



The Emergence of Extremism in the Mask of Religion in Central Asia and Its Manifestations

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Abstract

In this article, the author analyzes the factors that caused the rise of religious radicalism in Central Asia, especially in Uzbekistan at the end of the 20th century, the stages of the penetration of extremist ideas into the region, as well as the circumstances that caused the revival of religiosity during the transitional period of Uzbekistan.

Keywords: *Extremism; Religion; Religiosity; Islam; Secularization; Desecularization; Religion and Politics*

Introduction

The collapse of the Soviet Union spurred the transformation of the multinational states within the USSR into newly independent states. However, this situation has led to the increase of inter-ethnic conflicts in some countries, and on the contrary, it has created the ground for the rise of religious radicalism in others. Especially, the change in the geopolitical situation in the Central Asian region and the existence of an ideological gap in the newly emerging independent states led to the emergence of the above problems. Also, the weakened ideology of the former union was replaced by foreign ideas.

The efforts of foreign extremist centers caused the formation of extremist currents in Central Asia. Their main goal was to capture the Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union.

Not only the members of the extremist centers from abroad but also some local scholars expressed ideas contrary to traditional Islam.

Uzbek political scientist Shuhrat Goyibnazarov: the process of re-Islamization in Central Asia and the development of the so-called "unconventional Islam", including the radical trend, were decisively influenced by the liberalization of socio-political and economic relations that began in the mid-1980s in the USSR. A new stage in the development of radical Islamic organizations, the peak of their activity, began at this time" [1, - B. 218-219.] - and the fact that he emphasized that radical Islam entered Central Asia in these times proves once again.

In particular, some historians emphasize that extremist ideas entered the region in five stages starting from the 70s and 80s of the 20th century:

The first stage included the years 1970-1985, and as a result of the long-lasting atheistic policy, some scholars considered situations such as the weakening of the attitude towards religion among the population as a threat to Islam, and they believed that a political solution to the existing problems could be solved by creating an Islamic society even in the Soviet era. We're starting to come to a conclusion...

The second stage included the years 1985-1989 and was associated with the announcement of the slogan of democratization of society and transparency during the period of "Reconstruction" in the union. Especially, the views of the "Salafi" movement on issues such as the concept of "heresy", Sufism, visiting graves, marking them with gravestones, reciting the Qur'an to the souls of the departed, music, theater and fine arts, and celebrating birthdays cause various differences among the Muslim population. The discussions held by the supporters of this movement with the Hanafis gradually turned into open resistance and the use of force.

The third stage includes the years 1989-1993 and is characterized by the strengthening of Islamic movements in Uzbekistan. During this period, fanatical groups for the first time in many years came to the political arena with open demands and tried to independently solve issues related to religious life. Some researchers call this period the "Red Islamic Revolution". Because of the increase in openness and the granting of religious freedoms to the population, some official imams, inclined to fanaticism, caused discord among Muslims...

The fourth stage includes the years 1993-1999 and is the period of attempts to Islam the population based on secret activities. By attracting more young people and women, they started trying to inculcate the idea that "If you join this organization, you will become a protector of the nation, Islam and humanity" to young people who have no life experience, who do not understand the true nature of religion, and who are prone to radical ideas...

The fifth stage includes the period from 1999 to the present and is characterized by the transition to subversive-terrorist activities. At this stage, the activities of the women's wing intensified, even to the point of blowing themselves up and killing [2, – B. 119-122].

It is clear from the above stages that the process of restoring the reputation of religion is one of the main trends of modern society. Because, in the countries that were not satisfied with the ideas of the period of secularization, it was replaced by the rise of religious feeling. Also, religion tried to become the main factor and tool of politics. As a result, religion and politics became parallel. What factors motivated the emergence of this religion and politics in one line? What caused religion and politics to merge? Answering these questions has become more relevant today than ever. Because the answers to these questions allow us not only to identify problems, but also to find their solutions. It even visualizes future threats before our eyes.

The circumstances that led to the revival of religiosity in the transition period of Uzbekistan are shown in the following:

- the gap in society as a result of the ideological struggle between the USSR and the USA;
- filling the ideological gap with religious values by politicians;
- turning religion into a new ideological weapon.

The political system of the Soviet era aimed to completely destroy religion with state atheism, but it turned out that this could not be done. The people kept their religion. But today religious values are not accepted by the young generation in one sense: for some, they have a certain positive value, for others, they have a negative effect due to religious illiteracy [3, – S. 17].

While studying the causes of the desecularization trends in secular countries in general, we should not forget that there are different types of secularization. These types show the different manifestations of secularism in each region. In particular, the Russian philosopher Alexander Shishkov said: "Traditionally, in discussions about secularization, it is divided into two types: European (classical) and American. These types of secularization are well studied and described. However, one more type should be added to them, typical of countries with a communist regime (let's tentatively call it "Soviet secularization")" [4, - S. 166-167]— also prove our words.

Based on Shishkov's opinion, we put forward the idea of the desecularization of Europe, the desecularization of America, and the desecularization of the Soviet states. European and American desecularization are close to each other, that is, the increase of confessions based on tolerance and the increase of various forms of faith, after the collapse of the Soviet state, the return of religion to countries where Christians and Muslims made up the majority of the population and the increase of those who believe in it, that is, desecularization, which shows the dynamics of the growth of religion, desecularization in the Soviet states we found it appropriate to call it.

Because of discoloration in the Soviet countries, the geopolitical landscape of the world has also changed. Today, the globalized world is witnessing many trends. The interaction between fundamentalism and modernism in the 20th and 21st centuries created a basis for religious renewal.

We implemented discoloration in different ways in each country. It depended on the level of influence of religion on people's lifestyle, mentality, culture, national identity, statehood. Therefore, discoloration, which is a global trend, is manifested in a unique way depending on religious traditions, and the formation of a post-secular society takes place in different dynamics [5, – p. 46]. For example, the religious-political situations that occurred at the intersection of religion and politics showed that it is one of the main reasons for the disclosure process in Uzbekistan. Because in the socio-political debates in the country, the day-by-day rise of religion in first place has also caused it to become political. In particular, that groups under the guise of religion, carrying out secret activities in the territory of Uzbekistan and poisoning the minds of young people with various superstitious ideas, is proof of the impetus for the emergence of a religious-political situation in the transitional period.

Taraniuk Jap Petrovich: "In the context of the search for new political strategies that provide a balance between global threats, on the one hand, and the interests of states, on the other hand, politicians use national ideas as a source of national ideas, as a possible tool to confront and eliminate moral, demographic, terrorist and other threats to religion. are more and more used as an identification parameter of the community" [6, - p. 3] is proof of the above points.

The process of politicization of Islam in Central Asia began during the period of reconstruction. During the Soviet era, Islam survived in the region in two forms: an official religion controlled by the government and a hidden, unofficial Islam. The revival of Islam in Central Asia was more peaceful and moderate than the period of religious renaissance in other regions of the USSR.

In conclusion, taking into account the influence of Islam on the human mind, and its place in the national culture of countries, the use of its positive aspects, such as peacekeeping, occupies an important place in the spiritual and moral education of the young generation. Also, it is important to base the principles of religiosity and secularism on the principle of moderation in ensuring the stability, peace and security of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

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