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# DIALOGUE OF CULTURES AS FORM OF THERAPY OF RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL RADICALISM

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## *Abstract*

Religious-political radicalism becomes widespread, having various forms and features of manifestation, associated with crisis events occurring in society. Determinants of their generation are associated with social injustice, sociopolitical tensions, separatist tendencies, changing social systems, etc. Extremism as an extreme form of radicalism in different regions has its manifestations, determined by certain social causes, the identification of which is important for specific definition. In various regions of the world, extremism has its own forms of manifestation, and it often takes on a form of terrorism. Countering extremism involves specific methods, a system of organized counteraction, developed preventive measures, without which society and the state cannot exist. Radical and extremist movements in Islam are specific; often they have nothing in common with the values of Islam. Overcoming them implies organized opposition in society, creating conditions for a mutually respectful, tolerant attitude of representatives of various religions and cultures. Representatives of these groups orient the youth towards the struggle against the power of the existing state. Such was the activity of the North Caucasian Wahhabis who attempted to create a Caucasian Caliphate in the North Caucasus. Only state measures allowed eliminating the ideology and practice of Wahhabism, began to carry out measures in the regions using traditional values, combining them with civilizational and technological achievements, carrying out prevention among the youth. Attention is paid to the fact that in order to discredit Islam, horror stories are introduced that do not reflect the essence of radicalism and extremism.

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## 1. Introduction

Any forms of radicalism and extremism require opposition and appropriate measures of political and cultural therapy, "surgical" intervention by the state and society. Without such an approach, social deviations may well have an annihilating effect on the sociocultural existence of people, traditionally established political and religious relations between people. Social inequality, poverty, poverty, Western modernization, subjected to traditional and modernization social and cultural systems, are the most important factors determining radical, extremist, and terrorist manifestations.

A significant part of the youth, who are on the periphery of public life, unoccupied in production, management structures, is a social base for radical forces in society. Modern radical Islamists do not hide their rejection of the Western way of life, democratic values and free-thinking. They are convinced that the West brought corruption to traditional Muslim societies, contributed to the economic decline of Muslim peoples, the emergence of social injustice, the moral decay of Muslim youth.

Like any other cultural-historical type, Muslim culture is not an anomaly in the development of mankind. It is one of the universal methods of sociocultural organization of society, the spiritual existence of ethnic groups, people.

Radicalist, extremist trends in Islam, terrorist acts of Islamist groups have nothing in common with the values of Muslim culture, focused on bringing people together, the unity of the whole human community.

## 2. Problem Statement

The fates of the peoples of the world and the cultures created by them are directly dependent on the integration processes. Collision of civilization-cultural systems without effective cultural dialogue, mutual socio-economic, cooperation, mutual understanding can lead to the destruction of the world. This implies the preservation of diverse cultures, beliefs, civilizations. Integration according to the American scheme is the creation of a unipolar world, but this is not a solution to the global problems of our time, but rather the absorption of the cultural identity of ethnic groups, the reworking of their original cultures in the American way. Not material and cultural advancement of the West to the East, North to the South, but recognition of parity of cultures, a multicultural situation, and global mutually respectful cooperation is the way of sociocultural balance and progress of humanity, its various parts.

## 3. Research Questions

In today's interconnected world, Muslims cannot unambiguously determine their own path of social, spiritual and cultural development in isolation from the global trends of globalization. Inside the Muslim civilization, there has long been an intensive search for adequate models of sociocultural existence in a globalizing world. Thus, in the 20s of the twentieth century, Atatürk proposed the Muslims of Turkey the way of secularization of public life, Gaddafi defended Islamic socialism in his Green Book, Khomeini made an Islamic revolution in Iran, modern Ismaili followers led by Aga Khan VI in the Pamir mountains realize their understanding Muslim's public, spiritual, cultural, Muslim leader of Sudan, Hassan al-Turabi, sought to build an Islamic state based on Sharia, a Taliban in Afghanistan for six years has reislamized public life,

has revived the religious fundamentalism in its most rigid form, prohibiting the believers enjoy the many achievements of scientific and technical progress. Osama bin Laden, having risen against his former patrons and allies, declared jihad against "Jews and Crusaders", financed acts of terrorism against the United States. Religious-political radicals and extremists tried to commit an armed insurrection in Dagestan, pursuing the goal of creating a "Caucasian Caliphate", which contrasts sharply with the all-Russian sociocultural reality based on the primacy of secular values. Such methods are far from Islamic values, focused on dialogue, cooperation, mutual understanding of people and cultures.

Many radical groups in the Muslim world and beyond associated with the Islamic revival, intensified in the second half of the twentieth century. The Islamic Renaissance, as a broad intellectual, cultural, social, and political movement, spread throughout the world. American Islamist Esposito (1992) reveals signs of an Islamic awakening in heightened observance of religious rites, the spread of religious publications, wearing clothes, the resurrection of Sufism (Islamic mysticism), the growth of the number of governments, organizations oriented to Islam. Even secular regimes in Muslim countries, this author writes, are concerned about the potential power of Islam.

It is important to note that Islamic radicalism in its political and religious manifestations is primarily a denial of the West, as well as attempts to modernize social and cultural life in Muslim societies. Islamic radicalism calls for the complete elimination of Western and especially American interests and influences from the life of Muslim peoples and states. Rejection of US interests often takes the form of jihad - holy war, one of the forms of which is at times terrorism. Of course, Muslims condemn terrorism, but there are also those who do not leave indifferent the actions of extremist groups.

Given that radicalism is a modern reality faced by many eastern and western societies, it seems necessary to implement therapeutic measures aimed at both neutralizing and suppressing their activities. By their nature, these measures can be both tough and soft, liberal.

Wahhabism in the North Caucasus is not immanent to the local Muslim culture, but objectively deviant to it. Deviations from the cultural norm give rise to conflicts in the society, often expanding to hard opposition. The search for adequate measures for the treatment of cultural deviations is a task of state and public importance. At the same time, the culture itself, including Muslim, should reproduce adequate therapeutic measures, among which, first of all, the mobilization of the spiritual, humanistic, peacemaking potential of Islam and culture, which did not arise from its base, should be referred. This potential is huge, but in interethnic and interfaith practice is not verbalized enough, poorly understood and little spread.

Today, representatives of different religions understand that in the modern world there is a variety of religious and cultural systems, and their existence will continue in the foreseeable future. Therefore, the question arises about living together, working, communicating people who are in the context of cultural pluralism. This is also confirmed by the presence of more than 10 million Muslims in Western European countries, where they work, study, get social benefits, recognize themselves as citizens of these countries.

Western researchers pay much attention to the study of Muslim culture, based on the fact that Islam is a real factor affecting their countries and cultural life, they raise the question of whether Islam can adequately correspond to the modern world. But, from the point of view of politically oriented Islam, the world is divided into the world of Islam (dar al-Islam) and its opposite world, which is outside of Islam - the world of war (dar al-harb). Based on this, Professor at the Harvard University of the USA Huntington

(2011) believes that Islam, which unites religion and politics together even more than Christianity is an "absolute religion".

Islamists orient the Muslims to "holy war", jihad, although the Arabic word jihad is translated as "effort", which does not necessarily have to be directed to war with the infidels. This effort can be aimed at spiritual, intellectual development. Huntington (2011) believes:

*The main problems of the West are not at all Islamic fundamentalism. This is Islam, another civilization whose peoples are convinced of the superiority of their culture and who are tormented by the thought of the inferiority of their power. For Islam, the problem is not at all the CIA or the US Department of Defense. This is the West, another civilization whose peoples are convinced of the universal, universalistic character of their culture and who believe that they are superior to others, even if the forces tend to decline, impose on them the obligation to spread their culture throughout the world. Here are the main components of the fuel that feeds the fire of the conflict between Islam and the West.* (p. 176)

The American sociologist and futurologist Toffler (2004), emphasizing the prospects for the religious revival of Islam in the late twentieth century, notes the growing power of the Catholic Church. He writes: "Papal diplomacy recently participated in major political shifts - from the Philippines to Panama." Criticizing the calls of Pope John Paul II to create a "Christian Europe" (p. 559). Toffler (2004) states in "his constant criticism of the democracies of Western Europe are heard echoes of the distant past, a time when the world was not yet secular" (p. 559). This pope was a supporter of the creation of Christian Europe with a population of 700 million people, whose borders will stretch from the Atlantic to the Urals. But today in Europe there are 11 million Muslim immigrants, several million Hindus, Jews, followers of various religious sects. Some Islamists in their predictions see Paris, and in general, and Europe, Islamic. In connection with the above, the conclusion of Toffler (2004) seems relevant: "The game of new global forces in future decades cannot be understood without taking into account the growing power of Islam, Catholicism and other religions - as well as global conflicts and wars for faith" (p. 560). Such a development of events naturally presupposes a deepening of the cultural dialogue between nations, civilizations, the elaboration of common tolerant forms of interrelations.

The position of the numerous Islamic diaspora in various countries of the world indicates that it is in search of its own sociocultural identification, but at the same time they rely on Islamic values. In Europe, Muslims fulfill their spiritual needs for joint prayers in mosques built in many countries. Muslim mosques exist in Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, England, USA, Canada and other countries that are traditionally Christian. All this suggests that the objective cultural processes are dialogical in nature. Objectively cultures, including religious ones, are in interaction, gradually the degree of alienation between them decreases.

For many European countries, the spread of Islam and its culture is a serious economic, political and ethnocultural problem. Thus, at a scientific conference devoted to the problems of Islamic radicalism, held in 1999 in Stockholm, a high-ranking official of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Sweden, expressed his concern that 300,000 immigrant Muslims live in this state. With more than 7 million Swedes, this number

of law-abiding Muslims living in this country caused him great concern. In his opinion, in the absence of fertility among Swedes, the Muslim population tends to increase significantly. In accordance with his forecast, it turned out that in 50 years, Sweden could turn from a traditionally Christian country into a country with a predominantly Muslim population.

Muslim emigration to the West is associated with many factors. Many Muslims found themselves in Sweden, Denmark, France, England, the USA and other Western countries as a result of the collapse of Western colonialism, the Middle East conflict between Israel and the Arab countries, the Islamic revolution in Iran, the war between Iraq and Iran. Muslim youth rushed to the West in order to obtain European education, in search of work, and to improve their social status. The civil war in Syria, the criminal acts of ISIL * (a terrorist organization banned in Russia) in the Middle East determined the huge flows of refugees to Europe. This organization tried to extend its activities to Central Asia, the Caucasus, to influence the youth of these regions (Akaev & Salgiriev, 2017).

This situation implies a religious, cultural dialogue between people in different socio-cultural coordinate systems. In the West, many Muslims, adapting to new conditions, getting an education, finding work, quickly integrate into a new society for them.

But in the West there is often a pronounced negative, hostile attitude towards Islamic values and the culture of Muslims. In this regard, it is appropriate to quote the German journalist Todenheufer (2017), who described the activities of ISIL-IG (DAISH). He writes that "the image of the enemy - Islam, which had been planted in the West for centuries, was deeply imprinted in the mind. And this way you can manipulate" (p. 20). Politicians, journalists in the West create an image of Islam from Islam, although the latter is a global phenomenon that is not Muslim at all. This author believes that the source of violence in the Muslim world is the Western world itself (Todenheufer, 2017). According to him, terrorism has nothing to do with religion, there is no "Islamic terrorism" in nature, just like the North Irish IRA or Norwegian Anders Breivik's terrorism has never been Christian. The Muslim terror we dubbed "Islamic." We would never call Western terror "Christian" (Todenheufer, 2017).

From our point of view, anti-Islamic terminology produced in the West, uncritically perceived by some Russian researchers, is an informational bugaboo, reinforcing the opposition of Islam and the West, trying to prevent their dialogue.

Migration processes from south to north are also noticeable in modern Russia. Historically, Russia is an Orthodox Muslim country, in which religious denominations are closely interrelated and provide mutual support during difficult periods for its peoples. This traditionally established natural dialogue is an achievement of the peoples of Russia and its preservation and development is very important.

In order to strengthen traditional ethnocultural and confessional contacts of multinational Russian ethnoses, it seems to develop new forms of interaction, taking into account the factor of appearance in Russian Islam of radical, fundamentalist tendencies, pursuing political goals hostile to society and the state. In 1999, in the south of Russia, in connection with the activities of armed Wahhabi groups that organized the so-called "Islamic Army of the Caucasus", a real threat of disintegration of the country arose. Only a decisive state opposition to separatist-extremist groups, which posed a real threat to traditional Islam, to society and the state, prevented the realization of their goals.

## 4.  Purpose of the Study

Radicalist, extremist manifestations in Islam, terrorist acts carried out under Islamic slogans, jihadist attitudes are anti-Islamic, anti-popular in nature, undermining the foundations of Muslim culture, which involves the implementation of appropriate countermeasures and prevention measures. The necessity of theoretical and practical implementation of such opposition, as well as the implementation of the dialogue of cultures, social therapy of radical political extremism, which is detailed, is revealed in this publication.

## 5.  Research Methods

The study used the methods of analysis, synthesis, comparison and generalization of empirical data, the method of system-structural analysis of events, socio-political, religious and cultural processes.

## 6.  Findings

The question of organizing a set of measures that could suppress religious-political radicalism, to ensure peaceful coexistence and dialogue between different religions and cultures is of great importance for the modern world. It is no less important for Russia, especially in the course of the development of its democratic institutions, which led to the emergence of radical groups that supposedly preached "pure Islam", but in fact gave rise to intra-confessional and inter-confessional conflicts. In such a situation, it was obvious that it was necessary to implement a system of measures for the treatment of various forms of radicalism and extremism, while it is of fundamental importance to establish mutual understanding between people professing different faiths. In this context, in modern Russia, the implementation of Christian-Muslim understanding seems to be relevant, giving it appropriate institutionalization, creating spiritual-cultural and research centers designed to study much more widely the ways and mechanisms for establishing respectful, tolerant, tolerant relations between ethnic groups and faiths. Within their framework, relevant recommendations of a practical nature can be developed, allowing to adjust the confessional policy of the state, to expand the dialogue between confessions and cultures.

It seems that such measures could be:

1. The creation in Russia at the state level of structures that contribute to the formation of citizens of the country who adhere to different spiritual, cultural and ethno-political values, tolerant relations. Such structures can be organized within the legislative bodies of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

2. Writing relevant curricula and books, organizing television programs, implementing and other forms of practical activity.

3. Implementation of religious training and retraining of representatives of the traditional clergy in order to enhance their theoretical training, to form their ability to resist radicalist and extremist attitudes.

4. Based on the study of the moral and humanistic potential of Islam, form in students of Muslim educational institutions tolerant, respectful attitudes towards other ethnic and cultural and confessional systems.

5. Studying the best experience of religious training of the clergy in foreign countries, its use in the Muslim regions of Russia.

6. Studying the positions of Islam and Christianity in religious and secular educational institutions as the country's main confessional systems and their distribution among citizens.

7. Countering the ideology and practice of religious radicalism, extremism, using all forms of media.

8. Legal prosecution for extremist actions, Islamophobic statements, inciting ethnic hatred.

9. Periodic implementation of inter-confessional and inter-confessional dialogue in Russia.

10. Development of a Comprehensive Program of Creative Education, Spiritual and Moral Socialization of the Youth of the North Caucasus, as well as other regions of Russia (Akaev, 2017).

## 7. Conclusion

The implementation of these measures is designed to reduce the level of religious-political radicalism, improve inter-ethnic, interfaith contacts, and allow establishing a permanent cultural dialogue, so important for the North Caucasus region. In this process, the interest should be shown by both representatives of the traditional for Russia denominations, and the authorities that determine the church-confessional policy in the country.

## Acknowledgments

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