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ANATOLIY KHAZANOV. REVIEW OF MONOGRAPH BY  
A.I. VAVILOV "CATACLYSMS OF THE 'ARAB SPRING'"\* //  
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The Muse of history Clio often creates scenarios, which no writers with the richest imagination can invent. The "Arab spring" is among the most enigmatic historical phenomena of the past centuries. However, it is clear to all that this event was of crucial nature for all mankind. A historian should answer five questions pertaining to the event, namely, what, where, when, how, and why?

The main question is why?" Answer to it turns any historical work into an investigation, takes it beyond the limits of empirical description, and lends it analytical character.

And so, question No 1 – "What are the reasons for the 'Arab spring,' which destabilized the regions of the Middle East and North Africa for such a long time and created a serious threat to international security on a global scale?

A scientific reasoned answer to this question we can find in a new monograph by the well-known Russian scholar of the Orient, Professor Andrei Vavilov, DSc(History), entitled "Cataclysms of the 'Arab Spring.'"

On the basis of an analysis of a broad range of various sources and scholarly literature the author thoroughly studies the nature of the historic phenomenon, which was called the "Arab spring," and reveals its deep-lying internal and external reasons, and also vividly shows the crude outside interference in its affairs, which brought about a great ascent of terrorist activity, which then turned into a global challenge and threat to peace and security.

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\* "Biblos Consulting" Publishers, Moscow, 2018, 759 p.

Analyzing the reasons for Arab revolutions the author shows that a considerable role in them was played by the socio-economic, demographic and religious factors. A great many unresolved social problems have emerged in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa: unemployment, poverty, great class differentiation, social polarization, ethnic and confessional contradictions, diseases, etc.

The first heroic generation of the revolutionary leaders who headed the national-liberation revolutions (Nasser, Ben Bella, King Abdullah of Jordan, Arafat, and others) has passed away long ago, and new men came. As is known, revolutions are conceived by idealists, made by romantics, but it is scoundrels that use their fruits.

The first heroic generation of leaders in Arab countries was replaced by the second one of pragmatists of corrupt pragmatics.

As A. Vavilov justly emphasizes, along with these internal reasons of the "Arab spring," a great role was played by the external factor, namely, the interference of western powers, primarily, the United States, and the latter desires to preserve its dominating position in the life of the world.

The author cites concrete examples of certain Arab countries (Iraq, Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, and some others) to show the destructive influence of the West on processes of political and socio-economic transformation in Arab countries which gave birth to the dangerous phenomenon of the "Islamic state."

Rich factual material continued in the monograph vividly confirms the author's conclusion that the United States tried to force its political will and values on the independent countries of these regions. As a result, they have turned into a dangerous zone of permanent instability and protracted sanguinary conflicts, which maimed Syria and Iraq, Libya and Yemen. Destroying their statehood and vitally important infrastructure, undermining their territorial integrity, it threw them back for many long years into the backward past, and deprived of prospects of peaceful and beneficial development. Simultaneously, conflicts in certain countries created

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favorable conditions or dangerous destabilization in the neighboring countries of Africa, the Mediterranean area and in Central Asia.

It should be added that bloody wars unleashed by western powers in Iraq, Libya, Yemen and Syria have exerted pernicious influence on the culture of Arab countries (just remember the tragic fate of the famous Palmira). Culture is fragile; it is the first to be destroyed in the epoch of conflicts.

The author of the monograph pays much attention to the position of Russia toward the "Arab spring." He shows that from the very beginning of the "Arab spring" in 2011 the Russian leadership consistently proceeded from the need to find peaceful political solutions to any conflicts. Russia welcomed the legitimate strivings of the Arab people for liberation from all shackles of the past and independent development. Moscow has always called for settling all disputes through a broad dialogue, taking into account the interests of all sections of society in each country.

A. Vavilov's monograph reveals the deep-lying internal and external reasons of the Arab revolutions early this century. It describes true facts and ideas about the "Arab spring," and also gives an opportunity for a further elaboration of this problem.