

## **Abstract**

The research paper examines the question of Uzbek identity, and how it was pictured and presented by Soviet scholars and historians of independent Uzbekistan. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Uzbekistan announced its independence. One of the important questions on the agenda was the question of national identity. It was up to the newly independent state what they build their ideology on. Soviet historiography had different options for the origin of Uzbeks: some stated that history of Uzbeks starts from the 10<sup>th</sup> century; some suggested that it was the nomadic tribes to have entered the territory of the present Central Asia in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The new government of Uzbekistan somehow continued with the Soviet tradition by following the idea that Uzbeks originate from the 10<sup>th</sup> century. There is even a group who dates the origin of Uzbeks back to the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium B.C. The literature written on Uzbek identity can be divided into two approaches taken: primordialism and constructivism. Both Soviet and Uzbek historiography base their thoughts on primordialistic approach, explaining that Uzbek identity is a long and complex process of ethno-genesis and that is associated through blood, language, religion, culture, etc. Whereas constructivists are explaining that Uzbeks as a nation appeared only after the national delimitation of 1924. The author aimed at analyzing the issue of Uzbek identity through these two approaches and demonstrating to which extent they are applicable in this particular case. Uzbekistan is relatively young country, and it has not yet been built as a nation-state. Constructivist ideas in the historiography may destabilize the country with different ethnic groups residing in it.

## **Keywords**

Identity, Uzbek identity, ethnical identity, heritage, primordialism, constructivism.