





THE ISLAMIC FACTOR IN THE POLITICAL LIFE OF UZBEKISTAN IN THE 1990S – THE FIRST HALF OF THE 2000s

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24115/S2446-622020206Extra-A570p.129-134>

Marat Zufarovich Galiullin 
 Ramil Rashitovich Kadyrov 
 Victoria Ravil'evna Sagitova 
 Luiza Kajumovna Karimova 

ABSTRACT

The article reveals the main problems related to the Islamic factor in the political life of Uzbekistan. The crucial issue of gaining political identity is the attitude of States to human rights and the Islamic factor. Since the Republic was part of the USSR for a long time, an atheistic paradigm prevailed in political life. The Islamic factor is becoming a key factor in the problem of gaining cultural and national identity in Central Asia, as part of the national elite saw sovereign States under the flag of Islam and Sharia law. The authors note that the independence of States has set their leadership a serious task to preserve the main gains of the social state and the acquisition of religious identity in the lives of citizens of the country. The article shows the experience of harmonious coexistence of different faiths in a region where citizens retain their basic rights.

Keywords: History. Regional studies. Uzbekistan. Islamic factor. Constitution.

O FATOR ISLÂMICO NA VIDA POLÍTICA DO UZBEQUISTÃO NOS ANOS 1990 – A PRIMEIRA METADE DOS ANOS 2000

EL FACTOR ISLÁMICO EN LA VIDA POLÍTICA DE UZBEKISTÁN EN LA DÉCADA DE 1990 – LA PRIMERA MITAD DE LA DÉCADA DE 2000

RESUMO

O artigo revela os principais problemas relacionados ao fator islâmico na vida política do Uzbequistão. A questão crucial para ganhar identidade política é a atitude dos Estados em relação aos direitos humanos e ao fator islâmico. Como a República fez parte da URSS por muito tempo, um paradigma ateu prevaleceu na vida política. O fator islâmico está se tornando um fator-chave no problema de ganhar identidade cultural e nacional na Ásia Central, já que parte da elite nacional viu Estados soberanos sob a bandeira do Islã e da lei Sharia. Os autores observam que a independência dos Estados impôs às suas lideranças uma séria tarefa de preservar as principais conquistas do Estado social e a aquisição da identidade religiosa na vida dos cidadãos do país. O artigo mostra a experiência de convivência harmoniosa de diferentes credos em uma região onde os cidadãos mantêm seus direitos básicos.

Palavras-chave: História. Estudos regionais. Uzbequistão. Fator islâmico. Constituição.

RESUMEN

El artículo revela los principales problemas relacionados con el factor islámico en la vida política de Uzbekistán. La cuestión crucial para ganar identidad política es la actitud de los Estados hacia los derechos humanos y el factor islámico. Dado que la República fue parte de la URSS durante mucho tiempo, prevaleció un paradigma ateo en la vida política. El factor islámico se está convirtiendo en un factor clave en el problema de ganar identidad cultural y nacional en Asia Central, ya que parte de la élite nacional vio a los Estados soberanos bajo la bandera del Islam y la ley islámica. Los autores señalan que la independencia de los Estados ha asignado a su liderazgo una seria tarea para preservar los principales logros del estado social y la adquisición de identidad religiosa en la vida de los ciudadanos del país. El artículo muestra la experiencia de convivencia armoniosa de diferentes religiones en una región donde los ciudadanos conservan sus derechos básicos.

Palabras-clave: Historia. Estudios regionales. Uzbekistán. Factor islámico. Constitución.

INTRODUCTION

Islam in the East for centuries was not just an ideology of the state. It was a part of the political system, the basis of legal proceedings, the support of the worldview. In the era of the collapse of the Yalta system of international relations, Islam was in demand in Eastern countries as a special religious and political ideology that could unite all those dissatisfied with the Westernization process and become the basis for self-organization of the population. The strengthening of the position of Islam and its influence is associated with disillusionment with the ideological paradigms of the twentieth century, since they did not produce the expected results for former colonial and semi-colonial countries. Events taking place in the world today show that in modern conditions Islamism, which is replacing the ideas of the Arab socialist revival party – is a characteristic feature of the development of the Muslim world in the late XX – early XXI century, which is expressed in the increased impact of Islamism on domestic political life.

In the modern world, people in many regions have to defend their constitutional rights: the right to life, the right to freedom of movement, the right to equal treatment, the right to choose their religious path, as well as the right to be a full member of society. It becomes clear that there is a prolonged instability in the regions, which manifests itself in the political, economic, social and cultural areas, and this process will be long. In turn, it causes internal and inter-state conflicts, which makes the exercise of human rights and freedom of conscience vulnerable.

Human rights, as well as the right to freedom of religion, which are intended to help establish a sustainable world order, also have a downside and generate a confrontation between civilizations. There is no doubt that historical, religious, cultural and national characteristics cannot be ignored when implementing human rights in societies, but these characteristics should not detract from any rights. International covenants and optional protocols have been adopted with reservations in many countries, most of them taking into account religious specifics. Statements that human rights are used for pressure, as a pretext for violating the sovereign borders of a state, interfering in internal Affairs, and that human rights do not take into account the specifics of many States, except for Western ones, are becoming more and more discussed.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist system marked the beginning of tectonic changes in the entire system of international relations. The world has entered a new era. At the dawn of the new Millennium, Central Asia was plunged into a series of new shocks. To the traditional destabilizing factors, such as the struggle for spheres of influence between the national majority and minorities, the factor of international terrorism and armed interference on this basis from outside in the internal Affairs of Tajikistan has been added.

For Russia, the stability of Central Asia as part of the once great Soviet Union means the security of its southern borders and areas where the confessional majority is Muslim.

The stability of many countries and regions in General is affected by conflicts related to ethnic and intermediate contradictions, extremes, and aggressive separatist behavior. There is a risk of the proliferation of chemical and bacteriological weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The gap between rich and poor is not narrowing, it is reproducing, and in a negative scenario it is increasing. Drug trafficking and organized crime go beyond the borders of nation States and operate at a global level and are growing rapidly. The processes in Central Asia, where the ethnic and national problems of the people have become more acute due to the difficult border situation in Afghanistan, are no exception.

METHODS

The methodological basis is based on a combination of the principles of scientific-objective approach and system analysis. The article used such interdisciplinary methods as:

- the method of comparative analysis was used in assessing the main mechanisms of countering extremism among the Central Asian countries;
- a predictive method for studying the prospects for the development of the Islamic factor in Central Asia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On August 30, 1991, the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic declared itself a sovereign independent state – the Republic of Uzbekistan. The sovereign state began to build the legal basis of the state, where the main issue was to regulate the relationship between secularism and religiosity in the articles of the new basic law. First President of Uzbekistan I. A. Karimov wrote: "Religion, being primarily a spiritual life of a society, group, individual, absorbed, reflected universal norms of morality, turned them into binding rules of conduct has had a significant impact on culture, contributed and contributes to overcoming the isolation of man, his alienation from other people"[KARIMOV,1997].

The deep content of national interests depends on the identity of the people, their indigenous traditions and customs. And here the Islamic factor begins to play an important role in cultural, economic and political life. In the Soviet period, Islamic identity was out of the question, since the Soviet Union represented an atheistic paradigm. But even after independence, the leadership of most Central Asian countries, with some exceptions, chose a secular path of development and maintained continuity in controlling Islamic fundamentalism and extremism. Tajikistan had to go through the vicissitudes of civil war and foreign intervention, and Turkmenistan turned into a quasi-authoritarian regime with elements of secularism.

In other words, all culture and traditions that are aimed at preserving the foundations of the ethnic group must take into account challenges, including military ones. The threat can come not only from outside the borders of the state, but also be inside the country in "sleep mode".

Among the factors influencing a person's position in Muslim society, the fundamental situation is organically linked with Islam and the teachings of the Shariah (code of Islamic law), which reflect the most important cultural and religious traditions of adherents of Islam.

Sharia, which means "the way to follow", is also called Muslim law, which tells a follower of Islam how to behave in accordance with the religion and not distinguish between their obligations towards their own kind. Sharia is the source of the rules governing the economic sphere of Islamic States.

Islam has been the religion of the majority of the people of the Republic for centuries in Uzbekistan. "In the country, at the time of the collapse of the USSR, there were more than 120 Nations and ethnic groups that professed 17 different religious beliefs. As of January 1, 2007, the state statistics Committee provided data on 26.663 million people living in the Republic of Uzbekistan. According to statistics, citizens who profess Islam in the country were 88.46 % of the total population" (AN-NA'IM, 2000).

Thus, it can be seen that real freedom of religion and religious tolerance towards religious minorities were ensured in the Republic. Social transformations, first of all, affected the basic or, in other words, the basic principles of humanism and human rights. The basic law of the country was supposed to reflect the principles that for 70 years were kept silent, remained behind the wording of atheism and irreligion, although all religious holidays and principles were revered and professed in most Uzbek and Kazakh families. The leadership of Uzbekistan gave a clear assessment of the fact that Islamic principles entrenched in the worldview of the majority of citizens to ignore them or not to reflect in the Constitution properly is impossible, because it will be perceived by the population negatively.

The country's leadership was aware that followers of religious movements had been in an underground position for a long time. They also understood that religious adherents wanted changes in political life and the acquisition of the status of an Islamic state living according to the principles of Sharia. Preachers of these principles, first of all, were directed against the leadership of the Central Asian countries, and their ideas about native Islam and other religions were radically different from the canonical principles. And since the leadership of most Central Asian States still had their previous leaders, with the exception of Tajikistan, the wording in the constitutions of the countries should have been, in General, secular in nature, taking into account the moral foundations, socio-ethnic and spiritual attitudes of the main religions of these States.

SUMMARY

State bodies and spiritual administrations of Muslims made great efforts to work with the population of countries on the canonical interpretation of Islamic principles and their implementation in everyday life. These bodies at all stages of the development of independent States took measures to counter religious extremism, as well as to counter human rights organizations lobbying for the interests of foreign States and mass media that did not reflect the interests of local authorities.

Among the most important reasons for the increased activity of radical religious functionaries is the factor of "manifestations of the absence of a classical hierarchical structure in Islam, which created favorable conditions for energetic actions of people pursuing specific goals" And as a result, this situation "results, in particular, in the desire of some forces to create political parties and religious organizations with religious coloring" (ABDUVAKHITOV, 1993).

In these circumstances, the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan has defined that public life develops on the basis of a variety of political institutions and opinions, and ideology cannot be a state policy. "Democracy in the Republic of Uzbekistan is based on universal principles, according to which the highest value is the person, his life, freedom, honor, dignity and other inalienable rights" (KARAGIANNIS, 2006, article 13, p. 2). "All citizens of the Republic have the same rights and freedoms and are equal before the law without distinction of sex, race, nationality, language, religion, social origin, beliefs, personal and social status» (KARAGIANNIS, 2006, article 18, p. 3).

"Basic provisions and requirements on the need to comply with international human rights instruments and agreements related to freedom of conscience and religion. In particular, article 2 of the Law on freedom and religious organizations stipulates that if an international Treaty of Uzbekistan establishes rules other than those contained in the legislation of the Republic on freedom of conscience and religious organizations, then the rules of the international Treaty are adopted" (MELVIN, 2001).

Secular principles had an effect on the citizens of the republics living in the urban environment. The radical religious environment took root in the villages and villages, largely due to social injustice and lack of opportunities to get a high-quality secular education, and unemployment made these segments of the population vulnerable to false teachers and preachers of radical Islam. "The law establishes restrictions that are necessary to ensure public order and national security, life and health, rights and freedoms of other citizens, as well as provisions to prevent religious extremism, inciting hostility between different faiths, etc." (MINGAZOVA; BELYAYEV, 2017).

An important component of the national policy of States was the youth policy, which was aimed at eliminating and protecting unformed minds from radical Islamism.

"At the same time, it should be noted that according to indirect estimates of experts, up to 10-15% of young people are sympathetic to extremist ideas" (NAFIKOV; NABIEV, 2018). Despite the cultural and national identity of Uzbek citizens, Western organizations often imposed pseudo-democratic principles that were alien to the country's population. "The problem of involving some young people in extremist groups, or their hidden sympathy, is also related to the methods used by these groups and parties, or rather their local cells" (BELOGLAZOV; ZAKIROV; MUBARAKSHINA, 2019). The main issue for the state and society at the present stage is the religious education of young people. The stability of public consciousness and the state itself largely depends on the availability and unobtrusive communication to unenlightened minds of very important, and at the same time complex religious principles, a combination of religion and secularism, spiritual and existential.

In the country, the education system was separated from religion. "Religious subjects were not included in the curricula of General and higher education, unless they were specialized educational institutions such as Islamic centers or madrassas. At the same time, the right to secular education is guaranteed to citizens regardless of their attitude to religion. The teaching of religious beliefs on an individual basis is prohibited by the basic law of the country.

Issues of religious education are now under the control of the leadership of state bodies of Uzbekistan. "This is primarily due to preventing the teaching of radical Islamic teachings in the educational process, as well as the infiltration of extremist elements into the system of religious education. As you know, it is by subjecting young people to treatment, including through teachings and literature of religious and extremist content, that representatives of radical and terrorist organizations try to attract them to their side.

CONCLUSION

In the conditions of globalization and need of integration of Muslim Umma into public and cultural life of the country, it becomes relevant to create a competitive education system in relation with the Islamic world. From 10 to 12 million immigrants whose parents or they arrived from the countries belonging to the Muslim world. The matter is not less relevant for Russia. The migration situation emphasizes those representatives of Central Asia and a number of neighbor countries where Muslims make the majority.

In the countries of Central Asia in the mid-1990s, the interests of citizens were not taken into account, in the absence of an ideology that had sunk into the past with the Soviet Union, a large number of madrassas and mosques were opened, which were supposed to change the class paradigm to a moderate religious Outlook. Moreover, the level of religious knowledge received was far from canonical, and this became a good ground for religious fundamentalism and extremism.

The Islamic factor in the modern world has an impact not only on Muslim countries, but also on many countries of the world that are not included in this category. A huge number of Muslims also live in non-Muslim countries, so the governments of these States must take this fact into account.

It is important to remember that the ancient center of Islamic culture was centered on the territory of Uzbekistan. The heritage of "Holy Bukhara" has a political and cultural aspect. Islam in Central Asia is more radical than in the Volga region, and was more sensitive to the influence of foreign fundamentalist movements. The local clergy strongly influenced events, and their position was often unfavorable from the point of view of power.

Outside of Uzbekistan, the opposition has supporters in municipalities in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries. Most of them are committed supporters of Islamism. The idea of the Islamic revolution, in their opinion, should be implemented in court, according to Sharia law.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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Received: 20 Oct.2020

Approved: 01 Dec.2020

ⁱCandidate of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of regional studies and Eurasian studies, Institute of international relations. Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, Kazan, Russia. E-mail: maratscorpion@yandex.com. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3798-4328>.

ⁱⁱCandidate of Historical Sciences, teacher of the Department of regional studies and Eurasian studies, Institute of international relations. Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, Kazan, Russia. E-mail: kadyrovramil@mail.ru. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2996-8288>.

ⁱⁱⁱCandidate of psychological Sciences, Associate Professor, Department of Altaic studies and Chinese studies, Institute of International relations, Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, Kazan, Russia. E-mail: 12612682@email.ru. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7002-4719>.

^{iv}Candidate of Historical Sciences, Head of Department of Regional Studies and Eurasian Studies, Institute of International Relations, Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, Kazan, Russia. E-mail: lu_ka_sgrambler.ru. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0353-8493>.