

THE ESSENCE AND POLITICAL CATEGORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTS OF “YOUTH,” “EXTREMISM,” AND “INTOLERANCE”

Mansur Uralov

Independent Researcher Institute of Social and Spiritual Studies

Abstract:

This article examines the political categorical analysis of the concepts of youth, extremism, and intolerance. It highlights the role of youth in society, the emergence of extremism as a global threat, and intolerance as its main cause. Based on Karl Popper's theory of the “paradox of tolerance,” the issue of intolerance is discussed, emphasizing the necessity of effective political strategies to combat extremism.

Keywords: Youth, extremism, intolerance, political categories, paradox of tolerance.

In the 21st century, globalization processes and the rapid development of information and communication technologies have brought not only new opportunities but also complex threats to humanity. Among the most serious are extremism and radicalism, which pose a direct threat to social stability, national security, and human progress, particularly targeting the consciousness of youth. Therefore, the political-categorical analysis of the concepts of “youth,” “extremism,” and “intolerance” is one of the most pressing issues in modern social sciences.

The relevance of studying these concepts is explained by several reasons. First, youth, as the most active and creative segment of any society, plays a decisive role in its political, economic, and cultural life. At the same time, due to their psychological instability and underdeveloped ideological immunity, they become the main target of alien ideas. Second, extremism has become a transnational phenomenon in the modern world. It is not confined to any particular country or region but manifests as a global threat to world security. Third, intolerance and lack of tolerance are at the root of extremism and radicalism. Therefore, a deep study of the philosophical and political interpretations of these concepts is theoretically and practically important.

In scientific literature, the concept of “youth” is interpreted from various approaches. From a demographic perspective, it covers individuals within a certain age range; from a sociological approach, it is seen as a group actively participating in socialization processes. As a political category, youth is the targeted subject of state policy and a strategic factor in ensuring social stability.

The concept of “extremism,” in turn, is interpreted differently across disciplines. In political science, it is viewed as an ideology rejecting the existing political system and calling for radical solutions; from a legal perspective, extremism is considered illegal activity aimed at

overthrowing the constitutional order. Therefore, categorical analysis of this phenomenon is a primary task of political sciences.

The concept of “intolerance” has multifaceted meanings in philosophical, psychological, and political contexts. Philosophically, it denotes the rejection of differing views by individuals or societies; politically, it is seen as a key factor leading to the formation of extremism. Karl Popper’s “paradox of tolerance” concept demonstrates that if a society desires to be tolerant, it must adopt a firm stance against intolerance. This idea forms the theoretical basis of current political strategies in the fight against extremism.

This is because the population of the country, especially the youth, is relatively large, and their ideological immunity directly affects national security. Therefore, state policies such as the Law “On Youth Policy,” the Law “On Combating Extremism,” the activities of the “Center for Spirituality and Enlightenment,” and the “Agency for Youth Affairs” are aimed at eliminating intolerance among youth and fostering tolerance. Thus, analyzing the concepts of “youth,” “extremism,” and “intolerance” from theoretical and methodological perspectives, revealing their interconnections, and evaluating them as political categories is one of the most pressing tasks in today’s social sciences. These analyses have not only theoretical but also practical significance for Uzbekistan, contributing to national security, ideological stability, and the formation of healthy socio-political views among the youth.

As noted above, youth is considered the strategic resource of any society and the main guarantee of stability and security. It is now necessary to analyze this concept in detail from philosophical, sociological, and political categorical perspectives. This is because “youth” is not only a demographic indicator but also the most influential subject of the socio-political system.

Since ancient times, thinkers have regarded youth as one of the most important layers of society. Aristotle, in his work *Politics*, described youth as “a new force entering state life,” emphasizing that their natural energy plays a significant role in political life. Among Eastern thinkers, Farabi in *The Virtuous City* evaluated youth as subjects determining the future of society and stressed that their education and upbringing are guarantees of state stability. Ibn Sina defined youth as a group in the process of acquiring knowledge, ethics, and political culture, noting that their upbringing directly influences the spiritual development of society. These interpretations show that youth, since ancient times, has been seen as a key subject of society not only because of their natural energy but also due to their spiritual formation. In this respect, philosophical thought interprets youth as the main criterion for societal progress.

In the 20th century, the phenomenon of youth began to be extensively studied in sociological schools. Karl Mannheim, in his concept of “sociology of generations,” interpreted youth as the most sensitive group to historical changes in society. According to him, youth’s rapid adaptability distinguishes them, but this trait also makes them vulnerable to ideological

manipulation. In modern sociology, youth is considered the most innovative and adaptable layer of society. According to Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel's theory of value evolution, youth tend to embrace democratic values but can also quickly fall under extremist and radical ideas. This view highlights the dual role of youth in social transformations: they can be both drivers of progress and sources of political instability.

According to the UN classification, youth are individuals aged between 15 and 24 years. In Uzbek legislation, youth covers citizens aged 14 to 30. This approach is tailored to the country's demographic characteristics, considering that the majority of the population is young. Thus, youth issues in Uzbekistan have not only social but also strategic political importance. The Law "On Youth Policy," adopted in 2017, established the legal basis for state attention and support for this segment. The law aims to protect youth rights and interests, increase their socio-political activity, and strengthen their ideological immunity.

As a political category, youth play a dual role in society. On one hand, they are the main carriers of democratic values and modernization processes. On the other hand, their inexperience and emotional sensitivity increase the risk of falling under the influence of radical movements. As Zbigniew Brzezinski noted, youth have become the main intermediaries in many modern ideological conflicts.

In the context of Uzbekistan, youth policy during the "New Uzbekistan" era has become a key strategic direction for national development. The activities of the "Agency for Youth Affairs" and the "Center for Spirituality and Enlightenment" aim to increase the political and social activity of youth and equip them with ideological immunity against extremism and radicalism. Thus, the concept of "youth" encompasses a much broader meaning than just demographic or biological indicators. Philosophically, youth is regarded as the spiritual foundation of society, while sociology views it as a layer at the center of social transformations. From a political standpoint, youth is considered a strategic subject that determines national security and stability. Therefore, deep scientific study and a comprehensive approach to youth issues remain among the top priorities of modern science and politics.

The ideological immunity of generations plays a decisive role in national security and societal development. To better understand this factor, it is necessary to analyze the essence of the extremism phenomenon and its role as a political category. This is because the main threat directing youth consciousness toward radical ideas is extremism. The term "extremism" originates from the Latin word *extremus*, meaning "extreme" or "radical." Historically, it referred to the activities of radical groups opposing political systems at various times. In modern academic literature, extremism is interpreted as an ideology and practice offering radical, harsh, and violent solutions to existing social problems.

In political science, extremism is typically analyzed through two main approaches:

Legal approach: Extremism is defined as activities aimed at forcibly overthrowing the constitutional order. For example, Uzbekistan's Law "On Combating Extremism," adopted on June 14, 2018, establishes the legal framework for identifying extremist activities and taking measures against them.

Political-philosophical approach: Extremism is viewed as an ideology rejecting the existing political system and seeking to replace it with radical ideas.

Scholarly sources highlight the following characteristics of extremism:

Radicalism: Extremist views reject the current political and social system and aim for its drastic change. This distinguishes them from constructive political reforms.

Elements of violence: Extremist groups consider violence and aggression legitimate tools for achieving their goals. Consequently, extremism is often closely linked to terrorism.

Ideological basis: Extremism justifies itself through religious, national, or political ideas, which leads to its perception in society as a "just struggle."

Transnational nature: Modern information and communication technologies, especially the internet and social networks, enable the limitless spread of extremist ideas. Therefore, extremism is considered a global security threat today.

Youth represent the most active and influential layer of any society and are the most vulnerable group to ideological manipulation. Hence, extremist movements specifically target youth as their primary "audience" to spread their ideologies. This trend is also observed in Central Asia, where religious extremist organizations use psychological influence methods via the internet to recruit young people. As Zbigniew Brzezinski emphasized in his work *The Grand Chessboard*, many 21st-century conflicts have an ideological nature, with the youth generation becoming their main participants. This necessitates viewing extremism not only as a political threat but also as a danger to generational stability.

Since gaining independence, Uzbekistan has prioritized combating extremism as a key component of national security. Based on the Law "On Combating Extremism" and presidential decrees, mechanisms to protect youth from foreign ideologies have been developed. At the same time, preventive measures have been strengthened through institutions such as the "Center for Spirituality and Enlightenment" and the "Agency for Youth Affairs."

Currently, the risk of extremism in Uzbekistan is linked to two factors: firstly, the high proportion of youth makes them an ideological target; secondly, foreign ideas spread rapidly through global information networks. Therefore, thorough analysis of extremism and the development of effective political mechanisms to counter it remain urgent tasks. Thus, extremism is an ideology and practice based on rejection of the existing political and social system, violence, and radicalism. By fostering intolerance in youth consciousness, it undermines social stability. For this reason, studying extremism as a political category is

important not only theoretically but also practically. In the context of Uzbekistan, this analysis should be regarded as an integral part of the national security strategy.

References

1. Аристотель, Политика; пер. с греческого С.А. Жебелева, Т.А. Миллер. — Москва : Издательство АСТ, 2018.
2. Фараби. Город добродетельных людей. — Ташкент: Фафур Фулом номидаги нашриёт, 1993.
3. Ибн Сино. Китоб уш-шифо (танланган асарлар). — Тошкент: Фан, 2005.
4. Mannheim K. Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge. — Routledge, 2013.
5. Inglehart, R., Welzel, C. Modernization, Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence. — New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
6. Brzezinski, Z. The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives. — New York: Basic Books, 1997.
7. Bakhtiyor Omonov Contemporary approaches to modernization in asian and eastern countries in the era of globalization//Volume 3, Issue 5, May, Pp.68-73.
8. Омонов Б.А. Цифровая связь и политика цифровой торговли в центральной азии/Москва, Большая Евразия: развитие, безопасность, сотрудничество Материалы VII международной научно-практической конференции (27–29 ноября 2024 г. Стр.466-470.
9. Saidov, S. (2024). IBN SINO RISOLALARIDA RUHIY TARBIYA MASALALARI. International scientific journal of Biruni, 3(1), 269-273.
10. Saidov, S. (2025). ABDULLOH IBN MUQAFFANING “AL-ADAB AL-KABIR” ASARI ISLOM FALSAFASIGA OID MUHIM MANBA. TAMADDUN NURI JURNALI, 7(70), 201-204.
11. Saidov, S. (2025). IBN SINONING AXLOQ ILMIGA OID RISOLALARI. O‘ZBEKISTON RESPUBLIKASI OLIY TA’LIM, FAN VA INNOVATSIYALAR VAZIRLIGI TOSHKENT DAVLAT SHARQSHUNOSLIK UNIVERSITETI, 269.
12. Ugli, S. S. A. (2020). Philosophical and moral significance of IBN'S work" Al-adab Al-kabir". Asian Journal of Multidimensional Research (AJMR), 9(2), 261-264.
13. “Yoshlar siyosati to‘g‘risida”gi 14.09.2016 yildagi O‘RQ-406-sonli O‘zbekiston Respublikasining Qonuni <https://lex.uz/uz/docs/-3026246>
14. Ekstremizmga qarshi kurashish to‘g‘risida 30.07.2018 yildagi O‘RQ-489-son O‘zbekiston Respublikasining Qonuni <https://lex.uz/docs/-3841957>.