

IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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Annotation

In this article, his views on the socio-political factors of creating a spiritual space in the context of the new Uzbekistan are scientifically analyzed. Also, the article scientifically highlights that in recent years of Uzbekistan's independence, fundamental reforms have been carried out in all spheres of the country's life, with special attention being paid to spiritual renewal alongside economic growth in society's development.

Keywords. Uzbekistan, state, spirituality, ideology, society, strategy, society, development, worldview, citizenship, human.

In the years following Uzbekistan's independence, comprehensive reforms have been implemented across all spheres of national life. Alongside economic development, particular attention is being paid to spiritual renewal as an essential component of societal progress. As President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has emphasized, if the body of society is the economy, then its soul and spirit are its spirituality. In other words, building a new, free, and prosperous "New Uzbekistan" relies on two strong pillars: a robust economy based on market principles and a strong spirituality rooted in the rich heritage of our ancestors and national values. Therefore, in this new era of development, restoring and enhancing spiritual values and strengthening the moral foundations of society have been identified as priority tasks.

As highlighted in President Mirziyoyev's work Strategy of New Uzbekistan, "Spirituality is a set of mutual trust, respect, and attention among people; noble aspirations toward building the future of the nation and state together; and exemplary virtues. In other words, spirituality is the foundation that defines the content and quality of all political and social relations in society. The firmer this foundation, the stronger the people and the state will be." In this sense, studying the state policies and social initiatives aimed at developing the spiritual sphere and shaping the "spiritual space" of the country is of vital importance [1].

The concepts of New Uzbekistan and spiritual space, the priority directions of

spiritual development, the role of state policy in shaping societal morality, the views expressed in the President's works, and the media's role in covering these issues are all significant. Additionally, education and upbringing, public culture, religious tolerance, and the institutions of civil society play an important role in establishing this new spiritual space.

The concept of New Uzbekistan reflects the new stage of contemporary Uzbekistan, its novel socio-political processes, and values. Since the beginning of the reform period after 2016, the phrase "New Uzbekistan" has been used as a symbol of the nation's renewed image and the idea of building a just and free society. New Uzbekistan is based on principles such as respect for human dignity, prioritizing the people's interests, governance rooted in dialogue with citizens, rule of law, and transparency. President Mirziyoyev has emphasized that the ideology of New Uzbekistan should embody the principles of goodness, humanity, and humanism: "The ideology of the New Uzbekistan we are creating will be based on goodness, humanity, and humanism. By ideology, we primarily mean the cultivation of thought and the upbringing of national and universal values. These are based on the age-old life experiences and values of our people." These words indicate that the idea of New Uzbekistan relies on spiritual heritage and human virtues for its development [2].

The concept of spiritual space refers to the overall moral and spiritual environment formed in society, representing the moral character of the people. In his book Strategy of New Uzbekistan, President Mirziyoyev defines the new spiritual space as follows: "What is the new spiritual space? In my view, it is an enlightened society where the spiritual image of the New Uzbekistan we aspire to is clearly reflected, where our people strive for happiness, and our nation lives in prosperity."

Thus, the new spiritual space envisions an enlightened society – one in which people live happy lives and a national development model with high moral standards is implemented. The idea of the Third Renaissance also aims at this spiritual revival, and the grand slogan "From National Revival to National Advancement" has been adopted as a guiding principle. This noble idea contributes to laying the foundation for the new awakening of New Uzbekistan. Consequently, the concepts of New Uzbekistan and the new spiritual space are closely interconnected: the New Uzbekistan being built through modern reforms seeks to create a spiritually mature, united, and enlightened society [3].

In the context of New Uzbekistan, spiritual development has been elevated to the

level of state policy, with specific priority directions clearly defined. First and foremost, the Development Strategy for 2022–2026 gives special attention to enhancing the spiritual sphere. In the Presidential Decree No. PF-60 of January 28, 2022, “On the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022–2026,” the goals and objectives of the strategy were outlined, with particular emphasis placed on the creation of a new spiritual space. These strategic and programmatic documents provide a foundation for spiritual advancement characteristic of this new era of awakening and aim to elevate societal development to a new stage. Notably, the strategy identifies the realization of the “Third Renaissance” idea as one of its priority directions [4].

Practically, in recent years, a range of large-scale programs and initiatives have been implemented in various areas of spiritual development. Under the leadership of President Mirziyoyev, the expanded meeting of the Republican Council for Spirituality and Enlightenment held on December 22, 2023, put forward important initiatives in nine priority areas. Among these, a separate program was proposed for the development of the national idea – serving as a methodological foundation for the fields of spirituality and culture, and aimed at countering dangerous tendencies among certain groups, such as opposing religion to the law or denying secular values. As the President emphasized, historical experience shows that in difficult and challenging times, the nation’s enlightened intellectuals, poets, writers, and leaders of enlightenment unite society and lead it forward with a spiritual drive. Therefore, today, as exemplified by our Jadid ancestors, there is a critical need for highly educated professionals who have absorbed Western scientific achievements while being raised in the spirit of national values [5].

The meeting also highlighted the importance of increasing women’s access to education and professional opportunities as a separate priority, recognizing the crucial role of women in societal development. It was decided to establish “Centers of Spirituality and Enlightenment” in the regions, as well as a dedicated spiritual sector in every district and city. Local governors’ responsibilities were increased, and these centers were to operate as working structures of local spiritual councils. This initiative aims to organize ongoing spiritual and educational events in neighborhoods and regions.

Priority directions also include the development of culture and the arts. Specific programs were proposed for the advancement of theater and cinema, creation of films on the lives of our great ancestors under the “Living History” series, and

production of animated films for children depicting the lives of forebears. Measures were planned to enhance the national cultural heritage and museum activities, including the construction of new museums, enrichment of existing exhibitions, and even supporting cinema as an economic sector through the establishment of cinemas. To further develop traditional arts such as music, dance, maqom, and storytelling (bakhshi), it was proposed to open specialized schools and allocate grants for scientific research.

At the same time, ensuring spiritual development has consistently been highlighted as a priority in the President's addresses to the Oliy Majlis (Parliament). For example, in his 2021 address, the Head of State emphasized strengthening the moral foundations of society, developing the field of culture, and supporting science, education, and creative professionals as key priority directions. As a result of these noble efforts, the opportunity to enrich social life with new positive ideas and to create a strong unifying spiritual environment for the nation increases.

In conclusion, the priority directions defined in the spiritual sphere under the conditions of New Uzbekistan – developing the national idea and spirituality, improving education and upbringing, advancing culture and the arts, preserving national heritage, and fostering a healthy worldview among the youth – are programmatic tasks aimed at laying the foundation of the “Third Renaissance.” The development and practical implementation of national spirituality are of decisive importance in state policy. In the era of New Uzbekistan, the role of spiritual and educational activities within state policy has significantly increased. In recent years, several important decisions have been adopted in this regard. For instance, the Republican Council for Spirituality and Enlightenment was established, with its chairperson directly appointed by the President, and local governors were assigned leadership of regional councils. This structure serves to strengthen cooperation between state and public organizations in the field of spirituality and education. As a result of this new system, work in the spiritual sphere has been elevated to a higher place within state policy. The establishment of specialized spiritual departments in regions and districts further ensures the implementation of this policy at the local level.

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