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## **History of Religion**

# **SPIRITUAL ROLE OF ISLAMIC MEDIA SPACE IN DOMAIN "UZ"**

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### **Abstract**

This article investigates the spiritual role of Islamic media space of domain "UZ". The XXI century highlighted the issues of globalization and information communication technologies. The analysis of web sites domain "UZ" shows the response Uzbek language speakers audience. Cyberspace is cover all areas of human activity which manage data flow through information and communication technologies system. The article provides the first time classification of Islamic web sites and the concept of tolerance on the Islamic web sites domain "UZ". The issue of tolerance on cyberspace one of the vital topics of today.

**Keywords:** cyberspace, media, domain "UZ", internet, muslim.uz, islom.uz.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

With the advent of the "Internet Age," the flow of information has increased dramatically and getting in touch with social networking has accelerated dramatically. However, this reality has not only increments to the quantity and quality of social relations and information sharing, but growth their value. On the other hand, significant social changes, which led to the rapid development of information technology, also had an impact on religious processes. Commitment of online religious interests of the multinational Uzbekistan population one of the obvious manifestations of this increasing effect.

The expert in the field of religious sociology R.O. Safronov states: "Internet cyberspace is the broadest religious market where presented all traditional and new religious confessions and movements. Internet provides access to any religious texts and offers unlimited opportunities for believers to engage in dialogue and discussion on religious matters. By this way, the Internet enlarges religious diversity while it organizes independent spiritual vacuous space. These days using the virtuosity for religious activity get an impact for the further tendency. Representatives of traditional religion or new religious movement seek to strengthen their position in the virtual space by creating online groups, forums or social channels".

Smolina has described two ways of the relationship between Internet and religion. First, as the principle of "religion on the Internet" that any religious organization communicates with its adherents; secondly, as a space for collecting database about the religion. However, the goal of "Internet space" is not to provide information about the activities of a particular social institution, but according to traditional religions function unite people using the latest technology.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The article analysis of three sites which conducted to examine the significance of these sites in finding answers to religious issues and their popularity. Theoretical and methodological basis of the analysis was the ergonomics of theoretical and user interface of web development, methods and criteria for determining the rating of web sites.

Ergonomics is the scientific discipline concerned with the understanding of interactions among humans and other elements of a system, and the profession that applies theory, principles, data and methods to design in order to optimize human well-being and overall system performance []. Requirements for Web sites by the ergonomics of the software, first of all, help to avoid the problem of use and, secondly, to increase the level of website transparency.

## III. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Since the second half of the 1990s, researches devoted to the religious organizations and activities in cyberspace has become intense. Cyberspace is cover all areas of human activity which manage data flow through information and communication technologies system. In 1990s the activities of religions and religious organizations in cyberspace have become more considerable and inexpensive. Although became the subject of scientific research. It can be categorized the observed approaches to the scientific study of religious processes in cyberspace focusing on:

- **correlation of religion and the Internet** (Heidi Cempbel, Lorn L. Dauson, Rosalind A.J. Heckett, Rosemary Avans, Christopher Helland, Todd Mullins, Kelly O'Connor, Shu-Zen Tsai, Talal Naser Najran, N.V.Sviridova, A.P.Zabiyako, E.A.Voronkova, T.P.Minchenko, A.A. Armanova);

- **activating religion in social networks and rise of religious interest through the networks** (Amber Nicole, Ember Nicole Adams, Marco Tulio de Sousa, Ana Paula);

- **religious processes in countries' cyberspace** (Brazil's Catania Rocha Passos de Souza and Rita de Kasia de Aragao Matos, Anthony G. in Philippines, Talal Naser Najran in Kuwait, Sophia Zviadadze in Georgia, and D.A.Klimenko Vatican's). However, activity of online religion factor in mobile phones investigated in Heidi Cempbel, Sasha A. Scott's works.

The extent and diversity of research indicates that investigation of cyberspace and religion has increased dramatically. The current research provides a more detailed analysis spiritual role of Islamic media space of domain UZ. Process of globalization follows for critical and analytical study of religion in cyberspace of Uzbekistan. Whereas, various information and communication technologies, which are popularity among inhabitants of Uzbekistan, especially young people, are allowing deep penetration into cyberspace.

According to Talal Naser Al-Najran [1], people think that a mass media such as the Internet can change the nature of the self, consciousness, religious forms, the experience of time and space, modes of self-expression and social activism. However, lesson that has been learned from history showed that new communication technologies with the characteristics of the Internet will change its audience. On the one hand, it should be noted that the main objective of the Internet is not only to provide information about the activities of a particular social institution, on the other hand cyberspace based on the principle of the traditional religions integration people using new technologies.

The media of Uzbekistan transferred into global network expanding their sphere of influence. On the one hand this led not only to a quantitative increase in the exchange of information, on the other hand increased its quality.

Transformation the traditional media of Uzbekistan to cyberspace can be divided into the following stages:

The first stage is 1996-1999 years - The development of web technologies consisted in using the Internet as an information source for enriching the content of a traditional publication, which qualitatively improved the content of domestic media. It should be noted, in order to create the national domain “uz”, which the request made in 1995 to the University of Information of Southern California was approved successfully.

The second stage, which began at the beginning of 2002, commence to actively express itself through the global network, and Internet pages started mainly provided information about the publication, where the materials of newspapers and magazines were reprinted. The first Islamic web sites outlets on the Internet were muslim.uz, the website of Muslim Board of Uzbekistan [8], and islom.uz, the personal site of Sheikh Muhammad Sodik Muhammad Yusuf. It should be noted that at that time these web resources in many ways resembled the visiting card of the publication or institution.

The third stage is characterized by a change in the style of work, the reorganization of the website from a corporate visiting card to an online publication, where news coverage is carried out in parallel with the presentation of their topics. Currently, traditional media in the UZ domain are at this level.

As additional services, e-analogues activate interactive features, post online radio broadcasts, conduct online consultations and polls.

After 2005, mass media on the Internet became more active, many print media opened their web pages, radio and TV began broadcasting on the Internet, and the number of Internet media increased.

In recent years, need for information consumption and to satisfy the intellectual needs of the population of Uzbekistan have led to a sharp increase in the number of Internet users. In relation to this, over the past period, the number of registered domains “uz” has increased.

Such significant social changes, which have led to the rapid development of information technology, also have an impact on religious processes. One of the obvious manifestations of this effect is the increasing commitment of the multinational population of Uzbekistan to meet their religious needs online. It can be considered a natural phenomenon. Although the number of Internet segments currently registered in the “uz” domain has reached 70,663 (the number of domains does not represent the number of web sites because domains may be used as a postal address or simply a registered and not used now). However, Islamic web sites of domain “uz” less than a hundred. But this number is constantly increasing. One of the first Islamic site of domain UZ was “muslim.uz” in 2003, and “islom.uz” in 2004 (on the footer of the site was pointed out starting date 2003) and “quran.uz”. They also provide regular online services today.

Nowadays, the domain “uz”, which provides information about Islamic religion, promoting religious relations, educational institutions, research centers, publishers of religious literature, mosques, individual religious leaders, oriented in women issues, mystical and focused on specific religious multimedia files.

Examples of **websites that specialize for regulating religious relations** are the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan (muslim.uz) and its representations and the Karakalpak Muslim Board website (paziylet.uz).

**Web sites of educational intuitions where teaches religious disciplines** are International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan (iiau.uz), Imam Bukhari Tashkent Islamic Institute (islaminstitut.uz), Kukeldash Secondary School of Islamic Education (kukaldosh.uz), Khoja Bukhari Secondary School (khojabukhory.uz), sites of Khadija Kubro women's secondary specialized Islamic educational institution (khadicha.uz) and others.

**Websites of research centers** such as bukhari.uz (Imam Bukhari International Research Center), islamcenter.uz (Research Center for Islamic Studies at the IIAU) provide detailed information about Islamic studies and heritage of ancestors.

**Sites of religious literature publishers** - hidoyat.uz (Publishing House of Movarounnakh), hilolnashr.uz (Hilol Publishing House), irfon.uz (Irfon Calendar), ziyo.uz (official religious and educational internet site, media center).

**Mosque websites** are separate sites that provide information about mosques in the capital and in the regions.

All of these sites have a section called “Friday sermons” where you can read the text of the sermons and video views of the imams in the Friday prayers. Examples of such sites are: diyonat.uz (“Okhun bobo” mosque), kamolon.uz (“Khoja Alambardor” mosque), nasihat.uz (“Ahmadjon qori” mosque), islamota.uz (“Islom ota” mosque), islomobod.uz (“Islomobod” mosque), xutba.uz (“Sheikhul Islom” mosque), ummat.uz (“Tuhtaboy” mosque), minor.uz (“Minor” mosque), aqida.uz (“Jaloyir” mosque) and others.

**Religious leaders'** websites are also popular. Among such sites site “islom.uz”, which was published on the internet in the form of articles from the publications of Sheikh Mukhammad Sodiq Mukhammad Yusuf. The site has now reached the level of a religious and educational portal that combines specific web sites. Sayfuddinov Rahmatulloh Khabibulloh ugli was one of the first imams among the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan who created his own website “mehrob.uz”. The head of Tashkent city’s imam Rakhmonberdi Ergashevich’s site named “xatib.uz” has his audience.

Examples of **sites oriented in women issues** are “muslimaat.uz”, “oilam.uz”, “muslima.uz”. The peculiarity of this type of site is that there are separate pages devoted to beauty, cooking and family issues that are not observed on other religious sites. This helps women to use the sites effectively and stay put them.

Among **mystical sites** is the site “tazkiya.uz”, which provides information on spiritual education. The site, operating as a separate site of “islom.uz” portal, is the only such site today. This site has articles and sections dedicated to the essence of the site to purify the soul and the soul from the bad. The site also has a special emphasis on how to make issues of Naqshbandiy.

**Sites focused on specific religious multimedia files** due to the fact that almost all religious sites have a multimedia section, sites for downloading separate files are virtually non-existent in the “domain”. In this regard, we can present the only “mp3muslim.uz” site.

The “Question and Answer” section of the ISLOM.UZ website issues of “about the tolerance in Islam” and “How to Treat adherents of Islam and Other Religions” explained with examples of Quranic verses and hadiths. Tolerance in Islam toward other religions, protection of other religions temples, not to interfere with their religious and dogmatic issues, equate them with Muslims in rights, responsibilities and respect all human rights elucidates with historical examples.

Most of the articles on the tolerance of Islam to other religions have been published in the “Question and Answer” section of the site in 2017, total eight articles.

The articles of scholars who comment on the importance of religious tolerance will also be translated and posted on the site. For example: articles by Ali Vicheslav Polosin’s “Does the Qur’an forbid friendship with Jews and Christians?”, “Does God order the execution of apostates?”, Aydin Alizoda entitled “Is Islam Distributed Through Christianity in Christian Areas?”, Ali Tantawi’s chapter of the book “Tales of History” based on historical data.

The site of the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan is MUSLIM.UZ. It provides information on religious issues, religious and world news, as well as information about the beginning of conferences and opening the tolerance institutes in the world and in Uzbekistan. The “Articles” section of the site contains the most articles on the topic. The number of articles are 12. The article titled “Principles of Tolerance and Solidarity in Islamic Religions” by mufti U. Alimov, chairman of the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan, states that today in Uzbekistan coexistence in harmony and peace, more than 130 nationalities and ethnic groups. However, 13 verse of Surah al-Hujurat states “O mankind, surely We have created you from a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other. Surely the noblest of you with Allah is the most dutiful of you. Surely Allah is Knowing, Aware.” The tafsir (commentary) that this verse declares the equality of mankind. Mankind is spread around the world and has different nations and tribes in order to know each other, and no one is superior on the basis of color, race, or origin. As an example of Surah al-Mumtahana 8, it is said that Muslims are commanded to treat people of other nations and religions with kindness.

One of the peculiarities of the site's information sharing is that it contains videos about tolerance in media section. For example, the video lecture of Imam-Imam of the Alibek Mosque on the theme “Islam is a religion of tolerance”. There are 27 publications (from the last quarter of 2016 to 2017) on the website of MUSLIM.UZ.

This information will be presented to readers in response to issues of religious tolerance in the world, activities in Uzbekistan, articles of mosque imams, as well as questions from visitors.

## IV. CONCLUSION

From the above analysis, it is clear that the religious and educational activities of Islamic sites on the “uz” domain are the first and foremost information about religious news. This is one of the most important criteria expected from cyberspace processes. The main content is the articles on human development and spiritual development. In order to avoid being misled and confused by the Internet, websites have been offering popular solutions based on Quran, hadith, and historical narratives. This, in turn, helps Muslims who speak Uzbek language not to deviate from their faith.

Although the sites operated in the “UZ” and Uzbek languages, it is worth noting that their visitors are not only limited to Uzbekistan, but also from foreign countries, including Russia, USA, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. This indicates that relevant Uzbek websites on the internet are a source of information about Islam for Uzbek-speaking speakers in these countries.

Another noteworthy feature in content analysis is that the themes raised on these sites are not duplicated, they are expressed the theme in different ways and with different approaches. In some cases, detrimental issues in the cyberspace is not undertake the content truthfulness of the information, but they focus on the attractiveness of it. The rise number of sites that provide reliable and unbiased information on religious issues protects them from the mistaken views of their thirsty visitors.

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## ДУХОВНАЯ РОЛЬ ИСЛАМСКОГО МЕДИА ПРОСТРАНСТВА ДОМЕНА "UZ"

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### Аннотация

В статье исследуется духовная роль исламского медиа пространства домена «uz». XXI век обозначил проблемы глобализации и информационно-коммуникационных технологий. Анализ веб-сайтов домена «uz» показывает реакцию аудитории носителей узбекского языка. Киберпространство охватывает все области человеческой деятельности, которые управляют потоками данных через систему информационных и коммуникационных технологий. В статье впервые приводится классификация исламских веб-сайтов и понятие толерантности в домене «uz». Проблема толерантности в киберпространстве - одна из актуальных тем сегодняшнего дня.

**Ключевые слова:** киберпространство, медиа, домен «UZ», интернет, muslim.uz, islom.uz.

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