

მურმან ქუთელია

რიზა ა ატ-ტაპტავის მსოფლმხედველობის ზოგიერთი საკითხისათვის

წინამდებარე სტატიაში ყურადღება გამახვილებულია ატ-ტაპტავის მსოფლმხედველობის ისეთ საკითხებზე, როგორებიცაა “სამშობლოს“ და “ერის“ ცნებები და დასავლეთისა და აღმოსავლეთის ურთიერთდამოკიდებულება. დასახელებული საკითხების უფრო ნათლად წარმოჩენის მიზნით სტატიაში ურთიერთშეჭერებულია განმანათლებლებისა (ალ-აფლანის, აბდოს, ადიბ ისჰაკის, მუსტაფა ქამილის, ფარაჰ ანტუნის, ლუტფი ას-სეიდის) და ატ-ტაპტავის შეხედულებები. ატ-ტაპტავისთან “სამშობლოს“ და “ერის“ ცნებები არ არის ერთმანეთისგან მკაფიოდ გამიჯნული, ორივეს ერთად განიხილავს და ორივეს ერთად რელიგიურ კავშირებზე და რელიგიურ ძმობაზე მაღლა აყენებს. იმ დროს მსგავსი მოსაზრების გამოთქმა, და ისიც სასულიერო განათლების პირისთვის, მარტივი საქმე არ იყო, რადგან, ჩვეულებისამებრ, ყველა მუსლიმისთვის სამშობლოდ ითვლებოდა მთელი მუსლიმური სამყარო და არა რომელიმე კონკრეტული ქვეყანა. გარდა ამისა, ატ-ტაპტავი ჰერ კიდევ 60-იან წლებში ეგვიპტელებს მიაკუთვნებდა ერთდროულად მუსლიმურ და ეგვიპტურ ეროვნებას და პატრიოტული გრძნობებიდან გამომდინარე აცხადებდა, რომ “ეგვიპტე მისი შვილებისთვის ყველაზე ძვირფასი მიწაა“. შეიძლება ითქვას, მისი ეს მოსაზრება, მსგავსად ბევრი სხვა მისი მოსაზრებისა, წინ უსწრებს ეგვიპტელი ნაციონალისტების მიერ XIX ს.-ის დასასრულს წამოყენებულ ლოზუნგს “ეგვიპტე ეგვიპტელებისთვის“. რაც შეეხება დასავლეთისა და აღმოსავლეთის ურთიერთდამოკიდებულების საკითხს, იგი, ბევრი ეგვიპტელი განმანათლებლისგან განსხვავებით (მაგალითად ჯამალ ად-დინ ალ-აფლანი), დადებითად იყო განწყობილი დასავლური ცივილიზაციის მიღწევების მიმართ და ემხრობოდა ამ ორი ცივილიზაციის მიღწევათა გონივრულ სინთეზს.

“კანონიერების“, “თანასწორობის“ და “თავისუფლების“ პრინციპებზე მსჯელობისას აშკარად ჩანს, რომ ატ-ტაპტავი კანონის უზენაესობის მომხრეა. ყურადღებას ამახვილებს იმ ფაქტზეც, რომ აუცილებელია კანონები მოყვანილი იქნას დროის მოთხოვნებთან შესაბამისობაში. იგი მიდის დასკვნამდე, რომ ისინი, როგორც ფორმა საზოგადოების მოწყობისა, მუსლიმებისთვის ოდითგანვე იყო ცნობილი და არ ეწინააღმდეგება ისლამს.

ატ-ტაპტავი 1835 თუ 1836 წლიდან საკმაო ხანს ედგა სათავეში სპეციალური ენების სკოლის თარგმნის ბიუროს, 50-იანი წლების მეორე ნახევარში კი დაინიშნა “ენების სკოლის“ დირექტორად, ეწეოდა აქტიურ მთარგმნელობით საქმიანობას, თარგმნიდა სამეცნიერო, ტექნიკურ და მხატვრულ ლიტერატურას, თავისი აქტიური საზოგადოებრივი მოღვაწეობით ცდილობდა, არაბები დაერწმუნებინა, რომ ევროპული მეცნიერება და, საერთოდ, ევროპული ცივილიზაცია არ უპირისპირდება ისლამს და ყურანს.

Murman Kutelia

TOWARDS SOME QUESTIONS OF THE WORLD OUTLOOK OF RIFAAAT-TAHTAWI

From the 19th c. in Egypt, Syria and Lebanon the political, economic and cultural life begins to revive, which is known as the Revival (“the Nahda”). In this process enlighteners played the crucial role. The enlightenment movement reached its summit in Syria-Lebanon it occurred circa 1850s-1870s, in Egypt this occurred in the 1880s-1890s. As regards the other Arab countries, the revival and rise of the political, economic and cultural life there begin later, at the end of the 19th c., more from the beginning of the 20th c.

In the enlightenment movement in Egypt and the entire Arab world, in general, an especially outstanding place is occupied by Rifa a at-Tahtawi. In fact, together with Ali Mubarak (1822/4 — 1893) he is considered as the first enlightener in Egypt.

Rifa a at-Tahtawi (1801-1873) was a cleric. He was educated at the Al-Azhar University. He, as a mullah, was the head of the 40-person group sent by Muhammad Ali to France in 1826 with the purpose of training necessary specialists for the state. At-Tahtawi stayed five years in France, mostly in Paris, he familiarized thoroughly with the political, economic and cultural life of the country, its achievements in all spheres of social life, which had a tremendous influence on the formation of his world outlook. Practically there was hardly found another person in Egypt of the 19th-century, who was so enthusiastic about the achievements of the Western civilization, was such an active supporter of the introduction of the Western achievements that would be acceptable for the Arabs.

The aim of the present article is to focus attention on several questions of at-Tahtawi’s world outlook, in particular, his interpretation of the notion of “homeland” and “nation” and his views on the relationship between the West and the East.

At first, in order to demonstrate the question, I offer a brief overview of the viewpoint of Arab enlighteners on the above-mentioned problems, the more so as their bringing to the forefront was directly linked with the beginning of the national liberation movement in the Arab countries.

As the national liberation movement did not develop in a similar way in the Arab countries, proceeding from this, the attitude towards the Western countries and the Ottoman Turks was not identical. E.g. Syrian and Lebanese progressive thinkers in the second half of the 19th c., when Syria was still a colony of the West, struggled against the Turkish dominance and set hopes on the Western assistance. In Egypt, on the contrary, they expected assistance from the Turkish Sultan in the struggle against the British colonists (Levin, 1972, p. 101-102). Pan-Islamism that took shape in the same period and preached the unification of the Muslim world around the Ottoman Turks in order to resist European colonialism and defend the

interests of the Muslim world, found many followers in Egypt (Levin, 1972, p. 104). Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838 – 1897/8), a public and political figure of the Afghan origin, living in Egypt, always an adversary of the West and said: “The West opposes the East. The spirit of the crusades still makes hearts thrill” (Levin, 1972, p. 109). In his view, only the Ottoman Empire, which would unite in its boundaries the majority of the Muslims, could fight against the West. Muhammad Abdo (1849 - 1905) and Adib Ishak (1856 - 1885) shared this opinion almost fully. Mustafa Kamil (1874 - 1908) considered the acquisition of the complete independence of Egypt from Great Britain as the main objective of all Egyptians. Like al-Afghani, he regarded the creation of a common Muslim caliphate under the direction of the Sultan as the only solution of the Eastern problem (Dolinina, 1968, p. 88, 89). In Farah Antun’s (1874 - 1922) opinion, the decisive role in all the misfortunes of the East was played by Western colonists, without the deliverance from which the progress of the Arab countries was impossible. Therefore he called upon the Egyptians to struggle (Dolinina, 1973, p. 167). The viewpoint of the enlighteners in the sphere of culture was almost identical: to borrow from the West what was useful – the energetic, free, independent spirit, and to reject everything what opposed the interests of the Eastern countries and was alien to the Eastern morality (Dolinina, 1973, p. 171).

Syrian enlighteners, as noted above, were distinguished by anti-Turkish tendencies and inclined to the West. Some of them wished to create the Arab caliphate, in which the Arab countries situated on the Arabian Peninsula would be united. Al-Kavakibi (1849 – 1902/3) called upon foreigners to allow the Arabs to solve their affairs by themselves (Dolinina, 1973, p. 63). Notably enough, the attitude of the Egyptians and the Syrians to the West and the Ottoman state was determined by the fact that the Turkish dominance over Syria-Lebanon, neighboring directly upon the centre, was stronger, whereas the Western colonists were not politically strengthened there yet. Egypt, due to its territorial remoteness, was in the Ottoman Empire only formally and in fact was a British colony.

Naturally, under such conditions the notions of “homeland” and “nation” moved to the forefront. According to the concept accepted in Europe, Adib Ishak formulated the notion of homeland as follows: “Homeland as a political notion which denotes the place from which a person originates, where the safety of this person, his family and property is guaranteed” (Levin, 1972, p. 63). He and Al-Kavakibi stated that “there is no homeland in the conditions of despotism”, because in this case man is stripped of rights (Levin, 1972, p. 178). Lutfi As-Seidi (1872 – 1953/63) added to this notion the common material (economic) interests (Levin, 1972, p. 178). Farah Antun interpreted “homeland” as the commonwealth of the peoples making up the Ottoman Empire, the union which should have resisted the European expansion (Dolinina, 1973, p. 169).

“Nation” in the Arabic sense was the unity of all Muslims regardless of the language, race and ethnicity, or location (Levin, 1972, p. 179). In the course of time such a concept changed. It was not already a mere group of persons united by kinship, but a collective of persons having a common language, a single place of residence and religion (Levin, 1972, p. 179). Here the emphasis is on the language and territory. Al-Kavakibi ruled out the link with the religion and defined “nation” as

“the unity of persons related through a common race, homeland and rights (Levin, 1972, p. 180). Lutfi As-Seidi characterized “nation” as a social group united by common interests, and not by the religion (Levin, 1972, p. 180).

Such was in brief the views of the Arab enlighteners concerning the mentioned questions. But this was later, in the period of the upsurge of the enlightenment movement, circa middle of the second half of the 19th c. at-Tahtawi, who worked in an earlier period, outstripped them in time and in fact these questions were put on the agenda thanks to him.

What was at-Tahtawi’s attitude towards the above questions like?

Let us begin from at-Tahtawi’s idea of “homeland” and “nation”. It should be noted that these two concepts are not demarcated clearly with at-Tahtawi. As is known, the traditional idea of “homeland” derived from the meaning of this word in Arabic “Al-Watan” – the place of a person’s birth and residence. At-Tahtawi as early as the 1860s added to the traditional notion of “homeland” the idea of patriotism, love for the homeland. In his view, tireless work for the interests of the homeland, making one’s contribution to its building was the primary duty of a citizen of a country. To the theme of the homeland he added the national theme and placed both even above the religious ties. According to at-Tahtawi, there is a close relation between fellow countrymen, there exist certain rights and duties with respect to one another, and what is the most important there is national brotherhood between them, which is higher and more important than religious brotherhood. Each citizen of the country has moral obligations, he should spare no effort for the glory and dignity of his homeland. At that time it was not easy to voice similar ideas in public, especially for a person having a religious education, as the entire Muslim world, and not any particular country, was usually regarded as the homeland for all Muslims. As noted above, many Arab enlighteners, proceeding from the traditional idea of the homeland, in the struggle for independence from the colonists demanded the creation of the common Muslim caliphate, or the unification of all Muslims around the Ottoman state. Egyptian enlighteners were especially distinguished in this regard. The reason for this was discussed above. The idea of the creation of the common Muslim, or the common Arab caliphate or state is not found in at-Tahtawi’s work available to us. This is also supported by the fact that at the period of the upsurge of the enlightenment movement (circa final quarter of the 19th c.) Egyptian nationalism originated. At-Tahtawi as early as the 1860s attributed to the Egyptians the Muslim and the Egyptian nationality and on the basis of the patriotic sentiments stressed that “Egypt is the dearest land for its children.” (Kutelia, 2011, p. 88). One might say that at-Tahtawi’s these views, as many others, outstrip the slogan “Egypt for the Egyptians” put forward by the Egyptian nationalists.

As regards at-Tahtawi’s attitude towards the Western world, it may be said with confidence that he was one of the first, if not the first, propagandist of the Western, namely, French civilization in Egypt. His loyal attitude found reflection in his entire activity. This is demonstrated especially clearly in his book “A Paris Profile” dealing with the five-year period spent in France. At-Tahtawi takes a great liking to the European civilization, the tendency of the French people to move forward, to

perfect their knowledge, which, in his view, the Arabs should adopt and introduce. He pays great attention to the system of education in France. Indeed, later on, several years before his death, at-Tahtawi was put at the head of the commission drafting the curricula in connection with the foundation of the first girls' school in Egypt (Kakharova, 1968, p. 22-23). He introduces many things from the French education system and tries to adjust them to the local conditions. In addition, when in "A Paris Profile" he offers the analysis of the political and public institutions, he writes with exceptional sympathy about the constitutional government, the parliament and electoral system. He thinks that the people must take active part in the ruling of the country. Dealing with the legal issues, at-Tahtawi notes that "... Justice is the basis of civilization" (At-Tahtavi, 1991, p. 66). He partly touched upon the notion of "freedom" in the book, but he, the first of the Egyptians, offered its detailed analysis at the beginning of the 1870s. He regarded it as the most important factor of the existence of human beings, and singled out its five varieties: 1. Freedom as the natural state of a human being, 2. Freedom of behavior, 3. Freedom of conscience, 4. Civil freedom, and 5. Political freedom (Levin, 1972, p. 27). Interest attaches in the book to the author's reasoning concerning the principles of "lawfulness" and "equality". He believes that citizens must respect the rule of law. At-Tahtawi recognizes the equality of all persons before the law, the demands that the rulers of the country also follow the laws, obey the law and control the protection of the people's rights. Actually, he preaches the supremacy of law. At-Tahtawi already at the beginning of the 1870s, earlier than Muslim reformers, was the first to focus attention on the fact that it is necessary to bring the laws into conformity with the requirements of time. In "A Paris Profile" he arrives at the conclusion that notions "freedom", "equality", "lawfulness" (law), as the form of the social structure were known to the Muslims for a long time, and it do not contradict to Islam.

Along with this, under the influence of the European civilization, at-Tahtawi was the first among the Egyptians to begin struggling for women's rights. His views were not less progressive than those of the well-known enlighteners Kasim Amin (1865 - 1908), Wali Ad-Din Yekun (1873 - 1921) and others.

As is known, at-Tahtawi was actively engaged in the public work of the country. According to a Government Decree, he headed the special translation bureau of the School of Languages founded in 1835 or 1836 by the decision of Muhammad Ali. Later on, in the second half of the 1850s, he was appointed Director of "the School of Languages" in Cairo. At-Tahtawi was engaged in intensive translation activity. He paid attention to the translation of scientific-technical, humanitarian, philosophical and psychological literature as well as fiction. By his active public work at-Tahtawi tried to convince the Arab readers, which is also clear in his "A Paris Profile", that European science and European civilization, in general, do not at all oppose Islam and the Koran.

At-Tahtavi was a great and versatile public figure, excellent translator, author of good original works. His mental outlook was quite broad and, proceeding from this, his service to the homeland was enormous. K. Ohrnberg in his book "Rifa' a Bey al-Tahtawi (1801 - 73)" writes to him "... standard-bearer and symbol of Arabic renaissance, the most well known thinker of his epoch." (Kutelia, 2007, p.141).

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