

SPIRITUALITY AS THE FOUNDATION OF HUMAN AND SOCIETAL CULTURE

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Annotation

This article discusses the formation of human and societal culture, emphasizing that spirituality is the foundation of human and societal civilization. Today, the growing interest in mass culture and European culture among the youth is examined, highlighting the importance of shaping our cultural mentality.

Keywords: Spirituality, society, human culture, education, upbringing, ethics, mentality, social thought, mass culture, perspectives.

Spirituality, Growth, and Intellectual Maturity
True wisdom is achieved only through the balance of both.
“Abu Ali ibn Sino”

Introduction

The concepts of spirituality and culture have broad meanings. When discussing spirituality, it is not only the feelings and life experiences unique to humans that come to mind but also the important role of relationships that play a crucial part in the foundation of society. It is widely known that many of our great thinkers and scholars have contributed thoughts and reflections to the development of spirituality and culture. For instance, the scholar Abdurakhim Erkeyev noted, “There is no spirituality in nature. We cannot classify species of the animal world based on their manners, piety, or lack of conscience.”

Spirituality is a social phenomenon, meaning its formation and development are closely linked to human activity and are passed down from generation to generation. The following thoughts of our first President Islam Karimov express how spirituality becomes ingrained in a person's consciousness and heart: “Spirituality seeps into a person's blood and bones, gradually absorbed over years through the mother's milk, family upbringing, the teachings of our ancestors, and the feelings of homeland. It is composed of experiences, ideas, and reflections that are sometimes bitter and sometimes joyous. Since spirituality comprises feelings, perspectives, and skills that become part of human nature, they cannot be seen with the eyes or held with the hands; they form in the spirit, heart, and mind. Spiritual values pass from generation to generation in the form of the life experiences, ideas, and reflections accumulated by our ancestors. We can cite the rare works, books, ancient monuments, and discoveries that our scholars have left behind as examples. If these monuments, books, and discoveries did not exist, spirituality would not have formed in the human spirit, heart, and mind.”

Our first President Islam Karimov pointed out that “the sometimes bitter and sometimes joyous lessons of life also play a significant role in shaping spirituality. Life presents various



complexities, misfortunes, and contradictions. Alongside joy, there are many troubling and painful moments. All of these joys and troubles arise from people's actions. Some individuals experience a lack of spirituality due to irresponsibility, immorality, and a weak faith. By learning from these shortcomings and recognizing their mistakes, we can correct the deficiencies in our spirituality, and our efforts in this regard will pave the way for a purer spiritual realm." In his work "High Spirituality is an Invincible Power," the first President outlines the main criteria for shaping spirituality as follows:

1. Spiritual heritage and cultural wealth, ancient historical monuments
2. Oral folk art
3. Our sacred religion
4. The unmatched scientific and creative discoveries of our great thinkers and scholars
5. The role and influence of the family
6. The importance of the community
7. The education and upbringing system

In our country, many culturally rich and ancient historical monuments have been created. The "Avesta" book, produced in the Khorezm region three thousand years ago, deserves special attention. The essence of this book conveys the idea of "Good thought, good word, good deed," which remains significant. The teachings within the "Avesta" are based on three foundations of human faith: first, the purity of thoughts; second, the steadfastness of words; and third, the humanity of actions. We have all heard fairy tales and legends from our grandparents and read various books during our childhood. The presence of spirituality is evident in these tales and legends. The concept of spirituality has been ingrained in our consciousness since childhood, which is why it continuously flourishes in the hearts of truly virtuous individuals, guiding them toward goodness.

In Mahmudkhoja Behbudi's "Padarkush," a child's careless action leads to the downfall of the father's ideology. This suggests that ensuring there are no deficiencies in the upbringing and spirituality of every child is the duty and responsibility of today's grandparents and parents. After all, a child is the future fruit and reflection of tomorrow.

Mass Culture and Its Impact

One of the most pressing global issues in the 21st century is the concept of "mass culture." It continues to pose challenges. Everywhere we look, we witness various forms of "mass culture." Today, we can observe the negative effects of ideological threats disguised as "mass culture" on the consciousness of our youth. Many young people register on various informal websites through the internet that are inappropriate for their age. Despite being part of our own nation, they struggle to fully grasp our mentality, aesthetics, and ethics. Their increasing interest in European culture is due to a lack of ideological grounding and the absence of their own individual thoughts. Their imitation of European fashion often leads them to forget their own mentality. General Skobellov noted, "To destroy a nation, one does not have to kill it; it is enough to eradicate its culture, art, and language, and soon it will face decline." This void is being filled by the internet and mass media, leading to an influx of false news and slander aimed at poisoning the hearts and minds of individuals.

Our first President Islam Karimov stated in "High Spirituality is an Invincible Power," "The reality of life shows that any product of progress can be used for both good and evil." Currently, the internet is being utilized for self-serving purposes. The internet has both negative and positive aspects. Whether it is used for good or evil depends on the individual. The limitless



opportunities of this system and its speed facilitate the exchange of information, accelerate economic relations, and keep people informed about innovations in political and social spheres. However, there are destructive forces attempting to exploit this system for various malicious purposes, leading to a significant increase in fabricated news and slander within the system. Many websites are designed to corrupt the hearts and minds of individuals and negatively impact their morality and spirituality.

Utilizing local websites can enhance the knowledge and education of young people and provide them with accurate information about our nation's history and current events. As our first President Islam Karimov pointed out, "A nation that does not know its history and forgets yesterday has no future." A person who does not know his own history can be compared to a tree severed from its roots. The internet provides our youth with the opportunity to learn about our history, the cultures of various countries, and the present circumstances. As our President emphasized, "There can never be a vacuum in the ideological sphere. The heart, mind, and consciousness of a person never cease to absorb information and think. Therefore, they always need spiritual nourishment. If they do not obtain this nourishment from their environment or if this environment does not satisfy them, what will happen? They will gradually seek this nourishment elsewhere, and we must not allow that to happen." The essence of the matter is that as long as a person's consciousness continuously absorbs information and thinks, they need to be provided with spiritual nourishment without resorting to unnecessary websites. We also need to organize contests, competitions, and events for young people so that they do not waste their free time. The French writer Stendhal noted, "Idleness is the mother of boredom," emphasizing the need for engagement. Such activities play a crucial role in shaping national consciousness and thinking, which is particularly important for the healthy and spiritually developed growth of youth.

Conclusion

In conclusion, spirituality serves as the foundation of human and societal culture, providing ethical values, social stability, and the uniqueness of culture. Developing spirituality must be pursued through education and cultural initiatives, with attention to social sectors as well. As President Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted, "Currently, there are over 100,000 handwritten works preserved in the book collections of Uzbekistan. Unfortunately, these rare books have not yet been fully explored; they await scholars and readers. These unique works can help address many pressing issues facing today's world. By studying such rare books, we can also experience ideological growth. However, despite being heirs to such a unique heritage and wealth, we neglect to read and study them."

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