

# Between Ibn Khaldun and Ibn Tamiyya: Islamic Socio–Political Ideal and Dynastic Autocracy (Reflections on the Tide of “Arab Spring”)\*

## *İbn Haldun ve İbn Teymiye Arasında: İslami Sosyo–Politik İdeal ve Hanedan Otokrasi (“Arap Baharı” Geleneğine Yansımalar)*

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**Abstract:** Comparing Ibn Khaldun’s theory with extensive material accumulated by historians and anthropologists who studied the phenomenon of symbiosis between nomadic and sedentary societies of the Middle East, North Africa and Central Eurasia, one may argue that in fact, Ibn Khaldun has created a generalized theoretical model of the particular society in which he lived and which he knew very well. Fortunately, Islamic culture provides us an example of authentic social theory of traditional Muslim society, developed on the base of classical Muslim historiography, i.e. the theory of ‘Abd al–Rahman Ibn Khaldun (1332 – 1406).

**Keywords:** Ibn Haldun, Ibn Tamiyya, Arab Spring

**Öz:** Ortadoğu, Kuzey Afrika ve Orta Avrasya’nın göçebe ve yerleşik toplumları arasındaki ortak yaşam fenomenini çalışan tarihçi ve antropologlar tarafından toplanan kapsamlı materyal, İbn Haldun’un teorisi ile mukayese edildiğinde bir kişi, İbn Haldun’un içinde yaşadığı ve çok iyi bildiği, belirli bir toplumun genelleştirilmiş teorik modelini oluşturduğunu iddia edebilir. Neyse ki İslam kültürü bize, klasik Müslüman tarih yazıcılığı, yani Abdurrahman İbn Haldun’un (1332–1406) teorisine dayalı olarak geliştirilen geleneksel Müslüman toplumun gerçek sosyal teorisinin bir örneğini sunar.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İbn Haldun, İbn Teymiye, Arap Baharı

## Introduction

Contemporary global trends are closely related to the overcoming of modernity as a social project with re–conceptualization of its components: nation–state and political nationalism, industrialism, technocracy, secularism, polarization of global powers etc.

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At the new phase of social transformation called 'Arab spring', the problem of correlation between modernization and traditional societal structures of Arab and Muslim societies of the Middle East and North Africa again becomes the central subject of discussions by scholars, political analysts, public intellectuals and journalists.

External character of modernization in the Arab (and wider Islamic) world, provided to a more or less extent by the collision between traditional Muslim societies and European colonial powers, and its difficulties which this collision resulted in, has been discussed by researchers for a long time. (See Lewis, 2002, where this discussion was most summarized).

Thus we can observe an obvious crisis of secondary or 'catching-up' modernization strategy in Arab world, resulting in crisis of nation-state institutions, which implemented such a strategy. On the other hand, modernization as such (whatever different be its temps, measures, achievements in each country which entered into revolutionary process of 'Arab spring') alongside the globalization of information flows, forced the rise of social expectations of the population in these countries and catalyzed the protests against regimes, which – despite all the differences of their institutional design, the ideological and political orientation of the picture – have in common an authoritarian or autocratic type of power.

In this situation explanatory models developed outside the purely Western sociological theory increase their heuristic value.

Fortunately, Islamic culture provides us an example of authentic social theory of traditional Muslim society, developed on the base of classical Muslim historiography, i.e. the theory of 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn Khaldun (1332 – 1406). (Al-Azmeh, 1981, 2003; Simon, 2002).

Comparing Ibn Khaldun's theory with extensive material accumulated by historians and anthropologists who studied the phenomenon of symbiosis between nomadic and sedentary societies of the Middle East, North Africa and Central Eurasia, one may argue that in fact, Ibn Khaldun has created a generalized theoretical model of the particular society in which he lived and which he knew very well.

As it was stated by R. Simon (2002), from this perspective, Muqaddima Ibn Khaldun can be considered alongside such major theoretical works on social evolution with Karl Marx's *Kapital* and Max Weber *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Economy and Society). Just

as Marx developed a political economy of capitalism, and Weber did it for its sociology, Ibn Khaldun's model of historical and political dynamics between *badw* and *hadar* with the 'asabiyya as a major dynamic factor can be treated as a theory of such type of society that Weber himself called later the "pre-modern patrimonial empire" (Simon, 2002: 225).

Thus, Ibn Khaldun's conception becomes more relevant for the understanding of long-term trends in the historical development of traditional Muslim societies of the Middle East in general, the more obvious is "under-modernized" character of these societies, which to a greater or lesser – but always notable – degree preserve features pre-industrial character in its social and political structure.

In this perspective, from our point of view, we may accept as a working hypothesis, that most of contemporary Arab regimes during the process of unfinished 'catching-up' modernization have preserved some typological features of pre-modern patrimonial or autocratic political structures (and some of them, especially the Gulf states, simply conserved pure classical autocracy, just adding to them a constitutional democratic façade, which gives them modern nation-state look) (cf.: Wynand & Duvenhage, 2014, especially pp.35–36 on sultanistic regimes).

Regarding this there is a number of important issues related to the structural features of the political logic of the development of this type of societies. Inter alia, we should include here the problem of relationship between the Islamic socio-political ideal and dynastic autocracy (*sultaniyya*) and its theoretical development by Ibn Khaldun (Simon, 2002: 148–166, cf. Barthold, 1963). Moreover, we believe this is a central question of the historical sociology of traditional Muslim society, and it is crucial in a collision of Muslim societies with the phenomenon of modernity. In fact, the whole categorical apparatus of *Muqaddima* and its central concepts 'umran *badawi* – 'umran-*hadari* – 'asabiyya is an attempt to describe a model of the dynamic interaction between these two political paradigms. A category of 'asabiyya in this context becomes the key to understanding these dynamics.

A "classical" Islamic social model promoted by the 'ulama' is one of urban religion, ethics, and political culture. This model is based on the ideal of the autonomous theocratic community (*ummah*) managed on the basis of the God-given law (*shari'ah*) interpreted, in particular, by consensus (*idjma'*) of the community, whose spokesmen in the early period of Islam were the Companions of the Prophet (*Sahabah*), and in the later era – *Shari'ah* scholars.

Social organization of pre-Islamic Mecca, close to polis of late Antiquity (see, for example, Petrushevsky, 1966: 9–10), with political heterarchy and anti-monarchist political ethos, from the earliest stages of Islamic history prevented the formation of hierarchic control systems of autocratic type (Korotayev, 1999, 2003). Uniting Muhadjirun, Ansar and Jews led by Muhammad also did not mean establishment of his autocratic personal power.

As was observed by W. Barthold,

“like other Arab cities, Medina before Muhammad had no regular political organization <...>. Using his influence, Muhammad stopped the strife between separate elements of people and united them in the name of war for the faith into one ‘God’s community’, included, however, those citizens, who remained faithful to the ancient Arab religion or Judaism too <...>. Muhammad’s community was initially only a unity of previous kins and tribes. However even such a unity under the reign of one person regarded by to some Arabs as a violation of their previous freedom (Barthold, 1966a: 304).

This theocratic community, led by a charismatic leader – the Prophet – performed as an alternative to both of pure tribalism, and models of political organization in the framework of hierarchical structures – “kingdoms” and chiefdoms (Korotayev, 1999: 23–36).

So, governmental system, formed in Arabia on the eve of Islam, could be characterized as a “tribal democracy” (Beliaev, 1966; Negrya, 1981). Such a “democracy”, brightly reflected in a treaty between Muhammad and main groups of Yathrib (al-Madina), which formed a Medinan ummah, ‘ulama’ (so called “Constitution of Medina”), had been closely related with tribalization processes in Arabian societies in the context of decline of ancient states and chiefdoms. This relation however never had a character of a direct correlation. This theocratic community, led by a charismatic leader – the Prophet – performed as an alternative to both of pure tribalism, and models of political organization in the framework of hierarchical structures – “kingdoms” and chiefdoms (Korotayev, 1999, 2003: 23–36).

Let us note that the concept of ummah semantically associated with imam (derived from the root amma) and umm (‘mother’), refers to the idea of spiritual continuity, patronage and patron–client relationship (wala’/djiwar [Allah]) on the new level. Such a divine patronage differed not only from political relationship not only in ancient kingdoms of

Southern and Northern Arabia like Nabatea, Palmira, Saba', but also from traditional tribal relationships like alliances (hilf), patronage (wala'), brotherhood (mu'akhat), which were the basis of forming of a new world pre-Islamic Arabia of the 5th–6th centuries c.e., with its kingdoms and chiefdoms, based on dynamic interrelation of settled and nomadic population, in which the later almost always dominated (e.g. Lakhmids, Ghassanids, Kindites, partially Himyar) (Negria, 1981; Piotrovsky, 1977; 1984; 1985; Korotayev, 1998, Rezvan, 1987; 2001: 74–81).

Despite the fact, that political power exercised by the Prophet had sacred legitimation, this power, initially relied on its voluntary recognition within the framework of a social contract, was more charismatic than autocratic one. Due to this reason a great part of tribal 'democratic' institutions had been preserved within the umma of Medina. This became apparent immediately after the death of Muhammad, when Muslims faced the challenge of election of a new leader, transition of his power and strategies of its legitimation. If the Rashidun caliphs had been anyway elected by the community consensus (even represented by its elite of Muhadjirun), under the Umayyads a tendency of transformation of caliphate into autocracy (mulk) had prevailed. Let us note that, contrary to the widespread interpretation, their autocratic power was not completely without any religious legitimation (Watt 1971; Crone 2003; Alekseev, 2010).

Mihna of the 'Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mun (813–833) most clearly reflected established by this time ideas of Sunni 'ulama' about the status of Caliph and limits of his power. A great part of 'ulama', initially supported 'Abbasids when they were anti-Umayyad opposition movement, were at the period of Mihna in the strong (however passive), opposition to the ruling 'Abbasid caliph, who attempted to impose Mu'tazili dogma of 'createdness of the Qur'an' as an official creed. Such a position of 'ulama' was, finally, of the main factors which led to the situation, when ecclesiastical institution and official orthodoxy in Islam has not developed (Nawas, 1994; 1996).

Muslim legal doctrine (fiqh) since its formative period of the 8–9th cent. BB., has been developed by individuals, who were not as usual engaged in official service and often opposed to the political power. As it was stated by Oleg Bolshakov, Muslim law of that period was "more bourgeois, than the society in which it was implemented" (Bolshakov, 1984: 290). Social ideal formed by the 'ulama' in the framework of such a doctrine "is a kind of city-dweller (bourgeois) utopia; getting to know it, you feel how a wealthy merchant or craftsman, tries to set it, worrying not to disturb himself" (Bolshakov, 1982: 205). The most paradigmatic example of such a free citizen, merchant and 'alim is Abu Hanifa, who had been imprisoned for refusing to take the post of judge. However the

most radical exponents of political views of that social groups were, of course, Hanbalites, whose spiritual father Ahmad b. Hanbal became a leader and a symbol of anti-Mutazilite fronde of middle urban class of the Caliphate in the 1st half of the 9th century.

In this regard, it does not seem accidental that the Hanbali social and political ideals which stepped back after failed attempt of al-Qadir to establish their 'aqida as a normative orthodoxy, then displaced during the Seljuk era by the state-controlled system of regular religious education in madrasas, which was based primarily on the Shafi'i school, these ideals arose again on the agenda in the form of neo-Hanbalism after the destruction of the Caliphate state institutions as a result of the Mongol invasion. (cf. here Ibn Khaldun's views on training of 'ulama' and it's correlation with 'asabiyya (2004: 168–169)) Political views of Taqi al-Din Ahmad Ibn Taymiyya, reflecting neo-Hanbalite interpretation of Islamic sociopolitical ideal in the most strict manner are of particular interest (Laoust, 1939; 1948; 1986; 1994; Kirabayev, 2005; Matochkina, 2011).

In his treatise *al-Siyasa al-shar'iyya* (2007) Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328) provides his political theory in the context of relationship between the ruler and the people.

Ibn Taymiyyah believed that the rule of al-khulafa' ar-rashidun was a model of an ideal political system, and saw a contradiction between such a Righteous Caliphate and autocratic power (*mulk*), The later might be tolerated only if the government comply with the principle of justice ('*adl*) a does not violate Shari`a. According to Ibn Taymiyya, Muhammad established in Medina a social and political order, which, however, could not be called a state (*dawlah*) (Khan, 2007: 3–4, cited by: Matochkina, 2011: 81).

He criticizes both Sunni concept of caliphate (*khilafah*) and Shi'i theory of *imamah*. The Qur'an clearly defines the goals and objectives of prophethood of Muhammad, but does not consider the appointment of political authority. Ibn Taymiyya believes that neither Qur'an, nor Sunna contains foundations for these theories. Islam is for him a social order, based on the supreme power of Divine legislations (*shar'*) (Khan, 2007: 65, Matochkina, 2011: 84).

Ibn Taymiyya believed that the social and political order established in Medina by the Prophet was not a "state" (*dawlah*). All Members of Medina Community submitted to Muhammad as a Prophet, not as a ruler. Despite he made juridical judgments, led wars, concluded treaties, all this he did as a Prophet basing on Divine revelation, but not as a

head of non-existent State. These activities did not determine his prophetic mission, but were its logical consequences. His followers submitted to him when he had no political power as well as when he became a leader of a powerful community. He was not elected or officially introduced into power by his people and had no responsibility to them for his decisions. In other words, the Prophet got his sovereignty not by people's will, nor by their decision, but God gave him his authority. The Qur'an clearly describes the character and goals of Muhammad's prophetic mission but does not consider the purposes of political authority.

All this means that no constitutional theory can be based on the political practice of the Prophet. Ibn Taymiyya does not deny that Muhammad's rule had a kind of political nature. However, he insists that prophetic power has a unique character and his example can not be a foundation of political theory in Islam. According to him, Umayyads and 'Abbasids called themselves *khulafa* not because they were successors of Muhammad as a prophet, but just for the reason that they had authority over Muslims and administered the Divine law (*shar' Allah*) as a fundamental legislation of the state (Khan, 2007: 108).

Ibn Taymiyya did not agree with the idea of sultan authority as delegated to him by the Caliph. In his view, actual Caliphate was pure fiction. According to him, the Imam should be appointed by *ahl al-shawka* – those, who have a real authority and influence in the community. Imamate is supreme power and authority, which can not be implemented by the support of just a few people, excluding cases when they represent masses. (Khan, 2007: 136).

State power should be based not on the loyalty of a few *'ulama'*, but on the cooperation of the whole society, especially with the support of *ahl al-shawka*, who are, according to Ibn Taymiyya, people, who independently of their profession and life status are held in respect by the community. [Matochkina, 2011: 89–90].

At the same time the concept of *ummah*, professing Islam, was considered by Ibn Taymiyya much more clear and detailed than the theory of the state. *Ummah*, as the recipient of Divine revelation, is responsible for maintaining and spreading the faith, and organization of the state is one of its functions. The idea of a unified and universal community was particularly important in times of Ibn Taymiyyah for several reasons. In the Muslim community was concerned lawyer Shiite propaganda that undermined the foundations of Islam. With regard to the external environment, Ibn Taymiyyah was impressed by the Crusaders and the Mongols. These dangers were a constant threat to

free the Muslim world, the core of which was represented by the Mamluk empire in Egypt and Syria . This historical situation dictated the need for a united front , strict discipline and understanding among Muslims (Khan, 2007:110). Khilafah is determined by support ahl al-shawka and average people (djumhur), being not a goal in itself, but an instrument for implementing the interest of the ummah. The Ummah to which as a whole the Divine Revelation is intended, is responsible for preservation of faith and its spread and protection, whereas political organization is just a function in this process. Muslims, in the view of Ibn Taymiyya, can establish independent and sovereign states in any place, the most important condition is just that they must be guided by Shari'a.

Tasks assigned to the ummah cannot be met without the support of the government. However imam is just an executive who has to administer law and imply shari'a in the life of community, he has no sanctity or certain privileges. Community has a right to depose the ruler if he does not fulfill conditions of a "treaty" (mubaya'ah, 'ahd). Thus, the ruler is needed just as an instrument of fulfillment of God's will in the real life (Matochkina, 2011: 101–103).

Thus, it can be argued that neo-Hanbali political model assumed certain democratic tendencies, being an expression of the spirit and values of wealthy citizens, which, according to Bolshakov was "more bourgeois" than the surrounding society.

### **Ibn Khaldun on Islam, Power and Solidarity**

Ibn Khaldun, however, differentiates such an "Islam of `ulama' " from the Islam of the Prophet and Companions, as he sees it. The main factor of this difference is a level of `asabiyyah.

According to him, first Muslims did not receive the knowledge of their din neither from scholarly works, nor from education and training.

Their fiqh was based on what they were directly given from the Prophet. Prophet's authority (su`dud) and a power of their faith made them not needed no external imperative (wazi`), such as kingship (mulk) etc.

All this is based, as Ibn Khaldun discovers, on generally greater closeness of rural people ('deserters' badawiyin) to the good in comparison with inhabitants of urban centers (ahl al-hadar) Ibn Khaldun explains this by the Islamic concept of an initial purity of human

spiritual nature (*fitrah*), which is more characteristic to *badw* as primordial form of social being of humans (Ibn Khaldun, 2004, c. 161–175).

This means that in early Islam, convergence of the two forms of “solidarity” took place: a tribal (*‘asabiyyah qabyaliyyah*) and spiritual ones (*‘asabiyya al-islam*).

However “Islamic *‘asabiyyah*” was short lived and by the same “natural reasons” which made Arabs not able to obey any power, but forced them to rule over others, was transformed into autocracy (*mulk*). Religious preaching retained its importance as a mobilizing factor for new *‘asabiyyah* groups, in particular, to the Abbasids and Alids (Simon, 2002, p. 152–160).

Thus, the cyclical dynamics of Ibn Khaldun’s vision reflects a constantly renewed search for genuine authority, which in the absence of the Prophet is replaced by patriarchal or charismatic leader nominated by an *‘asabiyya* group. Then he becomes a hereditary autocratic ruler when *‘asabiyya* of his group has been exhausted. This leads to the completion of the cycle and creates conditions to capture the power by the new *‘asabiyya*.

It is no coincidence that the legacy of Ibn Khaldun after long neglect was revived in the 17th–18th centuries in the Ottoman Empire, which needed in this period a retrospective legitimation of Sultan’s power (it was then, as was shown by W. Bartold (1966a), when an idea of transmitting *khilafah* by the late Abbasids to Selim I to Yavuz has been developed).

This is important also because that Turkic factor itself holds a special place in the Khaldunian conception. Despite the fact that the *Kitab al-‘Ibar*, the introduction to which, in fact, the *Muqaddima* is, is a summary of the history of predominantly Arab Maghrib, Ibn Khaldun, who spent most of his productive life in Mamluk Egypt, could not choose but be interested also in the history of *Mashriq* and the Middle East, which at that time were largely ruled by Turkic dynasties. Moreover, the analysis of the conceptual logic of *Muqaddima* shows us that its author considers the Turks as a special invariant of “nomadism”, different from the Arab–Berber *badw* of North Africa, which he was thoroughly familiar to. This difference between the Turks and both Arabs and Berbers allows Ibn Khaldun to give them in his conception of the historical process, an important (even not obvious at the first sight) place.

The most prominent feature of the Turks due to the geographical conditions of their origin, from the Khaldunian standpoint, is a special kind of 'asabiya generated among them, which is not subject to the cyclic laws of the rise and fall of dynastic states within three or four generations. Turkic 'asabiya allows its holders not only to conquer great territories, but also to retain power over them for a long time, thereby creating what Fernand Braudel would call structures de long durée.

Ibn Khaldun is trying to identify mechanisms to maintain 'asabiya analyzing the political practice of Turkic dynasties known to him, especially Saldjuk and Turkish and Circassian Mamluks in Egypt and Syria (it is worth noting that the latter, like their predecessors Ayyubids, despite their non-Turkic origin, Ibn Khaldun considered as clients of Turkic dynastic houses and thus, as an organic part of Turkish political elite).

In this regard Ibn Khaldun makes an important remark concerning gradual weakening of wazirate under Saldjuks and putting in the forefront deputy governors (na'ib) from slaves recruited to the military service (like mamluks), or from families close to ruling family and brought up in militarized spirit by atabegs. Both of the two groups remained under patronage (wala', wilaya) of "a mother dynasty" and vassalage.

Such a mechanism of elite reproduction supported by permanently renewing of 'asabiyya, which was already based not only on the blood ties, but also on idea of political unity (which, that is important, also rested upon religious eagerness), promoted a long standing symbiosis between "nomadic"/badawi (at least by spirit) Turkic dynastic rulers and urban/ hadari culture of peoples subject to them. This symbiosis, in view of Ibn Khaldun, was of important factors of preservation of Islamic civilization ('umran) of Mashriq when Dar al-Islam was under double threat from Mongols and Crusaders. This allowed him to evaluate Turkic rule as a Divine mercy. In the same context, should be considered a historic meeting between Ibn Khaldun and Tamerlane in 1401 in Damascus. Rightly fearing for his life, Ibn Khaldun, however, not only made amnesty of Mamluk prisoners and guarantees of their personal safety possible, but also praised the political wisdom and wide outlook of the great Turkic-Mongol ruler. Perhaps he could see in it some features of a dialectical synthesis between badw and hadar in history.

### **Theoretical Conclusions**

Thus, we believe that the general structural specificity of contemporary Arab societies is, above all, that these societies being not completely modernized, preserve to various degrees major system features of Ibn Khaldun's 'umran.

The latter, in turn, is complementary symbiosis of urban and non–urban forms of life that are fundamentally different from each other by generating capacity of ‘asabiyya, that cannot be reduced to a consanguine solidarity, but must be understood as a ‘group feeling’ in the broadest sense.

In modern conditions hadar is the political structure of the civil society of modern type, and badw – proletarianized and marginalized sections of society that are not enough included in or excluded of the structure of modern social and economic relations. This includes the Bedouin tribalism itself but not limited to it.

It is these social groups that provide social basis for the emergence of solidarity groups, and their ‘asabiyya forth , in fact, determine their political future.

Thus, in our view, the key factor in the actual political change is the presence of strong ‘asabiyya groups able to gain power in a situation of crisis of former state structures. Apparently, the traditional tribal structures (where they exist) have no such powerful ‘asabiyya. Indeed, the traditional ‘asabiyya qabyaliyya is enough just to raise a rebellion, but it is not enough to gain power, not to mention its defense.

Of particular importance is Ibn Khaldun’s observation that the most successful is ‘asabiya, combined with religious idea. Undoubtedly the most organic combination of these two factors in the framework of the traditional organization of Muslim society is a religious brotherhood (tariqa).

It is important to note that we are talking about the principle of the organization of such a brotherhood generating ‘asabiyya ties and strengthens solidarity of its members through religious motivation. Actually mysticism, which is usually associated with Sufism, which provided a framework the classic type of brotherhoods formed in, has no fundamental significance here.

A much greater role played by voluntary discipline of brotherhood members and their consolidation around a charismatic leader – shaykh or murshid. In this sense, the difference between, say, a Sufi tariqa shadhiliya, relying on the theosophical teachings of Ibn ‘Arabi, and the “Muslim Brotherhood”, criticizing “al–Shaykh al–Akbar” from positions close to neo–Hanbalism and Salafiyya, is merely an ideological label. Characteristically, the head of “The Brotherhood” is designated by the quasi–Sufi term al–murshid al–‘amm.

In case of failure of these new regimes in the stabilization of the situation, which is quite possible due to their secondary nature and, therefore, weakness, global actors may gamble in the region on the structure of tariqa type. In this case, it is the Sufi brotherhood because of more organic nature of its structure and the traditional character of the charisma of their leaders, can be far more effective than a more institutionalized structures of an “ikhwani” example.

The precedent of such developments can be observed in post-Mongol period in the history of the Middle East, when the success of the Ottoman conquest of the Arab countries in the situation of the general crisis of local dynasties and the Mamluk regimes was largely achieved by the support to the Ottomans provided by tariqa structures and Sufi ideology (in particular, the cultivation of the teachings of Ibn ‘Arabi).

Among other things, it is relying on Sufism, combining both elite and popular religious metaphysics, that contributed to almost complete marginalization, as a political force, their main competitors – neo-Hanbalis, who, along with a number of Sufi brotherhoods were among the main ideologists resistance to Mongols.

Of course, this scenario is relevant only in case of a consensus of global and regional political actors on the need for stability in the Islamic world. However the project of such a macroregional stabilization is faced with a significant risk due to the fact that the whole Middle East and North Africa is in the area of artificially drawn borders that can easily be torn down in the course of the revolutionary chaos in the “Greater Middle East”.

In this situation, the role of countries which pretend to play a role of regional leaders, especially Turkey and Iran, increases. They may be brought to the role of the macro-regional stabilization patrons. In this case, we can not exclude the possibility of formation of macro-regional blocs and patronage alliances of political elites, and traditional structures with strong ‘asabiyya may play a significant role in the process of their consolidation.

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