



AN IDEATIONAL AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL INTEGRATING NATIONAL IDENTITY HISTORICAL MEMORY AND CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL POLICY

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Abstract

This article examines the ideational and conceptual foundations of the interrelationship between national identity, historical memory, and contemporary cultural policy. Particular scholarly attention is devoted to national self-awareness, the continuity of historical and cultural heritage, and the identification of directions for contemporary cultural development amid globalization, increasingly rapid information exchange, and expanding intercultural relations. The primary aim of the article is to provide a theoretical analysis that elucidates the substantive connections between national identity, historical memory, and contemporary cultural policy and develops an ideational and conceptual model based on their integration. The study employs systems analysis, historical and logical analysis, comparative analysis, and conceptual modelling. It examines the legal and regulatory instruments governing culture in the Republic of Uzbekistan, alongside scholarly perspectives on theories of national identity and collective memory.

Keywords: National identity, historical memory, cultural policy, national culture, cultural heritage, ideational and conceptual model, cultural continuity, globalization, ideological processes, spiritual development.

Introduction

In the contemporary world, national self-awareness and the continuity of historical and cultural heritage are closely connected to a society's spiritual development, cultural independence, and social solidarity. Globalization, the widespread use of digital communication, and increasingly intensive intercultural interaction create new

opportunities for national cultural development while also necessitating the preservation and reinterpretation of its substance in contemporary conditions. From this perspective, studying national identity independently of historical memory, or reducing cultural policy to organizational and administrative activities, cannot fully reveal the substantive unity of these phenomena.

National identity, historical memory, and cultural policy are interrelated yet conceptually distinct. National identity refers to a people's awareness of its historical and cultural belonging and its understanding of shared values and cultural markers. Historical memory denotes the intergenerational transmission of understandings of past experience, historical events, and cultural heritage. Contemporary cultural policy encompasses institutional activities aimed at protecting, developing, disseminating, and expressing these values and this heritage in cultural life.

In Uzbekistan, the relevance of this issue is reflected in measures to develop national culture, preserve historical and cultural heritage, and improve the legal foundations of state cultural policy. In particular, Article 61 of Chapter XI of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan [1] establishes citizens' obligation to preserve the historical, spiritual, cultural, scientific, and natural heritage of the people of Uzbekistan and provides for its protection by the state. Furthermore, Law No. LRU-668 of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 20 January 2021, "On Cultural Activities and Cultural Organizations" [2], identifies the regulation of cultural activities, preservation of historical and cultural heritage, support for folk creativity, and fulfilment of the population's cultural needs as important areas of state policy.

These legal foundations make it possible to study culture as a system connected to a society's historical experience, values, and spiritual needs, rather than solely as a material or organizational sphere. However, the existence of objectives set out in legal and regulatory instruments does not, in itself, fully explain the ideational connections between national identity, historical memory, and contemporary cultural policy. Establishing the theoretical foundations of these connections and identifying their conceptual mechanisms require a dedicated scholarly investigation.

National identity, collective memory, and cultural development have been examined within various scholarly traditions. Anthony D. Smith's approach emphasizes the significance of shared historical memory, symbols, values, and cultural traditions in the formation of national identity [5]. Maurice Halbwachs explains collective memory in relation to social groups and the mechanisms through which they construct memory

[6]. Jan Assmann's concept of cultural memory provides an important theoretical basis for explaining how historical meanings are transmitted across generations through texts, symbols, rituals, and cultural institutions [7].

Although these studies offer detailed accounts of particular aspects of national identity and historical memory, explaining their interaction with contemporary cultural policy within a unified ideational and conceptual model requires further analysis. In particular, identifying the interrelationship between heritage preservation, contemporary interpretations of national values, and support for cultural creativity is increasingly relevant.

2. METHODS

The study's methodological foundation is a systems approach that examines national identity, historical memory, and cultural policy as interrelated sociocultural phenomena. This approach enables each concept to be analysed individually while also identifying their functional connections within a shared cultural space.

The article first employs historical and logical analysis to examine the formation of the concepts of national identity and historical memory, the transformation of historical experience into cultural values, and the ways in which this experience manifests itself in contemporary social life.

Comparative analysis is used to compare the scholarly perspectives of Anthony D. Smith, Maurice Halbwachs, and Jan Assmann and to identify their similarities and differences.

Formal legal analysis is employed to examine the substance of the Republic of Uzbekistan's legal and regulatory instruments concerning cultural activities, cultural heritage, and cultural organizations. Specifically, the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Law No. LRU-668, legislation on the protection of tangible cultural heritage sites, and instruments aimed at developing national culture in Uzbekistan constitute the study's legal and regulatory framework.

Systems analysis is used to clarify the functions of national identity, historical memory, and cultural policy. Conceptual modelling is employed to synthesize the interrelationships among these components and formulate the author's model of their substantive and practical connections.

The study is guided by the principles of historicity, objectivity, systematic inquiry, conceptual clarity, and the scholarly analysis of evidence. These principles make it

possible to distinguish contemporary interpretations of historical heritage from one-sided assessments of past events, separate legally prescribed objectives from outcomes achieved in practice, and connect the author's conclusions to their theoretical and legal foundations.

3. RESULTS

National self-awareness is a complex process through which individuals and social groups recognize their belonging to a particular historical and cultural community and understand its values, language, historical experience, and cultural traditions. The concept encompasses more than a nation's ethnic origins or outward cultural markers; it also includes its relationship to its historical experience and its understanding of shared symbols and values.

Anthony D. Smith's ethnosymbolist approach explains the formation of national identity in relation to historical memory, beliefs about common origins, symbols, and cultural traditions [5]. An important implication of this approach is that national identity cannot be explained solely as an outcome of the activities of modern political or administrative institutions. Its substance is also shaped by cultural experience and collective understandings formed over long historical periods.

Maurice Halbwachs's account of collective memory reveals the social nature of historical memory. In his view, individuals' understandings of the past develop in relation to social groups, shared experience, and practices of memory preservation [6]. Historical memory is therefore more than a simple aggregate of past events; it is historical experience that a society remembers, interprets, and transmits across generations.

Jan Assmann's concept of cultural memory develops this argument further by explaining the mechanisms through which historical meanings are preserved over extended periods through cultural signs, written sources, rituals, and symbols [7]. From this perspective, historical memory can be understood as an important and substantive source of national identity.

However, historical memory and national identity are not identical phenomena. Historical memory provides a historical and spiritual foundation for national identity, while national identity involves society's understanding of this historical experience and its significance for contemporary life. Their relationship should therefore be

understood as a process of reciprocal interaction rather than a simple linear relationship between cause and effect.

This relationship can be expressed through the following logical sequence:

Historical experience — collective memory — awareness of national values — formation and development of national identity.

This sequence is a theoretical framework for explaining the influence of historical memory on national identity. It does not imply that historical memory automatically produces a single or unchanging national identity. Historical experience may instead be interpreted differently by different generations. The stability of national identity therefore depends both on preserving historical heritage and on studying it systematically and connecting it to contemporary social needs.

The study identifies three important dimensions of national identity.

First, the axiological and spiritual dimension reflects society's understanding of language, customs, moral norms, historical symbols, and cultural traditions.

Second, the dimension of historical continuity concerns the transmission of historical experience and cultural heritage across generations and the preservation of spiritual connections between the past and the present.

Third, the dimension of contemporary creativity encompasses the development of national values through contemporary cultural activities, art, education, scholarly inquiry, and new cultural forms.

These dimensions indicate that national identity should be understood through the unity of historical continuity and contemporary creative development, rather than as an unchanging historical inheritance or a phenomenon confined to traditional values. Cultural policy is a system of activities aimed at meeting society's cultural needs, preserving cultural heritage, developing culture and the arts, and establishing appropriate legal and organizational conditions for cultural activities. Its ideational substance is determined by the role of cultural values in social life and the objectives of transmitting them to future generations.

The legal foundations of cultural activities in the Republic of Uzbekistan have been reinforced, among other instruments, by Law No. LRU-668, adopted on 20 January 2021. The law addresses the regulation of relations in cultural activities and the operation of cultural organizations, the preservation of historical and cultural heritage, support for folk creativity, and improvements in the quality of cultural services. Furthermore, Presidential Decree No. PD-6000 of 26 May 2020 [3] presents national

cultural development as an integrated process extending beyond improvements in the operation of cultural and artistic institutions. It encompasses the preservation of historical and cultural heritage, its transmission to younger generations, the development of national artistic traditions, and their integration into contemporary cultural space. In this respect, heritage preservation and promotion help maintain historical memory across generations, while the development of historical and cultural awareness strengthens national self-awareness. The decree's attention to the digitization of museum collections, electronic catalogues, and "virtual museum" and "digital museum" projects supports the adaptation of national cultural heritage to the contemporary technological environment. The international promotion of national art and culture also broadens opportunities for active integration into the global cultural space while preserving national identity.

The significance of these legal foundations for the present study lies in the fact that recognizing cultural development as a distinct area of state policy helps establish institutional connections between historical heritage preservation and the organization of contemporary cultural activities.

At the same time, the ideational substance of cultural policy cannot be confined to laws, decisions, or the activities of cultural organizations. Its substantive effectiveness also depends on the extent of its integration with historical memory and national identity, society's understanding of cultural heritage, and the conditions created for creative development.

Presidential Decree No. PD-6000 of 26 May 2020 [3] sets out objectives for enhancing the role and influence of culture and the arts in social life. The document advances directions for developing national culture, preserving and promoting tangible and intangible cultural heritage, supporting folk creativity, and fostering innovation in the cultural sector.

These directions reveal the dual function of cultural policy. On the one hand, it must ensure the preservation and protection of historical and cultural heritage. On the other, it should create conditions for developing contemporary cultural forms, supporting new creative opportunities, and expanding intercultural relations.

The institutional foundations of cultural heritage protection are also an important part of this function. Resolution No. 119 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 3 March 2021 [4] aims to strengthen the protection of tangible cultural heritage sites and areas included on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The document

sets out objectives concerning the protection and use of heritage sites and their inclusion in international cultural heritage lists. Its substance demonstrates that preserving the material foundations of historical memory is an important area of cultural policy. Historical monuments, museum objects, written sources, and cultural spaces preserve knowledge of the past while enabling its scholarly investigation and transmission to future generations.

However, protecting tangible heritage cannot be equated with the full formation of historical memory. The preservation of a historical monument or museum exhibit must be accompanied by society's understanding of its meaning and its incorporation into a body of historical knowledge. Accordingly, the ideational function of cultural policy involves not only preserving heritage but also interpreting it academically, connecting it to education and public enlightenment, and developing it as a substantive resource for contemporary cultural creativity.

Contemporary cultural policy thus acts as an institutional means of sustaining the relationship between national identity and historical memory. Its principal function extends beyond preserving historical heritage in an unchanged form to supporting the continuous development of national culture under contemporary conditions.

The theoretical and legal analysis above allows national identity, historical memory, and contemporary cultural policy to be considered interrelated components of a unified ideational and conceptual system. Within this system, national identity represents the axiological and spiritual substance of cultural development, historical memory embodies its historical continuity, and cultural policy provides the institutional and practical mechanisms for preserving and developing that substance. On the basis of this analysis, we propose three principal components within the ideational and conceptual model of national cultural advancement presented in this article: an axiological and spiritual component, a historical continuity component, and an institutional and practical component.

The first component of the model—national identity—constitutes the axiological and spiritual foundation of cultural development. It is expressed through awareness of the national language, historical and cultural heritage, customs, traditions, and shared values. This component determines the spiritual criteria and historical experience that inform the development of national culture.

The second component—historical memory—sustains the historical continuity of national identity. Its function is to preserve historical experience and cultural heritage,

transmit knowledge of the past across generations, and connect this knowledge to contemporary cultural thought. This component entails not only the physical preservation of historical heritage but also an understanding of its spiritual and scholarly significance.

The third component—contemporary cultural policy—is the institutional mechanism that enables the first two components to find practical expression. It connects the protection of historical and cultural heritage, the development of cultural organizations, support for cultural education, the creation of conditions for creative activities, and the expansion of international cultural relations.

A key feature of the model is that the relationships among its three components are reciprocal. Historical memory enriches the substance of national identity; national identity influences attitudes towards historical heritage and its contemporary interpretation; and cultural policy creates the legal and institutional conditions for preserving historical memory and developing national values. At the same time, new cultural products, scholarly research, and educational materials produced within the framework of cultural policy may also influence the future formation of historical memory.

The proposed model should therefore be understood as a system of components interacting through substantive, historical, and institutional connections, rather than as a simple sum of three independent areas.

The model's theoretical significance lies in its capacity to explain the ideational foundations of national cultural advancement through specific components and their functions. In practical terms, it may serve as a conceptual framework for addressing the following questions when designing cultural policy programmes:

How does a cultural initiative contribute to national self-awareness and the understanding of national values?

Alongside the preservation of historical heritage, how is the intergenerational transmission of its scholarly and educational significance ensured?

What conditions does cultural policy create for contemporary creativity and intercultural dialogue while maintaining historical continuity?

These questions define the model's practical orientation. They are conceptual criteria proposed for future research and the assessment of practical programmes, rather than empirically validated indicators of cultural policy effectiveness.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the connections between national identity, historical memory, and contemporary cultural policy cannot be adequately explained solely in terms of heritage preservation or the organization of cultural events. Although these phenomena are interrelated, each has a distinct function. Their integration provides a theoretical basis for explaining the relationship between the historical continuity of national culture and its contemporary development.

Smith's account of national identity supports the first component of the proposed model. He emphasizes the relationship of national identity to historical memory, symbols, and shared cultural heritage [5]. In the present study, however, national identity is understood not only as awareness of historical and cultural belonging but also as an axiological and spiritual component that develops through contemporary cultural activities.

Halbwachs's concept of collective memory explains the relationship between historical memory and social conditions [6]. Jan Assmann's approach to cultural memory elucidates the mechanisms through which cultural meanings are preserved through symbols, written sources, and institutions [7]. The proposed model combines these perspectives as complementary theoretical foundations and reveals the functional connections of historical memory with national identity and cultural policy. The distinctive feature of this approach is that historical memory is considered both a means of remembering the past and a factor sustaining national self-awareness and the substantive continuity of cultural development. Cultural policy is interpreted as an institutional system that enables historical memory to be preserved, studied, disseminated, and connected to contemporary cultural life, rather than as the sole factor shaping it.

Uzbekistan's legal and regulatory instruments concerning culture make it possible to identify the institutional foundations of this theoretical approach. In particular, the objectives set out in Law No. LRU-668 concerning cultural activities, the protection of historical and cultural heritage, support for folk creativity, and the fulfilment of cultural needs demonstrate the multifaceted nature of cultural policy.

Nevertheless, the existence of legally prescribed objectives does not automatically establish their practical implementation or social outcomes. Accordingly, this article assesses the directions set out in legislation as the legal and institutional foundations

of cultural policy; firm conclusions about their effectiveness cannot be drawn without separate empirical evidence.

The model's practical significance derives from the need to consider its three components together when planning cultural policy, studying historical heritage, and designing cultural and educational programmes. Heritage preservation, scholarly interpretation, transmission to younger generations, and connections to contemporary creative activities should be coordinated.

5. CONCLUSION

The study indicates that the interrelationship between national identity, historical memory, and contemporary cultural policy is an important ideational and conceptual foundation of national cultural development. Examining these concepts as interacting components of a shared cultural system enables a deeper understanding of their substance and functions.

First, national identity is an axiological and spiritual phenomenon associated with awareness of historical and cultural belonging and the understanding of shared values and cultural markers. Its development is closely connected to historical memory, cultural heritage, and contemporary sociocultural experience. Second, historical memory is an important factor sustaining the historical continuity of national identity. It is expressed through the intergenerational transmission of historical experience, the preservation of cultural heritage, and contemporary society's understanding of knowledge about the past. Historical heritage protection should therefore be integrated with scholarly investigation and the communication of its educational significance.

Third, contemporary cultural policy is an institutional and practical mechanism that helps sustain continuity between national identity and historical memory. The Republic of Uzbekistan's legal and regulatory instruments concerning cultural activities and cultural heritage establish the legal foundations for cultural development, heritage protection, and support for cultural activities. Fourth, the study develops the author's three-component model integrating national identity, historical memory, and contemporary cultural policy. Its theoretical significance lies in its capacity to explain the axiological and spiritual, historical continuity, and institutional and practical foundations of national cultural advancement within a unified system.

Fifth, improving the ideational substance of cultural policy requires the coordination of historical heritage preservation, the development of its scholarly interpretation, connections between national values and contemporary cultural creativity, and the creation of conditions for intercultural cooperation. Promising directions for future research include empirically testing the proposed model, examining its potential applications in cultural and educational programmes, and identifying how national identity and historical memory are understood by different generations.

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