

**Publication date: July 21, 2020**

**DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.3831465](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3831465)**

## **Historical Sciences**

# **ISLAMIC FACTOR IN THE MODERN POLITICAL LIFE OF CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES**

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### **Abstract**

The article discusses the rapid development of modern socio-political relations, the rapid development of communication and information technologies, the expansion of ideological influence, the impulse to improve the style and means of communication, as well as the criminal threats of society. The study emphasizes the fact that the minds and hearts of peoples of different parts of the world turn into a training ground for testing various ideas, in other words, an ideological training ground for training. It is also clear that the activities of fanatical political Islamists and religious extremist movements, disguising religion and trying to undermine religious values, are one of the threats to our children's spirituality.

Acts of robbery and aggression, terrorism and subversive activity under the flag of religion, which cause all kinds of harm to society, form the basis for the formation of interethnic and inter-religious hatred, nationalism and religious differences among the younger generation. To combat this, it is necessary to increase the social activity of the young generation, and it is very important, as never before, to "fight with thought against thought, idea against idea, enlightenment against aggression".

**Keywords:** Islamic factor, Central Asia, Islamic studies, ideology, radicalism, religious values, ideology, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, democratic state, civil society, religious tolerance.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

In the last decade of the twentieth century, the history of human development has reflected its great changes. This is explained by the emergence of new political actors on the world stage, the acceleration of globalization, the facilitation of the exchange of information between people and the rapid movement of secular processes from one point to another. At the same time the period of revival and politicization of Islam began in Central Asia. The specificity of the revival of Islam in Central Asia has been deeply analyzed in scientific circles, which attracts researchers in many ways. In particular, it manifests itself by the leaders and their followers who advocated the revival of Islam saw the pursuit of political goals through religion, as well as the radical demonstration of their goals and positions to the secular authorities, in the planning and implementation of actions ranging from ethnic conflict to human trafficking.

While many scholars have studied aspects of the revival of Islam in the former Soviet Union, the current state of religion is twofold: **firstly**, the state's declaration of religious tolerance and the opportunity for all believers to enjoy the same rights; learns that celebrations are allowed and that religious reform is carried out when necessary; **secondly**, researches the situation of exposing narrow-minded political goals associated with the realization of the personal interests of some opposition leaders by disguising religion by extremist organizations. At the same time, it should be noted that many researchers in modern Muslim schools today argue that Islam should control or regulate aspects of human life that include, for example, politics, economics, and the legal system. That is why the fact that Islam embraces and regulates all aspects of social life requires religious and political leaders, religious political parties and radical extremist organizations to justify and support their actions and initiatives by members of society, as well as secular authorities.

Of course, there is no room for discussion about the relevance of Islam for the people of Central Asia. Because this religion is a part of the history of the peoples living here, the basis of their culture and an important aspect of their way of life. This region has made a huge contribution to the development and popularization of Islamic culture, theory and Islamic Sharia law. In particular, the great Islamic scholars and theorists Ahmad Yassavi, Imam Ismail al-Bukhari, Imam al-Termizi, Burhanuddin al-Margilani and az-Zamahshari, Bahovuddin Naqshband and several other scholars are among them. Even today, it can be said that Islam remains a key aspect in the expression of the cultural and confessional identity of the people of the region.

It should be noted that the loss of control in the former USSR since the 1980s of the XX century has led to the revival of Islam in Central Asia. This is mainly due to the influx of propagandists of Islamic culture in legal ways and the factor of "soft power", which many do not yet understand, and began to pay more attention to the construction of mosques and the involvement of young people in education. It has also served to assist in the repair of religious and cultural historical sites and to establish bilateral and multilateral relations between educational centers, non-governmental non-profit organizations and individuals of Muslim countries.

## II. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Foreign Islamic centers and ethnic Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kyrgyz, and Kazakhs from Central Asia have been quick to take advantage of the changing situation in the region and the height of the artificially created religious and ideological gap in the minds of the population. As a result, the number of religious schools and educational centers has also increased, and they are directly funded from abroad. Admittedly, the above-mentioned groups have outstripped even the official governments and state religious organizations of foreign countries in carrying out propaganda activities and attracting citizens with a strong propensity for Islamic teachings and making them aware of the correctness of their chosen ways and goals. In this process, the financing of opposition groups, which had previously been secretly manifested by foreign Islamic centers, and the promotion of radical social and political views along with fundamental Islamic teachings in educational programs have been intensified. As a result, the formation of small groups advocating the seizure of political power through opposition speeches or through armed conflict was on the rise. Even as a result of the development of these aspects, the previously secretive party led to the formation of quality organizations as an official religious-political party. At the same time, the newly independent states did not have a well-established system for managing the religious situation, comprehensively analyzing the activities of foreign Islamic centers and forecasting their future activities, and practicing cooperation with religious organizations. This led to the rapid expansion of radical groups and the formation of a certain number of electors who supported them on their side.

On this basis, there has been an increase in the number of adherents of traditional Islam and a mass rejection of the existing secular authority by proponents of governance and living conditions promoted by Islamic educational centers, and an increase in adherents to the establishment of a system of governance based on Islamic principles. Behind these well-crafted propaganda, the main goal was to participate in the political process to build a state based on Islamic principles, to form a conflict relationship with the secular authorities, and ultimately to form a system of governance based on Islam. The main factor in the realization of the intended religious and political goals was the conditions associated with the inability to meet the social needs of the population in the independent states. The main reason for these conditions was the frequent changes in the social status of the population (for example, the utopian view of the longevity of the socialist system, the mood of

dependency, etc.), as well as the dissatisfaction of secular authorities with material, spiritual and political needs.

However, it should not be forgotten that Islam is a religion that embodies these high cultural and spiritual values and leads man to goodness and perfection. The rules of belief of this religion propagate the idea of being kind and loving to man. Many political leaders, the public, and political scientists around the world have accused Islam of using the virtues of Islam as a cover for crimes such as daily riots, civil wars, coups, drug trafficking, and human trafficking.

Religion has always been an important factor affecting all aspects of society. The level of religiosity in the world is not decreasing, on the contrary, it is rising at the contemporary stage. After the two-polarization period, "we have to celebrate the return of traditionalism". It primarily belongs to Islam.

The rapid development of modern socio-political relations, the rapid development of communications and information technologies have given rise to ideological influences, improved methods and tools, and spiritual threats have become a global problem. This actuality is also reflected in the fact that the minds and hearts of the peoples of different regions of the world are being transformed into a test site, in other words, an ideological landfill. Modern reality is manifested in the growing number of new ways and means of struggle for the soul and mind, especially in the above-mentioned attempts to use the religious factor. Particularly alarming are the activities of fanatical Islamists and religious extremist movements, who are trying to disguise religion and undermine our religious values in the face of threats to the spirituality of our children. Such forces are trying to use every form of evil to reach the minds and hearts of young people. Under the banner of religion, acts of looting and robbery, terrorism and aggression, and to the detriment of society, contribute to the formation of interethnic and interreligious hatred, nationalism and religious separatism among the younger generation. Therefore, to bring the young generation an in-depth analytical overview of the positive changes that have taken place in our lives against religious extremism and destructive attempts at fanaticism in the 21st century, enhancing their social activism and the slogan "opinion against opinion, ideology against ideology, enlightenment against vandalism" is more important than ever.

The events of the last 30 years show that "the politicization of religion does not occur in a traditional, archaic society where the majority of the population is actively religious, but rather in a society that has reached a high level of modernization and secularization".

In the later stages of human society development, religion's influence on politics became even more apparent. All of this was clearly reflected in religious and political realities such as religious wars (Arab occupation, Crusades, religious massacres, etc.).

The active involvement of religion in political life also demonstrates the processes taking place in the world today. For example, in the basis of the religious outlook various organizations are founded, and they are actively involved in public and political life. The authority of some traditional Western European elites is based on tradition and religious values. Some religious leaders in Southeastern Asia are publicly influencing public officials (for example, Buddhist monks in Myanmar and Ceylon). All of this proves that the link between the existing spheres of social life of people has existed since ancient times and will continue to be so. The difference is that in certain historical periods this relationship may be strengthened or vice versa and there may be conflicts between them.

In recent times, there has been an increase in the popularity of high-ranking clerics on religious issues, their active involvement in political life, and the expansion of missionary activity. With the increase in the number of supporters and expansion of influence, the status of individual religious-territorial institutions is also expanding. Legalization of secular authorities or secular support of religious authorities is a sensitive issue. The secular government with weak pillars needs the support of the clergy and religion in forming a new state. Consequently, there are cases of conversion to Islam in many Asian and African countries. In the Middle Ages, some Christian monarchs were regarded as high-ranking bishops, and were declared as "divine persons" or "representatives."

Experience of politicization of various religions (Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, etc.) shows that politicization has always coincided with the emergence of alternative dual-networked social institutions. First of all, they fulfill many important social functions of the state, and secondly, they serve as the centers of

advocacy and political activity. At the best of times, these alternative social institutions (educational institutions, hospitals, fundraisers, etc.) are becoming the starting point for seizing political power.

In the last third of the twentieth century, critical process in the political life of some countries and in international politics have intensified due to the strengthening of the "Islamic factor" and the activation of Islamic groups with global religious and political programs. One of the most serious attacks against the international community is the intensification of politicization of the religious factor in all regions of Islam and the active use of terrorist attacks to achieve political goals.

Most researchers have identified this issue of the emergence of political and religious groups in all regions where Islam is spreading, and groups that work in politics is "happening as a system of religious ideas, relationships and institutions within Islam," but it mentions serious changes that doesn't always appear. This approach aims at identifying and analyzing the internal doctrinal sources of the emergence and development of political Islam. Today, there is a whole network of Islamic groups operating in different ways and with different programs.

The role of religion in society is increasingly determined not by the interests of religious organizations, but by the interests of the ruling elites, who artificially support the interest of religion in society, taking into account the centuries-old experience of religious organizations that have influenced people's minds and morals. In western civilization, religiosity is becoming more rational, more docile, and more manageable. Western standards are also penetrating the Muslim East.

At the intersection of politics and religion, we can witness the emergence of specific forms of international tension exaggerated by the media, Islamophobia, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism. As a result, regional problems are becoming global.

We can see the rise of Islamic movements and religious and political parties in the Arab world at this time. Especially since 2010, the African Arab countries have given a new geopolitical picture. At first sight the protests were carried out against the former ruling regimes in Tunisia, Syria, Egypt, Libya and Yemen, the struggle in these countries was actually between religious extremists and secular rulers of the country. Tunisia and Egypt have apparently gone back to secular domination at the cost of large casualties, but Iraq, Syria, Libya and Yemen have been plunged into a civil war that has now become a religious factor that no one can predict when it will end.

### III. CONCLUSION

The Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan has pursued a policy of strengthening religious tolerance as a basis for ensuring security and stability since the early days of independence, guaranteeing the free functioning of the country along with Islam and other religious confessions. All citizens, regardless of their nationality, race or religion, are guaranteed equal rights through our constitution and laws. This constitutional rule is also reflected in Article 5 of the new edition of the law which was adopted on May 1, 1998: "Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations". The law establishes relations between state and religious organizations, taking into account historical, cultural, and social factors. After all, as President of Uzbekistan Sh.Mirziyoyev noted, "We believe that the most important task is to convey the true humanitarian nature of Islam to the world community. We cherish our sacred religion as an expression of our ancient values. We strongly condemn those who place our sacred religion in the line of violence and bloodshed, and we will never compromise. Islam calls for good and peace, and the preservation of true human qualities". Security, interethnic accord and religious tolerance, pursuing a well-thought-out, mutually beneficial foreign policy has been identified and reaffirmed the relevance of the issue as the fifth priority in the "Strategy of Actions for the Further Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2017-2021". Consequently, one of the most important ideological, ideological and even politically significant tasks of building a democratic state and civil society today is the severe and consistent struggle against the politicization of religion, including Islam in Uzbekistan.

There are all conditions for mutual respect between religious organizations of different faiths in our country. In its turn, in the provision of social and political stability in the republic, above all, religious tolerance and interethnic harmony are fully provided and legally guaranteed. This requires a particular approach in a multi-ethnic, multi-confessional country. It is worth noting that Uzbekistan has a rich experience in interethnic relations and religious tolerance. In our country, great attention is paid to the preservation of the national language, culture and traditions in the national self-consciousness. The principle of strengthening religious tolerance and uniting around one idea is being observed to ensure the unity of all nations and ethnic groups living in our country. As the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoev noted: "It is known that in our ancient and generous land, for many centuries, representatives of different nationalities, cultures, religions have lived peacefully". Consequently, goodness, generosity of heart and true tolerance, which is the eternal value of our people, are the basis of our mentality.

In general, while Central Asia's growing role in the global geopolitical arena, protecting our country, which occupies a main place in the region in terms of population and territory, from the stereotype of religious fanatics, preserving the conditions for citizens to exercise their faith, religious tolerance and interethnic harmony, further strengthening and developing the centuries-old traditions and customs of our people still remains as an important task for us.

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# ИСЛАМСКИЙ ФАКТОР В СОВРЕМЕННОЙ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЙ ЖИЗНИ СТРАН ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ

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## Аннотация

В статье рассматривается стремительное развитие современных общественно-политических отношений, быстрое развитие коммуникационных и информационных технологий, расширение идеологического влияния, импульс к совершенствованию стиля и средств общения, а также криминогенные угрозы общества. Исследование подчеркивает тот факт, что умы и сердца народов разных частей света превращаются в полигон для испытания различных идей, иными словами, в идеологический полигон для подготовки кадров. Ясно также, что деятельность фанатичных политических исламистов и религиозных экстремистских движений, маскирующих религию и пытающихся подорвать религиозные ценности, является одной из угроз духовности наших детей. Такие акты грабежа и агрессии, терроризма и подрывной деятельности под флагом религии, которые наносят всевозможный вред обществу, создают основу для формирования межэтнической и межрелигиозной ненависти, национализма и религиозных разногласий среди подрастающего поколения. Для борьбы с этим необходимо повысить социальную активность молодого поколения, и очень важно, как никогда ранее, «бороться мыслью против мысли, идеей против идеи, просвещением против агрессии».

**Ключевые слова:** исламский фактор, Центральная Азия, Исламоведение, идеология, радикализм, религиозные ценности, идеология, католицизм, протестантизм, индуизм, демократическое государство, гражданское общество, религиозная толерантность.

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