

ANNOTATION

dissertation work by Amirbekova Sagynysh Kopenovna on the topic « «Arab Spring» in the coverage of Global and Domestic Orientalismn: comparative analysis», submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the specialty «6D020900 - Oriental Studies»

General characteristics of the work

The dissertation analyzes all currently available points of view, both Western, Arab, Russian and Kazakhstani orientalists, as well as experts representing the widest range of social and humanitarian disciplines, which in one way or another considered issues dedicated to the events of «Arab Spring» that swept through the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region at the end of 2010. Such an analysis will allow us to study the «Arab Spring» from a multi-faceted perspective, which makes it possible to consider social protests in the Arab world through the prism of interconnected processes: political, economic, social problems, plus the complex ethno-confessional situation in most MENA countries.

Relevance of the research topic

Firstly, the relevance of the dissertation topic is due to the fact that since the «aunch» of revolutionary processes, a powerful wave that passed through the Arab countries of the Maghreb and Mashreq, we can observe that the events that took place at the end of 2010 have not ended, but have acquired a permanent character. The scenario of the «Arab Spring» was repeated in other regions of the world, including the independent states of Central Asia. The example of the «Tragic January» of 2022 in Kazakhstan is a vivid example of this, which makes the topic of the dissertation research even more relevant.

Secondly, the MENA region has played a key role in world politics, economics, culture and religion for centuries. As one of the most important centers of world civilization, it exerted a huge influence on the development of mankind, its historical significance as a political, economic, religious and cultural center is preserved in the 21st century. In the context of modern globalization, which also affects eastern countries, this role is only increasing and attracts close attention of world and regional powers, affecting their interests as well.

World oriental studies observes with great interest all the processes of the MENA, where especially great attention was paid to the «Arab Spring». Over the past time, a large array of materials has been accumulated, which allows us to consider the causes of the Arab revolutions from different points of view, thereby revealing the essence of many political, economic, social processes occurring today within the Arab communities of the MENA. The analysis of these processes adds additional value to the study, contributing to the contribution to the development of domestic, «modern oriental studies».

Thirdly, the «Arab Spring» and the subsequent course of the revolution in the MENA region «reanimated» and revived the «spirit» of the dormant political regimes of Islamic political parties (An-Nahda in Tunisia, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Libya), and also brought the activities of radical Islamist terrorist organizations (Al-Qaeda, ISIS, Jabhat al-Nusra, etc.) to a new level, which resulted in civil confrontation in Iraq and Syria, reviving the idea of creating a global Muslim state, including the countries of Central Asia, including Kazakhstan, in the zone of its ideological influence. These and other issues require a thorough study of the events of the «Arab Spring» will make it possible to assess the degree of influence of such revolutions on the countries of Central Asia and develop strategies to prevent the spread of destructive consequences.

Degree of development of the problem

The problem of studying the «Arab Spring» and the Arab revolutions of the 2010s within the framework of «Modern Oriental Studies» is the subject of numerous works in foreign and domestic literature. The degree of development of the Arab Spring topic is quite high, and it continues to attract significant attention of researchers in various fields, including political science, sociology, history, international relations and regional studies. Researchers consider the Arab Spring from different theoretical and methodological positions. There are discussions about the role of internal and external factors, the influence of social networks, the nature of protest movements, as well as the consequences for democratization, stability and geopolitics of the region. Considerable attention is paid to the study of the «Arab Spring» in individual countries (Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, etc.), identifying specific features of the protests and their consequences in each specific context. Many studies have focused on the analysis of the short-term and long-term consequences of the «Arab Spring», including political changes, economic difficulties, social transformations, the rise of extremism, and regional conflicts. Despite the fact that the main events of the Arab Spring took place more than a decade ago, the topic remains relevant due to the ongoing instability in the region, the incompleteness of political processes, and the need to understand the lessons of the past.

However, despite a significant amount of research, the topic of the «Arab Spring» continues to evolve. New data are emerging, understanding of the processes is deepening, and early conclusions are being rethought. There remain controversial issues and areas requiring further study, such as the long-term impact on political institutions, the role of external actors, the evolution of social movements, and the impact of regional conflicts.

Thus, it can be said that the topic of the Arab Spring is quite developed, but at the same time, further research remains important and relevant for understanding the dynamics of political and social processes in the Middle East and North Africa.

The object of the investigation is the phenomenon of the «Arab Spring» in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The subject of the investigation is the theoretical and conceptual opinions of Western, Arab, Russian and domestic scientists on the main factors in the emergence of the «Arab Spring» revolutions and their consequences at the regional and global levels.

The purpose of the dissertation is to study the «Arab Spring» revolutions in the light of world and domestic oriental studies, a comparative analysis of internal and external factors that led to the Arab revolutions of the 2010s, as well as the role and place of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the geopolitical alignment of external actors in the context of past events.

The implementation of the stated goal of the investigation involves solving the following tasks:

- take into account and highlight the opinions of Western, Arab, Russian and domestic experts to assess the political process in the Middle East;
- analyze the main directions of interpretations of the «Arab Spring» in the theoretical and conceptual ideas of world and domestic oriental studies;
- to characterize the «Arab Spring» as a modern phenomenon in the context of the theory of international relations;
- to determine the main endogenous factors of the events of the «Arab Spring» as the main triggers and factors at the beginning of revolutions in the MENA region;

- to establish the role and characterize the external influences that had one or another influence on the course of the studied events "ante et post", especially the influence of the USA, Turkey, Iran and Russia;
- to analyze the risks and threats from radical Islamist movements to political stability in the countries of Central Asia;
- to monitor the prerequisites for the spread of religious extremism in Kazakhstan among young people;
- to highlight a set of measures aimed at countering the threat of the spread of religious extremism and religiously motivated terrorism in Kazakhstan in light of the «Arab Spring»;
- to analyze the events of the «Tragic January» of 2022 in Kazakhstan in the context of their comparison with the scenario of the Arab revolutions of the 2010s.

The theoretical and methodological basis of the dissertation research were the works of domestic and foreign authors on the problem under study. A special place among them is occupied by theoretical works touching upon historically conditioned, political, economic, socio-cultural aspects of the life of Arab communities both in the past and in the modern era. The methodological foundations of the work are determined by the nature of the object and subject of the study. The work uses both general scientific - analysis, synthesis, and specialized epistemological methods - systemic, historical, comparative, interdisciplinary (complex) and structural-functional approaches, as well as content analysis and discourse analysis, which allowed the most complete and objective study of the problems of the processes caused by the events of the «Arab Spring».

The empirical and source base of the dissertation consists of the research of foreign and domestic scientists (scientific monographs, articles) published recently; official documents and laws of the Arab Muslim countries; resolutions and official documents of international and regional organizations; speeches, statements, interviews of political figures; materials of foreign and domestic and state news agencies; international and statistical data of the Arab states; data of a sociological survey conducted by the dissertation candidate during the research to find out the real prerequisites for the spread of extremism in Kazakhstan, as well as a report on the implementation of the State Program for Countering Religious Extremism and Terrorism in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2018-2022.

The chronological framework of the investigation is determined by 2011-2022.

The scientific novelty of the investigation consists in the fact that:

1. The «Arab Spring» is a series of anti-government protests, uprisings and armed rebellions in 2011-2013, caused by socio-economic problems and the desire for political freedoms. The results of the «Arab Spring» were the overthrow of a number of authoritarian regimes, but the region faced political instability, civil wars, migration towards Western European countries and the activation of radical extremist and terrorist movements; 2. Analysis of the determinants of the «Arab Spring» proves the central role of the endogenous factor. Many factors of an endogenous nature have been covered quite objectively and in detail in the Russian, Western, Arab and Kazakh scientific communities. Factors that had accumulated over decades included: socio-economic problems - unemployment, income inequality, poverty, corruption in government bodies, lack of social mobility and ineffectiveness of the economy and reforms, as well as political problems - authoritarianism, lack of democratic institutions, corruption, election fraud and inheritance of power;

3. The «Arab Spring» had devastating consequences for geopolitics in the region, Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia intensified the struggle for dominance in the region, in addition, regional

leadership became the subject of a fierce struggle between the United States and Western countries and Russia, which have differentiated significance for one or another country in the Arab world, ethno-confessional contradictions have intensified, which can aggravate the already fragile peace in the region against the backdrop of geopolitical confrontation;

4. The analysis of the events of the «Arab Spring» is carried out through the prism of the opinions of both domestic and foreign researchers. A comprehensive review of all currently existing views, including the points of view of Western, Arab, Russian and Kazakhstani orientalists, political scientists, philosophers and economists. This approach allows us to consider the «Arab Spring» from different angles, revealing the relationship between socio-economic problems and geopolitical factors in the MENA;

5. An interpretation of the «Arab Spring» is offered through the prism of the opinions of scientists grouped into five discursive categories, where each of these categories contributes to a deeper understanding of the complexity and versatility of the revolutionary processes that swept through the Arab world in 2010;

6. The issue of the impact of events in the Middle East on the national security of Kazakhstan requires careful study, since instability and anarchy create ideal conditions for the flourishing of crime and terrorism in the MENA region, and the processes of Islamization and radicalization are exported and directly threaten the security of Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan;

7. The level of religiosity of modern youth of the Republic of Kazakhstan as a whole does not go beyond the general trends for the whole of Central Asia, and the available, albeit very modest, empirical data allow us to draw quite definite conclusions, according to which the young generation of Central Asian countries is rather indifferent to the ideas of religious extremism and terrorism. These conclusions are evident from the social monitoring conducted among the youth of Kazakhstan, dedicated to the prerequisites for the spread of extremism and terrorism;

8. The event of «Tragic January» of 2022 in Kazakhstan, in general, in a state rich in resources and with socio-economic problems, gives reason to draw parallels with the «Arab Spring» of the 2010s. The lessons of these two events, which occurred in different geographic regions, have three common factors: social, domestic political and geopolitical.

The main provisions submitted for defense:

1. The «Arab Spring» is a series of anti-government protests, uprisings and armed rebellions in 2011-2013, caused by socio-economic problems and the desire for political freedoms. The results of the «Arab Spring» were the overthrow of a number of authoritarian regimes, but the region faced political instability, civil wars, migration towards Western European countries and the activation of radical extremist and terrorist movements;

2. Analysis of the determinants of the «Arab Spring» proves the central role of the endogenous factor. In the Russian, Western, Arab and Kazakh scientific communities, many factors of an endogenous nature were covered quite objectively and in detail. Factors that had accumulated over decades included: socio-economic problems - unemployment, income inequality, poverty, corruption in government bodies, lack of social mobility and ineffectiveness of the economy and reforms, as well as political problems - authoritarianism, lack of democratic institutions, corruption, election fraud and inheritance of power;

3. The «Arab Spring» had devastating consequences for geopolitics in the region, Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia intensified the struggle for dominance in the region, in addition, regional leadership became the subject of a fierce struggle between the United States and Western countries and Russia, which have differentiated significance for one or another country in the

Arab world, ethno-confessional contradictions have intensified, which can aggravate the already fragile peace in the region against the backdrop of geopolitical confrontation;

4. The analysis of the events of the «Arab Spring» is carried out through the prism of the opinions of both domestic and foreign researchers. A comprehensive review of all currently existing views, including the points of view of Western, Arab, Russian and Kazakhstani orientalists, political scientists, philosophers and economists. This approach allows us to consider the «Arab Spring» from different angles, revealing the relationship between socio-economic problems and geopolitical factors in the MENA;

5. An interpretation of the «Arab Spring» is offered through the prism of the opinions of scientists grouped into five discursive categories, where each of these categories contributes to a deeper understanding of the complexity and versatility of the revolutionary processes that swept through the Arab world in 2010;

6. The issue of the impact of events in the Middle East on the national security of Kazakhstan requires careful study, since instability and anarchy create ideal conditions for the flourishing of crime and terrorism in the MENA region, and the processes of Islamization and radicalization are exported and directly threaten the security of the Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan;

7. The level of religiosity of modern youth of the Republic of Kazakhstan as a whole does not go beyond the general trends for the whole of Central Asia, and the available, albeit very modest, empirical data allow us to draw quite definite conclusions, according to which the young generation of the Central Asian countries is rather indifferent to the ideas of religious extremism and terrorism. These conclusions are evident from the social monitoring carried out among the youth of Kazakhstan, dedicated to the prerequisites for the spread of extremism and terrorism;

8. The event of the "Tragic January" of 2022 in Kazakhstan, in general, in a resource-rich state with socio-economic problems, gives reason to draw parallels with the «Arab Spring» of the 2010s. The lessons of these two events, which occurred in different geographical regions, have three common factors: social, domestic political and geopolitical.

Scientific, theoretical and practical significance of the work:

The provisions of the dissertation can be used in further research on the problems of the «Arab Spring». The research materials can be used to analyze and predict international political processes, especially in the countries of the Arab world, with which Kazakhstan has close political, economic and cultural ties caused by the proximity of both historical, cultural and religious communities.

The results of the dissertation research can be used in lecture courses and special courses on oriental studies («Fundamental problems and concepts of modern oriental studies»), international relations and world geopolitics, political science, etc., for the development of textbooks on foreign regional studies, preparation of reference literature devoted to political processes in the Arab countries of the Middle East and North Africa, as well as in countering religious extremism and terrorism in the Republic of Kazakhstan and the countries of Central Asia as a whole.

The theoretical significance of the study lies, first of all, in conducting a comparative analysis of the conceptual opinions of scientists from Russia, the West, the MENA countries and Kazakhstan. A comprehensive analysis of the factors, processes and consequences of revolutionary events in the Middle East is studied. The presented dissertation research, devoted to a comprehensive analysis of the determinants of the emergence of protest movements in the MENA region and an assessment of the impact of the «Arab Spring» on the national security of

the Republic of Kazakhstan, is of great importance for obtaining objective knowledge about the processes taking place in the region and the development of mechanisms and effective strategies to counter their destructive consequences and neutralize potential threats.

Approbation of research results. The dissertation work was discussed and recommended for defense at a joint meeting of the Department of the Middle East and South Asia of the Faculty of Oriental Studies of the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and the Department of the Near and Middle East Countries of the Institute of R.B. Suleimenov Oriental Studies of the Science Committee of the Ministry of Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The main scientific and theoretical results, materials and conclusions of the dissertation research were presented in 16 publications (including: seven articles in publications recommended by the Committee on the Development of Scientific and Technical Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, two scientific articles indexed in the Web of Science and Scopus databases; two articles in journals of neighboring countries ("Young Researcher: Challenges and Prospects", Russia, 2018-2019), four in collections of international and republican scientific and practical conferences and one article in a scientific journal).

The structure of the dissertation is determined by the logic of the disclosure of the research topic, the specifics of the goal and the tasks to be solved. The dissertation consists of an introduction, three sections, a conclusion and a list of references.