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The Process of Formation of a Political Elite in The Arab States: Features and Problems

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Abstract

The article deals with the problems of the formation of the political elite in the Arab countries. The process of the formation of an elite in any society is associated primarily with those socio-political processes, cultural and mental characteristics, as well as with the socio-economic situation that dominates the state. Cultural and mental characteristics are due to the historical formation of the nation, the development of statehood, the formation of a system of civilizational values. The political elite, consisting of ideology, must be based on the corresponding axiological determinants, mental and ethical, which reflect the main characteristics of the public perception of the world, so that the political elite can successfully seize and retain power. All this necessitates the study of the problems of the political elite, based on new conceptual approaches.

Keywords

political elite, the Arab world, the Arab state, Islam, power, numerous peoples.

Introduction

The Arabs are one of the most numerous peoples of the Semitic ethnolinguistic group, as well as a minority in Iran and Turkey and the diaspora in America, Europe and other countries, belong to the Caucasian race that was formed on the Arabian Peninsula and exists today in the Arab world on both sides as from Asia and from Africa.

Countries with a majority of the population are Arabs, in a broad sense, form in their unity what is today called the "Arab world". In North Africa, these are Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan and Egypt. In western Asia - Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, in Arabia - Saudi Arabia, Yemen and a number of other border states. A small number of the Arab population also live in Israel.

The Arab world has nearly 130 million people, of which 116 are Arabs. However, the population of the Arab world has no common origin. Although the early history of Arab culture was associated with the Arabian Peninsula, over time, many other peoples came under the influence of the Arabic language and Arab culture (Truevtsev, 2004).

It should be noted that speaking about the Arab world, we must understand that an important factor in the development of the elite is the spiritual. Islam as the dominant religion has formed the corresponding level of worldview, served as the basis for the formation of many institutions of society and the state. This, in turn, determined the specifics of the formation of the management elite of society, the clergy and all other social classes and groups, which influenced the formation of the political elite as such. In addition, it is important to note the presence of a single civilizational pan-Arab idea of the Great Caliphate, which played a major role in the context of the historical formation of Arab statehood. Although later the Arab world became dispersed, but at the beginning of its inception, the Arab culture had rather discrete goals. This led to the formation of general trends in the civilizational choice among many Arab states, and therefore among many political elites in these states.

Arab countries are primarily a cultural continuum, which must be understood from the point of view of opposing the Arab world to the Christian and Jewish world. This statehood has become an alternative to the promotion of Christian monarchies in territories that have had a much greater historical tradition, including state building, than Europe. In the end, the understanding of the nature of the political elites of Arab countries must be tied into the general context of the globalization processes of the 20th century, as well as the consequences that the era of colonialism left behind.

It should be noted that when analyzing the peculiarities of the formation of the political elites of Arab countries, we must proceed from the following aspects of the influence of the external environment on this process:

- the permanence of the opposition of the Arab culturological idea of the Christian, and the eastern way of life to the western, which was manifested in the

antagonism of democratic ideas, opposition to the democratic path of the development of the traditional eastern;

-a high degree of dependence of the Arab countries on the EU and the Western world in financial and economic terms, the need to focus on global trends in the geopolitical balance in the regions of North Africa and the Middle East;

- the influence exerted by the period of colonial expansion and the stay of the states of the Arab world under the yoke of colonial empires. Different empires had different influences on the development of the Arab countries, somewhere expanding the possibilities of self-government, somewhere directly penetrating the elite, somewhere imposing a Western way of government;

- the dominance of the spiritual principle over the secular and the wide influence of spiritual leaders, who most often orthodoxly perceive the problems of confrontation between states professing different religions, and in addition preaching the idea of the commonality of the Arab peoples and the need for their unification, which in many countries negatively affects national ideas and ideas of state construction;

- low standard of living and low economic potential, giving rise to problems of social security, lowering the level of well-being of the population. this leads to the escalation of social tension, resulting in, among other things, the events of the Arab Spring;

-high activity of fundamental and radical currents of Islam, which advocate the aggressive expansion of the Islamic movement in Western countries, thereby increasing the level of aggression and negative perception of the European population towards the representatives of the Arab world, and Christians towards the representatives of Islam.

Literature review

As M.A. Sapronova "in the general complex of fundamental problems of our time, the problem of power, its nature, social character, its effectiveness, legitimacy and constitutionality has come to the fore. Historiographic processes have left their mark on the research work of this direction, and, first of all, the search for broad historical and theoretical concepts, in the light of which it would be possible to consider local phenomena and inscribe them into world historical processes. It is no exaggeration to say that one of the most controversial problems of modern political science is the question of the relationship between the general and the specific in the paths of socio-economic and political evolution of the East and the West " (Sapronova, 2009).

Turning to the cultural heritage of the Arab countries, I would like to draw attention to scientific works that are descriptive in the era of the emergence of the Arab nation. Ibn Khaldun's philosophy of history was an important part of the Ottoman intellectual and cultural tradition in the 16th and 19th centuries. Ibn Khaldun is the genius of the Arab world, "the only bright point against the dark background of his time and region ..." (Faris, 2018). He was born and worked when

the Arab civilization stubbornly but vainly tried to overcome the chaos inherited from the interregnum period (975-1275).

It should be noted that in his political philosophy Ibn Khaldun studied not an ideal, but a really existing state, when the rulers in their policies deviated far from the principles of Islamic law. He defended the rational and objective nature of truth, opposing false wisdom with political knowledge and experience. Ibn Khaldun, in his monumental work "Book of edifying examples and a collection of beginnings and messages about the days of the Arabs, Persians and Berbers and those who were contemporary with their supreme power", initiated the process of substantiating the peculiarity of the Muslim world in relation to other cultural spaces. He substantiated the greatness of Muslims, Islam, the Arab world, explaining why the Arab world is the central segment of the entire civilizational space, opposing the teachings of the Koran to other religious movements and philosophical teachings. Ibn Khaldun substantiated the idea of the absolute of spiritual power over the secular, and a spiritual leader over the secular in matters that, at first glance, do not relate to government: culture, philosophy, art, morality, ethics, axiological perception of human existence. It was this concept that had a huge impact on the formation of leadership qualities of representatives of the ruling elite of monarchs.

Later, the term "Ibn Khaldunism" began to be widely used by modern historians of Arab countries, who described to them the phenomenon of the formation of Arab statehood. In fact, it was Ibn Khaldun who laid the foundations of the pan-Arab statehood and world order in which Islam became the center of influence. Ibn Khaldun's teachings about the state are inextricably linked with his teachings about the ruling class, which in fact can be considered the first mention of precisely the requirements of history for the elite.

According to Ibn Khaldun, the only thing that can be opposed to the destructive forces inherent in every nation is religion. He argued that Islam provides the community with lasting spiritual satisfaction, a complete answer to all questions of life; and Islam provides a comprehensive answer to its practical study of the organization of the human race. He considered religion an absolute necessity for any truly united and effective state.

He was also ahead of his time in economic theory. Four centuries before Adam Smith, Ibn Khaldun had already concluded that labor is the source of prosperity. He also distinguished between direct sources of income, from agriculture, industry, and commerce, and indirect sources of income, from public service and employment. These concepts seem self-evident today, but seven hundred years ago they were revolutionary, and they paved the way for classical economics and its models of consumption, production, demand, price, and social utility.

Ibn Khaldun is considered the founder of the philosophy of the history of the Arab world. In addition, he developed the labor theory of value more than three centuries before the emergence of political economy in Europe. Among the original aspects of his theory stand out: 1) following in the field of historical research critical

and cause-and-effect methods; 2) recognition of economic and geographical factors as the main ones in the development of society, state and civilization; 3) recognition of a person as a natural, social and culturally conditioned being; 4) refusal to recognize the state as primarily a religious entity (Truevtsev, 2004).

Discussion

It should be noted that the Arab world, or "the homeland of the Arabs," as most of its representatives like to say, is a political term. It is used to designate the geographical position between the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Arabian Gulf in the east, including countries that are members of the Arab League and parts of the annexed lands of neighboring states, such as the Ahvaz regions (Iran); Ogaden (Ethiopia); Ceuta, Melilla, Canary Islands (Spain).

As mentioned above, the Arab elite prefers the name "homeland of the Arabs" and opposes the use of the names "Middle East" and "North Africa". The general political picture in the Arab world indicates that the Arab elites have failed to cope with their tasks for various reasons.

First of all, this happened as a result of the presence of a stable, traditionally formed social heritage, namely, ethnopolitical tribalism (Mamed-Zade, 2004).

Also, ignoring the vulnerable in terms of education layers of society: for example, the judicial system in Egypt does not welcome, and in some cases prohibits the entry into its field of activity of people from the lower strata of the population, preferring to see in its composition primarily the children of judges or already working in this area figures.

The need to understand the modern ways of development of the countries of the East gave rise to a new direction in historiography: the study of political systems and political processes and the dynamics of their transformation. Currently, a new science has begun to form - the history of power - about the origin, evolution and development prospects of power as a decisive social phenomenon and as a "fundamental part of historical sciences." The history of any country and of any period is almost always the best illustration and presentation, first of all, of imperious decisions and actions, behavior and deeds of both rulers and subordinates " (Turekulova, 2013). Thus, we will analyze the main factors in the formation of not so much statehood as the political elite of the Arab states, taking into account the above historical and cultural context.

It is important to understand that any political elite has a dual nature: on the one hand, it is the exponent of the social class that came to power, on the other, it is the resultant historical path of development of a particular state or nation, which explains the level and degree of effectiveness of the ideologies that the political elite preaches in society.

It should be noted that the period between the two World Wars had a tremendous influence on the formation of the political elites of the Arab countries, and in particular Egypt. So, V.M. In this regard, Akhmedov claims that after World

War I and the liberation from the rule of the Ottoman Empire in a number of countries of the Arab East, the colonialists established political regimes modeled on the political systems of the metropolises (Egypt, Syria). This process was facilitated due to the presence of a number of circumstances. Back in the 19th century, as a result of reforms that individual Arab rulers tried to carry out, who managed to achieve de facto independence and independence from the Ottoman Port (Muhammad Ali in Egypt, for example), a narrow stratum of modern managers began to form within the traditional elite. On the other hand, the active penetration of Western capital into the Arab possessions of the Ports and the creation of enterprises on their territory to serve the needs of the industry of Western European countries led to an increase in the need to attract more and more local residents to work in modern enterprises. This process especially intensified after the actual transformation of many Arab countries into colonies and semi-colonies of Western European powers (Ahmedov, 2000). It should be noted here that the main factors that have the main and most significant influence on the formation of the political elite of the Arab countries during this period are primarily personal, that is, directly affecting the individual perception of the ruling circles or the emerging elites of the mentality of the life of European countries. Here it is necessary to say that the European monarchies and colonial empires demonstrated the following apparent superiority over the countries of the Arab world:

- luxury inherent in high European society, but which is more a tribute to established traditions, rather than a necessary attribute of power;

- an established system of hierarchy and social differentiation, which influenced the formation of a whole estate class of servants, a stratum of society that inherited the tradition of "serving" from generation to generation, which, however, at that time was already a rudimentary social factor in the development of society;

- the presence of the intellectual elite, the intelligentsia, which did not create any economic product, did not know how to turn knowledge into innovation, but had a high level of education and aristocratic manners. This factor was one of the elements of the causes of socio-economic decline, since the educated aristocracy lost the skills of practical management of economic benefits aimed at creating new ones;

- the high level of development of industrial production and the emergence of a new class of economic elite, in fact, the Arab elite found the process of the emergence of business elites in the classic modern West. But at that time all this was felt by the representatives of the Arab political elite as a new phenomenon, impossible in the conditions of the archaic structure of the national economy of most Arab countries.

In general, all of the above appeared to the representatives of the ruling circles of most of the Arab colonies of European empires as social benefits, as the peak of social development and prosperity. In fact, representatives of the political elite of the Arab countries saw only the initial stage of the stratification of European

society, the decline of the colonial system, the emergence of a class of the new economic bourgeoisie, but behind the level of prosperity that was available to European rulers, representatives of the political elites of Arab countries saw only the possibility of personal enrichment with the arrival and retention of power in the colonies.

In this regard, Akhmedov (2009) comes to the conclusion that over the past hundred years the Arab world has experienced major upheavals, accompanied by numerous uprisings, revolutions, wars, reforms. The Arab East is a politically and economically very labile region, where there is a fierce struggle of opinions at the regional and extra-regional levels about the future structure of states, working out approaches to solving the most pressing problems of politics, economic revival and social progress. At the same time, there is virtually no consensus on what will ultimately represent the new world order in this region. The process of economic and political reforms affected many countries that were previously plundered and exploited. However, a significant part of the Arab world turned out to be weakly susceptible to the main world trends in historical development, and in a number of positions rejected them (Akhmedov, 2009).

All this was a consequence of the fact that in the period between the two World Wars there was a break in the cultural concept traditional for the Arab world, the imposition and expansion of the Western standard of living and the Western style of thinking and worldview.

Conclusion

Thus, from the foregoing, the following points can be distinguished that the political elite of the Arab countries during the period of its formation, inception is a response to the social request regarding the registration of their own statehood by the countries of the Arab world. Therefore, it is the culturological, moral-ethical, mental or even civilizational aspect of the development of Arab society, the Arab world as such, that should be considered the initial one. This became the primary reason for the formation of an ideology, which later, thanks to the most active and progressive layers of Arab society, took shape into an established trend and a national idea - liberation from colonial dependence and the development of their own independent national states as the end point of the development of nations. For the political elite, this became an ideological basis, which, in contrast to the teachings of Karl Marx, replaced the economic basis, that is, it was the idea that became the fundamental basis for the development of class society, and already under the very idea promoted by the elites, society had to take possession of or regain that economic basis. , which was owned by the metropolises and was governed taking into account the interests of the center.

It was representatives of the counter-elites who became the head of the Arab states after gaining independence and formed the basis of the ruling elites of the independent countries of the Arab East. The social composition and political culture of the ruling elites of the independent states of the region were determined

by the nature of the transformations carried out in the course of colonization and by the way in which the anti-colonial movement developed in these countries (Karsh, 2006). The preservation of traditional institutions of government and the provision of formal power to them by the metropolises in many countries of the Arab East led to the consolidation of regional elites around the nominal political center. So, in a number of countries: Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Saudi Arabia around the nominal monarch there is a strengthening of the representatives of the big trading bourgeoisie, Arab feudal lords, who advocated the creation of an independent national state.

Contact, or rather antagonism, with Western civilization during the colonial expansion and subsequent struggle for independence had a significant impact on the formation of the political culture of nations. At the level of mass public consciousness and perception of historical reality, there is a transformation of the world perception with the active influence of Islam and its spiritual leaders. This leads to a total and complete rejection of Western traditions and the rejection of everything Western, including the objectively necessary laws of social order, which have demonstrated the effectiveness of government mechanisms, the organization of law and order, etc.

All this affects the development of the political elite, which is on the verge of the need to fight to maintain power, to keep society within certain limits of the rule of law, as well as to oppose the spiritual leaders of Islam, who activate radical, fundamentalist movements against the background of the failures of the new political elite in the socio-economic management of the state. development.

The political elite was not ready for such challenges, it did not have a clear strategy for the development of statehood in most countries, therefore, the relative pluralism that took place in the initial periods of political struggle gave way to a more authoritarian, radical and tough style of management and organization of social and political processes.

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