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TOHIR KURBONOV. INFLUENCE OF MODERN CIVILIZATION ON THE UZBEK NATIONAL MENTALITY // *The article was written for the bulletin “Russia and the Moslem World.”*

Keywords: civilization, mentality, national mentality, transformation of society, spirituality, national consciousness, humanism, national identity.

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Citation: Kurbonov T. Influence of Modern Civilization on the Uzbek National Mentality // Russia and the Moslem World, 2020, No. 3 (309), P. 65–70. DOI: 10.31249/rmw/2020.03.05

Abstract. This article analyses the influence that modern civilization exerts on the mentality of the Uzbek people. The article also

scientifically describes customs, traditions, language, religion, psychology, worldview and mentality of the nation.

By the end of the 20th century, the world has entered a phase of significant structural and functional changes that have a considerable impact on economic, political, social and spiritual facets of society and affect all countries, including Uzbekistan. The centuries-old national way of thinking is enriched with new elements and features. Matters related to the national mentality are of particular interest, since the national mentality influences social processes in the world and in the country and at the same time is influenced by them. That is why in the years following the independence first President of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov used to say that the country's own path of development should be suited to national specificities [1, p. 34].

In the context of society transformation in Uzbekistan, it is important to analyse and explore issues, related to the change in the national mentality, as follows:

1) Economic transformation is a factor changing not only the nation's ways, but also its mentality. However, the issue of the impact of economic reform programmes on the national character of the Uzbekistan people has not been well studied yet.

2) The national mentality of any society is affected by the changes in the social structure. How much has the social structure of the society changed over the years of independence? That is the question that needs to be answered.

3) Over the years of independence, the Uzbek people have experienced an unprecedented process of spiritual rebirth. Spiritual development leads to a completely new national mentality. Therefore, all the issues need to be explored in the context of spirituality & national mentality.

4) Uzbekistan's integration into the world community as an independent country has created new factors and tools that have an impact on the mentality of the nation. It is also important to

determine these factors and tools and analyse changes in the national way of thinking.

5) Democratization of the Uzbek society and modernization of the country demand that we seek solutions to the problems inherent in our national mentality in the light of social scientific knowledge.

The change in the national mentality in the context of social transformation is a fundamental and relevant problem for Uzbekistan. The processes following the independence caused inevitable changes in national consciousness and spirituality and is deeply rooted in social relations. Today, national development, unity and spiritual integrity are priorities for Uzbekistan. The logic of today promotes us to give serious consideration to the change in the people's character and mentality.

National characteristics and personality traits build on certain socio-economic, natural-geographical and political conditions, religious ties and relations with other people in times of war and peace. Russian scientists A. Panarin and I. Pantin note that mentality is no more than an end product of mental and psychological state of people and interpret mentality as a related phenomenon [1]. There is also a view that this concept constitutes a set of particular rituals and ceremonies of the nation. In addition to the above-mentioned characteristics, the national mentality also comprises intelligence and psycho-social features of the nation. These characteristics stem from an integral system of historical background, customs, rituals and ceremonies of the people. They act as the driving forces of the mentality.

In the age of market relations and dominance of the state-of-the-art IT, the modern Uzbek mentality should become even more important. Changing world requires fast, resourceful and at the same time evolving approach to the people's behaviour patterns, as well as planning, thorough preparation, understanding and cooperation. And also, the role of individuals in the system of relations between the individual and the society & the individual and the State has increased markedly.

The spread of civilization raises the need for a different approach to the role that people play in life and society. The role of the individual in society is becoming increasingly important, and their influence on social life is increasing, either directly or through a particular community or group. It is well known that the democratic order of that time was a phenomenon born in the Western world. The principles of democracy currently applied to the nations of the world are a reflection of the lifestyle that the peoples of Western Europe lead.

Globalization, i.e. the Western model of democratization, which is part of the civilizing process, is experiencing certain difficulties while taking root in the lives of the peoples of the East. Thus, every state must undergo a period of adjustment and at times obtain results which are the opposite of what it hoped for.

That is why Uzbekistan has consistently pursued a policy of preserving the spiritual integrity of the people, stayed true to itself, and supported the very best in the human nature. In this regard, on the 16th August 2017 President Shavkat Mirziyoyev issued a decree No. IIII-3217 on the development of tourism during 2018/2019 according to which tourism was set to be primarily aimed at attracting tourists to the holy sites in Uzbekistan by revitalizing event organization, running a relevant promotional campaign and organizing logistics, including charter flights.

A government decision on organizational matters and technical facilities of tourist zones and mountain clusters in 2018/2022 is very important. It's also vital to cultivate the notion of the national cultural heritage among the majority of the population. The national cultural heritage should be based on the national mentality, an objective study and evaluation of the country's historical background and assessment of its contribution to a world civilization. So, what does "mentality" mean? Professor K. Khanazarov defines the Latin concept of mentality as a set of "mental and spiritual capacities, mental

characteristics and abilities to analyse the laws of life held by a social or ethnic group of people" [2, p. 3].

The national mentality comprises specificities of a nation, its way of thinking, work & life (for example, the Uzbek people live either in cities or villages), its culture and contribution to a major body of values. It is widely known that different natural, social, and cultural settings of each nation shape the peoples' ability to deal with the joys and problems in everyday life, their professional skills and contribution to the development of a universal culture.

The mentality of the nation is defined not only by its historical ancestral heritage. Rather, it shows the character building of people of the same ethnic background, their personal characteristics, professional skills and daily behaviour.

From the very beginning the Uzbek people have always tended to live in groups. Furthermore, the Uzbek mentality features respecting adults, caring for children, helping each other, and candid, friendly & sympathetic attitude to all the people regardless of their ethnicity. The best qualities of the Uzbek people include patriotism, hardworking, and special respect for teachers.

Most Uzbeks care not only about their personal well-being, but also about the well-being of their families, relatives and neighbours. That is the greatest spiritual value and the jewel of the human heart. For centuries, the Uzbek people have stayed just, humane and kind to their neighbours. While humanity is integral to the national spirit of the Uzbek people, cruelty and violence are foreign to their nature. Uzbeks always face problems and enjoy the moments of happiness with patience and inner peace [3, p. 77].

The Uzbek national identity is a unique example of Asian cultural and spiritual life. It requires building on the experience of ancestors and respecting them. On the path to independence the country has embarked upon the major reform of socio-political, economic, spiritual and educational systems. The

effectiveness of the reforms is both directly and indirectly related to the changing mentality of the people. That is why the human factor and national mentality are essential when improving the system of public administration, teaching citizens about self-governance via local authorities, broadly promoting the principles of social participation and building a civil society against the new background. Consequently, the State now carries out its functions not by strengthening the authority, but rather by expanding democratic self-governance.

The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan reflects the strategy on five priority areas for development in 2017/2021. The government is meant to serve the Uzbek society and is charged, above all, with establishing a direct dialogue with the people, protecting civil rights and freedoms of citizens, and ensuring the rule of law. The spirit of change has an impact on people's relationships, views, objectives, plans, social goals and whole lives. It also improves social mobility of the people.

Thus, a great deal of creative work done in the country over the years of independence resulted in a change in the mentality of the people.

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