



## RELIGIOUS VIEWS AND BUDDHISM IN UZBEKISTAN

*Zhao Bing*

*Director of Eastern Silkroute Education and Culture LLC*

**Abstract:** The article examines the historical role and development of religious views in Uzbekistan, with an emphasis on Buddhism. Uzbekistan has long been a center of various religious beliefs, such as Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Judaism, Nestorianism, and has always maintained an atmosphere of interreligious peace and tolerance. Particular attention is paid to the Buddhist heritage in the region, including archaeological finds and monuments, such as the Zurmala suppa in Termez, which testify to the importance of Buddhism in Central Asia in the 1st-3rd centuries AD. It is also emphasized that today Uzbekistan maintains religious diversity and peaceful coexistence of representatives of different faiths due to state policies aimed at strengthening tolerance and interreligious harmony.

**Keywords:** Uzbekistan, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, interreligious harmony, Zurmala suppa, Nestorianism, tolerance, religious heritage, Central Asia.

The territory of Uzbekistan has served as a cradle of various religious beliefs and ideas at different times. Fire worship served as a formative sphere for Zoroastrian religions, as well as Buddhism. Historically, it is known that there were no interethnic or interreligious conflicts on the territory of any local state that ruled Uzbekistan. Once upon a time, those who believed in such religions as fire worship, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, monism, shamanism and ancestral spirits lived peacefully side by side in this region. Genghis Khan, a great commander who conquered a quarter of the world in his time, bequeathed to his successors the same attitude towards all religions. Over the years of independence, the quality of interethnic harmony and tolerance of the Uzbek people has increased even more. Thanks to the stable policy pursued in the republic, interethnic relations have improved. Thanks to reforms aimed at ensuring mutual harmony between peoples and freedom of religion, about 20 religious confessions, representatives of more than 130 nationalities and peoples live peacefully in the country. In addition, the republic has created a wide range of opportunities for them, as a result of which more than 140 national and cultural centers operate in this country. The population of the Earth has already exceeded seven billion. They speak more than six thousand different languages and dialects. Although racially there are mainly three main races, in fact they are divided into about twenty racial groups formed as a result of crossbreeding. According to their economic and social status, people are divided into the richest and the poorest. This situation further determines political positions. There is another aspect that differs from all of these - religion, faith. It is religious faith that can unite different races, languages, sexes, nations, peoples, etc. into a single whole, or it can lead a people, nation, relatives and clans into a state of alienation and hostility. As long as the principle of national and religious tolerance operates in Dune, interethnic and interreligious conflicts are not allowed. After all, a society with internal conflicts will never be able to unite and will eventually decline. Most modern armed conflicts have arisen and continue to arise in the context of national and religious conflicts. For example, mutual conflicts between the Orthodox, Catholic and Islamic South Slavic peoples of the Balkan Peninsula, etc. Today in the world, even if representatives of one religion make up the majority in a certain country, representatives of other religions and teachings also live together. In this situation, the main goal of the state is peaceful, peaceful and harmonious coexistence of representatives of different nationalities, religions and

teachings, the unification of all their strength and courage to achieve the development of the country.

The book by L.S. Vasiliev "The History of the Religious East" is devoted to the study of the history of Eastern religions and examines the manifestations of the same religion in different regions. For example, Buddhism in India, Buddhism in China, Buddhism in Japan. The main goal is to fully disclose and comprehensively analyze the manifestations of the same religion in different regions. Because if we study religion as a whole, without dividing it into regions, some aspects may remain without attention. Thanks to the regional study of the history of religions, we can observe cases of the transition of some aspects of one religion to another in the region. In the process of interaction with the religion of a religious group, the original historical origin of which goes back to the same root, religious ideas are preserved in another religion associated with the same origin by historical origin. Religions adopt ideas, customs, traditions and rituals that can be transferred from another religion. Even when faced with a crisis, they appear in new forms and continue to live. In a group of religions and sects, interreligious ideas and beliefs are mixed in a group of religions and sects, the original religion of which has reached its historical end and pronounced a harsh sentence on the dead religion or sect. The ideas and beliefs of this religion continue to exist within another religion or sect that is part of the religious complex. In general, religious ideas within a group of religions belonging to the same religious root are mutually inherited. When we see that a religion has come to an end in history, this does not mean that its religious idea has died completely. There are many striking examples of this in the history of religions. For example, the ancient Brahmanical religious ideas have not completely died, but continue and live in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. In addition, primitive religious ideas exist today either in an independent form or in combination with some modern religions.

Classification of religions by geographical region into eastern and western religions. This is a broad geographical classification that reflects political and cultural differences, similar to dividing the world into poles. Eastern religions include Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Shintoism, Taoism and other Far Eastern religions. Western religions include Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In fact, Islam cannot be called an Arabic or Eastern religion. Geographically, it originated in the East and is also widespread in Western countries. Both Judaism and Christianity are actually Eastern religions that originated in the Middle East and are widely spread in Western countries.

The national legal system of Uzbekistan creates equal conditions for representatives of all 16 religions living in the country. The Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience and belief, the corresponding legal framework creates conditions for satisfying the religious needs of all citizens, ensures the rights and interests of citizens regardless of national and religious affiliation, effectively combats discrimination on this basis. According to scientific sources, Uzbekistan is one of the most ancient places in the world where the first religious ideas and views were born. This is confirmed by the ancient grave of an 8-9-year-old Neanderthal child found in the Teshik-Tosh cave located in the Boysun Mountains of the Surkhandarya region, explored by archaeologist Okladnikov in 1938. Also, in collaboration with French and Japanese archaeologists, bas-reliefs, remains of temples, statues of Buddha, coins, seals and other finds were created as a result of excavations of the ruins of Kara-tepa, Faez-tepa, Dalverzintepa and others. Afrosiyob in Samarkand and Surkhandarya were discovered at the same time about ten religious objects, representatives of this teaching in the region are neighbors, blood relatives, peaceful. indicates that they lived. Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Judaism have existed in Uzbekistan since ancient times, and later turned into complex ideological systems. Most experts consider Central Asia, or more precisely Khorezm, to be the birthplace of Zoroastrianism, the first monotheistic teaching in the world. Zoroastrianism is based on the idea of the duality of things. That is, the regular struggle of the forces of good and evil, the final victory of the forces of good, the concepts of heaven and hell, the heavenly bridge, the golden age, and so on. These rules and teachings, which later emerged as the teaching of the One God, found their expression in the teachings of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. At the same time, Buddhism played an important role in Central Asia. Among the Buddhist buildings of Termez, the Zurmala suppa of the 2nd-3rd centuries, located in the east of Old Termez, deserves great attention. As a result of research conducted by archaeologists, it was established that this structure is a Buddhist suppa of the Kushan dynasty. In fact, in the 1st-3rd centuries AD, Termez was one of the centers of Buddhism in Central Asia. Due to this, many Buddhist temples were built here.

1,200,000 mud bricks measuring 40x40x10 cm were used to build the Zurmala Suppa. In addition,

the outside of the suppa is covered with limestone, and the upper part is covered with baked bricks of dark red color. Its height is 13 m, the diameter is 14.5 m. In ancient times, its height was at least 16 meters. The top of the suppa has a dome shape, and the remains of a large cylinder are striking in their grandeur. The discovery of many limestone blocks, architectural decorations and reliefs near the monument suggests that the Zurmala suppa once had a stone-relief coating. Sacred books and statues of Buddhism are kept under the dome. In the early Middle Ages, Nestorian Christianity penetrated the region from Syria through Iran and occupied an important position. Nestorianism was founded by one of the disciples of Jesus Christ, Nestorius, who differed from the Christian teachings common in Rome and Byzantium in that he considered Jesus Christ not God or the Son of God, but God's messenger and prophet. Therefore, this religious teaching is widespread throughout Central Asia. In Samarkand at the beginning of the 6th century, a Nestorian bishop served, and in the 8th century, a Nestorian metropolitan worked. In conclusion, we note that in the history of Uzbekistan there are many examples of peaceful coexistence and cooperation between representatives of different nationalities and religions, their tolerance, peace and harmony. That is why there have never been religious conflicts on the territory of Uzbekistan. Warm relations can also be seen in the relations between Islamic, Christian, Buddhist and Jewish religious communities. Assessing these relations, the first President of the Republic of Uzbekistan I. A. Karimov emphasizes the following: "The joint life of Muslims and Christians on the land of Uzbekistan is a rare sign of religious and spiritual harmony and the best example of tolerance for representatives of all other religions." The years of independence opened a new stage in interethnic and interreligious relations in Uzbekistan. The most important achievement of this period is peace and stability, which became the key to the successful implementation of reforms.

In addition, this situation is associated with its local, ethnic and religious aspects, the dynamics of social change, the expansion of people, nations and international relations, the dissemination of scientific information in public life, as a consequence, the emergence of peace. spiritual problems and their solutions.

In the religious culture of mankind, there is not a single moral theory that does not raise the question of the spiritual and moral responsibility of man. In Western spiritual culture, the theoretical aspects of human moral responsibility continue from antiquity to modern and contemporary times (Socrates, Aristotle, Lucretius Carus, Epicurus, Kant, Hegel, Weber, etc.). The problem of responsibility as a problem is reflected in ancient philosophy and philosophical and ethical treatises, medieval religious teachings (Augustine, F. Aquinas, etc.). The issue of human religious culture, which occupies a large place in the culture of the East, including Islamic culture, was also studied in the teachings of Zoroastrianism and Buddhism of previous religions.

#### **References**

1. Vasiliev LS History of the religious East. - Moscow: Vostochnaya Literatura, 2003.
2. Okladnikov AP Ancient cultures of Central Asia. - Tashkent: FAN Publishing House, 1966.
3. Karimov IA Uzbekistan on the path to stability and prosperity. - Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 1997.
4. Archaeological research of Buddhist monuments in Termez: Proceedings of a scientific conference. - Termez, 2020.
5. The concept of the state policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the field of interethnic and interreligious relations. — Tashkent, 2022.