

**A. Altaikyzy** 

Institute of Philosophy, Political Science and Religious Studies CS MSHE RK, Almaty, Kazakhstan  
e-mail: aikerim.altaikyzy@gmail.com

## THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD DURING THE YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

This article delves into the pivotal role of religion in the Islamic world during the epoch of achieving independence in the 20th century. During this historical juncture, numerous states within the Islamic world, having liberated themselves from colonial subjugation, faced the formidable task of constructing new nation-states and establishing stable socio-political systems. Islam was central to these processes, functioning as a tool for political mobilization, a means of legitimizing new authorities, and a source of national and cultural revival. The article examines instances from North African countries, such as Algeria and Egypt, where Islamic movements and religious narratives significantly impacted anti-colonial struggles and subsequent state-building endeavors. The analysis extends to the situation in Central Asia, where, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Islam became a crucial element in the formation of new national identities. The study identifies both common and unique aspects of the interplay between religion and politics across different Islamic nations, and it scrutinizes the long-term implications of this interplay for contemporary societies. This article contributes to a deeper scholarly understanding of the role of Islam in socio-political processes and the formation of nation-states in the context of decolonization.

**Key words:** Islamic World, North African Continent, Algeria, Egypt, Central Asia.

А. Алтайқызы

ҚР ҒЖБМ ҒК Философия, саясаттану және дінтану институты, Алматы, Қазақстан  
e-mail: aikerim.altaikyzy@gmail.com

### Тәуелсіздік алған жылдары ислам әлеміндегі діннің рөлі

Бұл мақала ХХ ғасырда тәуелсіздікке қол жеткізген дәуірдегі ислам әлеміндегі діннің шешуші рөлін қарастырады. Осы тарихи кезеңде отаршылдық бағыныштылықтан құтылған ислам әлеміндегі көптеген мемлекеттердің алдында жаңа ұлттық мемлекеттер құру және тұрақты әлеуметтік-саяси жүйелер орнату сияқты бірқатар міндеттер тұрды. Ислам саяси жұмылдыру құралы, жаңа билікті заңдастыру тәсілі, ұлттық және мәдени жаңғырудың қайнар көзі ретінде қызмет атқара отырып, бұл процестердің негізгі өзегі болды. Мақалада исламдық қозғалыстар мен діни нарративтер отаршылдыққа қарсы күреске және одан кейінгі мемлекет құру әрекеттеріне айтарлықтай әсер еткен Алжир және Египет сияқты Солтүстік Африка құрлығы елдеріндегі мысалдарды қарастырады. Талдау Кеңес Одағы ыдырағаннан кейін ислам жаңа ұлттық бірегейліктерді қалыптастырудың шешуші элементіне айналған Орталық Азиядағы жағдайды қарастырады. Зерттеу әртүрлі ислам елдеріндегі дін мен саясаттың өзара әрекеттесуінің ортақ және бірегей аспектілерін анықтайды, сонымен қатар бұл өзара қарым-қатынастың қазіргі қоғамдар үшін ұзақ мерзімді салдарын талдайды. Бұл мақала отарсыздандыру жағдайында исламның қоғамдық-саяси процестердегі және ұлттық мемлекеттердің қалыптасуындағы рөлін ғылыми тұрғыдан тереңірек түсінуге ықпал етеді.

**Түйін сөздер:** ислам әлемі, Солтүстік Африка континенті, Алжир, Египет, Орталық Азия.

А. Алтайқызы

Институт философии, политологии и религиоведения КН МНВО РК, Алматы, Казахстан  
e-mail: aikerim.altaikyzy@gmail.com

### Роль религии в исламском мире в годы обретения независимости

Настоящая статья посвящена исследованию роли религии в исламском мире в эпоху обретения независимости в ХХ веке. В этот исторический период многие государства исламского мира, освободившись от колониального господства, столкнулись с задачами формирования новых на-

циональных государств и установления устойчивых общественно-политических систем. Ислам играл центральную роль в этих процессах, выступая в качестве инструмента политической мобилизации масс, средства легитимации новой власти и источника национально-культурного возрождения. В статье приводятся примеры стран Северной Африки, таких как Алжир и Египет, где исламские течения и религиозные идеи оказывали значительное влияние на антиколониальные движения и последующее строительство государства. Также проведен анализ центральноазиатской ситуации, где после ухода Советского Союза из геополитической арены ислам стал значимым элементом формирования новых национальных идентичностей. В результатах исследования определяются общие и уникальные аспекты взаимодействия политики и религии в разных регионах исламского мира, выявляются долговременные последствия этого взаимодействия для современных обществ. Данное исследование способствует глубокому пониманию роли ислама в процессах общественно-политической сферы и становлении национальных государств в контексте деколонизации.

**Ключевые слова:** исламский мир, Североафриканский континент, Алжир, Египет, Центральная Азия.

## Introduction

The XX century was an era marked by the independence of many nations around the globe, including most Islamic countries. This period witnessed challenging decolonization processes that led to the establishment of new nation-states. To gain a profound understanding of the socio-political momentum and the impact of diverse Islamic movements in this nationhood, it is crucial to consider this issue across various regions. This analysis attempts to compare the experiences of particular countries in North Africa and Central Asia.

Within the Muslim world, the decolonization process substantially impacted the creation of nation-states and new political arrangements. The up-to-date nations confront challenges in creating permanent institutes and securing countrywide unity while conserving their cultural and religious identities. By carrying out a comparative research of North African and Central Asian countries, we highlight the divergences and commonalities in their decolonization processes, the formation of state apparatuses, and the influence of Islamic movements on the political environment.

In North Africa, the process of decolonisation and self-determination was associated with independence from colonial rule, whilst in Central Asia, it had singular characteristics shaped by the region's geopolitical layout. Differences in the ethnic, cultural, and religious composition of the population, as well as the influence of neighboring states and international actors, played a significant role in the formation of national and political identities.

A comparative analysis of these two regions reveals unique aspects of Islamic and political development, as well as common trends within the context of decolonization processes and the formation of nation-states. This approach facilitates a deeper

understanding of the influence of Islam on socio-political processes in different parts of the world.

One of the most pressing topics among the general public and experts in Kazakhstan today involves several critical questions: what role should religion/Islam play in society and the state, how should the religious sphere be regulated, what has been the historical nature of Islam in the Kazakh worldview, and what should it look like today? In this regard, a comprehensive analysis of Islam from a phenomenological perspective, through the comparison of historical and contemporary experiences of Islamic countries, will enable a better understanding of the current context in Kazakhstan. Furthermore, last year, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, held several meetings focused on the religious sphere and emphasized several priorities: 1) promoting traditional Islam in accordance with the people's worldview and developing its scientific-theoretical foundation; 2) not neglecting the spiritual upbringing of the youth, as failing to do so could result in the loss of our national traditions (Bassarova, 2023); 3) paying special attention to the activities of religious associations and interethnic relations (Akorda, 2023).

## Justification for the choice of topic, goals and objectives

The research topic, "The Role of Religion in the Islamic World during the Years of Independence", was selected due to its profound significance and relevance within the broader discourse of socio-cultural and political transformations that characterized the decolonization processes in Islamic nations. A subtle understanding of the theological component is indispensable for comprehending the complex interactions of collective identity formation and the political-social realignments that ensued during this

pivotal time. Religion, Islam as the central element, was instrumental in the fortification of communal ties, the ascendance of new political authorities, and the expression of state doctrines during the epoch of independence.

The principal aim of this investigation is to perform an in-depth analysis and evaluation of the effect of Islam in shaping political and social directions of Islamic countries throughout their individual struggles for independence. This exploration seeks to reveal the ways through which religion contributed to the enhancement of national awareness, in addition to assess the tactics and tools employed by faith figures and spiritual movements to wield control over societal and political structures. To accomplish these targets, the research will tackle multiple essential tasks: initially, it will pursue an exhaustive review of the historical setting and political circumstances under which the sovereignty campaigns occurred across Muslim countries; following that, it will thoroughly evaluate the function of Islamic bodies and clerical leadership in coordinating and guiding these movements; thirdly, it will determine and discover the core mechanisms of collaboration between faith-based and political frameworks at the formative stages of nationhood; fourthly, it will measure the level to which religious teachings and concepts infused and structured state ideologies and national identities; and lastly, it will offer a comparative assessment of selected case studies to illustrate the distinct capacities religion served in the independence efforts.

The choice of this subject matter is inspired by its crucial significance in enhancing our insight of the present-day political and social realities of Muslim-majority nations. Moreover, it intends to provide meaningful input to the current academic debate by advancing both theoretical and empirical inquiry in the disciplines of religious studies, political science, and post-colonial research.

### **Scientific research methodology**

The study of the role of religion in the Islamic world during the years of independence requires a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach, combining methods from historical analysis, political science, sociology, and religious studies. The following approaches and methods were used for this research:

- Firstly, the author employs the method of historical analysis as the primary methodological approach to determine the experiences of the states under consideration at the time of writing the scholarly

article. Particular attention is given to the years of independence and the subsequent periods of state-building in the countries of North Africa and Central Asia.

- Secondly, the method of comparative analysis is used to compare the experiences of North African and Central Asian countries in the context of independence and the formation of national identity. This allows for the identification of both common trends and unique characteristics of each region.

- Thirdly, qualitative analysis includes an in-depth examination of individual situations (cases or events), which enables a more detailed study of specific aspects of the influence of religion on political and social processes in different countries. Additionally, an analysis of various political processes was conducted.

As sources for the research, the works of domestic and foreign scholars in the fields of social and human sciences were analyzed, as well as the speeches of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, K.-J.K. Tokayev, on religious issues at official meetings. Additionally, several legislative documents and findings from sociological studies conducted within the framework of the scientific project “AR09259797 Processes of Increasing Religiosity in Kazakhstan: Characteristics, Trends, Impact on the Development of Society and Human Capital (Interdisciplinary Analysis)” (Burova, 2021-2023) were used to draw certain conclusions.

### **Main part**

*The North African continent*, which includes countries such as *Algeria* and *Egypt*, underwent significant changes as a result of decolonization processes. Until the mid-20th century, Algeria (1962) was a French protectorate, and Egypt (1953) was a British protectorate. In the post-colonial period, Islam played a crucial role in shaping the socio-political landscape of these countries. Islamic religious movements, cultural aspects, and social norms became important elements in establishing identity and defining political policies. Each of the countries under consideration has unique characteristics shaped by various contextual, historical, and cultural factors. Taking these features into account is essential for a deeper understanding and differentiation of the political, social, and cultural structures in each specific country.

Islam played a significant ideological role in the Algerian people's liberation movement. After Algeria gained independence, Islam became the state religion, aimed at national consolidation and

political control. In Algeria, the state exercised monopolistic control over the construction of mosques, with the Ministry of Religious Affairs regulating the activities of public mosques by appointing and paying the salaries of “imams”. This ministry also managed religious property, established institutions for religious education, and integrated principles of Islamic law (Sharia), particularly in family law. However, these measures did not satisfy all segments of the population. Consequently, in 1964, the Islamic movement “Al-Kiyam (Values)” emerged, which later led to the formation of the “Islamic Salvation Front (Islamist Party)” in the 90s of the XX century. “Al-Kiyam” advocated for a more active functionality of religion in legal and political system of Algeria and confronted Western practices in the socio-cultural life of local people. This presented a difficult challenge for the political system, which sought to integrate Islam with national identity. While state leaders viewed Islam and socialism as compatible cultural markers, radical Islamist groups saw Islam as the sole defining factor, incompatible with others (Jonathan, 2006).

Under Houari Boumediene, Islamism was contained, but after his death in 1979, Chadli Bendjedid became president, and his regime became more tolerant towards Islamists. In the context of a socio-economic crisis, social tensions increased, and the policy of Arabization did not yield the expected results. For example, French remained the dominant language among the political elite, leading to preferential employment opportunities for French-speaking students (Jonathan, 2006). Supported by the state, the movement gained momentum on university campuses as a counterbalance to leftist student organizations. This growing tension eventually erupted into violent confrontations in 1982 at the University of Algiers’ Ben Aknoun campus.

The growth of Islamism obtained a profound influence on Algerian population, evidenced by the increasing number of women adopting the veil (“chadra”). This trend and phenomenon can be attributed to the expression of more conservative religious views and a desire for protection from harassment in public spaces. Despite pressure from feminist groups, Islamists resisted the adoption of a more liberal family code.

Following the Islamic Salvation Front’s victory in the 1991 elections and its subsequent banning, the resulting tensions between Islamists and the government escalated into a decade-long military conflict, which resulted in an estimated 100 000 deaths. Nevertheless, certain Islamist parties, including the Peace Society Movement and the Islamic Revival

Movement, became politically active and participated in subsequent elections. Recent legislative documents, such as the “Law on Civil Concord” and the “Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation”, have provided amnesty for most crimes committed during the war. Today, despite the current legislation guaranteeing freedom of conscience and religion as stipulated in Article 51 of the Constitution (Constitute, 2020), the provision for punishing those who call for apostasy from Islam remains in effect.

Islam gained significant influence in *Egypt* following the 1952 revolution, during which the military seized power. President Gamal Abdel Nasser implemented a series of secularizing reforms aimed at modernizing society (Aburish, 2004), while simultaneously bolstering the role of Islam in the country’s political and socio-cultural spheres. Consequently, Islam remains a crucial and foundational element of Egyptian identity. The revolutionary changes in the power structure did not diminish religious influence; rather, they stimulated a dynamic interplay between secularism and the reinforcement of Islamic elements in various aspects of public life. This process has rendered Islam an integral component of Egypt’s cultural and political landscape, complementing and interacting with the secular elements of society.

In 1956, the Constitution was adopted, officially recognizing Islam as one of the sources of legislation. This underscored the enduring influence of Islam on the country’s legal system, even amidst the introduction of secular reforms. In 1971, the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs was established, tasked with overseeing the regulation of Islamic matters. This institution exemplifies the state’s commitment to maintaining the significance of religious institutions within its structural framework.

During Anwar Sadat’s presidency, Islam was designated as the official state religion of Egypt, and “Sharia” was acknowledged as the primary source of law. Presently, the influence of Islam on family and social structures in the country markedly surpasses that of Christianity and other ideologies. Although secular legislation in Egypt is founded on Islamic law, “Sharia”, it is applied in a moderate and restrained manner.

It is also noteworthy that Islamic organizations such as the “Muslim Brotherhood” have emerged as influential political forces. The “Muslim Brotherhood”, a religious and political organization, was founded in Egypt in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna. Under Al-Banna’s leadership, the movement evolved into a political entity that amalgamated Salafi and Sufi traditions. Following Al-Banna’s death in 1949, the

writer Sayyid Qutb (Kozhushko, 2000) joined the movement and became one of its key ideologues.

The “Muslim Brotherhood” is a movement with varying statuses; it is recognized as a legal organization in some countries and designated as a terrorist organization in others. The group has garnered supporters across multiple nations. Throughout its history, the “Muslim Brotherhood” has participated in elections, with their candidate, Mohammed Morsi, securing a presidential victory in 2012. However, following Morsi’s unsuccessful presidency and subsequent removal from office in 2013, the organization faced significant repression. After the coup d’état on July 3, 2013, Morsi was arrested, and the organization’s popularity surged within certain social circles.

The situation escalated on August 14, 2013, when authorities decided to disperse the pro-Morsi encampments. The deployment of security forces resulted in mass clashes, with numerous demonstrators being injured or killed. These incidents triggered a new wave of protests and violence throughout the country, including attacks on police stations and Christian churches. Consequently, the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood was arrested, and in September 2013, the organization was officially banned in Egypt. Amidst these events, it is noteworthy that in recent decades, the influence of conservative Islamic currents has risen in Egypt, as evidenced by the growing popularity of Salafism and other conservative Islamic organizations.

Regarding contemporary Central Asia, this region boasts a rich historical heritage, where Islam plays a pivotal role in shaping socio-cultural and political aspects. In this context, the Islamic factor encompasses not only religious customs but also extends its influence across all spheres of social life. Islam in Central Asia represents a worldview that has long permeated the region, with historical allegiances to this religion significantly influencing contemporary social structures. Religious traditions are perpetuated across generations, thereby forming a stable cultural foundation. Islamic values also permeate the political arena of Central Asia. The influence of Islam on the region’s political environment is a multifaceted process that entails balancing secular and religious values, alongside efforts to foster a society where diverse religious and cultural traditions can coexist harmoniously (Sagimbaev, 2023).

A significant topic in the Central Asian countries is the growing influence of religious fundamentalism and the radicalization of religious consciousness. In

the wake of independence, members of local societies are striving to discover and cultivate their unique identities. In this context, Islam serves as a crucial cultural factor in shaping societal consciousness. The sharp increase in the number of adherents to Islam and believers in God indicates active engagement with these cultural aspects. However, widespread illiteracy and limited knowledge about Islam, coupled with the underdevelopment of critical scientific and educational fields, result in information dissemination from varied sources, which can lead to negative consequences of increasing religiosity. Additionally, the proximity to unstable regions such as Afghanistan poses further risks for Central Asia.

According to numerous researchers (Rahimov and others, 2023), the rise of religious fundamentalism in Central Asia is closely linked to the authoritarian policies of the region’s states. The restriction of human rights and the implementation of stringent governance have fueled a quest for justice among the populace, thereby fostering the consideration of radical methods as a form of resistance. A particularly illustrative example of this dynamic is the situation in Tajikistan, which merits detailed analysis.

The authors of this article also anticipate an escalation in the activities of terrorist, extremist, and separatist groups within the Central Asian region. This trend is attributed to the diminishing effectiveness of state structures and security apparatuses, as well as the instability of borders with Afghanistan, which facilitates the unfettered movement of fundamentalist groups across regional boundaries. The authors propose that the politicization of Islam, coupled with the intensification of state control, has contributed to the proliferation of these radical groups’ influence among the populace.

Despite the growing religiosity in Kazakhstan, sociological research indicates that the majority of its citizens prefer a secular state (Burova and others, 2023). Islam has not deeply ingrained itself in the religious consciousness of Kazakhstani people. Concurrently with trends towards Islamization within society, there is also an observable development of liberal attitudes, encompassing support for LGBT rights, feminism, and other progressive causes. Experts argue that attempts at “political Islam” aimed at altering Kazakhstan’s governmental structure are impractical and largely ineffectual. The rise in adherents to fundamentalist and radical ideologies is currently attributed to socio-economic challenges and the cultural and educational decline, which create favorable conditions for the propagation of such ideologies (Altaikyzy, 2023).

## Results and discussion

Sebastien Peyrouse's article "Why do Central Asian governments fear religion? A consideration of Christian movements" (Peyrouse, 2010) examines how Central Asian governments have approached religion, with a particular focus on Christian movements, in the post-Soviet period. After gaining independence in 1991, these countries implemented laws that restricted religious freedoms. Issues regarding religious aspects, particularly Islam, as a probable ideological adversary brought about tougher legal regulations and intensified bureaucratic oversight on religious organizations. In the 1990s and early 21st century, these governments tightened their grip on religious organizations by rebuilding or sustaining Soviet-era systems, such as the Councils for Religious Affairs and the Muslim Spiritual Boards. Consequently, statutory constraints on religious practices grew more stringent, notably in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, where Christian congregations encountered considerable barriers in securing registration and expressing their religious beliefs openly.

Authorities endeavored to limit the spread and activities of "non-traditional" Christian communities, labeling them as "sects". This categorization enabled officials to marginalize certain communities that were not in accordance with government-sanctioned frameworks. The narrative of fighting religious extremism served to legitimize the repression of religious activities. Peyrouse emphasizes that, regardless of the proclaimed religious "renaissance", Central Asian regimes still approach religion from a Soviet perspective, causing paradoxical outcomes in religious affairs. Religion remains as a balancing force against governmental power, prompting officials to worry losing grip and order. Hence, the Central Asian religious policies show a fundamental inconsistency between the religious liberty and the concrete limitations imposed to uphold authority and regional stability.

The article by Batir Valiev "The Religion of Central Asian Countries and its Relationship with the Politics" (Valiev, 2021) studies Islam's role in Central Asian states and its link to political issues. Islam possesses substantial historical and cultural value in the area, acting as a central aspect of both social and political institutions. The region contains key spiritual landmarks like Samarkand and Bukhara and the places where celebrated religious personalities were born. The article underscores that after the collapse of the USSR, the bond between religion and politics in Central Asian countries continues to be prominent. States with secular gover-

nance, such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan frequently encroach on religious liberties while claiming to combat extremism and terrorism. Even with Islam's prevalence, the region features significant confessional pluralism, chiefly in Kazakhstan. Valiev mentions that these governments implement stringent regulations on religious life driven by apprehensions that Islamic fundamentalism could threaten their dominance. This supervision is apparent through the constraints on religious observances and the curbing of religious figures. After the breakup of the USSR, Islam started to occupy the ideological gap vacated by Marxism-Leninism specifically within youth demographics. The article wraps up stressing the necessity for more in-depth investigation into the effects of religion on political and human rights issues in Central Asia.

The document "Central Asia: A Space for 'Silk Democracy': Islam and State" (Nogoybayeva and others, 2017) analyzes the interaction between Islam and policy-making in Central Asia from 1991 to 2016. Scholars from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan outline three primary angles: a historical review of alterations, specific perspectives for each country, and a cross-national comparison of the four countries. Kazakhstan's stance on religious matters entails moderating oversight while actively addressing extremism and encouraging moderate Islam. Kyrgyzstan encountered a swift rise in mosques and religious educational facilities, resulting the implementation of stricter measures to address possible extremism. Regarding Tajikistan, following a civil war shaped by religious-political forces, the regime has set up severe controls to supervise religious affairs, seeing political Islam as a risk to public safety. Uzbekistan, recognized for its rich Islamic heritage, endorses Islamic cultural traditions while applying intense scrutiny to prevent extremism and ensure societal harmony. The paper concludes that the interplay between Islam and governments in Central Asia is intricate and diverse. The state manages the religious matters to protect country's defense while facilitating communication with faith-based organizations.

The article "The Historical Role of Islam in the Public Life of the Central Asian Region of the CIS in the XX-XXI Centuries" (Kozmenko and others, 2020) studies the impact of Islam on the socio-political environment of Central Asia. It looks into the methods used by the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union to administering religion in Turkestan, using a combination of forceful and gentle tactics. The study examines how Islam influences regional

modernization efforts, noting essential features of the religious scene and major Islamic factions. It emphasizes the substantial effect of Islam on ethical guidelines and legal rules, and also on economic and social engagements. Furthermore, the article covers the consequences of radical Islamic movements on regional security and highlights the necessity of studying Islam's humanistic side to create a harmonious blend of religious and secular components in society. In summary, the article delivers a comprehensive analysis of the contribution of Islam to Central Asia, demonstrating its broad role on the region's public and political spheres.

"Throughout the last century, the fusion of religion and politics has become increasingly prevalent across the Islamic world, often resulting in negative consequences. However, there are signs suggesting that the era of political Islam's dominance may be waning. In this context, the experiences of Central Asian countries and Azerbaijan, which are Muslim-majority regions that prioritize secular legal systems, courts, and educational frameworks, offer a largely overlooked model that is likely to attract more interest. "The New Secularism" is the first comprehensive study of the Central Asian approach to the relationship between religion and the state, exploring its unique characteristics and comparing it to other widely discussed models in the Muslim world" (Cornell, 2023).

The paper "Islamic Revival in Central Asia: The Cases of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan" (Olimova, Tolipov, 2011) studies the renewal of Islamic influence in these countries. The research focuses on the complex relationship between Islam and state institutions within a region molded by specific historical, cultural, and political backgrounds. It explores the revival of traditional Islam following the collapse of the USSR, acknowledging its application as a tool of social norms, and identifies the rise of fundamental directions like the Salafists, which pose a risk stability in the region. The analysis is arranged according to a few core topics: Islam's role within Central Asia, re-Islamization trends, Islam in post-Soviet Tajikistan, official religious policies, and approaches to counteract radicalization.

The chapter focusing on the role of Islam in Central Asia explores whether Islam functions as a contentious or integrative force in the context of the post-Soviet period and emphasizes the variations in adherence to Islamic rules, including both conventional and extreme elements. The re-Islamization section discusses whether resurgence of Islamic practices was motivated by external or internal factors, showing the range within the Islamic move-

ment. The part focusing on post-Soviet Tajikistan details the stages of Islamic revival, the official recognition of political Islam, and its consequences on social and political structures. The paper of government policies on religion compares how different Central Asian nations govern Islam, taking into account the involvement of social institutions and religious leaders. The counter-radicalization section describes programs to fight against Islamic extremism, for example, the creation of rehabilitation committees and governmental supervision of religious activities.

The conclusion affirms the key importance of Islam in the future development of Central Asia and the significance of comprehending the relationship between Islam, democracy, and authoritarianism. The research provides meaningful reflections on the factors of Islamic renaissance in the territory studied in the article and analyzes the historical, social, and political aspects guiding the role of Islam in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

After gaining independence, Kyrgyzstan has witnessed a considerable religious awakening, which has created difficulties for its secular state foundations. In the beginning, the government allowed the fast growth of religious organizations, deeply influenced by ideologies originating in Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the Indian Subcontinent. During this time, there was also a wave of Christian missionary efforts. Gradually, the state established tighter regulations, giving precedence to Hanafi Islamic school and the Russian Orthodox Church because of their historical relevance. Steps were taken to oppose international Salafist influences and preserve social solidarity, demonstrated by the 2008 legislation on religious liberty, which set restrictions on conversion others to a religion and the dissemination of religious literature. Various presidential administrations have utilized different strategies in managing religious issues, varying from lenient policies to promoting stronger collaborations with religious figures. Islam has steadily become integrated into the political arena, acting as a factor of legitimacy and a mechanism to attract voters. The growth of Islamic radicalism and terror threats, particularly in the southern areas, had a major effect on policy-making. Events linked to groups like the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Hizb-ut-Tahrir have strengthened the state's regulatory priorities. The secularism model of Kyrgyzstan, which advocates for traditional Islam while limiting non-traditional belief systems, persists in adapting to the complexity of its religious composition. Harmonizing secular administration with religious sway is essential

for the country's stability and sense of identity, representing wider regional patterns in Central Asia (Engvall, 2020).

The work "Islam in Kazakhstan: A Survey of Contemporary Trends and Sources of Securitization" (Omeliicheva, 2011) explores connection between Islam and Kazakh ethnic identity and its influence on Kazakhstan's socio-political sphere. It draws attention to how Islam, deeply intertwined with local customs, is a fundamental component of cultural heritage. Despite the presence of Islam in Kazakhstan is predominantly moderate and centered on local traditions, the government has progressively viewed it as a security issue through the process of securitization. This process portrays Islam as a possible risk to national steadiness, thus warranting strict state policies. The article outlines the historical and socio-cultural roots of Islam in Kazakhstan, tracing its evolution from the traditional nomadic existence to its modern-day position post-independence. The author identifies several essential traits of "Kazakh Islam", including its fusion with cultural identity, the grounding of religious practices in local culture, and a tendency towards personalizing expressions of faith. In conclusion, Omeliicheva's findings uncover the complicated interaction among religion, ethnic backgrounds, and political matters in Kazakhstan. It provides a critical assessment the government's method to governing religious pluralism through a security standpoint, calling for a more detailed comprehension of Islam to avoid the negative impacts of securitization on political stability and social integration.

### Conclusion

Since gaining independence, the countries of Central Asia and North Africa have experienced Islam as a significant factor in shaping their cultural identities and processes of self-determination. However, in the context of Central Asia, Islam is not the sole determinant of cultural identity. In-

stead, it represents one component among various others. The majority of the population in these countries is inclined towards establishing national identities that are deeply rooted in traditional ethnic values such as language, cultural heritage, customs, history, and literature. These elements collectively contribute to the formation of a distinct national statehood.

Conversely, in Arab countries during their post-independence era, Islam has played a crucial role not only as a religious belief system but also as a guiding force in defining a comprehensive code of civilization. This role has significantly influenced the shaping of state structures and governance. Unlike in Central Asia, where national identities are primarily constructed around ethnic and cultural factors, Arab countries have seen Islam deeply integrated into the foundation of their state institutions and societal norms.

The predominance of national values in Central Asia can be understood through two main lenses. Firstly, the historical legacy of these regions includes periods influenced by atheistic ideologies, which sought to diminish the role of religion in public life. Secondly, Central Asia exhibits a rich tapestry of ethnic and religious diversity, which has historically contributed to a pluralistic society. These factors together emphasize the importance of national identity rooted in cultural heritage and language, distinct from the more singular role of Islam in Arab countries' state-building processes.

### Acknowledgments

This research was funded by the Committee of Science of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Grant No. BR21882428 "The influence and prospects of Islam as a spiritual, cultural, political, and social phenomenon in postnormal times: the experience of the countries of the Middle East and Central Asia").

### References

- Aburish S.K. (2004) *Nasser: The Last Arab*. – Thomas Dunne Books. – 432.
- Al-Jazeera Stuff (2012) Interactive: Full Egypt election results // <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2012/2/1/interactive-full-egypt-election-results>
- Constitute (2020) Constitution of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria // [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Algeria\\_2020](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Algeria_2020)
- Cornell S.E. (2023) *The New Secularism in the Muslim World: Religion and the State in Central Asia and Azerbaijan*. – AFPC Press. – 288.
- Engvall J. (2020) *Religion and the Secular State in Kyrgyzstan*. – Washington D.C., Stockholm: A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center. – 55.



- Jonathan N.C. (2006) Identity and instability in postcolonial Algeria // *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 11, Is. 1. – 1-16.
- Kozmenko, N.V., Logacheva, N.V., Toktamysov, S.Zh., Belanovskaya, Yu.E. (2020) The Historical Role of Islam in the Public Life of the Central Asian Region of the CIS in the 20th-21st Centuries // *Articulo de investigación*, Vol. 9, Is. 25. – 452-460.
- Nogoybayeva, E. and others (2017) *Central Asia: A Space for 'Silk Democracy': Islam and State*. – Almaty, Friedrich Ebert Foundation. – 48.
- Olimova, S., Tolipov, F. (2011) *Islamic Revival in Central Asia: The Cases of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan*. – Barcelona: documents cidob ASIA. – 15.
- Omelicheva, M.Y. (2011) Islam in Kazakhstan: a survey of contemporary trends and sources of securitization // *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 30, No. 2. – 243-256.
- Peyrouse, S. (2010) Why do Central Asian governments fear religion? A consideration of Christian movements // *Journal of Eurasian Studies*. – 134-143.
- Valiev, B.N. (2021) The Religion of Central Asian Countries and its Relationship with the Politics // *European Scholar Journal*, Vol. 2 No. 2. – 54-56.
- Ақорда (2023) Президент принял министра информации и общественного развития Дархана Кыдырали // <https://www.akorda.kz/ru/prezident-prinyal-ministra-informacii-i-obshchestvennogo-razvitiya-darhana-kydyrali-107233>
- Алтайқызы А. (2023) Дискурс-анализ казахстанского сегмента онлайн-платформ в контексте формирования массового религиозного сознания // Сборник материалов Международной научно-практической конференции: Социальная модернизация в Казахстане: возможности и перспективы. – Алматы: ИФПР КН МНВО РК. – 254-268.
- Бассарова О. Токаев заявил, что в Казахстане важно прославлять традиционный ислам // <https://kz.kursiv.media/2023-03-13/lbs-islam-tokaev/> 13.03.2023.
- Бурова Е.Е. – руководитель научного проекта, тема: АР09259797 «Процессы религиозизации в Казахстане: специфика, тенденции, воздействия на развитие общества и человеческого капитала (междисциплинарный анализ)», период реализации: 2021-2023.
- Бурова Е.Е. и другие (2023) *Религиозизация в Казахстане: тренды и перспективы*. Коллективная монография. – Алматы: Институт философии, политологии и религиоведения. – 348.
- Кожушко Е.П. (2000) *Современный терроризм: анализ основных направлений* // под общ. ред. А.Е. Тараса. – Минск: «Харвест». – 250-253.
- Рахимов К.Х., Очола К.О., Буннавонг С., Ашар Й. (2023) *Терроризм в Центральной Азии: на примере Республики Таджикистан* // *Казачество*, № 69. – 177-182.
- Сагимбаев А. (2023) *Государственная политика в религиозной сфере на современном этапе развития Казахстана* // *Государственное управление и государственная служба*, № 1(84). – 53-61.

## References

- Aburish S.K. (2004) *Nasser: The Last Arab*. – Thomas Dunne Books. – 432.
- Akorda (2023) Президент принял министра информации и общественного развития Дархана Кыдырали [The President received the Minister of Information and Social Development Darkhan Kydyrali] // <https://www.akorda.kz/ru/prezident-prinyal-ministra-informacii-i-obshchestvennogo-razvitiya-darhana-kydyrali-107233> (in Russian)
- Al-Jazeera Stuff (2012) Interactive: Full Egypt election results // <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2012/2/1/interactive-full-egypt-election-results>
- Altaikyzy A. (2023) Diskurs-analiz kazahstanskogo segmenta onlajn-platform v kontekste formirovaniya massovogo religioznogo soznaniya [Discourse Analysis of the Kazakhstani Segment of Online Platforms in the Context of the Formation of Mass Religious Consciousness] // *Sbornik materialov Mezhdunarodnoj nauchnoprakticheskoj konferencii: Social'naja modernizacija v Kazahstane: vozmozhnosti i perspektivy* [Collection of Materials from the International Scientific and Practical Conference: Social Modernization in Kazakhstan: Opportunities and Prospects]. –Almaty: IPhPSRS CS MSHE RK. – 254-268. (in Russian)
- Bassarova, O. (2023) Tokaev zajavil, chto v Kazahstane vazhno proslavl'jat' tradicionnyj islam [Tokayev said that it is important to glorify traditional Islam in Kazakhstan] // <https://kz.kursiv.media/2023-03-13/lbs-islam-tokaev/> (in Russian)
- Burova E.E. – head of the scientific project, topic: АР09259797 “Processy religiolizacii v Kazahstane: specifik, tendencii, vozdeystvija na razvitie obshhestva i chelovecheskogo kapitala (mezhdisciplinarnyj analiz)” [Religiousization processes in Kazakhstan: specifics, trends, impacts on the development of society and human capital (interdisciplinary analysis)], implementation period: 2021-2023. (in Russian)
- Burova E.E. and others (2023) *Religiolizacija v Kazahstane: trendy i perspektivy* [Religiousization in Kazakhstan: Trends and Perspectives]. Kollektivnaja monografija [Collective monograph]. – Almaty: Institute of Philosophy, Political Science and Religious Studies. – 348. (in Russian)
- Constitute (2020) *Constitution of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria* // [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Algeria\\_2020](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Algeria_2020)
- Cornell S.E. (2023) *The New Secularism in the Muslim World: Religion and the State in Central Asia and Azerbaijan*. – AFPC Press. – 288.
- Engvall J. (2020) *Religion and the Secular State in Kyrgyzstan*. – Washington D.C., Stockholm: A Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Center. – 55.

Jonathan N.C. (2006) Identity and instability in postcolonial Algeria // The Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 11, Is. 1. – 1-16.

Kozhushko E.P. (2000) Sovremennyj terrorism: analiz osnovnyh napravlenij [Modern terrorism: analysis of the main directions] // under the general editorship A.E. Taras. – Minsk: Harvest. – 250-253. (in Russian)

Kozmenko N.V., Logacheva N.V., Toktamysov S.Zh., Belanovskaya Yu.E. (2020) The Historical Role of Islam in the Public Life of the Central Asian Region of the CIS in the 20th-21st Centuries // Artículo de investigación, Vol. 9, Is. 25. – 452-460.

Nogoybayeva, E. and others (2017) Central Asia: A Space for ‘Silk Democracy’: Islam and State. – Almaty, Friedrich Ebert Foundation. – 48.

Olimova, S., Tolipov, F. (2011) Islamic Revival in Central Asia: The Cases of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. – Barcelona: documentos cidob ASIA. – 15.

Omeliicheva, M.Y. (2011) Islam in Kazakhstan: a survey of contemporary trends and sources of securitization // Central Asian Survey, Vol. 30, No. 2. – 243-256.

Peyrouse, S. (2010) Why do Central Asian governments fear religion? A consideration of Christian movements // Journal of Eurasian Studies. – 134-143.

Rahimov, K.H., Ochola, K.O., Bunnavong, S., Ashar, J. (2023) Terrorism v Central’noj Azii: na primere Respubliki Tadjikistan [Terrorism in Central Asia: the example of the Republic of Tajikistan] // Kazachestvo, № 69. – 177-182. (in Russian)

Sagimbaev A. (2023) Gosudarstvennaja politika v religioznoj sfere na sovremennom jetape razvitija Kazahstana [State policy in the religious sphere at the present stage of development of Kazakhstan] // Gosudarstvennoe upravlenie i gosudarstvennaja sluzhba, № 1(84). – 53-61. (in Russian)

Valiev, B.N. (2021) The Religion of Central Asian Countries and its Relationship with the Politics // European Scholar Journal, Vol. 2 No. 2. – 54-56.

**Information about the Author:**

*Altaikyzy Aikerim – Phd, Leading Researcher at the Institute of Philosophy, Political Science and Religious Studies CS MSHE RK (Almaty, Kazakhstan, e-mail: aikerim.altaikyzy@gmail.com).*

**Автор туралы мәлімет:**

*Алтайқызы Айкерім – PhD, ҚР ҒЖБМ ҒК Философия, саясаттану және дінтану институтының жетекші ғылыми қызметкері (Алматы, Қазақстан, e-mail: aikerim.altaikyzy@gmail.com).*

**Сведения об авторе:**

*Алтайқызы Айкерим – PhD, ведущий научный сотрудник Института философии, политологии и религиоведения КН МНВО РК (Алматы, Казахстан, e-mail: aikerim.altaikyzy@gmail.com).*

*Received: June 24, 2024.  
Accepted: September 9, 2024.*