The conflict between the West and the World of Islam: Causes and Dynamics in the Historical Dimension

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Abstract- The article is devoted to the problem of conflict / dialogue between the Western world and the world of Islam. The subject of the article is the factors that impede the dialogue of these worlds as two world civilizations, create cultural and political, cultural and historical conditions for the existence and sharpening of deep divergences between these civilizations, and in modern conditions of a transboundary, increasingly unstable and uncertain world - transfer these differences in the context of mutual claims and exclusivism in relation to each other. The purpose of the study is to identify the main historical causes and dynamics (historical stages) of the emergence and sharpening of the conflict between European and Islamic civilization: first between Islam and Christianity, and then – in Modern and Contemporary times - between Islam and the West. The following methods have been used: civilizational comparative studies, comparative religion, terminological analysis. The dominant versions of the history of the conflict between Islam and Christianity, Islam and the West are analyzed in the world and Russian science. The concept of the underlying factors of this conflict, due to the nature of both civilizations, the tense cultural and historical ties of Islam and Christianity, is proposed.

Keywords: Islam and Christianity; Islam and the West (European civilization of Modern and Contemporary times); the East, religion, civilization, conflict, factors and historical dynamics of the growing conflict between Islamic and European civilizations, historical versions of this conflict.

I INTRODUCTION

Important, in no small way, crucial events have occurred in the Muslim world in the past decade. In early 2011, the Arab countries were swept by a wave of political protests and uprisings against the ruling regimes (the events of the "Arab spring"); the role of the fundamentalist (Salafi) trend of Islam has increased; open social networks for Muslims appeared around the world; as a result of the Islamization of the political process in some Muslim countries, political Islam (Islamism) developed, which in turn led to the intensification of radical (extremist) movements around the world, a turning point in the rise of Islamic radicalism was the invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the United States and its Allies, which led to the formation of the largest military terrorist organization of Islamic

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radicals, banned in Russia - the so-called Islamic State - IS, which proclaimed itself a global caliphate in June 2014. These and other events that began to occur in connection with Islam, around Islam, for Islam or against Islam attracted wide attention of the world political and scientific community. Moreover, issues related to the role of Islam in world history and world politics, its relationship with other civilizations have become relevant. It is, first of all, about a long historical confrontation, the ongoing conflict between Islam and the West, with the Christian world.

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II   Islam vs West: terminological analysis

Considering the problem of the conflict between the West and Islam, it is necessary to introduce terminological certainty into the value-semantic construction (topology) of the description of its world subjects at the very beginning. It is primarily about such ambiguous concepts as: "Islam", "Christianity", "West" and "East". In cultural and historical terms, the concept of "West" cannot be separated from the concept of "Christianity." The fact is that cultural and civilizational processes of Western origin, for example, differentiation, separation of religious and political spheres had Christianity as their main identifying marker, ideas about the Christian world and its space. (This feature of the old topology of European civilization is highlighted by the famous Norwegian specialist in using the image of the "Other" I.B. Neumann in international relations [9, p. 53]. The contrast between Christianity and Islam as the main thing in this topology of the European world before the Renaissance was the main axis of the European identity "We Are They" (Christianity vs Islam). After the Renaissance, this opposition has been preserved but the European civilizational identity has received (in terms of the era of the Reformation of the schism of the Christian denomination into Catholic and Protestant denominations) a new foundation - culture, the presence or absence of secular education [5, p. 348]. On this basis, a broader cultural and geographical concept of "West" has appeared. This concept includes not only Christianity as the most important element of European religious identity, but also a number of other components that emphasize the special level of European civilization: worldview (freedom and human rights), geo-economical (about indoor world market), public and political (representative democracy), the moral and ethical and psychological and mental until the lifestyle of millions of

people living in Europe and America. Given the dynamics of the development of European civilizational identity, the conflict between European and Muslim civilizations should be divided terminologically into two parts, different in meaning and content: the conflict between Islam and Christianity before the era of Modern times in Europe (before the period of bourgeois-democratic revolutions in Europe, the separation of religion from state, the creation of national states) and the conflict of Islam with the West, which began in the second half of the XIX century and continues to this day.

However, separating the world of the West and the world of Islam we are faced with the problem of cultural and geographical symmetry of correlation of these worlds. The presentation of European identity as the identity of a person in the Western world carries the idea of the cultural hegemony of European peoples, their superiority over non-European peoples. As shown by an American intellectual of Arab origin E.V. Said in his famous book "Orientalism", this idea, as it was affirmed in European cultural self-consciousness, gave rise to a whole system of representation, the image of the East as a whole as an unchanging, uniform and extremely peculiar object of action of the West itself [10]. The image of Islam in this picture of the world is inseparable from the image of a Muslim as an eastern person. However, as E.V. Said admitted himself in the afterword to his book, the concepts of "West" and "Orientalism" began to be perceived by readers as one term, and this term began to be used to represent the West as an enemy of Islam, Arabs, and many other non-European peoples. Isn't it more correct in this context to talk about the conflict between the West and the East as a struggle between two opposing systems of representation of the culture of mankind? (West vs East). Will we not get in this case a more interesting construct expressing the polarization of the perception of world history, culture and politics: West vs East, or East vs West? However, in reality, the terms "East" and "Islam" do not correspond to each other in many respects. The main differences are geographical, religious and mental. The world of the East, as it is obvious, is geographically wider than the Muslim world. In the East, many other religions and religious communities are present and dominate, in addition to Islam (there are more than a thousand of them in India alone). Mental psychological maps and lifestyle of millions of people throughout the vast cultural and geographical space of the East are very heterogeneous. In this heterogeneity of eastern societies, one can easily lose or underestimate the originality and complexity of the Islamic world itself.

Today, all the leading representatives of scientific and humanitarian knowledge recognize the existence of a special Islamic civilization. Arisen on the Arabian Peninsula in the VII century AD, Islam as a cultural and historical formation of a civilizational level rapidly spread to North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula, as well as to the regions of Central Asia, Hindustan and Southeast Asia. As a result, many separate cultures and sub-civilizations have developed within the world of Islam, including Arab, Turkic, Persian, and Malay. "Islamic civilization" and "Muslim world" in this regard are more similar to the "Christian world" and the "Christian civilization" of the Middle Ages and the "western world" and "western civilization" in modern and recent times.

The issues of the influence of Islam on medieval Europe and the influence of Europe on the Muslim world in modern and contemporary times have attracted and continue to attract the attention of historians (works by J. Le Goff, M. Lombard, W.M. Watt and others). The presence of a conflict component in this mutual influence of Europe and Islam is recognized. However, a complete picture of the conflicts that accompanied the interaction of Europe and the Muslim world at its various stages is still missing.

III Causes of conflict in relations between Europe and Islam: basic versions

Three main versions of the history of the conflict between Islam and Christianity, Islam and the West can be distinguished. If the first version connects this conflict primarily with the wars that Europe waged with the Muslim world, the second is of a cultural and civilizational nature emphasizing that the third version is associated with the origin of Islam as a religion. According to the first version, the history of the conflict between Islam and the Christian world begins from the time of the Reconquista and the Crusades. However, it must be recognized that this conflict began much earlier, when the first Muslim units of the future Caliphate began to fight against the border troops of Byzantium in the early years of the emergence of Islam. The history of open conflict, indeed, begins with Islamic-Christian wars, but later on this conflict took on other forms including relatively peaceful competition and rivalry. It is about the development of Muslim civilization after the capture of Iran and Central Asia by Muslims. For a long time, Islam was "stewing" in the Iranian civilization pot until it has become a world religion.

In the Middle Ages, world Islamic civilization successfully competed with Christian in many areas: philosophical thought, art, literature, science and education, technology, ideals and values of social progress. Muslim conquests everywhere were accompanied by an increase in the activity of contacts between the population of different countries and an increase in foreign trade. It was the Muslims who, for the first time after the antiquity, created trade routes in large territories of the Middle East, Southern, Western, Central and Eastern Europe, along which large caravans regularly transported goods and silver money to various countries of the Eurasian continent. A more active trade policy of the Caliphate or its individual parts was determined in the IX-XII centuries. Maintaining a high standard of living in large and medium-sized urban centers of the Caliphate turned out to be almost entirely due to the success of international trade, which provided sales of handicraft products of these centers, created the conditions for acquiring a variety of necessary raw materials. European countries, in turn, felt a direct dependence on this trade, which provided a wide supply of spices, peppers, sweets but at the same time large masses of fabrics, especially silk, as well as various metals, including precious metals and minerals. Many of the countries surrounding the Caliphate experienced a boost due to the transit trade routes of the Caliphate passing through their territory. However, the weakening of the military activity of the Caliphate led to the decline of its military contingents, their discipline and, consequently, the ability to defend the conquered. The turning point came in favor of Christian civilization after the discovery of America and the new sea routes, the Renaissance and Enlightenment, industrial revolutions and the creation of nation-states. This point of view is shared by many scholars, both in the West and in the Muslim world [1; 2; 3; 4].

According to the second version, the confrontation between Christians and Muslims dates back to the time of the appearance of the prophet Muhammad himself. Some domestic [15] and foreign authors [13] write about this. They argue that the Koran contains many polemical statements opposing the Christian faith, and not only opposes it, but also offers reasonable arguments to refute it. Moreover, they cite many authors who lived in different periods of the Caliphate. Indeed, in the first centuries of the history of Islam, Muslim scholars and theologians wrote many books in which they challenged the purity of the Holy Scriptures (Ibn Hazm), the doctrine of the Trinity of God (Abu Isa al-Varrak), the social structure of Christian society (al-Jahiz) convincingly proving that both the Old and

New Testaments prophesy about Muhammad (at-Tabari). These disputes continue to this day. Nowadays, polemic materials on this subject are being published in large quantities, for example, treatises by Ahmad Didat, a Muslim preacher from South Africa [13].

Christian scholars and theologians often entered into a fierce debate with these and other Muslim authors. In these disputes, they reasonably objected to the authority of Muhammad as a prophet, providing numerous evidences refuting the claim that the Koran is the Word of God. However, often the harsh statements of both sides were very biased and unbalanced. The most beautiful ideals of one faith were opposed by its supporters to the examples of the vicious practice of the adherents of another faith, while the arguing parties were often aware of the dishonesty of their method. Of course, such disputes laid a solid foundation for the emergence of a cultural and civilizational conflict between Islam and Christianity in the future. Perhaps the history of the Reconquista, the Crusades and the bloody pages of the history of the Caliphate were associated with these disputes, in particular. Thus, the history of the conflict between Islam and Christianity took many forms over many centuries: military conflicts, competition and rivalries in peacetime in all spheres of life, and the cultural and civilizational gap that began with the emergence of Islam as a religion and continues to this day.

The third version relates the emergence of conflict to the time of the birth and formation of Islam as a religion. We are talking about the problem of the relationship of the three Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Islam and Christianity. According to many historians, Islam as a religion arose and was formed under the influence of Christian civilization. Some Muslim and Christian theologians agree with this. Here are the keywords that have been spoken at the World Conference of Muslim Scientists "Who are they - people of the Sunnah? ("Akhlus-Sunnah-Val-Jama a") in Grozny, August 25-27, 2016), where the problem of the dialogue between Islam and Christianity was raised. "The Prophet Muhammad repeated more than once that he was not the first and the only one prophet, that there were prophets before him. In the Koran, any Christian or Jew will find the name of Adam, Noah, or Abraham, whom the apostle Paul rightly calls "the father of all believers." Moses (under the name of Musa), and his brother Aaron (under the name of Harun), and almost all the leading characters of the Old and New Testaments appear in the same place. And, finally, the Koran is surrounded by the name of Jesus, the Son of the Virgin Mary with great respect and reverence. Isa (in the Koran) is the son of Mariam born of the Virgin. This is emphasized in the Koran, and maybe it is the only one of all religions (except Christianity) that recognizes the special, unique nature of Jesus of Nazareth" [14]. This assessment emphasizes the community, kinship of the three Abrahamic religions. But precisely this kinship laid, in our opinion, the foundation of the future cultural and civilizational conflict between Islam and Christianity for many years to come. We are talking about the main prophets that are mentioned in the Old and New Testaments. Islam, as a new world religion, not only recognized the former prophets, but called them "their own". Thus, the life and work of the Jewish and Christian prophets formed the basis of the plot of many ayahs and suras of the holy Koran. The Abrahamic prophets themselves were firmly entrenched in the Islamic pantheon of the prophets losing in the hierarchy only to Muhammad, as the new and the last. In this common spiritual space, disputes and judgments of various kinds began to arise regarding the hierarchy of the prophets between Muslim and Christian scholars as mentioned above.

At the same time, it should be recognized that at the stage of the formation of Islam as a religion there was no constant conflict between Islam and Christianity, otherwise the Abrahamic prophets could not have firmly established themselves in the future Muslim religion. Moreover, for a certain period, a certain combination of

Islamic and Christian cultures, Muslim and Christian civilizations took place. The conflict arose when Islam united with politics and became a caliphate. The caliphate needed expansion and power; Islam expanded in parallel with the caliphate until it reached the borders of the Christian world. Christianity, bordering on the Caliphate, at that time was also closely connected with politics and power. It is, first of all, about the Eastern Roman Empire of Byzantium.

IV Stages and key moments of the Islam conflict with Christianity and the West

Now we make a short excursion into history in order to study the main stages of the emergence and intensification of the conflict between Islam and Christianity and the West in more detail. We will not focus on those versions that have been outlined above in the periods under review.

The initial Arab-Islamic expansion, which took place from the beginning of the seventh century to the middle of the eighth, established the rule of Muslims in North Africa, the Iberian Peninsula, the Middle East, Persia and North India. The borders between Islam and Christianity had stabilized for about two centuries. Then, at the end of the eleventh century, Christians regained control of the western Mediterranean, conquered Sicily, and captured Toledo. The Crusades began in 1095, and for one and a half centuries Christian sovereigns tried, with decreasing success, to establish Christian rule in the Holy Land and in the adjacent areas of the Middle East, until in 1291 they lost Acre, their last stronghold in the Holy Land. Meanwhile, Ottoman Turks appeared on the scene, creating the Ottoman Empire (1299-1922) and the Ottoman Caliphate (1517-1924). First, they weakened Byzantium, and then conquered most of the Balkan Peninsula, as well as North Africa, captured Constantinople in 1453, and Vienna in 1529. For about a thousand years, from the first landing of the Moors in Spain to the second siege by the Turks of Vienna, Europe was under constant threat from Islam. Islam was the only civilization that questioned the survival of the European world, and this happened, as S. Huntington notes, at least twice [6, p. 327-328].

The situation radically changed after the success of the Reconquista, when gradually the Christians regained the Iberian Peninsula, completing this task in 1492 near the walls of Granada. Meanwhile, the development of navigation allowed the Portuguese, and then other Europeans to go around the originally Muslim lands, penetrate the Indian Ocean and even reach China. At this time, the Russian princes ended the Mongol-Tatar rule. In the following years, the Ottoman Turks took the last leap and in 1683 laid siege to Vienna again. Their defeat marked the beginning of a long retreat of the Ottoman Empire, which entailed the struggle of the Orthodox peoples in the Balkans for liberation from Ottoman rule, the expansion of the Habsburg empire and the dramatic Russian offensive against the Black Sea and the Caucasus. Only about a hundred years have passed, the West, through colonial expansion, gradually conquered new Muslim lands. The colonial expansion of the West successfully continued until the First World War. As a result of this war, Great Britain, France and Italy delivered a final blow to the Turkish state and established their direct or indirect rule on the remaining lands of the Ottoman Empire, with the exception of the territory of the Republic of Turkey. Thus, the Ottoman Empire collapsed - the West defeated; Islam lost - Christianity won. But the conflict between Islam and the West did not end there, although in 1920 only four Muslim countries — Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Afghanistan — remained free from any form of non-Muslim rule.

By 1924 the Ottoman caliphate had collapsed. The Hijaz caliphate, which was founded in Mecca in 1916, also disintegrated in 1924. After that, in the XX century the Caliphate was no longer created. In turn, the retreat of Western colonialism slowly began in the 1920s and 1930s and dramatically accelerated in the aftermath of World War II. Many Muslim countries regained their freedom and independence. The collapse of the Soviet Union brought independence to the new Muslim societies in Central Asia and the Caucasus. According to statistics, during the period from 1757 to 1919 there were ninety-two seizures of the acquisition of Muslim territories by non-Muslim, mainly Christian governments. By 1995, sixty-nine of these territories were once again ruled by Muslims; the Muslim population dominated in about forty-five independent states. The violent nature of these changes is reflected in the fact that among the wars that between 1820 and 1929 were fought by states with different religions, 50 percent were wars between Muslims and Christians [6, p. 329].

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the Ottoman caliphate, the idea of creating a new Caliphate arose and spread almost immediately. This idea was picked up by new Islamic parties, organizations and movements, which gradually began to appear on the fragments of the land of the Caliphate that had gone down in history. A powerful Islamic fundamentalist "Muslim Brotherhood" party appeared in Egypt (1926), which began to fight for power in the countries of the Middle East. In the bowels of this party, personalities were formed, which created the international Islamic party Hizb-at-Tahrir (1954) in the early 50s. in Palestine. A huge number of Islamist organizations, including Salafi organizations, appeared in the Middle East and North Africa in the 20th century under the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood. All these Islamic parties and organizations in different years declared their main goal - the creation of the New Caliphate. Saudi Arabia became the center of the Muslim peace and Islamic fundamentalism. This country began to export Salafism as ideological and religious goods around the world at the end of the twentieth century. Thus, the West destroyed the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman caliphate but received a more terrible enemy in its turn- fundamentalist Islam. The ideological war of Islam against the West was going on throughout the 20th century, although sometimes this war even reached a direct confrontation in some countries of the Middle East and North Africa, although it was the more dangerous enemy of the West in the 20th century. Communism became the ideology of civil religion in the heyday of secularism but even within the confrontation of these two antagonistic systems, the hidden conflict between Islam and the West continued. The USSR helped many Arab Muslim countries in the East, but the United States and other Western countries in every way interfered with the presence of the Soviet Union and its allies in these countries.

V   Conclusion

Comparing and analyzing different periods and key events of the dynamics of the conflict between Islam and Christianity, Islam and the West, we come to the conclusion that the main, basic causes of this conflict lie not in such transient phenomena as the zeal of Christians in the era of the Reconquista and the Crusades or Islamist zeal at the stage of the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the XX century. The deep causes of this conflict, in our opinion, stem from the nature of two religions and civilizations: Islam and Christianity, Islam and the West. Muslim and Christian lifestyles began to differ greatly after the merger of Islam with politics and the emergence of the Caliphate. Thus, the Muslim way of life began to spread and be imposed on the population not only in the Arab countries themselves, but also outside them, wherever Islam came. The Christian way of life, on the contrary, at

that time was gradually separated from the secular way of life as part of the process of the emergence and formation of secular national states in Europe. The causes of the conflict also stemmed from the similarity of the worldview foundations of both religions. Both of them are monotheistic, which means that, unlike polytheistic beliefs, they cannot easily accept new deities and prophets. Both are universalistic and each proclaims itself the only true one. Both are missionary and based on the belief that their followers are required to convert unbelievers to the only true faith. From its very beginnings, Islam expanded its influence through conquest; adherents of Christianity, when possible, did the same. The concepts of "holy jihad" and "crusade" are not only similar to each other, but also distinguish these two religions from other major world religions. In addition, Islam and Christianity, as well as Judaism, are characterized by a teleological view of history in contrast to the ideas of cyclical or static prevailing in other civilizations. Well-known Western scholars often argue about these causes of the conflict [4; 7; 8].

The severity of the conflict between Islam and Christianity throughout the entire period was influenced by demographic growth and decline, economic development, technological change, and the intensity of religious beliefs. The spread of Islam in the VII-VIII centuries was accompanied by an unprecedented for that time mass migration of Muslim peoples of the Middle East, North Africa, the Byzantine and Sasanian empire. A few centuries later, the Crusades were largely the result of economic and demographic growth, which resulted in an increase in population by an order of magnitude in Europe by the 11th century. It became possible to mobilize a large number of knights and peasants on a campaign in the Holy Land due to this growth. In the 19th century, an incredible population growth again caused the "eruption" of Europe, laying the foundation for the largest migration of people in history who migrated to both Muslim and other countries. This migration process then took place as part of the colonial expansion of the West around the world.

At the end of the 20th century, a comparable combination of these factors exacerbated the conflict between Islam and the West. Firstly, population growth in Muslim countries had generated a significant number of unemployed and dissatisfied young people who began to join the ranks of Islamic organizations, exerting pressure on neighboring societies and migrating to the West. Secondly, the Islamic Renaissance began, which strengthened the belief in the minds of Muslims in the advantage of the cultural, civilizational and moral values of Islam, strengthened the belief that their Islamic moral values were superior to Western ones. Thirdly, the Western efforts coinciding in time with the Islamic revival to turn their values and social institutions into universal, global, the desire to maintain their military and economic superiority, as well as intervene in conflicts in the Islamic world, began to cause furious indignation among Muslims. Fourth, the collapse of communism deprived the West and the Islamic world of a common enemy, and each side turned into the main and distinctly perceived threat to the other. Fifthly, the increasing contacts between Muslims and Christians of the West and their mixing strengthened in both of them a sense of their own identity and an understanding of how this identity distinguishes them from each other.

Thus, today the causes of the conflict between Islam and the West lie in fundamental issues of power and culture, cultural and political influence, control, beliefs and identity. Who? Whom? Who rules? Who is ruled by? In recent years, Western social thought has been proposing a new model of relations with Islam. This model is called: The Cold War with Islam. The West may ultimately count on victory in this war with Islam. But, in our opinion, this idea is unpromising. The West has been struggling with Islam for many centuries, almost 1,500 years, but to no avail. The West is changing, and Islam is changing. Today, Islam is present not only in the Muslim world, but also in Western countries. Muslim communities today exist in all Western countries, creating the conditions

for the emergence and development of so-called parallel societies, preserving their customs, traditions, and beliefs. Moreover, Muslim communities are organically connected with other countries of the Muslim world through network structures. Therefore, today it is incorrect, in our opinion, to talk about the isolation of Islam from the West in the framework of the "new cold war". Islam begins to penetrate into the world of the West, grows together and interbreeds with it, and, possibly, in the foreseeable future will destroy it from the inside, as it was during the destruction by the Germanic tribes of the Western Roman Empire.

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