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As a manuscript

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**FACTORS OF SOCIO-POLITICAL DESTABILIZATION IN
“AFRASIAN” INSTABILITY MACROZONE**

Thesis Summary

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9 articles and monography were selected for defense. All journals in which these articles were published are included in the first or second quartiles in terms of citation indicators of Web of Science/Scopus or “Lists A, B, C, D” of the HSE University.

1. Issaev L. Russia and the New Middle East // *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*. 2021. Vol. 23. No. 3. P. 423-442.
2. Issaev L. Russia and the Middle East: From “Honest Broker” to “Status Keeper” // *Demokratizatsiya*, 2023. Vol. 31, No 3. P. 309-333.
3. Issaev L.M. Arab League and the Middle East crisis // *Asia and Africa today*. 2013. No. 5. P. 33-36 (in Russian).
4. Issaev L.M. Arab Spring and the Arab League: Between Baghdad and Cairo // *Oriens*. 2013. No 3. P. 55-63 (in Russian).
5. Korotayev A., Issaev L., Shishkina A., Rudenko M. A., Ivanov Y. Afrasian Instability Zone and Its Historical Background // *Social Evolution & History*. 2016. Vol. 15. No. 2. P. 120-140.
6. Issaev L., Korotayev A., Zinkina J. V. Center-Periphery Dissonance as a Possible Factor of the Revolutionary Wave of 2013-2014: a Cross-Cultural Analysis // *Cross-Cultural Research*. 2015. No. 4. P. 461-488.
7. Akaev A., Korotayev A., Issaev L., Zinkina J. V. Technological development and protest waves: Arab spring as a trigger of the global phase transition? // *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*. 2017. Vol. 116. P. 316-321.
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9. Issaev L., Zakharov A. *Federalism in the Middle East: State Reconstruction Projects and the Arab Spring*. Springer, 2021.

10.Issaev L., Zakharov A. Dynastic Sacredness: Islam and the Arab Spring in Morocco // *Middle East Policy*. 2022. Vol. 29. No. 3. P. 112-128.

Other articles on the topic of the dissertation:

11. Issaev L., Malkov S. Y., Ilyin I. A methodology for analyzing and forecasting sociopolitical destabilization // *BioSystems*. 2020. Vol. 198. No. C. P. 1-8.
12. Issaev L., Zakharov A. Decentralization in Libya after the Arab Spring // *Middle East Policy*. 2020. Vol. 27. No. 1. P. 56-70.
13. Issaev L., Korotayev A. Russia's Policy towards the Middle East: The Case of Yemen // *The International Spectator*. 2020. Vol. 55. No. 3. P. 132-147.
14. Issaev L., Lifintseva T., Shishkina A. Fitnah: The Afterlife of a Religious Term in Recent Political Protest // *Religions*. 2015. No. 6 (2). P. 527-542.
15. Issaev L., Shishkina A. From Fitnah to Thaura: The Metamorphosis of the Arab-Muslim Protest Movements // *Religions*. 2017. Vol. 8. No. 9. P. 1-9.
16. Issaev L.M., Korotayev A.V. Yemen: Unknown revolution and international conflict // *World Economy and International Relations*. 2015. No. 8. P. 71-81 (in Russian).
17. Issaev L.M., Korotayev A.V. Anatomy of the Egyptian counter-revolution // *World Economy and International Relations*. 2014. No. 8. P. 91-100 (in Russian).
18. Issaev L.M. Arab League summits: (not) time for debate // *Asia and Africa today*. 2010. No. 9. P. 46-50 (in Russian).

1 Introduction

1.1 Relevance

This dissertation research is aimed at identifying factors of socio-political destabilization in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability. In the last ten years, the world-system has been experiencing a powerful process of reconfiguration, which greatly affects the state of societies in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability (Grinin, Korotayev 2015). Moreover, it began in the core of this macrozone with the Arab Spring. At the same time, in the second half of the 2010s - early 2020s. The “afrasian” macrozone of instability and adjacent territories demonstrate perhaps greater instability than in the mid-2010s. The number of different destabilizing events in the last decade has been very large and has affected a large number of countries from Morocco to Yemen, from Central Asia to the Sahel. At the same time, the risks of destabilization are increasing even in those countries that seemed stable during the Arab Spring.

Thus, the relevance of this topic is due to the fact that the identification of real factors of destabilization is the basis for subsequent forecasting of socio-political dynamics in the extremely important part of the modern world being studied. These forecasts will serve as the basis for forming ideas about the essence and dynamics of strategic political risks and threats.

In scientific terms, the relevance is associated with the need to consider the processes of socio-political destabilization in dynamics, as a constantly changing process. This, in turn, will make it possible to better understand not only the logic of the development of the political process in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability, but will also make a significant contribution to the development of such a direction of political science as political change.

1.2 Research problem

The world-system periphery, which includes the “afrasian” macrozone of instability, has developed so quickly in recent years that analytical risk forecasting

systems developed on materials from the last decades of the last century did not have time to adapt to the new reality. None of them was able, for example, in 2010 to predict the destabilization in Arab countries, called the “Arab Spring”, the revolutionary wave of 2013-2014. (Issaev, Korotayev, Zinkina 2015) or so-called. the second revolutionary wave (which also received the metaphorical name “Arab Spring 2.0” (Issaev, Korotayev 2022)), etc.

Moreover, the ideas about the revolutionary process that were available to political science at the beginning of the 21st century also turned out to be unable to foresee such large-scale destabilization processes as were observed in the 2010s. The dominant position among researchers of that time remained the belief that revolutions were based on the structural features of states and the system of international relations (Skocpol 1979). Accordingly, regime stability was perceived as a normal and understandable phenomenon. The “Arab Spring” and the events that followed it showed the inconsistency of this kind of assumptions and highlighted the need to develop new effective systems for analyzing the current state and predicting socio-political destabilization. Which, in turn, requires a separate study of the factors that contributed to the sharp increase in socio-political destabilization starting in the 2010s.

1.3 Theoretical and methodological basis of research

As mentioned above, stability has long been perceived as a normal state, and the goal of theory has been to identify a “short and consistent list” of factors that undermine stability (Goldstone 2006). However, subsequently the inconsistency of this approach seemed increasingly obvious. Regime characteristics alone were not sufficient to predict sociopolitical destabilization. Moreover, structural conditions also could not explain the effects of destabilization. It has been argued that “the establishment of democracy or dictatorship...the character of the new regime, be it Islamic, communist or liberal, appears to be a contingent consequence of the decisions made by revolutionary leaders, foreign powers and popular supporters, and the interactions between them” (Aminzade et al 2001). Thus, at the beginning of the

21st century, the “fourth generation” of the theory of revolutions was formed, within which special attention was paid to the conditions for the existence of regimes for a long time, and the starting position was to consider stability as a non-obvious phenomenon that takes into account a wide range of factors and conditions leading to the undermining of stability (Goldstone 2006).

Thus, the dissertation is largely based on the theory of “fourth generation” revolutions, to which significant contributions were made by Beck (2011), Nepstad (2011; 2015), Goldstone (2014), Lawson (2019). After all, the study of the processes of socio-political destabilization in the countries of the “Afro-Asian” macrozone of instability took place precisely within the framework of the theory of “fourth generation” revolutions.

This direction is characterized by: firstly, consideration of a much wider range of revolutionary cases; second, an attempt to explain a wide range of revolutionary trajectories, including armed revolutions aimed at redistributing property (Goldstone, 2022), “negotiated revolutions” (Lawson, 2019) or violent revolutions; third, focusing on factors that lead to both stability and instability; and finally, a consideration of international influences and interventions as fundamental and integral, and sometimes defining, elements of modern revolutions.

Among the most strengths of the theory of the “fourth generation” of revolutions are the following. 1) Focusing on intra-elite conflicts as a determining revolutionary factor (Parsa 2000; Snyder 1998). 2) Hypothesizing that transitional regimes are more vulnerable than consistently authoritarian or democratic ones (Albrecht & Koehler 2020; Slinko et al 2017). 3) Identifying the role of ideological, generational and cultural factors that are the driving forces of the revolution (Foran 2005; Shishkina 2017). 4) Consideration of revolutions not as a separate phenomenon, but in the context of regional and global dynamics (Grinin 2019; Lawson 2019).

The main problem within the framework of the theory of revolutions of the “fourth generation” was that it turned out to be a de facto transitional stage from the

“third generation” to the “fifth”. Colins Beck rightly notes in this regard that researchers of this generation of revolution focused on criticism of earlier work, but were unable to consolidate the new approach: “Work on the study of revolutions concentrated on the same small number of cases, and progress in developing new theory, seems to have stalled” (Beck 2018).

A similar point of view is shared by J. Goldstone, who noted that the “fourth generation” will not be the last word in the theory of revolution (Goldstone et al 2022). Despite their obvious merits in this generation, the theories did not take into account important aspects of revolutions, such as: the role of women or gender issues in general (Jayawardena 2016); problems of racial and ethnic struggle, the growth of radical Islam as a global revolutionary movement (Grinin et al. 2019), administrative and territorial aspect, etc.

Moreover, a distinctive feature of the new, “fifth generation” theory of revolutions is its emphasis on nonviolent revolutions. Thus, many scientists today agree on the role of nonviolent protest in the success of the revolution. Recently, a lot of work has appeared that suggests that, in general, nonviolent protests are the most reliable (though not the only and not always effective) way of regime change (Bayer et al. 2016; Celestino & Gleditsch 2013; Kadivar, Caren 2016; Kadivar, Ketchley 2018).

Thus, the theoretical framework of the dissertation is also based on ideas that are currently being used to develop the theory of “fifth generation” revolutions. Among these, the works of Beissinger (2023), Bayat (2017), Della Porta (2016), Ritter (2015) should be highlighted.

Finally, this study is based on a world-system approach in terms of studying the processes of socio-political destabilization in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability in connection with global historical processes. Previous research (Bowlsby et al. 2020; Djuve et al. 2020) has shown that the factors that lead to the success of revolutions change over time, taking “the form of both cyclical patterns that generate

revolutionary waves and linear ones, in which certain revolutionary processes die out, and new ones, on the contrary, begin to develop” (Goldstone, Grinin, Korotayev 2022).

1.4. Data collection and methods

The study is based on a broad empirical base, which can be divided into three groups. Firstly, statistical data, among which we can highlight: key indicators of the World Bank¹ (to assess the level of socio-economic development of the states of the “afrasian” macrozone of instability, the level of female employment, etc.); data from the UN Population Division² (to assess the demographic development of countries in the region); Cross-National Time Series³ (to assess the level of protest activity and internal conflicts); G. Murdock's ethnographic database⁴ (to assess the spread of ortho-cousin marriages); Freedom House⁵ (to assess the type of political regime); Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index⁶; data from the Egyptian Stock Exchange⁷ (as one of the indicators of revolutionary events).

Secondly, interviews with experts and direct participants in revolutionary events in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, representatives of opposition groups, as well as official authorities, which were collected during regular field research in the countries of the “afrasian” makozone of instability from 2011 to the present time. Thirdly, data obtained during participant observation, since the author of this dissertation witnessed destabilization processes in Egypt (2011), Yemen (2012, 2014-2015), Syria (2011-2018), Lebanon (2017-2018), Iraq (2019), Mali (2021), Niger (2021), Burkina Faso (2021, 2023), Iran (2017-2018) and Afghanistan (2015, 2019).

¹ World Bank Open Data, <https://data.worldbank.org/>

² UN Population Division Data, <https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/data-landing-page>

³ Cross-National Time Series Database, <https://www.cntsdata.com/>

⁴ Murdock G.P. Atlas of World Cultures. Pittsburgh, 1981.

⁵ Freedom in the World. <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world>

⁶ Corruption Perception Index, <https://www.transparency.org/en>

⁷ EGX Indices Data, <https://www.egx.com.eg/>; Trading Economics, <https://tradingeconomics.com/>

To work on the dissertation research, a holistic set of methods was used, taking into account the fact that various scientific methods were used to perform different tasks.

An important place in this study, as already noted, was given to world-system theory and, accordingly, to the world-system method. The essential feature of this approach is the study of the historical evolution of systems of societies, rather than individual societies. The world-system method is especially important for the modern period, since the interconnectedness in world processes is constantly growing, which causes both rapid changes and serious difficulties and conflicts in the event of failures in world connections. Thus, the world-system method allows us to see how global factors and causes are refracted in the processes of specific societies or groups of societies. In particular, how many causes of socio-political destabilization are closely related to global and world-system processes and aspects.

The method of participant observation, expert and in-depth interviews was used to assess and analyze destabilization processes in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability. Research into decentralization processes has been conducted within the framework of postcolonial studies, which is the mainstream approach to the study of federalism in non-Western societies. A statistical analysis method, including multiple ordinal regression modeling, was used to identify center-peripheral dissonance. Longitudinal analysis of the dynamics of stock indices and gold and foreign exchange reserves was used to study political processes in crisis societies. A longitudinal analysis of the dynamics of global economic and technological growth and protest activity was used to identify the transition of protest activity to a qualitatively new state. The method of correlating political and sociocultural characteristics was used to identify the parameters of the “afrasian” macrozone of instability. Qualitative content analysis was used to identify the role of regional and global actors in the processes of socio-political destabilization in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability.

1.5. Theoretical significance

The theoretical significance of this dissertation is determined by its contribution to the rethinking of the theory of revolutions of the “fourth generation” and the formation of the foundations of the “fifth generation” of the theory of revolutions. For these purposes, an attempt has been made to systematize the accumulated experience in the field of assessing and forecasting the risks of socio-political destabilization. In the course of studying the events of the “Arab Spring”, and then the events of the so-called. the second revolutionary wave in the Middle East and North Africa at the end of the 2010s. It became clear that the theory of revolutions of the “fourth generation” would not be the last word in the theory of revolution. Despite their obvious merits for this generation, the theories did not take into account such important aspects of revolutions as the role of women or gender issues in general; problems of racial and ethnic struggle, the growth of radical Islam as a global revolutionary movement and the administrative-territorial aspect, which played a crucial role in the revolutionary processes under consideration. In addition, in the 21st century, the very nature of revolutionary processes changed, which began to acquire a predominantly unarmed character.

It can be argued that the theoretical significance of this work lies in the formation within the framework of political science of a direction in the field of studying the processes of socio-political destabilization in modernizing countries. The dissertation makes a significant contribution to the development of methodological foundations for the study of revolutionary processes, as well as assessment of the current state of stability of socio-political systems of the “afrasian” macrozone of instability.

1.6. Applied significance

The practical significance of the work is associated with the possibility of using its results and conclusions to identify the features of the revolutionary process in the countries of the “afrasian” macrozone of instability in order to take preventive measures to prevent the situation from worsening. This, in turn, can serve as the basis for developing practical recommendations regarding tools and methods for

ensuring Russia's national interests in Asian and African countries, taking into account the global challenges of the development of the "afrasian" zone of instability. The results of the study are used in teaching the disciplines "Modern Revolutions in Foreign Countries", "Islamic Political Culture", "Russian Foreign Policy and Conflict Resolution" and "Russia and the Middle East" to undergraduate and graduate students at the National Research University Higher School of Economics. The results of the study formed the basis of two textbooks for university students: "Methodology for modeling and forecasting the risks of socio-political destabilization" and "Political processes in the countries of the Near and Middle East."

1.7. Statements for the defense

1. There is every reason to consider the "afrasian" zone of instability as a single space that correlates quite closely with the territory of the Umayyad Caliphate, the traditional spread of ortho-cousin marriages, as well as with a zone of extremely low economic activity of women. Thus, conditions have been created in this zone for the formation of a higher level of frustration among young people, as the part of society most prone to radical actions.

2. Based on an analysis of the revolutionary wave of 2013-2014. in the "afrasian" zone of instability, it was revealed that an important factor of socio-political destabilization was the so-called "center-periphery dissonance". The emergence of this factor is typical for developing societies and is due to the heterogeneity and asynchrony of modernization processes, when capitals almost always modernize faster than the periphery. In the 2010s. the presence of "center-periphery dissonance" turned out to be a strong predictor not only of relatively bloodless processes of unarmed revolutionary destabilization, but also of bloody civil wars in the studied area.

3. In 2011–2012 the world-system has, to a certain extent, experienced a transition to a qualitatively new state of global protest activity. Transition early

2010s was prepared by a new wave of growth in global information connectivity, as well as the improvement of means of protest self-organization through the spread of new technologies: the Internet, satellite television, social networks, mobile communications, etc.

4. The determining role in the processes of socio-political destabilization in the countries of the “afrasian” macrozone of instability was played by the presence of an intra-elite split. Using the example of revolutionary events in Egypt in the first half of the 2010s. it is shown that this factor played a key role in the revolution of 2011, as well as the military coup of 2013. The success of the revolution of 2011 was due to a split within the Egyptian political elite into the “old” (military) guard and “young” politicians united around supporters son of President Hosni Mubarak Gamal. In turn, the 2013 coup was largely prepared by the reconciliation between the Egyptian economic and military elites, who united to overthrow the power of the Islamists.

5. The problem of redistribution of power between the central government and the regions, which has not been resolved for decades, has become one of the most important factors of destabilization in the region. Historically complex and diverse states in the region such as Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and Syria have always been predisposed to decentralization due to the extreme heterogeneity of their political space, devoid of the unity of culture, religion, language, and ethnic substratum. But this need for the combination of self-government and shared rule (self-rule and shared-rule) inherent in federalism was not satisfied for decades, since the intensive construction of the nation-state, which immediately engulfed post-colonial societies, harshly pushed federal projects into the background.

6. Using the example of protests in Morocco and Jordan in the 2010s. the stabilizing role of monarchical institutions is shown, which is largely due to the moral and legal superiority of the throne over any opposition. It is also shown that the Moroccan (as well as Jordanian) experience indicates the presence in the hands of monarchs of additional stabilization tools, and not their use of religious status,

among which the so-called plays an important role. the policy of “bureaucratization” of Islam – the purposeful use of religious rituals and institutions to strengthen one’s own power.

7. Using the example of studying the military coup in Egypt in 2013, it is shown that the formation of new regional alliances became an important destabilizing factor in the region. At the same time, existing regional institutions (primarily the League of Arab States) have failed to act as a stabilizing factor in the region.

1.8. Summary of scientific novelty

The scientific novelty of the dissertation lies in identifying the features and factors of socio-political destabilization in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability.

1. For the first time, the concept of the “afrasian” macrozone of instability was introduced into scientific circulation and conceptualized. In particular, the author’s personal contribution was to develop a hypothesis about the presence of a civilizational basis for the formation of an “afrasian” macrozone of instability and a further detailed description of each of the zones.

2. The phenomenon of center-peripheral dissonance is revealed and its role in the processes of socio-political destabilization in this macrozone is shown. In particular, the author’s personal contribution was to improve the methodological tools proposed by J. Goldstone and allow a more accurate description of destabilization processes in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability.

3. The role of the events of the Arab Spring as a trigger for the global protest wave of the early 2010s is revealed. In particular, the author’s personal contribution was the collection of empirical data, on the basis of which it was possible to identify the key role of global information connectivity and improving the means of protest self-organization in the transition of the world system to a qualitatively new state of protest activity.

4. The potential of decentralization as a possible factor in countering destabilization processes in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability has been

determined. In particular, the author's personal contribution was that for the first time in domestic and foreign literature an extensive database was collected on federal and decentralization projects in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa after the Arab Spring.

5. It is shown that the formation of new regional alliances has become an important destabilizing factor in the region.

6. The role of external actors and their influence on the processes of socio-political destabilization in the "afrasian" macrozone of instability is revealed.

7. The significance of the intra-elite split is revealed as the most important factor of socio-political destabilization in the macrozone under consideration. In particular, the author's personal contribution was to develop, using the example of events in Egypt in 2011 and 2013. methods for identifying intra-elite splits.

8. The stabilizing influence of monarchical institutions in the "afrasian" macrozone of instability has been confirmed. In particular, the author's personal contribution was to carry out a historiographical review of Islamic provisions on state and power, which led to the conclusion that there were checks and balances in Islamic political culture that limited the power of rulers.

1.9. Public presentations on the topic and grant support

The main results of the research on the topic of the dissertation were presented in the form of more than 50 presentations at international conferences in Russia and abroad, including: Annual Meeting of the Society of Cross-Cultural Research, IPSA World Congress, ISA World Congress, Annual Conference of African Econometrics Society, International Congress of the Russian Society of Sociologists, International Conference of Africanists, International Congress on Source Studies and Historiography of Asian and African Countries. In addition, the results of the study were tested in the framework of presentations at scientific events organized by Qatar University, Georgetown University in Qatar, Geneva Center for Security Policy,

Finnish Institute of International Affairs, University of Shahid Beheshti in Tehran, TOBB University in Ankara, The Institute for National Security Studies in Israel.

Research on the topic of the dissertation was supported by the Russian Science Foundation (grant 14-18-03615, 2014-2018; 14-11-00634, 2014-2018; 18-18-00254, 2018-2022; 19-18-00155, 2019-2023 ; 21-18-00123, 2021-2023), the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (grant 17-06-00476, 2017-2019) and the Basic Research Program of the HSE University (2014-2023).

2. Formation of “afrasian” instability macrozone

Selected article: Korotayev A., Issaev L., Shishkina A., Rudenko M. A., Ivanov Y. Afrasian Instability Zone and Its Historical Background // *Social Evolution & History*. 2016. Vol. 15. No. 2. P. 120-140.

In the modern world-system, a number of large zones of instability can be identified. Previous studies have identified five main zones of instability, which can be conditionally designated as: Central Asian (including, in addition to Central Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan), Middle Eastern, North African, Sahel region and Pacific (see primarily Truevtsev 2014). At the same time, the latter clearly stands out from the general list, spreading exclusively along the borders of the People's Republic of China and being rather a consequence of Chinese foreign policy priorities and ambitions. As for the other four zones, they collectively constitute a macrozone, which can be represented as a single continuous “afrasian” macrozone of instability. It is obvious that this macrozone is currently the main area of concentration of internal socio-political tension in the world system. The world outside this macrozone now looks much calmer.

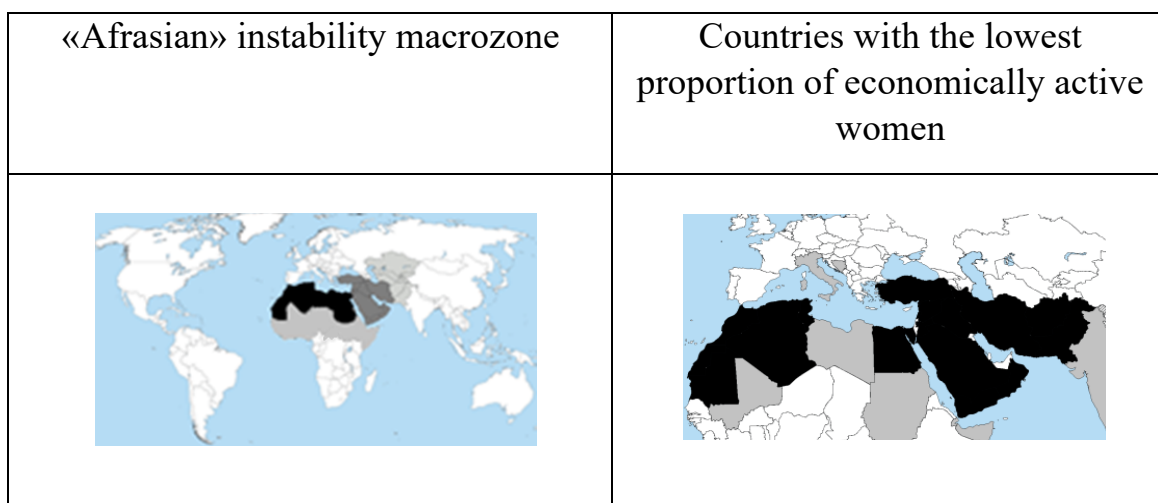
The “afrasian” macrozone of instability almost perfectly coincides with the zone of ortho-cousin marriage, the Umayyad Caliphate, and also with the zone of an ultra-low share of economically active women (Fig. 1). What explains such a close correlation? Why, for example, are the boundaries of the zone of traditional distribution of parallel cousin marriage so close to the boundaries of the Umayyad

Caliphate? On the one hand, it is difficult to deny the existence of a certain functional connection between Islam and parallel cousin marriage. Indeed, this form of marriage appears to be highly adaptive in the traditional Islamic context (see, for example, Rosenfeld 1957).

In our case, parallel cousin marriage is, in fact, a good marker of belonging to the Arab-Islamic civilization. At the same time, there is reason to assume that some characteristics of this civilization in modern conditions have turned out to contribute to socio-political destabilization. Here we will focus only on some of these characteristics (see, for example: Korotayev, Meshcherina, Slinko et al. 2019).

One of them can be considered a combination of strict prohibitions on extramarital sexual relations with a whole set of marriage and family customs, which, in the context of modernization, led to a sharp increase in the age of marriage - especially for men (see, for example: Rashad, Osman, Roadi-Fahimi 2005: 6; Marks 2011a: 5, 25; Marks 2011b; Puschmann, Matthijs 2012: 15,19). In recent decades, modernization has led to an increase in the age of marriage everywhere, but in the Arab world this phenomenon has taken on a particularly pronounced form among men (Fig. 2).

Fig. 1. The traditional zone of ortho-cousin marriage prevalence, the territory of the Umayyad Caliphate, the zone of ultra-low female employment and the “afrasian” macrozone of instability in comparison.



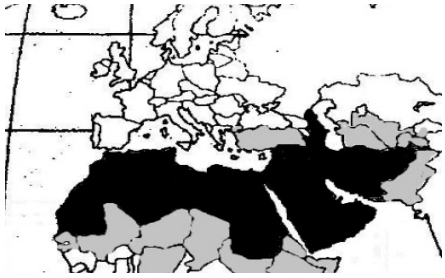

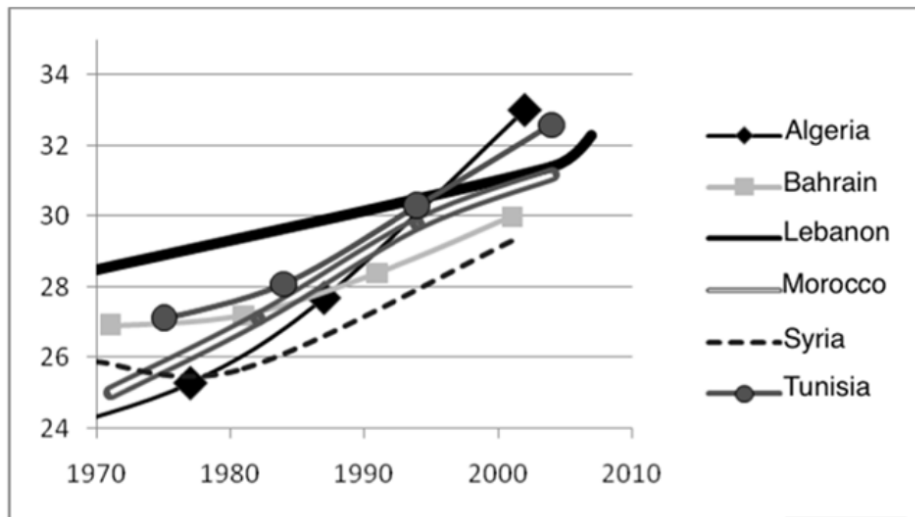
Traditional zone of prevalence of parallel cousin marriage	Umayyad Caliphate (750)
	

Fig. 2. Dynamics of the average age at first marriage (years) among men in some Arab countries on the eve of the “Arab Spring”



Source: UN Population Division 2020.

One of the main reasons for the widespread increase in the lower limit of the age of marriage is that young people are increasingly unable to get engaged due to financial difficulties. Over the past decades, weddings in Islamic countries have become especially expensive for both the groom and the bride and her family. The groom must pay *mahr*⁸ and undertake obligations to provide full financial support for his wife and children, while the size of both the official mahr and the unofficial

⁸ The term *mahr* itself in Muslim family law is used to refer to the property allocated by the husband to the wife upon entering into an equal marriage (*zawaj*). Payment of *mahr* is the main condition of such a marriage and is considered as payment to the wife for the marriage relationship. In this context, makhrom can be absolutely anything that has any value and to which property rights can be extended (see, for example: Bogolyubov 1991: 164).

kalym (the groom's payment for the bride to her parents) has grown enormously in recent decades (Toros, 1975: 3).

One of the main reasons for the widespread increase in the lower limit of the age of marriage is that young people are increasingly unable to get engaged due to financial difficulties. Over the past decades, weddings in Islamic countries have become especially expensive for both the groom and the bride and her family. The groom must pay *mahr* and undertake obligations to provide full financial support for his wife and children, while the size of both the official *mahr* and the unofficial *kalym* (the groom's payment for the bride to her parents) has grown enormously in recent decades (Toros, 1975: 3).

Modernization in the countries of the Middle East contributed to this process in a variety of ways, including quite unexpected ones. Thus, the increase in the cost of first marriage for men, and therefore the increasing postponement of marriage, was paradoxically facilitated by the rapid increase in women's enrollment in higher education observed in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa in recent decades. And the point here is largely that the rapid increase in women's enrollment in higher education was not accompanied by any comparable increase in female employment. While the share of college-aged women receiving higher education has almost doubled in the Middle East and North Africa over the past 15 years, the share of economically active women in the total number of working-age women has increased by only a fraction of a percent. At the same time, in many countries of the region, the share of women of student age receiving higher education is now several times higher than the share of economically active women in the total number of women of working age.

It is worth noting that the number of economically active women includes not only working women, but also women actively seeking work, which means that in many countries of the Middle East and North Africa, the majority of women who have completed higher education not only do not work, but also do not looking for work. But obtaining a higher education creates a heightened understanding among

both the bride and her parents of what constitutes a decent level of support for her husband, which further raises the financial and economic bar for a potential groom and increasingly delays his marriage.

Thus, for a wedding to take place, an increasingly significant amount of money is needed, and the man responsible for paying most of this amount must work hard to earn it. Many young people, after concluding an engagement agreement, go to work in one of the oil-producing Arab countries for several years in order to save money. On average, until the age of 30, an ordinary Muslim Arab cannot afford to get married, since he must first find a job with a salary sufficient to support his wife and children, purchase a car, build a house or buy an apartment, furniture, and, finally, have the amount to payment of mahr for the bride and an expensive wedding gift for her (Shmeleva 2003: 67–71).

In this regard, it is extremely relevant that unmarried men are significantly more prone to radicalism and extremist political actions (including outright terrorism) than married men of the same age, which was shown using direct empirical data for Egypt (see Marks 2011a: 9–17). Thus, the significant increase in the average age of marriage among men observed in recent decades in most Arab countries can be considered a significant factor of socio-political destabilization in this part of the globe.

“Increasing the age of marriage is becoming a source of frustration... Marriage has remained one of the top goals of young people in the Arab world, and although the current generation of youth has invested more time, energy and money in education than previous ones, access to marriage has become more difficult as it now takes significantly longer to meet the economic demands of marriage... There are several studies that confirm that violence and social dislocation are higher among (young) unmarried men (Courtwright 1998; Daly, Wilson 1990; Sampson, Laub, Wimer 2006). Miriam Marks even found direct empirical evidence that unmarried men in Egypt are more willing to engage in high-risk political activity than married men (Marks 2011a)... There is ample evidence to add changes in marriage rates to

the list of the most important factors in the genesis of the Arab Spring, since the changes in marriage rates discussed above cause frustration, psychological problems and conflicts within Arab society. All this inclines people to protests and riots. Moreover, the increase in the number of unmarried men... increases the number of those who are willing to take part in high-risk political actions” (Puschmann, Matthijs 2012: 39).

It should be noted that the widespread attitude in the countries of Arab-Muslim civilization that the groom, upon entering into marriage, must undertake obligations to provide full financial support for his wife and children, also correlates with the postponement of marriage by men (until they achieve the appropriate level of economic well-being) , and with the growth of political violence (due to the action of the mechanisms described above, especially against the background of the effective ban on premarital sexual relations, which is so characteristic of the countries of the Arab-Muslim civilization). This, by the way, apparently explains the above-mentioned, long-discovered (Robinson et al. 2006) statistically significant correlation between the low level of economic activity of women/women's employment and the high level of terrorist activity.

3. “Arab Spring” as a trigger of the grows of global protests activity

Selected article: Akaev A., Korotayev A., Issaev L., Zinkina J. V. Technological development and protest waves: Arab spring as a trigger of the global phase transition? // *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*. 2017. Vol. 116. P. 316-321.

In 2011, the entire planet was swept by an unusually powerful wave of protest. The bulk of the 2011 protests took place in the Middle East and North Africa, particularly in Arab countries. Despite the fact that protests began in Algeria earlier than in Tunisia, the description of the “Arab Spring” usually begins on December 17, 2010, when a young unemployed M. Bouazizi committed self-immolation in the provincial Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzid. This event launched a growing wave of

protests in Tunisia, which ended with the unexpectedly rapid collapse of the Z. Ben Ali regime as a result of the emergence of intra-elite conflict between the unprivileged army and the privileged security forces, which were under the special tutelage of the president (see, for example: Nepstad 2011). As a result, the army sided with the protesters, which led to the rapid fall of the authoritarian regime in Tunisia. This surprisingly rapid (and rather bloodless) fall of the authoritarian regime of Z. Ben Ali prompted secular leaders of youth movements in Egypt and some other Arab states to try to organize (through the widespread use of social networks) large-scale protests in their countries.

As a result of significant internal tension in Egypt (see: Grinin, Issaev, Korotayev 2015), the protests led to the fall of the regime of H. Mubarak. All this raised a wave of destabilization throughout the Arab world (signs of which, however, were noticeable immediately after the rapid victory of the Tunisian revolution). The scale of destabilization in specific countries depended primarily on the extent to which conditions corresponding to it were present there, such as internal conflict among the elite, an inconsistently authoritarian regime, the presence of unprivileged categories of the population (with the exception of labor migrants), high unemployment among young people (especially young people with higher education), etc. (see, for example: Vasiliev 2011; Beck 2014; Lang, Sterck 2014; Beissinger et al. 2015). In some cases (especially Libya and Syria), external destabilizing influences played an important role.

Nevertheless, the rest of the world also experienced a non-trivial surge of sociopolitical destabilization under the influence of the “Arab Spring”; here one can, for example, recall the numerous “Occupy...” movements, from “Occupy Wall Street” to “Occupy Abai”. In order to better imagine the entire global scale of the “Occupy...” protest movement in 2011–2012, we can recall that protests of this type were observed in the USA (New York, Detroit, Harvard University, etc.), Great Britain (London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, etc.), Germany (Berlin and some other large cities), Norway (Oslo), in numerous cities in Canada, Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur),

Australia (Melbourne and Sydney), New Zealand (Auckland and other cities), Nepal (Kathmandu), Cyprus, Ghana (Accra), Nigeria (Kano, Lagos, Abuja), Iceland (Reykjavik), South Africa (Johannesburg and Cape Town), Japan, Russia, etc. Also The global protests of October 15, 2011, in which representatives of dozens of countries around the world took part, should also be mentioned. In addition to the above-mentioned “Occupy...” protests, one can recall major protests in 2011 in Spain, Portugal, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Mexico, Bolivia, Chile, Burkina -Faso, Malawi, China, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Iran, etc. (see: Breau 2014; Danjibo 2013; Erdogan 2013; Kerton 2012; Mushtaq 2014).

The wave of protests continued in 2012. Already in February, during the protracted political crisis, the President of the Maldives M. Nasheed resigned. At the same time, resistance began in Syrian Kurdistan, associated with the formation of the Kurdish Supreme Council, which became the de facto government of this region. Anti-government demonstrations in Romania also began in 2012 and continued until 2015. Serious destabilization processes also affected some African countries, such as the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali, where the Tuareg uprising broke out in January 2012, which was a direct consequence of the Libyan crisis, during which the rebels took control of the entire northern part of the country (see: Besenyo 2013; Kumar 2016; Weyns et al. 2014).

2013–2014 were characterized by another wave of anti-government protests (see: Korotayev, Issaev, Zinkina 2015). Among them, first of all, one should highlight a powerful wave of anti-government protests in Egypt (which ended with a military coup there that cost the legally elected M. Moursi the presidency), protests around Taksim Gezi Park in Istanbul, Ankara, protests in Tunisia against the government controlled by the moderate Islamist movement “al-Nahda”, Euromaidan in Ukraine against President Viktor Yanukovich and the Party of Regions, which was highly influenced by anti-government demonstrations in Arab countries in 2011 (see: Lifintseva, Issaev, Shishkina 2015). Another state in the post-Soviet space

affected by protests was Abkhazia. In less than a week, protesters in Sukhumi managed to achieve the dissolution of the Cabinet of Ministers and the resignation of President A. Ankvab. Protests also affected the capitals of Venezuela, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Thailand (see Krastev 2014; Nguyen et al. 2014; Sagarzazu 2014). Another striking echo of the “Arab Spring” is considered to be the so-called “umbrella revolution” in Hong Kong at the end of 2014 – beginning of 2015, directed against the electoral reform initiated by the Chinese government.

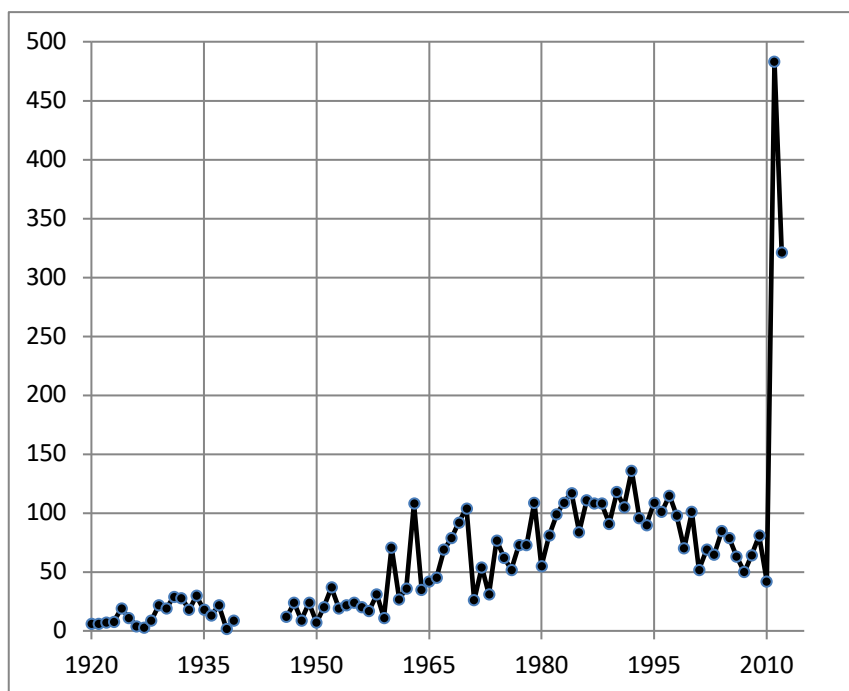
Instability also increased in sub-Saharan Africa (see Ortmann 2015). At the same time, the events of the “Arab Spring”, which led to increased political instability in the Middle East and North Africa region, provoked an exacerbation of pre-existing conflicts. An example of this is the political crisis in one of the youngest states in the world - South Sudan - in 2013, which subsequently resulted in a full-fledged civil war between two ethnic groups: the Nuer and the Dinka (see: Koos, Gutschke 2014).

The situation has also noticeably worsened in some countries affected by the events of the “Arab Spring”. Thus, in 2014, a civil conflict broke out again in Libya, which ultimately led to the breakdown of the process of national reconciliation and the establishment of a de facto triarchy (see: Turinskaya 2015). Another political crisis in 2014 occurred in Yemen, where the country’s traditional problems of north and south were again actualized (Serebrov 2015), and the Houthi revolution of September 2014 took place according to the “offensive from the periphery” model. As a result, in September 2014, the Ansar Allah movement seized power in Sanaa, which led in 2015 to the flight of President M. Hadi from the country to Riyadh and the start of military intervention by a coalition led by Saudi Arabia.

Finally, a consequence of the “Arab Spring” was the emergence of the “Islamic State” (ISIS) on the territory of Syria and Iraq, the formation of which was the result of a number of socio-economic and ethno-confessional problems that were on the agenda of the above-mentioned countries of the Middle East against the backdrop of a sharp weakening of Syrian statehood (see: Weiss, Hassan 2016). However, the

activities of ISIS are far from being limited to the territories of Syria and Iraq - terrorist groups have sworn allegiance to it both in the Arab world (Libya, Yemen, Tunisia, Algeria, Jordan) and beyond (Nigeria, Mali, Russia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Philippines) (see, for example: Jalalzai 2015; Lefevre 2014).

Fig. 3. Dynamics of the total number of large anti-government demonstrations recorded in the world per year in the CNTS database, (1920–2012).

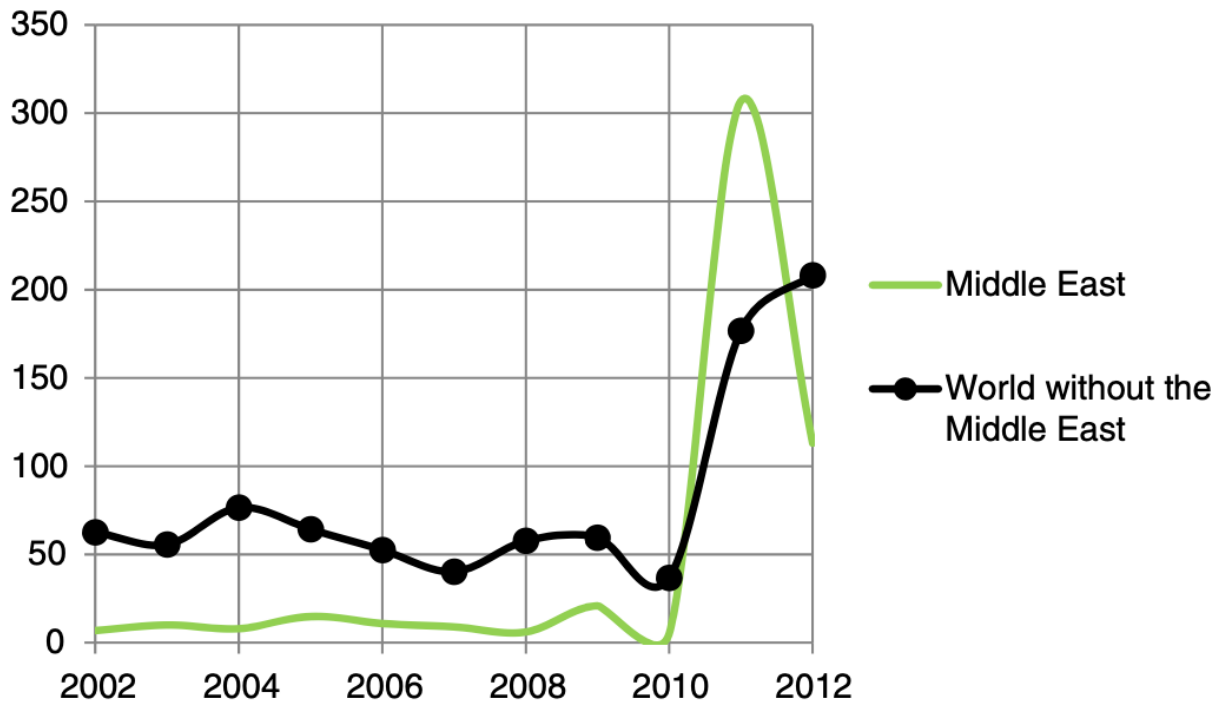


Source: CNTS 2015.

However, it is impossible to assess the true scale of the unusual events of the “Arab Spring” and its global “echo” without the use of quantitative empirical data. The following graph can help understand the global scale of these events (see Fig. 3).

At the same time, most of the truly unusual surge in protest activity in 2011 came from the Near and Middle East (and especially Arab countries), but in the rest of the world (under the direct influence of the “Arab Spring”) there was a non-trivial rise in protest activity (see Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. Dynamics of the total number of large anti-government demonstrations recorded in the Near and Middle East and the rest of the world per year in the CNTS, (1920–2012)



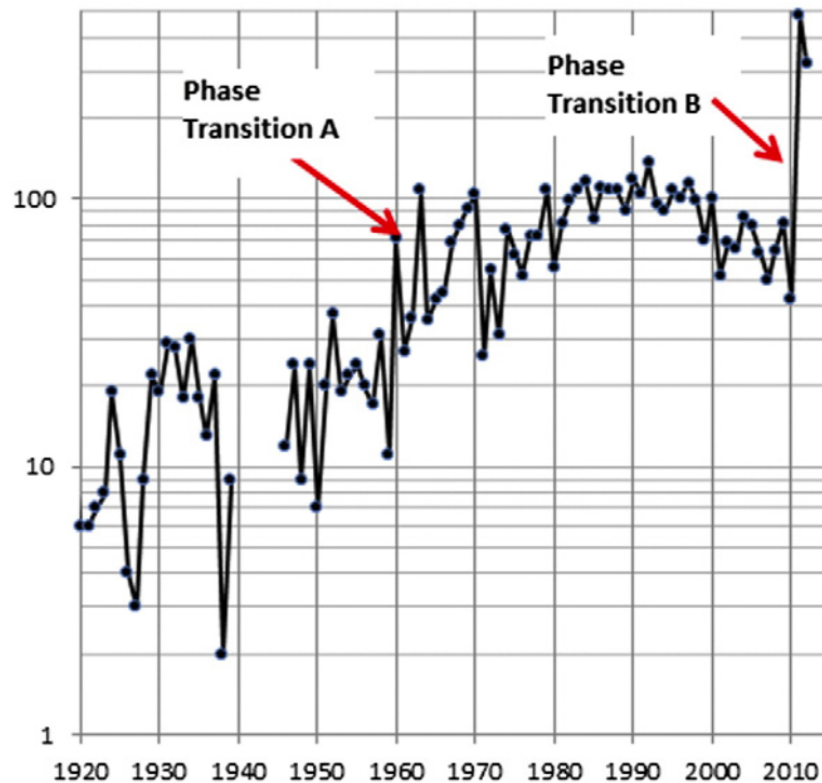
Source: CNTS 2015.

As we see, in the Near and Middle East in 2011 there was an incredible (by two orders of magnitude) increase in the level of protest activity, but in the rest of the world this increase was also observed in 2011–2012. although not so large-scale, it was also non-trivial - the level of protest activity there jumped almost by an order of magnitude.

Thus, there is reason to believe that in 2011–2012. The world-system has experienced, in some respects, a transition to a qualitatively new state (let us denote it as Transition B). Moreover, this phase transition is somewhat reminiscent of a similar transition in the early 1960s. (let's denote it as Transition A).

In Fig. 3, transition A is overwhelmed by the scale of transition B, so it makes sense to present this graph on a logarithmic scale (see Fig. 5).

Fig. 5. Dynamics of the total number of large anti-government demonstrations recorded in the world per year in the CNTS, (1920–2012), logarithmic scale



The first (after 1919) Transition A occurred in the early 1960s, and was associated with the growth of global information connectivity that occurred after the Second World War and the improvement of means of protest self-organization, due to the spread of television, portable transistor radios, megaphones and other technologies. Thus, the post-war period and, in particular, the 1950s, were marked by a number of significant transformations in the sphere of production, distribution and perception of information. This period marked the development of the personal computer industry: the bipolar transistor was invented in 1947, and by 1955, transistors replaced vacuum tubes in computer designs, marking the advent of the “second generation” of computers. Transistors had a number of advantages over vacuum tubes: they were smaller, required less power, generated less heat, were more reliable and had a longer lifespan (see, for example, Lavington 1998).

Important changes also affected radio broadcasting. In 1954, Regency introduced a pocket-sized transistor radio, the TR-1, powered by a standard battery,

and in 1955, the upstart Sony introduced its first transistor radio-rugged and small enough to fit in a pocket (Transistor Radios 1999). Professor of the School of Journalism and Media Studies N. Arceneaux, reflecting on the communicativeness of portable communications, highlights the concept of interaction between people and the concept of inclusion, involvement. He believes that the concept of customization can be applied to transistor receivers, which means the device can be personalized and modified according to the user's wishes.

Regarding the connection between mobile equipment and communications infrastructure, in the case of portable radios, this was reflected in their ability to receive signals from remote towers and thus connect users in different geographically distant locations (Arceneaux 2014). In addition, radios of the previous configuration were mostly stationary objects located in residential premises or public places, where their use could not go unnoticed. Portable devices, allowing any user to listen to what he wants, looked like a rebellion against government officials accustomed to controlling traditional channels of information, an escape from their control and a denial of their dominant role in these processes.

And although global information connectivity grew throughout the 1950s, the growth of protest activity did not occur smoothly, but abruptly at the very beginning of the 1960s. If before Transition A the CNTS recorded 20-30 large anti-government demonstrations per year, then in the early 1960s. this level jumps to a hundred. Then in 1964–1966. (but especially after the peak of the late 1960s - in 1971–1973) a noticeable decline follows; however, by the 1980s. the level of global protest activity that in the early 1960s. seemed abnormal, is already becoming quite normal.

In the last 20 years before the Arab Spring, there was a pronounced downward trend in global protest activity, and in 2010 it was the lowest since the mid-1970s. But even in 2010 it was higher than anything recorded in the CNTS before 1960.

Transition B was prepared by a new wave of growth in global information connectivity and improvement in the means of protest self-organization, caused by

the spread of communication technologies (Internet, satellite television, Twitter, mobile telephony, social networks, etc.). And again, although the spread of these technologies continued for many years until 2011, their enormous potential for generating and disseminating protest activity was realized spasmodically.

4. Center-periphery dissonance as a factor of socio-political destabilization

Selected article: Issaev L., Korotayev A., Zinkina J. V. Center-Periphery Dissonance as a Possible Factor of the Revolutionary Wave of 2013-2014: a Cross-Cultural Analysis // *Cross-Cultural Research*. 2015. No. 4. P. 461-488.

In 2013–2014 The world was faced with a new, rather weak (but at the same time peculiar) revolutionary wave. A wave of protests in Cairo, Kyiv and Bangkok led to the fall of the regimes (in the first and third cases with the direct participation of the military); waves of protests in Tunisia, Caracas, Istanbul-Ankara and Sarajevo posed a serious challenge to the respective regimes, but did not lead to their actual overthrow. Destabilization wave 2013–2014 represents a striking contrast with the countries of the Arab Spring, since all anti-regime protests here were directed against democratically elected authorities. Indeed, almost all attempts (sometimes successful) to overthrow regimes during the Arab Spring were directed against authoritarian authorities, and at the same time, in the few unconsolidated Arab democracies (Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority and Iraq), crowds of people took to the streets under the slogan “*ash-shab yurid isqat an-nizam!*” (“The people want to bring down the regime!”), there was practically none.

At the same time, one cannot help but note a certain logical connection between these two waves. Indeed, the first wave brought down most of the unstable authoritarian regimes that existed in the world at that time, leaving in their place, in some cases, unstable, unconsolidated democracies, and adding “combustible material” to the new destabilizing wave, which already affected unconsolidated democracies.

In addition, it should be noted that another common characteristic of the events of the revolutionary wave of 2013–2014. is that they all belong to the type of “central collapse”. Goldstone identifies two main types of revolutionary destabilization. First, “attack from the periphery.” This type of revolutionary destabilization is described as follows. “In the event of an offensive from the periphery, the decomposition of the old regime is not initially at the most advanced phase. However, a group of elites bent on overthrowing the government is able to gain a foothold in one part of the country, usually in a mountainous or wooded area far from the capital. This peripheral resistance base may remain small and insignificant for several years. But if the regime becomes more unstable - weakening economically, experiencing military setbacks, losing support among more and more groups of people and the loyalty of more and more elites - the opposition core can begin to grow and strengthen as the number of those who support it grows and the number of those who supports the existing regime...” (Goldstone, 2014: 28).

However, by the events of the revolutionary wave of 2013-2014. The second type (“central collapse”) is most directly related. A central collapse “can be triggered by a rapid economic decline, a price hike, a military defeat, electoral fraud, or some government action that meets mass resistance. Whatever the initial impulse, it is quickly followed by a mass demonstration in the capital city. The government is trying to disperse the demonstration, but this is proving unexpectedly difficult; The first attempts at dispersal are followed by increasingly large-scale demonstrations. The police force is unable to cope with the urban unrest, and the government is faced with a situation where it is forced to bring in the army to quell the unrest. However, the army refuses to take decisive action to clear the streets of protesters; key military units take a neutral position, and some even go over to the opposition. The inaction of the army serves as a signal to the ruler, the elites and the population that the regime is truly defenseless. Crowds take over the capital; Similar mass demonstrations are spreading across other cities and regions of the country. All this develops over the course of a few weeks (maximum - several months). The ruler may then flee the

country or be captured, while elites, supported by crowds or the military, seize government buildings and create a provisional government” (Goldstone, 2014: 27). Here we will consider only the type of “central collapse”, taking the “attack from the periphery” scenario out of the equation.

Goldstone's considerations can be formulated in the form of the following hypothesis that is amenable to formal empirical quantitative testing. In 2013–2014 a strong predictor of socio-political destabilization under the “central collapse” scenario is a combination of an average level of GDP per capita with a high level of corruption and a political regime intermediate between consistent authoritarianism and consolidated democracy. This hypothesis can be presented as follows. In 2013–2014 among countries with a GDP equal to or higher than that of Egypt and/or equal to or lower than that of Venezuela, and with a level of corruption equal to or higher than that of Bosnia, in countries indexed by Freedom House as “partly free”, one should expect revolutionary destabilization according to the “central collapse” model with a significantly higher frequency than in countries indexed by Freedom House as either “free” or “not free”. Let us conduct a formal test of this hypothesis (see Table 1).

Table 1. Unconsolidated democracy as a predictor of the level of socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model in highly corrupt moderately developed countries in 2013-2014.

		Index of the level of socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model				Total
		0	0,25	0,5	1	
Freedom House (dichotomized)	0 (other meanings ≈ consistently authoritarian and consolidated democratic regimes)	12 <i>Algeria, Azerbaijan, China, Salvador, Guyana, Iran, Jamaica, Serbia, South Africa, Surinam, Tonga, Turkmanistan</i>	3 <i>Brazil, Iraq, Peru</i>			15
		80%	20%			100%
		5	2	4	3	14

	1 (partly free ≈ unconsolidated / partial democracies)	Albania, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Maldives, Paraguay	Columbia, Libya	Bosnia, Tunisia, Turkey, Venezuela	Egypt, Thailand, Ukraine	
		35,7%	14,3%	28,6%	21,4%	100%
Total		17	5	3	3	29
		60,7%	17,9%	10,7%	10,7%	100%

As we can see, in recent years, the presence of an unconsolidated democratic regime turns out to be a good predictor of socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model (see Fig. 6 and 7).

Fig. 6. Risks of socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model in 2013–2014. in highly corrupt, moderately developed countries with consistently authoritarian or consolidated democratic regimes.

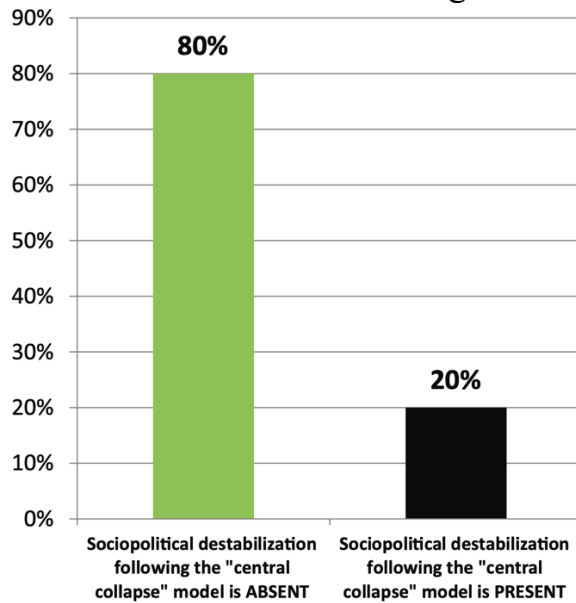
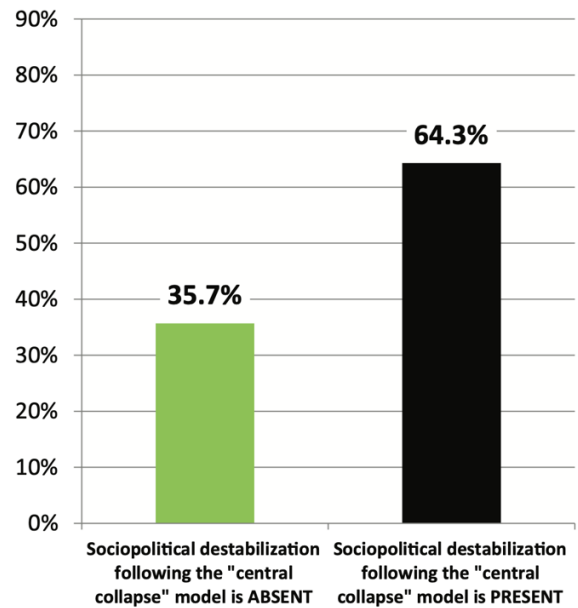


Fig. 7. Risks of socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model in 2013–2014. in highly corrupt, moderately developed countries with partial democracies.



As we see, in highly corrupt, moderately developed societies of recent times, both consistent authoritarianism and consolidated democracy are powerful factors suppressing socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model. This kind of destabilization was observed only in a small minority of highly corrupt, moderately developed societies with a Freedom House rating other than “partly free” (and in all cases it was about the most minimal destabilization). At the same time, socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model was observed in the vast majority of highly corrupt, moderately developed societies with

a “partly free” rating. Moreover, in most cases the talk here was about fairly large-scale destabilization - up to the fall of the regimes.

It is worth noting that for the table. 1 the correlation between the two variables is not very high (with Spearman's rank correlation coefficient between 0.50 and 0.53). In addition, it turns out that for the destabilization wave of 2013–2014. One more common denominator can be found.

As is known, modernization processes, which in the modern world are highly correlated with Westernization processes (Huntington, 2003), in any large country proceed unevenly in different parts of them. Moreover, in the capitals they usually go faster than in the periphery, as a result of which the mood of the population of the capitals can quite naturally begin to differ significantly from the mood of the periphery. To put it extremely simply, in the capitals of modernizing systems, more “liberal” / “Westernized” (in Islamic countries – more “secularist”) sentiments usually prevail, and in the periphery – more “conservative” / less “Westernized” (in Islamic countries – more “Islamist” ”).

In such a situation, the establishment of democracy in such countries systematically leads to a situation where, during democratic elections, a party comes to power that enjoys the support of the majority of the country, but does not enjoy the support of the majority of the population of the capitals.

Thus, we can identify another predictor of socio-political destabilization for highly corrupt, moderately developed societies, which we called “center-peripheral dissonance.” In general, the thesis about center-peripheral dissonance can be formulated in the form of the following hypothesis that is amenable to formal empirical quantitative testing. In 2013–2014 a strong predictor of socio-political destabilization under the “central collapse” scenario was the combination of an average level of GDP per capita with a high level of corruption and a noticeable level of center-periphery dissonance. This hypothesis can be further presented as follows. In 2013–2014 among countries with a GDP equal to or higher than that of

Egypt and/or equal to or lower than that of Venezuela, and with a level of corruption equal to or higher than that of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in countries with a higher value of the center-periphery index dissonance, one should expect revolutionary destabilization according to the “central collapse” model with a significantly higher frequency than in countries with a lower value of this index.

To test this hypothesis, the following index of center-peripheral dissonance was used:

1 – the level of support for the regime in the center (“capitals”) is significantly lower than in the country as a whole;

0,5 – intermediate value;

0 – the level of support for the regime in the center (“capitals”) is the same or higher than in the country as a whole.

Let us now conduct a formal test of the formulated hypothesis (see Table 2).

Table. 2. Center-peripheral dissonance as a predictor of the level of socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model in highly corrupt moderately developed countries in 2013–2014.

		Index of the level of socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model				Total
		0	0,25	0,5	1	
Center-peripheral dissonance index	0 (the level of support for the regime in the center ["capitals"] is the same or higher than in the country as a whole)	13	2			15
		<i>Albania, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Algeria, Azerbaijan, China, Salvador, Guyana, Iran, Serbia, Surinam, Tonga, Turkmenistan</i>	<i>Libya, Iraq</i>			
		86,7%	13,3%			100%
	0,5 (intermediate value)	2	1	2		5
		<i>Jamaica, South Africa</i>	<i>Brazil</i>	<i>Turkey</i>		
		40%	20%	40%		100%
1 (the level of support for the regime in the center ["capitals"] is significantly lower)	1	2	2	3	8	
	<i>Ecuador</i>	<i>Columbia</i>	<i>Bosnia, Tunisia</i>	<i>Egypt, Thailand, Ukraine</i>		

	than in the country as a whole)	12,5%	25%	25%	37,5%	100%
Total		16	5	4	3	28
		57,1%	17,9%	14,3%	10,7%	100,0%

As we see, in recent years, the presence of center-peripheral dissonance turns out to be an even noticeably stronger predictor of socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model than the presence of an unconsolidated democratic regime. Thus, the correlation coefficient (0.72) for center-periphery dissonance turns out to be noticeably higher than for unconsolidated democracy (0.50-0.53). This is quite clearly visible when using dichotomized variants of indices (see Fig. 8 and 9).

Fig. 8. Risks of socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model in 2013–2014. in highly corrupt, moderately developed countries with no center-periphery dissonance

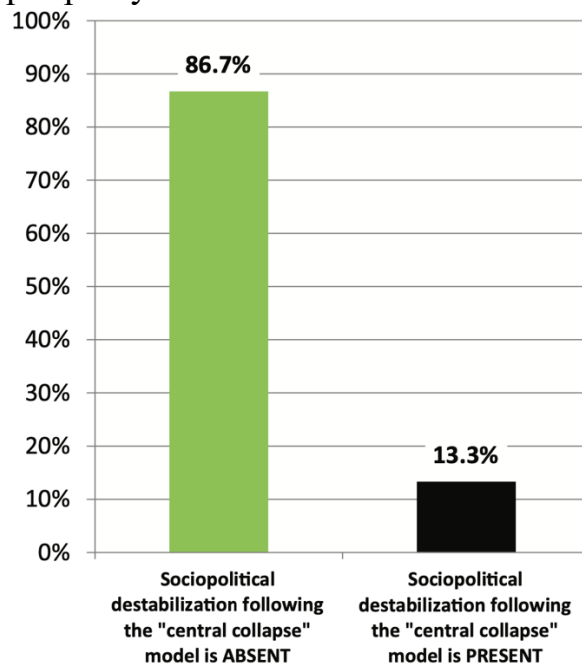
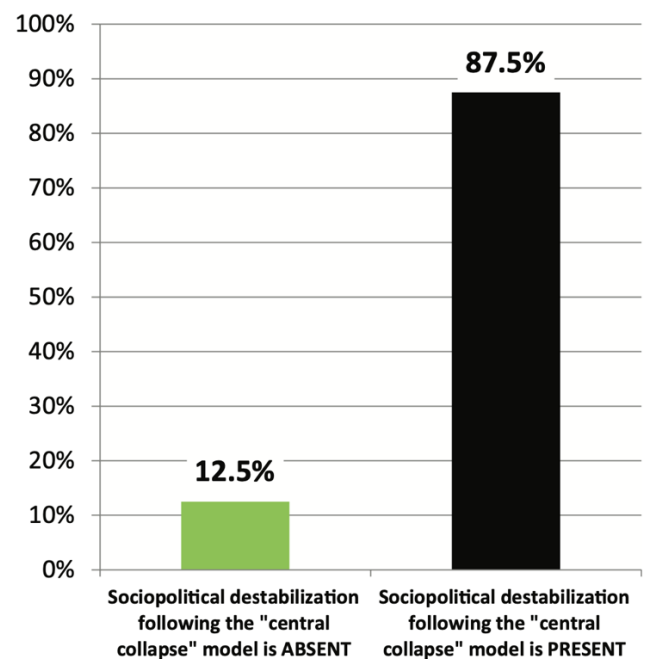


Fig. 9. Risks of socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse” model in 2013–2014. in highly corrupt moderately developed countries with the presence of center-peripheral dissonance



Let us recall that in 2013 – the first half of 2014. the presence of unconsolidated democracy in highly corrupt moderately developed countries was an indicator of a 64 percent risk of socio-political destabilization according to the “central collapse”

model. But in the presence of center-peripheral dissonance, we were talking about a risk of more than 87%.

Thus, it was possible to identify another important factor in the destabilization wave of 2013–2014. according to the “central collapse” model. We are talking about a factor that we designate as “center-peripheral dissonance.” Let us emphasize once again that the appearance of this factor is not at all accidental, but rather even inevitable in the process of modernization, and is associated with the natural heterogeneity and asynchrony of modernization processes, when the central elements (“capitals”) of the system are almost always modernized faster than its periphery.

It is worth emphasizing that the potentially destabilizing role of this factor can be very strong and dangerous. Events of the 2010s showed that this factor is capable of destabilizing society even in the context of the completion of the demographic transition, when such a traditionally important factor of political destabilization as the “youth bulges” disappears (see: Korotayev, Zinkina 2011). At the same time, there are certain grounds to assert that center-peripheral dissonance can be a factor not only in relatively bloodless “central collapses”, but also in bloody civil wars. If the “central collapse” occurs under the influence of center-periphery dissonance, this by definition means that at least a significant part of the politically active population of the periphery (if not even the majority) considers the forces that seized power in the capital by force illegitimate, and themselves - the right to use violence to overthrow these forces.

5. Intra-elite split as a factor of socio-political destabilization

Selected article: Shishkina A., Issaev L., Korotayev A. Egyptian coup of 2013: an ‘econometric’ analysis // *Journal of North African Studies*. 2016. Vol. 21. No. 3. P. 341-356.

An analysis of the Egyptian revolution of 2011 showed that it was able to achieve an unexpectedly easy victory largely due to the following two circumstances. Firstly,

the strongest intra-elite conflict. We are talking primarily about the conflict between the military (“old guard”) and the economic elite (“young guard”) - a group of leading Egyptian businessmen led by G. Mubarak. The army elite controlled (and controls) not only the armed forces of Egypt, but also a significant part of the Egyptian economy. We are talking not only about military enterprises, but also about large tracts of land, real estate, factories and factories that produce both defense products and other industrial sectors. Estimates of the share of the Egyptian economy controlled by the military have been estimated by various analysts to range from 10 to 40% (Marshall and Stacher, 2012). This group of the Egyptian elite was very frightened by the rise of the “young guard” of leading Egyptian businessmen under the leadership of G. Mubarak. After all, the “young guard” controlled the economic bloc of the Egyptian government, which, starting in 2004, carried out effective reforms that led to a noticeable acceleration in the growth rate of the Egyptian economy. In July 2004, A. Nazif was appointed to the post of Prime Minister of Egypt, who gathered around him a competent team of economists close to G. Mubarak, most of them educated in the West. Thus, the post of Minister of Finance went to Y. Butrus-Gali, the post of Minister of Foreign Trade and Industry - R.M. Rashid, who graduated from Harvard Business School, was given the portfolio of Minister of Investment by the former special representative of the President to the World Bank, M. Mohi ad-Din. Thus, the financial and economic bloc of the government gradually passed into the hands of the “young guard,” which could not but worry the military.

“Over the past few decades,” writes American sociologist Nepstad, “the Egyptian military has not spent all its time solely on ensuring national security; they also acquired valuable real estate and numerous businesses. By some estimates, the military controls 40% of the Egyptian economy. Before the events of 2011, Egyptian generals expressed their concern about President Mubarak's plan to appoint Gamal as his successor. Many were convinced that if Gamal became president, he would begin to implement a policy of privatization that would lead to the dismantling of

the economic empire of the Egyptian military" (Nepstad, 2011). Indeed, there was every reason to expect that leading Egyptian businessmen from Mubarak's entourage, if he came to power, would begin to redistribute military property, justifying this by the ineffectiveness of its use.

Such a development of events became even more likely, given the outright dominance of the "young guard" in the Egyptian parliament and the National Democratic Party (NDP), where the key post of head of the political committee since 2002 was retained by G. Mubarak. It is not surprising that as soon as the military had the opportunity to deal with G. Mubarak's entourage at the beginning of 2011, they took advantage of it.

The Egyptian intra-elite conflict allows us to understand many of the circumstances of the Egyptian revolution. For example, throughout the revolution, the army quite effectively guarded all important government facilities, harshly suppressing all attempts by protesters to seize them. However, already in the very first days of the revolutionary events (January 28–29, 2011), the military allowed opposition demonstrators to destroy the headquarters of the ruling National Democratic Party (Issaev, Shishkina, 2012).

The second circumstance that ensured the unexpectedly rapid success of the protesters in 2011 was the creation of a broad opposition bloc, in which secularists with both left-wing and liberal views and Islamists united and began to act in a completely coordinated manner. At the same time, Islamists played a key role in the success of the Egyptian revolution.

After the start date for the demonstrations was chosen, only two Egyptian political parties confirmed their participation in the demonstrations: Al-Gadd and the Democratic Front. However, the main question was whether the Muslim Brotherhood would take part in the planned protests. Since this association was the most experienced, organized and numerous opposition force in Egypt, its decision to participate in the demonstrations was in many ways fateful. Commenting on the

possible participation of the Muslim Brotherhood in the protests scheduled for January 25, Kifaya and National Association for Change member K. Al-Hifnawi called it “an undeniably positive aspect” and noted that even if the Muslim Brotherhood usually participates in protests not as a group, but individually, this serves as a catalyst for the participation of other opposition groups (Fahmy, 2011).

On January 20, 2011, a speech by one of the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, E. Al-Iryani, appeared on the ad-Dustour website, saying that the association would not take part in the demonstrations. The Muslim Brotherhood argued its position primarily by the fact that the initiative to bring people to the streets, which came from the Facebook network, was addressed not to political parties and movements, but directly to the people (Issaev, Shishkina, 2012). In this regard, the Muslim Brotherhood decided not to participate in protests as an organized group, but this position of the association’s leadership in no way prohibited its members from participating in demonstrations individually, which, in fact, happened.

However, the alliance between secularists and Islamists ended as soon as the common enemy in the person of H. Mubarak was defeated. Already at the referendum on voting for the country's Interim Constitutional Declaration in March 2011, Islamists and liberals went as opponents, taking irreconcilable positions towards each other. And, if the Muslim Brotherhood called for approval of the document put up for referendum, then all potential secular presidential candidates (M. El-Baradei, A. Moussa, H. Bastawisi, H. Sabahi) voted against the amendments to the constitution.

The distribution of forces observed in the run-up to the 2013 coup in January 2011 was completely opposite. The revolution followed by a counter-revolution led to the deepest split among the January (2011) opposition macrobloc. At the same time, it leads to a split in several directions at once. Within this macro-bloc, even the Islamist bloc turned out to be split, because the initiators of the coup, represented by the military, were supported by the second most powerful Islamist party - the Islamist-Salafi party Hizb al-Nur, as well as a number of prominent Islamists.

The fall of the Muslim Brotherhood was quite natural. Already in the first months of their reign, they came face to face with the need to implement an extremely unpopular policy to overcome the socio-economic crisis in the country. A signal of the political consequences this could lead to was the referendum vote in December 2012, when support for the Islamist-proposed constitution was not as clear as in the March 2011 vote on an interim constitutional declaration or in the parliamentary elections in December 2011 – January 2012. The Muslim Brotherhood refused to compromise with other political forces in Egypt and enter into coalitions with them. This can largely be explained by the fact that the movement has never had experience not only of governing the state, but also of participating in the legal political process. During the year of their reign, the Muslim Brothers turned almost all the main political forces of Egypt against themselves, which predetermined their downfall.

After the victory of the Muslim Brotherhood in the parliamentary elections of 2011–2012, and M. Moursi in the presidential elections, the dissolution of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces and the removal from office of the Minister of Defense M. Tantawi and the Chief of the General Staff S. Adnan, with subsequent personnel changes in the ranks of the military, the situation became threatening for the Egyptian generals. By 2013, the Egyptian army, along with the surviving supporters of G. Mubarak, realized the need for a joint confrontation with the Muslim Brotherhood.

Thus, the Egyptian economic elite made peace with the military, and in June 2013 they acted as a united, well-coordinated front, ensuring such a rapid overthrow of the Muslim Brotherhood. The economic elite realized that continuing any serious attempts to seize the property of the military carried even greater costs than recognizing their dominant position in the ruling bloc, as well as the integrity of their economic resources.

6. Role of regional actors in socio-political destabilization processes in “afrasian” instability macrozone

Selected article: Исаев Л. М. ЛАГ и Ближневосточный кризис // *Азия и Африка сегодня*. 2013. № 5. С. 33-36; Исаев Л. М. Арабская весна и Лига арабских государств: между Багдадом и Каиром // *Восток. Афро-азиатские общества: история и современность*. 2013. № 3. С. 55-63.

The growth of global protest activity in the 2010s, the epicenter of which was the “afrasian” macrozone of instability, led to a split between regional actors in the Middle East and North Africa. There has been an Arab-Israeli conflict in the region for quite some time, as well as antagonism between Shiite Iran, which supports political parties and movements in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine, and the Sunni monarchies in the Persian Gulf led by Saudi Arabia. But due to the events of the Arab Spring, this antagonism turned into an open split. As a result, the emerging confrontation between regional actors acted as one of the factors of socio-political destabilization in the region.

In the Near and Middle East, there has been a change in the balance of power, weight and influence of local players. Due to the economic losses of the revolutions and unresolved problems, Egypt temporarily lost its leadership position in the region, dependent on financial assistance from the Gulf countries. Saudi Arabia has moved to the Arab stage. Most of the Persian Gulf countries, Egypt, and Jordan became its allies.

Saudi Arabia and its allies are being challenged by a new alliance: Turkey-Qatar-Muslim Brotherhood. This was cooperation with the most economically developed and with the most powerful armed forces in the region of a non-Arab country, where a party close in ideology to the Muslim Brotherhood was in power. The second component of the alliance was the state of Qatar with enormous financial resources. The third component is the international ideological and political structure of the Muslim Brotherhood, which laid claim to power in a number of Arab states.

This alliance managed to achieve impressive successes during the Arab Spring of 2011-2012. After the Egyptian revolution on January 25, 2011, this alliance

succeeded in strengthening the position of the Muslim Brotherhood, which eventually came to power in Egypt in 2012. In Libya, Qatar and Turkey supported the uprising against Gaddafi and managed to translate this support into very strong growth positions of the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood. In particular, the Muslim Brotherhood achieved dominance in the General National Congress, elected in July 2012. In Tunisia, the al-Nahda movement, ideologically quite close to the Muslim Brotherhood, managed, with the support of Qatar and Turkey, to win the first free elections in October 2011 and temporarily form a government. In Syria, Turkey and Qatar succeeded in securing the leadership of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood in the main focal point of the Syrian opposition outside Syria, the Syrian National Council, formed in August 2011 in Istanbul, while rebel groups backed by Turkey and Qatar made major territorial gains inside Syria. In Yemen, forces quite close to the Muslim Brotherhood gradually came to power after the resignation of A. Saleh in November 2011. In addition, in Jordan, the Muslim Brotherhood led protests in 2011 and were even invited by King Abdullah II to the Jordanian cabinet ministers.

Another important point is that by mid-2013, Qatar and Turkey had won international support for the Muslim Brotherhood. Let us note that the Qatari-Turkish alliance turned out to be a fairly effective mechanism. Despite its enormous economic, demographic and military potential (comparable to Iran, Saudi Arabia or Egypt), Turkey (as a non-Arab state) was unlikely to have any real chance of single-handedly achieving regional leadership in a predominantly Arab region (by the way, this is a serious obstacle to Iranian efforts as well).

On the other hand, Qatar, despite its enormous financial resources and Arab identity, is too small to make any serious attempt at regional leadership on its own. Qatar and Turkey managed to quit in 2010-2012. quite an impressive challenge to regional hegemony only after they joined forces, adding to this the enormous political potential of the Muslim Brotherhood.

However, in 2013, Saudi Arabia and its allies managed to carry out a fairly successful counter-offensive. Its centerpiece was the overthrow of the Muslim

Brotherhood government in Egypt, carried out in alliance with the Egyptian military and several other internal Egyptian and international forces. In January 2014, under enormous pressure, al-Nahda was forced to resign from power in Tunisia. In Libya, with the support of Saudi Arabia and its allies, H. Haftar launched the military operation “Dignity” in May 2014, which led to a sharp decrease in the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood in this country. In Syria, Saudi Arabia managed to significantly reduce the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood in the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (which replaced the Syrian National Council as the main focal point of the Syrian opposition outside Syria) and for a time increased the influence of pro-Saudi groups. The influence of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan has also declined. At the same time, Saudi Arabia launched a fairly successful offensive against the Muslim Brotherhood throughout the Arab world (including Saudi Arabia itself).

Saudi Arabia and Iran have clashed in the struggle for regional leadership. The Sunni center, home to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, found itself face to face with a Shiite regional power. This developed into a Sunni-Shiite confrontation throughout the region and in the world as a whole. This split is supported de facto by Western powers interested in splitting the Muslim world, which increases the possibility of new social explosions in the region.

Iran, for its part, was able to create an unofficial bloc called the “axis of resistance.” Tehran has allies in the form of the Syrian regime with its very strong Alawite component, the Lebanese Hezbollah, and the Shiite militias of Iraq, not to mention official cooperation with Baghdad, where Shiite parties are in power, and Shiite militias from Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Thus, the “Arab Spring” served as a trigger for the emergence of new coalitions in the “afrsian” macrozone, which had a significant impact on the protracted nature of destabilization processes in the region.

7. Global aspect of socio-political destabilization in “afrasian” instability macrozone

Selected article: Issaev L. Russia and the New Middle East // *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*. 2021. Vol. 23. No. 3. P. 423-442; Issaev L. Russia and the Middle East: From “Honest Broker” to “Status Keeper” // *Demokratizatsiya*, 2023. Vol. 31, No 3. P. 309-333.

Based on the study of Russian policy in the Middle East and North Africa region, a research design was developed to study the role of external actors in the processes of socio-political destabilization in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability. In our opinion, the growth of global protest activity in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability was a consequence of the weakening of the world-system center and the strengthening of the role of peripheral countries. These processes are also accompanied by a transition to a new state of international relations, when, along with attempts to preserve old alliances, various new coalitions are simultaneously formed.

The weakening role of global actors in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability had a significant impact on the reconfiguration of the entire region. The point is not only that the processes of socio-political destabilization have affected, to one degree or another, almost all countries of the macrozone. The point is rather that there is a trend towards changing the very structure of both horizontal (between regional players) and vertical (between regional and global players) relationships. The weakening of the world-system center naturally led to a revision of existing security guarantees, which led to increased militarization and, as a consequence, to an increase in socio-political instability in the “afrasian” macrozone.

Thus, the change in the global balance of power in the 2010s. began to lead to transformations of the world order as a whole, to one degree or another influencing all regions of the world and especially the “afrasian” macrozone, which became the de facto epicenter of these events.

8. Decentralization as a possible factor countering destabilization processes

Selected monography: Issaev L., Zakharov A. *Federalism in the Middle East: State Reconstruction Projects and the Arab Spring*. Springer, 2021.

The Arab Spring has revived discussions about federalism and decentralization in some of the affected countries in the Middle East and North Africa. This is not at all surprising: the authoritarian models of government that dominated the region for decades have exhausted themselves, and along with them, their inherent rigid centralization of power has squandered its potential. As a result, in the first two decades of the 21st century, federation as a way of political existence turned out to be in demand in such Arab states as Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and Syria. In all of these contexts, plans for federal reconstruction have become the subject of ongoing public dialogue with greater or lesser intensity, and in one of these countries (Iraq, which has rid itself of the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein) federalism has already turned from an idea into practice, further fueling the ongoing debate. in the countries of the region.

In assessing all these events, an important role is also played by a fundamental circumstance, which is not always emphasized: the Arab world does not have the “allergy” to federalism that is sometimes attributed to it - on the contrary, wherever this idea has gained relevance after the “Arab Spring”, federal experiments have had own backstory, sometimes very turbulent and rich. In other words, post-revolutionary federations are not built from scratch: behind them stands what can rightfully be called the “Arab tradition of federalism.”

The Arab Spring affected countries affected by the political instability it generated in different ways. Events of 2011-2012 have exposed the real crisis potential of a given Arab country, bringing to light numerous and often colossal problems that for many years were ignored or postponed by Arab rulers. But if in some states the main “Arab Spring” slogan is “The people want to bring down the regime!” - turned out to be fatal only for ruling dynasties or individual rulers,

marking a change in the leading elites and without affecting the political system as such, in other states revolutionary processes destroyed almost everything. This leads to a logical question: why did statehood in Tunisia or Egypt, despite all the upheavals, survive, but in Yemen, Libya or Syria it almost completely collapsed?

It's all about the nature of the problems that had to be solved during the revolutionary reform. While Mubarak or Ben Ali ruled predominantly (though not without reservations) homogeneous societies, Yemeni, Libyan, Syrian (and Iraqi) leaders after their countries gained independence presided over fragmented, mosaic, motley social systems born political engineering of former colonialists. And if in the first two situations (in Egypt and Tunisia) the overthrow of the regimes triggered a gradual, albeit complex, return to normal life, then in Yemen, Iraq, Libya (and to a large extent in Syria), on the contrary, it eliminated those political mechanisms that which generally allowed states to exist within established and recognized boundaries. In each of these cases, removing the dictator solved absolutely nothing; Likewise, the departure of Assad, if it suddenly took place, would not end, but, on the contrary, would only aggravate the Syrian crisis.

Historically complex and diverse, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and Syria have always been predisposed to federalization. They objectively needed it because of the extreme heterogeneity of their political space, devoid of the unity of culture, religion, language, and ethnic substratum. But this need for the combination of self-rule and shared-rule inherent in federalism was not satisfied for decades, since the intensive construction of the nation-state, which immediately swept post-colonial societies, harshly pushed federal projects into the background. The “Arab Spring” changed little in this regard. New, post-revolutionary authorities often speak under the slogans of the same single and indivisible unifying statehood, making respect for the diversity on which the federal project is built unattainable.

At the same time, the “Arab Spring” made it possible to articulate an objective public demand for decentralization in the Middle East and North Africa, which had been repressed and suppressed for decades. A comparative study of federalism

shows that civil conflict in complex societies can serve as a prologue to federalization; war in practice refutes the effectiveness of unitary models, in heterogeneous contexts that inevitably rely on the oppression and suppression of minorities.

The fundamental value of federation in such situations is that it appears as an option that allows one to break the traditional “zero-sum game” scenarios of authoritarianism. In other words, the usefulness of dispersing power as a way of social reconciliation is recognized today not only outside the Arab world, but also within it: federalism is talked about a lot in Arab countries, not only by scientists and activists, but also by politicians and this, of course, brings closer its practical implementation.

There is, however, a serious problem, which is that it is easy to be late in introducing federalism. If discussions about its implementation drag on greatly, then the bitterness of the warring parties may reach a point after which federalization as a compromise and intermediate solution simply ceases to interest them. “One of the typical reasons that prevents the benefits of federalism from being realized is the delay in its implementation. States that are able to benefit from the transition to a federal structure often realize the “advantages” of federalism too late, when internal conflict has already flared up. As tensions escalate, their governments become even more hesitant, fearing increasingly imminent secession” (Horowitz 2007: 963). The above is extremely important in the context of the Middle East and North Africa. In each of the cases considered, the severity of the “lag” has its own specifics, but in one form or another the issue is relevant everywhere. By the way, it is no less important than another risk factor - external interference that can block the federalist dialogue and the further transition to a federal deal.

9. Factors of stability of dualistic monarchies in “afrasian” instability macrozone

Selected article: Issaev L., Zakharov A. Dynastic Sacredness: Islam and the Arab Spring in Morocco // *Middle East Policy*. 2022. Vol. 29. No. 3. P. 112-128.

Many researchers have noted that the stability of the Moroccan and Jordanian regimes, first during the events of the “Arab Spring”, and then the second revolutionary wave of the late 2010s, is due to the factor in the “sacralization” of power (see: Demchenko, 2013; Kuznetsov, 2018). This position was based on the fact that the ruling dynasties of the Alawites in Morocco and the Hashemites in Jordan are among the few whose ancestry goes back to the Prophet Muhammad. This opinion seems to us erroneous, since the principle of untouchability in relation to monarchs, even with a religious pedigree, does not always work. The refutation of the mentioned hypothesis is based on two grounds.

Firstly, the historical facts supporting the argumentation of the first type indicate that the pedigree going back to Muhammad himself, neither in ancient nor in modern times, did not remove the representatives of the two dynasties that interest us from the action of the elementary laws of the struggle for power. They not only became victims of those who challenged their dominant position, but also sometimes died at their hands - like ordinary mortals. Undoubtedly, both Moroccan and Jordanian monarchs deliberately used religious rituals and institutions to consolidate their own power. Thus, the Jordanian King Hussein constantly emphasized his role as the custodian of the Muslim shrines in Jerusalem, and under the Moroccan King Hassan II, the state annually published his genealogy, leading straight to the Prophet Muhammad.

In addition, the power of the direct descendants of the Prophet was never unlimited, since restraining mechanisms always worked within the Islamic political and legal system, a kind of Muslim checks and balances that effectively limited the seemingly unlimited rulers. Both ruling dynasties, the Alaouites and the Hashemites, experienced their action at different times - just as the Turkish Sultan was forced to act in captivity of the same checks and balances until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in his incarnation as the Caliph, the spiritual leader of all the faithful -Sunni

(Feldman, 2008). The main principle of this system, repeatedly studied and described, was that no pedigree gives the ruler the right to do whatever he pleases. The destruction of this system began only in the 20th century.

Secondly, the fact that Sunni socio-political thought has always considered public power to be a subject not of religious dogma, but of Islamic law, translated it into a subject of worldly regulation and control. A very common point of view among Sunnis, developed at the beginning of the 11th century by the largest Muslim jurist Abu al-Hasan al-Mawardi, is the idea of Allah as the supreme bearer of sovereignty (Al-Mawardi, n/d). Based on his name and guided by his instructions, power on earth is exercised by the Muslim community, whose sovereign rights are expressed, first of all, in its ability to elect a ruler, to whom the Muslim community only entrusts the right to govern itself. Due to the fact that the procedure for filling the post of head of the Islamic state was not strictly defined by either the Koran or the Prophet, Muslim jurists for the most part agreed that the post of caliph goes to the applicant by virtue of a special agreement concluded between the community and the applicant for the post caliph.

In accordance with such an agreement, the ruler is personally responsible to the community for the exercise of power and has the right to demand unquestioning obedience from it, which, however, is conditioned by the fact that he himself must strictly follow the prescriptions of Sharia. It is this principle that allows Muslims to oppose the caliph in cases where the ruler has neglected the norms of Sharia and has ceased to be guided by the interests of his subjects or to consult with them. Sunni political and legal culture especially emphasizes that “the power of the head of state is not absolute, he does not enjoy any privileges or immunity, and, like an ordinary Muslim, he is subject to the norms of Sharia and can be punished for any offense” (Sykiyainen, 2016: 143). From here, by the way, follows a principle of Sunni political theory that is no less important for our study, according to which the ruler, even while exercising religious power in the state, is personally, nevertheless, deprived of the divine nature. In other words, descent from the Prophet himself does

not at all mean personal divinity for his descendants, with all the ensuing political consequences.

Speaking about the ruling Alaouite dynasty in Morocco, it should be noted that its rise was largely facilitated by the policies pursued by the French during the protectorate. Despite its sacred origins and centuries-old history, the power of the Sultan of Morocco in the period preceding the establishment of the French protectorate in 1912 was much more modest than the power of the Moroccan king today. Despite the fact that the Sultan was recognized as the indisputable bearer of divine grace (“*baraka*”), he, nevertheless, was not the sole owner of spiritual power: he was assigned only the authority to be the imam at Friday prayers (Vasiliev, 1990: 209).

This state of affairs continued until 1957, when the sultanate was transformed into a kingdom. Throughout Moroccan history, the monarch was limited by a council of tribal leaders, the range of competencies of which implied not only the choice of the heir to the throne, but also the deprivation of the sultan's powers. Moreover, the ruler did not even have the right to interpret Islamic laws: it was assigned to the ulema - theological scholars, and judicial power until the mid-19th century was exercised by judges appointed not by the monarch, but by the supreme court of the city of Fez, the spiritual capital of Morocco. Accordingly, the Sultan could make decisions on the most important issues of domestic and foreign policy after receiving approval from the Council of Ulema, which was recorded in the relevant fatwas.

Only in the 20th century, and only thanks to the French, did the political and religious authority of the ruling dynasty in Morocco begin to steadily strengthen, which, of course, contributed to the resuscitation of the forgotten sacred foundations of the management system. Under the French “umbrella,” the local monarch became an increasingly powerful and unlimited ruler. The main merit in the destruction of the previous structure of Islamic “checks and balances” and in the subsequent rise of the monarchy belonged not so much to the monarch himself, but to the French

colonialists: precisely in those years, Paris contributed with all its might to the reorganization of the Sultan's rule, consistently working to modernize it.

The goal of Paris was quite clear: he wanted to turn the sultanate into an efficiently working bureaucratic mechanism, built on the principles of unity of command and serving the interests of the metropolis. But, whatever their intentions, it was the regime of foreign patronage, as S. Miller rightly noted, "removed the institution of Sultan power from the dustbin of history, returned respect to it, eliminated everyone who encroached on its religious monopoly - and, having done all this, allowed him in the future, when the dust of decolonization had settled, to assert his absolute power in Morocco" (Miller, 2013: 118). In turn, the expansion of the powers of the Sultan as the sole political leader, inspired by the French "from above," quite expectedly stimulated the strengthening of his authority among ordinary Moroccans "from below."

In the 1950s The final demolition of the previous administrative and political structure took place, as a result of which the supreme power passed from the tribal elite and religious authorities, who had dominated the Moroccan political tradition since ancient times, to a single monarch. Already in the first years of his reign, Muhammad V, using modern legal means, legitimized his own power as "commander of the faithful," thereby placing himself above all other political actors in the state. The guaranteed supremacy of the throne over other participants in the political process was enshrined in the first Moroccan constitution of 1962. Hassan II, son of Muhammad V, characterized the Moroccan system as follows: "Whoever we appoint to a public or military position must serve our purposes - the mission the ruler of the faithful, who is the shadow of Allah on earth" (Vasiliev, 1990: 188-189).

In other words, contrary to opinions sometimes expressed, the political system in which the king is ascribed "divine immunity" from any political mistakes, and his power prerogatives are interpreted as obviously indisputable, turns out to be not so much a product of the national or Islamic political tradition, but rather a man-made construct of a relatively recent of the past. Thus, the power of the Alawi monarch

rests not at all on the supposedly customary respect for the descendants of the Prophet in the Muslim world, but on a specific system of checks and balances that King Muhammad V constructed, passing it on to his heirs.

Among other features of this system, it is worth highlighting, in particular, the use of, although sophisticated, but quite “earthly” methods of working with opposition forces, within the framework of which some oppositionists are completely and strictly removed from the political process, while others admitted to it turn out to be objects of manipulation, depriving them of incentives to actively fight for power or incite social protest (Lust-Okar, 2005: 14). Among the latter, we can rightfully include the oldest Istiqlal party, mentioned more than once, whose founders were never enthusiastic about vesting the ruling dynasty with undivided power. The political program of this organization, developed in the mid-1940s, initially assigned a very modest role to the monarchy, believing that the throne should free itself from the unusual burdens of political struggle and limit itself to the usual role of a mediator, arbitrator, or simply a symbol of the nation (Orlov, 2009: 95).

Thanks to French patronage, and then his own innovative approaches, the Moroccan monarch in a very short time turned, in the words of the American Arabist E. Burke, into “an interested broker on the exchange of political interests” (Vasiliev, 1990: 184). As a result, over the past decades, the stability of royal power was ensured by the thoughtful and tough tactics adopted by the Moroccan monarchs after gaining independence: the court took turns attracting various political forces to govern the country and consistently revealed the inability of each of them to rule alone, thanks to which the authority of the monarch was continuously increased, while the main political parties fell just as steadily (Landa, 1985).

Finally, the thesis about the “sacredness” of Moroccan power is important to compare with the fact that after the departure of the French, the Alaouite dynasty considered the armed forces its main support. It is for this reason that, from the very proclamation of independence, the Moroccan army was officially called not

“national”, but “royal”. At the same time, however, the military did not always maintain unconditional loyalty to the throne, despite its divine pedigree: at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s. In Morocco, not only were there attempted coups, but there were also several attempts on the life of Hassan II himself, the son of Muhammad V.

In addition, the Moroccan throne strengthened its position due to the so-called. the policy of “bureaucratization” of Islam, begun by Hassan II, with the aim of strengthening the position of official spiritual structures and, in the words of the Russian historian V. Orlov, turning the religious life of Morocco into “his own fiefdom” (Orlov, 2009). Back in the 1980s. The Moroccan corps of ulema was reformed and integrated into the state management vertical: the nationwide network of religious figures was subordinated to the highest religious and legal authority in the person of the Supreme Council of Ulema, led by the king himself.

This organ, however, was not assembled until 2000, remaining decorative. But against the background of the growing opposition of the Moroccan state to the Salafis and Shiites, Muhammad VI, who ascended the throne in 1999, breathed new life into it: in 2008, he declared that the ulema should with all diligence “strengthen the spiritual security of the nation.” (Wainscott, 2017: 108). By the beginning of the 2010s. the bureaucratic pyramid, crowned by the Supreme Council of Ulema, included 27 regional and 67 local councils. Such a hierarchical system does not allow any initiative: while improving the financial situation of clergy, the court constantly demands from them administrative discipline and constant respect for the monarch.

As for religious institutions that did not fit into the state policy, the authorities harshly squeezed them out of the public sphere. Since the mid-1980s, after the reform of the relevant ministry dealing with Islamic affairs, provincial governors were also involved in the activities of ulema councils related to the approval of imams of mosques, preliminary approval of sermon texts, as well as the resolution of financial issues (Orlov, 2009: 103).

Trying to emphasize his special religious status, Hassan II paid great attention to the external side of piety. The Higher Institute for Propagation of the Faith, which he established, was authorized to patronize Muslim education, as well as ensure the dissemination of the official religious narrative. Since the 1980s, more and more television and radio programs covering Islamic issues have appeared in Morocco.

Islamic preaching was portrayed as a tool that united the Moroccan nation, which was especially important in light of ethnocultural heterogeneity and the Arab-Berber dichotomy. In addition, Hassan II revived the program of building thousands of mosques in Morocco, begun by his father Muhammad V, by founding the third largest (at that time) mosque in the Muslim world in Casablanca in 1987. Islam, however, was encouraged under an indispensable condition: impeccable loyalty to the regime was required from Muslim associations, and renunciation of any independence in religious affairs from the clergy and community.

The same line of integrating Islam into the bureaucratic apparatus of power was continued by Muhammad VI. In his case, the most powerful impulses towards a more thorough nationalization of the dominant religion were, firstly, the “war on terror” launched by the United States of America after September 11, 2001 and escalating the situation in the Islamic world, and, secondly, terrorist attacks in Morocco, held in the first half of the 2000s.

The comprehensive and comprehensive religious reform launched by Rabat in 2004 “bureaucratized Moroccan Islam to the utmost, placing key decisions regarding religious practices in the hands of people on the state's payroll” (Wainscott, 2017: 1). As a result, the complete co-optation of the old and the formation of new religious elites took place, united by undivided devotion to the throne.

Taking charge of the entire religious life of the nation, the Moroccan monarchy relied on a vast array of state-led institutions that reproduced and disseminated the official interpretation of Islam in every possible way. The scope of control included methods of mastering and interpreting religious texts, religious media and religious

educational institutions. The coordinating efforts of the state have brought small foundations preparing new editions of the Koran and huge universities running large-scale programs of Islamic studies to work hand in hand. It is significant that currently only two countries in the Islamic world have such a developed religious infrastructure: Iran and Saudi Arabia (Wainscott, 2017: 98).

As one would expect, filling the Islamic semantic field with content fabricated and supplied by government agencies allowed the authorities, firstly, to drown out claims to the sacred foundations of the monarchy, and secondly, to reduce the degree of the policy of intimidation, which one way or another in the 2000s all authoritarian regimes in the Middle East and North Africa appealed. The complete neutralization of the threat potentially posed by independent religious elites gave rise to a rather unusual political-religious construct, which some researchers call “Moroccan Islam.”

The reform was so effective that in 2015, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the Green March, which under Hassan II secured the annexation of Western Sahara, the Moroccan authorities allowed themselves a symbolic gesture unthinkable in neighboring countries also suffering from the terrorist threat: they amnestied more than three with half a thousand Islamic radicals and reduced the sentences of several hundred more (Wainscott, 2017: 42). Among those released were those accused of involvement in the 2003 terrorist attacks. It is symbolic, however, that the large-scale amnesty was preceded by a royal decree signed in May 2014 that categorically prohibited imams from participating in any political activities, including work with trade unions.

Thus, despite its divine origin, the Moroccan royal power demonstrated stability not so much due to its “sacred” status, but rather due to the created system of containing opposition and the policy of targeted use of religious rituals and institutions to strengthen its own power, which became a key tool in the Moroccan arsenal of state power construction.

10. Conclusions

The studies collected within the framework of this dissertation dealt with various aspects of the same issue: identifying the characteristics of the factors of socio-political destabilization in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability.

Firstly, we introduced into scientific circulation the concept of the “afrasian” macrozone of instability, which is a set of Central Asian, Middle Eastern, North African and Sahelian zones characterized by the highest level of processes of socio-political destabilization. This macrozone very accurately coincides with the territory of the Umayyad Caliphate, a zone of extremely low levels of economic activity of women and the spread of parallel cousin marriages, and there is every reason to believe that the “afrasian” macrozone of instability was formed on a fairly deep civilizational basis. The civilizational attitude, widespread in Arab-Muslim countries, that the groom, upon entering into marriage, undertakes obligations to fully provide for his wife and children, correlates with both the postponement of marriage by men and the increase in political violence. This, in turn, explains the previously discovered (Robinson et al. 2006) statistically significant correlation between the low level of economic activity of women and the high level of terrorist activity.

Secondly, the study of the processes of socio-political destabilization within the framework of the events of the “Arab Spring” allowed us to conclude that there was a qualitative change in the global protest dynamics in the early 2010s. Our research, based on data from CNTS, showed that the “Arab Spring” acted as a trigger for a global wave of destabilization, significantly exceeding in scale the “Arab Spring” itself and affecting absolutely all world-system zones. In other words, in the early 2010s. We were dealing with a transition to a qualitatively new state of global protest activity, which was prepared by a new wave of growth in global information connectivity, as well as the improvement of the means of protest self-organization through the spread of new technologies such as the Internet, satellite television, social networks, mobile communications, etc. And although the spread of these

technologies was going on long before 2011, their enormous potential for generating and protest activity was realized spasmodically during the events of the “Arab Spring”.

Thirdly, based on the study of the revolutionary wave of 2023-2014. We have identified such a factor of socio-political destabilization as center-peripheral dissonance. The emergence of this factor is typical for developing societies, which include the countries of the “afrasian” macrozone of instability, and is due to the higher pace of modernization of capitals than the periphery. In our opinion, the destabilizing role of this factor can be very strong. Events of the 2010s showed that this factor is capable of destabilizing society even in the context of the completion of the demographic transition, when the traditional factor of political destabilization, the “youth bulge”, disappears (Korotayev et al. 2021).

Fourthly, the most important factor that predetermined the nature of socio-political destabilization in the “afrasian” macrozone of instability is decentralization. The events of the Arab Spring exposed the real crisis potential of one or another Arab countries, highlighting numerous and often colossal problems that had been ignored or put off by local authorities for decades. But, if in some states the main slogan of the “Arab Spring” - “The people want to bring down the regime”, turned out to be fatal only for individual rulers, marking a change in the leading elites and without affecting the political system as such, then in other states the processes of socio-political destabilization destroyed almost All. It can be noted that the problem of redistribution of power between the center and the regions, which has not been resolved for decades, has become one of the most important factors of destabilization in the region.

Fifthly, the presence of an intra-elite split played a key role in the success of the processes of socio-political destabilization in the countries of the “afrasian” macrozone of instability. Experience in studying events in Egypt in the first half of the 2010s. showed that the success of the Egyptian revolution of 2011 was largely possible due to the strong intra-elite split between the military (“old guard”) and the

economic elite (“young guard”), a group of leading Egyptian businessmen led by G. Mubarak. In turn, the passage to power of the Muslim Brotherhood forced the Egyptian economic elite to make reconciliation with the military, and in June 2013 they already acted as a united, well-coordinated front, ensuring such a quick overthrow of M. Moursi.

Finally, it was noted that the stability of the monarchical regimes in Morocco and Jordan during the Arab Spring, as well as during the second revolutionary wave of the late 2010s. (Issaev, Korotayev, 2022) is based on the moral and legal superiority of the king over any of the opposition groups. The ruling Alaouite dynasty of Morocco is one of the very few whose royal lineage goes back to the Prophet Muhammad himself. Despite its sacred origin, the stability of Moroccan royal power indicates the presence in the hands of monarchs of additional stabilization tools, among which the so-called plays an important role. the policy of "bureaucratization" of Islam (the deliberate use of religious rituals and institutions to consolidate one's own power) which became a key tool in the Moroccan arsenal of state building. Moreover, it was France that elevated the royal family and allowed the throne to become a pillar of Moroccan nationalism.

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