

HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

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Annotation. This article analyzes the historical formation of the science of psychology, its gradual development, and the theoretical approaches that emerged in different periods. It examines the earliest views on psychic phenomena in ancient civilizations, the formation of philosophical psychology, and the ideas of Aristotle, Plato, and Democritus. The ideas of early thinkers about the soul and consciousness are highlighted, showing how different civilizations attempted to interpret mental life long before psychology became an independent discipline.

Keywords: psychology history; ancient civilizations; philosophical psychology; Aristotle; Plato; Democritus; soul; consciousness; mental phenomena; theoretical approaches; development of psychology.

The article further explores the emergence of experimental psychology since the European Renaissance, emphasizing the growing interest in scientific observation and measurement. Particular attention is given to Wilhelm Wundt's establishment of the first psychology laboratory, which marked the formal separation of psychology from philosophy. The analysis includes the formation of major scientific directions such as behaviorism, founded by B. Pezhov and later developed by other scholars; Z. Freud's psychoanalysis, which opened new perspectives on the unconscious; and K. Jung's analytical psychology,

which broadened psychoanalytic ideas by introducing concepts such as the collective unconscious and archetypes. The article also reviews the main psychological trends of the 20th century, including humanistic psychology, the cognitive revolution, and the development of neuropsychology as a bridge between psychology and brain sciences.

Additionally, the study examines the practical areas of modern psychology and its significance in medicine, education, management, and social life. It shows that the science of psychology was formed through complex historical processes and today continues to develop as a multidisciplinary, evidence-based field. Psychology has ancient roots, often described as the science of the soul in the period from the 6th century BC to the 15th century AD. Each philosopher attempted to present their own view of what the soul is and how it functions. Early concepts were mostly animistic: every natural object—plants, animals, water, fire—was believed to possess its own soul. Movement, change, and activity were regarded as signs of this inner force. Aristotle proposed that psychic processes were reflected in all organic processes and extended the idea of the soul to plants and animals, describing different levels of vitality. Over time, two opposing views on the psyche emerged: materialistic and idealistic. According to Democritus, the psyche had a material nature, composed of subtle atoms whose movements and combinations gave rise to mental states. Knowledge of the world, in his view, was rooted in the interaction between the organism and the external environment. Plato, on the other hand, argued that the soul was eternal and perfect, belonging to the world of ideal forms. Understanding reality, therefore, consisted of recalling these ideal forms, since the soul existed before entering the human body. During the 17th–19th centuries,

psychology developed within the framework of the doctrine of consciousness. The introduction of experimental methods gradually transformed it from a branch of philosophy into a scientific discipline. R. Descartes suggested that animals lacked consciousness and explained their behavior through mechanical reflexes. He also believed that human consciousness and thinking were shaped by inner speech. J. Locke viewed consciousness as a system composed of simple elements derived from experience and used methods of “atomic” analysis of consciousness. In the same period, English thinkers such as T. Hobbes, D. Hartley, and P. Holbach contributed to the development of determinism and attempted to explain human behavior through objective laws. The formation of psychology as an independent science is closely associated with Wilhelm Wundt’s establishment of the first experimental psychology laboratory in 1879. Although this event marked a new era, psychology still faced conceptual difficulties and a methodological crisis as scholars attempted to define its subject matter, methods, and boundaries. The study of conditioned reflexes, the treatment of mental disorders, and advances in physiology further supported the emergence of psychology as a science that relied on empirical evidence. Conducting controlled psychological experiments became essential for validating theories. The 20th century witnessed the emergence of multiple psychological schools, including behaviorism, psychoanalysis, psychodynamic approaches, and Gestalt psychology. These directions fundamentally shaped the understanding of human behavior, cognition, and emotion. Psychology also strengthened its position in the system of sciences by establishing connections with physiology, sociology, pedagogy, linguistics, anthropology, and medicine. Since the psyche reflects the processes of the objective world, psychology

naturally interacts with disciplines that study human behavior and social systems. Philosophy has historically provided psychology with concepts and methods of analyzing consciousness. Within this relationship, the psyche is often viewed as primary, while consciousness emerges gradually through interaction with the environment. Psychology studies the development of mental processes within human activity and provides a general model for understanding human cognition. Because of this, psychology integrates knowledge from many fields and influences them in return.

Its relationship with sociology appears in data-collection methods such as surveys, interviews, and questionnaires, as well as in theories of social learning, group influence, socialization, and ethnopsychology. Sociology helps psychology broaden its understanding of collective behavior, while psychology contributes insights into individual differences within social groups. Pedagogy also relies heavily on psychology, borrowing methods for assessing abilities, motivation, learning styles, and developmental stages. The integration of psychological knowledge into pedagogy once led to the emergence of pedology—a field that combined elements of psychology, education, and biology. Although pedology is no longer practiced as an independent discipline, its historical development demonstrates the growing connection between psychology and education.

The article also briefly addresses widespread myths in everyday life regarding psychologists. Many people believe that psychologists can read minds, immediately understand anyone, or control people's thoughts and emotions. Others believe that psychologists possess extraordinary wisdom or special powers such as hypnosis. These misconceptions

arise from limited understanding of the profession. In reality, a psychologist is a specialist trained to analyze behavior and mental processes using scientific methods, not a person with supernatural abilities. Modern psychology is rapidly expanding and becoming more diverse. In recent decades, new branches such as anthropological psychology, acmeology, the psychology of threat and terrorism, the psychology of religion, communication psychology, developmental psychology, bioconstitutional psychology, the psychology of creativity, quantum psychology, investigative psychology, and the psychology of artistic perception have emerged. Studies in these areas help develop new theoretical frameworks and practical applications.

In Uzbekistan, psychologists face important research priorities, including studying the psychological changes occurring among individuals and social groups during the period of independence; exploring social perceptions across different age, demographic, ethnic, and professional categories; and developing scientific approaches for managing social behavior. Issues related to organizational psychology, management psychology, group psychology, and mass psychological processes require further study. Addressing these questions will allow national psychology to benefit from global scientific achievements while developing approaches that reflect local cultural and social characteristics.

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