The Journal
OF INTERDISCIPLINARY HUMAN STUDIES
https://mijournals.com/index.php/Human_Studies/index

https://doi.org/10.57033/mijournals-2026-1-0033

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PHILOSOPHY OF VALUES: THEORETICAL SCHOOLS AND CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES

Abstract. *This scientific article analyzes the philosophical foundations of values, major axiological schools, and modern approaches. Special attention is paid to the relationship between axiology and spirituality, the impact of globalization on the evolution of values, and the specific features of value-oriented approaches in Central Asia. The research findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of values in the spiritual development of society.*

Keywords: *value, Central Asia, axiology, spiritual development, Friedrich Nietzsche, Axiological schools.*

INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of values constitutes a fundamental theoretical framework for understanding the meaning and substance of human and social life. Values function as guiding principles of human behavior, regulators of social relations, and moral standards throughout all stages of societal development. For this reason, the problem of values has consistently occupied a central place in the history of philosophical thought.

From ancient philosophy onward, values were interpreted within the framework of ethics, justice, goodness, and virtue, while in modern philosophy they became increasingly associated with moral consciousness and individual choice. The emergence of axiology as an independent philosophical discipline at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries significantly expanded the scope of value studies, allowing values to be analyzed as moral, cultural, aesthetic, and social phenomena.

In the contemporary world, processes of globalization, rapid technological advancement, and intensified cultural interaction have profoundly influenced value systems. The relationship between traditional and modern values, as well as between national and universal values, has become a pressing philosophical issue. Within this context, the study of axiological theories, the interconnection between values and spirituality, and the transformation of values under globalization is of particular importance. This article examines major theoretical schools of the philosophy of values and explores modern approaches to understanding the role of values in the spiritual development of society.

MAIN PART

The philosophy of values constitutes an important theoretical foundation for understanding the meaning and content of human and social life. Values function as guiding principles of human activity, regulators of social relations, and moral standards at all stages of social development. For this reason, the issue of values has always occupied a central place in the history of philosophical thought.

The problem of values was initially examined in ancient philosophy within the framework of ethics, goodness, and justice. In the views of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, goodness, happiness, and virtue were interpreted as the highest goals of human life. During this period, values were considered objective and absolute in nature.

In modern philosophy, however, the problem of values began to be closely associated with the subjective factor. Immanuel Kant linked values to moral consciousness and analyzed them within the framework of "practical reason." According to Kant, human dignity and freedom constitute supreme values. This approach laid the foundation for associating values with personal choice and moral responsibility.

At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, axiology emerged as an independent philosophical discipline. During this period, values began to be studied not only as moral phenomena but also as cultural, aesthetic, and social realities.

Within classical axiology, several important theoretical schools were formed. Representatives of Neo-Kantianism, such as Wilhelm Windelband and Heinrich

E-ISSN 3069-8375

Rickert, regarded values as the main criterion for understanding the historical process. According to them, historical events acquire meaning and significance through values.

Max Scheler, a representative of phenomenology, analyzed values in connection with human emotional experience. He classified values into a hierarchical system, ranging from material values to spiritual and religious ones. In Scheler's theory, love and compassion are interpreted as the highest values.

In the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, a critical attitude toward traditional values occupies a central position. By advancing the idea of the "revaluation of values," Nietzsche called on individuals to create new values through strong will and creativity. This approach exerted a profound influence on the development of individualism and existentialism in modern philosophy.

From the second half of the twentieth century onward, the issue of values acquired new interpretations within postmodern philosophy. Postmodernism rejects the idea of absolute and universal values, emphasizing instead their relative and contextual nature. According to this perspective, each culture and society possesses its own system of values, making universal generalization difficult.

In contemporary humanistic philosophy, human rights, freedom, equality, and justice are promoted as universal values. This approach evaluates values as fundamental factors of social development and sustainable progress.

In religious-philosophical approaches, values are based on divine sources and are interpreted as criteria that determine the meaning and purpose of human life. In Islamic philosophy, justice, honesty, responsibility, and human dignity are regarded as fundamental values. These values serve to maintain balance in both personal and social life.

Under conditions of globalization, the relationship between traditional and modern values has become a pressing issue. On the one hand, technological progress and the rapid flow of information contribute to the emergence of new values. On the other hand, preserving national and religious values has gained particular importance.

This contradiction necessitates a balanced approach within the philosophy of values. Contemporary approaches are based on adapting traditional values to new conditions without denying them. This, in turn, constitutes an important factor in ensuring sustainable social development.

E-ISSN 3069-8375

The philosophy of values reveals the spiritual foundations of human and social life through various theoretical schools and approaches. An analysis of classical and modern perspectives demonstrates that values always develop in close connection with historical, cultural, and social contexts. In this respect, a deep understanding of values plays a crucial role in ensuring the spiritual development of society.

The concepts of axiology and spirituality are closely interconnected in philosophical thought, serving as an important theoretical foundation for understanding the individual's inner world, moral position, and social relations. The system of values emerges as one of the main factors defining the content of spirituality. Therefore, analyzing the relationship between axiology and spirituality is of particular importance for understanding the spiritual development of society.

The Philosophical Content of the Concept of Spirituality

Spirituality is a complex socio-philosophical phenomenon associated with an individual's inner spiritual world, moral norms, beliefs, worldview, and social responsibility. In philosophy, spirituality is not opposed to material life but is interpreted as a criterion that determines its meaning and content.

Spirituality constitutes the foundation of personal development and plays an important role in self-awareness, the determination of life goals, and the individual's place in society. From this perspective, spirituality is not only an individual but also a social phenomenon that reflects the overall moral condition of society.

Values are an integral component of spirituality, determining the direction of human behavior and activity. The value system formed in each society directly influences the spiritual consciousness of its members. For example, values such as justice, honesty, conscience, and responsibility serve as key criteria of an individual's moral character.

From an axiological perspective, spirituality represents the process of internalizing values and manifesting them in practical life. While values exist at a theoretical level, spirituality is their real-life expression. Thus, axiology and spirituality appear as complementary concepts.

The formation of personal spirituality is primarily connected with the process of understanding and accepting values. From early childhood, individuals assimilate certain value systems through family, educational institutions, cultural environments, and religious traditions. These values shape their worldview and moral position.

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In modern society, personal spirituality is influenced by multiple factors. The development of information technologies, mass culture, and global communication processes introduce new elements into value systems. This situation complicates the issue of value choice in personal spirituality.

At the societal level, axiology serves as an important theoretical basis for shaping spiritual policy. A value system defines moral standards and contributes to social stability and cohesion. In societies where spiritual values weaken, social instability, moral crisis, and spiritual vacuum may emerge.

Therefore, developing spirituality on the basis of an axiological approach holds strategic importance for social progress. The harmony between national and universal values enhances the spiritual potential of society.

Religious values occupy a special place in the formation of spirituality. In religious teachings, moral norms are based on divine principles and encourage individuals toward goodness, patience, and responsibility. In Islamic spirituality, justice, honesty, compassion, and human dignity are interpreted as sacred values.

These values are significant not only in personal life but also in social relations. The harmony between religious and secular values ensures the stable development of a society's spiritual life.

Globalization and the Evolution of Values

Globalization is one of the most significant socio-philosophical phenomena of the modern world, reflecting the integration of economic, political, cultural, and spiritual processes. This process leads to the relative disappearance of boundaries between societies, accelerated information exchange, and expanded cultural interaction. As a result, value systems undergo profound changes and transformations.

From a philosophical perspective, globalization represents a new stage of social development in which humanity is forming as a unified civilizational space. This process directly affects social relations, modes of thinking, and value systems. Globalization transforms not only material life but also individuals' worldviews and spiritual orientations.

Under conditions of globalization, values emerge as a multilayered and complex system. National, religious, and cultural values interact with globally disseminated universal values.

E-ISSN 3069-8375

Globalization exerts a dual influence on the evolution of values. On the one hand, it facilitates the spread of universal values such as human rights, freedom, equality, and democracy, which occupy an important place in modern political and legal systems.

On the other hand, globalization poses certain threats to national and traditional values. As a result of mass culture, consumerism, and information pressure, some traditional values may lose their significance or become secondary.

Modern information technologies are among the main driving forces of globalization. Through the internet, social networks, and mass media, values spread and change rapidly. This complicates the process of value selection in human consciousness.

The dominance of speed and visuality in the information space may lead to the simplification of values with deep spiritual content. Consequently, moral norms become relative, and spiritual criteria acquire a fluctuating character.

In the context of globalization, the balance between national and universal values becomes an important philosophical issue. While universal values express the common interests of humanity, national values reflect the historical experience and cultural uniqueness of specific peoples.

Rather than opposing these two types of values, it is essential to ensure their harmony. When national values are enriched by universal ones, the spiritual stability of society is strengthened.

Some scholars regard globalization as a source of spiritual crisis, arguing that rapid change, cultural standardization, and the dominance of consumer values lead to a spiritual vacuum.

Other approaches view globalization as an opportunity, emphasizing that it allows for the re-evaluation of values, their adaptation to contemporary demands, and spiritual renewal.

In conclusion, globalization appears as a complex and contradictory process in the evolution of values, simultaneously generating new opportunities and challenges. Therefore, preserving and developing values under conditions of globalization requires a balanced, conscious, and scientifically grounded approach.

CONCLUSION

The analysis presented in this study demonstrates that the philosophy of values plays a crucial role in revealing the spiritual foundations of human and social life.

E-ISSN 3069-8375

Values develop in close connection with historical, cultural, and social contexts and continuously influence the direction of social development. A review of classical and modern philosophical perspectives confirms that values are not static or absolute but dynamic and evolving phenomena shaped by changing social conditions.

The close relationship between axiology and spirituality highlights the practical significance of values in shaping individual moral consciousness and social behavior. Value systems determine the ethical orientation of individuals and contribute to social cohesion, stability, and moral integrity. Societies in which spiritual values weaken are often confronted with moral crises and social instability.

Under conditions of globalization, the evolution of values emerges as a complex and contradictory process. While globalization facilitates the dissemination of universal values such as human rights, freedom, and equality, it also poses challenges to national, cultural, and religious value systems. Therefore, a balanced and reflective approach is required–one that preserves traditional values while adapting them to contemporary realities.

In conclusion, a comprehensive understanding of the philosophy of values is essential for ensuring sustainable social and spiritual development. The harmonization of national and universal values, grounded in an axiological framework, represents a key condition for fostering a morally resilient and spiritually mature society.

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