

Ontological Aspects of the Nature of Spirituality

Maneviyatın Doğasının Ontolojik Yönleri

NURNAZAR PIRNAZAROV 

Karakalpak State University

BERDİMURATOVA ALİMA KARLİBAEVNA 

Karakalpak State University

Received: 12.06.2024 | Accepted: 29.12.2024

Abstract: This article explores spirituality as a foundational element of socio-cultural identity, emphasizing its persistent relevance across historical epochs. Despite the challenges of modernization, globalization, and rapid societal change, spirituality remains vital in shaping personal and collective consciousness. The study identifies four essential characteristics of spirituality—axiological, sociocultural, humanitarian, and information-virtual—that highlight its multi-dimensional influence on human life. These aspects reveal spirituality as both a personal journey toward higher values and a collective force for societal coherence. The article argues that spirituality, when integrated into daily life, provides a stabilizing influence that preserves cultural identity, fosters humanistic values, and supports the individual's quest for self-fulfillment within the social context. This analysis underscores the need for renewed focus on spiritual development in modern society to mitigate alienation and uphold moral standards amidst an increasingly information-driven world.

Keywords: Spirituality, socio-cultural identity, individual and collective consciousness, globalization, human values, alienation, spiritual development.

✉ Nurnazar Pirnazarov

Karakalpak Devlet Üniversitesi

Karakalpak Cumhuriyeti, Özbekistan | ziyonetvilly@gmail.com

✉ Berdimuratova Alima Karlibaevna

Karakalpak Devlet Üniversitesi

Karakalpak Cumhuriyeti, Özbekistan | pnr9323@mail.ru



Introduction

Each historical epoch inevitably returns to the contemplation of “eternal” issues—problems that persist across generations, requiring renewed consideration as they continually manifest in different forms. These enduring concerns remain relevant because, although they seem familiar, they are continually reshaped by the unique conditions of each era. Within the socio-cultural fabric of our nation, spirituality is one such phenomenon—an enduring construct that, despite its intangible nature, profoundly shapes the internal structure of national identity and tradition. Across philosophical, social, cultural, and psychological studies, it is evident that the core of our societal tradition is organized around principles of spiritual existence (Rousseau, 2019:15-24).

In the current transitional phase, characterized by instability and transformative shifts across all levels of social existence and consciousness, exploring the essence of these ongoing changes becomes crucial (Barnett & Stein, 2012:243). The evolving reproduction of spiritual values across different aspects of life reflects the tension between rapid societal advancement and the dissolution of long-standing values and traditions. This tension has led to a “spiritual crisis,” where individual and collective consciousness struggles to align with emerging global demands and challenges (Harris & Jones, 2018: 195-207). This dissonance intensifies a sense of alienation, as individuals find themselves distanced from communal life, their personal needs and voices unheeded by society. Consequently, people seek to redefine their identity and preserve their essence in the face of technocratic and utilitarian pressures, further exacerbated by globalization.

In this evolving landscape, there is an increasing demand for individuals to possess not only technical skills and professional acumen but also a foundation in humanitarian values and effective intercultural communication. Emphasis on spiritual and moral qualities aligned with universal standards has become crucial to navigate these complexities and counteract alienation (McCall, 1994:323, Bennett, 2017:378). The weakening link between the individual and broader society manifests in widespread distrust and a lack of unified goals, complicating interpersonal relations and the social fabric (Suvorova, 2020:211).



The paradox of modern spirituality lies in its dual nature as both a socio-cultural artifact rooted in tradition and a complex, evolving construct shaped by current influences. While spirituality is an inherent component of socio-philosophical knowledge, contemporary expressions and understandings remain incomplete. The erosion of spirituality from society's moral compass has led to a dominance of consumerist values, overshadowing the constructive, life-affirming qualities integral to a spiritual society (Anatolij, 2018:16). This fundamental conflict sets the stage for an essential research question: What are the intrinsic characteristics of spirituality, and how can these serve as constructive resources within the socio-cultural reality of our nation?

This paper proposes that the ontological characteristics of spirituality encompass axiological, sociocultural, humanitarian, and information-virtual dimensions. Emphasis on these dimensions underpins society's existential strategy by reaffirming universal values and adapting them to the contemporary information age. Spirituality, conceived as a conscious pursuit of higher values and self-realization, has the potential to shape individual and collective existence, fostering a life oriented toward meaning and ethical action. As this article will explore, spirituality's essential qualities are integral to building a society where individual and social aspirations align, grounded in a shared cultural heritage and a collective humanitarian ethos.

Axiological characteristics of spirituality. The starting point in the study of the essence of spirituality is the inner spiritual world of a person (Gerdrung, Panwatanasakul, & Nurnazar, 2021:250-258). The soul, as an energy-information carrier of the subject's inner life force, actively promotes intellectual, emotional, moral and value aspirations. Acting as a link between a person and other people, this vital energy is realized in external being, manifested in active love for the world. Thanks to the information received from the outside, internal potencies, attitudes, meanings are formed that motivate the behavior-action of the subject to development and self-improvement. In other words, spirituality can be defined as work to improve and constructively renew oneself. In this process, a system of semantic value attitudes is determined, by which a person is guided in the movement from "to have" to "to be", from cognition - through action filled



with energy - to the spirit. Manifesting itself in the field of thought, knowledge, feelings, creativity, spirituality acts as a qualitative indicator of the value-semantic content of human life (Nurnazar, 2020:13). This allows us to define spirituality as an essential system-forming quality of a person that affects all levels of life.

Sociocultural characteristics of spirituality. The personal spiritual space of an individual is created in the real process of life throughout life and is updated due to the inclusion in the area of its "producer" - the socio-cultural spiritual space of society (Sheldrake, 2013:240). Through the study by the subject of the relations "I am internal and I am external", "I am the Other", "I am the Society", the qualitative content of social life is revealed in the unity of its individual and social aspects. Awareness of the process of creating one's own being, objectification of ideas, the desire to see and share a sense of beauty, reorganization of one's life in accordance with the ideas of "due" - these positions establish a worldview system and determine the position of a person in society (Browne, 2017: 3311-3318). They also reflect the presence of cultural and social foundations of spirituality.

Humanitarian characteristics of spirituality. The inner subjective world of a person is formed with the participation of many spiritual intentions. They are represented by non-material values, those objects of worship that are immensely dear to people - life, health, freedom, honor and independence of one's family, oneself. These are sovereign footholds that cannot be retreated from and cannot be undone. They are given to a person in the process of life development by the ability to know and readiness for faith, and are confirmed by the spiritual experience of a person (Harris&Jones, 2018: 195-207). Human life in its entirety and in all manifestations is a certain universal creative act in the broadest sense of the word. Obviously, the position of a person in the world and society consists of two intentions. The first of them is the internal actively manifested active position of the individual himself, which finds expression in the prevailing worldview attitudes, the desire to understand the world, to master and settle down in the direction of general cultural social processes. However, another thing is no less important - the external circumstances of a person's life, those cultural and historical conditions in which he has to live and create, realizing internal potentials. The humanistic orientation of the



worldview of the society surrounding a person acquires a decisive significance in this case (Frunza, 2018:162). Maintaining the principles of human development in society affirms the human essence, human experience and his creativity as a fundamental imperative, the general source of spiritual being, which is directly addressed to the content-semantic field of spirituality, confirms the presence of the humanitarian in the nature of spirituality.

Information-virtual characteristics of spirituality. Spirituality is able to manifest itself in the space of information-virtual reality. In the process of life, a person assimilates a certain amount of social information received from the outside world, which, developing into personal qualities, acts as an axiological guideline for life.

(In this case, information appears as an undoubted attribute of people's social practice.) The following sequence of interactions is built: mastering information by consciousness, a person masters not its formal thingness, but its ideal essence, while thinking out, building his personal model of the object. This mental operation - perception, reflection, conjecture - leads to the appearance of its own deep modification, which we understand as an informational virtual space of spirituality. It is conditioned, on the one hand, by the information of the real world, and, on the other hand, by the subjective reflection - virtualization - of the individual himself. In this process, an information-virtual reality is created, connected and occurring by the generated reality, but which acquires its own dimension. Spirituality focuses on the qualitative and dynamic side of the information flow, reproducing the images that guide a person in the search between the real, ideal - "due", and the real subjective position of a person - "existing".

Conclusion

The considered essential characteristics of spirituality - axiological, sociocultural, humanitarian, information-virtual - adequately reveal its nature, correspond to the times, and are capable of being realized in people's everyday practice. Refusal to take them into account and put them into practice creates a dangerous situation of alienation of a person not only from culture and social institutions, but also from his own essence. As a result, in the work on spiritual recovery, it is necessary to take into account the unified humanitarian context of social development, which will ensure



the preservation of value and moral standards for a person in the huge information flow that falls on him every day. This will allow social subjects to engage in new behaviors while maintaining themselves without losing their own identity. The choice of the spiritual direction of development is necessary and possible under the condition of understanding the essence of spirituality, its place and role in the life of the individual and society. It implies the formation of the spiritual world of a person through the implementation of spiritual value orientations, through a targeted impact on the spiritual potential of the individual with the unconditional support of society and the state.

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Öz: Bu makale, maneviyatı sosyo-kültürel kimliğin temel bir unsuru olarak ele alarak, tarihsel çağlar boyunca süregelen önemini vurgulamaktadır. Modernleşme, küreselleşme ve hızlı toplumsal değişimin zorluklarına rağmen maneviyat, kişisel ve kolektif bilincin şekillenmesinde hayati öneme sahip olmaya devam etmektedir. Çalışma, maneviyatın insan yaşamı üzerindeki çok boyutlu etkisini vurgulayan aksiyolojik, sosyokültürel, insani ve bilgi-sanal olmak üzere dört temel özelliğini tanımlamaktadır. Bu yönler, maneviyatı hem daha yüksek değerlere doğru kişisel bir yolculuk hem de toplumsal uyum için kolektif bir güç olarak ortaya koymaktadır. Makale, maneviyatın günlük yaşama entegre edildiğinde, kültürel kimliği koruyan, hümanist değerleri besleyen ve bireyin toplumsal bağlam içinde kendini gerçekleştirme arayışını destekleyen dengeleyici bir etki sağladığını savunmaktadır. Bu analiz, giderek daha fazla bilgi odaklı bir dünyada yabancılaşmayı azaltmak ve ahlaki standartları desteklemek için modern toplumda manevi gelişime yenilenmiş bir odaklanma ihtiyacının altını çizmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Maneviyat, sosyo-kültürel kimlik, bireysel ve kolektif bilinç, küreselleşme, insan değerleri, yabancılaşma, manevi gelişim.



