



## THE INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCHERS IN THE STUDY OF THE RESTORATION OF ISLAM IN CENTRAL ASIA IN THE EARLY 90S OF THE 20TH CENTURY

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### ABOUT ARTICLE

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**Abstract:** The article talks about the specific problems of studying the restoration of Islam in Central Asia in the late 80s and early 90s of the 20th century and its impact on the socio-political processes in the region. In the opinion of the author, it is necessary to study the Islamic factor free from the influence of Eurocentrism and Western Orientalism in researching the revival of Islam in Central Asia in the late 80s and early 90s of the 20th century. For this, the influence of Islam on the development of the Central Asian countries should continue to be widely and deeply studied with an objective academic approach.

### INTRODUCTION

During its fourteen-century history, Islam has played an important role in the development of world civilization, particularly in the development of the peoples of Central Asia. The role of Islam is increasing in the regional and global political processes taking place in the modern world. From this point of view, the research of Islam and its place in world politics, especially in the social, economic, political and cultural development of the Central Asian countries, is considered more urgent today. The politicization of Islam is evaluated as a geopolitical problem, creating the basis for concepts such as "geopolitics of religion" and "geopolitics of Islam" [1]. Central Asian countries are a unique region for studying the Islamic factor, as well as for observing the processes of "Islamic revival" in the post-Soviet region [2]. Researchers put forward different opinions about the "Islamic renaissance" taking place in Central Asia in the post-independence period. In general, naming this phenomenon with the terms "Islamic renaissance", "re-Islamization", "revivalism", "second Islamization" or concepts such as "Islamism" and "fundamentalism" have become the topic of discussion among researchers [1].

### ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Today, it is necessary to note that there are a number of problems in the theoretical-methodological aspects of studying the influence of the Islamic factor at the international, regional and state levels.

First, today's system of modern international relations is mainly secular in nature and mainly relies on the ideology of Eurocentrism.

Uzbek scientist Sh. Yovkochev emphasizes that religion is considered an integral part at every stage of the historical development of humanity, and in order to understand how the roots of religion and politics are connected to each other, it is necessary to understand the essence of religion, to determine its role and function in society [3].

The Russian scientist G. Yemelyanova observed that the researches in the field were carried out mainly based on the empirical theories and paradigms of Eurocentrism. The scientist says that in these studies, "second-hand" Western, especially Russian, sources were relied upon[4].

In our country, as noted by Sh. Yovkochev, researches in the field traditionally depend on Russian and Soviet oriental studies, and their roots go back to European oriental studies formed under the heavy influence of the German school [1].

Foreign researchers D. Khizershaw and David W. Montgomery say that "in order to deeply understand the situation related to political Islam in Central Asia, it is necessary to understand the complex relationship between secularism, Islam and the state." In addition, secularism has emerged as a major force in the Islamic world in the post-Union era. It limits radicalism, but at the same time creates an exaggerated fear of Islam" [5], saying that it is important to understand the difference between Islamism and politicized Islam, i.e. Islamism and radicalism, and it is wrong to see Islam as only radical. brings that.

Secondly, there are conflicting views among the researchers that Central Asia is an integral part of the unified Islamic world or that it is a separate region due to the fact that Islam developed in the region under the influence of the ideology of atheistic communism.

There are different opinions about whether the revival of Islam in Central Asia is the result of the independent spiritual, socio-political development of the region or a phenomenon related to external influences.

Saodat Olimova, a researcher from Tajikistan, stated that the majority of scientists believe that the revival of Islam in the region in the 80s and 90s of the last century was a result of external influences and proselytism [7].

Thirdly, as noted by Sh.Yovkochev, theoretical approaches to the field developed by Russian classical scholars were based on the "vulgar sociological approach" closely related to militant atheism from the 30s of the last century. As a result, the direction of researching the Islamic factor in the region was influenced by the militant atheism of communism[1]. Analyzing research in the field of Islamic studies, the scientist says that the field should not be turned into a means of promoting "spiritual and cultural heritage". According to him, the revival of religious and national values in the post-Soviet era and the weakness of academic research in the field of Islamic studies have formed two types of "simple apologetics and academic (not atheistic)" approaches to research in the field.

Uzbek researcher D. Yusupova states that there are a number of problems related to the study of the religious factor in Uzbekistan, and the reason for these problems is the repetition of some of the shortcomings of the last century [5].

For example, there are a number of obstacles in the study of the problem of religious identity in Uzbekistan, one of which is the problems associated with the stereotypes and political mechanisms of the last century[1]. Being free from such shortcomings makes it possible to systematize and properly integrate the relationship between religion and the state in the region.

Fourthly, if there is a tendency towards an apologetic approach among local researchers, G. Yemelyanova cites the limited number of experts with sufficient qualifications to conduct an interdisciplinary academic study of the Islamic factor with an interdisciplinary approach, and to obtain "first-hand" empirical results with a deep study of the field, among the problematic factors.[7]. For example, foreign political scientists and sociologists do not know local languages well enough to conduct such research.

Fifth, even if foreign and local researchers embark on the study of the Islamic factor in the region with a purely academic approach, practical, logistical and political obstacles to empirical research in the region still exist. Obstacles include local governments' implementation of foreign-funded religious research and the local population's reluctance to such research.

Sh. Yovkochev said that the majority of the population is Muslim, that the region has direct, historical and cultural close ties with the Islamic world, that Islam is considered an integral part of the history and culture of the Uzbek people, the Uzbek way of life, and that Islam has an important place in the social and political life of the state and society. emphasizes the need for academic research of the Islamic factor in the region due to the fact that it is a factor [3]. After all, if academic research is considered necessary for scientific needs, the most important thing is that the scientific basis is the basis for making the necessary internal and external political decisions aimed at regulating issues related to religion for the state organizations responsible for ensuring stability in the country.

Under the influence of the above obstacles and problems, conflicting ideas and assumptions about the influence of Islam on social and political processes in Central Asia were formed. An example of this is the view that in the post-independence period, the region will fall under the political, economic and religious influence of mainly Muslim neighboring countries such as Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan[1].

A.Bennigsen put forward the opinion that despite the fact that Islamic teachings lost their importance in Central Asia as a result of the banning of Islamic education in the Soviet Union, Islamic paintings remained as cultural elements. His assumptions were confirmed in the period after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Bennigsen's views prompted Z.Brzezinski to establish the Nationalities Working Group[1]. The working group supported Bennigsen's hypothesis that the promotion of Islamism in Central Asia could lead to Muslim rebellion against Soviet rule[1].

In the decade after independence, the American scientist Adib Khalid also studied the Islamic factor in Central Asia and the role of Islam in the self-concept of the peoples of the region [1]. According to him, the restoration of the national heritage of Central Asians means the rediscovery of Islam and Muslim culture, at least partially, and the restoration of ties with the entire Islamic world that were severed under the influence of Soviet xenophobia[1].

Since the 2000s, a new generation of Western scholars who have more in-depth knowledge of the region, who specialize in the cross-section of countries and who have mastered the local languages, has been formed in the research of the Islamic factor in Central Asia. Researchers of the new generation are trying to understand the Islamic factor in Central Asia by studying different Muslim communities in the region separately, rather than conceptualizing it as observed in the early period of independence. In particular, A. Bennigsen and Sh. Akiner analyzed the relationship between Islam and ethnic identity in Central Asia[8].

The French scientist M. Laruelle tried to justify the fact that Islam is becoming an important factor in the formation of collective and personal identity in the region with phenomena such as the sharp

increase in the number of Muslims who demand the introduction of religious studies in the educational system, fasting and zakat [9].

The German researcher A. Walters studied one of the specific directions of the Islamic factor in the Central Asian countries - that is, the field of Islamic finance.

R. Turayeva studies the impact of Islam on the socio-economic and cultural life of the region on the example of the activities of transnational entrepreneurs and informal economic relations between Central Asia and Russia. For these entrepreneurs, he focused on the place of Islam as a solution to regulate informal commercial relations [2].

Most of the studies on the Islamic factor in the development of Central Asian countries are devoted to the topic of relations between the secular system and Islam in the region. M. Laruelle describes the relations between Islam and the state in the post-independence Central Asian countries as "schizophrenic". This is explained by, on the one hand, the recognition of Islamic values by the state, on the other hand, the monitoring of religious images and rituals, the strict limitation of religious education, and the suspicion of any independent relations with the Muslim world. He also writes that the relationship between the state and society is complex [9].

Marlene Laruelle puts forward the view that "the re-Islamization of societies in Central Asia after the collapse of the Soviet Union has nothing to do with politics" [9].

A. Bennigsen said that in the 1980s, the Soviet leaders predicted that in the future, the Soviet people would have a common way of life and culture, that Islam, like other religions, would disappear in the Soviet Union, and that the majority of the population would consist of atheists [8].

Seventy years of Soviet power in Central Asia could not eliminate the Islamic factor, but had a great impact on the formation of a secular society in the region. To date, the analysis of various historical processes in Central Asian countries shows that the region is prone to re-Islamization processes.

Saodat Olimova, a researcher from Tajikistan, analyzed whether Islam acts as a destructive or constructive factor in the re-Islamization of Central Asia.

Ten years later, the scientist's assumptions that the region will not survive the influence of global "Islamic geopolitics", that external radical-extremist forces will continue their destructive activities in the region, that the geopolitical transformation of Central Asia will take place not only in an economic or military-strategic, but also in a religious-civilizational context have been confirmed. It is necessary to say that he found [11].

## CONCLUSION

Today, it can be said that researching the Islamic factor in Central Asia has become a more urgent issue than before. The researchers emphasize the need to study the Islamic factor without the influence of Eurocentrism and Western Orientalism in understanding the processes taking place in the region. For this, the influence of Islam on the development of the Central Asian countries should continue to be widely and deeply studied with an objective academic approach.

Despite the hostile or strict policies towards Islam observed in the Soviet and post-Soviet era, today in Central Asia, the influence of Islam on the socio-economic processes of the region continues to increase. The Islamic factor, on the one hand, has its politicized, fundamental and radical aspects in the region, and on the other hand, it affects the Central Asian countries in terms of cultural, economic and social revival observed throughout the Muslim world in today's globalization period. In this regard, in the research of the Islamic factor in the Central Asian countries, it is necessary to pay special attention to its constructive or destructive aspects of the socio-political processes in the region.

Researchers who have studied the Islamic factor in Central Asia predict that the processes of Islamic revival will continue and intensify in the region, and the influence of Islam on social and political processes will increase significantly. Undoubtedly, the Islamic factor will continue to increase in the future development and politics of the Central Asian countries. Therefore, a scientific approach based on the interests of the region is required to study the place of Islam in the socio-political life of the region.

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