

# “Religious Renaissance” and the politicization of religion as a factor in the power of modern geopolitical governance

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**Abstract**—Modern institutions not only influence the current political situation, but also regulate the processes of political passivity/ activity of the population, transforming and modernizing the processes of geopolitics and the political system as a whole.

Today, we are actively involved in the process of the device, which can be a catalyst in stabilizing and/or destabilizing the political space. The strengthening of positions of Islamic radicalism, the juxtaposition of the world of East and West, the activity of external migration processes, the terrorist activity of some religious organizations make us pay attention to the identification mechanism for politicizing religion based on the analysis of specific political technologies when working with potential recipients of such content. Understanding the specifics of the politicization of religion can help significantly in the development of measures to ensure social and national security.

At the end of the 20th century, we witnessed a "religious renaissance" in which religion rapidly gained from the thaw in the traditional countries of Islam, reinforcing the link between political and religious spheres of society, as the former state of religion has been undermined by ethnotrauma [1], primarily in post-socialist countries, including Russia. The authors aim to look at the reasons "religious renaissance" and the politicization of religion as a factor of power, taking into

account the identification of the impact on the transformation of the modern geopolitical picture of the world.

**Keywords**—religious renaissance, religious institutions, geopolitics, politicization of religion, new religions, political space

## I. INTRODUCTION

Relativist character defines with a timelier-political about the spaces about, so such dynamic processes as migration waves, transformation Demographic behavior, design and/or proclamation of a new political system are predetermined by many factors, among which religion becomes the dominant factor in transformation contemporary geopolitical picture of the world [2].

Religious technologies of the transformation of the geopolitical system are manifested in the countries of the traditional East in the active use of religious slogans, emphasis on the psycho-emotional sphere recipients in order to update specific political actors. So, and with tasks us strength positions of religious institutions using political methods and resources.

As we know, religion was an important component of the political development of Western Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, and in the 21st century religion became a fundamental structuring element of political life in the "Islamic world". This leads to a confrontation between the Western and Eastern world, which is reflected in the use of confessional political technologies [3].

Researchers such as E. Balagushkin, V.V. Barabash, A. Barker, V. Kolotov, E. Lansdal, I. Matveyev, A. McKoy, K. Payev, I. Sidorov, B. Full, D. Hexram consider and then study "new religions" as tools for conflict management, influence on political life.

"Conditions of postmodernism", alarming atmosphere of socio-economic and ethnopolitical instability, phenomenon of "geopolitics of chaos" create favorable preferences for religious actors associated with increasing influence on the political field social life, including issues of social justice, influence on the political system, system of power relations [4]. The politicization of religion acts as a complex, multi-component process that uses religious ideas for political purposes to justify political action and mobilize people to non-religious activities.

Today we are witnessing new trends, namely: 1) the tendency to involve representatives of various religious confessions in power relations; 2) the introduction of religious ideological attitudes in the struggle for the dominance of their own interests in Western Europe [5, 6].

As a result, European countries are experiencing a collapse due to a sharp jump in the growth of religions that are not traditional for the EU countries. At the same time, the religious factor is becoming a key element of consolidation for external migrants. As a result, the European identity will undergo a powerful transformation, and on its basis a new identity begins to form. This new identity is built not so much on the basis of nationality, ethnicity, but on the basis of confession and religion within one state. In this regard, religious parties are gaining popularity among the population, and this makes it possible for social minorities to actively transform both the political processes themselves and the political system of a particular country [7]. The very work of official state structures for the absorption of the "minority community" in European society, to reduce the impact on socio-political values, socio-cultural traditions is devoid of effectiveness, so the "Breivik phenomenon" occurs spontaneously in various European countries as an acute reaction of the host community. Modern migrations are the starting point in the communication revolution, which we consider as a component of globalization and the result of modernization. At the same time, the change of communication strategies in the context of cultural transformation is becoming a factor of socio-political activity of the General population associated with the protection of their rights, including religious freedoms [8].

The authors of this paper take into account the fact that many important aspects of the problem are still poorly studied in Russia and abroad, and seek to take this circumstance into account in the implementation of comprehensive scientific research, analysis of mechanisms, technologies of mutual influence of the religious factor and the political process.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The concept of K. Mannheim and Z. Bauman became a methodological basis for the study of the phenomenon of "religious Renaissance" in the form of radicalism.

We understand religious radicalism as a form of actualization of political ideologies and political organizations. Today, religion is evolving as social structures become more complex, transforming sociocultural norms, traditions and values, so religion becomes one of the levers of influence on social institutions [9]. The phenomenon of politicization of religion as an aspect of power has organizational aspects; we interpret them in the context of General theories of organization and political institutionalism. Greenberg, R. Baron, D. North, J. W. March, Th. Olsen.

The authors used such methods and techniques as: 1) systematic analysis; 2) 3 comparative evaluation based on categories, identities and differences, to identify similar, identical, or different characteristics of the comparative political institutions and processes; 3) "cases" as a means of identifying official messages in the context of generalizations; 4) communicative technologies of political theory; 5) synchronous-diachronic study of phenomena and events; 6) historical-linguistic and ethnopsycholinguistics modeling of political processes, technologies and institutions.

The empirical base of the study was:

- documents and other materials of the Orthodox Church and the Muslim Ummah in Russia and Post-soviet Union's countries, the Concept of the ROC missionary activity, materials and documents on the history of relations between the state and the Church, materials and documents characterizing the Islamic policy of the state;

- official documents of the governments of the Russian Federation, Germany, France, Turkey, USA and other countries directly related to the regulation of relations between the state and religious organizations and inextricably linked to the religious factor in the political life of these countries;

- materials from open sources (Internet).

## III. DISCUSSION

Such scientists as P. N. Bepalenko, S. S. Davydenko, S. M. Zinchenko, N. Yu. Elnikova, S. S. Ivanov, M. S. Mamaladze, A. V. Mitrofanova, M. Mchedlova, S. A. Samedova, M. S. Topchieva, N. V. Tuzova, M. V. Shulzhenko analyzed in detail the process of politicization of religion in different loci and chronotopic [10].

Religion is the basis of the political system in the East (Ummah, Sangha). The religious basis allows the political elite to transform religious identity into a dominant political category, which is used by the political parties of the traditional East in their strategic interests [11, 12]. The electoral systems of Sri Lanka, Myanmar and other States use ethno-religious symbols for purely political purposes. In our view, this pragmatic attitude towards religion weakens the secular nature of the state by supporting a variety of extremist organizations.

Our theoretical conclusions on politicization of religion are based on the classical works by C. Schmitt "the concept of the political", the works of E. Voegelin and H. Linz for political religions and totalitarian ideologies. We believe that our materials are also consistent with the conclusions of L. Ross and R. Nisbett on the politicization of non-political factors [13, 14].

Today, political Islam is a great danger. In our view, political Islam acts as a set of Muslim movements based on Sharia: from moderate Islamic parties to extremist groups. Political Islam performs various functions in the life of the Islamic world: political, social, ethnic, psychological, managerial, economic, legal, and cultural [15].

As the researchers rightly point out, the territorial sphere predetermines the politicization of such problems as land and environmental well-being. The spiritual and cultural sphere also politicizes aspects of morality, education, science, religion, art [16]. In the modern world there is a politicization of labor relations, economic behavior, social differentiation, etc. [17-19]. Thus, the politicization of religion significantly affects all spheres of life, regardless of our desire.

Politics and religion go hand in hand, because: 1) they are ideological systems; 2) they have a common object of influence -the population; 3) representatives of religions lobby their interests through politicians, and politicians, in turn, use religious norms, dogmas and religious organizations for their own purposes; 4) the emergence of new religious movements has a transforming effect on socio-political stability in society. According to V. I. Garadzha, "every religion claims to possess divine revelation, i.e. eternal truth" [20].

So religion acts as a holistic worldview, it determines the way of life, the political structure of society, economic life, the basic values of culture, etc. When people practice religion as a cult without a religious worldview, the sociologists call this phenomenon as "ritual religiosity" [16]. In the post-Soviet world, people consider themselves Christian/Muslim "by culture."

#### IV. RESULTS

Thus, the "postmodern condition" of our time find your answer in the various religious factors [4]. New facts of the "religious Renaissance" influence the sphere of domestic and foreign policy, as a result the

very concept of social justice becomes relevant in the system of power relations [21]. For example, in Russia, the authorities organize the work of the forum of all Muftis of Russia, all specific representatives of Muslim spiritual administrations, as well as participate in the formulation of the principles of the functioning of the Confederation of Muslims of Russia. The purpose of the Russian authorities is prosaic: the creation of a single center of Muslims with a leader respected throughout the Islamic space of Russia. Thus, the religious sphere in Kazakhstan is regulated by the Ministry, in Kyrgyzstan — by the Commission, in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan — by the Committee on religious Affairs. The main non-state institutions in this area are the Islamic center — the Council of Ulema in Tajikistan, and the Spiritual administration of Muslims in other countries of the region. The data on the number of mosques and imams are indicative. Thus, in Kazakhstan in 2016 there were 2516 mosques (in 1991 — 68), in Kyrgyzstan — 2669 mosques (in 2009 — 1973), in Tajikistan — 3930, in Uzbekistan — 2065 Muslim organizations. Most imams per capita in Tajikistan is 1 2210 Imam on the people (imams 3914), least of all in Uzbekistan — 1 7824 Imam on the people (imams 4100). In Kazakhstan, one Imam accounts for 4,915 people (3,611 imams in the country), in Kyrgyzstan — for 2,407 people (2,500 imams). At the same time, the growth of Islamization should be considered as an internal challenge, since the processes taking place in Central Asia itself lead to the formation of Homo Sovieticus instead of Homo Sovieticus, which existed in the first decade of the post-Soviet period, Homo Islamicus (even if it looks different in different countries). Moreover, the process of Islamization is asynchronous in the region: it is most pronounced in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The basis of the vitality of the Ummah is the local community, and the life of the Ummah in a secular state with the creation of the hierarchy has not been coordinated in the history of its functioning [9, 22]. The state loses in such an Alliance, because Islam is a rigid religion that forms a certain type of society with its own way of life, so the strengthening of the Islamic factor will inevitably lead to the strengthening of the trends of the organization of the Islamic state in Russia [23].

Like other traditional religions, in modern society, Islam is the basis for the formation of moral foundations that bind society based on customs and traditions. But, despite its constructive nature, religion is used by destructive, extremist elements as a tool to infiltrate religious-oriented communities, recruit and recruit some believers into extremist and terrorist organizations. Thus, new perspectives of political science research are becoming relevant for understanding the specifics of the modern political process. One of them is the study of the mechanisms of transformation of political practices political practices. In modern political life there is a process of politicization of social relations, and the reverse process of depoliticization.

Religion in society is divided into institutional and symbolic. The indicators of institutional religion are the levels of religious involvement and participation of the population, public support for the social position and the doctrine of the Church. The indicator of symbolic religion is the importance of religious factors for national identification. Institutional religion influences believers, but not all believers fully share the Church's position and are involved in religious practice. Such non-Church religiosity of the population associated with national identity is defined as a symbolic religion. Religious market theory is based on the assumption that the church is guided by its own interests and acts as a rational actor. Religion is seen as a product - the object of choice.

Thus, cultural isolation becomes aggressive and the degree of aggressiveness depends on the degree of alienation of a group from the bulk of the population, causing transformations in behavior matrices and stereotypes [24]. In society, there are socio-psychological contradictions that lead to severe social deviations [25]. In such a situation, immigrants react to the changing attitudes of a part of Western society by increasing their isolation, isolation, the desire to cling to their traditional values, language, culture, religion and lifestyle, seeing it as the only means of preserving their identity [1, 26]. Their integration into the new society becomes almost impossible.

The risk of spreading extremist sentiments of ethnic and religious character in this location, in our opinion, is due to the spread of archaic symbols among the rural population of the Islamic regions of Russia, both living in rural areas and living in cities in the first and second generation. At the same time, for the same reason, the religious worldview is traditionally strong among the population of these territories.

## V. CONCLUSION

The factor of religion, primarily Islam, is used by the ethno-oriented elite to mobilize the population. At the same time, a symbolic consolidation of communities of ethnic Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Bashkirs, Tatars and representatives of other ethnic groups, traditionally classified as professing Islam, is achieved. There is no doubt that there is a link between politics and religion in the modern world. Moreover, there is a strong influence of politics on religion and religion on politics [27]. Thus, Islamic fundamentalists generally consider the political struggle to achieve their goals, including the Holy war against the "infidels", as necessary for every faithful Muslim observance of the commandments of the Koran. In this case, we can say that politics is part of religion [9].

As for the reasons preventing the preservation of harmonious relations in the confessional sphere, the main importance here is the negative sentiment regarding the prevailing injustice, prejudice and inequality. Historical facts and events that once became the causes of resentment and turmoil are updated, concepts and theories of national superiority are revived, the entire accumulated potential of confrontation and hostility is spilled out. The objects of

mutual claims and reproaches are territorial borders, religious differences, and priorities in the economic, cultural and spiritual spheres. The Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979-81, the formation of the religious and political movement of the Taliban in Afghanistan (1994) [42] were perceived as a casuistic phenomenon of involvement in the political activities of the poorly educated lower classes of society. The situation changed in the beginning of the XXI century a Chain of military, political, and social processes in North Africa and the middle East (2002-2003) has stepped up numerous political and military-political organizations, in which religion becomes the basis of the ideological base. The process is not limited to the traditional "Islamic world". In 2006-2009, radical forces in the Xinjiang Uygur region of China, Myanmar, Somalia also use religious symbols as a priority. In 2010-2014, the main force of the network of revolutions and civil wars called the "Arab spring" in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia becomes the organization "Brat'yamusulmane" [43]. The war in Syria, which to some extent involves all global actors from the civil war, between supporters and opponents of President X. Assad in 2013-2014, goes into a religious war between the religious communities of Salafis, alawites, Yazidis, Shiites, Sunnis of various mashabs, Christians etc [44]. The process of the Renaissance of religion takes place in Europe, despite the declared tolerance. Signals of religious intolerance are traced, also in China, the USA, Russia.

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