



The implications of the current Saudi-Iran rapprochement

Dr. Suadiq Sufian Ali*, Dr. Mohammed Seid Mohammed

Institute of Foreign Affairs, Middle East Affairs Research Directorate, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Abstract

The commencement of Saudi-Iran diplomatic relations is not exactly known. Yet, the most noticeable period worth mentioning is related to the period of Persian Sassanid and the rise of Islam in Arabia in the seventh century. In the modern period, the year 1979 marked a historical milestone for Saudi-Iran relations as the moment changed Middle East history owing to the Islamic Revolution of Iran. More importantly, since the revolution, the Saudi-Iran relationship has crossed a chain of relations oscillating between hostility and rapprochement. After a long period of severe diplomatic relations, the two countries signed the Beijing rapprochement deal on March 10, 2023. Against this background, this paper intends to portray the implications of the current Saudi-Iran rapprochement in light of possible scenarios.

Keywords: Saudi Arabia, rapprochement, conflict, relation, diplomacy

Introduction

Although the exact commencement of the Arab-Iran relation is anonymous, the most noticeable period worth mentioning is related to the period of the Persian Sassanid and the rise of Islam in Arabia in the seventh century. Since this period, the Arab-Persian relation has passed through different phases of development, causing a transitory and lasting impact on the political, social, and cultural development of the modern republic of Iran.

The year 1979 marked a historical milestone that changed Middle East history owing to the Islamic Revolution of Iran^[1]. The revolution yielded the fruition of a new Islamic Republic of Iran in April 1979. After toppling decades-long rule of the monarchic Pahlavi dynasty, the Shia clerks established a kind of revolutionary theocratic government that had an explicit goal of exporting revolution beyond its territory^[2]. The formation of an alien, theocratic republic was seen as a threat by the neighboring Gulf countries^[3]. Especially, Saudi Arabia felt more insecure when Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the architect of the revolution returned to Iran from exile, dragged the revolution towards a purely Islamic direction, and started to vie for the leadership of the Islamic world^[4]. Traditionally, long before the revolution, Saudi Arabia, being home to the birthplace of Islam, already appointed herself as the leader of the Muslim world^[5]. This genesis of contradiction that deeply rooted under the core of Iranian revolution apparently sowed the first seeds of rivalry for the coming of forty decades despite there have been occasional thaws^[6].

Broadly speaking, the Saudi-Iran relation have crossed a chain of relations oscillated between “hostility” and “rapprochement”. More recently, on March 10, 2023, the two countries signed the Beijing rapprochement deal. The fruition of the deal have left many commentators with doubt. Therefore, this paper dealt with the implications of the current Saudi-Iran rapprochement in light of possible scenarios.

The period of hostility in Saudi – Iran relation

Saudi Arabia and Iran were experiencing at least two periods of hostility after the 1979 revolution. The first of

which advanced in the 1980s following the Iran - Iraqi war and the July 1987 Hajji incident. The second hostility emerged in the late 2000s and covered the last one-and-half decades (2008 - 2020). This recent hostility was mainly akin to US disengagement from the Middle East as the new development escalated Iran-Saudi antagonism following their struggle for regional supremacy^[7].

The first period of hostility: The Islamic revolution as a turning point

The Islamic revolution changed the relation of Saudi Arabia and Iran dramatically in such a way that they could consider themselves as arch-foes. Neither the Iranian revolutionaries nor their contenders from Saudi Arabia had an optimistic view on the relation of each other. The revolutionaries who dismantled their monarchic regime in Tehran had a dismissive and even attacking stance to neighboring monarchical leaderships based in the region. The leader of the Islamic revolution, Khomeini argued that Islam and monarchical leadership are inconsistent^[8]. Hence, in the eyes of the Saudi leaders, Khomeini's takeover of power were a game changer in the political geometry of Iran that potentially spread into their own territory^[9]. Khomeini publicly characterized monarchy as un-Islamic form of government.

Consequently, in response to the Islamic revolution, a series of measures were put in place, ranging from forming a new anti-Iran alliance to a direct military engagement. Saudi Arabia and its Gulf neighbors had actively participated in these projects. Two occasions could clarify this point evidently: Iraqi-Iran war and the formation of the Gulf Cooperation Council. As to the former, fearing a potential attempt of Iran to export its revolutionary ideals and assert regional supremacy, Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, just a year after the revolution, began striking Iran on September 2, 1980^[10]. Though Saudi Arabia publicly declared neutrality, the relations between Saudi and Iran were strained throughout 1980s as Iran accused Saudi Arabia of backing the Iraqi government^[11]. Their tense relation was further deteriorated towards the end of 1980s because of the Hajji incident. Saudi and Iran even briefly

confronted each other militarily, with Saudi jet fighters shooting down two Iranian jets in 1984^[12]. Indeed, their relation was badly severed in July 1987 following the annual Hajj pilgrimage. During this Hajj practice, Iranian pilgrims demonstrated illegal protest against USA in the holy city of Mecca. The Saudi security forces crackdown the protest violently and 275 Iranian pilgrims lost their life. In response, Iranian protesters attacked and occupied the Saudi embassy in Tehran. A Saudi diplomat died during the incident. King Fahd, then, cut diplomatic relation with Iran in 1988.

The second period of hostility: The US disengagement as a turning point

The American military presence in the Middle East essentially served as a stabilizer for Saudi–Iran relation^[13]. Their relation was challenged when US began withdrawal of its military in 2007 that was completed in 2011^[14]. The move gave more space to Iran to expand its influence in Iraq and the region. This development annoyed Saudi Arabia. Hence, in February 2008, it summoned Iran’s Foreign Minister and warned that Saudi Arabia would suspend its relations with Tehran^[15]. Iran seemed indifferent to the Saudi King’s call. Instead, what worried Iran most was Saudi Arabia’s readiness to re-ignite the Sunni insurgency in a bid to prevent US forces from leaving Iraq. The US shared Iran’s view and alleged Saudi Arabia as through its Secretary of Defense Robert Gates as if Saudi wanted to “fight Iranians to the last American”. The secretary further said, “It is time for them to get in the game”^[16]. This jolted Saudi Arabia while perhaps boosted Iran’s confidence of avoiding conflict with US.

During the presidency of Obama, East Asia Strategy and Obama Doctrine pushed US further to the Edge of the Middle East as the strategy shifted the American focus from the Middle East, and the Doctrine distanced US involvement in proxy wars fuelled by Saudi–Iranian competition. US disengagement in Middle East resulted in a power vacuum in the region. In this new environment, Riyadh has moved aggressively in pushing its regional agenda - what some scholars are already calling the Salman doctrine. Meanwhile, Iran worked hard for regional supremacy or, at minimum, to maintain a relative position in Iraq, Bahrain, Syria, Yemen and Lebanon. This is in many ways a regional equivalent of the Cold War.

Saudi-Iran relation nosedived over the Hajj incident of 2015. A stampede in Mecca resulted in the death of more than 2000 pilgrims, of whom 400 were Iranian citizens^[17]. Iran religious leader Ayatollah Ali Khomeini accused Saudi Arabia of “murder”. Four months after the stampede in Mecca, Saudi Arabia executed prominent Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr. According to Theodore Karasik, Gulf State Analytics, Consulting group, the execution is a sign of a newly aggressive stance adopted by King Salman, who has worn the crown for a little less than a year since the death of king Abdullah, and it sent a powerful message against Iran^[18]. Protesters in Tehran opposed the act of Saudi Arabia and stormed its embassy that pushed Riyadh to severe its relation with Tehran^[19]. Though they have been regional foes, it was the first time since a two-year rupture in 1988-1990 that diplomatic ties between Iran and Saudi Arabia had formally been cut^[20].

Moreover, Iran and Saudi Arabia have involved in proxy war in the region. To mention few, Lebanon, Bahrain, Iraq,

Syria and Yemen are countries where Saudi and Iran have been involved in proxy wars^[21]. It seemed that a possibility of dialogue between them was almost dismissed. This is illustrated by the 2017 exclusive interview given by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The crown underscored, “Its (Iran’s) logic is that the Imam Mahdi will come and they must prepare the fertile environment for the arrival of the awaited Mahdi and they must control the Muslim world.” Two years later, an incident further exacerbate the already severed relationship. Saudi Arabia alleged Iran for the damage of its largest petroleum processing plant by Iran-made drone. The drone attack is one of the most provocative in a 40 year pattern of escalatory violence from the Tehran side^[22].

Iran’s President Hassan Rohani dismissed the allegation though he justified the attack. In such a way, their hostility has continued throughout 2020, too. The demise of Qasim soleimani, Iran’s top security and intelligence commander, was celebrated by official Saudi media. Indeed, Saudi Arabia does not want to see a full-blown war between Iran and US. Saudi-Iran hostility began dropping since 2021 following their first talk in April 2021 mediated by Bagdad^[23].

The period of conviviality between Saudi and Iran

To begin with, in accordance with historical accounts, the period of friendly relation between Saudi and Iran could be divided into three Phases: Phase I (1920s to 1930), Phase II (1946 to 1979) and Phase III (1991 -2007). The first period paralleled the initial collaboration in the multipolar world of the late 1920s and early 1930s. The second matched the friendly relation in the bipolar world from 1946 to 1979. The third healthy relation coincided with the unipolar moment of the early 1990s to 2000s. Indeed, the writers believed that since the current Beijing brokered deal open a new hope of rapprochement between Iran after seven years of severed relation, it can be treated as Phase IV (March 10, 2023 to the present). Here, post Iranian Revolution attempts of rapprochements were paid emphasis.

The first phase: Collaboration in the multipolar world of 1920s to 1930s

Iran and Saudi Arabia had limited interaction in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The very nature of their collaboration attributed to being adherents of similar orientations in terms of critical policies. Their foreign and security policies in particular were largely British-centric within a multipolar world order. More importantly, they relied on the British Residency in the Persian Gulf to ensure stability along their borders^[24]. A low level of observed interactions between them in the 1920s hinted that their bilateral relations was not as such significant. For instance, when the Persian envoys visited the Holy place of Mecca at Ibn Saud’s invitation in 1925, their point of discussion was the status of Iranian pilgrims and Shia inhabitants in Madinah and Qatif, not their bilateral relation or beyond. Later on, they signed a Friendship Treaty in 1929, which involved mutual recognition and the establishment of full diplomatic relations. On that occasion, the Pahlavi and Al-Saud dynasties agreed that “inviolable peace and sincere and durable friendship will reign^[25]”.

The second friendly phase - shared polarity (1946 to 1979)

The Cold War between the Eastern and Western block came into being in the stage of history after WWII. For more than

three decades both Saudi Arabia and Iran allied themselves with the United States. Their close alignment to a similar block help them to deter a potential confrontation partly because of shared interests. Iran and Saudi Arabia feared their rivals among Arab nationalists, socialists or communists far more than they feared each other. This fear was great enough to draw Saudi Arabia, a Sunni Islamist state, and Iran, a pro-secular Shia state, together under the auspice of defending their western-inclined interest against nationalism and/or Communism ^[26]. As Iran and Saudi Arabia accepted American dominance, they complemented each other and set aside issues that could have split them, including the sectarian divide. On the top of this, super powers would seek to prevent fighting between their own minor-power allies ^[27].

The third phase: Iraqi factor and a unipolar caution (1991-2007)

Saudi Arabia and Iran remained friendly from 1991 to 2007 because of two important political currents: The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the American domination of the time (Unipolar World Order) ^[28] Iraq's invasion created new realities for Iran and Saudi Arabia. In December 1990, the six GCC members declared that they would welcome better ties with Iran and that Iran should be included in any future regional security system. Tehran responded with readiness to collaborate in all aspects of the Gulf security plan. The friendly diplomatic discourse between the two countries was continuing for almost 18 years (the détente from 1991 to 1997, and the rapprochement process from 1997 to 2007).

Riyadh and Tehran were exceptionally close between 1997 and 2001. The shift in the relationship between Iran and Saudi Arabia is often attributed to the personal relationship of Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and President Mohammad Khatami of Iran ^[29]. In 1997, Crown Prince Abdullah visited Iran to attend the Islamic Summit in Tehran. He became the highest-ranking Saudi official since the Islamic Revolution. In the meantime, Abdellah attempted to distance Saudi Arabia from US in order to show his country decide in its own apart from American influence. From the Iran side, Khatami had worked for rapprochement with Riyadh after winning his first landslide victory in 1997. He visited Saudi Arabia, the first such trip since 1979. Better relations are sealed with a security pact in April 2001 ^[30].

The fourth phase: The current rapprochement

Saudi Arabia and Iran have formally agreed to work towards restoring diplomatic relations that were severed seven years ago in 2016 ^[31]. Apparently, the embryo of their agreement came into being when US failed to act against Iran following the 2019 drone attack into Saudi Arabia, as Saudi monarchs concluded that US is not a reliable security partner ^[32]. Strikingly, it is not Saudi but Iran took the initiation to resume dialogue in 2021. They had conducted five rounds of dialogues from 2021-2023 in Iraq. At the midst, in February, 2023 Iran proposed Beijing to hold a Saudi-Iran dialogue ^[33]. The United States could not have presented itself during Saudi-Iran, because to the minimum, it does not have direct contact with Iran. Accordingly, the current trilateral agreement was signed between Saudi, Iran and Beijing on 10 March 2023. At this juncture, the question "Why the two sides resume ties now" is important to be answered.

Frustrated Saudi and Iran pushed themselves to sign the current rapprochement. From the Saudi's point of view, normalization with Iran removes obstacles of its economic transformation aspired could be also mentioned in relation to the normalization. Firstly, Iran secures halting of Saudi's support to oppositions groups including the Mujahedin-e Khalq and the Baloch militant group Jaish al-Adl. Secondly, it thwarts growing Western pressure by diversifying its options. Finally, it wants to neutralise possible Israeli cooperation with Arab states to launch military attacks on Iran ^[34].

According to the current rapprochement deal, Iran and Saudi Arabia have agreed to resume diplomatic relations and reopen their embassies within two months. They have also reaffirmed non-interference in the internal affairs of other states besides reinstating the 2001 security agreement ^[35]. The statement reads: "In response to the noble initiative of His Excellency President Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, of China's support for developing good neighborly relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran ^[36].

The future of the rapprochement: Potential scenarios

The current deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia is neither the first one nor would be the last one. Given their deep rooted political, economic and religious rivalries in the region, they have concluded a number of deals in different times. Hitherto experiences revealed that most of their deals failed to solve deeply rooted structural differences and bring a long lasting peace. Considering the current trends and positions adopted by various parties, three scenarios are likely for the future of the "made in china deal" ^[37] – germination of cold peace, booming of bilateral cooperation or doing business as usual.

Scenario 1: Germination of cold peace

This scenario assumes that Saudi – Iran deal pave the way to a cold peace phase at least in the short term. In the view of Sakwa (2013), "a cold peace is a mimetic cold war". That is to say, while a cold war accepts the logic of conflict between opponents, a cold peace reproduces the behavioural patterns of a cold war suppresses acceptance of the logic of that behaviour. A very good example such a moment is the end of the cold war in 1988 - 1991. As historical lessons vividly revealed the formal end of the cold war did not put an end to profound cultural and civilizational ambiguities in Russia's relations with the West, but it created a fertile ground for the germination of cold peace between the two blocks ^[38].

In the same vein, scenario 1 assumes that Saudi and Iran could reopen their embassies and continue negotiations on contentious issues. As per this scenario, the two sides would achieve some progress in some of these issues without reaching final solutions. They would also agree on a general understanding to prevent future escalation of tensions. The deal would move Saudi-Iran relations from the Cold War phase to the Cold Peace phase. They also maintain that the two countries have decided to enter in peaceful relations phase. However, their structural problems - profound political and ideological differences and the nature of both nations' power cards would prevent them from reaching a final agreement on major contentious long term issues.

Scenario 2: Booming bilateral cooperation

This scenario stipulates that the Saudi- Iran deal can resolve most of the contentious issues between the two countries. These may include Iran's nuclear program, proxy wars in the region, and other deep rooted structural problems like sectarianism, competing geopolitical interests and ideologies. However, the nature of the current deal as a bilateral agreement can reduce its efficiency in solving most of the controversial regional issues. Thus, a broad consensus is necessary among relevant regional and global actors including Gulf Cooperation Council, United States of America and others. For instance, as the deal would push US away from the Middle East matters, expecting US to remain indifference while favoring the "Made in China" deal put in place is absolutely insupportable. Thus, the point is that Beijing brokered deal can play an indispensable role in booming bilateral cooperation between the two antagonistic parties when there is a platform that allows to happen. The preparation of this platform needs into account not only the interest of Iran and Saudi but also all the global stakeholders. Accordingly, whether the deal can address the aforementioned significant issues remain unanswered even in the eye of the signing parties. For instance, the foreign minister of Saudi Arabia said that deal with Iran "does not mean *all issues* have been *resolved*,"^[39] implicitly warning the danger of huge expectation from the current rapprochement in booming bilateral cooperation.

Scenario 3: Doing business as usual

This scenario supposes that there will be no significant change in Iran – Saudi relation pertaining to the current agreement. Being engulfed in deep suspicion and distrust for decades, it will not be easy for the two countries to remain committed as per their deal. In other words, they do nothing for the realization of their promises made during the Beijing dialogue in such way that bring a change on genuine base. Hence, pre-existing circumstances can be expected to continue as usual. This can be illustrated by the spirit of the agreement made between Saudi Arabia with Iran, and Syria. Seemingly following the footsteps of the Beijing deal, Saudi Arabia concluded an agreement with Syria to normalize its severed relation^[40]. Unsurprisingly, though Saudi Arabia and Iran had agreed before Saudi Arabia and Syria signed the deal, the later have agreed to reopen their embassies earlier despite the Saudi – Iran deal is considered as a precedence for Saudi – Syria agreement^[41], implying that Saudi – Iran's readiness is relatively open to doubt.

Implications of the rapprochement

The recent Saudi-Iran rapprochement is believed to have global and regional implications. Based on the aforementioned possible scenarios the implications of the deal can be pointed out as follows.

1. Global implications

Although scholars believe that the world is in disorder, there are many views about the status of the global order. One of the scenarios in this regard is the transition to the new global order. The transition to the new world order begins when there are powers that are interested in revising it. The question here is, however, how powerful are these actors to influence over the hegemonic power? And the degree of response by the status quo power to maintain the existing order. A renowned scholar of international relations,

Tsygankov Andrei argues that the post-Washington world order is irreversible though transition may take a couple of decades and extend beyond half of this century. Among others, the collapse of international institutions, the revisionist tendency of the USA on the global order, rising power and regionalism, and the proliferation of non-state actors are causes of transition to the new global order. China as one of the promising powers will have an alternative to constructing military, political and economic power transcending the US hegemonic power^[42].

In the context of the first scenario, a comprehensive implementation of the Saudi-Iran rapprochement accompanied by US disengagement will have implications for Chinese endeavors to change the global order. In doing so, the peace deal will accelerate the penetration of China into the most oil-rich and geo-strategically vital states of the Middle East and thereby contribute to her hegemonic ambition in the global order. Although China may not be a security guarantor for countries of the Middle East, the two nations are increasingly motivated to join China for economic and diplomatic partnership. This is evidenced by the application of the two nations to join the inevitable Chinese dominating BRICS economic bloc and their diplomatic trust to broker the current rapprochement.

2. Regional implications

Middle East and the Horn of Africa are perhaps the most notable regions that can be affected by the Saudi-Iran rapprochement. Saudi Arabia and Iran were key players in conflictual polarization for a long season in the Middle East. In the context of the two scenarios, the peace dividend out of this rapprochement might have implications for regional peace as it is anticipated to address the utmost tough contentious issues like proxies, intense competition for hegemony and an arms race in the region. Beyond this, the region will benefit at least from the general descalation as a result of the bilateral agreement. Moreover, the Saudi-Iranian conflict has implications on the security landscape of the Horn as the two states aspired to establish a strategic foothold in the horn of Africa since 2015. Iran had a strategic alliance with Al-Bashir of Sudan and the isolated government of Eritrea. This helped Iran to smuggle arms to the Houthi in Yemen and naval presence in the Red Sea Region. In countering Iran's threat in the region, Saudi Arabia established an alliance of six countries on the cost of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (Egypt, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen and Jordan) with the aim of establishing security cooperation to counter the influence of Iran and other outside powers. In the context of the two scenarios, therefore, the present deal is supposed to reduce strategic competition in the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa Regions, which consequently contributes to regional stability.

Reference

1. Banafsheh K. Saudi Arabia and Iran Friends or Foes? New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
2. BBC. Why Saudi Arabia and Iran are bitter rivals. Available at, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east>
3. BBC. Why Saudi Arabia and Iran are bitter rivals. Available at, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east>

4. CSIS. (N.d.) The History of Saudi Iranian Completion. Available at <https://www.csis.org>
5. CSIS. (N.d.) The History of Saudi Iranian Completion. Available at <https://www.csis.org>
6. <https://bearworks.missouristate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4139&context=theses>
7. <https://ecfr.eu/article/the-shoots-of-stability-what-the-saudi-iran-deal-means-for-the-middle-east-and-europe/>
8. <https://ecfr.eu/article/the-shoots-of-stability-what-the-saudi-iran-deal-means-for-the-middle-east-and-europe/>
9. <https://ecfr.eu/article/the-shoots-of-stability-what-the-saudi-iran-deal-means-for-the-middle-east-and-europe/>
10. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Withdrawal_of_United_States_troops_from_Iraq
11. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2010/12/01/gates-saudis-want-to-fight-iran-to-the-last-american/>
12. <https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2016/jan/06/timeline-iran-saudi-relations>
13. <https://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/iran-and-islam>
14. <https://thewire.in/diplomacy/iran-saudi-arabia-diplomatic-ties-china>
15. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/saudi-arabia-says-deal-with-iran-does-not-mean-all-issues-resolved>
16. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/3/10/iran-and-saudi-agree-to-restore-relations>
17. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/3/10/iran-and-saudi-arabia-from-rivalry-to-mending>
18. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/3/10/iran-and-saudi-arabia-from-rivalry-to-mending>
19. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/3/10/iran-and-saudi-arabia-from-rivalry-to-mending>
20. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/3/10/iran-and-saudi-arabia-from-rivalry-to-mending-ties-a-timeline>
21. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/history-saudi-iranian-competition>
22. <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230310-made-in-china-saudi-iran-deal-goes-beyond-middle-east-say-analysts>
23. <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/2016-01-04/ty-article/timeline-iran-and-saudi>
24. <https://www.history.com/topics/middle-east/iran-iraq-war>
25. <https://www.ifimes.org/en/researches/insight-215-iran-saudi-ties-can-history-project>
26. <https://www.ifimes.org/en/researches/insight-215-iran-saudi-ties-can-history-project>
27. <https://www.ifimes.org/en/researches/insight-215-iran-saudi-ties-can-history-project>
28. <https://www.ifimes.org/en/researches/insight-215-iran-saudi-ties-can-history-project>
29. <https://www.ifimes.org/en/researches/insight-215-iran-saudi-ties-can-history-project>
30. <https://www.ifimes.org/en/researches/insight-215-iran-saudi-ties-can-history-project>
31. <https://www.mei.edu/publications/how-tehran-views-iranian-saudi-agreement>
32. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/iran-saudi-arabia-timeline-relations-four-decades-tensions>
33. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/saudi-arabia-syria-agree-reopen-embassies>
34. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/saudi-arabia-syria-agree-reopen-embassies>
35. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/saudi-arabia-claims-drone-attacks-strike>
36. <https://www.nytimes.com/1984/06/06/world/2.html>
37. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-iran-relations-id>
38. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/saudi-arabias-execution-of-cleric-ignites-fury>
39. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/saudi-arabias-execution-of-cleric-ignites-fury-in-iran>
40. Mearsheimer J. The Trategy of Great Power politics. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2001.
41. Richard S. The cold peace: Russo-Western relations as a mimetic cold war, Cambridge Review of International Affairs,2013:26(1):203-224. DOI: 10.1080/09557571.2012.710584
42. Tsygankov A. "From Global Order to Global Transition: Russia and the Future of International Relation" in journal of Russia in Global Affairs, 2019, 17(1).