Study of Iran-Saudi Relations in the Persian Gulf Region within the Framework of the Threat Balance

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Abstract

Relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia should at least after the Islamic Revolution have seen relations that have seen a lot of landing. Although in some cases these relations have been in cooperation and in some cases also contradictory, but what is evident in the relationship between Iran and Saudi Arabia is the threat posed to Saudi Arabia by Iran after the revolution, which, in the light of that, their area is also affected. Although these threats have existed since the Islamic Revolution of Iran for Arabia, the events of a recent decade, especially the invasion of Iraq, have caused this threat to reach its peak, and if, after the revolution, it intends to curb Iran at its internal borders After the occupation of Iraq, considered Iran's threat as a regional one and sought to prevent it. The purpose of this article is to examine the threats posed by Saudi Arabia towards Iran at the regional level.

Regarding what has been said, the main question of this article is what has been the response from Iran to the threat posed by Iran to Saudi Arabia?

The hypothesis of this article is that the threat posed to Iran has led Saudi Arabia to take an aggressive stance against Iran and counter balance it.

This article, using a descriptive-analytical method, uses Stefan Walt's Threat Equilibrium Approach to explain this issue.

Keywords: Occupation of Iraq; Iran; Saudi Arabia; Gulf region; Threat balance

Introduction

The relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia should be considered as relations that have always seen a lot of downs and downsides. Although there are strands of cooperation in the history of the two countries' relations, they generally have to consider relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia as relations based on a perception of the threat to both countries. This is a distant past in relations between the two countries, but the slight loss of similarities between Iran and Saudi Arabia after the Islamic Revolution has maximized this threat. This impression is intensifying from the point where both Iran and Saudi Arabia are considered regional powers of the Persian Gulf adjacent to each other, and each of them has an aggressive capability and expansionist intentions. In other words, they form a threat to them. After the invasion of Iraq, Saudi Arabia's perception has grown high and made Iran feel threatened by its perceived aggressive intentions and build its relations on this basis, so that it could threaten Iran itself in the region. Slowly this has led Saudi Arabia to face threats against Iran in the region and seek to curb Iran's power. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to examine the threats posed by Saudi Arabia to Iran at the regional level in this regard and therefore seek to answer the question of how this threat perceived by Saudi Arabia Has a companion. Analysis of this model requires a relationship between the two countries with regard to emerging threats, which can be called a balance of threat as an appropriate approach in this regard.

Theoretical Framework: Threat Balance

Before discussing the balance of the threat as the theoretical framework of the article, it is necessary to move to the balance of power, which is the equilibrium of the changed threat, with the same equilibrium framework. In the field of international relations as well as other disciplines such as economics, chemistry, life, etc., which apply the concept of balance and balance in their theories, they use the concept of a balance of power in the same sense as the principal organizer in relation to the power relations between states National, and it is assumed that governments, according to their nature laws, seek to secure their own security by creating a kind of balance of power.

David Hume believes that the balance of power is so rooted in common sense and obvious arguments that even in the distant past, it cannot be denied that it was absent. The balance of power is one of the oldest theories in international relations that have always existed from the distant past. This theory has changed over the course of history, although the concept of balance has always played a central role. From ancient times and old times, it can also be seen in written form the balance of power in the works of individuals such as Thucydides and the Greek historian of the Peloponnesian Wars, in which fear of a collapse of the balance of power by Athens and the efforts of Sparta to
manifestations and replacing it with the concept of balance of threat, considers this theory to be incomplete and incomplete, although not a superior power gain coalition with it prevents the balance against it. Instead of the power balance, Stefan Walt, as the designer of the equilibrium theory of the balance of power into structural terms, which Kenneth Waltz finds meaningless because there was no serious indication from other countries to create a balance. This factor led to a counter balance to the threat of replacing the concept of a balance of power in which countries counter balanced the most powerful country. According to Stefan Walt, as the designer of the equilibrium theory of the balance of power of nations, not against the strongest government in international politics against threatened countries, and not of threats that are ambiguous and unclear, since governments are confronted with these impending threats and path changes taking into account the caution [2,3].

The balancing of the threat as one of the defensive realism manifestations and replacing it with the concept of balance of threat, instead of the power balance, identifies the effects of strategic pragmatism, which reduces the threats to a country with superior power and thus the process of aggressive patterns will have more limited functionality.

Of course, the balance-of-concept theory does not replace the balance of power in its entirety, but aims to increase its power, and it forces governments to be in a state of insecurity from other governments whose immediate threat jeopardizes their interests. To balance it with the balance achieved through unification.

Walt believes that threats can come from parameters such as power, proximity, aggressive capabilities, and aggressive and expansionist intentions as their key and fundamental variables, with changes in each of them leading other governments to fear threatened. And takes precautionary measures. On this basis, although the idea of balance of threats also implies the idea of power, this power, along with geography, aggressive ability and intentions, lies within the framework of a more general concept of threat. From this perspective, Walt, while accepting the ideas of realism and the theory of balance of power, considers this theory to be incomplete and incomplete, although not false, and the reason is that power is only one of the factors affecting the formation of balance, and not only or even the most important factor. For example, he states that it is even possible that the power and ability of a country not only does not shape the equilibrium responses of others, but even the countries that have a stake in the coalition with a superior power gain coalition with it prevents the balance against it. Therefore, these countries' views of how to use superior power capabilities can lead to a lack of passive cooperation, calm opposition and an active counterbalance against it. One of the other threatening factors that can shape the equilibrium is the proximity that Walt considers: The low geographic distance, the high threat potential, and vice versa, the high geographical distance, has a low threat potential. In an example for a geographic distance from an impossible balance, he says that powers such as China, Russia and India against the United States would remain silent until short-term aggressive behaviors on the part of the country. In addition, he has another type of power called invasive power in the effective balance of Dundo that beliefs such as achieving specific military capabilities or specific political abilities, as well as wide-ranging ideologies, could threaten states. This would jeopardize the cohesion of the land of other powerful states that are counter balanced [4].

Finally, as the last variable, it also introduces invasive intentions, the more obvious the probability of balancing becomes. This makes it difficult and costly for a developing and aggressive government to take an aggressive approach and hence other countries will inevitably have a counter balance to it. Given that the theory of balance of threats emphasizes variables such as power, geography and nation's intentions, and since the two countries of Iran and Saudi Arabia are regional powers that are in some way adjacent to each other, as well as their sphere of influence The borders of these countries are at a very short distance, causing fears and threats of other powers in the region of these countries to lead to threats that threatened Saudi Arabia for fear of loss. The Arab identity of the countries of the region is more visible and hence threatened to confront Iran against this country.

**Foreign policy of Saudi Arabia to the Islamic Revolution of Iran**

Saudi foreign policy should, at least in Middle Eastern logic, be based on diplomacy to combat the threat, which is due to its security concerns and concerns. This is in contrast to the establishment and continuation of the Saudi government inside, which is based on the Wahhabi identity and is not an identity that dominates foreign relations in the field of foreign policy, but also international currents that have led to a perilous perception of the nature and The source of these clashes is the threat-fight diplomacy over its foreign policy.

Hence, Saudi Arabia's foreign policy should be leaked from the very beginning with a significant shift in foreign policy, procedures, policies and considerations, so that if, at the outset, the Wahhabism was only pledged to the domestic sphere after the formation of the kingdom In Saudi Arabia, in 1932, security considerations and threats such as the ruling dynasty in Iraq and Jordan, including the Hashemi family, as well as the rule of King Malek Fouad, the king of Egypt, which did not recognize Ibn Masood’s rule on Hejaz, led to these threats on the part of Saudi Arabia and the Echoes. For the Saudis, the threat of the Hashemi family for them was such that Jordan's King Abdullah had the dream of uniting Arab nations from Lebanon and Palestine and Syria to Iraq, which should be under the control of Hashemi, and this danger to the Saudi rulers at that time, King Abdul Aziz was at the forefront of the work. Hashmi, unlike the Saudi family, claim to have a relative connection with the Prophet Muhammad, which, of course, was threatened by the British who supported the Hashemi. Saudi Arabia's response to this threat was to establish relations with the United States, which, by expanding its political-economic relations with the country, could somehow endanger the threat and counter balance the United States [5].

This process meant that the foreign policy approach based on foreign affairs followed with the success of Abdul Aziz's successors,
such as Nasser’s Arab-led nationalism, the intensification of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the unification of Syria and Egypt, the formation of a united Arab republic and ... the most important threats to the Saudi government. On the frontier, but on Abdul Karim Qassim’s pursuit of Iraq in the aftermath of the 1958 Revolution, the coming of the Ba’ath Party in that country, as well as the inclination of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi to dominate the region, so that Saudi Arabia could formulate its foreign policy on the basis of them.

This process can be seen with the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, but then it should be considered the most important threat to the Islamic Revolution, so that if in the past the government of Iraq and the Ba’ath party were the most important source of threat for this country, with the advent of the revolution the Islamic threat to Iran was replaced by the sovereignty of Iraq in the wars of Iran and Iraq, as well as the formation of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council.

The Islamic Revolution of Iran and the Transformation of the Concept of the Threat

However, before the revolution, the threats to Saudi Arabia threatened by Iran should, as it were mentioned, be sought in the behavior of the Shah in the purview and domination of the region, which I can even mention, for example, of the determination of Iran to conclude a security treaty with Iraq Following the 1974 Algiers agreement, in which Iran, through a game with Iraqi tablature, called for the marginalization of the Arabian lands of the Gulf States, and as a result of achieving an acceptable and planned balance in the area, these actions could not have Such a threat to Saudi Arabia and the creation of a pure security environment against Iran, which can be considered as a fog. Metin pointed out that at this time, both Iran and Saudi Arabia were in the same camp as the Western Secretary of Defense, and most importantly, the two countries were considered as the foundations of the doctrine of Nixon in the region. They carried out additional measures for the security of the region in the Persian Gulf, and this training provided incentives to monitor the regional security system that was designed to meet the objectives of the Soviet Union. In other words, it can be argued that although Iran and Saudi Arabia are in many fields such as ideology, culture, and so on, Regional rivals were considered as one another, but the two countries’ agreement in the international system affected the threats posed by these factors: the emerging crisis of the Islamic Revolution and the opposing system with the Islamic Republic of Iran, creating a security vacuum And the threat to Western interests and goals in the region, the Arab countries of the region and, above all, Saudi Arabia, have led to the formation of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The Threat to the Formation of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council

As mentioned above, the emerging crisis and victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1357 Hijri Shams created this threat to the United States, which had vital goals and interests in the region, as well as pro-Western regimes, and at the same time the complex for the threats posed by This revolution is to adopt a common position and practice against the Islamic Republic of Iran. This reaction was to greatly expose the threats of the Islamic Revolution and to adopt hostile positions with concern and pressure from the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was pursued by both the United States and the Persian Gulf countries, which ultimately led them to war As the most successful tool for suppressing the Islamic Revolution that was formed with the green light of these countries and with Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Iran [6].

After the promises of Saddam to fulfill his promises based on the collapse of the Islamic Republic’s nascent regime and the seizure of Tehran for a week in Tehran, six months after the event, the foundations for the formation of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council were realized, although the purpose of establishing itself They set out a series of political, economic, commercial, cultural, technical, health, financial, and ... partnerships, but the purpose of this council was to preserve anything but maintaining political stability and maintaining the status quo, as well as coordinating capabilities. In countering the common foreign threats, especially the Islamic Revolution of Iran. The council, centered on Saudi Arabia, tried to re-establish the kind of stability that would have been threatened by the Islamic Revolution of Iran, which threatened to overwhelm Saudi Arabia, the United States, as well as the regional strategy He was suffering from a vacuum of power, and this vacuum created an atmosphere of anti-Americanism in the region for that country.

During the imposed war, the council laid down its Arab and Arab nationalism alongside Iraq and Iran, and even Prince Nayef bin Abdul Aziz and Saudi Arabia under the auspices of a bilateral security treaty with Iraq expressed this expression. Not only does Iraq not defend its independence and sovereignty, but it also defends Arab territories and the Arab nation on everything. These political orientations that came from the threats of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, even after the war, also existed for the Saudi Arabian-Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, so that even after the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 598 by Iran, the Council of Ministers continues to rule The unilateral Iraqi support the Arvand River (which was contrary to the provisions of the Algerian 1985 Agreement that defined the real borders of Iran and Iraq), and even restored Iraq after the war [7,8].

In addition to the sense of the threat and fear these countries feel from Iran, which, of course, is threatened by the great powers, the hostility of some members of the Gulf Cooperation Council has also caused the regional security of Iran and the Cooperation Council The Persian Gulf is marked by a significant difference in the way that Iran, after the revolution of the regional security system, has been emphasized by the countries of the region, in which any interference by large powers is condemned, but members of this council are led by Saudi Arabia in order to threaten and intimidate Iran from the security system. They follow another region in which they rely more heavily on the Powers the grave of the United States, in particular, is threatening the Islamic Republic of Iran [9].

Occupation of Iraq: Fear of Iran as a Regional Power

Iran and Iraq are always regarded as two peripheral countries in the form of regional security arrangements. The occupation of Iraq after the 9/11 attacks caused Iran to play an effective role in this country and in the region in light of the events that took place after this occupation. Although viewed as an opportunity for Iran, it was a challenge for the country, the most important of which was the magnitude of Iran’s threat to the region in order to exploit the gaps and constraints to contain and weaken Iran from the United States. Saudi Arabia was threatening Iran’s threat to the region.

Aside from the US actions, which are part of this effort to consolidate its hegemony in the region and hence seek to prevent Iran from becoming a regional power, Saudi Arabia has also entered the most intense competition with Iran after these developments. Putting
the country together with the United States to bring Iran out of power. The influence of Iran in Iraq, which further increased its influence on Lebanon and the rise of Hezbollah’s movements, created a threat and threat to Saudi Arabia and other conservative Arab states that sought to expand their influence in the Middle East. Therefore, it seeks to cope with it and weaken the Islamic Republic of Iran. Saudi Arabia believes that post-employment cases in Iraq have created an opportunity for Iran to put pressure on its Shi’a supporters in this country, as well as groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas, to bargain over the United States and the West. And, ultimately, to recognize the undeniable regional power of the United States as a result of which the country has sought to halt regional power in Iran. Despite the Saudi-Iraqi relationship between Iraq and Saddam Hussein’s time, although Iraq was seen as a threat to Iran prior to occupation, Iran’s threat to Saudi Arabia was such that it even used Iraq as a weight against Iran. But with the occupation of Iraq after the September 11 attacks, this weight was eliminated for Saudi Arabia and intensified to further increase Iran’s influence and influence. This was contrary to expectations of Saudi Arabia that the government structure and the Islamic Revolution of Iran created that fear for Saddam Hussein as a means to compete with the threat of Iran and to maintain the balance of power in their favor and at the expense of Iran. Which was a kind of buffer between the two countries, which kept Saudi Arabia away from the scene and held regional competition with Iran.

Saudi officials recognize the role of Iran in Iraq after the occupation as a massive threat, so that they even refer to it to Iraqi delivery to Iran. However, the Saudi authorities have given them the opportunity to convey this claim so that they can reduce domestic issues, such as pressure on democracy, but ultimately, with the withdrawal of the Shi’ite crescent after the occupation of Iran and Iraq after the occupation, which, of course, is the Lebanese Hezbollah And Syria and Hamas, in some way to create Shi’ite fears and fears of Iran in the region, and used it as a threat to Iran in order to worry the US about Iran’s goals. Saudi Arabia is fearful of the threat of Shi’ite revival, which reveals the erosion of legitimacy and the widening gap between Sunni and Wahhabis and the people, and is afraid of fearing Iran’s power to jeopardize its undemocratic regime.

This idea of widening the ideology is one of the parameters that, along with other factors in the theory of balance of threat, such as power, geographical distance and aggressive policy, can threaten a state. Therefore, the power of the Shi’ia in Iraq could be presented in a regional arrangement of a different smell of Shi’ia, which could have given Iran this ability to increase its psychological and strategic space and, in contrast, in conflict with other interests. The regional actors have become Saudi Arabic, and this relationship has become firmly established.

In a glimpse of a close, interconnected geography, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan were a topic that could have linked the geopolitics of Persian Gulf issues to the whole, and it seemed a worrying one for conservative Arabs like Saudi Arabia. And this was a threat to the Saudis in the aftermath of the occupation of a geopolitical situation over Iran, which, in addition to Iran’s cooperation with the international community, at the same level as Iran, has been a connecting point for new developments. In the Middle East the geography of Iran and Iraq, which included long boundaries with the country and the connection to the Croesian area in the north and Basra in the south, led to the creation of a unique strategic location for Iran in the context of the Iraq crisis, which led Iran to move from the new Iraqi And the new Iraqi central government supported Iraq and Iran, which had a long history of hostility, as friends and colleagues.

All of these factors have led Saudi Arabia to respond to Iran. The reaction that emerged from a threat from Iran was a response to Iran’s regional power struggles, not to respond to Iran’s power, but to respond to the threat posed by Iran, of course, to Saudi Arabia. Which Saudi Arabia considers to be an ideological and threatening one, due to Iran’s near geography of its own intentions and Shi’ite ideology. In recent years, the crisis created at the site has led to a more confrontational, more aggressive, frontier power movement, and to engage these countries indirectly in a war against each other. One of these countries is Bahrain, which has a geopolitical background as well as ideological or religious factors, which have opened up Iran’s foot as a country seeking to appeal to the Shiites of the world in search of allies (informal) in the region and in the world. If, before the revolution, Iran’s approach to foreign policy was based on geographic and geopolitical factors, the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran was based on the strengthening of the ideological approach, which made Iran the most active regional actor in foreign policy. It became apparent: interference in the core issues of the Middle East, including the Arab-Israeli peace and the struggle against arrogance and, consequently, the struggle against Arab-dominated Arab powers.

The selection of this policy by the Islamic Republic of Iran has made other Shiites, considered as centrifugal forces, to turn these beliefs into a program and, by gaining political and social identity, to resist the political pressures of their own governments. The takeover of power by the Shiite-dominated government in Iraq after occupation, as well as the demonstration of the power of the Hezbollah Shi’ite group in Lebanon, was one of the victories for Iran, which could have transformed the Shi’ite element into a central feature of Middle Eastern equations.

The choice of this approach to a broad-based ideology can be linked to the balance of threat, which could be a threat to other countries, and in this regard, it was a threat to Saudi Arabia, but the crisis, which, in addition to the fact that it was in the ideology of fear, The country was in close proximity to the crisis as a result of the crisis in Bahrain, which in this crisis, even threatening the lives of its troops, made a lot of difference. Unlike the old strategy of this country, the strategy was to relate the other countries to the struggle, due to its geographical proximity to Bahrain, especially the Qatifs and Qaanawahs of Bahrain, which had a geographic and emotional connection with this country, which also raises concerns about Saudi Arabia.

Finally, it can be said that Saudi Arabia’s preoccupation with small regional countries such as Bahrain is from Iran, which can strategically use its ideological background and increase its influence in the Middle East region, especially the Persian Gulf. In the context of the Bahraini crisis, in addition to the ideology that plays an effective role in the threat, the proximity and geography as important parameters of this theory played an important role in the Saudi response to Iran’s approach to the crisis because of the threat to Iran that Iran The intention to intervene in Bahrain is to try to find a regional hegemony and undermine the country and ultimately increase international bargaining power. The crisis in Syria should be considered another crisis, even as it is described as the Iran-Iraq war. A crisis that was not seen in crises such as Egypt, Libya, or Tunisia, but a crisis in which the trajectory of regional powers such as Saudi Arabia was clearly seen. Considering whether this crisis has a domestic or external origin, the answer is that this crisis is more than a source of foreign origin than a domestic source, such as social and political unrest and economic
problems. Conquest and competition among regional actors. Even in the meantime, unlike the international system’s crises, the role of the United States cannot be regarded as a major player in the tensions that have been set up in Syria. However, Syria has been identified as the axis of evils on the part of the country and should be seen as a pressure on the resistance axis. This country and its regional allies have been pushing for pressure, but for some reason this role has been given not to the United States but to Saudi Arabia in the context of the crisis.

Syria is not a country with a lot of fossil fuels and cannot justify the comprehensive and inclusive actions of the United States in this country. On the other hand, Syria has entered the campaign with the United States’ main ally in the region of Israel, which has supplied the oil to groups such as Lebanese and Palestinian groups. Politically speaking, because of the secularism of the Syrian regime as the most secular Arab country in the region, it cannot oppose the US, which seeks to spread American culture in its cover of democracy, secularism, and the creation of a free market.

Therefore, Saudi Arabia should play the most important role in regional and trans-regional actors who lost their allies and allies in the aftermath of the recent crises in the region. For example, we can mention the fall of Mubarak in Egypt, Zine al-Abidine ibn Ali in Tunisia, and so on. Before that, the Saudis in the Iraqi, Lebanese, and Palestinian countries had found rhymes to Iran, and the question of Syria raised the question of Saudi Arabia what is the aim of the Syrian Assad and the government?

Iran and Afghanistan are not natural allies, neither counts nor natural enemies. These two countries, for reasons like two major oil producers and Shia and Sunni defenders, are natural rivals. The competition, of course, already existed, but before the revolution, because of the two countries in the West, the competition was by the states United was controlled, but with the fall of the Shah, Saudi Arabia remained in the West, and Iran became the enemy of that country.

Prior to the prosecution of cases such as the loss of Iraq and Lebanon, as well as the Bahraini crisis, even this was acknowledged by the Saudi authorities that the Cold War with Iran is a fact; this is a country that is expanding its influence, the instability of several last month led to We can no longer sit comfortably and watch only. These facts have been seen as a threat from the Saudis, and the Syrian government has been thinking of overthrowing Iran’s allies in the country and ideologically looking to the region to support the radical Salafist opposition of the Syrian government. Although this can be taken in the direction of overlapping with the interests of the unipolar United States, it is undeniable that Saudi Arabia, as a two-state regional power, seeks to restrain Iran’s power and threat as a major regional power. There are many geopolitical and ideological reasons for this work. Finally, Saudi Arabia’s low-profile Saudi influence on Syria should be attributed to its hostilities with Iran, which has come to the benefit of Iran as a threat to the loss of identity of these countries. After losing Iraq and the Lebanon and starting the Bahrain uprising, Saudi Arabia perceives itself as jeopardizing that Iran has disturbed the balance in its own right and at the expense of Saudi Arabia, and this creates a feeling for Saudi Arabia that it is pushing for unity. Iran, in other words, Syria, can do something retaliation, as well as reduce Iran’s threat to Iran.

**Conclusion**

The balance of threat is a concept that replaces the balance of power, of course, with the same basic approach of power, leading to the power behind the threat. A systemic approach to the atrocities of those countries in the system is against the most powerful one that is struggling against the most threatening country. The relationship between Iran and Afghanistan in the region of the Middle East and the specialty of the Persian Gulf should be based on this type of balance. Two countries, although not as enemies and not potential friends, have always been potential rivals. Of course, similar approaches and systems that are inconsistent with the system sometimes make them united or hostile to each other. Considering the approach in the country before the Islamic Revolution of Iran, although their system was united with one another, the Islamic Revolution led Iran to oppose the system by opting out and replacing ideological factors rather than geopolitical issues in its foreign policy. The face of a threat to Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia’s program has been diversified to contain the threat of various parameters, which can be distinguished from securing the Ba’athist regime against Iran and the formation of institutions such as the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council.

With the increase of regional power of Iran in the aftermath of the occupation of Iraq, the crisis of Bahrain and, moreover, Saudi Arabia, which already felt the threat of threat from Iran more than before, entered the stage of the campaign, so that even for the uprising of Bahrain The Saudis suppressed a rebellion and protest that could have threatened both ideologically and geopolitically. Saudi Arabia has come to the conclusion that Iran is a major regional power and even acknowledged that the region lost its Arab identity, which is why it sought to capture Iran in the region, the most obvious of which can be seen in the context of the crisis. Syria has observed that in this country, with the weakening of the Syrian government, it is trying to weaken Iran as its ally.

**References**