

IDEOLOGICAL THREATS AND THE PROBLEM OF SOCIAL STABILITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract:

This article analyzes ideological threats and the problem of social stability in the 21st century. It emphasizes the growing importance of spiritual struggle and ideological security in contemporary global processes, as well as the intensification of ideological threats that distort the consciousness of the younger generation. The paper examines the concepts of ideological struggle, ideological confrontation, and spiritual threats, their impact on social stability, and scientific perspectives on preventive measures.

Keywords: Ideological threat, spiritual security, social stability, ideological struggle, youth, globalization, spiritual immunity.

Introduction

The current level of global development demonstrates that in the 21st century, ideological struggle and spiritual potential have become among the most important factors ensuring social stability and national security. Today, confrontation is no longer conducted primarily through weapons, but rather according to the principle that “only an idea can counter an idea, and only thought can oppose thought.” A society whose ideology and national idea are strong is capable of ensuring its development and stability. Unfortunately, young people are more frequently exposed to ideological threats in this process, which raises serious concern.

Ideological struggle manifests itself as a process of instilling specific ideas into public consciousness. It arises from conflicts of interest between the holders of diverse ideological views. However, the emergence of ideological struggle does not merely depend on the existence of different social groups; it acquires a real character only when their interests take ideological forms—namely, when ideological pluralism exists. During ideological struggle, competition and ideological confrontation emerge. Confrontation, in many cases, is characterized by the collapse of previously dominant systems of views and the loss of life orientations for individuals and society. Therefore, ideologies that are viable and psychologically sound ultimately prevail in such processes.

Ideological struggles take place not only at the national level but also within the international arena. Today, certain political forces skillfully employ various ideological tools, including modern technologies and communication channels, to expand their spheres of influence. By promoting extremist, immoral, and destructive ideas—especially among youth—they pose serious threats to social stability.

The concept of threat, as demonstrated by historical experience and scientific research, indicates that the security, stability, and development of a state and a nation depend on their ability to recognize and comprehend such threats. Threats may be internal or external, large-scale or limited, and may originate from distant or nearby regions. Events of the 20th century have shown that threats can be classified as economic, social, political, ecological, demographic, ideological, military, natural, and spiritual.

An ideological threat represents a set of ideological dangers that pose risks to the destiny of society, the state, or the nation and may lead to tragic consequences. It involves the imposition of an ideology that reflects the interests of a particular socio-political movement or political force upon others through intimidation or coercion. Under conditions of globalization, ideological threats increasingly influence the consciousness of youth, national values, and traditions, thereby weakening the spiritual immunity of society. Consequently, one of the key factors in ensuring social stability in the 21st century is strengthening the spiritual immunity of young people, preserving national ideas and values, and developing effective strategies to counter ideological threats. The security, development, and sustainable future of the country are directly dependent on these factors.

Ideological struggle signifies the process of instilling specific ideas. Its sources lie in conflicts between holders of differing ideological views and their respective interests. The mere existence of diverse social groups is insufficient for ideological struggle to occur; it becomes real only when their interests assume distinct ideological forms—that is, when ideological pluralism is present. During periods of ideological struggle, competition and confrontation become evident. Ideological struggle should be distinguished from actions aimed at eliminating all forms of ideological diversity or suppressing ideological pluralism altogether.

Confrontation (from the French term meaning “opposition”) refers to a situation in which a previously dominant ideological system collapses, causing individuals to lose long-established life orientations and resulting in a state of ideological instability. Ideological confrontation is destructive in nature, as it focuses on eliminating ideologies perceived as hostile. In such circumstances, ideologies that are viable and closely connected with people’s psychology, aspirations, and hopes ultimately prevail. Therefore, strengthening the spiritual immunity of youth during periods of ideological struggle is considered an essential necessity.

Ideological struggle is ongoing both within individual societies and countries, as well as at the international and interstate levels. At present, political forces and movements seeking to expand their spheres of influence through ideological means are becoming increasingly aggressive. Ideological attacks aimed at undermining the peace and stability of particular nations, societies, and states—weakening or destabilizing political and constitutional systems and posing threats to civil and social security—are intensifying. Hostile forces engaging in such attacks employ a wide range of methods to achieve their malicious objectives, skillfully exploiting people’s religious and national sentiments, existing socio-economic difficulties, and modern technologies, including telecommunication tools. Today, their malicious intentions—particularly the attempt to capture the hearts and minds of certain segments of the population,

especially youth, by instilling destructive ideas, religious extremism, and immoral values—are becoming increasingly evident.

Historical experience at the threshold of the 21st century demonstrates that the security, stability, and development of a state or a nation, as well as its future, largely depend on its capacity and ability to recognize and comprehend the threats it faces.

Currently, the concept of “spiritual threat” is widely used, although its meaning is not always clearly understood. Spiritual threats constitute a set of destructive factors that generate negative concepts, feelings, traits, and qualities within an individual’s moral consciousness. The term “threat” itself implies danger, aggression, and destruction; therefore, spiritual threats can be understood as deliberate attacks aimed at undermining an individual’s intellectual and moral integrity.

According to the research of S. M. Yo‘ldosheva, spiritual threats manifest in several forms. The first form includes ideological attacks, which primarily target the distortion of individual thinking, the corruption of worldview, and the alteration of personal positions. Incorrect reasoning, fanatical worldviews, and harmful life stances indicate an individual’s ideological instability.

The second form of spiritual threat is ideological (conceptual) threat. This type of attack also encompasses three dimensions, focusing mainly on corrupting individual behavior, disrupting moral relationships, and impairing interpersonal conduct. Harmful behavior, unhealthy moral relations, and rude communication reflect a weakening of personal ethical discipline.

The third form of spiritual threat is informational attack. Its primary objective is to provide individuals with false information, simplify and degrade their knowledge, and weaken their practical activities. Possession of inaccurate information, superficial knowledge, and ineffective activity are indicators of cultural deficiency. In short, spiritual threats are manifestations of moral and ethical degradation that can reduce members of society to ignorance.

Preserving and enhancing the spiritual values of our people, particularly protecting the younger generation from the influence of harmful ideas and ideologies—in other words, from spiritual threats—constitutes one of the most pressing tasks of today. As the concept of “spiritual threat” has entered academic discourse relatively recently, diverse approaches to its interpretation exist. In her article “Problems of Ensuring Spiritual Security in Uzbekistan,” Doctor of Philosophical Sciences G. Tulenova considers ideological threats, including terrorism, fanaticism, and religious extremism, as forms of spiritual threats.

In the scientific-methodological manual titled “Spiritual Security of Russia (Current Theoretical, Methodological, and Practical Problems of Spiritual Security)” by Russian researchers, particular attention is paid to spiritual threats. The manual emphasizes the insufficient level of attention currently devoted to spiritual security and analyzes threats affecting demographic processes and religious consciousness as spiritual threats.

Ye. A. Boksha highlights destructive processes targeting the lifestyle of Russian families as spiritual threats, noting their role in generating moral contradictions. He also identifies the spread of radical feminist ideology, the popularization of so-called “gay culture,” the

promotion of eroticism, the forced adoption of egoistic values within families, and the negative impact of market ideals on moral foundations as spiritual threats. Spiritual threats are comprehensive in nature, and these approaches address different aspects of the phenomenon.

According to the research of I. Islomov, a spiritual threat represents a set of conditions and factors that endanger the vital interests of individuals, society, and the state within the spiritual sphere. Factors that negatively influence spirituality and generate processes and phenomena threatening national spiritual interests are regarded as spiritual threats.

Abu Nasr al-Farabi, in his work “The Virtuous City,” expressed valuable insights: “The inhabitants of ignorant cities—those who pursue personal aims such as honor, wealth, and material pleasure—constitute a distinct category. Observing that such goals are prohibited in the virtuous city, they attempt to violate its just laws, distance themselves from truth, and distort these principles. They achieve this in two ways: first, by interpreting controversial issues according to their own assumptions; second, by resorting to false wisdom and deception. They follow this path to ensure that no one interferes with the attainment of their ignorant and base objectives. Such individuals should not be admitted into the community of the virtuous city.” From Farabi’s perspective, it becomes evident how dangerous the modes of thinking and behavior of ignorant and misguided societies are for virtuous communities in promoting immoral ideas and generating spiritual threats.

It should be emphasized that the most dangerous aspect of ideological threats lies in their primary focus on undermining the spiritual sphere of society. Spiritual thinking and spiritual potential constitute fundamental factors in ensuring social development and socio-political stability. As stated by the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, “Today, situations in which immorality is presented as culture, while genuine spiritual values are disregarded and treated as obsolete, pose a serious threat to development, human life, family stability, and youth education. Many people around the world are coming to realize how vital it is to resist such attacks, which are spreading globally like a disaster.”

In the contemporary world, another negative manifestation characteristic of Western individualism is the increasing tendency toward remaining unmarried and women’s unwillingness to give birth, which represents a specific form of demographic crisis. The People’s Writer of Uzbekistan, Muhammad Ali, in his essay “The America I Have Seen,” notes: “In America, the family is not strong. There are even those who dream of establishing a family-less society. According to data, in 1955 only one percent of American women did not wish to have children, whereas today this figure has reached five percent.” As the well-known American political scientist Patrick Buchanan states, in many Western countries, “there is a greater need for coffins than for cradles.” As tens of thousands of young American women refuse childbirth, the number of immigrants in the country continues to increase.

The demographic crisis leads to a crisis in family and marital relations, which, in turn, results in the dominance of selfishness and individualistic principles. Egocentrism represents an extreme form of selfishness, characterized by living solely for oneself, prioritizing personal interests, and rejecting all other values. Regarding the philosophy of egoism and immorality, Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences M. Quironov states: “Today, many people are well aware of

global threats such as international terrorism, religious extremism, drug aggression, and AIDS, which pose serious dangers to humanity. However, there are also serious threats that are not immediately visible, not widely recognized, yet are aimed at undermining our spiritual life. If preventive measures are not taken promptly, it may be too late. These threats include egocentrism widespread in the Western world and the philosophy of immorality disguised as freedom.”

This harmful phenomenon is no less dangerous than ignorance and fanaticism. “Indifference, prioritizing personal interests above all else, selfishness, and excessive ambition are the main characteristics of individuals afflicted with egocentrism,” notes the prominent scholar Muhammadjon Quronov in his work “Ideological Threats and Youth Education.” High spirituality, social solidarity, and, in other words, our national ideology represent the only effective means of overcoming such vices as egocentrism.

“...In order to raise the level of knowledge and intellectual capacity of all members of our society, first and foremost, we need enlightenment, education, and high spirituality. Where there is no knowledge, backwardness, ignorance, and deviation from the right path inevitably emerge. As Eastern sages have said, ‘The greatest wealth is intellect and knowledge; the greatest legacy is good upbringing; and the greatest poverty is ignorance.’ Therefore, mastering modern knowledge, acquiring genuine enlightenment, and attaining high culture must become a continuous and vital necessity for all of us,” states our esteemed President in his Address to the Oliy Majlis.

It is deeply concerning that such vices, which are increasingly spreading in Western countries, are also penetrating young states that have gained independence within the context of ideological globalization. From this perspective, it can be argued that ensuring ideological security in society is an extremely important and urgent task at a time when ideological and spiritual threats are intensifying in various forms. In this regard, it is appropriate to focus attention on the scientific analysis of the concept of ideological security.

In the conditions of the 21st century, the role of ideological threats in ensuring societal stability is growing significantly. As a result of globalization processes and the rapid development of information and communication technologies, the capacity to influence social consciousness and shape the worldview of the younger generation through ideological tools—thereby weakening their spiritual immunity—has increased. Therefore, spiritual threats exert negative effects not only in moral and educational processes but also in political, social, economic, and cultural spheres.

Processes of ideological struggle and confrontation are based on ideological conflicts that arise between social groups and political and cultural institutions. In such processes, ideologies that are strong, resilient, and adaptable gain superiority in the ideological arena. At the same time, enhancing the spiritual immunity of youth and citizens, reinforcing them with national values, historical experience, and moral norms remains one of the most urgent tasks of our time.

Furthermore, the systematic identification, analysis, and prevention of spiritual and ideological threats constitute a vital strategic direction in ensuring the stable development and national security of the state. This issue requires comprehensive scientific and practical study, and in

this regard, active cooperation among state institutions, academic organizations, and all segments of society is essential. In the 21st century, understanding the complex interconnection between ideological threats and societal stability, strengthening social consciousness, ensuring the spiritual resilience of the younger generation, and shaping state policy in this direction are regarded as key factors in addressing global challenges.

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