

Subjective feeling of happiness and a level of social and political instability: towards a cross-cultural perspective

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This paper aims at analyzing the subjective feeling of happiness as a factor operationalizing T. Gurr's theory of relative deprivations. The further analysis using the methodology of qualitative comparative research allows to reveal the destabilizing potential of this indicator in the context of different combinations of political instability factors.

Subjective feeling of happiness as a factor of social and political destabilization

Despite the notable successes in the field of economic and social development in the 2000s in the Arab world, the population of many Arab countries showed a decrease in the level of satisfaction with standard of living¹. The phenomenon of rapid economic growth that coincides with the period of reduction of subjective well-being is called a paradox of "unhappy development", according to which people living in countries with high rates of economic growth on average feel less happy than those who live in countries with lower levels of economic growth². With regard to the Arab world this paradox could have a basis represented by a level of education through which young people formed an idea they could find a more prestigious job after graduation compared to the generation of their parents³. The widening gap between the actual and the desired level of well-being, in turn, exacerbates the negative attitude of the population to the problems of inequality and social injustice.

The American sociologist J. Davies in 1962 put forward the hypothesis that the period of growth inspiring people that is dramatically followed by a decline, could generate a revolutionary situation. He says that the revolution is likely to occur when a long period of objective economic and social development will be accompanied by short period of the opposite state. People then subjectively fear that the positions obtained with great effort will be lost. This gives them a revolutionary mood⁴. Thus, in his opinion, protests are provoked not by absolute poverty itself but rather by the excessive demands on the standard of living established during the well-being and development period.

The mechanism of accumulation of the protest potential in this case could be described as following. At some point needs drop a few (often as a result of population growth or unsuccessful war...), but the expectations continue to rise by inertia. The gap creates frustration, the situation seems to be intolerable and humiliating for people, they are looking for the guilty,

¹ Arampatzi E., Burger M. et al. Unhappy Development: Dissatisfaction with the Life in the Wake of the Arab Spring. *International Association for Research in Income and Wealth*, 2015. URL: <http://iariw.org/egypt2015/unhappydevelopment.pdf>.

² See: Graham C., Lora, E. Happiness and health satisfaction across countries // Graham C., Lora, E. (Eds.) *Paradox and Perception: Measuring Quality of Life in Latin America*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2009; Deaton A. Income, health and well-being around the world: evidence from the Gallup World Poll. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 22: 53-72, 2008.

³ Cammett M. C., Diwan, I. *The Political Economy of the Arab Uprisings*. Perseus Books Group, 2013.

⁴ Davies J. *Toward a Theory of Revolution // American Sociological Review*, 1962. P. 5.

and aggression no longer directed outwards, turns *into* the social system. Emotional resonance provokes riots⁵.

Fig. 1. Davies' J-curve.

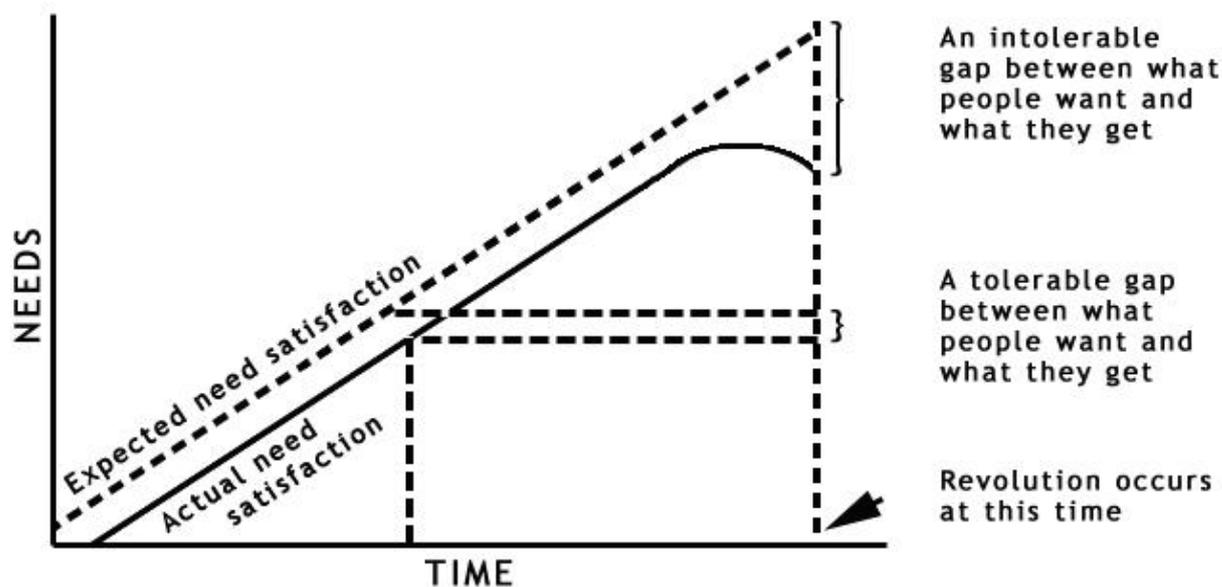


Fig. 1 shows the dynamics of the needs satisfaction and the revolutionary situation, according to Davies' concept. The solid line represents the dynamics of satisfaction the needs (economic, political, etc.), while the dotted line reflects the dynamics of expectations. At the same time, point X on the x-axis represents time of heightened tensions that may be followed by a social explosion caused by a number of subjective factors⁶. It should again be emphasized that in this case we do not speak of the revolution taking place in a period of sustained growth, but that the period of recovery inspiring people with some hopes is replaced by a sharp decline. In the case of the Arab spring, we can speak about the consequences of the global economic crisis of 2008 that in many countries has replaced the period of recovery, with the result that the real financial situation of the population confronted their expectations⁷.

One of the conditions for the transition of social protest of the latent state into an active phase could be the readiness of the protesters to ignore the risk to which they may expose themselves, as well as a high assessment of the probability of acquiring the desired if the political regime is changed. T. Gurr's book "Why Men rebel?"⁸ analyzes a "civil struggle", the confrontation and collision of quite large social or ethnic groups that make up a single society. Gurr thinks that intra-societal conflicts are the most destructive, and the main danger of internal wars, unlike external, is that they split the society, deprived its integrity. According to Gurr, there were waves of such conflicts: the first wave of this kind relates to the late XIX – early XX

⁵ Назаретян А. П. Универсальная история и синдром Предкризисного человека. История и синергетика: методология исследования / Ред. С. Ю. Малков, А. В. Коротаев. М.: КомКнига/URSS, 2005. с. 141–166.

⁶ See: Коротаев А.В. Кривая Дэйвиса на Украине? Полит.Руб 09.04.2014. URL: <http://polit.ru/article/2014/04/09/ukraine/>

⁷ See: Шульц Э. Управление социальным протестом как технология и содержание «Арабской весны» // Международные процессы, Т. 13, №1. С. 90.

⁸ Gurr T. Why Men Rebel? Princeton University Press, 1970.

centuries, and the second one was triggered by the Russian Revolution and the Civil War, while the third one is related to the post-war period. It is obvious that the revolutionary wave of the Arab Spring fits quite logically in the described sequence and could be considered using this concept.

One of the key ideas of Gurr's theory is that the expectations provoked by the modernization processes are unsatisfied, which makes people to take to the streets⁹. To explain and predict political violence the sociologist uses the general *theory of relative deprivation*. He defines relative deprivation as the discrepancy between the value expectations and the value capabilities perceived by individuals". However, special attention in this case should be paid to the adjective "relative", which means that this condition is not absolute and is the result of comparing of people to others, i.e. different social groups may have differently perceive almost identical circumstances¹⁰. Relative deprivation is associated with a gap between the need for a good on the one hand, and the conditions upon which people have to rely, on the other, and inevitably leads to frustration that could ultimately provoke political violence.

The authors of the report of the International Association for Research in Income and Welfare¹¹, defining happiness as a subjective well-being or the extent to which a person evaluates the overall quality of his/her life as a favorable, given by Veenhoven¹², distinguish factors of life level dissatisfaction among the population faced the protests of the Arab Spring. Thus, according to the report, they are the following: dissatisfaction with constant unemployment and the lack of good jobs, dissatisfaction with corruption and nepotism, the restriction of freedom in authoritarian states¹³. On the basis of these assumptions and the data of numerous surveys the report analyzes the perception of the standard of living by the Arab countries population. It is noted that the perception of happiness depends both on the objective conditions and subjective factors. If the former include gender, age, marital status and education level, the latter is connected with expectations about family relationships, work, public institutions, etc. Thus, the authors conclude that the uprisings of the Arab Spring were preceded by a decrease of satisfaction with life and feeling of happiness in spite of the economic progress in the past few decades, as well as point out that the analysis should take into account not only the objective conditions but also the subjective awareness of deficiencies in these conditions.

This assumption is highly relevant when we speak about subjective factors reflecting the expectations of the population and their vision of certain problems. According to the data of the research project "World Values Survey" exploring the values and beliefs of people and their changes over time, the results of the surveys at the beginning of anti-government protests in

⁹ Gurr T. Persistence and Change in Political Systems, 1800-1971 // American Political Science Review. Vol. 68, 1974. P. 148-504.

¹⁰ Gurr T. Why Men Rebel? Princeton University Press, 1970.

¹¹ Arampatzi E., Burger M. et al. Unhappy Development: Dissatisfaction with the Life in the Wake of the Arab Spring. *International Association for Research in Income and Wealth*, 2015. URL: <http://iariw.org/egypt2015/unhappydevelopment.pdf>

¹² Veenhoven, R. Conditions of Happiness. Dordrecht/Boston: Reidel, 1984.

¹³ In this case it is necessary to emphasize that this is a subjective perception of each of these factors by the population. Thus, the level of unemployment or corruption some of the Arab countries were at the same level with the EU countries and the USA. In addition, in relation to unemployment in Egypt there was observed the following trend: after the reforms of 2004, it decreased, then it increased slightly during the economic crisis, and after it began to decline again. But at the same time, the unemployment rate remained high among young people, whose numbers continued to grow. With regard to restricting freedoms, in this case the example of Egypt is also very illustrative, since in the beginning of anti-government protests the freedom level was estimated by demonstrators in comparison with Western countries, but then during the interviews protesters themselves admitted that restrictions were significantly weaker during the presidency of Mubarak than after the overthrow of his regime.

2011 showed that the largest number of respondents who answered that they do not feel very happy or very unhappy, lived in such countries as Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain and Lebanon. At the same time, the least amount of such responses is recorded in Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

The World Happiness Database demonstrates the level of subjective perception of happiness and is based on surveys according to which the level of happiness is ranked from 1 to 4 or from 1 to 10. We apply to the last option in this paper since it is it that represents materials on all of the countries under analysis in the period preceding the beginning of anti-government protests, in 2010. Thus, the following information was obtained:

Country	Subjective feeling of happiness
Tunisia	5,13
Egypt	4,66
Libya	4,92
Syria	4,46
Bahrain	6,1
Morocco	4,66
Algeria	5,34
Yemen	4,35
Lebanon	5,03

Source: World Database of Happiness¹⁴.

So, we face the task of operationalizing the absence of subjective feeling of happiness in the Arab countries in the period before the start of anti-government protests and the Arab Spring, accordingly, T. Gurr's relative deprivation theory. For these purposes, we referred to the subjective feeling of happiness indicator. But since we found no studies in which this factor would be considered as a way to operationalize the relative deprivation, we need to test this hypothesis. A method of correlation analysis was applied in this case. It showed the average strength but statistically significant correlation between the level of subjective happiness index coefficients and socio-political instability¹⁵:

		Happ2010
Destab	Pearson Correlation	-,438*
	Sig. (1-tailed)	,035
	N	18

The analysis was applied in relation to the Arab world as a whole, i.e. twenty-two countries – members of the League of Arab States. This result allows us to conclude that the

¹⁴ Veenhoven R., et al. World Database of Happiness, 2010. URL: <http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl/>

¹⁵ The coefficients of the index of social and political instability have been calculated according to research of A.V. Korotaev and others: Korotayev A., Issaev L., Shishkina A., Malkov S. Y. Developing the Methods of Estimation and Forecasting the Arab Spring Events // *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies*, Vol.7, №4, 2013.

operationalization of relative deprivation theory by T. Gurr is possible on the example of such a factor as the subjective feeling of happiness.

Towards the identifying the potentially destabilizing factors

For further research, a qualitative comparative analysis will be used mainly on the basis of Veenhoven World Happiness Database. We also add such factors as active involvement of women in the protests, the intra-elite conflict as well as radical football in the political sphere of Arab countries, that conventionally belong to the category of cultural, to the analysis to identify the potentially destabilizing combinations of factors and the role of subjective feeling of happiness in them.

Thus, a distinctive feature of the anti-government protests of the Arab Spring was quite active (compared to previous periods) *women's participation in the protest movements*. Women's participation in demonstrations may serve as a vivid example of inclusion in protest activity based on the growing level of national identity: people were not only to protect their own interests, but were willing to take responsibility for the socially vulnerable strata of society.

Duverger in 1955 wrote that real political change would be possible only when the society will be able to change the dominant political discourse and destroy a deep-rooted belief of the natural inferiority of women¹⁶. After almost fifty years political Inglehart and Norris found that the gender gap exists in almost all societies and at all levels of political participation, and women are less active than men both in traditional forms of activity (discussion, voting, membership in parties, etc.) and non-traditional (protests, demonstrations and boycotts). This gap can be explained by various factors – structural, religious, cultural and traditional, but in post-industrial societies it is significantly reduced in the case when social differences are blurred on such indicators as education or religiosity. In addition, Inglehart and Norris point out that the gender gap in political participation is reduced when it comes to protest activity as well as the fact that the modernization of society, secularisation and generational change help to eliminate gender gaps in political area¹⁷.

New information technologies and, in particular, social media allowed women to participate in demonstrations of the Arab Spring as organizers, activists and journalists. Due to the fact that men tend to dominate in the region's space of traditional media, cyberactivism allowed women to express themselves within a particular country and internationally. Social media has become a tool for them to participate in revolutionary action, blurring the distinction between social and political networks.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that women's participation has become quite an important part of the implementation of protest potential, it has not yet been analyzed sufficiently, because it is often regarded as part of the feminist movement¹⁸. At the same time, Arab women's participation in the protests could be hardly associated with the feminist movement, and even feminist thought, which, in turn, played an important role in the kind of equalization of protest actions participants of both genders who in this case were united by common revolutionary targets.

¹⁶ See: Duverger M. *The Political Role of Women*. Paris: UNESCO, 1955. P. 130.

¹⁷ See: Inglehart R., Norris P. *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change Around the World*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Pp. 123-126.

¹⁸ See: Khamis S. (2011). The Arab "Feminist" Spring? *Feminist Histories and Institutional Practices*, Vol. 37, №3, 692-695.

It is noteworthy that the study of women's perception of the political situation in the crisis as well as their vision of the revolutionary activity helps to better understand the transformation of dissent and the degree of frustration inherent in the post-revolutionary period following the overthrow of the former regime.

Apparently, the perception of the political situation in a country by those or others groups of population is connected with the disappointment of the current situation. The Arab spring has shown that there a *conflict within the political elite*, in some cases, may be one of the most destabilizing factors. The examples here are Egypt where there was a conflict between the military elite and influential group of businessmen headed by Gamal Mubarak, the son of President; Tunisia, where there was a confrontation between the army and the secret services the number of which was several times higher than the military; Yemen and Libya where a key role in the processes of social and political instability within the conflict was played by tribal elite. We should also note that Egypt, Libya and Yemen were characterized by a situation in which special discontent of various social and political groups has been caused by the prospect of power transfer to the son of the leader staying in power for decades.

With regard to Libya, we can say that, being a tribal country, it underwent an intra-elite conflict, the dividing line of which passed between the tribes of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. Being a native of Tripolitania, Muammar Gaddafi stayed in power for over 40 years, which caused discontent among the tribes of Cyrenaica deprived of the possibility of political participation, as well as obtaining the share of national wealth they claimed, especially given the fact that major oil fields of Libya are located in its eastern part¹⁹.

The events of the Arab spring also showed the absence of grounds for intra-elite conflict in Syria and Bahrain. Throughout 2011 the ruling regime in Syria has demonstrated a high degree of consolidation and enjoyed the support of the army and the system opposition organizations inside the country. Being in power of Alawites was not doubted by the members of the elite, there have been no large-scale defections of military and armed forces, and law enforcement agencies throughout 2011 remained the guarantor of the stability of Al-Assad regime. In addition, the representatives of Syrian diplomatic missions abroad demonstrated their commitment to the official mainstream. The protracted nature of the conflict in this country was determined first of all by the presence of foreign factors including the danger of military intervention.

In case of Bahrain, we also have no grounds to speak about intra-elite split, since the entire political elite of the country is composed exclusively of representatives of the ruling house of Al-Khalifa. In this case, there has been a confrontation between the Sunni minority in power and the Shiite majority deprived of opportunities for political participation. The deprivation of most of the population of the opportunity to realize their political rights predetermined the unfolding of long-term conflict in the country in the absence of foreign factors of political instability²⁰.

Another notable feature of Arab Spring demonstrations was the role that they have been played by *radical football fans*. Mahfoud argues that football is very important for the Arab

¹⁹ See: Исаев Л.М., Шишкина А.Р. Сирия и Йемен: неоконченные революции. - М.: Либроком, 2012; Исаев Л.М. Племенная революция по-йеменски. №4, 2012. С. 240; Korotayev A., Issaev L., Shishkina A., Malkov S. Y. Developing the Methods of Estimation and Forecasting the Arab Spring Events // *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies*, Vol.7, №4, 2013.

²⁰ Ibid. Pp. 240-241.

world to unite individuals, classes and nations under its banner. Leaders and governments use it as a political tool including the suppression of opposition²¹.

Football has become a national passion for many Arabs since its introduction by the British colonialists in Egypt at the end of the XIX century, and by the 1920s it has become a symbol of national heritage²². For decades, football was forming an alternative public space in the Middle East providing a place for the expression of anger and frustration against authoritarian regimes²³. At the same time the ranks of radical fans are comprised mainly by young people of the working class sharing the culture of confrontation - with another team, state, etc., that can sometimes develop into acts of political violence²⁴.

Manifestation of the radical activities of football fans during the Arab Spring protests and after them have reached their greatest scope of course in Egypt. However, it should be noted that, for example, in Tunisia the movement has also been quite active, for many years "Ultras" were collaborating with the organization "Takriz" positioning itself as a "virtual think tank and street resistance network of resistance"²⁵. Since 2009, these entities jointly announced the mobilization, at the same time fueling discontent in the Internet²⁶.

QCA analysis

Nine countries were selected for further analysis: five of them (Tunisia, Egypt, Lybia, Syria and Yemen) faced either a change of political regime or a stalemate, and four countries where there were anti-government demonstrations, but they did not pass through such circumstances – Algeria, Morocco, Bahrain and Lebanon. On the basis of various statistical data, the analytical reports of international organizations as well as researches there were gathered empirical data on the indicators of socio-political instability in the Arab Spring countries discussed above. It is worth noting that all selected for the analysis factors except the absence of the subjective feeling of happiness are presented in qualitative form, so we immediately proceed to dichotomized data table:

Country	Absence of subjective feeling of happiness ²⁷	Women's participation in protests ²⁸	Football fans in political space ²⁹	Intra-elite conflict ³⁰
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²¹ Mahfoud A. Sport, Politics and Society in the Arab World. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

²² See: El-Sayed M. Love at First Sight. Al Ahram Weekly, 2004. URL: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2004/2010/s082.htm>; Lopez Sh. Football as National Allegory: Al-Ahram and the Olympics in 1920s Egypt // History Compass 7(1). Pp. 282-305.

²³ Dorsey J.M. Pitched Battles: The Role of Ultra Soccer Fans in the Arab Spring // Mobilization: An International Journal 17(4).

²⁴ Kuhn G. Soccer vs. the State: Tackling Football and Radical Politics. Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2011.

²⁵ Dorsey J.M. Pitched Battles: The Role of Ultra Soccer Fans in the Arab Spring // Mobilization: An International Journal 17(4). P. 413.

²⁶ See: Pollock J. Streetbook: How Egyptian and Tunisian Youth Hacked the Arab Spring // Technology Review 14(5), 2011. Pp. 70-82.

²⁷ See: Veenhoven R., et al. World Database of Happiness, 2010. URL: <http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eur.nl/>; Arampatzi E., Burger M. et al. Unhappy Development: Dissatisfaction with the Life in the Wake of the Arab Spring. *International Association for Research in Income and Wealth*, 2015. URL: <http://iariw.org/egypt2015/unhappydevelopment.pdf>; World Values Survey Wave 6: 2010-2014. World Values Survey, 2015. URL: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>; World Happiness Report, 2012. URL: <http://worldhappiness.report/ed/2012/>; Hedengren D. Huge gaps in "happiness" between Middle East Countries. *Your Middle East*, 2013. URL: http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/features/huge-gaps-in-happiness-between-middle-east-countries_12377; Happiness Index: Why are Arab Countries Ranked Low? *The Regional Center for Strategic*

Tunisia	0	1	1	1
Egypt	1	1	1	1
Libya	1	1	1	1
Syria	1	0	0	0
Bahrain	0	1	0	0
Morocco	1	0	1	0
Algeria	0	0	1	0
Yemen	1	1	0	1
Lebanon	0	1	0	1

The fact that data columns were presented in different formats makes no difficulties while dealing with QCA since the main analysis is carried out using dichotomized data tables.

Thus, the absence of *subjective feeling of happiness* has been encoded mainly on the basis of statistical data of Veenhoven World Happiness Database as well as on the materials of Gallup researches, the World Values Survey and a number of analytical materials. As a result, we can see that all the countries studied, with the exception of Bahrain and Lebanon, show the absence of the subjective feeling of prosperity among their people. So, as the threshold 5 has been set according to Veenhoven, and the value of [1] or [0] were given to each of the countries.

To evaluate the factor of the role of women in the protest actions we addressed to Gallup Institute, Arab Media Group Reports, as well as the research literature on relevant topics. In accordance with the sources pointed in the table every country was coded in terms of women's participation in protest movements directly in demonstrations and protests, or in training in the virtual space.

An indicator of the presence of *football fans in the political space* of a country has been assessed in relation to each of the cases firstly on the basis of Dorsey's studies whose works on this subject form a broad view of the role of fans in the historical and political processes of the Middle Eastern states. In addition, a number of other sources of information has been used,

Studies. Cairo, 2015. URL: <http://www.rcssmideast.org/en/Article/229/Happiness-Index-Why-are-Arab-countries-ranked-low->.

²⁸ See: Arab Social Media report. Dubai School of Government, 2011. URL: <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/dsg/unpan044212.pdf>; Retta J. Consequences of the Arab Spring for Women's Political Participation // *Journal of Women and Human Rights in the Middle East*, Iss. 1, 2013. Pp. 20-30; Radsch C. Women, Cyberactivism, & the Arab Spring. Muftah, 2012. URL: <http://muftah.org/women-cyberactivism-the-arab-spring/>; Opening Doors: Gender Equality and Development in the Middle East and North Africa. The World Bank. Washington D.C., 2013. P. 135; Mogahed D. Arab Women and Men See Eye to Eye on Religion's Role in Law. Gallup, 2012. URL: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/155324/arab-women-men-eye-eye-religion-role-law.aspx>; Lengel L. Arab Women, Social Media, and the Arab Spring: Applying the framework of digital reflexivity to analyze gender and online activism // *Journal of International Women's Studies*, Vol.13, Iss. 5. Pp. 30-45; Stephan R. Cyberfeminism and its Political Implications for Women in the Arab World. *E-International Relations*, 2013. URL: <http://www.e-ir.info/2013/08/28/cyberfeminism-and-its-political-implications-for-women-in-the-arab-world/>.

²⁹ See: Dorsey J.M. Pitched Battles: The Role of Ultra Soccer Fans in the Arab Spring // *Mobilization: An International Journal* 17(4), P. 411-418; Dorsey J.M. Football Pitches: A Battleground for North Africa's Future // *The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer*, 2011. URL: mideastsoccer.blogspot.sg/2011/03/football-pitches-battleground-for-north.html; Mahfoud A. Sport, Politics and Society in the Arab World. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011; Pollock J. Streetbook: How Egyptian and Tunisian Youth Hacked the Arab Spring // *Technology Review* 14(5), 2011. Pp. 70-82.

³⁰ See: Korotayev A., Issaev L., Shishkina A., Malkov S. Y. Developing the Methods of Estimation and Forecasting the Arab Spring Events // *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies*, Vol.7, №4, 2013; Исаев Л.М., Шишкина А.Р. Сирия и Йемен: неоконченные революции. - М.: Либроком, 2012; Исаев Л.М. Племенная революция по-йеменски. №4, 2012. С. 240; Исаев Л.М. Демократическая зима в Северной Африке // *Неприкосновенный запас: дебаты о политике и культуре*. №3, 2011.

whereby [0] or [1] values have been affixed for the countries. It is worth noting that in this case there occurred a division of the Middle East and North Africa: the presence of football fans turned out to be more expressed precisely in the latter region.

The intra-elite conflict was analyzed and coded on the basis of a number of Russian scientists research on the processes of social and political instability in the Arab countries during the Arab Spring and factors that played the most important role in them. Thus, in accordance with the results of these studies, the intra-elite conflict inside proved to be most pronounced in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Lebanon.

As a result of qualitative comparative analysis several configurations were obtained, among which there occurred two similar combinations that lead to a positive outcome (a change of political regime in the country). Thus, at this stage we can state the absence of contradictory configurations and move on to procedures of separate analysis of positive and negative configurations using Boolean minimization.

The analysis is performed in accordance with the following relationship:

$$Destab. = f(Happ., Wom., Soc., Confl.),$$

where Destab is an outcome, expressed in a change of political regime in the country, Happ. is the absence of a subjective feeling of happiness, Wom. is women's participation in the protest, Soc. is the presence of football fans in the political space of the country, and Confl. is the presence of intra-elite conflict.

In the first case (positive configurations), we obtained the following results:

$$Destab = Confl.*Soc.*Wom.$$

$$\text{or } Confl.*Wom.*Happ.$$

$$\text{or } \sim Confl.*\sim Soc.*\sim Wom.*Happ.$$

The results show that for the positive outcomes, a change of political regime *may be caused* by a combination of factors such as the intra-elite conflict, the football fans in the political field and the active participation of women in the protests (this explanation corresponds to the cases of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya); the intra-elite conflict, women's participation in protests and the absence of subjective feeling of happiness (this explains cases of Egypt, Libya and Yemen), as well as a combination of the absence of intra-elite conflict, absence of football fans in the political space, absence of participation of women in the protests and the absence of the subjective feeling of happiness (Syria).³¹

The same procedure for negative outcomes lead to the following results:

$$Destab = \sim Happ.*Wom.*\sim Soc.$$

$$\text{or } \sim Wom.*Soc.*\sim Confl.$$

according to which a change of political regime *is not a result* of a combination of factors such as subjective feeling of happiness, women's participation in the protests and the absence of football fans in the political space (this explanation corresponds to the cases of Bahrain and Lebanon); the absence of active participation of women in the protests, the presence of football fans in the political space and the absence of intra-elite conflict (this explains the cases of Morocco and Algeria).

QCA has a function that allows to include in the analysis the potentially possible

³¹ One should keep in mind that in this case terms “intra-elite conflict”, “absence” or “presence” of this or that factor should be referred to the chosen methodology and reflects the threshold values: thus, the “absence” means that numerical value of the factor is below the threshold, etc.

configurations that are not found in the existing base of cases in order to reduce the obtained formulas and to come to inter-cases generalizations. Thus, there are 4 variables and, in accordance with the formula $|k|=2^n$ where $|k|$ is a total number of possible configurations, and n is a number of conditions for the analysis, 16 potentially possible configurations are obtained ($2^4=16$). However, only 8 configurations correspond to the observed cases, while the rest belong to the set of potential combinations. By excluding the obviously poorly performing variations and coding the outcomes for each of the configurations accordingly, the minimization is carried out first for positive configurations and then for negative.

In the first case (positive outcome) we got the result, according to which the necessary but not sufficient condition for the change of political regime is a combination of factors such as the absence of subjective feeling happiness and active participation of women in the protests. The intra-elite conflict has been defined as a sufficient but not necessary condition for the change of political regime.

As for the negative configurations, the result of minimization in this case has shown that the absence of intra-elite conflict is a necessary but not sufficient condition to maintain political stability, while the combination of the subjective feeling of happiness and the absence of football fans in the political space of the country are sufficient but not necessary. It was found that such factor as the active participation of women in the protests also did not play a decisive role in this case, its importance is manifested only in relation to the destabilization of political regime.

The results give us reasons to conclude that three of the selected factors: the absence of subjective feeling of happiness, the active participation of women in the protests and the intra-elite conflict, could play an important role in the emergence of social and political instability and, as a consequence, lead to a change of political regime in a given country. At the same time, such factors as the presence of football fans in the political space of the country and the active participation of women in the protests are capable of catalyzing the protests, and play a significant role in the development of the destabilization process, but only if a revolutionary mechanism has already been launched: the results of the qualitative comparative analysis showed that these factors do not lead to a change of the political regime at standstill.

Therefore, we have grounds to conclude that subjective feeling of happiness could be regarded as a factor of social and political destabilization since it reflects the relative deprivations in the countries with comparatively high rates of economic growth. This factor has shown its destabilizing potential in combination with other factors referring to the category of "cultural".

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