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INTERPRETATIONS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGES AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF LEGAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN EASTERN AND WESTERN LEGAL-PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINES

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Abstract. This article examines the impact of socio-cultural transformations on the formation and transformation of legal consciousness in Eastern and Western legal-philosophical traditions from a comparative philosophical perspective. Legal consciousness is conceptualized not as a static set of legal knowledge, but as a dynamic socio-spiritual phenomenon shaped by historical experience, moral values, religious and cultural perceptions, political institutions, and everyday social practices. The legal-philosophical ideas of Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, Al-Biruni, Yusuf Khas Hajib and Nizam al-Mulk are compared with the approaches of Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Immanuel Kant, Hegel, Karl Marx, Eugen Ehrlich, Leon Petrażycki, Lawrence Friedman, Patricia Ewick and Susan Silbey.

Keywords: legal consciousness, philosophy of law, Eastern legal thought, Western legal thought, socio-cultural transformation, legal culture, legal values, justice, rule of law, legal modernization, legal civilization, civil society.

Introduction. The article substantiates the substantive and functional evolution of legal consciousness during the transition from traditional society to modern society—encompassing industrial and post-industrial stages—as well as to the digital society. It compares the interplay of law, morality, justice, and collective responsibility found in Eastern legal-philosophical thought with Western approaches rooted in individual rights, freedom, the rule of law, and formal rationality. The views on legal consciousness and legal culture held by representatives of the Uzbek school of jurisprudence—such as Z.M. Islomov, Kh.T. Odilqoriyev, A.Kh. Saidov, A. Tadjikhanov, and others—are analyzed in conjunction with contemporary approaches in the sociology and philosophy of law. The study establishes that the transformation of legal consciousness involves both universal and civilizational dimensions, and that maintaining a balance between global legal values and national-cultural identity is crucial to its formation.

Legal consciousness is a fundamental socio-philosophical category that serves to understand, evaluate, and transform the legal life of society. The actual social effectiveness of law is not determined solely by the existence of normative legal acts adopted by the state. How society perceives the law, the value it assigns to it, and how it is applied in daily life are also of significant importance.

In this sense, legal consciousness can be understood as a system comprising society's perceptions, evaluations, beliefs, and practical attitudes regarding legal reality. In modern sociology of law, legal consciousness is evolving into a dynamic concept that examines how individuals experience, understand, and interpret the law in their daily lives, as well as how they act in accordance with it.

This issue is particularly relevant in the context of today's globalization. This is because traditional perceptions of the law are shifting as a result of digitalization, migration, transnational legal relations, the

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universalization of human rights, the development of civil society, and the expansion of the information space.

Interpreting this process solely from the perspective of Western modernization would be a one-sided approach. After all, Eastern civilizations have also developed profound legal-philosophical views regarding justice, the state, law, morality, individual responsibility, and social order. Therefore, rather than contrasting Eastern and Western legal thought, a comparative study of their respective responses to the transformation of legal consciousness represents a scientifically productive methodological approach.

Research methodology. The study employed historical-philosophical, comparative-legal, dialectical, axiological, civilizational, systemic, and socio-philosophical methods.

The historical-philosophical method was used to examine the stages of formation of Eastern and Western legal thought.

The comparative method enabled the identification of commonalities and differences between Eastern and Western legal-philosophical doctrines.

The axiological method served to elucidate the role of legal values—such as justice, freedom, equality, human dignity, duty, and responsibility—in the transformation of legal consciousness.

The civilizational approach allowed for the analysis of legal consciousness without divorcing it from the historical, religious, cultural, and political experiences of a given society.

Legal consciousness and socio-cultural transformation: a theoretical issue. Legal consciousness cannot be conceived in isolation from the process of transformation, as it reflects the changing social relations within a society. As economic relations, political institutions, family structures, education systems, religious and ethical values, technologies, and forms of communication evolve within society, so too do perceptions of the law.

In this regard, legal consciousness can be expressed through the following formula: social experience → cultural values → legal awareness → legal assessment → legal conviction → legal behavior.

However, this process is not unidirectional; legal consciousness itself can serve as an active driver of socio-cultural change.

For instance, evolving perceptions regarding human rights, gender equality, personal inviolability, the fight against discrimination, or environmental rights often emerge first within legal consciousness and can subsequently lead to changes in legal norms and institutions.

Thus, legal consciousness not only reflects society but also manifests as a force that transforms it.

Law, justice, and social order in Eastern legal-philosophical thought. Eastern legal-philosophical thought has often interpreted law as being inextricably linked with morality, justice, duty, spirituality, and the interests of society. In the politico-philosophical legacy of Abu Nasr al-Farabi, special attention is paid to the issues of a just society, the virtuous city, and human perfection. In his concept of the "City of Virtuous People," the goal of society is not merely to maintain external order, but to ensure the spiritual and intellectual perfection of the individual.

In Al-Farabi's approach, political and legal order is not separated from ethical purpose. This aspect highlights a key characteristic of Eastern legal consciousness: the integration of law and ethics. While Western legal positivism later saw a growing tendency to conceptually separate law and ethics, the Al-Farabi tradition prioritizes their mutual complementarity.

Ibn Sina links issues of social order and the state to human natural needs and the necessity of societal cooperation. His views hold that an individual cannot satisfy all their needs in isolation;

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consequently, a need arises for social cooperation, order, and justice. This concept is crucial for understanding the relationship between the individual and collective dimensions of legal consciousness.

Al-Biruni's scholarly legacy places great emphasis on the comparative study of diverse peoples and cultures, as well as the understanding of their customs and values. This approach holds significant methodological importance for modern legal anthropology and legal pluralism, as comprehending legal consciousness requires studying not only state laws but also the customs, traditions, and social norms within a society. In Yusuf Khass Hajib's *Kutadgu Bilig*, issues such as justice, state governance, responsibility, the duties of the ruler, and social order occupy a central place. The work presents justice as the moral and political foundation of state governance; this aspect can be studied comparatively alongside certain concepts of the modern "rule of law."

Nizam al-Mulk's *Siyasatnama* addresses state governance, the just ruler, the responsibilities of officials, and the maintenance of social order. In this tradition, the primary bearers of legal consciousness are not merely individual citizens, but also the ruler and state officials.

Thus, in Eastern thought, legal consciousness is not limited to a citizen's obedience to the law but also encompasses the responsibility of those in power to uphold justice.

The evolution of legal consciousness in Western legal-philosophical thought. The transformation of legal consciousness in Western legal thought can be divided into several key stages.

Aristotle: Justice and political existence

Aristotle views justice as one of the fundamental conditions of the political community. His ideas regarding distributive and corrective justice have significantly influenced subsequent legal philosophy. For Aristotle, man is a "political being" whose legal and moral existence is bound to the *polis*. In this respect, there is a significant similarity between Aristotle and Al-Farabi: both thinkers view the human being not in isolation from society, but within the framework of a socio-political community.

Thomas Aquinas: natural law

Thomas Aquinas links law to moral order and natural law. His views incorporate principles of universal justice that can be grasped through human reason. This approach is crucial for explaining the normative and evaluative nature of legal consciousness.

John Locke: individual rights

Locke made a major contribution to the development of the individualistic paradigm, which marked a fundamental turning point in the history of legal consciousness. His views on natural rights—specifically life, liberty, and property—subsequently influenced the formation of the concept of the liberal state governed by the rule of law. At this stage, the individual and their rights move to the center of legal consciousness.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau: the general will

Rousseau links law and political legitimacy to popular sovereignty and the "general will." This approach reveals another vital aspect of legal consciousness: the idea that the individual is simultaneously subject to the law and an active participant in the law-making process. Immanuel Kant interprets law as a system that harmonizes freedoms. In his view, individual freedom must coexist with the freedom of others. Kant's philosophy of law provides a crucial theoretical foundation for understanding the dialectic of freedom and responsibility within legal consciousness.

Hegel links legal consciousness to the historical development of individual will, morality, and social institutions. In his perspective, law manifests itself through objective institutions that exist independently of individual consciousness. This aspect aligns with the relationship between the "individual" and "institutional" levels found in contemporary studies of legal consciousness.

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Eastern and Western Paradigms: Similarities and Differences

It is methodologically incorrect to treat Eastern and Western legal-philosophical thought as absolute opposites; significant commonalities exist between them.

First, in both traditions, justice is regarded as a vital criterion of the legal order.

Second, the relationship between the individual and society is a central issue.

Third, the question of the legitimacy of state power is present in both traditions.

However, differences in emphasis are evident. In Eastern traditions, the harmonious interplay of law, ethics, spirituality, duty, and collective interests is more strongly manifested.

In Western modern legal thought, however, individual rights, freedom, personal autonomy, the rule of law, formal equality, and the rational organization of institutions are becoming increasingly important.

Therefore, the following hypothetical model can be proposed:

Criteria	The Eastern paradigm	The Western modern paradigm
Core value	Justice and moral order	Freedom and individual rights
Individual	An individual in harmony with society	Autonomous legal subject
Law and Morality	Strong integration	Conceptual differentiation
Duty	One of the key categories	Balanced against rights
Team	An important social unit	Centered on the individual
Authority	Constrained by justice and responsibility	Limited by the constitution and the law

However, in modern times, these distinctions are becoming increasingly relative. Human rights, constitutionalism, social justice, and the rule of law are emerging as common categories within global legal discourse.

Socio-cultural modernization and the transformation of legal consciousness.

The process of modernization influences legal consciousness in at least five ways.

First, the shift from collective consciousness to the individual as a legal subject. In traditional societies, an individual's legal status is often defined by their family, clan, community, or social standing. In modern law, however, an individual's legal status is linked to their universal and inalienable rights.

Second, the transition from custom to formal law. In traditional societies, customs, local norms, religious rules, and community opinion can play a significant role in dispute resolution. In a modern state, the role of formal law and judicial institutions becomes more prominent. Yet, this process does not imply the complete disappearance of informal norms. Indeed, contemporary studies on legal culture in Uzbekistan demonstrate that the relationship between formal law and informal social rules is crucial to understanding legal consciousness. Thirdly, the shift from legal subordination to legal participation. In the traditional model, the citizen might be viewed merely as a subject who obeys the law. In a democratic state governed by the rule of law, however, the citizen emerges as a rights-holder, a defender of legitimate interests, a participant in the political process, an evaluator of the activities of legal institutions, and an active agent in legal reforms.

Fourthly, the shift from legal knowledge to legal competence. Today, legal literacy is not measured solely by knowledge of statutory provisions. An individual must be able to identify their rights, locate legal information, appeal to state bodies, utilize legal mechanisms, and resolve disputes through lawful

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means. Modern research incorporates skills, attitudes, beliefs, and values—alongside legal knowledge—into the composition of legal consciousness.

Fifthly, the shift from national legal consciousness to global legal consciousness. Issues such as human rights, international law, environmental security, digital rights, migration, and transnational economic relations are expanding the geographical boundaries of legal consciousness.

The transformation of legal consciousness in Western sociology of law. In the theory of modern legal consciousness, the views of scholars such as Eugen Ehrlich, Leon Petrażycki, Lawrence Friedman, Patricia Ewick, and Susan Silbey hold particular significance.

Eugen Ehrlich's concept of "living law" demonstrated that law should not be limited solely to normative acts created by the state.

Leon Petrażycki focused on the psychological and emotional aspects of legal phenomena. His legacy remains crucial for understanding the individual-psychological component of contemporary legal consciousness. In the collection *Legal Consciousness* (published in 2025), Petrażycki's teachings are specifically examined in relation to modern legal theory.

Lawrence Friedman views legal culture as a connecting factor between law and society. His approach illustrates that the effectiveness of law depends on societal perceptions and values regarding the law.

Patricia Ewick and Susan Silbey linked legal consciousness to everyday social experience, studying how individuals "experience" the law and the meanings they attribute to it. Their classic classification distinguishes between three forms of legal consciousness: "before the law," "with the law," and "against the law." Contemporary research also employs this triad as a vital theoretical model for analyzing legal consciousness. This approach is also significant for re-examining Eastern legal thought, as in Eastern societies, alongside formal law, customs, religious-ethical norms, and the practices of the *mahalla* and the community can also influence the formation of legal consciousness.

Transformation of legal consciousness in the legal thinking of Uzbekistan.

In the modern development of the legal and philosophical thinking of Uzbekistan, Z.M. Islamov, H.T. Odilkariyev, A.Kh. The scientific legacy of scientists like Saidov and A. Tadzhikhanov is important.

Z.M. Islamov researches the theory of state and law in connection with the processes of political, social and spiritual development of society. His approach makes it possible to understand law not as a mechanical norm separated from society, but as an important institution of social life.

H.T. In Adilkariyev's views on the theory of the state and law, the rule of law, civil society, legality and the social tasks of the legal system occupy an important place.

A.H. Saidov and A. Tadzhikhanov's research on legal culture laid the foundation for understanding legal consciousness as an important spiritual component of legal culture.

The general methodological feature of this scientific school is that it is a priority to see legal consciousness in connection with legal education, legality, legal culture and civil responsibility. Modern international studies on Uzbekistan also study legal consciousness in connection with local legal culture and real judicial practice. In particular, it is shown that it is possible to study the legal consciousness of lawyers, entrepreneurs and ordinary citizens through the analysis of economic court disputes. This shows the need to study the transformation of Uzbekistan's legal consciousness not only through legislative changes, but also through how people perceive and use law in everyday life.

Digital transformation and new forms of legal consciousness.

One of the most important factors in the transformation of legal consciousness in the 21st century is digitization.

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The legal behavior of a person in the digital space is not limited by traditional territorial boundaries. Personal data, digital identity, intellectual property, online contracts, interactions with artificial intelligence, and digital security are shaping new legal visions.

As a result, new components of legal consciousness are emerging: digital legal literacy, information security culture, vision of algorithmic justice, awareness of personal data protection and digital citizenship responsibility.

Therefore, the transformation of modern legal consciousness is no longer limited to the relationship between "law and citizen". It also covers "human - state - technology - private platform - global information space" relations.

Eastern and Western synthesis of the transformation of legal consciousness

The results of the research show the possibility of mutual enrichment of Eastern and Western legal-philosophical traditions in modern conditions.

From Eastern legal thought to modern legal consciousness: the moral content of justice; collective responsibility; social cohesion; duties and responsibilities; principles such as the relationship between law and morality are important.

From the Western legal thinking: the universality of human rights; personal freedom; rule of law; constitutionalism; separation of powers; formal equality; principles such as legal protection serve as an important methodological and institutional basis.

Thus, the optimal model of modern legal consciousness can be based on the three "universal legal values + national-cultural identity + active civic responsibility".

Scientific news. As a result of the research, a civilizational-complementary model of the transformation of legal consciousness is proposed. According to this model, the transformation of legal consciousness consists of three interrelated levels:

1. Cultural level - tradition, religion, morality, custom and historical memory.

2. Normative-institutional level — Constitution, legislation, state institutions, courts and law enforcement bodies.

3. Individual-pracheological level - legal knowledge, beliefs, values and real legal behavior of a person.

The compatibility of these three levels determines the stability of legal consciousness transformation.

If the legislation is modern, but legal values in the society do not adapt to it, legal modernization can remain formal in nature.

On the contrary, if legal values are high in the society, but the institutions cannot provide them, the possibility of legal alienation and mistrust increases. Modern research on legal consciousness also emphasizes the interaction of legal consciousness with legal institutions and everyday experience.

Summary. A comparative study of Eastern and Western legal-philosophical thinking shows that legal consciousness is not formed in isolation from the historical and cultural development of society. It reflects the ideas of a certain civilization about justice, man, state, society, freedom and responsibility.

In Eastern legal thinking, legal consciousness is more associated with justice, morality, duty, spirituality and collective responsibility, while in modern Western legal thinking, individual, freedom, law, legal state and institutional ...rationality has occupied a central place. However, modern globalization is leading to a convergence of these two paradigms. Contemporary legal consciousness is compelled to simultaneously take into account both individual rights and social responsibility, as well as both universal legal values and national-cultural distinctiveness.

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This issue holds particular significance for Uzbekistan. The country's process of legal modernization requires, on the one hand, the adoption of international legal standards and, on the other, consideration of historical-cultural heritage, national values, and the society's actual social experience. Therefore, it is appropriate to view the transformation of legal consciousness in modern Uzbekistan not as a complete assimilation into the Western model or a total return to the traditional Eastern model, but rather as a creative synthesis of universal and national legal values.

From a scholarly perspective, the most optimal model is one of legal consciousness that harmonizes the universal principles of human rights and the rule-of-law state with justice, spirituality, social solidarity, duty, and national-cultural distinctiveness. Such an approach elevates legal consciousness beyond the mere level of knowing the law, transforming it into an active social force that drives the democratic, moral, and legal development of society.

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