

destructive doctrines undermining morals and spiritual values and rejecting the Sharia law.

2019.02.016. OLGA CHIKRIZOVA. "ECUMENISM" IN ISLAM: HISTORICAL MILESTONES IN OVERCOMING OF SUNNI-SHI'A ANTAGONISM // *Ekonomicheskie, socialno-politicheskie, etnokonfessionalnye problemy afro-aziatskih stran. Pamyati L.I. Rejsnera. Yearbook 2018, Institute of Oriental Studies, RAS. Moscow: IOW RAS, 2018. – 228 p.*

Keywords: Sunni-Shi'a antagonism, "ecumenism" in Islam, Najaf conference (1743), pan-Islamism, Jamā'at al-taqwā, R.M. Khomeini.

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This article is devoted to the problem of overcoming Sunni-Shi'a antagonism in the history of Islam. The author dwells on two major Islamic trends and proves that they are initiated "from above" and caused by political rather than religious motives.

The author examines the problem of overcoming Sunni-Shi'a antagonism in the history of Islam, and analyzes attempts to draw these two Islamic trends closer. The urgency of the subject is prompted by the more frequent confrontations of these trends accompanied by frequent bloodshed.

At the beginning of the article the author points to the fact that the problem of the confrontation of the two trends – Sunna and Shi'a – in Islam becomes very urgent again today. After the intrusion of the U.S. troops in Iraq in 2003 and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, after the "Arab spring" events, the situation in Islam has considerably aggravated. Sunni-Shi'a conflicts are ripening in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon. Struggle for

regional leadership in the Middle East is going on between Saudi Arabia and Iran, in which the two states often play on Sunni-Shi'a contradictions.

In this connection the author notes a very timely character of investigating the problem of ecumenism in Islam, historical attempts to draw Sunnites closer to Shi'ites and their analysis with a view to finding peaceful ways to resolve Sunni-Shi'a contradictions. The author determines the concept of ecumenism in order to understand whether it fits to describe the processes of overcoming Sunni-Shi'a differences. The concept "ecumenism" was initially used to term the Christian movement based on the idea to reach religious unity of all trends of Christianity. However, subsequently, the interpretation of "ecumenism" has become broader, meaning "inter-religious dialogue." But "ecumenism" in Islam will represent not philosophical deliberations on the subject of overcoming dogmatic distinctions between the Sunnites and Shi'ites. The author proposes to use another term, more apt to describe the process of Sunnite-Shi'ite contradictions, which took several stages.

Turning to history, the author notes that having begun as an argument concerning the views on the principle of electing the descendant of Prophet Mohammed, that is, due to the problem of succession of power, Sunni-Shi'a antagonism has acquired the nature of confrontation between the principles of faith, system of the perception of the surrounding world, and views on relations between religion and the state. In reality the dogmatic differences between Sunnism and Shi'ism are insignificant.

As to the world outlook, the Sunnites accept reality as a success and glory of Islam, and the Shi'ites regard the world as the kingdom of injustice and suppression.

The first attempt to overcome Sunni-Shi'a antagonism in the prolonged history of internal Islamic confrontation was undertaken by Caliph al-Mamun (813-833), who accepted moderate Shi'a concepts compatible with Sunni principles and tried to unite them ideologically in a single community of

believers. Another attempt was undertaken by Abbasid caliphs al-Qadir and al-Caim, who initiated joint accusing manifestos (in 1011 and 1052) signed by Sunni and Shi'a legal experts.

The most popular attempt to draw Sunnism and Shi'ism closer was made at the Najaf conference in 1743 organized by Nadir-Shah with a view to stopping theological disputes concerning the status of the followers of the Prophet. Nadir-Shah was striving to overcome religious and ethnic confrontation in his multinational army, which consisted of Uzbeks and Afghans believing in Sunna Islam, and Iranian Shi'as called "infidels" (kyafirs). "Ecumenical" policy of Nadir-Shah, which had mostly political than religious aims, came to an end after his assassination in 1747. At the end of the 19th century the Osmans also examined a possibility of drawing closer to Shi'ites on the basis of the ideology of pan-Islamism. This step was conditioned by two factors: outside threats weakening the Empire and propaganda of Shi'ism in Iraq, which led to mass conversion of Iraqi Arabs into Shi'ites. The Young Turks also pursued this policy, having mobilized Shi'ites who were fighting hand-in-hand with the Turkish army in the "sacred war" against the British.

In the 20th century nationalist ideology in two forms – pan-Arabism and state patriotism – was able to reconcile both Sunni and Shi'a on the basis of the common language, ethnic origin and striving to oppose western intrusion in their region. Moreover, the ideology of Arab nationalism opposed confessional predilections which threatened to undermine loyalty to the Arab nation and, consequently, fought against what was called "confessionalism." Nevertheless, Arab nationalism was unable to overcome Sunni-Shi'a antagonism. Arab nationalism, in its essence, was not fully secular and contained Islamic gradations, such as lauding the first generations of Muslims, or the Arab dynasty of the Omayyades, which negatively influenced Sunni-Shi'a relations. Many Shi'ites felt that Arab nationalism was a synonym of Sunnism aimed at preserving the domination of Sunnites and relegating Shi'ites to the position of second-grade Arabs. "Confessionalism" has become

the main derogatory term in Arab political thinking, and both the Sunnites and Shi'ites used it as a weapon, accusing each one of pursuing confessional policy.

The common outside threat to the independence and identity of the Muslim community has helped the Sunnites and Shi'ites to reach temporary solidarity. For example, this was demonstrated by demonstrations against the conquest of Libya by Italy in 1911, proclamation of jihad by the Shi'ites against the allied states at the beginning of World War I, joint actions at the early stages of the anti-British uprising in Baghdad in 1920, as well as the Shi'ite support of the Palestinians in their anti-Zionist struggle at the Muslim congress in Jerusalem in 1931. However, these episodes have not brought them to a prolonged peace between the Sunnites and Shi'ites.

In the late 1950s Iran and Egypt undertook another attempt to overcome this antagonism. In 1947 Islamic scholars of history of Iran and Egyptian political figures set up an association to bring Islamic sects entitled "Jamā'at at-Taqrīb" closer together. This movement reached the peak of its activity in 1959. This organization fell victim to the break-up of relations between Egypt and Iran after the latter recognized the State of Israel in 1960.

"Ecumenism" was used by states as an instrument of overcoming periodic political crises through religion, but all attempts failed through, and the sides have not reached religious reconciliation.

The ideology of ayatolla R.M. Khomeini, the leader of the Iranian revolution of 1978-1979, whose aim was to create a single Muslim community - "ummah" - was of a general Islamic character. After the "Islamic revolution" in Iran the "ecumenical movement" in the region has spread considerably largely due to the fear of Iran's leadership disliked by Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Turkey. Anti-Shi'ite literature emphasizing the destructive role of Persians and Shi'ites in the Arab history of Islam was spreading far and wide.

"Islamic renaissance" inspired by the Shi'ites has turned against the Shi'ites themselves. The Iranian regime and its ideology have become the main challenge to the Sunnite states and played the role of a factor consolidating the Sunna part of the Islamic world on the anti-Iranian foundations. This was graphically demonstrated by the creation of the Council of Arab states of the Persian Gulf in 1981 on the initiative and under the domination of Saudi Arabia. Tension in the relations between the Arab Sunna states and Iran continues to grow. In this connection Iran has started to implement the "soft power" policy in order to demonstrate to the world community that for the Iranian leadership Sunnism and Shi'ism are "twin-brothers."

Finally, the author makes a conclusion that all attempts to overcome the Sunni-Shi'a antagonism have been due not to the desire of the two sides to do away with disagreements in the Islamic world, but only to political expediency. In this connection the most correct term which could aptly describe the attempts to overcome Sunni-Shi'a contradictions would be not "ecumenism," but "rapprochement."

At present a process is going on, which is opposed to rapprochement. Sunni-Shi'a contradictions are purposefully fanned up by various forces with a view to aggravating them still further, and also sharpening the competition for regional leadership, broadening the religious foundation under the traditional struggle of states for the implementation of their national interests. However, in this situation there is still an opportunity for a new rapprochement on the ground of opposition to the common enemy - religious extremism and terrorism. Iraq headed by Shia al-Abadi demonstrates the first steps on the road to national rapprochement of the Sunni and Shi's communities which are trying to overcome their differences for the sake of the destruction of such a threat as the "Islamic state" grouping. But it is not possible to predict whether another attempt to reach Sunni-Shi'a rapprochement will prove successful, inasmuch as too many

factors influence the Middle-East policy and relations between Islamic countries.

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MUSLIM ATAEV. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN ISLAM // *English version of the article was submitted by the author for the bulletin "Russia and the Moslem World."*

Keywords: children's rights, family problems, matrimonial relationships, family law, Qur'an and Hadiths, Ustrushani, Sahib al-Fusul.

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Abstract: This article examines the significance and role of the rights of children in Islam, which are interpreted in the work of Muhammad ibn Mahmud Ben Hussein Majuddin Al-Ustrushan "Jami' ahkam al-şighar" ("Rights of minor children"), their peculiar properties, socio-economic, cultural educational background.

Uzbekistan embodies experience of the state starting with the ancient Sogdiana and Khorezm, Samanids state, Khorezmshahs, Timur and the Timurids, and the historical experience of our ancient nation with its age-old dream of its own state. The Uzbek state and law are inseparably combine unity of universal and national statehood, and develop in accordance with spiritual potential of our civilization accounting more than three thousand years.

Legal culture of people in Maverannahr derives from its civilization, common and state culture, morality of the nations. Long-living cultural tradition part of which is the legal tradition is operating not only in area of official statehood, but also in the moral regulation in the nations and people. Here is the value of historical, cultural and legal traditions of people of Maverannahr.