rtveladze, D. Alimova, Sh. O'ljayeva, M. Hamidova, T. Mahmudov, M. Buzrukov, S. Ahmedov, L. Begimqulova, O. Abdunosirova, and N. Isroilov [17]. Of these, some data presented in B. Ahmedov's works were critically analyzed by B. Usmonov, a major contemporary Timurid scholar. Specifically, during the analysis of B. Ahmedov's pamphlet titled "*Temur va Qamariddin*" ("Temur and Qamariddin") [18], it was noted that the author's opinion—that the Timurid army, led by Iskandar Mirza, covered the lands from Khotan to Khanbalyk and spent the winter in Khotan—was far from the truth. It was pointed out that sources do not mention a march up to Khanbalyk, and instead state that Iskandar Mirza spent the winter in Kashgar. It was also noted that B. Ahmedov made an inaccuracy in indicating the time of Amir Qamariddin's raid on Fergana, stating that the event took place in the summer of 1376.

In addition to the above, B. Ahmedov's works dedicated to the socio-political history of the 16th–19th centuries and the source studies of that period were examined in a brief context in the research of H. To'rayev, G. Agzamova, G. Sultonova, A. Zamonov, B. Mirzayev, A. Nishonov, S. Rajabov, and J. Ergashev [19].

Among the studies related to the second direction, the works of foreign authors also hold special significance. In this regard, B. Ahmedov's works in the field have been specifically studied in the research of M. Abuseitova, G. Tursunova, A. Saidov, H. Kamol, T. Velsford, S. Khoseinisheroziy, F. Saidov, A. Umarov, and M. Khodjayev [20].

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Academician Bo'riboy Ahmedov (1924–2002), who played a vital role in the development of historiography and source studies in Uzbekistan, traversed a long and challenging path throughout his life. His childhood coincided with the processes known as the Soviet government's "New Economic Policy" (NEP, 1921–1928) and the "Land and Water Reform" (1921–1929) in the history of Central Asian countries. His adolescence was spent directly on the front during the Second World War (1939–1945). His young adulthood occurred during the severe post-war economic difficulties. These factors led B. Ahmedov to enter the world of science somewhat later than his peers, specifically in 1961. Nevertheless, the strong will and patience forged during the hard labor of his childhood became the main factor in his productive scholarly output during his years as a scholar.

Based on the analysis of primary sources on the topic, including archival documents, written and video-recorded memoirs of the scholar, and his works, B. Ahmedov's life and activity should be divided into the following main stages:

**1924–1953:** Childhood and Youth. This stage, encompassing his primary and secondary education, saw B. Ahmedov mature as an independent individual. His characteristic traits such as diligence, responsibility, and modesty were fully formed during this period. As noted above, the harsh socio-economic conditions of the 1920s–1940s and his participation in the Second World War were of crucial importance here.

**1953–1974:** Period of Formation as a Historian Scholar. This stage covers the time from B. Ahmedov's postgraduate studies up to receiving his Doctor of Historical Sciences degree. The scope of his scientific research was very broad during this period, with the scholar conducting research ranging from the issues of the origin of the Uzbek people to the history of world countries, including the peoples of Latin America, the USA, and Africa.

**1974–1991:** Period as a Major Historiographer and Source Scholar. In this stage, the scholar achieved the rank of Honored Worker of Science, conducting important scientific research on the socio-political history and source studies of Central Asia from the 10th to the 19th centuries, and publishing several fundamental works.

**1991–2002:** Focus on Timurid Studies. During this stage, the scholar primarily focused his scientific efforts on the history of Amir Temur and the Timurids, leading to the formation of the Bo'riboy Ahmedov School of Timurid Studies. His research and organizational work in this field received high recognition nationally and internationally, leading to his appointment as a Full Member of the Academy of Sciences and an Honorary Professor at several major foreign universities and research institutions.

In the works published on the subject to date, B. Ahmedov's scholarly activity is typically divided into four directions: the ethnic history of the Uzbek people; the socio-political history

of Central Asia in the 10th–19th centuries; source studies; and the history of Amir Temur and the Timurids. As became clear from the analyses in the first chapter, B. Ahmedov's scope of scientific research was wide-ranging, and he conducted research not only within the issues of the history of Uzbekistan but also Central Asia and even world countries. Based on this, we deem it appropriate to divide B. Ahmedov's scholarly research activities into the following 5 directions, based on the chronology of his engagement:

The **First Direction** encompasses the issues of the formation and ethnic history of the Uzbek people, a field in which the scholar conducted research from the earliest years of his career. Specifically, in his Candidate of Historical Sciences dissertation, defended on March 16, 1961, at the Scientific Council of the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Leningrad State University, titled "*Gosudarstvo kochevykh uzbekov vo vremena Abu'l-Khayrkhana*" ("The State of Nomadic Uzbeks during the Time of Abu'l-Khayr Khan"), as well as in nearly twenty scientific works published in subsequent years, he approached this subject with deep scholarly analysis. He attempted to substantiate, relying on medieval sources, that the formation of the Uzbek people dates back to ancient times, and that the Shaybani Uzbeks gave their name to the local Turkic population after entering Mawarannahr.

The **Second Direction** covers the issues of world history. The scholar conducted research in this area during the early years of his career, specifically between 1963 and 1970, publishing several monographs, pamphlets, and articles on the history of the USA, Latin America, Africa, Congo, and European security. The primary cause for the scholar's works in this direction was the various ideological restrictions placed on the research of national history during that period. The **Third Direction** includes the results of scholarly research on the socio-political history of the peoples of Central Asia in the 10th–19th centuries. This direction pertains to the scholar's activities starting from the mid-1970s. One of the major works in this field was his Doctoral dissertation, prepared for the degree of Doctor of Historical Sciences, titled "*Balkhskoye khanstvo v XVI – pervoy polovine XVIII vv.*" ("The Khanate of Balkh in the 16th – First Half of the 18th Centuries"), and the monograph published based on it, titled "*Balkhskoye khanstvo*" ("The Khanate of Balkh").

The **Fourth Direction** is dedicated to source studies, in which the scholar prepared several rare works for publication. Furthermore, sources related to the history of Uzbekistan were compiled, and descriptive works about them were published. Specifically, the translated editions of works such as the two-volume "*Abdullanoma*", "*Bahr ul-asror*", "*Nasihat al-mulūk*", "*Siyāsatnāma*", "*Samariya*", "*Shoirilar bo'stoni*" (Poets' Garden), and "*Tārīkh-i arba'ulus*" ("History of the Four Ulus"), as well as his own works like "*Istoriko-geograficheskaya literatura Sredney Azii XVI–XVIII vv.*" ("Historical-Geographical Literature of Central Asia in the 16th–18th Centuries"), "*Materialy po istorii Sredney i Tsentralnoy Azii X – XIX vv.*" ("Materials on the History of Central and Inner Asia in the 10th–19th Centuries"), and "*O'zbekiston tarixi manbalari*" ("Sources of the History of Uzbekistan") are of vital importance in the field of source studies.

The **Fifth Direction** encompasses the works published by the scholar on the history of Amir Temur and the Timurids. B. Ahmedov published his main scientific works on the history of

this period starting in 1991—that is, when the Republic of Uzbekistan gained independence and great attention was paid to the activities of Amir Temur as one of the founders of Uzbek statehood. However, it should also be noted that B. Ahmedov began his Timurid studies research as early as the 1960s. Despite ideological pressures, he had already published about ten pamphlets and articles on the life and work of figures such as Mirzo Ulugbek (1394–1449), Davlatshah Samarqandiy (c. 1436–1491), and Khondamir (c. 1475–1535) during that period.

## CONCLUSION

The analyses clearly demonstrate that Academician B. Ahmedov's scientific research was both broad in scope and primarily focused on the fields of Oriental Studies and source studies. His research on key issues, such as the formation of the Uzbek people, the socio-political history of the region up to the 19th century, and Timurid studies, was consistently grounded in the analysis of primary sources relevant to these topics.

In total, the scholar published 363 scientific works between 1960 and 2022. Of these, 54 are monographs, 42 are works published with his involvement as a responsible editor or translator, over 140 are articles written for the 14-volume *Uzbek Soviet Encyclopedia* and the first two volumes of the *Uzbekistan National Encyclopedia*, and over 120 are scientific and popular scientific articles related to the scholar's main research directions. Several of these works were published in cities such as London, Delhi, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Tbilisi, Ashgabat, Almaty, Kabul, and Wiesbaden (Germany).

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