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«ФИЛОСОФИЯ» СЕКЦИЯСЫ

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<https://doi.org/10.48081/BTOUH3.2026/6-25>**B. Sh. Abdilkhakim¹, S. E. Shakirov², *A. S. Omirbay³**¹Egyptian University of Islamic Culture Nur-Mubarak,

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¹ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8271-866X>²ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8354-5844>³ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7183-6428>*e-mail: kazak_abzal@mail.ru**THE PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS LEGITIMACY:
A PHILOSOPHICAL-THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS
OF CONFLICTS IN CENTRAL ASIA**

Beyond its geopolitical dimension, the return to power of the Taliban movement (hereafter, T) in Afghanistan in 2021 raises a properly philosophical question: who possesses the authority to define authentic Islamic governance, and on what grounds can such authority claim religious legitimacy? This had a significant impact not only on the country's domestic political situation, but also on the international security architecture. Although T promised the international community that they would not allow the territory of Afghanistan to become a base for terrorist organizations, subsequent events have shown that transnational jihadist groups remain active in the country. The article analyzes the activities of foreign extremist organizations operating in Afghanistan under the T regime and their mutual religious and ideological conflicts, approaching them through the conceptual lens of political theology and the philosophy of religion. The objects of the study were organizations such as Organization A (hereafter, A), the Islamic State of Khorasan, Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan, Jamaat Ansarullah, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, the Islamic Jihad Union, and Khatiba Imam al-Bukhari. The purpose of the study is to determine the nature of the relations of these

organizations with T and with each other, the differences in their ideological and hermeneutical positions on religious legitimacy, and the impact of these conflicts on regional security. The results of the study showed that not all extremist groups in Afghanistan serve a common goal, and there are deep contradictions among them in terms of power, sphere of influence, religious understanding and strategic orientation – contradictions that, at bottom, reflect competing claims to the same contested category of religious authority. The article also examines the threats posed by transnational extremist organizations in Afghanistan to the states of Central Asia and analyzes the trend of increasing their ideological and military activity directed at the countries of the region, arguing that religious legitimacy in radical Islamism is not a fixed doctrinal given but a socially and politically constructed claim.

Keywords: Philosophical analysis, religious conflict, political theology, religious legitimacy, philosophy of religion, hermeneutics of violence, Central Asia.

Introduction

Currently, the phenomenon of religious extremism and transnational jihad has become one of the most pressing issues not only at the intersection of international relations, security studies, and religious studies, but also of political philosophy and the philosophy of religion, since at its core it is a struggle over the very meaning and legitimate bearers of religious authority. Over the past few decades, the activities of radical organizations under the guise of Islam have had a significant impact on the internal stability of many states, regional security, and the system of international relations. However, considering radical organizations as a single phenomenon does not allow us to fully understand their internal features. In fact, there are significant differences between such organizations in the interpretation of religious texts, understanding of the concept of jihad, and methods of implementing political goals – differences that are, in the final analysis, hermeneutical and ontological rather than merely tactical. Therefore, when studying extremist organizations, it is necessary to take into account not only their relationship with states or society, but also their mutual connections and contradictions, understood as competing claims to religious legitimacy.

This issue is especially important in the case of Afghanistan. For more than forty years, Afghanistan has become a platform for the activities of various Islamist movements, armed groups, and transnational jihad organizations. Since the Soviet-Afghan war, this country has emerged as one of the centers of the spread of the idea of international jihad. Subsequently, A, the Islamic Movement

of Uzbekistan, the Islamic Jihad Union, Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan and many other organizations used the territory of Afghanistan to conduct their activities. Thus, Afghanistan became a space where not only military-political conflicts, but also various religious-ideological movements converged.

The return to power of the T movement in 2021 gave a new character to the situation of extremist organizations in Afghanistan. On the one hand, the T promised the international community not to hand over the country's territory to foreign terrorist organizations. On the other hand, the activities of a number of jihadist organizations that had long been established in Afghanistan did not completely cease. On the contrary, while some organizations tried to adapt to the new political situation, others perceived the T regime as a phenomenon that contradicted their goals. As a result, a new era of struggle for influence, ideological competition and armed confrontation between extremist organizations was formed.

From a theological point of view, these contradictions are based on different approaches to the interpretation of Islam. For example, the T movement is mainly based on the Deobandist religious tradition, while the Islamic State of Khorasan adheres to the Salafi-Takfiri ideology. These differences directly affect their positions on the establishment of an Islamic state, their concepts of governing Muslim society, and their attitudes towards opponents. Therefore, it is not enough to consider the conflicts between them only as a competition of a political or military nature. This is, first of all, a reflection of the struggle for religious legitimacy, the dispute over the true model of Islamic power, and the contradictions in interpreting the concept of jihad. In the language of political philosophy, the conflict may be described as a struggle over the very criterion of political-theological legitimacy – over who is authorized to draw the boundary between the community of true believers and its adversaries. From the point of view of conflictology, the relationship between extremist organizations in Afghanistan is a model of multi-level conflict. Here, competition for resources, the struggle for territorial control, and the pursuit of ideological dominance coexist between organizations. Interestingly, although many organizations have similar ultimate goals, their relationships often take on an adversarial nature. This situation shows that conflicts between radical movements can sometimes be even more complex than conflicts between a state and an extremist organization.

The study of the phenomenon of transnational jihad in Afghanistan is also of great practical importance for the Central Asian states. Because some organizations operating on the territory of the country include representatives of Uzbek, Tajik, Uyghur and other Central Asian peoples. In addition, a number of them link their ideological and political goals with the countries of the region. Therefore, the study of mutual conflicts between extremist groups in Afghanistan allows not only

to understand the nature of religious radicalism, but also to assess the possible threats to regional security.

This article examines the activities of transnational extremist organizations operating in Afghanistan under the T regime, their religious and ideological characteristics and mutual conflicts. It also analyzes the relationship of these organizations with the T, the main reasons for their mutual conflicts and their possible impact on the security of Central Asia.

Philosophical Framework: Political Theology and the Hermeneutics of Religious Legitimacy

The theoretical framework of this article rests on three complementary strands of thought, each of which reframes what would otherwise be described only as a security problem into a properly philosophical one. The first is Max Weber's sociology of domination, with its distinction between traditional, charismatic and legal-rational forms of authority. Read through this typology, the T's claim to rule appears not simply as a military fact but as an attempt to fuse a traditional, tribally and juridically rooted authority – anchored in the Deobandi scholarly tradition – with a residual charismatic component inherited from the movement's founding generation. Rival organizations, by contrast, tend to ground their legitimacy in a purely charismatic and often eschatological register, detached from any settled institutional tradition, which is one reason their claims are more absolute, and less negotiable, than the T's own.

The second strand draws on Carl Schmitt's concept of political theology, taken here in its narrower, analytical sense: the thesis that the central concepts of a political order are structurally secularized theological concepts, and that sovereignty, in the last instance, belongs to whoever has the practical capacity to decide the exception – to determine, authoritatively, who counts as a genuine believer and who as an enemy of the faith. Seen through this lens, the conflicts examined below are not reducible to disputes over territory or material resources; they are, at bottom, disputes over who holds this decisive power to draw the line between the community of true believers and its adversaries.

The third strand is philosophical hermeneutics, in particular Hans-Georg Gadamer's account of understanding as always mediated by a prior horizon of interpretation. A shared textual corpus – the Qur'an, the hadith literature, the classical fiqh tradition – does not by itself yield a single, self-evident political theology; it is always already read from within a particular interpretive community, with its own historical formation, chain of teachers and tacit assumptions. The organizations examined in this article largely share the same canonical sources, yet arrive at markedly different, mutually exclusive conclusions about what those sources require politically. For this reason, the conflicts described below cannot

be adequately reduced to a simple opposition between «true» and «false» Islam; from a philosophical standpoint, they are better described as a clash between incommensurable hermeneutical horizons, each of which nonetheless claims to be the sole legitimate one.

These three theoretical resources are not applied to the empirical material as an external commentary; they structure the very object of the study. Accordingly, in what follows, references to a group's "ideology" are also, and primarily, references to its structure of legitimation in Weber's sense; references to a group's "authority" also designate the theologico-political claim analyzed by Schmitt; and references to a group's "interpretation" also designate a hermeneutical horizon in Gadamer's sense. The empirical material presented in the Results and Discussion section is organized with this apparatus in mind, moving from the historical genesis of the contemporary legitimacy vacuum in Afghanistan, through a comparative profile of the principal claimants, to an explicit reconstruction of the hermeneutical structure of their conflict.

Materials and Methods

The study used historical-comparative, systemic and conflictological analysis methods. Using the historical-comparative method, the stages of the formation of transnational jihadist organizations in Afghanistan, their evolution and the dynamics of changes in their relations with the T movement were examined. In addition, the religious and ideological positions of various extremist groups were compared, and their similarities and differences were identified. The system analysis method allowed us to consider radical organizations in Afghanistan as elements of a complex, interconnected security system. Based on this approach, the features of the relations between the T, A, the Islamic State of Khorasan, Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan, Jamaat Ansarullah and other organizations were studied.

The conflictological method was used to analyze the causes of religious and ideological contradictions between extremist groups, the mechanisms of their escalation into armed conflicts and their impact on regional security. During the study, UN reports, materials from international expert centers, scientific works and analytical reports on security issues were used as sources. This allowed us to comprehensively assess the current state of the phenomenon of transnational jihad in Afghanistan.

Results and Discussion

The Historical Genesis of a Legitimacy Vacuum: A Philosophical Reading

The entry of the Soviet army into Afghanistan, the guerrilla struggle, the provision of funds and weapons to the mujahideen by the anti-Soviet powers – all this triggered the growth of extremism, first in Afghanistan, and then around the world. The results of this began to be seen in the 90s. After the Soviet Union's

withdrawal from Afghanistan, former mujahideen who were accustomed to war but were left without work, formed the first extremist groups, such as A, Jaish-e Islam, and Lashkar-e Taiba. Later, these turned into organizations with a system and structure. The militants of some extremist movements were used by external forces. For example, the Pakistanis, when it came time, incited the Afghan Mujahideen against India in the disputed Jammu and Kashmir region. In general, due to the direct or indirect influence of the Afghan war, in addition to the above-mentioned extremist groups, various religious radical movements such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, the Turkestan Islamic Party founded by representatives of the Uyghur nationality, and the Indonesian Islamic Jamaat (Jamaa Islamiyah) have mushroomed in the Muslim world like mushrooms after rain.

Although the T, after returning to power in 2021, stated that the territory of Afghanistan would not become a haven for terrorists and that the security of neighboring countries would not be harmed, in reality the T's actions against terrorist groups resemble a selective struggle. For example, while a ruthless battle is being waged against groups such as the Islamic State Khorasan, the Afghan branch of the Islamic State terrorist organization, it is said that «like-minded» organizations such as A are spreading their wings on Afghan territory. In general, there has been a tendency to intensify the problem of terrorism in Afghanistan in recent times. There are extremist cells operating there, consisting of small groups of foreign nationals, such as Uyghurs, Uzbeks, and Tajiks, as well as locals. According to the latest UN data, the number of foreign militants in Afghanistan is close to 10,000. These are mainly members of radical extremist groups such as A, the Turkestan Islamic Party, Katibat Imam al-Bukhari, Katibat at-Tawhid wal-l Jihad, the Islamic Jihad Organization, and Jamaat Ansarullah [1, p. 4]. Of course, this is a matter of concern for the countries of the region. In turn, the T leadership seems to prefer to integrate the terrorists into Afghan society instead of completely eliminating them. For example, the T did not imprison 75 jihadists captured as a result of special operations, but divided them into three contingents and deployed them throughout the country. There is even evidence that some of them are employed by law enforcement agencies to keep them under control and provide them with a source of income [2, p. 11].

The UN Sanctions Monitoring Group's June 2023 report states that about 20 terrorist groups in Afghanistan have freedom of action and are taking advantage of the instability in the country. While extremist organizations that previously took refuge in Afghan territory were limited to directing angry words at Central Asian countries, they are now finding an opportunity to move from words to deeds. On the one hand, this situation also shows that the T are unable to fully control all

parts of Afghanistan. This, in turn, raises doubts about the security guarantees given by the T regime to its neighbors [3, p. 149].

Next, we will focus on the most powerful of the radical groups that use Afghan territory as a base and pose a particular threat to Central Asian countries.

Competing Claimants: A Philosophical-Comparative Profile of Legitimation Strategies

A. A can be considered one of the greatest products of the Soviet-Afghan War. Founded in August 1988 in Peshawar by mujahideen such as Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, the organization was guided by the idea of global jihad after the Soviet army withdrew from the region. Initially based in Pakistan, A moved to Afghanistan after the T came to power. A carried out many terrorist activities around the world, especially against the United States, but it was the September 11 attacks that made it truly famous on a global scale. Although the Wahhabi-Salafi dogma prevailed in A, it is believed that it was influenced by Deobandi views. This is because, although the founders of the organization were Arabs, their headquarters and training camps were located in Pakistan or Afghanistan, and their main activities were carried out there. And it is known that Deobandism is ideologically influential and dominant in this region. Therefore, we can assume that Osama bin Laden, who has been in this region since the 1980s, was also indirectly influenced by Deobandism and had at least warm relations with Deobandist radical organizations. It is clear that without it, Arabs from outside would not have been allowed to form organizations and act freely. For example, the terrorist organization Islamic State Khorasan, which wanted to go its own way, could not have such an opportunity. After the US military intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq and the death of Osama bin Laden in May 2011, A lost its former ferocity and power. But the group did not completely disappear, but retained its vitality. And since 2021, it is said that the relationship between the T and A has been strengthening. It is known that the latter uses the territory of Afghanistan as a logistical and ideological hub in order to attract new fighters. The terrorist organization also opened 8 new training bases in Afghanistan, and prepared schools and hideouts [4, p. 24]. The special relationship between the two sides was also evident in the T's sheltering of A's leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, in Kabul. On July 31, 2022, a US military drone struck the house where al-Zawahiri was staying, killing the leader of A. Of course, this did not sit well with the T. According to the data, only Sirajuddin Haqqani and his close associates, who sheltered him there, knew about al-Zawahiri's presence in Kabul. However, it is inconceivable that the T's top leadership was unaware of this [5, p. 145]. The brotherhood with A is one thing, but the new generation of T is distinguished by

the fact that it attaches more importance to Afghan identity than to the ideology of international jihad.

Philosophically, A occupies a distinctive position within Weber's typology: its authority is charismatic yet deliberately deterritorialized, claimed not on behalf of a particular polity but on behalf of the global umma as such. In Schmittian terms, A universalizes the friend-enemy distinction beyond the boundaries of any state, treating the entire international order – not merely a rival regime – as the space in which the decision on true belief must be enforced. This is precisely what separates it from the T: where the latter's legitimacy remains, at least formally, tied to a bounded territory and its traditional institutions, A's claim to authority is constitutively borderless.

The Islamic State of Khorasan. The Islamic State of Khorasan (ISK) is a relatively young extremist organization that emerged in Afghanistan in 2015. It was founded by former T commander Hafiz Sayyed Khan. ISK was much more brutal than the T and A. Even the T began to look more moderate in comparison to it. ISK, like the T, often embraced not only representatives of the Pashtun ethnic group, but also anyone who was ready to accept its dogma. This became its main advantage. As a result, former T disillusioned with the T and unemployed soldiers who opposed the current government are filling the ranks of ISK. Those who join ISK are mostly Salafist and Wahhabi. This is also becoming a major problem for the T. Some experts have even called ISK the T of the new era [5, p. 200].

It was ISK that dealt the first blow to the T after they returned to power. In Kandahar, T leader Haibatullah Akhundzada was discussing the composition of the future government with senior members of the movement when the ISK took action. On August 26, 2021, a suicide attack by the ISK at the Kabul airport killed 170 Afghan civilians and 13 American soldiers. Interestingly, the suicide bomber who blew himself up had been released by T representatives from Parwan prison at Bagram airport a few days earlier [5, p. 85]. After this explosion, the previously unknown organization began to be recognized. Since its establishment, the ISK has been engaged in terrorist attacks not only in Afghanistan but also in Pakistan, causing the deaths of many civilians. However, their primary target today is the Afghan T. For example, in the first 5 months of T rule, 127 terrorist acts that occurred in the country were carried out by ISK militants. These attacks were directed at T convoys and checkpoints, as well as at T who spoke out against the ISK. In total, between August 2021 and August 2022, the ISK carried out 262 attacks against the T regime in Afghanistan [5, p. 202].

The Islamic State terrorist organization, from which the ISK emerged, was skeptical of the T's victory from the very beginning. They expressed their opinion on the T's takeover of Kabul through their newsletter al-Naba. In the

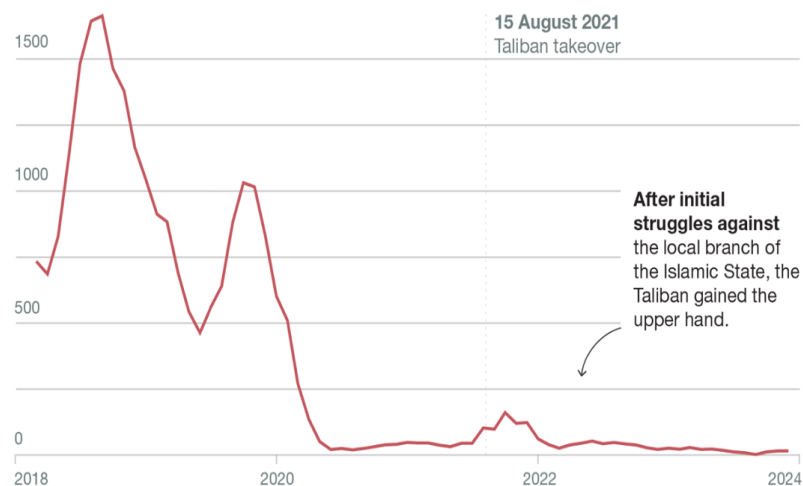
report, they describe the T's return to power as «the result of the Doha agreement between the Crusaders and the heretics». According to them, the Americans overthrew the T during their time of adherence to Sharia law and bombed them for 20 years. However, after succumbing to the will of the United States and reaching an agreement, the T were allowed to return to Afghan power. The fall of Kabul was also a result of mutual coordination between the T and the Americans. The statement also states that the T facilitated the “crusaders” free escape from Kabul [6]. In this regard, the Islamic State sees the T as an ally of the West, far from being considered true Islamists. Therefore, for the Islamic State, fighting the T and shedding their blood is tantamount to fighting non-Muslim Americans.

Another reason for the growth of extremist groups in Afghanistan is due to the T's internal politics. After the T came to power, jihadist groups consisting of citizens of Central Asian countries who had taken refuge in Afghanistan, such as Uzbeks, Uyghurs, and Tajiks, found themselves in a difficult situation. First, the T's emphasis on Pashtun nationalism automatically turned them into a marginal movement. Second, their idea of establishing an Islamic state governed by Sharia in Central Asia contradicts the political and economic goals of the T, who are interested in regional cooperation. Thus, despite years of fighting shoulder to shoulder against external forces, their paths have diverged with the T. In this regard, they are worried about being pushed out of Afghan territory [1, p. 6]. Unable to achieve the desired attitude from the T, Central Asian jihadists are joining the ranks of the T's rival, the Islamic State. For example, in October 2021, the Islamic State organized a suicide attack on a Shiite mosque belonging to the Hazara ethnic group in the city of Kunduz, killing 55 people. According to the Islamic State, the suicide bomber who blew himself up was Muhammad al-Uighuri, a Uyghur from China's Xinjiang region. According to data, this citizen carried out this terrorist act because the T agreed to deport Uyghurs in Afghanistan to China at the request of the Chinese government. The targets of this attack were not only Shiites, but also the T. In other words, Uyghur militants in Afghanistan had no choice but to join the Islamic State and fight against the T. The ISK also took advantage of the situation to promote the migration («deportation») of radicalized citizens from Central Asian countries such as Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan to Afghanistan in order to join its ranks [1, p. 7].

The ISK has not limited itself to Afghanistan alone, but has also targeted neighboring Central Asian states. On April 18, 2022, the ISK claimed to have fired 10 missiles at an Uzbek military base in Termez. However, the Uzbek side has denied that the missiles were fired, and that it does not consider this an attack [3, p. 147]. Although the Uzbek side has denied that the missiles were fired, witnesses have reported seeing several missiles land on the ground. In addition, the fact that

Uzbek military aircraft patrolled the border area for several days after the incident also suggests that the missiles were fired. On July 5, 2023, the ISK members again fired 5 missiles at a military base in Termez. These incidents caused minor damage to buildings, but no casualties. The following month, the ISK militants launched a similar attack in Tajikistan. However, these attacks did not result in casualties or major damage. Following these events, the T announced that they had carried out a military operation against the ISK in Kunduz province, which was responsible for the attacks on Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and had killed several terrorists [7, p. 48]. The ISK also did not leave Iran, their ideological enemy, aside. On January 3, 2024, a bomb attack organized by ISK terrorists at a memorial service for Qasem Soleimani in Kerman, Iran, killed 95 people [8]. Meanwhile, within Afghanistan, ISK militants carried out attacks on Chinese citizens and the Russian and Pakistani embassies. All this shows that the ISK does not recognize any laws and regulations, its goal is to harm as many people as possible and does not choose any method for this. The T government has also not been inactive. As it turned out later, the T destroyed the terrorist cells that had been firing on the territories of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in 2022 [2].

Various sources indicate that the number of ISK fighters is between 1,500 and 4,000. Their main areas of concentration are the settlements of Kunar, Nangarhar and Nuristan. In addition, ISK has separate cells in the cities of Badakhshan, Faryab, Jawzjan, Kunduz and Takhar. In order to attract recruits from Central Asian countries, ISK has expanded the language base of its propaganda media called Al-Azaim and began broadcasting in Tajik and Uzbek [7, p. 48]. As part of the ideological confrontation, ISK has called on Islamists in Afghanistan and beyond to unite against the Pashtuns [9, p. 10]. It is worth noting that the ISK is a movement that is strongly opposed not only to the T, but also to the Deobandi school in general. They even published anti-Deobandi pamphlets for distribution in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The ISK and Deobandi are not just rivals, they are fundamentally opposed ideologies, irreconcilable enemies [5, p. 244]. In turn, after the T's countermeasures and military pressure, the ISK's activity on Afghan soil has slowed down. In particular, since 2022, the deputy leader of the ISK, the former transitional leader, the head of the intelligence service, and the head of the judiciary have been killed as a result of raids organized by the T. Experts note that the ISK is now less dangerous than it was in 2021 [9, p. 8].



Source: Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED); Crisis Group calculations.

These three-month rolling averages include all violence involving IS-KP as a primary or associated actor in Afghanistan from 1 January 2018 to 1 January 2024.

Figure 1 – Deaths from terrorist attacks by the Islamic State of Khorasan Province between 2018 and 2024

While the T have begun to dismantle the most brutal and directly hostile terrorist cells, such as the ISK, they are in no hurry to completely eliminate other radical groups. It seems that the T are more interested in keeping them weak than in destroying them, and using them if necessary. However, security experts say that such a policy is very dangerous for the T themselves. Because they can easily get out of control and turn their weapons against their masters at any time [9, p. 11].

Philosophically, ISK represents the most radical point on this spectrum of legitimization. Its takfir hermeneutic reads the shared textual tradition through an exclusivist horizon (in Gadamer's sense) so narrow that it de-legitimizes not only secular states but the T and A themselves, both of which it regards as having compromised the faith through political accommodation. Its violence against the T is therefore not incidental to, but constitutive of, its claim to authority: in the Schmittian register, ISK asserts sovereignty precisely by refusing to recognize any other actor's right to decide who counts as a true believer, the T included.

From Global to Regional Jihad: A Philosophical Transition

Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan. Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was formed in 2007 with the aim of overthrowing the pro-Western Pakistani government in the Federally

Administered Tribal Areas and establishing an Islamic state. Like the T in Afghanistan, the majority of the Pakistani Taliban are Pashtuns. However, they have not fully integrated with the Afghan T. Although the T denied their connection to the TTP after coming to power in Afghanistan, it is clear that there is a close relationship between the two. This can be seen in the release of TTP members from Afghan prisons held by the T after they took power. The TTP initially considered Mullah Omar as its spiritual leader and promised to support the Afghan T in their fight against the United States [5, p. 182]. The T's return to power in Afghanistan has become an indispensable source of inspiration for the TTP. The Pakistani Taliban have also taken action to replicate this scenario in their own country, increasing their attacks inside Pakistan. For example, in 2021, TTP attacks increased by 42 % compared to the previous year [10, p. 2].

Despite the brotherhood between the T and the TTP, there are differences between the two groups. The Pakistani Taliban currently do not associate themselves with Deobandi scholars and disciples. Their religious practices also do not align with Deobandism. The Pakistani Taliban are fundamentalists with an independent system of thought, and their religious values are deeply intertwined with tribal culture. Although they still receive education in Deobandi-affiliated madrasas, they do not have a three-way relationship with the Deobandism system. In general, the T movement has developed a new fundamentalist ideology over time, combining Salafi austerity, militaristic Deobandism, Russianism, and Pashtunwali ideologies [5, p. 152].

Philosophically, the TTP illustrates a different mechanism of legitimization: legitimacy by derivation rather than by original charisma. Its own authority is explicitly parasitic on that of the Afghan T, whose 2021 victory it treats, in Weberian terms, as a demonstration effect – proof that a similarly constituted movement could achieve the same form of domination in Pakistan. This is charisma exported across a border without being formally transferred: the TTP borrows the T's symbolic capital while remaining institutionally and doctrinally distinct from it, a hybrid condition that sits uneasily within Weber's original typology.

Jamaat Ansarullah and Tehrik-i Taliban Tajikistan. Another radical group that has taken refuge in Afghanistan and poses a threat to Central Asian countries is Jamaat Ansarullah (JTA). Founded in 2010 by Tajik citizens, this organization is considered an ally of the T. Its goal is to establish an Islamic state based on Sharia law in Tajikistan. Therefore, the organization's main target is Tajikistan. In 2010, two police officers were killed in a suicide car bombing organized by JTA at a police station in the town of Khujand, Tajikistan [11, p. 158]. In 2014, the T threatened to attack Kyrgyz forces during an armed conflict on the border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. This incident showed that the T supports Tajik nationalism and intends to recruit Tajik citizens on this basis. According to data, after the US left Afghanistan, the T handed over some of the weapons left behind to the T.

Another extremist group threatening Tajikistan is the Tehrik-i Taliban Tajikistan (TTT), which was founded in 2022. Even before its official formation, it participated in various attacks together with the T. After the T came to power in 2021, it handed over to the TTT settlements in the Badakhshan province of Afghanistan, such as Kuf-Ab, Hwakhan, Maimay, Nusay, and Shekai, close to the border with Tajikistan. This indicates that the T trust the TTT and intend to use them as a border force. The TTT leadership has established its headquarters in the Shahri Buzurg area. The T authorities have provided them with 15 military vehicles and 60 tanks. The group has also reportedly purchased 15 boats to patrol the riverbeds between the Amu Darya River and the Afghan-Tajik border [7, p. 49].

Philosophically, JTA and the TTT display a further variation: the fusion of religious with ethno-national legitimation. Here the Schmittian friend-enemy distinction is drawn not solely along confessional lines but along a Tajik/non-Tajik axis internal to the Islamic world itself, so that religious legitimacy becomes entangled with, and partly parasitic upon, national identity. This suggests that Weber's categories of traditional and charismatic authority are not mutually exclusive: ethnic tradition here supplies part of the legitimating ground that pure religious charisma, on its own, could not fully secure.

The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and its splinter extremist groups. The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) was founded in 1990 in the city of Namangan by Tahir Yuldashev and Zhumabai Khazhayev. The two men, following the then-popular idea of establishing an Islamic state in Uzbekistan, set themselves the goal of establishing an Islamic state in Uzbekistan. The movement began operating independently of the central government in the Fergana Valley in the early 1990s. However, in 1992, it was recognized as an illegal organization by the Uzbek government, and the group's leaders fled to Tajikistan. Yuldashev actively participated in the civil war in Tajikistan, and later moved to Afghanistan under the T. The IMU carried out several terrorist acts in Tashkent in 1999, and also attempted to assassinate President Islam Karimov. The organization did not limit its attacks to Uzbekistan. In August 1999, about 200 militants illegally entered the Batken district of Kyrgyzstan's Osh region and captured several people. The region was cleared of terrorists as a result of joint military operations by the armed forces of Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan [12]. The IMU is said to have had about 2,000 troops, consisting of citizens of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, by the late 1990s [13, p. 4].

Although the IMU's primary goal was to overthrow the secular government in Uzbekistan and establish a state governed by Sharia, their ultimate goal was to implement this plan throughout the Central Asian countries. They believed that if the Islamic revolution was successful in Uzbekistan, the region's largest state in terms of demographics, this trend would spread spontaneously to the neighboring territories

of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan [16, p. 45]. Even after the killing of the ISI leader Yuldashev in Pakistan in 2009, the terrorist group did not stop recruiting recruits from the Central Asian region. It also organized attacks against the troops of the international coalition led by the US. Thanks to this, it strengthened its ties with the T. They also established close relations with the Pakistani Taliban. In 2014, the ISI, together with the latter, carried out an armed attack on the Jinnah Airport in Karachi, which resulted in the death of 39 people [14].

After the 2010s, IMU militants began to attack any group that opposed the idea of creating a transnational caliphate in Central Asia. In 2015, they entered into official negotiations with the US and broke with the T, which took a more moderate position. After that, the IMU leadership pledged allegiance to the Islamic State terrorist organization and joined it. Of course, this did not please the T. As a result, the last leader of the IMU, Osman Ghazi, was killed by the T in the same year. Having lost direction and orientation, the IMU members began to join various larger terrorist groups. Some swore allegiance to the T, while others swore allegiance to A. The remaining core remained in the hands of the Islamic State. This is because the IMU's goal of establishing a caliphate in Central Asia was closer to the ideals of the Islamic State than other radical groups [7, p. 48].

Philosophically, the trajectory of the IMU is a textbook illustration of what Weber calls the problem of the routinization of charisma – and, more precisely, of its failure. Rather than being stabilized into an enduring institution after the death of its founding leaders, the movement's authority fragmented, each successor faction reasserting a claim to the original charismatic mandate. This confirms a central thesis of this article's theoretical framework: religious-political legitimacy is not a possession that, once secured, persists automatically: it is a claim that must be continuously reproduced, and it can be lost through succession failure as easily as through external defeat.

Fragmentation and Succession: A Philosophical Note on Splinter Legitimacy

Islamic Jihad Union (IJU) a terrorist organization that broke away from the IMU in 2002 and was founded by Najmuddin Jalolov and Suhail Buranov. The group's members did not want to join A and focused their activities on Uzbekistan and Central Asia, where they aimed to establish an Islamic state. The group's main center is located in North Waziristan in Pakistan. In March-April 2004, 47 people were killed in terrorist attacks organized by the IJU in Uzbekistan [2]. The group also carried out attacks on the US and Israeli embassies in Tashkent and the office of the Prosecutor General of Uzbekistan. The IJU also began to establish cells in the territories of Russia, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan during those years. Members of the terrorist group were arrested in Kazakhstan and Germany in the mid-2000s on charges of planning terrorist acts [3, p. 146].

Another young terrorist organization that broke away from the IMU in 2011 and was founded on the Afghan-Pakistani border is the Khatiba Imam al-Bukhari (KIB). Since 2015, the group has allied itself with the Syrian Jabhat al-Nusra organization. With the support of the latter, it has carried out terrorist acts in the Syrian cities of Idlib and Hama [15, n.d.]. According to the data, the IB had about 500 fighters under its command, consisting of citizens of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia, including Caucasians [16]. The KIB leader is said to be a Tajik citizen named Dilshod Dekhanov. Like the IJU, the KIB aims to open the door to jihad in Central Asian countries. Since 2016, the KIB has concentrated its troops from Syria to the northern regions of Afghanistan, where they have military training bases. According to the UN, the number of KIB soldiers is increasing due to the recruitment of local people and financial support from the T and jihadist groups in Syria [3, p. 147].

Philosophically, the emergence of the IJU and the KIB out of the IMU exhibits a pattern that might be called a hermeneutics of purity: each successive schism narrows the interpretive community while intensifying its members' confidence in the exclusivity of their reading. This is the mirror image of Gadamer's fusion of horizons – not an expansion of understanding through dialogue with a tradition, but a progressive contraction of the horizon itself, in which legitimacy is purchased at the price of doctrinal narrowness and organizational smallness.

The study showed that the T's return to power in Afghanistan in 2021 did not fundamentally stop the activities of extremist organizations in the country, but rather contributed to their adaptation to the new political situation. The notion that transnational jihadist organizations operating in the territory of modern Afghanistan form a single ideological space does not fully correspond to reality. On the contrary, significant differences have developed between them in terms of religious understanding, political goals, jihad strategy, and views on Islamic statehood. These differences often lead to mutual distrust, ideological competition, and armed conflict.

The Hermeneutical Structure of the Conflict: A Philosophical Synthesis

The study revealed that the contradictions between the T and the Islamic State of Khorasan are one of the most important conflict factors in modern Afghanistan. The basis of this conflict is not only the struggle for power, but also differences in the interpretation of the Islamic system of governance and the issue of religious legitimacy. In turn, the relationship between A, Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan, Jamaat Ansarullah, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and other organizations with the T is not uniform. While some organizations are interested in cooperating with the T, others see its policies as incompatible with their ideological goals. This situation indicates the emergence of several competing religious and political centers in the radical environment in Afghanistan. From a theological perspective, the root of the contradictions between extremist organizations lies not in the basic tenets of Islam, but

in differences in their interpretation and application. This is, at bottom, a hermeneutical problem in the philosophical sense: the same textual corpus generates incompatible claims to authority once it is read through different interpretive communities, each convinced of the exclusivity of its own understanding. Each organization seeks to present its position as the true model of Islam and tries to deny the religious legitimacy of opposing groups. Therefore, many conflicts in Afghanistan should be viewed not only as military or political phenomena, but also as manifestations of religious and ideological opposition. From a conflictological perspective, the relations between extremist organizations in Afghanistan are multi-level and dynamic. Here, such factors as ideological competition, the struggle for spheres of influence, control of resources, and the attraction of supporters all operate simultaneously. Such a complex system of relations can not only destabilize the security situation in Afghanistan, but also spread its consequences to neighboring states.

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Conclusion

The results of the study showed that it is not enough to consider the phenomenon of transnational jihad in Afghanistan only as a problem of terrorism. This phenomenon is a complex socio-political system in which religious ideas, political interests and elements of armed struggle are intertwined. Therefore, the study of mutual conflicts between extremist organizations in Afghanistan allows us to understand the nature of radicalism more deeply, as well as to assess in advance the possible threats to the security of the Central Asian states. In this regard, a comprehensive study of the activities of transnational jihad organizations and their relationships will remain one of the scientific directions that will not lose their relevance in the future. Ultimately, beneath its political and military manifestations, this phenomenon poses a philosophical question that will remain pertinent well beyond the current conjuncture: on what grounds can any human authority claim to speak in the name of the sacred, and what becomes of a religious tradition once that claim turns into an object of armed contestation.

Framed in the terms introduced at the outset of this article, the Afghan case is thus a laboratory in which Weber's types of authority, Schmitt's notion of the sovereign decision, and Gadamer's hermeneutical horizon can all be observed operating simultaneously, and in open conflict with one another. No single organization examined here has secured what Weber would call a stable form of domination; each remains locked in a Schmittian struggle to be recognized as the party entitled to decide who is,

and who is not, a true believer; and none can escape the hermeneutical condition that its reading of the shared textual tradition is one reading among several, defensible only from within its own horizon. It is this philosophical structure, rather than any particular battlefield outcome, that is likely to outlast the present conjuncture.

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ДІНИ ЛЕГИТИМДІЛІК МӘСЕЛЕСІ: ОРТА АЗИЯДАҒЫ КОНФЛИКТТЕРДІ ФИЛОСОФИЯЛЫҚ-ТЕОЛОГИЯЛЫҚ ТАЛДАУ

Геосаяси өлшемінен тыс, 2021 жылы Талибан қозғалысының (бұдан әрі – Т) Ауғанстанда қайта билікке келуі шынайы ислами басқаруды кім анықтауға құқылы және мұндай өкілеттіктің діни легитимдігі қандай негіздерге сүйенеді деген философиялық сұрақ туындатты. Бұл мәселе елдің ішкі саяси жағдайына ғана емес, халықаралық қауіпсіздік архитектурасына да елеулі ықпал етті. Тәліптер халықаралық қауымдастыққа Ауғанстан аумағының террористік ұйымдардың базасына айналуына жол бермейтіні жөнінде уәде бергенімен, кейінгі оқиғалар ел аумағында трансұлттық джихадшілік топтардың белсенділігі сақталғанын көрсетті. Мақалада Т билігі тұсындағы Ауғанстанда әрекет ететін шетелдік экстремистік ұйымдардың қызметі мен олардың өзара діни-идеологиялық конфликттері саяси теология мен дін философиясы тұрғысынан талданады. Зерттеу нысаны ретінде «А» ұйымы, Хорасан Ислам мемлекеті, Тахрик-и Талибан Пакистан, Жамағат Ансарулло, Өзбекстан Ислам қозғалысы, Ислами Жихад Одағы және Хатиба Имам әл-Бұхари сияқты ұйымдар қарастырылды. Зерттеудің мақсаты – аталған ұйымдардың Т-мен

және бір-бірімен қарым-қатынасының сипатын, олардың идеологиялық және герменевтикалық ұстанымдарындағы айырмашылықтарды және бұл қайшылықтардың өңірлік қауіпсіздікке ықпалын анықтау болып табылады. Зерттеу нәтижелері Ауғанстандағы экстремистік топтардың барлығы бірдей ортақ мақсатқа қызмет етпейтінін, олардың арасында билік, ықпал аймағы, діни түсінік және стратегиялық бағдар мәселелері бойынша терең қайшылықтар бар екенін көрсетті – бұл қайшылықтар түптеп келгенде діни легитимдіктің бір ғана санатына қатысты бәсекелес талаптарды бейнелейді. Сонымен қатар мақалада Ауғанстандағы трансұлттық экстремистік ұйымдардың Орта Азия мемлекеттері үшін төндіретін қауіптері қарастырылып, олардың аймақ елдеріне бағытталған идеологиялық және әскери белсенділігінің арту үрдісі талданады, әрі радикалды исламизмдегі діни легитимдіктің тұрақты догматикалық факт емес, әлеуметтік-саяси тұрғыда құрылатын талап екені негізделеді.

Кілтті сөздер: Философиялық талдау, діни конфликт, саяси теология, діни легитимдік, дін философиясы, зорлық-зомбылық герменевтикасы, Орта Азия.

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ПРОБЛЕМА РЕЛИГИОЗНОЙ ЛЕГИТИМНОСТИ: ФИЛОСОФСКО-ТЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ КОНФЛИКТОВ ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ

Помимо геополитического измерения, возвращение движения «Талибан» (далее – Т) к власти в Афганистане в 2021 году актуализировало философский вопрос о том, кто вправе определять подлинно исламскую форму управления и на каких основаниях должна основываться религиозная легитимность такой власти. Данная проблема оказала существенное влияние не только на внутривнутриполитическую ситуацию в стране, но и на архитектуру международной безопасности. Несмотря на заявления талибов

международному сообществу в том, что они не допустят превращения территории Афганистана в базу для террористических организаций, последующие события показали сохранение активности транснациональных джихадистских групп на территории страны. В статье анализируется деятельность иностранных экстремистских организаций, действующих в Афганистане в период правления Т, а также их взаимные религиозно-идеологические конфликты, рассматриваемые сквозь призму политической теологии и философии религии. В качестве объектов исследования рассматриваются такие организации, как «Организация А», «Исламское государство – Провинция Хорасан», «Техрик-и Талибан Пакистан», «Джамаат Ансаруллах», «Исламское движение Узбекистана», «Союз исламского джихада» и «Катибат Имам аль-Бухари». Цель исследования заключается в выявлении характера взаимоотношений указанных группировок с Т и между собой, анализе их идеологических и герменевтических расхождений в понимании религиозной легитимности и определении влияния этих противоречий на региональную безопасность. Особое внимание уделяется вооружённому противостоянию между Т и «Исламским государством – Провинцией Хорасан», а также избирательной политике талибов в отношении отдельных иностранных джихадистских группировок, что может быть прочитано как конкуренция за право быть носителем истинной религиозной легитимности. Кроме того, в статье рассматриваются угрозы, исходящие от транснациональных экстремистских организаций для государств Центральной Азии, а также анализируется рост их идеологической и военно-политической активности, направленной на страны региона; при этом утверждается, что религиозная легитимность в радикальном исламизме представляет собой не устойчивую догматическую данность, а социально и политически конструируемую претензию.

Ключевые слова: Философский анализ, религиозный конфликт, политическая теология, религиозная легитимность, философия религии, герменевтика насилия, Центральная Азия.