

Chapter 2

The References

The principles

Ancient human civilizations have demonstrated their chronology, from the ancient Pharaonic civilization to the Mesopotamian civilization, passing through the Indian, Chinese, and Roman civilizations, and finally to the Greek and Islamic ones. However, an individual must elevate their thoughts and actions within society so that the state may achieve the ranks of progress.

A set of ethical principles governing the practice of professions is defined—particularly, doing good, maintaining professional secrecy, respecting duties, and promoting rights. Acting in accordance with social norms, religious beliefs, and the law.

Ethics is a set of concepts and principles that guide us in determining behaviors that help living beings.

I. Philosophical Reference

The foundation of moral reflection begins with **philosophy**, which seeks to answer the timeless question: *How should humans act to be moral?* Philosophy examines the principles, values, and reasoning that guide human behavior, and it provides the framework for understanding morality in both individual and social contexts.

- **Socrates** is considered one of the first Greek philosophers to emphasize self-awareness as the basis of morality. He encouraged both scholars and ordinary people to turn their attention from the external world to the human condition. According to Socrates, knowledge that directly affects a person's life is primary, while all other forms of knowledge are secondary. **Self-knowledge** is essential for achieving success and is considered a fundamental virtue. A self-aware person acts to the fullest of their potential, ultimately reaching their peak and attaining happiness.

- **Aristotle** expanded on these ideas by developing an ethical system based on virtue. He believed that acting according to virtue enables a person to perform good deeds and achieve satisfaction. Aristotle emphasized the importance of mental and intellectual development, as it is essential for philosophical self-awareness and distinguishes humans from other beings. He also introduced the concept of balance, suggesting that virtue lies between two extremes for instance, courage stands between cowardice and recklessness.

- **Immanuel Kant:** Introduced the idea of a **universal moral law**; one should act only according to rules that could be applied universally.
- **René Descartes:** Emphasized that morality must be guided by **reason and clarity of thought**, not by emotion; rationality is central to ethical decisions.

In academic and professional life, these philosophical principles manifest in concrete actions. A researcher who refuses to falsify data, a student who reports injustice, or a professor who makes decisions based on reason rather than favoritism exemplifies the practical

application of philosophical ethics. Through such behaviors, individuals demonstrate responsibility, integrity, and adherence to moral principles.

II. Religious Reference

Religion has always been a major source of moral values. It provides a spiritual framework guiding humans toward goodness, justice, and righteousness. In Islam, moral and social behaviors are based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

“The best among you is the one with the best manners.”

Fundamental religious values include justice (*al-'adl*), honesty (*al-amāna*), respect (*al-iḥtirām*), and solidarity (*al-takāful*). These principles encourage sincerity, fairness, and compassion in human interactions.

Examples:

A merchant refusing to cheat on the scale, or a public servant rejecting corruption, are acts that demonstrate moral integrity based on religious principles.

Religious teachings, especially in monotheistic faiths, have inspired the creation of professional ethical codes. They remind us that every human activity must aim for good, serve society, and respect both divine and human laws.

II. Evolution of Civilizations

Since the beginning of the transition to the modern state, universities have been the center of ongoing philosophical debates regarding their role in society. From the late 19th century, universities initially focused on knowledge and culture for their own sake. Later, their mission shifted towards preparing students and training them for professions required by society during the industrial renaissance. Governments and private institutions increasingly turned to universities to meet the demand for specialized personnel.

At the beginning of the 20th century, emphasis was placed on spreading general culture among students and on shaping their moral and intellectual personalities. In the 1960s and 1970s, education gained widespread recognition in economic and political circles as a major investment in human capital. Governments worldwide began investing heavily in all sectors of education, with particular attention to higher education in its traditional and non-traditional forms. The number of students increased significantly, university budgets doubled, and universities became more than ever responsible for meeting both the professional and career aspirations of learners and the developmental needs of their societies. This evolution led to major changes in university specializations and the regulations governing them, in order to keep pace with globalization and its induced developments.

Human history shows a continuous evolution of moral and ethical values across civilizations:

- **Ancient Egypt:** Morality was based on order and harmony (Ma'at).
- **Ancient Greece:** Introduced rational reflection on virtue and reason.
- **Rome:** Established the concepts of citizenship and legal duty.
- **Islamic Civilization:** Combined faith and reason, promoting justice, dignity, and solidarity.
- **Modern Europe:** Affirmed freedom, equality, and human rights.

Each civilization has contributed to defining moral references that ensure social cohesion and collective progress. In modern universities, this heritage supports academic freedom, the pursuit of truth, and respect for human rights, which remain central to the educational mission and the development of well-rounded, responsible citizens.

I.V Institutional Reference

Modern institutions, especially universities, recognize the importance of ethics in preserving their integrity and social mission.

Every profession relies on norms that define proper behavior. The absence of ethics leads to the loss of dignity and respect.

Therefore, universities have established ethical codes and regulations to govern relationships between students, teachers, and researchers, ensuring the moral quality of all academic activities.

Institutional ethics aim to protect scientific integrity, prevent discrimination, safeguard intellectual property, and strengthen trust within the academic community.

Modern universities no longer focus only on transmitting knowledge; they also prepare responsible citizens capable of ethical reasoning and respect for universal values.

V.I Conclusion

Ethics has developed through philosophy, religion, and institutions, each shaping human behavior and social harmony. Ancient civilizations founded moral thinking, religion added spirituality, and modern institutions established ethical rules. Today, ethics in universities and professions emphasizes responsibility, honesty, and respect, ensuring integrity, justice, and human dignity.