



## Religious tolerance is a symbol of peace and enlightenment

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**Abstract.** The problem of religious tolerance is very significant for ensuring security in modern societies. Religious tolerance is the basis of social stability and integration. Intolerance to religious feelings and values led to bloody wars, division of states and nations. The article describes the principles and types of tolerance in world religions, values aimed at forming a culture of tolerance in the spiritual heritage of the Uzbek people. The issues of ensuring religious tolerance in the country, the activities of religious denominations and religious organizations and the formation of a culture of religious tolerance among young people are also covered.

**Keywords:** Tolerance, religion, religious tolerance, stability, intolerance, security, religious organization, religious-confessional groups, culture of tolerance, religious denomination, religious organization.

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### INTRODUCTION

The principle of tolerance means that people who have different religious beliefs live on the same ground, in one homeland, as a partner and co-existence in the midst of noble ideas and intentions. All religions in the world are based on the ideas of goodness, it relies on several noble qualities, such as honesty, peace, goodness and friendship. It encourages people to honesty and purity, kindness, humanity and tolerance.

The problem of religious tolerance has always been relevant for the countries of the world community. Since time immemorial, religion, if used correctly and wisely, has been a powerful unifying factor in society, and vice versa. Religions with good ideas have fostered qualities such as tolerance, peace, humanity, and friendship. The destructive actions in the name of religion and their teachings, on the contrary, caused instability in society. Unfortunately, indifference and intolerance to religious feelings and values of representatives of other religions also cause bloody wars, division of states and peoples in the modern world. In today's era of increasing globalization, it is important to highlight and inculcate the principles of tolerance in religions, especially world religions, in the minds of young people. Consequently, religious tolerance is the most effective factor in ensuring mutual understanding between different religions. Therefore, as stated in the Declaration of the Principles of Tolerance: "Without tolerance there will be no peace, and without peace there will be no progress and democracy"(1).

### THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The concept of religious tolerance means that people of various faiths live together on the same land, in the same homeland, as partners and solidarity on the path of noble ideas and intentions. The concept of "tolerance" is one of the most widely used concepts in various fields of scientific activity and social life, including philosophy, political science, sociology, theology and religion. The term "religious tolerance" can be defined as follows: "This is the attitude of representatives of one religious denomination towards representatives of another religious denomination. Everyone has their own religious beliefs and recognizes that others have the same rights".

The Oxford Dictionary defines tolerance as "the willingness and ability of an individual to accept without objection or interference"(2).

Well-known Russian scientist V.A. Tishkov explains tolerance as follows: "Patience is a feature of openness and free thinking"(3). This is a personal and social description, which means that the world and social environment are multifaceted, which means that views of the world are also diverse, they should not be forced to serve the same, someone's benefit.

The concept of tolerance in Uzbek has different meanings: endurance, patience, tolerance, tolerance, resilience, openness, generosity. Tolerance is a manifestation of human individuality, respect for different noble views, beliefs, multifaceted world culture and self-expression through correct

understanding. Tolerance means the widespread implementation of the principle of “unity – diversity”. Tolerance is becoming the norm for building civil society and an important value of today’s civilization.

According to the classification given today by scientists of the concept of tolerance, they are divided into the following groups:

*Political tolerance.* It is the ability to tolerate the manifestation of different political views, opinions, convictions, aspirations, different from your own. Political tolerance is a certain order of political relations, an understanding of the need for cultural relations.

*National-ethnic tolerance.* This means that there is no negative attitude towards other national-ethnic cultures, but there is an assimilation of the positive aspects of the achievements of other cultures while maintaining important elements of their own culture. This is not the assimilation of one’s own culture, but the process of enriching each other’s national cultures as a result of national-ethnic integration.

The concept of religious tolerance means that people of different religions and denominations live side by side and in peace, despite the differences in beliefs.

Tolerance is divided into several types depending on which object it is manifested:

- Tolerance towards other religions (Islam - Christian, Islam - Buddhist, Christian - Buddhist);
- Tolerance towards members of different denominations of the same religion (Sunni - Shia, Protestant - Orthodox, Catholic - Orthodox);
- Tolerance towards different sects;
- Tolerance of believers towards atheists.

Misunderstandings and ignorance have led to mutual suspicion and mistrust in human life, which has led to various conflicts and bloody disagreements. How truthful was Abu Rayhan al-Biruni when he said: “People are hostile to what they do not know” (4). The more objective and deeper the knowledge, the stronger the underlying values, values and worldview will be. In short, they define the possibilities of a culture of tolerance and become a strong shield against various manifestations of intolerance and intolerance. In particular, then the priority task is not to evaluate “others”, their activities, “special” things and events only on the basis of their own values.

The values aimed at creating a culture of tolerance are deeply rooted in the spiritual heritage of the Uzbek people. Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Monism, Mazdakism, Christianity and other religions existed on the territory of modern Uzbekistan before the establishment of Islam. In the Indian and Persian territories of the country, the majority of people converted to Buddhism, while in Khorezm, Bukhara, Samarkand and Fergana, the population was predominantly Zoroastrian. In the pre-Islamic period, Buddhism was one of the most important components of ideological life in Central Asia. The spread of this doctrine dates back to the III-II centuries BC, the period of the Kushan Empire. The peoples of Central Asia who converted to Buddhism built special temples.

From the first centuries of our era, Jews with national religions began to appear in cities such as Samarkand and Bukhara. At the beginning of the 6th century a Nestorian bishop served in Samarkand and in the 8th century a Nestorian metropolitan. Even during Beruni’s reign (973-1048) there was an Orthodox metropolis in Merv. Christians also lived freely in Tashkent and Khorezm regions.

From the 9th century onwards, the Hanafi sect, which is characterized by the tolerance of the Sunni branch of Islam towards other religions and local traditions, was established in the territory of our present homeland. The Hanafi school was more moderate in its treatment of Christians and Jews than any other school of Sharia, and the Imam Azam sect was also known for its tolerance of other religions. The ideas of tolerance, patience and religious tolerance were widely propagated in the works of great scholars who grew up in our country during this period. In particular, Abū Manşūr al-Māturīdī, the founder of the Māturīdiyya creed, in his commentary on the verses of the Qur’an, in his commentary on verse 40 of Surat al-Hajj: “The demolition of churches and synagogues is prohibited. Therefore, in the land of the Muslims, they have remained intact until this time. There is no disagreement among the scholars on this issue” (5).

It is known from history that Amir Temur understood Islam as a universal faith, free from bigotry. His perfect faith was not at the expense of rejecting other religions, but also cared for members of other religions in his kingdom. This has earned Europe’s deep respect. King Charles VI of France paid tribute to Amir Temur as follows: “We thank you, Your Excellency, for the respect, care and gifts that you have shown to many Christians. We are also ready to treat your people in a way that suits them or, if possible, more or less”.

Archbishop Ioann, Amir Temur’s ambassador to Europe, describes Amir Temur’s personality in his book “Memorire sur Tamer et sa cour”: “Timur welcomes foreign traders, especially Franks and Christians, and provides them with security, care and assistance throughout the country” (6).

From the first years of independence of our country, the principle of respect for the religious feelings of the people, inter-religious tolerance has risen to a new level. “A Muslim child does not classify

someone as a disbeliever or a pious person ... because it is God who rules over his servant, not his servant. Therefore, it is not right for us to accuse each other in vain and argue that I am a Muslim and you are a disbeliever”, – said the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov (7).

Today, more than 90 percent of the country’s population is Muslim, about 4 percent is Orthodox, and the rest are members of other denominations. As for religious organizations, almost 92 percent of religious organizations are Islamic religious organizations. In addition, there are more than 170 non-Islamic religious organizations, which are branches of religious organizations operating in various countries around the world.

In 1990, there were 119 religious organizations and 2 religious schools in the country, but today the number of religious organizations has reached 2,040. The largest of them are the Muslim Board of Uzbekistan, the Diocese of Tashkent and Central Asia of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Evangelical Baptist Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of the Full Bible, the Bible Society of Uzbekistan and others. In addition, 2056 mosques, 157 Christian churches, 8 Jewish synagogues, 6 Baha’i societies, 1 Krishna Consciousness Society, 1 Buddhist temple and 1 biblical community have all the conditions for safe worship.

During the years of independence, hundreds of churches, synagogues and prayer houses have been built and renovated. These include the Orthodox Churches in Tashkent, Samarkand, Navoi, the Catholic Church in Tashkent, the Armenian Apostolic Church in Samarkand, and the Buddhist Church in Tashkent. The newspaper “Word of life”, the magazine “East from above”, as well as prayer sermons and other enlightenment publications are published for the followers of the Orthodox faith in the republic.

The celebration of religious holidays is widespread in our country. The number of citizens going on Hajj, Umrah and other pilgrimages is also increasing year by year. It has become a good tradition for representatives of other religious communities to visit holy sites in Russia, Greece and Israel. The government provides the necessary support to pilgrims in various ways. On April 6-7, 2018, more than 130 Orthodox Christians visited Jerusalem.

In his speech at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev appealed to the session participants with a proposal to adopt a special General Assembly resolution “Enlightenment and Religious Tolerance”. The main purpose of this important document is to promote the right of everyone to a comprehensive education and to eradicate illiteracy and ignorance (8).

Shavkat Mirziyoyev stressed that the resolution should be aimed at promoting tolerance and mutual respect, ensuring religious freedom, protecting the rights of believers and preventing discrimination against them. The fifth direction of the Action Strategy for 2017-2021, approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated February 7, 2017, is security, aimed at ensuring interethnic harmony and religious tolerance, in which the study of the scientific heritage of great ancestors of the past will serve as an important factor in strengthening today's environment of peace and tolerance, preventing the spread of extremism and terrorism among young people (9).

At present, there is a hidden contradiction in our society between the forces striving for an individualistic model of Western-style values and other models of collective values associated with the traditional Uzbek mentality (10). In recent decades, changes in socio-cultural processes associated with changes in the archetypes of national identity have also become more and more firmly embedded in our lives.

Growing national integration in the global world, politicized international missionary activity, and religious extremism create difficult situations not only for one state and nation, but also for all of humanity (11). In such a situation, threats in the form of missions, first of all, undermine our national and spiritual image, the atmosphere of religious tolerance that has been formed for centuries. It destroys their spiritual foundations, expands the continuity of national values from generation to generation and creates huge risks in the future. Destructive ideas, such as missionary work and proselytism, are mainly aimed at a particular person, a person whose faith is not firmly established, who cannot lead his life in the right direction, who is trapped in personal problems, is depressed or has no life experience. In this regard, religious and national identity, which now manifests itself as a social process, plays an important role in the fight against anti-human threats, such as missionary work.

Under the influence of missionary communities, young people of many nations forget their national way of thinking, their national image, their identity, or change their attitude to their national culture. The Uzbek character, which is unique in the world and differs in many ways from the peoples of the region, or the traditional Islamic rules, which are unique to us throughout the Islamic world, are forgotten. Because a person's perception that he or she is represented in a particular nation or in a unique-looking religious community constitutes his or her national identity. The more different people (in terms of culture, race,

religion, and other characteristics and characteristics) a person can perceive as equals, the more humane and mature his or her national identity will be (12).

The spiritual and psychological basis for the formation of religious identity in the context of religious revival in modern Uzbek society is demonstrated in connection with the concepts of “moderation, compromise, peace and mutual understanding” put forward by the Head of State (13). Indeed, in the vast Muslim world, there is practically no such religious identity, and this is one of the features of our region. There are also major external and internal factors affecting religious identity today, such as the modernization of social life, globalization, the missionary activity of religious organizations, the virtualization of social space and the emergence of cyberspace, the study of the basics of religion in educational institutions, the appeal to religious values, and much more.

Having a common basis for interaction and communication in society in the implementation of secularism is important to prevent missionary work. This can be an idea of tolerance, a social sign of respect for another position, and an opportunity to demonstrate the unique religious characteristics of religious tolerance. Healthy interreligious communication is important in the fight against missionary work, which is carried out throughout human development as a form of communication with people of other religions. Religious communities include certain cultural components of peoples passed down from generation to generation, as well as religious relations adapted to regional conditions. Such an attitude seems to be a means of achieving mutual understanding in the face of society itself, even when there is a need to solve the problems of communication between religion and the state, religious denominations. In the process of communication, it is possible to clarify positions, identify or reject key areas of cooperation, as well as resolve disputes, including inter-religious ones. It is the lack of confidence in communication positions, aggression against mutual interests that leads to the use of such activities as missionary work.

The conceptual idea of “Enlightenment against Ignorance” is also at the heart of modern spiritual and ideological activities to protect the spiritual world of young people from missionary activities. After all, today the acceleration of information exchange, the globalization of ideological processes has a unique impact on the spirituality of people, especially the younger generation. In such a situation, as young people are educated, their spirituality is enriched, so it will find its expression in the spiritual and educational life of the state in the future. Many countries are developing their own special State programs to properly use the existing opportunities and abilities of young people. In particular, the Republic of Uzbekistan has developed many programs and decisions of national importance on this issue.

The study concluded that the study of materials and the growth of missionary activity in real life led to the disintegration of the nation, using not only the religious factor, which is an integral part of the spirituality of different nations and peoples, but also the economic, political and ideological influence and turned into a territory of political and economic interests, that is, a dependent territory.

In the process of preparing the study (among students of several schools, colleges and universities of the country), public opinion polls were conducted on the topic “Determining the impact on social processes of missionary organizations operating in the territory of Uzbekistan”. The main task was to study the social groups of religious sects and organizations that make up the internal structure of the mission, methods and means of influencing individuals. It was also necessary to identify the social factor in missionary activity, to study the psyche with its help, to determine the conditions for dynamic adaptation to the values and traditions inherent in our mentality, to clarify through what methods missionary work is carried out. Taking advantage of the difficult socio-economic situation in the context of globalization, the main focus was on identifying intellectual activity in society that seeks to serve and effectively use it.

The analysis showed that of the 528 respondents (aged 14 to 30 years) who participated in the survey, 48.2 percent could not clearly imagine the danger and consequences of missionary work and proselytism for the life of society and the people. The results obtained helped to identify the causes of indifference to national values, exposure to harmful foreign ideas, criminal delusion, extremism, missionary activity among young people in the current period of ideological and ideological struggle in a world where spiritual threats are growing (14). Thus, increasing the effectiveness of spiritual, educational, and ideological work, effectively combating internal and external threats and dangers in the field of religion and spirituality, and strengthening ideological immunity in society shows that state institutions and civil society institutions have a great responsibility (15).

One of the ways to protect young people from these aggressions is to implement the “Concept of development of the national idea at a new stage of development of Uzbekistan” (16). The necessity of this concept lies in the fact that in an environment of diversity of ideas and ideologies and growing contradictions between them, it not only unites the nation, but also protects it from threats that may threaten it in the future, and forms a spirit of loyalty among the population, especially young people. This

idea will be the basis for the nation's sense of responsibility for the future. At the same time, it is increasingly important to make effective use of national factors that can counter the threat of missionary work and proselytism (17).

At a meeting with young people at the specialized school of Muhammad al-Khwarizmi, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev put forward and implemented a number of initiatives on youth policy. In particular, on the basis of the Youth Union, an Agency for Youth Affairs was created, a "Youth Media Holding" was created, which unites TV, radio and print media aimed at the younger generation. Overall, five important initiatives taken by the President, the establishment of schools and President of creativity, the Department of community and family support of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the priority of the idea of "Educating against ignorance" consistent implementation "of the concept of lifelong theological education" - apart from the fact that it is a practical program to provide, improve morale, improve education and strengthen education, it is an important means of countering ideological threats such as missionary work.

At the same time, young people can be protected from ideological threats through national experience, intellectual creativity, artistic creativity, socio-economic or political changes in reality and orientation to other areas of life.

Today, the negative impact of globalisation on the stability of relations between nations is manifested in the following directions:

first, there is a sharp discrepancy in the use of opportunities that globalize. This process, first of all, gives tremendous advantages to the powerful countries in meeting their geopolitical interests;

secondly, the fact that economically powerful nations are trying to integrate their values system into the lifestyle of other nations with the help of economic support and information technologies, relying on the opportunities created by the process of globalisation, naturally provokes the mood of discontent and leads to the formation of negative relations in the representatives of this nation;

in the third, globalisation sent migration processes kuchaytirib. As a result, the countries of the world are becoming increasingly multinational character profession. Calls for urgent measures to maintain their superiority in the titular nationalities against the excessive increase of foreigners in certain countries, the nationalist moods are being seen;

out of the four, global harmonization, "living according to the same habits, common prints, based on common values, obedience to the same traditions and norms of morality, striving to unify the rules" leads to the absorption of national lifestyles, national spirituality;

fifth, as a result of the globalisation process, the existing stereotypes and values are rapidly depreciated, and the cycle of the formation of new ones is increasingly shrinking. Consequently, millions of people remain in the midst of a system of several different values, the whirlpool of spiritual suffering as they rediscover and rediscover their spiritual and spiritual identity in the conditions of the devaluation of their values.

## CONCLUSION

The formation of a culture of religious tolerance in educational institutions and, in general, in all our youth is one of the most pressing issues of today. Accordingly, in this direction, in our opinion, the following tasks are required:

- teaching the history of world religions in general education schools, academic lyceums and professional colleges, universities, their essence in accordance with the age, skills and desires of students, gradual mastering of topics, based on the principles of non-repetition;
- Explain to the younger generation the important role of religion in human and social life, that the faith of one or another representative of this religion will be further strengthened by respecting the beliefs of others;
- Coverage of the virtuous nature of all world religions, in particular Islam, in the media, on the Internet sites most often used by young people through concrete examples;
- Explain to the population that the evils of extremism, vandalism, violence, and evil are completely alien to religion, based on the materials of original and credible, tested sources;
- Achieving a clear and broad mastery of both knowledge to build the ability of citizens, especially young people, to distinguish between secular and religious issues.

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