

# THE STEPCCHILD OF THE GREEN BELT PROJECT: UZBEKISTAN ISLAMIC MOVEMENT

Yeşil Kuşak Projesi'nin Üvey Çocuğu:  
Özbekistan İslami Hareketi

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## Abstract

*In the background of radical Islamic terrorism, which has become a global threat today, the impact of the project in question is undeniable. These groups created by the process in question were not only limited to the territory of Afghanistan, but were exported to its periphery, Central Asia. In this sense, similar structures began to form in the countries with the soft belly of the region, and Uzbekistan, one of these countries, was exposed to the threat of the "Uzbekistan Islamic Movement", which we can consider as one of these structures. This study aims to understand the organization in different dimensions.*

**Keywords:** Middle Asia, Terror, Islam, Green Belt, Uzbekistan.

## Öz

*Günümüzde küresel bir tehdit haline gelen radikal İslami terörün arka planında söz konusu projenin etkisi yadsınamaz. Söz konusu sürecin yarattığı bu gruplar sadece Afganistan topraklarıyla sınırlı kalmamış, periferisine Orta Asya'ya ihraç edilmiştir. Bu anlamda bölgenin yumuşak karnına sahip ülkelerde de benzer yapılar oluşmaya başlamış, bu ülkelerden biri olan Özbekistan, bu yapılardan birisi olarak değerlendirebileceğimiz "Özbekistan İslami Hareketi" tehdidine maruz kalmıştır. Bu çalışma, örgütü farklı boyutlarıyla anlamaya yöneliktir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Orta Asya, Terör, İslam, Yeşil Kuşak, Özbekistan.

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## INTRODUCTION

The importance of competition areas on the globe is mainly explained by geopolitical approaches. Until today, the concept of geopolitics has been tried to be explained with different definitions by scientists, but the words state, geography and politics have been used in almost all of them. As it can be understood from this point, the concept of geopolitics did not suddenly exist as a special field with its own concepts and dynamics, on the contrary, it was shaped at the end of a long theoretical and practical experiential process.<sup>1</sup>

Geopolitics; it is a science that examines the current and future power and purpose relationship-at the political level-based on physical and political geography. With its own internal methodology, it determines the direction drawn by the power elements to the policy with the geographical platform and data. In a sense, the special field we call geopolitics means activating geography with all its elements and drawing conclusions by evaluating these elements. Physical geography, in other words, on the geographical platform, evaluates the universal and regional power centers mutually and establishes the power and target relationship at the political level. It forms the scientific basis of the security and development policy of a state, a community of states or a region.<sup>2</sup> This situation is beyond giving us a special field of study and analysis, as the components in the concept of geopolitics are the main factors in the emergence of crisis and conflict, it is very important to evaluate this with the science of history.

No matter which corner of the world it is, it is possible to understand a fundamental problem, how the problem emerged, how it developed and how it resulted, again with geography and history science. Here, famous geopolitics theorists such as Frederich Ratzel and Halford Mackinder have

1 Ali Hasanov, *Jeopolitik*, Babıali Kültür Yayıncılık, İstanbul 2012, p.15.

2 Suat İlhan, "Jeopolitik Kavramı ve Unsurları", *Avrasya Dosyası*, Jeopolitik Special, 8(4), 2002, p. 318.

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defined certain parts of the world as red areas. One of the regions included in this definition is the geography of Central Asia.<sup>3</sup> How appropriate this determination is is supported by the idea that the realization of the “New World Order”, which is the last form of the struggle for global dominance, is based on dominating this geography.<sup>4</sup>

In fact, the special place of the region, which started with the fact that it was a part of the old world, made it a field on which projects were produced with the developments in the cold war process. The effect of the “Green Belt” project, which was put into practice during the cold war, on the basis of the terror environment and terrorist organizations that emerged with the radicalization of Islam, which is one of the main problems in the region today, and its transformation into a so-called Islam, is enormous.

Explaining geopolitical theories can only be possible by evaluating historical conditions. In this sense, it is necessary to take a closer look at the cold war process in order to understand and make sense of the moves of the actors in the region. The Cold War is the name of the period in which an international system, defined as the “*balance of terror*”, took place between the United States and the Soviet Union, and because of the risk of it turning into a nuclear conflict at any moment. It was the result of the creation of a new world order by dividing into ideological camps by the USSR and the West, which acted together despite the ideological differences, in the face of the global threat posed by Hitler’s Germany.

The Soviet army entered the Eastern European countries as a savior and the local communist leaders who took refuge in them during the Nazi period returned to their countries and took over the administration again. The political structure of Europe was beginning to change. This tension

3 Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, “Küresel Güç Mücadelesinde Avrasya Jeopolitiği ve Türk Avrasyası”, *Küresel Güç Mücadelesinde Avrasya’nın Değişen Jeopolitiği: Yeni Büyük Oyun*, Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, der., Barış Platin Kitabevi, Ankara 2009, p. 15.

4 Uğur Aktürk, “Orta Asya ve Kafkasya Jeopolitiğinde Küresel Egemenlik Mücadelesi”, *Elektronik Siyaset Bilimi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 1(1), 2010, p. 20.

arising from ideological polarization was the reason for the start of the process called the cold war. The Cold War, beyond the soft expression in its name, is a competitive process that does not look for hot wars.

Although war is actually a concept with different definitions scientifically, it can be defined as a large-scale physical violence conflict or collision that takes place between states and non-state political actors that have the capacity for violence or army units in the international system existing in an anarchic order. The discipline of International Relations mainly studies two subjects: Diplomacy and war. Diplomacy is conceptually based on interstate dialogue and its institutionalization in order to prevent the use of armed force.<sup>5</sup> It can be defined as the use of armed force, in which violent acts are carried out between organized groups of people, between at least two parties, in the event that war diplomacy fails to resolve conflicts.<sup>6</sup>

The competition, which started with the creation of human beings, has also revealed another phenomenon that is as old as the history of humanity. Humanity, who lived in the order of tribes at first, had the first motivations of belonging with the evolution of primitive communities to statehood over time, and this situation combined with the parameters of conflicts of interest and conflicts of interest over time, the human being remembered the genetic codes of his ancestors in the post-homini period and resorted to violence and on his behalf. The concept of war or war has emerged.

If we explain this concept in its simplest definition, "War is an act of using force to force the enemy to accept our will."<sup>7</sup> Thus, the aim of the war is to force the enemy to accept our will with the pressure used, that is, to make him do our will and as a result, to make the enemy give

5 Ronald Peter Barston, *Modern Diplomacy*, Pearson Publishing, London 2006, p. 24.

6 Jan Angstrom, *Rethinking the Nature of War*, Frank Cass Publishing, Londra 2005, p. 3.

7 Carl Von Clausewitz, *Savaş Üzerine*, Kastaş Yayınları, İstanbul 2008, p. 29.

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up without being able to resist this power. The methodology of this is to make the enemy or competitor think about a simple value-loss calculation, to make them feel worse than the sacrifice we expect from them. War in the true sense is a bloody game of chess that should be thought of as a deadly fight. Each thinker who dwells on the concept of war has shaped this concept and pointed to a different dimension of war with the understandings he added to the discipline.

The definition of the term war at different times and in different ways is mainly due to the formation of the concept in question, the source, scope and nature of the information about the concept, and the use of different levels and units of analysis in the definitions within this scope. As it is known, scientific terms have a terminological integrity that allows everyone to think the same thing. In this sense, the expression war, when used in a sentence or alone, explains the mental state created by the same act of violence in the mind of the person who hears it. War is also a phenomenon that includes an evolutionary process.

Within the general definitional framework we have made above, we have stated that the phenomenon of war is a socio-political phenomenon equivalent to the history of humanity. If we consider that states did not exist in the present sense in the early ages of humanity, we can say that it consisted of conflicts between tribes. With the change of the political structure that started in the Middle Ages, the war took place in small areas, with low intensity, but for a long time, by the militias of the city-states and private armies formed by mercenaries.

After the French Revolution, we witness that the national armies formed with the establishment of national states transformed the concept of war away from the struggle of the rulers into the war of nations with common ideals, goals and objectives. In this period, we see that the war took a total form and gained a destructive character with definite results. Whoever describes it, no matter what scientist's signature is written under

it, there is only one reality. War is a situation that includes elements of violence at the highest level. Sometimes this violence is in the form of psychological and public pressure on the opponent or other elements to fight in your favor. This is what the green belt aims at.

What is the green belt project?

How did it affect the region?

The architect of the project, Brezinski, National Security Advisor to US President Jimmy Carter, was going to design the project on the basis of a development in Central Asia. This development was the presence of the USSR's expansionist policy on the field. The USSR invaded Afghanistan two weeks after the decision taken at the Politburo meeting chaired by Brezhnev on 8 December 1979. This occupation would be one of the most important breaking points of the cold war period.<sup>8</sup> The actor of the USSR in the country was undoubtedly Nurmuhammed Teraki, who took power with a military coup, and the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan under his leadership. The "Green Belt" project of the USA would come into play in the face of the spread of communism and the possibility of Afghanistan becoming an important base in the eastern bloc with this new party power.<sup>9</sup>

At this point, it is important to understand the project in question in order to understand the subject more clearly. The religion of Islam and Muslims have an important place in the regional and global policies that it has designed to implement for the United States of America. Particularly during the Cold War, the pro-Soviet attitude of Arab Nationalism in the Middle East and the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1979 would make Muslims an important element in US foreign policy. This project put forward by the USA continued in the post-Cold War period and

8 "Sovyetlerin Afganistan İşgali", *AVİM*, avim.org.tr/Bulten/Sovyetlerin-Afganistan-İşgali-37-Yil-Once-Bugun-Baslamisti/, (Date of Accession: 03.06.2018).

9 Bahadır Selim Dilek, *Suriyeli Göçü*, Kripto Kitaplar, Ankara 2018, p. 196.

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the USA tried to popularize a new interpretation of Islam called “*Moderate Islam*”, which could keep the Middle East societies under control more easily against the movements called “*Radical Islam or Political Islam*”.<sup>10</sup>

Opposition to communism in the Afghan people, which is a religious society, caused a rapid reaction. The USA supported the mujahideen within the scope of the project. A civil war had begun in the country. The success of this project, implemented during the Cold War, was that it was supported by sound sociological, psychological and theological reasons.

The concept of “*Jihad*” in his project, which was built on these foundations by the USA, was handled very successfully by US psychological warfare experts, disregarding religious standards, in which religion was the most basic duty, but this duty was neglected for years. Now, Afghanistan has been occupied by an irreligious state and the new conjuncture has emphasized that they have a duty “*neglected*” by Muslims. The invasion of Afghanistan had turned into a very good opportunity for them to fulfill their duties that they had neglected for years. In this way, the United States chose to settle the conflict/war with the Soviet Union without directly intervening, with proxy fighters, and created Muslim fighters on its behalf.<sup>11</sup>

During the Cold War period, this proxy warfare technique was less costly and sustainable in terms of applicability. But the real danger would appear with the end of the cold war.

Jihadist Groups, which were used to create a “*green belt*” against the Soviet Union during the Cold War Era, were labeled “*dangerous*” for the “*Western and Christian World*” after the Cold War, and were “*justified*” for direct or indirect interventions in Islamic Geography. was put on the field as justifications. As a result, with the intervention made by “*proxy fighters*”

10 Mehmet Kılıç, “Uluslararası İlişkiler: Yeşil Kuşak Teorisi ve Örnekleri”, *International Journal of Political Science Researches*, 1(1), 2015, p. 50.

11 Mehmet Şahin, “ABD’nin Müslüman Savaşçıları”, *Akademik Orta Doğu*, 3(1), 2008, p. 45.

to these groups, which are thought to have become an uncontrolled power in Iraq and Syria, it was given the impression that the danger was eliminated and an effort was made to gain legitimacy in the international arena for the invasion of new proxy fighters that the USA would use in the next period.

Radical Islamist Groups never became a threat to the USA, on the contrary, they continued to be used as a tool for projects implemented in the post-cold war era, predominantly in the unipolar world order. Because the phenomenon of religion was the simplest way to give the impression of conflict between cultures and civilizations.

It is necessary to consider religion and society as two separate and highly interactive institutions. The direction of this interaction is bilateral, both from society to religion and from religion to society. If we first take a look at the effects of society on religion from this two-way relationship; In this sense, Wach's statement is an important analysis. Joachim Wach, "Every religion emerges in certain social conditions and is sustained by certain social circles."<sup>12</sup> it means.

Today, together with modernism, the way of living of the same belief between urban society and rural society is the manifestation of this point of view. Likewise, societies tend to carry their social genetic codes and social habits to the religion they belong to. The other interaction aspect we mentioned is related to the effect of religion on society. This mutual interaction is not only the regional but also the first problem posed by the so-called Muslim fighters globally.

These social and armed structures, which exist in the region and actually owe their existence to an external influence, have started to change their environment rapidly and perceive this as an ontological

<sup>12</sup> Wach Joachim, *Din Sosyolojisine Giriş*, Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Yayınları, Ankara 1987, p. 31.

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necessity. Social change in Pakistan can only be perceived in this way. The secular center has rapidly transformed into radicalization thanks to these structures.

The second major problem is the mobility of these ideas and their representatives in the region, which is a geography of ethnic and religious crises. These terrorist groups, under different names, have moved both in Central Asia and the Middle East in its periphery, and have become the important dynamics and threat elements of the process extending to the present.

Today, the increase in regional instability and conflicts, especially in the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa, is the result of this threat. After the Arab Spring, this threat has found a sociological and political space in the region under the names of DAESH, Al-Qaeda, Es-Shabab, Al-Nusra, Uzbekistan Islamic Movement. Here, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, one of the organizations mentioned, is the main subject of this study.

### UZBEKISTAN ISLAMIC MOVEMENT

The geography of Uzbekistan has always maintained its importance throughout history. Before the arrival of the Russians, Central Asia was an integrated entity at the cultural. The first inhabitants of Central Asia were nomads who traveled from the north and from east to west and south. The regional names Transoxiana or Ma Wara'un-Nahr, among other names for Central Asia have resulted from foreign invasions.<sup>13</sup> This region would first be discovered by the Persians and the Chinese, and then these lands on the silk road would attract the attention of European traders. Even

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<sup>13</sup> Paulo Duarte, "Central Asia: The Bends of History and Geography", *e-Journal of International Relations* 5(1), 2014, p. 48

if the control of trade routes passed to the West with the conquest of Alexander the Great in 327 BC, there would be destruction in the region as a result of the Mongol attacks that would take place later.

About a century after this great destruction, he would rebuild civilization with the settlement of Muslim peoples in the region this time. After the existence of the Russian Tsardom in the international system as a major global actor in the 19th century, it became one of the areas of competition between England and Russia. After the communist revolution, in 1924, Uzbekistan was included in the USSR.<sup>14</sup> Of course, other parameters are needed to understand the importance of the geography in question. However, contemporary geopolitics points to the necessity of revisiting the basis of classical geopolitical theory, which proved unable to explain and foresee the world political processes of that time, especially the collapse of the Soviet Union and geopolitical implications of that event.<sup>15</sup>

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, like other radical movements in its region or based in the Middle East, first emerged in the form of an ordinary religious group and under the name “*Islamic Lashkars*”. The group, which expanded and expanded its organizational structure over time, was organized under the unification of the two leaders and in the structures called “*Justice*” and “*Repentance*” and accelerated their propaganda and organization activities especially in line with the aim of establishing an independent Islamic State in the Namangan region. They expanded it to Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.<sup>16</sup>

14 Phil Kelly, ed., *The Geopolitics of Uzbekistan*, ISAG Report, 2017, p. 6

15 Farkhod Tolipov, *Micro-Geopolitics of Central Asia: A Uzbekistan Perspective*, *Strategic Analysis* 35(4), 2011, p. 629

16 Michael Fredholm, “From the Ferghana Valley to Waziristan and Beyond”, *Islamism and Politics in Eurasia Report*, 22, 2010, p. 5.

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In this sense, Fergana Valley is one of the most important strategic points of the region.<sup>17</sup> It would be a correct approach to claim that stability in Central Asia passes through the Fergana Valley. The valley, which is geographically located in the middle of the region, has vitally important features for its entire periphery. In the hydropolitical context, the water resources it contains and especially the unjust distribution of the waters of the Sir-i Derya and Amu Derya rivers between countries cause the region to be close to conflict, making it easier for not only the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan but also other radical elements to find a comfortable living space. At the same time, Fergana Valley is on the transit route due to its proximity to drug production centers. The fact that the region provides an environment for international terrorism and drug trafficking facilitates access to an important source of income for these groups.<sup>18</sup>

The members of the organization, who initially tried to gain the trust of the people in the form of a legitimate organization rather than acts of violence, received significant support from the unemployed young population between 1990 and 1992, and they carried out all their propaganda activities in mosques and madrasas towards the ideal of a single and independent Islamic state. There are both ideological and strategic reasons for this. Religion is the basic phenomenon in Islamic forms of government.

At this point, although religion seems to be used as a tool, the fact of religion is not a tool, but an end. This perspective naturally rejects secularism. Because the essence of the same understanding is the understanding that religion and its requirements dominate all legal, cultural and political processes. it is natural. For this reason, the masses

<sup>17</sup> Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, "Orta Asya'da Güvenlik Sorunları", *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 1, 2004, p. 94.

<sup>18</sup> Levent Demirci, "Özbekistan, Kırgızistan ve Tacikistan'ın Kesişimindeki Sorunlu Vadi: Fergana", *The Journal of Defense Sciences*, 11(2), 2012, p. 33.

and groups that want Islam to dominate politics, especially radical Islamic groups, advocate the seizure of power by using force. In this framework, political Islam struggle and activity come to the fore in all forms of government.<sup>19</sup> In this sense, the most important weapon used by these radical organizations towards their goals is undoubtedly terrorism.

Terrorism appears as a concept that entered the literature with the French Revolution. After the revolution, the name given to the period of pressure applied by the Jacobin administration to maintain control over the society was the “*period of terror*”. The first to implement systematic terrorism, on the other hand, dates back to the Roman period. The organization called the Sicarii made their name known with the actions they carried out in an atmosphere of turmoil. The Hashashins, the organization of Hasan Sabbah, formed the basis of today’s terrorist organizations. In this organization, which works with a cell structure, the members are completely loyal to their leaders. The Cold War period, in which the concept of terrorism intensified, seems to be a period in which this concept developed. While the Cold War period, in which international terrorist organizations were influential on the system, was the century of fears, terrorist organizations played a leading role in the formation and continuation of the atmosphere of fear. The concept of terrorism, which cannot be defined clearly although it is an effective phenomenon in the global system, can be defined as using fear and violence for political purposes.

It can also be seen as systematic violence. Another purpose of systematic violence is to kill qualified people, to move the other party with their emotions rather than their logic, to intimidate people and to make them suspicious of each other. Another important factor for terrorism

<sup>19</sup> Bernard Lewis, *İslam’ın Siyasal Söylemi*, Phoneix Yayınları, İstanbul 1997, p. 51.

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is the rate at which it mutates in the developing and changing world. Terrorism is “calculated” violence. Its aim is not to kill as many people as possible, but to make the masses affected by their actions. It is to make the masses horrified and think, in despair, that there is no choice but to submit to the wishes of the terrorist.<sup>20</sup>

Here, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan started to resort to terrorist methods such as armed guerrilla actions, sabotage and hostage actions shortly after its establishment. The most resonant action in the organization’s action dynamics and chronology was the assassination attempt against Kerimov, with a bomb, on February 16, 1999. The attack, in which 16 people lost their lives and more than 130 were injured, shook Uzbekistan deeply and caused the state to perceive radical Islamist politicization as a greater threat.<sup>21</sup> The organization continued its actions after this action and turned the actions targeting foreigners into a jihad. In recent years, the fear of Islam/Islamophobia, which has reached anxiety, fear and hostility, has started to spread in non-Muslim countries, and on the basis of this spread, there is this understanding of jihad, which the aforementioned organizations have developed differently.<sup>22</sup>

This attack has deeply shaken Uzbekistan and caused the state to perceive radical Islamist politicization as a greater threat. The organization continued after this action and targeted foreigners in particular. The Uzbekistan state demanded especially from the USA and Russia to take a decisive attitude towards the organization. As a result of these efforts, the USA was included in the list of terrorist organizations. US President

20 Bora İyat, *Zihin Kontrolü Psikolojik Savaşın Temel İlkeleri*, Kripto Yayınları, Ankara 2013, p. 134.

21 Fredholm, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

22 Hüseyin Yılmaz, “İslam Korkusunun/İslamofobinin Oluşmasında Cihad Algısının Rolü”, *Cumhuriyet Fakültesi Dergisi*, 16(1), 2012, p. 183.

Bush also stated that the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan was linked to Al-Qaeda and its leader Osama Bin Laden. In addition to the aid from the radical organizations, the organization gained income by collecting money and controlling the drug trafficking in particular. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, the USA declared war against the radical Islamist organizations in the region, and the Uzbekistan Islamic Movement took heavy blows and lost its leader. The organization, which entered a period of decline after that, has reappeared in the near past.

During the Arab Spring, it reemerged, especially in Syria, where the civil war was taking place. The organization, which declared the emirate in the Idlib with Al Qaeda in Syria, continues to be effective here. However, it has now become the Turkistan Islamic Party. When a correct study is carried out on the movement style of the organization that has an effect in the Middle East and the threats it creates, it is obvious that its effectiveness in the region may again be a threat to Central Asia in the face of the conjunctural changes that will occur at the end of the Syrian civil war. So far, I have found it appropriate to briefly talk about the historical process of the formation of the organization, the geopolitical situation and the structure of the organization.

However, in global security paradigms, in addition to Russia's moves in the Middle East and North Africa, the new situation that started with the invasion of Ukraine and has been defined as the new cold war for a while also signals that the aforementioned organizations may be more active. Both the geographical axis of the region and the energy basins increase this possibility even more.

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## CONCLUSION

When we evaluate the history of humanity on the political level in terms of the global system that is progressing in an anarchic structure and its interconnected international relations, we see that there are several important breaking points and each break alters or regulates the system. The geography of Central Asia, with its geopolitical features, rich energy resources, and the advantages of its geographical location, has attracted the attention of all countries that claim global power and is an area known for conflicts and crises.

The regional fault lines, which were thoroughly broken after the Cold War struggle, were kneaded with instability and became one of the living areas of religious-oriented radical terrorism, the reason being hidden in the struggle for global domination during the cold war period. In the hottest days of the Cold War, the Soviets will invade Afghanistan on 1979, and the USA against this move in the face of the spread of Communism in the region and the possibility of becoming an important base in Afghanistan's eastern bloc.

The mentioned project is the doctrinal result of the US effort to control the region with a new Islamic interpretation. Name of the project is "Green Belt" and its, The US policy regarding Islam was to support a moderate, controllable Islam, to use this Islam as an antidote to the Soviet Russia and communism. Brzezinski, the famous US strategist and national security adviser to Carter, was among those who argued that Islam would be a shield against communism in the USA. Who was thinking, communism and Islam were opposite concepts. In this context, the United States, Islam's radical/jihadist by supporting the discourse of "jihad" by Muslims for years "neglect. He emphasized that they have a duty. The incident of the invasion of Afghanistan is very good for Muslims

to fulfill their neglected duties it was brought to the agenda that there was an opportunity. Because, according to the USA, the Soviet Union “does not know God”, “atheist”, “Godless” and “empire of evil” The US promoted “Political Islam” and supported Islamist groups against both the Soviet Union and the pro-Soviet and anti-Western nationalists.

As can be seen from this situation, the USA chose to use religion as a tool of its hegemonic politics. However, this trend will gradually become radicalized and turn into terror. The impact of the project in question is undeniable in the background of the radical Islamic terror that has become a global threat today. These groups created by the aforementioned process will not be limited only to the lands of Afghanistan, and these dangerous ideas and terrorized so-called Islamic belief will be exported to Central Asia, its close periphery. The Good Moslems of the Cold War suddenly became Bad Moslems in the post Cold War era.

In this sense, similar structures have begun to form in countries with the soft belly of the region and Uzbekistan, one of those countries, has been exposed to the threat of the Uzbekistan Islamic Movement, which we can consider as one of these structures, its independence after the cold war. This importance continued after the cold war. The Central Asian states and especially Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, which are natural resources and energy resources, especially strategic areas, have rapidly transformed into a worldwide center of attraction.

This situation has caused the region to become a risk and challenge area. The gap created by the policies of the Soviet Union, especially in the field of religion, made Central Asia the new stage of religious radicalism with the effect of the green belt project I just mentioned. Some of these originate from the Middle East, while others have received support from Afghanistan. Here, Uzbekistan Islami Movement is a radical organization

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supported by Afghanistan and Taliban. The social infrastructure of the country and the way religion is handled by the state have also laid the groundwork for the emergence of such an organization in Uzbekistan.

While the state practices an official understanding of religion, it looks at groups that may become radicalized from the perspective of security. In addition, the nationalization process that Uzbekistan entered after independence has deeply affected the domestic and foreign policy of the country. A nationalist and statist policy was followed on the basis of the Uzbek national identity within the country. When a correct study is carried out on the movement style of the organization that has an effect in the Middle East and the threats it creates, it is obvious that its effectiveness in the region may again be a threat to Central Asia in the face of the conjunctural changes that will occur at the end of the Syrian civil war.

In fact, the Russian invasion of Ukraine brought with it a lot of controversy and historical analogy. One of these analogies is to call the new global order emerging with the Russian invasion of Ukraine a new cold war. This is not a new analogy, and every tension between Russia and the West alliance, from the Kosovo crisis to Libya, was expressed with this concept. If we look at the foreign policy of the USA today, we can see that there has not been much change in terms of the policy followed during the Cold War years. History repeats itself.

In addition, while the attitude of the West, led by the USA, against Russia, which signals a return to the imperial genes under Putin in the current period, seems to start a cold war process again, keeping the proxy war practice of the USA, which still wants to dominate the region, as an option on the table. probability is quite high.

In this new cold war, as in the first cold war, the absence of sharp ideological borders and camps separating the two blocs and the more idealistic attitude of the global system strengthen this possibility. While talking about the geopolitics of the region, besides Fukuyama's *"End of History"*, Huntington's *"Clash of Civilizations"*, Brzezinski's *"Great Chessboard"*, Alexander Dugin's *"Russian Geopolitics: Eurasian Approach"*, it is necessary to think about proxy wars once again.

At this point, will the existence of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan come to life again? Otherwise, it will be necessary to wait a little longer for the answer to the question of whether it will evolve into another form. However, no matter what name it is defined by, the products of the green belt will still continue to be a risk factor for the region.

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