

The impact of globalization, on the tendency of nationalism to Radical Islam in the central Asia and its threat to Russia

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Abstract: the globalization has affected on the two different approaches Nationalism in Central Asia: The one hand, causes the weakening of the national state, and can accelerates the process of ethnic – nationalistic movement ; On the other hand, the Central Asian countries are facing with serious problems of social, economic, cultural and ideological; But due to the economic numerous problems in this country, In this case, the nationalism has tended to Islam and led to design ideas of "Islamic socialism" by extremist groups. The various factors are effective to this issue such as: First, The economic problems which helps to growth of Islamism; second, the ability of Islamic Ideology in the response to the moral demands of society; third, the low level of education of the people of this region; fourth, it is associated with a the ethnic of Muslim population in these countries. The ascent of Islam in Central Asia is not primarily the result of agitation of missionaries. Rather, it is the result of a series of intertwined economic, political and historical factors.

[Seyed Salman Moradi. **The impact of globalization, on the tendency of nationalism to Radical Islam in the central Asia and its threat to Russia.** *Nat Sci* 2014;12(6):21-26]. (ISSN: 1545-0740). <http://www.sciencepub.net/nature>. 4

Keywords: globalization, Nationalism, Radical Islamism, Russia, central Asia

1. Introduction

The geopolitical importance of the Caspian region does not stem only from its energy potential. Whether or not the area emerges as a major energy producer, its central geographical location, the considerable potential for regional instability and internal and interstate conflict, and the competition among external powers for influence all suggest that events in the region will shape the balance of power in Eurasia and the geopolitical order that will supplant Russian hegemony. One of the distinct trends that emerged after the end of the Cold War was the strategic shift from Europe to Asia.

The significant event that ushered in these radical changes at the global level was the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991, leading to the emergence of fifteen new independent entities in the post Soviet space. This event fundamentally altered the geopolitical map of Europe and Asia. New sources of threats and challenges were regional/local conflicts. Such conflicts were fuelled by religious extremism, terrorism and aggressive nationalism and were the chief sources of instability. However, the religion and its role in the lives of the citizens of Central Asia became an issue that was followed to the attention of many governments throughout the region (Silanti'ev R. (2008).

The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in the emergence of new states in Central Asia with no previous experience of sovereign governance. These former Soviet republics, namely Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, left without a 'patron', experienced severe economic and social problems, characteristic for newly independent entities. Insecurity and

uncertainty about the territorial and political integrity of these states, combined with the growing number of oppositional forces, resulted in the willingness of the regional leaders to construct and promote national and historical identities among their respective societies in order to stabilize their leaderships. Hence, since most of the countries of this Islamic area were Sunni, There is an increased risk of fundamentalists in the region than two decades ago, because the country of this area, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are located near to Afghanistan and have faced over the last three decades, the growth of Islamic fundamentalism. Especially, the idea of Islamic of fundamentalists has expanded in Central Asia due to the presence of the Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Malashenko A. (1998).

However, the growing influence of the religion in the region has been accompanied by the emergence of fundamentalisms, which Central Asian governments have sought to suppress using tough measures. The effectiveness of the tactics employed is a matter of debate, along with the extent to which Islamist movements de facto jeopardize the stability in the region. Islamic Radicalism has become a serious problem in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Though these areas are bastions of moderate and traditional Islam and among the most secularized areas of the Muslim world, radicalism has made a forceful comeback in the past two decades.

Beginning in the late 1980s, alien Islamic proselytizing has gathered speed across the Muslim regions of the former Soviet Union, and has resulted in the spread of radical ideologies, militancy, and even terrorism. Worst hit have been the Russian

North Caucasus and some parts of Central Asia, especially the Ferghana valley shared by Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. This has led to fears that Central Asia will become a new center of terrorism and that militant Islamists from abroad will find a ready welcome here.

1.1. The Bolshevik Revolution and its policies towards Islam and The expansion of Islamism

Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, caused lot of hopefulness for Muslims initially. Muslims in the Russian Empire were attracted to the Bolsheviks. Despite their hard anti-religious stance, the Bolsheviks in the years following the revolution and during the civil war were in a very poor position to fight against Islam in Central Asia. Therefore, the Bolsheviks appealed to them as allies and promised them political independence and religious freedom. Lenin even voiced admiration of Muslims who had fought against imperialism and saw Muslim folk heroes as emblems of the struggle against imperialism (Frederick Starr, S.2005). In 1917 the Bolsheviks made this pronouncement to Muslims in Russia: To all toiling Moslems of Russia and the East, whose mosques and prayer-houses have been destroyed, whose beliefs have been trampled on by the czars and the oppressors of Russia. Your beliefs and customs, your national and cultural institutions are declared henceforth free and inviolable. Organize your national life freely and without hindrance. This is your right. Support this revolution and its government. Religious propaganda was considered to be of essential importance to Lenin's party from its early pre-revolutionary days, because he used of their contribution in the fight against German government and or At least hereby could avoid them from the thought of rebellion and revolution or sabotage; Thus, Lenin could to gain the support of Muslims in its fight against "the *white Russians*" or "Byelorussians; But these promises were soon forgotten and Muslims were persecuted during the communist rule, even more than prior; In the late 1980s, when Mikhail Gorbachev became president, his policies, namely perestroika and glasnost impact on Central Asia. The greatest outcome was acceptance of manner consistent with Islam. This transformation was completely accepted natives with wonder and enthusiasm. Over Gorbachev's time in power, perestroika and glasnost were his most important goals. Economic, social, and political aspects of the Soviet Union have been partly implemented due to these two elements which heighten his seriousness of pushing towards his current objective. The new mosque was opened and was held several informal religious education classes in many areas. Although still members of the elite

ruling were the Communist Party and the continued prohibition of religious ceremonies, but nevertheless, the government encouraged the revival of Islam. Coincided with the religious resurgence was performed a wonderful revivalism "Sufism" - the Sufi branch of Islam that is oriented in Central Asia. So, looking for the reform Gorbachev in Perestroika period (second half 1980), the Soviet government in response to two completely different concerns, adopted a peaceful approach towards religious elements. The necessity to control of the emerging "Islamic threat" was one of the concerns. The perception of Islam as a potential menace was to some extent inspired by the writings of western scholars, who frequently stressed that the rapid demographic growth of the Soviet Muslim population would endanger the stability of the Soviet Union and might even bring about its dissolution. The threat perception was fuelled, too, by apprehension that 'fundamentalist' movements might be imported into Central Asia from Iran and Afghanistan. The other concern for the Soviet authorities at this period was the urgent need to improve economic performance. In an attempt to change the moral climate, religious leaders were coopted to help fight these social ills. In Central Asia, as part of this policy, Islam began to be presented in a positive light, with much emphasis on its ethical values. the process of implementing perestroika arguably exacerbated already existing political, social and economic tensions within the Soviet Union and no doubt helped to further nationalism in the constituent republics. Perestroika and resistance to it are often cited as major catalysts leading to the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev changed the meaning of freedom for the people of the USSR. When the Central Asian states gained independence at the end of 1991 there was much speculation, within the region and broad, as to the possible impact of the 'Islamic factor' on politics and society.

1.2. Globalization, The orientation of nationalism toward radical Islamism in Central Asia

In order to the implications of globalization can be pointed three changes: Undermine the government, nations, the growth and strengthen of the ethnic seeking Identity, The creation of The ethnic virtual communities. The goal of world community in the present century is replacing the minimum ruling instead of the maximum ruling. Globalization as a world trend is not confined to the economic field. It originated in economy and has extended into political, cultural and other fields. The cultural globalization doesn't mean homogenization or integration of global cultures.

It refers to the world culture exchange, conflict, adhesion and interactive process. The cultural globalization does not define Westernization or Americanization. Globalization and localization, unity and diversification, universality and particularity, pursuit of national culture value, sovereignty, and so on, all of these would vocalize a reasonable interaction between a pair of paradoxes. With the appearance of globalization multinational corporations administer in different host countries around the world. They have to deal with a wide variety of political, economic geographical and technical situations (Roshwald, Aviel. 2001). In addition each host country has its own society and culture, which may widely vary from many other societies and cultures. Multinational corporations have comprehended through virulent experience that socio-cultural factors are vital ingredients that make up the overall business environment, and that it is essential to perceive these differences to set up and operate in a host country.

To measure its extensity and effect on an especially society it is needed to analyze each of these facet separately. This problem is, moreover, more dramatic in its outcomes for some nations of the developing world, where multi-ethnic composition arising from the crude territorial divisions of colonial occupation combines with comparatively weak state structures to produce a legacy of often bloody political instability and interethnic violence(Nairn, Tom. 1997). In 1991, as the Soviet Union was split up, new states emerged in the aftermath. A top priority for these national governments was their establishment as independent and legitimate political and global entities. Equally important was the construction of national identities. External and internal dynamics were complicated by the enormous challenges that many of these countries were facing including: ethno- linguistic conflict, population movement, poverty, unemployment, and increasing social stratification. For seven decades the inhabitants of the newly independent Central Asian states had experienced nation-building as members of the Soviet state. Having never experienced it as a sovereign people the responsibility of singling out the features of nationality was left for themselves.

If globalization does not discharge the State of all its capacities of action, it decreases the leeway of the latter, by blocking off different spaces: economy, media, education, and throws out a challenge to some States that want to shield their citizens from this impression. After 1991, religious globalization resulted in the interference of external Islamic movements that could be categorized although they could be interlinked. into three movements depending on their origin: Arab, Turkish and Iranian and which

were respectively and abusively described as Salafist, Sunni Brotherhood and Shiite. Indeed, the process of globalization, interaction and interrelations of the Central Asian republics with the world community started developing from the beginning of 1990s; the moment of getting independence and forming of the national state, squired by transformation of economic, cultural, socio-political structure of the society. There is no doubt that globalization has its appreciable impact on all aspects of the republics' life specially the role of Islam.

One of the key tenets of the Soviet system was that religion was disagreeable with communism, and the communists methodically set about suppressing all forms of religious expression. Although the Soviet regime regulated and sometimes followed formal religion, communism was never able to overthrow its unofficial and private practice. The personal religion retained force, especially in rural areas where peasants did not expect advancement, communist party structures were weak or non-existent, and traditions remained strong.

The renaissance of Islamic traditions and culture in Central Asia in the 1990s is attributed to the recurrence of the phenomenon that existed in the Soviet Union in the late 1960s when the activities of low key Islamists became noticeably obvious. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan remained the nucleus of clandestine ventures of the Sufis who strived for the restoration of Islam during that period. Despite the fact that these activities were vanquished by tough Soviet policies, religious elements remained active in the social sub-strata of the Soviet republics.

So can be said that the globalization has affected on the two different approaches Nationalism in Central Asia: The one hand, causes the weakening of the national state, and can accelerates the process of ethnic – nationalistic movement ; On the other hand, the Central Asian countries are facing with serious problems of social, economic, cultural and ideological. But due to the economic numerous problems in this country, In this case, the nationalism has tended to Islam and led to design ideas of "Islamic socialism" by extremist groups. The various factors are effective to this issue such as: First, The economic problems which helps to growth of Islamism; second, the ability of Islamic Ideology in the response to the moral demands of society; third, the low level of education of the people of this region; fourth, it is associated with a the ethnic of Muslim population in these countries. The ascent of Islam in Central Asia is not primarily the result of agitation of missionaries. Rather, it is the result of a series of intertwined economic, political and historical factors.

1.3. The Islamic threat in the border of the Russian Federation

Islam is considered as one of Russia's traditional religions, legally a part of Russian historical heritage. According to a poll by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center, 6% of responders considered themselves Muslims. According to Reuters, Muslim minorities make up a seventh (14%) of Russia's population. Every Muslim family has 3 or 4 kids but any non-Muslim Russian family have a kid. The statistics indicate that Russia will have lost approximately 1.3 of the population in the first half of the 21st century but these statistics is not same about some of these religious minorities, particularly Muslims and their population is increasing because there is bearing among them.

The majority of Muslims in Russia adhere to the Sunni branch of Islam. About 5% are Shia Muslims. In a few areas, notably Dagestan and Chechnya, there is a tradition of Sunni Sufism. The Azeris have also historically and still currently been nominally followers of Shi'a Islam, as their republic split off from the Soviet Union, significant number of Azeris immigrated to Russia in search of work. Notable Russian converts to Islam include Vyacheslav Polosin, Vladimir Khodov and Alexander Litvinenko, a defector from Russian intelligence, who converted on his deathbed. The ethnic Muslim population in Russia grew throughout the period between 1989 and 2002. Estimates of the current size of that population range from about 5 million to over 30 million, and the wide range of estimates reverberate the fact that very little reliable information on the subject exists for Russia. Moscow blames the spread of violent Islamist radicals throughout the North Caucasus on foreign influences in the region. However, in explaining the rise of violent Islamism, the role of mercenaries and ideologues from the Muslim world is very much secondary to domestic factors.

At the most fundamental level, Russian perceptions and attitudes towards Islam reflect a barely disguised schizophrenia (Tazmini, Ghoncheh, 2001). On one hand, Islam is recognized as 'an inseparable, fully-fledged, and active part of the multiethnic and multid denominational nation of Russia.

As a result, radical Islam started to circumscribe not only between the eastern part of the region (i.e. Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia), but also across its western part, where the religiousness of the population had traditionally been less strong. As it became clear that Islam was growing in importance and providing Central Asians a link with their past, regional rulers increasingly came to view Islam as a threat rather than an avenue for harnessing support for their leadership.

The Central Asian regimes have been deeply concerned by the rise in radical Islam, which they attribute to meddling from Islamic movements abroad (Roy, Oliver, 1994). Although the Central Asian governments have taken different approaches to the advance of radical Islam in their respective countries, each is careful about what public support for radicalism might mean for their leadership. Islam is well rooted in those regions of Central Asia where the population is settled. Nomadic tribes have also often adopted Islam, but their lives are still dominated by traditional rules and laws. In the other republics of Central Asia, popular sentiment towards Islam is more lukewarm and the activities of Islamic organizations have not found significant support.

1.4. Islamism in Central Asia and the security threats for the Russia

The western reaction has been one the one hand understanding for the challenges confronted by the Russian government in the region and support for its policies; and on the other mild criticism for its counter-productive centralization policies and repressive rule in the region.

The criticism of the cruel manner of the war in Chechnya and of the poor management of Russia's counter-terrorism efforts that has put hundreds of civilians in Harm's way has been relatively muted. In Central Asia, where the West has had a considerable presence, the reaction has been different. In fact, the West has shown little understanding, let alone support, for the seriousness of the radical and quarrelsome challenge faced by Central Asian states (Ahmed Rsshid, 2002).

Instead, the west has focused on the governments' mismanagement of the situation, while withholding from responding to calls for assistance. The Radical Islamic militants from Central Asia have undergone a long evolution, from groups operating on a local scale in the region during the 1990s to international terrorist organizations conducting operations on a global scale in cooperation with other Islamic terrorist groups. The activity of radical Islamic militants from Central Asia can be divided into two stages: the first, which includes the beginnings of Islamic radicalism and the efforts of radicals to exploit the weakness of the region's states in the first decade after the fall of the USSR; and the second, which includes the period after the 9/11 attacks and the fall of the Taliban in 2001, when radicals from Central Asia were forced to escape and found themselves in a new environment, while their influence on the situation in Central Asia was diminished. Islamist groups can be defined as social movements that base their principles, organization and goals on their understanding of Islam. Radical

Islamist groups that this study discusses are those movements that ideologically reject democracy as well as the legitimacy of political pluralism.

Their goal is to bring about a radical change in social, political and economic aspects of a country (Ayubi, Nazih.1991). While radical movements refuse to work within the established state institutions, not all of them favor violent methods to achieve their goals. However, the activity of Islamists is increasing severely in Central Asia. This region is more than before of Islamisation and "the Soviet man" is gradually replaced by the "Muslim man" (Although this phenomenon various colors in different countries). A prominent feature of this process is the proliferation of Islam and, in particular, an Islam based on radical ideology. Although radical Islam has become popular with certain parts of the population in Central Asia, it is still considered a marginal issue, since the majority still prefers the traditional moderate version of Islam. The risk of "green terrorism" is often misused by governmental authorities (especially in Uzbekistan) to justify persecution of the opposition.

The Islamic in Central Asia is not the same velocity and observed more in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Since 2004, a series of events have taken place that indicates that the problem of Islamic radicalism is not going away.

However, it is also apparent from these developments that the radical groupings are continuously able to alter their shape, methods and tactics in order to evade attempts by governments to fight them. In this sense, the regions have come to differ. In the North Caucasus, the Chechen rebellion gradually morphed into a region-wide insurgency with Islamist overtones, negating all efforts by Russia to control the situation. Unlike in Central Asia, the Islamist movements of the North Caucasus have not developed into clear and visible organizations, but rather as networks of individuals and sub-groups that are known variously under different names. The strategic threat to Russia involves more than Central Asia. The confrontation with radical Islam has spread to Russia itself, including the formerly peaceful Muslim communities along the Volga.

The first members of the Islamist movement, Hizb ut-Tahrir, for the most part ethnic Uzbeks and Tajiks, appeared in Russia in 1996. Faced with repression by the authorities in the Central Asian republics, they began to gather in the lower Volga (Didier Chaudet, 2006).

In 2003, the Russian Supreme Court designated Hizb ut-Tahrir a terrorist organization but their strength grew in the Volga district. It must be noted, though, that the threat of Islamist extremism has also become a rhetorical instrument for the

implementation of so-called antiterrorist policies that are intended to stabilize and cement the positions of particular power cliques in the various political systems.

2. Discussions

Islam is well rooted in those regions of Central Asia where the population is appointed. Nomadic tribes have also often adopted Islam, but their lives are still dominated by traditional rules and laws. The development of Central Asian countries after the dissolution of the Soviet Union exemplified similar processes and problems to those in Middle Eastern Muslim countries, even though this region has its own specificities stemming from the long-period of Soviet rule (lower religious fervor, the strong influence of the Russian language, etc.). The countries are struggling with high population growth and poverty. An additional factor in the mix is the reclamation of traditional social institutions, both in everyday life and in the ideologies of the states, since 1991.

This article has identified factors which might contribute to the radicalization of the Muslim communities in Russia, while respecting the differentiated nature of these communities. However, this focus should not obscure the ways in which radicalization has been contained. Generally, by the electoral period in 2007-8, there was evidence of greater national stability and a reduction of major internal threats to state security, linked to the improved economic situation and the generally popular support for Putin's policies. These developments make it clear that views of Russia as facing a unified and all-pervasive national Islamic threat are very much exaggerated.

Acknowledgements:

Author is grateful to persons for financial support to carry out this work.

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4/26/2014