



Article

# Scientific Conceptual Basis of the Concepts of Mentality and Social Mentality

Suyarkulova Guljakhon Zokirjon kizi<sup>\*1</sup>

1. Teacher of Fergana State University.

\* Correspondence: [guljaxonzokirovna@gmail.com](mailto:guljaxonzokirovna@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** The aim of the study is to analyze the conceptual framework of mentality and the concept of social mentality and their historical development as well as its theoretical interpretations and the impact of mentality in a nation. Despite becoming a well-discussed topic in philosophy, anthropology, psychology and sociology, the scientific definition of mentality is still missing and this hampers the understanding of mentality as a dynamic socio-cultural phenomenon. Filling this void, the paper explores both traditional and more recent academic conceptions of mentality, cataloguing development from the foundations of Western philosophy through to contemporary cultural anthropology. The analysis draws upon a systematic review of conceptual sources, historical materials, and theoretical debates reported in literature. Mentality was first used in colonial and ethnographic contexts to describe the mindsets and cognitive processes of different populations, according to findings. This idea evolved from cultural clichés to include habitual mental models, value systems, and collective perceptions. The study demonstrates that mentality as such is a key component of the shaping of nations, especially so for the region of post-Soviet societies, where socio-political transformation has exacerbated an interest in the roots of cultural and psychological continuity. These findings illustrate that mentality is both a historical construct and an evolutionary adaptation shaped by cultural endowment, social institutions, and the changing political environments. Due also to its cross-disciplinary nature, it is a major tool of analysis of social transformation. This study suggests that the research on the temperament of the Uzbek national character should be performed in the order to reinforce democratic reforms, improve socio-cultural development and develop better a national development model. A better theoretical grasp of mentality will underpin sounder social policy, education, and identity-building.

**Citation:** Zokirjon kizi S. G. Scientific Conceptual Basis of the Concepts of Mentality and Social Mentality. Central Asian Journal of Literature, Philosophy, and Culture 2026, 7(1), 176-180.

Received: 04<sup>th</sup> Sep 2025

Revised: 12<sup>th</sup> Oct 2025

Accepted: 20<sup>th</sup> Nov 2025

Published: 05<sup>th</sup> Dec 2025



**Copyright:** © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license

(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

**Keywords:** Mentality, Democratic Reforms, Modern Technologies, National Development, Human Spirit, Thinking Styles, Hereditary Characteristics, National Way of Thinking, National Worldview, Cultural Anthropology.

## 1. Introduction

The implementation of tasks set on the agenda by the demands of life will lead to the solution of democratic reforms in a manner consistent with the national mentality, the effectiveness of achievements, and the improvement of the national development model. Because the results of research on mentality show that the millennial history of peoples has not been able to erase the differences in mentality between them, and even modern technologies have only partially affected mentality. Therefore, it is important to study the consequences, lessons, and aspects of the formation of the Uzbek mentality related to the past century that determine its future.

The word "mentality" is derived from ancient Latin and refers to the specific qualities of the human psyche. This concept has different meanings in different cultures. For example, today, along with this word, words borrowed from other languages are also used. In our study, in order to analyze the concept of mentality, its history of origin, existing basic concepts, as well as its significance in the life of society are determined.

According to historical data, this term was first used by one of the French philosophers, Charles Montesquieu, but later German scientists Richard Mayer and Wilhelm Windelband made a great contribution to its development. At the beginning of the 20th century, the study of this concept was an important step for the development of European science. At that time, there were many debates among scientists working in various fields about clarifying the meaning of this concept. For example, psychologist Franz Boas defined the place of this concept in the science of psychology. In his opinion, mentality is directly related to people's ways of thinking, which to some extent also include hereditary characteristics. This should have been studied in the psychological direction. Later, Russian pedagogue-psychologist Konstantin Yudin emphasized that mentality plays an important role in the educational process. According to his theory, effective results are ensured if students are taught in accordance with their mentalities during the educational process.

## 2. Materials and Methods

This article adopts a qualitative, conceptual, and historical research many scholars conceptualise the notion of mentality and the ways, it operates in the contemporary social sciences. The analysis is based on a close reading of classical philosophical texts, ethnographic reports, anthropological studies and psychosocial analysis that have defined the signification of mentality through time. In the document linked to below I analyzed sources to track the introduction of the term into academia, its use in colonial and ethnographic contexts, and its later evolution as a more general analytical category in sociology, political science and philosophy. The approach was to compare competing academic readings of the scholarship from earlier theorists such as Montesquieu and Levi-Bruhl through to contemporary scholars to discern continuities and changes in how theorists, and indeed members of the field, have regarded the concept over time, as well as tensions in its conception. The world outlook, thinking styles and modes of behaviour of people living in Central Asia and other regions of the world was examined with the aim of both defining mentality as stable cultural body-part and a variable social body-part. With the intention of developing an integrated concept, this study therefore synthesizes these disparate sources to define the concept of mentality, delineate the meaning, extent, and importance of mentality for national identity and contemporary social development.

## 3. Results and Discussion

The importance of the issue of mentality as a scientific paradigm in the social and human sciences also dates back to this period. Because it was during this period that more than ten definitions of the concepts of ethnos, ethnicity, and nation were rejected, and among them, opinions and definitions that placed more emphasis on the unity of the national way of thinking, national worldview, and mentality were confirmed. True, in the scientific debates between the two aforementioned streams of ethnologists, a standard definition of the concepts of ethnos, ethnicity, and nation that would be satisfactory for everyone has not yet been developed, but the problem of mentality has gone beyond ethnology and become a topical research topic in such scientific fields as social philosophy, sociology, political science, and psychology.

However, the problem of mentality, which is still being studied in the social and humanities of Central Asia and Russia, is a topic with considerable experience in American and Western cultural anthropology. These issues are studied from the perspective of "mental health" - mental health, and as we noted above, mentality is analyzed more in

terms of the product and level of culture than in terms of ethnic and national characteristics [1].

If we consider it a fateful event that the debate between postmodernism and primordialism in the post-Soviet environment opened the way to the issue of mentality, its logical essence was determined by the need to study this issue. There is a reason why the problem of mentality is given great attention today in the social and humanities of independent states: this situation is determined by the socio-economic and political situation that has developed in the territory of the former Soviet Union over the past twenty years, and the situation of national identity in the countries of the former Soviet Union that have gained independence.

National identity is not only an expression of state interests from the perspective of nationality in countries that have resumed a new way of life with a new character, economy, and politics during the period of independence, but also an integration into the development of the modern world in exchange for understanding their roots and identity from the perspective of all historical, material, and spiritual values, and re-examining the shortcomings of the national mindset based on the traditional worldview that hinder all progressive and economic progress. The socio-political foundations of the transversal nature of the problem of mentality in the humanities of the present era are rooted in this issue. The psychological essence of this phenomenon is interpreted by the psychologist P.N. Shikharev as follows: "Analysis of history in only one sphere of human activity, the economy, shows that, with the development and sophistication of the means of production, humanity is inexorably moving from external forms of awakening to internal forms, which are the motivational core of the individual, the basis of values, involving all possibilities" [2].

The emergence of the term mentality is associated with the name of the philosopher and poet R. Emerson, who lived and worked in the 19th century [3]. Later, the introduction of mentality into scientific circulation and its acquisition of content and meaning as a scientific concept is associated with the name of the French ethnologist and social anthropologist L. Levi-Bruell. In his work "Primitive Mentality", he writes: "Twelve years ago, when my work "The Activity of Thinking in Primitive Societies" was being published, I could have called it "Primitive Mentality", but I refused such a name, because the word "mentality" and even the term "primitive" were quite foreign to our language" [4][5]. Considering that "Primitive Mentality" was published in 1921, at the beginning of the 20th century, "mentality" was a term that had hardly entered scientific circulation. The main contribution to the formation of the concept of "primitive mentality" was made by the French philosopher, sociologist and social psychologist Lucien Levi-Bruhl (1857-1939) through his work "La mentalite primitive" admits T.V. Andrianova. Indeed, according to the author of this work, the subject of "Primitive Mentality" was the study of primitive people's understanding of cause and effect, their ideas about these categories [6]. It should be noted that this book does not provide a separate definition of the term "mentality", it is used as a word adequate to the concepts of thinking activity and mental skills.

The term mentality began to revive in the science of the 20th century in the 1980s. Since that time, the term mentality has become popular in the social and humanitarian sciences, displacing the expression "cultural stereotype" and taking on a greater role and meaning than when it first entered science. This was not only because the emphasis on mentality began to become a tradition in the social and humanitarian sciences, of course [7]. This situation is determined by the following:

First, the "cultural stereotype" by its very nature and definition could not encompass the dynamic changes occurring in the worldview and mental image of individual groups [8]. This is because the word "stereotype" is derived from the Greek words stereos – solid and typos – sign, characteristic, and in scientific communication is used mainly in the sense of character, traditional, usual form of perception, exemplary character style, method of

performing actions in a certain sequence, uniformity, similarity" [9]. Therefore, "in modern humanities, the concept of mentality has acquired a broad meaning and is used not only to identify the characteristics of one or another cultural stereotype or the spiritual preparation of society as a whole, which are considered typical for large social groups, but also to identify the way of thinking, beliefs, and "spiritual skills" of a small group of people [10].

Secondly, it was precisely from these times that the nations, sensing the economic, political, and spiritual changes that were taking place and moving from complacency to their future and development, had a natural need to define their way of thinking on the basis of certain standards. Mentality is a broad, verbal concept that, on the one hand, expresses the recurring characteristics of behavior defined in stereotypes, and on the other hand, the developing dynamic features of thinking, perception, and worldview [11]. Therefore, it serves as a scientific object as a means of revealing the states of perception in the thinking of individual groups during the process of fundamental changes at the end of the 20th century.

Having analyzed the history of the formation of approaches and theories in the study of mentality to date, we came to the conclusion that they can be categorized as follows:

- I. Classical works that reflect the history and problems of the study of mentality. In turn, this category is divided into two areas:
  - 1) Studies that served to create and strengthen the ideological foundations of colonial policy, to introduce and assimilate foreign politics, enlightenment and culture into the colonial territories [12]. The ideological roots of these studies go back to the work of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, one of the representatives of German classical philosophy. In the work of Hegel, the founder of pro-European and chauvinistic doctrines, the aesthetic worldview of the peoples of the East is belittled with such analyses as: "Idealism is not characteristic of the Chinese way of thinking, aesthetics is very far from it" or, speaking of the Indians, "behind this understanding of beauty lies a nervous weakness" [13].  
Hegel, as the ideologist of the imperial policy of Western Europe in the 19th century, laid the foundation in his work for the study of the mentality of the colonized peoples for the purpose of conquest. In fact, the main goal of the study of mentality and its introduction into scientific circulation was to study the mentality of the peoples of the territories to be conquered. Among the scientific works with such a purpose, one can list the works of Levi-Bryul, P.G. Galuzo, A.R. Luria [14].
  - 2) Ethnographic materials that provide information about the way of thinking, mental processes, and worldview of peoples. Works in this area were written by foreign scholars and historians who came to Central Asia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a result of travel or exile. Most of them, in addition to describing the lifestyle and life of the peoples of Central Asia, paid special attention to the irrational way of thinking, spiritual world, and mental characteristics associated with customs and forms of belief [15].

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, given the broad scope and relevance of the issue of mentality, and taking into account the current stage of development of the Uzbek people, the need for a more comprehensive and deep scientific study of this problem from a value perspective is clearly felt. After all, national mentality is a generalized form of social thinking, and at the same time, as an expression of thought that has been formed over several thousand years of historical passage and has a high value status as a means for Uzbeks to unite at the national level. For this reason, this issue should be a separate object of research.

## REFERENCES

- [1] V. R. Filippov, *Paradigmatika etnologii*. Available: <http://www.viu-online.ru/science/publ/buleten10/page9.html>
- [2] P. N. Shikharev, *Sovremennaya sotsialnaya psikhologiya*. Moscow: Delovaya Kniga, 2000, p. 7.
- [3] T. V. Andrianova, *Geopolitika i kultura*. Moscow: Politika, 2001, p. 22.
- [4] L. Lévy-Bruhl, *Pervobytnyy mentalitet*. Moscow: Kulturnoe Nasledie, 2003, p. 9.
- [5] T. V. Andrianova, *Geopolitika i kultura*. Moscow: Politika, 2001, p. 22.
- [6] L. Lévy-Bruhl, *Pervobytnyy mentalitet*. Moscow: Kulturnoe Nasledie, 2003, p. 9.
- [7] C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, 1973.
- [8] A. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*. Cambridge, MA: Peabody Museum, 1952.
- [9] N. T. Umarova, *The Role of Ethnic Character Stereotypes in the Formation of the Political Culture of Society*. Tashkent, 1997, p. 22.
- [10] "Mentalitet," *Krugosvet Encyclopedia*. Available: <http://www.krugosvet.ru/articles/105/1010513/1010513a1/htm>
- [11] S. Eisenstadt, *Explorations in Social Theory: From Metatheorizing to Rationalization*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.
- [12] R. Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1934.
- [13] G. W. F. Hegel, *Estetika*. Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1973, p. 291.
- [14] P. G. Galuzo, *Turkestan-koloniya*. Tashkent: Kommunist, 1929, p. 164.
- [15] A. Vambéry, *Puteshestvie po Sredney Azii*. St. Petersburg, 1865, p. 292.