



CONFERENCE ARTICLE

**PHILOSOPHICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS AND CIVILIZATIONAL
INTERPRETATIONS OF THE CONCEPT OF MORAL CULTURE**

Temirov Akmal Zokirovich

Independent researcher of Samarkand State Pedagogical Institute, Uzbekistan

Abstract: This article explores the philosophical and theoretical content of the concept of moral culture, its civilizational criteria, and its role in enhancing individual activity. The paper compares interpretations of the concept of "culture" in the thought of Eastern and Western peoples, analyzing its descriptive, historical, normative, and ideological types. In contrast to the intellectual and technological approach inherent in the Western worldview, the purely spiritual foundation of culture—conscience, virtue, and the law of the heart—is substantiated. Furthermore, factors internally governing the moral culture of an individual are revealed within the context of the German thinker I. Kant's idea of the "categorical imperative" and contemporary philosophical perspectives.

Keywords: Moral culture, criteria of civilization, typology of culture, descriptive interpretation, Western and Eastern spirituality, conscience, V. Porus, I. Kant, categorical imperative, moral law, individual activity.

Introduction

The upbringing of moral virtues is the source of all virtues in all times and places. The practical manifestation of morality is considered moral culture. The context of moral culture is a person's attitude toward the world, events and phenomena, others and their activities, one's own life and its content and essence, and in some cases toward many concepts such as improving the lives of others; viewing the understanding, comprehension, feeling and appreciation of them as attention to increasing one's own activity is theoretically of great importance in further developing and enriching its content and essence. Therefore, moral culture and personal activity, taking into account the opportunities and conditions provided by independence, living alongside them and studying them occupy a special place in educating mature people of a great future state and in developing young people like great scholars.

It is repeatedly emphasized that the moral criteria of civilization are connected with relevant social relations. It is stated that changes in social relations lead to changes in worldview principles, as well as in the moral criteria and categories connected with them. For example, in the early stages of the formation of civilization, there were disciplines of organizational structures arising from hierarchical layers consisting of priests, temples, sacred state customs, and ideas about society being governed by a world standing above this world and nature. At later, higher stages of civilization, moral norms specially regulated by the educated upper stratum were developed. As a result of new changes occurring in the structure of society, new moral values and moral contexts continue to be created.

As we begin to consider the interpretations of the concept of "culture" among Eastern and Western peoples, first of all it should be emphasized that in special works devoted to cultural studies there are nearly 1000 definitions of this concept, whose Latin lexical meaning means "processing". In order not to get lost in the labyrinth of these interpretations, it is necessary first of all to pay attention to the fact that there are several types of them and always keep this in mind. They are as follows:

First, the descriptive interpretation. In this interpretation, the concept of culture includes all types of human activity, their various examples and various aspects: different languages, books, works of fine art, customs, various cultural associations, religions and the like.

Second, the historical interpretation. In this interpretation, culture means all things and phenomena created by humanity, generally speaking, creations made by human hands, that is, artificial nature is meant.

Third, the normative interpretation. In this case, culture consists of a set of values.

Fourth, the ideological interpretation. In this case, culture constitutes a flow of ideas that passes from generation to generation and becomes embedded in the consciousness of generations.

The abundance of interpretations of culture indicates that this phenomenon is very complex. In the typology of interpretations above, a certain side or interpretation of this complex phenomenon has been put forward, but there is no general and single interpretation. One of the main tasks of philosophy has been to distinguish the most general and correct one among these interpretations. However, as we have seen through the above terms, the fact that modern philosophy is in a state of crisis shows that it is difficult to rely on this task. Nevertheless, in this regard, it remains an appropriate and necessary task to analyze as deeply as possible the main ideas being put forward in philosophical thought, to approach them more deeply, and to try to distinguish our own approach among them.

In the Western worldview, culture has so far been the result of viewing it as an indicator of the domination of the individual and society over nature, formed during the Enlightenment period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The main means that has

made it possible to dominate nature has so far been science and technology. Therefore, in the content of the Western understanding of culture, there is no place for purely Eastern values such as conscience, truth, goodness, loyalty, devotion, kindness, compassion, self-sacrifice, love and spirituality. They have mainly become concepts more characteristic of religion and past culture. Therefore, in the West, spiritual culture mainly means intellectuality and being armed with equipment and technology. For this reason, at present many people in the West consider themselves much more cultured than people of the East. However, in Western countries too, there was previously the same view of culture as in the East, and efforts to preserve and protect these views still exist. However, during the later periods of the development of the scientific worldview and scientific and technical progress, such an approach became increasingly limited.

It is also noteworthy that in post-Soviet Russia there is now an approach to culture that is completely different from the Western one. For example, V. Porus gives the following definition of culture. "Culture," he says, "is the foundational structure of internal self-restraint, spiritual and moral self-control, which has become the main rules, principles, of human behavior, creativity and any activity. A cultured person is not someone who merely says fine words, but someone who can seriously say: 'I can never, under any circumstances, do such a bad or wrong thing. Because if I do such a thing, I will not be a human being'" [2.27.]. Here and throughout the following content of our work, by "culture" we mainly mean spiritual culture.

The view expressed here — "I can never, under any circumstances, do such a bad or wrong thing. Because if I do such a thing, I will not be a human being" — corresponds to the concept of "conscience" in Eastern spirituality, and in Russian to "sovest". In the doctrine of the German classical philosopher I. Kant, a special term, "categorical imperative", was used instead of these concepts. This term is considered one of the main concepts, categories, included in the content of doctrines called "sharia" in Islamic religious philosophy, "law" in Christian religious philosophy, "ethics" in Greek philosophy, and "dao" in Chinese philosophy.

The definition given by Porus, in our opinion, is quite tolerant and at the same time more concrete. In particular, the presence here of a factor that directs human actions is noteworthy. This factor corresponds to "conscience" in V. Porus and to the "law of the heart" in I. Kant. The famous German philosopher's statement, uttered from the depths of his heart, "The more and longer I think, the more and with ever stronger wonder and reverence two things fill my heart each time: one is the starry sky above me, the other is the moral law within my heart" [3.499.], is precisely about this. He expressed this moral law in his heart through the Latin concept "imperative". The concept "imperative" means "commanding". Through this, the philosopher emphasizes that the conscience in his heart is his ruler, the force directing his actions. Kant's admiration for the "starry sky" expresses that he is always amazed by how great this world is and by the wisdom of its creation. Thus, I. Kant's "categorical imperative" appears as a law that internally, from the heart, directs, determines and controls the behavior of every person, and it constitutes the basis of the individual's culture.

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