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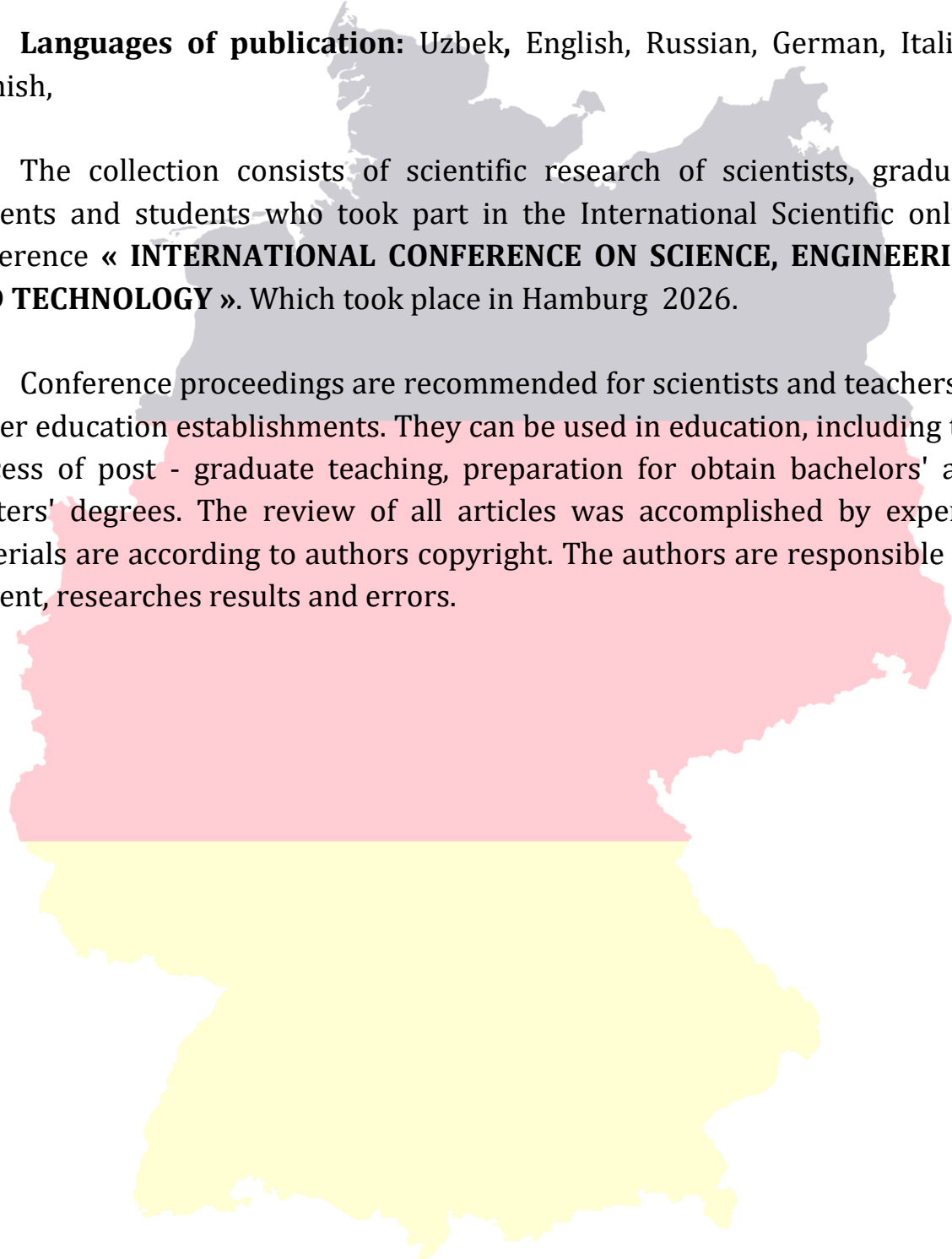


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PHILOSOPHICAL AND ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION: INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND NATIONAL APPROACH

09.00.00 – PHILOSOPHICAL SCIENCES

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Abstract. This article analyzes the philosophical and ethical foundations of social justice and anti-corruption policies in the context of modern global processes. The study examines the negative impact of corruption on social development, human values, and public administration systems. Furthermore, effective anti-corruption mechanisms based on international experience and the specific features of national approaches are highlighted. The research reveals the dialectical relationship between the principles of social justice, legal consciousness, moral responsibility, and transparent governance.

Keywords: philosophy, social justice, corruption, ethics, transparency, legal consciousness, public administration, moral values, civil society.

INTRODUCTION

At all stages of historical development, the idea of building a just society has served as a primary objective for humanity. Social justice functions not merely as a legal norm or an economic category, but as a fundamental philosophical and ethical value that reflects the spiritual maturity of a society. As noted in the textbook *Philosophy*, justice is a structural criterion of social stability, and any systemic violation of it leads to destructive crises within the socio-political structure[1]. In the contemporary era of globalization, the greatest threat undermining this stability and distorting the scale of justice is the global phenomenon of corruption.

Corruption cannot be reduced to a simple economic or administrative crime; it is an existential threat that degrades the moral and ethical foundations of society, erodes social trust, and deconstructs the ontological balance of justice. From the perspective of ethical philosophy, corruption represents a crisis of individual moral choice and a failure of civic responsibility. It distorts the "subject-object" relations in public administration, converting public interest into private utility.

Consequently, the fight against corruption cannot achieve sustainable results if it relies solely on punitive legal measures. Developing a deep understanding of



its philosophical and ethical foundations and fostering an institutional and individual "vaccine of integrity" in public consciousness is an urgent necessity of our time. The objective of this article is to comprehensively examine the socio-philosophical and ethical mechanisms required to establish social justice, while critically evaluating international anti-corruption paradigms in relation to the evolving national strategy of Uzbekistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The intellectual history of social justice and moral rectitude spans from ancient philosophy to contemporary political theory. In antique philosophy, Aristotle defined justice in his *Nicomachean Ethics* through the concepts of distributive (*justitia distributiva*) and corrective (*justitia commutativa*) justice, emphasizing that inequality arises when equals are treated unequally[2]. In the context of Eastern Renaissance philosophy, Abu Nasr al-Farabi, in his treatise *The Virtuous City*, argued that a just ruler must possess high moral qualities, and a city can only achieve happiness when its governance is free from greed and internal betrayal[3].

In modern political philosophy, John Rawls fundamentally reshaped the discourse with his *A Theory of Justice*, where he introduced the "veil of ignorance" and argued that social and economic inequalities must be arranged so that they are to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged[4]. Conversely, contemporary critique of corrupt networks is often framed around Michael Sandel's work, which warns against the moral limits of markets, arguing that market values can corrupt public goods when applied to spheres governed by non-market norms[5].

Russian philosopher V.S. Stepin analyzed the crisis of modern civilization by focusing on the relationship between human activity, culture, and ethics, noting that techno-technological growth must be accompanied by a development of higher ethical standard imperatives[6]. A.A. Guseynov further treats morality as an unconditional restrictive filter against administrative opportunism[7].

Within the academic community of Uzbekistan, N.A. Shermukhamedova has conducted extensive research on the philosophical aspects of social epistemology and methodology, highlighting the dialectical necessity of balancing socio-structural changes with the spiritual and moral cultivation of the individual[^8]. Under a socio-ethical lens, I. Saifnazarov evaluates the economic and spiritual causes of corruption, arguing that strengthening legal culture and implementing transparent mechanisms within public institutions are vital prerequisites for securing social justice[^9]. Additionally, Z.S. Aripova highlights that information societies must cultivate cultural and moral traditions to prevent systemic ethical decay in the wake of rapid modernization[10][11].

METHODS



To ensure analytical depth and scientific objectivity, a comprehensive multi-methodological matrix consisting of 11 philosophical and socio-scientific methods was deployed:

1. **Axiological Analysis:** Employed to trace the evaluation and evolution of "justice," "honesty," and "integrity" as core ethical values within the socio-political system.
2. **Dialectical Method:** Utilized to expose the internal contradictions between individual self-interest and public duty, examining the systemic tensions between corruption and social equilibrium.
3. **Comparative Method:** Applied to analyze the divergence and convergence between Western institutional anti-corruption frameworks and Eastern moral-ethical governance models.
4. **Systems Approach:** Used to conceptualize corruption not as an isolated incident, but as a systemic pathology affecting the legal, economic, and moral sub-systems of society.
5. **Structural-Functional Analysis:** Assisted in identifying how anti-corruption tools (such as compliance control) stabilize administrative structures and reinforce social justice.
6. **Socio-Cultural Approach:** Allowed for an investigation into how local traditions, public mindset, and historical inheritance influence or mitigate corrupt behaviors.
7. **Hermeneutical Method:** Used for the textual interpretation of international legal conventions, anti-corruption laws, and classical philosophical treatises to uncover their underlying normative principles.
8. **Historical Method:** Applied to trace the evolution of anti-corruption strategies and state-building reforms over historical timeframes.
9. **Phenomenological Method:** Utilized to study the perception of corruption within public consciousness and its impact on the existential trust between citizens and the state.
10. **Gnoseological (Epistemological) Analysis:** Used to examine the formation of legal consciousness and anti-corruption literacy as a distinct form of social knowledge.
11. **Sinergetik Method:** Applied to understand how localized anti-corruption initiatives can self-organize into a macro-level social movement toward transparency.

RESULTS



The empirical and theoretical findings of this study demonstrate a direct inverse correlation between the prevalence of corruption and the realization of social justice: wherever corrupt mechanisms proliferate, the principles of meritocracy, equality before the law, and fair distribution of resources inevitably collapse. The systemic configuration of how distinct philosophical-practical paradigms address this dynamic is structurally categorized in Table 1.

Table 1. Philosophical and Practical Models of Social Justice and Anti-Corruption

Comparative Indicators	Liberal-Institutional Model (Western)	Moral-Ethical Model (Eastern Traditional)	Holistic-National Model (Uzbekistan’s Approach)
Core Foundation	Rule of law, bureaucratic checks and balances, and institutional transparency.	Primacy of conscience, inner moral restraint, and continuous ethical education.	Synthesis of stringent legal regulations and targeted moral-spiritual orientation.
Concept of Justice	Equality of opportunity and procedural fairness (Rawlsian framework) ^[4] .	Social harmony, mutual communal obligation, and equity.	Human dignity (<i>Inson qadri</i>), comprehensive social protection, and meritocracy.
Primary Mechanism	External institutional oversight, audit trails, and strict legal sanctions.	Inner self-perfection, containment of greed, and familial-societal shame culture.	Implementation of digital compliance control paired with civic-moral education.
Systemic Outcome	Minimization of bureaucratic opportunism and institutional friction.	Cultivation of high interpersonal and systemic socio-institutional trust.	Zero-tolerance atmosphere toward corruption across state and civil sectors.

Our research reveals that the national anti-corruption model of Uzbekistan has successfully transitioned from a reactive paradigm (punishing corruption after its occurrence) to a proactive preventative framework. This structural change is



realized through the comprehensive digitization of public services, which removes the human factor from critical transaction nodes, thereby validating the social justice imperative.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study prompt a critical re-examination of several highly contested issues in social philosophy. A central debate concerns the optimal balance between external institutional coercion and inner moral restraint. Authors like Byung-Chul Han argue that the modern obsession with total institutional transparency can paradoxically lead to a breakdown of organic social trust, reducing human interactions to cold algorithmic verifications[12].

Our findings indicate that transparency must not be purely mechanical; it must be grounded in an underlying ethical infrastructure. If legal transparency is implemented without a corresponding upgrade in public moral consciousness, corrupt networks simply evolve into more sophisticated, covert configurations.

Furthermore, analyzing international experience—such as the institutional rigidity of Singapore or the high transparency indexes of Scandinavian nations—confirms that successful anti-corruption frameworks are invariably backed by an uncompromising code of professional ethics[13]. In the context of Uzbekistan, this dynamic possesses unique socio-cultural characteristics. The implementation of modern anti-corruption compliance systems must harmonize with the historical and communal values embedded within the *Mahalla* structure.

The national strategy, validated by recent legislative acts and decrees, correctly identifies that cultivating a collective psychology of zero-tolerance is just as vital as imposing structural legal penalties[14]. Thus, the philosophical synthesis of Eastern moral accountability and Western structural transparency forms the conceptual core of Uzbekistan's modern anti-corruption governance.

CONCLUSION

Social justice and the fight against corruption represent two inseparable dimensions of a balanced social system. From a philosophical and ethical standpoint, eradicating corruption cannot be accomplished merely by rewriting legal codes or increasing administrative penalties; it fundamentally requires the moral and spiritual rehabilitation of the collective social fabric.

The structural reforms executed in Uzbekistan demonstrate that securing human dignity (*Inson qadri*) is directly contingent upon the systematic elimination of corrupt vulnerabilities. Ultimately, fostering high legal literacy, embedding institutional compliance, and cultivating personal ethical integrity serve as the



primary strategic mechanisms for constructing a stable, just, and sustainably developing society.

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