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**Refferees**

# Iraq's Identity Crisis and Iran's Foreign Policy Orientation

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## Abstract

Iraq has been the most prominent example of divergence and identity crisis in recent decades. The multiplicity of ethnic, religious, and power sharing groups has caused political and social divisions. Shiites, Kurds and Sunnis are the main players in this split. The ethnic has divided Iraq into two Kurdish and Arab communities, and the religious one into Shiite and Sunni groups. With the victory of the Islamic Revolution there were fundamental changes in Iran's foreign policy at the regional level and toward its neighbors. At the same time, Saddam's dictatorship did not provide an opportunity to express different ethnicities and identities. The US invasion to Iraq and the overthrow of the Ba'athist regime brought Iraq into a new and unstable phase, with various groups and ethnicities trying to express their conflicting political and social identity goals and demands. The regional countries particularly the Islamic

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Republic of Iran, have expanded their influence in Iraq by changing their foreign policy orientation based on their regional goals and national security, to prevent other competitors increasing their influence. The main purpose of the present study is to analyze and investigate the identity crisis impact in Iraq on the Islamic Republic of Iran foreign policy orientation by emphasizing on the post-Saddam era from 2003 to 2020 by using Constructivism Theory. The paper, based on the nature and type of the subject, uses a descriptive-analytical method and the library resources to collect data and information.

**Keywords:** *Crisis; Identity; Identity Crisis; Constructivism; Foreign Policy Orientation*

## Introduction

In one society, the contradiction, conflict, and divisions among the different groups, identities, and ethnicities can lead to crisis. Social divisions refer to indicators and criteria that may cause the separation of social groups from one another and even to the confrontation. Along with politics, the ethnicity, religion, and the social class can also initiate conflict and political, social, and identity crises. In undemocratic and heterogeneous countries, the problem of identity is very difficult to solve. In short, it can be said that many countries in the Middle East and in the Arab world are concerned about their identity and its crisis.

Lucian W. Pye, divides the political crisis into five categories: the identity, legitimacy, participation, influence and the distribution crises. The identity crisis occurs when a society realizes what has exclusively and indisputably admitted as its self-cumulative is no longer acceptable under the new historical circumstances. The political system in order to reach a new level of performance based on changes in territory, intensity, structural or eventual changes, it is necessary to redefine the participants in the system, i.e., who they are, and how they are different with the all other political or social systems. Regarding the identity crisis we can say that there are four main types of identity crisis: the first type of crisis relates to feelings about the territory and the relationships of geographic circumstance to nationalist feelings. The second form occurs when the social structure, and in particular the social class divisions expand in a way that prevents the national unity. The third case deals with the confliction between transnational identities and the commitment to a common

national identity. The fourth form of the identity crisis is caused by psychological consequences, rapid social change, and dual feelings towards foreigners (Pye, 2001: 170-171).

Iraq is a nascent state in the Middle East, formed in this region in the twentieth century due to the interests and strategies of European powers, especially Britain. It has a very heterogeneous ethnic and religious population and in terms of political, social and cultural structure is divided into three distinct areas. In Iraq, Sunni Arabs live in the central, Kurds in the north and Shiite in the south. Beside these three main groups, there are also small cultural and social identities, such as Turkmen, Assyrians, and Yazidis, who have distinct cultures and beliefs. The lack of national identity in Iraq, along with the ethnic-religious gap, has led to the emergence of an identity crisis between ethnic and sectarian groups where the historical and political factors as well as functional causes has reinforced it. The ignorance of people's rights during the different historical periods and the lack of a clear plan to reduce gaps and conflicts have caused social and political disruption. That is to say, besides the Sunni-Shiite religious identity gap, and the Arab-Kurdish ethnic identity crisis, there is a third economic-welfare-class crisis, too. Gaps and splits that arise from differences in identity, belief, ideology, and authority, since they see their interests preserving and sometimes their existence as the other party's elimination, are likely to lead to violence and crisis. From the very beginning of Iraq creation in the 1920s, Arab Sunnis, which constitute a low percentage of the population and have long domination in Iraq, continued to rule the country until 2003, even however, with the Ba'athists' efforts to spread the extremist nationalism to attract Shiite Arabs, they failed to infiltrate other claimed areas beyond the predominantly Sunni centers in Iraq. For this reason, the Ba'athist central government has always had the least legitimacy and acceptance in the southern Shia populated and northern Kurdish regions of Iraq, while Kurdish ethnic identity and Shiite religious identity are bolder than Iraq's identity among the

inhabitants. Since the fall of Saddam's Ba'athist regime in 2003, Shiites and Kurds have had the first opportunity to seize the outpost of power in accordance with their demographic realities. The power elites are trying to redefine a broader and more modern national identity in this country. Thus, we continue to see the superiority of ethnic and religious identity interests on national identity and interests in Iraq. A brief look at transformations in Iraq shows the internal instability and the identity crisis have had a direct impact on the behavior and orientation of other countries foreign policy. An deep understanding of the political and social situation in Iraq can provide an opportunity to recognize its security dimensions and the effects that its stability or instability has on neighbor countries, especially the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Using an analytical-descriptive approach and relying on the theory of constructivism, this study examinate the identity crisis in the new Iraq (post-Saddam), and addresses the question of "how the identity crisis in Iraq has affected the approach, direction and orientation of the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy in internal, regional and international dimensions? It proves this hypothesis that the identity crisis in Iraq has paved the way for Iran to face internal, regional and international challenges and increased its security aspects. In the present study, the "identity crisis in Iraq" is considered as the independent variable and "the Islamic Republic of Iran foreign policy orientation" as the dependent variable.

## I. Theoretical Framework

In analyzing the governments' foreign policy, most scholars have attempted to use major and dominant intellectual approaches and paradigms in international relations such as realism, idealism, and behaviorism. The main reason for these analyzes can be found in the fact that the identity subject of the most countries political system has never been seriously considered. But paying attention to the current situation of international system and the the complex structure of ethnic and religious identity in the Middle

East, the study of Islamic Republic of Iran foreign policy orientation with respect to the Iraq country, within the mentioned approaches and paradigms framework cannot be easily understood. For this reason, from a variety of theories, the constructive approach which is more descriptive and analytical, selected as the theoretical framework.

One of the most important reasons for the importance of the constructive approach in international relations is its relevance to the question of states' identity. In defining identity, constructivists have defined it as a self-definition or self-defining against others. In their view, identity allows nations to make their world meaningful, to categorize other entities, and to define others as their friend or enemy. Governments with these perceptions seek to change or maintain the status quo, unite with one country or take action against others (Wilmer, 2002: 59). According to the constructivists, other important subject related to the identity are the fluidity and changeability of identities. Identity can be fluid under material conditions, and the main mission of the constructivists is to explain this change and policy, because in their view identity is a social matter, meaning that in constructing selves, the other can also be made, so identity is fluid. This is because in their view, actors' perceptions of themselves, their interests and goals are changeable, and as a result of the new identities formation, there will be new interests for the government as well, so these different and changing identities serve the actors' interests and behaviors shape. In this respect, identity and interests are not pre-eminent and are not derived from the power distribution structure, but are sourced from the internal origins of the actors' identity (Aghaee and Rasooli, 2009: 5). According to the constructivist foreign policy model, common inter-subjective norms in both the internal and international levels of Iran national identity forms the specific national role. These roles in turn, determine the specific national interests that guide and shape the Islamic Republic's foreign policy. Thus, by applying this model one can examine how non-material

intellectual and ideological structures such as ideology and worldview, influence the Islamic Republic's foreign policy and also the role and place of non-material interests and resources in Iranian foreign policy can be determined and explained. Furthermore, the definition and prioritization of Iran's national interests based on its national identity and role could be analyzed (Dehghani Firouzabadi, 2010: 43).

In modern Iraq, non-integration of ethnic and religious groups within a single nation and non-formation of national identities and the competition for power have led to the identity crisis which made the shared and common interests among Iraqi groups and other countries. In recent years this crisis with the increasing spread of terrorism and the interference of other foreign countries has influenced Iran's foreign policy in various aspects. It seems that the costructive theory, which emphasizes on the immaterial dimensions and internal identities of countries, in explaining the Islamic Republic of Iran foreign policy provides a better context about Iraq country. Taking into account such characteristics and features in Iraq specially the identity crisis, and by examining the reasons of its emergence and redefinition its impact on the Islamic Republic of Iran foreign policy the importance of this research can be understood. Identifying the identity crisis in Iraq with emphasis on the constructive theory with regard to the gaps in the less use of this scientific theory in international relations is one of the main reasons of this research. Considering the identity crisis in Iraq and its variable role and impact on the Islamic Republic of Iran foreign policy orientation in order to produce an appropriate and practical study source for crisis management and scientific analysis of the identity crisis in Iraq for its impact on the policy approach of a country that has more ethnic, religious, social and political structure similarities with Iran can be theoretically and scientifically beneficial for policy makers and statesmen in dealing with the identity crisis and practically in transforming it to the opportunity to serve the national interest. The innovative and creative approach of this study is applying the constructive theory

as an international relations in one country foreign policy orientation with regard to the identity crisis.

## II. Iraq Recognition

Iraq is made up of 18 provinces that are federally governed under the new constitution. Each province has a private parliament that is elected by the people, and ultimately a chairman is elected as governor with relatively full authority. Cities, villages, and even districts in each province also have a council and a chief to send the views and needs of everywhere of the country to senior Iraq officials. The new Iraq parliament law permits the coalition of provinces and the formation of new regions, where now the Kurdistan Region having three Erbil, Sulaimaniyah and Duhok provinces in the north, is governed by declaration of autonomous government under a federal headquarters in Erbil. This geographical coalition is possible for other provinces as well, but provincial consolidation has not yet taken place in the other 15 provinces in Iraq. Basra, Nasiriyah and Al-Muthanna provinces deciding to declare a separate region in the south by referendum but it did not reach the majority and is now governed by the central government in Baghdad under the previous procedure. Iraq has a National Assembly with 329 members from all over the country, as well as the President and Prime Minister as the most responsible person in the country with 22 ministers. The official language of Iraq is now Arabic and Kurdish, which in some provinces also speak Persian and Turkish. The religion of 97% of Iraqis is Islam, 67% are Shiites, 30% Sunnis and 3% Christians, etc. The Shiites generally reside in central and southern Iraq and the Sunnis live in the north and west. Baghdad, as the capital of Iraq, contains various groups, parties, and religions, which are currently at odds over political power and religious differences. Iraq has 3650 kilometers of common border with its neighboring countries, including Iran as the largest border with 1458 kilometers to the east, Turkey with 352 kilometers to the north, Syria with 605 kilometers to the west, Jordan with 181 kilometers

to the southwest, Saudi Arabia with an area of 814 kilometers to the south, Kuwait 240 kilometers to the southeast and the Persian Gulf 58 kilometers to the southeast (Nejatnia, 2019: 12).

## III. The Perspective of Identity Crisis in Iraq

The Ba'ath Party took the power through the coup in 1968, and Saddam Hussein ruthlessly defeated his party rivals and overthrew the regime (Bremer, 2007: 58). Saddam and his companions lacked social influence and were deprived of religious originality and, within the Ba'ath Party, pursued a radical Arab ideology based on Sunni Arab thought. This practice led to the changes and doubling weakening of the other "ethnicities" and "religions" status, such that the Arab Sunnis prevailed over the political system of this land for six periods of Bani Omayeh, Bani Abbas, the Ottomans, British Mandatory, Kingdom and Republican (from 680 AD to the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS), until 2003 the overthrow of Saddam Hussein) which continued until the formation of the Transitional Council of Iraq Government (Majlis) in May 2003, (Golchin, 2019: 18).

Based on this, six important historical periods in contemporary Iraq history concerning the establishing of contradictions, its consolidation, deepening and escalation, and finally the activation of divisions and conflicts in the form of an identity crisis at three stages: (a) The pre-Saddam era, b) Saddam era, and c) The post-Saddam era will be discussed.

**The Pre-Saddam Era**: In the studying of the historical background of contradictions and the identity crisis in Iraq despite the tumultuous history of the past few centuries, it seems that the Ottoman period, with the establishment of sovereignty and stability structures, went to be the starting point for identity structural contradictions in Iraq. Important factors, such as the existence of purely nationalist thinking that has followed the policy of Turkism, trying to change the ethnic nature of the Arab regions particularly Iraq, fostering Sunni-Shiite religious conflict, intensifying Arab-Kurdish ethnic conflicts, unification of religion

(Hanafi), emphasizing on applying military to govern Iraq regions in which were without cultural thought and economic growth for the flourishing of Iraq in various social, cultural, economic and other spheres. Ultimately caused the consolidating of the sovereignty and authority of the Sunnis on Kurds and Shiites, the dominance of the Arab Sunnis over Iraq administrations and organizations, army, scientific institutes and education. All of these led to the establishment of Iraq's contradictions, which served as the source of problems in the future. Unlike the Shiites and the Kurds, Sunnis have ruled Iraq since the founding of the Bani Abbas dynasty. For about five centuries the sovereignty of Ottoman caused the political governing of Turks and along with them the Sunni Arabs over Iraq (Mar, 2001: 28).

**British Dominatio**n: In 1920 Iraq created from the Ottoman Empire by the British, including three constituent states, Mosul, Baghdad and Basra. They did not have a common political, social and economic life background within a single political entity. They had different cultures and tendencies and were governed separately and independently, and lacked national identity and cohesion. In the policy of religious discrimination, Britain adopted the Ottoman method. The British pursued complete domination of Iraq by marginalizing and persecuting the Shiites. The result is that in the 12 years of domination, Britain tried to take advantage of Turkish, Arab and Kurdish hostility. The Shiites, who made up the majority of Iraqi society, were not safe.

Although Iraq's independence from British domination led to the 25 years sovereignty of the kingdom from 1932 to 1958, it was in fact a continuation of the domination  period and Britain had completed control over rules. King Faisal attempted to reduce the severity of ethnic-religious discrimination in Iraq, but the British directly prevented it through subordinate prime ministers and governments. In the words of King Faisal, during this period Britain dictates to the Iraq government a policy that the paying taxes and killing were for Shiites, and the positions and offices for Sunnis. One of the important reasons for keeping Shiites out of

government was their strong opposition to the British during the occupation. The British, therefore, had no belief in the Shiites and tried to keep them out of sovereignty (Aliyan, 2005: 369). In this period, Britain focused on oppression of Shiites and Kurds by influencing on citizenship and social and legal discrimination against Shiites and Kurds. During this period, anti-Kurdish social policy took place and Kurds, like the Shiites, became second-class citizens.

**The First Republican Period**: In 1958, the first republic was formed under the leadership of Abdul Karim Qassim, whose father was Sunni and his mother was Shiite. He has sought to halt the process of increasing deprivation and ethnic and religious disputation in Iraq, and has taken actions such as giving Shiites posts and positions in the army and government agencies, building Medinah al-Soura and Medinah al-Nour for the poor and oppressed in Baghdad suburbs, which had often migrated from southern Shiite areas. Abdul Karim Qassim also sought to promote multi-ethnic inclusive nationalism in Iraq, and to contribute to the administration of other ethnic and religious groups. After Qassim, Abdul Salam Aref, with a far sharper and more violent approach than in the past, resorted to tribalism and hostility to the Shia. During the Republican era, the Iraq government strongly prevented the possible strengthening of the Shiites role in Iraq, which created a class division and public discontent, Shiites were always dissatisfied with the repressive view of the state (Barzegar, 2011).

**Saddam's Era**: Shiites and Kurds who had not practically participated in Iraqi rule since the formation of Iraq, in Ba'athist particularly in Saddam Hussein rule, in addition to the continuation of the past approach, were put aside along with Sunnis who did not conform to the Ba'ath Party's ideology and religion interpretation. Under these circumstances, the Ba'athist period has also been a continuation of the evolved state of the Ottoman-English and Abdul-Salam Arif era, in which at least two Shiite and Kurdish groups were not involved in the state-building

process of Iraq nation, and nearly 80 percentages of the country's population were trapped in a condition of insecurity and terrorism. The result was a great extent of contradictions, an identity crisis, and the collapse of national sentiment.

**Post-Saddam Era**: With the fall of Saddam in 2003 and the liberation of social forces, there was a special historical opportunity for Iraq oppressed tribes and religions. On the other hand, some Sunnis especially the remnants of the Ba'athist regime, rose against new conditions. Factors such as the liberation of forces from past oppression and discrimination, the overwhelming demand for power by ethnic and religious groups, the Sunnis failed attempt to stay in power, and the occupiers' failure to organize Iraq, all made the particular critical situations which the first and immediate effect was to activate past accumulated crises and showing them in the political, social and security spheres encountering and confrontation. Recent decades' statistics on the human toll crisis in Iraq illustrate the depth of the escalation and the identity crisis in Iraq. To address the problem of a new Iraq, the Americans have considered the model of state-nation-building from the outside, but this type of state-nation-building has been very costly and violent, and in the short run it has had little impact as stabilizers in the regional environment. Also, with the exiting and withdrawal of external support, nascent government structures and institutions have been on the verge of collapse as a result of internal strife caused by disagreement and denationalization (Bashir, 2009).

The study of Iraq's historical-political process reveals that it was not formed on the basis of a common idea of Iraqi citizens. Accordingly, there have been structural conflicts that have resulted in divisions and identity crises. The deepening of this gap and crisis, undermined social cohesion and and faced Iraq to the internal crisis and insecurity. Since the fall of the Ottoman Empire, both during the Ottoman and independence years, the country has always been plagued by internal crises stemming from a lack of public consensus on national identity and the legitimacy

of the central government, and the process of establishing a national government was a major concern for governments in Baghdad. From the outset, Iraq had a fragmented ethnic and religious context and lacked coherent elements such as language, race, religion, land, and a common historical heritage, elements that were viewed by theorists in the field of social and political science which are necessary to adopt any modern national unit (Anderson and Stanfield, 2004: 20).

## IV. The Identity Crisis in New Iraq

In Iraq's ethnic and racial division, there is greater agreement on the following subdivision: 75 to 80 percent Arab (largest ethnic group), 15 to 20 percent Kurdish (second largest ethnic group), and the rest, about 5 percent which include Turkmen, Assyrians, Jews, Yazidis and Sabians. The Arabs are of the Sami race, the Kurds are of the Aryan race, and the Turkmens are of the Central Asian Turkish race. The Shiites emphasized the Islamic Republic of Iraq as their preferred alternative to the new political system. The Sunnis also supported the Iraq Arab Republic. The Kurds and other non-Arab Iraqi minorities also proposed the Iraq Democratic Republic, which was eventually recognized by the Iraq Parliament as the source of government's identity and structure (Pirani, 2019: 35).

**Shiites and Identity Crisis**: Although Iraq is the center of Shiite and encompassed by Shiite holy shrines, in spite of their population weight they were always in minority politically. With the exception of Ale-Boyeh during the fourth century, Shiites have always been dominated by the Sunni political powers in Baghdad. Shiites were neglected despite their demographic weight throughout Ottoman, Hashemite, British, Nationalist, Communist, and Ba'athist regimes, however, today's Shiites are the largest group which makes up the majority of the entire Iraq population. The overthrow of Saddam provided the basis for the Shiites' presence and their exit from isolation and since then the Shiites have become increasingly active in the political and social arena

(Talashan, 2010: 116).

Shiites are responsible for their Iraqi identity and even love for, believing that Iraqi identity guarantees unity and integration, responds to interdependence, loyalty and religious freedom, they believe that the Iraqi community multiplies is one suitable merit and positive characteristics. The Shiites do not have much affinity for their Arab identity, the main reason being that Arab identity is now out of its natural form and has become a definite religious trait, meaning that anyone outside the (Sunni) religious framework, it is also out of the Arab identity (Golchin, 2019: 191). Therefore, despite the many ups and downs of Iraq political process, the main tendency Shiite groups is to maintain Iraq's integrity, to strive for greater power within Iraq's internal equations and practical political conditions, as well as to strive for stability and security (Vaezy, 2008: 51-17). Because of the population majority and cultural elements, Shiites are looking for Arab identity and cultural fundamentals different from the Arab world, which has more specific Iraqi characteristics (Bagheri, 2013: 149).

**Kurds and Identity Crisis**: The Kurds have always pursued an "independent Kurdish ethnic and nationalist identity, and only find it as a response to their desires and representing their own characteristics. However, the Iraqi identity that emerged after 2003 has provided them with broad material and spiritual privileges. The Kurds prefer their Kurdish nationalist identity, so during the drafting of the Iraqi constitution they did not allow to emphasize Iraq's Arab identity. The Kurds say that the Kurdish people must themselves determine their own destiny, it means that they must be able to declare independence at any time. In the post-Saddam era, Kurds have acted with consistency, coherence, and efficiency in Iraq politics, and it can be said that they have gained the most in the Iraqi political process today (Golchin, 2019: 195-191). Also, Iraq Kurdistan has always been one of the divergence areas due to the linguistic, religious, historical and cultural heterogeneity of the Iraqi majority (Zibaklam and Abdullah Pour,

2011: 63). Among the Kurdistan neighboring countries, the Islamic Republic of Iran has had the least problem with the Kurdish subjects, since the Kurds are essentially Ariyan and prideful in their ethnic affiliation with the Persians (Ahmadi, 2000: 85).

**Sunnis and Identity Crisis**: Sunni Arabs, despite being a minority, have dominated the political and social life of Iraq from the distant past with the support of the Ottoman government. On many occasions, Arabs have expressed a desire to use both Arab and Islamic identities to excel the Shiite and Kurdish groups. The Sunnis of Iraq have put their desire more towards religion, and in fact religion has sought to be the main engine of their cause and argue for the founding or emergence of their new order. Accordingly, despite years of establishment of a new system in Iraq, there is still concern that Arab Sunnis will not accept the new Iraq identity framework after the change and Iraq society and government fails to create a new Iraq (Golchin, 2019: 195-196). In post-Saddam era, Iraq Sunni groups have refused to participate seriously in the political process and, by insufficient support to the government, have created challenges to build a strong, cooperative and peaceful state for all Iraqi groups. Sunnis dissatisfaction with its role in the new power structure, and also considerations and policies of Arab countries including the Saudis, have played a decisive role in the unprotected and uncooperative behavior of Iraq Sunni groups (Asadi, 2008: 89). Sunni Arabs, because of their minority status define their Arab identity in line with the Sunni Arab world and see themselves as part of the Arab world in order to enjoy full support for a greater share of power in Iraq. They consider the Arab countries as their natural and permanent supporter and even a large part of their behaviors and roles are based on the views and policies of Arab governments (Bagheri, 2013: 149).

## V. The solution to the identity crisis

This study has attempted to examine the historical contexts

focusing on the post-Saddam era while answering the main research question about the identity crisis in Iraq and its effects on Islamic Republic of Iran foreign policy orientation, it is going to address the roots of the contradictions and social and political crises in Iraq to provide a model for a national unity plan. The three main ethnic and religious groups that formed the Iraq society, following the collapse of Saddam's Ba'athist regime, used extremist means to achieve their demands, namely to compete with ethnic and sectarian communities in the contradiction main nature in Iraq, it means that it is the origin of the power and resources acquisition which other foreign actors strongly influence on this competition. In other words, it can be stated that the real deprivation of Shiites and Kurds in the past years as well as the Sunnis false sense of deprivation after 2003 have triggered ethnic and religious conflicts in Iraq (Golchin, 2019: 249).

Iraq has failed to overcome the crisis of national identity and political legitimacy since the start of the modernization process after 2003, which has led to the emergence of a third crisis as the security crisis. For this reason, the country still has to deal with the national identity crisis and the security implications of undeveloped nation-state. Although a new political structure based on federalism, democracy and elections has been in place since 2003, there is a long way to go before a favorable political order and a proper identity framework in which the interests of all ethnic groups can be met. On the other hand, the most important challenge for the central government in Iraq before entering the stabilization process is how to establish and maintain security. This is so important that even the continued legitimacy and presence of government and sovereignty on the scene, depends directly on the function and ability of the government to maintain its internal security; since no economic, cultural or social activity or in other words, the return of life to its normality is not possible without security. This principle is greatly important in Iraq because of its complex ethnic and demographic nature and also due to the lack of tolerance and reconciliation between different

groups.

To overco security problems in Iraq requires an effective negotiation and intelligence, and an initiative based on an understanding of the nature, structure, mechanism and objective evaluation of real capabilities and limitations. In such circumstances, there should be a focus on the reform process, the rule of law, the power strengthening and the powers to de-escalation and structuralizing. Achieving strategic alignment of the major Iraq tribes, focusing on central government cohesion and authority and fostering Shiite, Sunni and Kurds integration and participation in governance commensurate with electoral requirements, are the backgrounds that provide the necessary context and capacity which will provide understanding. The speed and improvement of this process depends largely on having a single definition of national interest and a practical commitment to maintaining Iraq's integrity. On the other hand, it seems that although the constitution of Iraq's federalism was originally designed to preserve and consolidate Iraq's integrity, but it is a factor in diverging and weakening its national cohesion at present. The formation of federals on the basis of ethnic and religious identities can undermine and threaten the principle of its national unity and identity. Therefore, other models must be taken into consideration by the people that respond to ethnic and religious diversity and can address the deprivations imposed on the people of this landmark, which dates back centuries. The provincial federalism model is well-suited to achieving this goal and is well implemented and in contrast, the three-federalism model (Shia, Sunni, and Kurdish) can be the worst model because it weakens the spirit of national solidarity and will reinforce the ethnic and religion identities in such a way that the "Iraqi" national identity will be severely damaged and even forgotten. To the extent that Iraq can deviate from the three federalism model formation, it has similarly departed from the danger of disintegration and is close to reinforcing its "Iraqi" national identity (Golchin, 2019: 252).

## VI. Iraq and Iran relations

Looking at the background of Iraq and Iran relations after the Islamic Revolution, it can be further divided into two periods. The first is the contradiction period and the struggle starts from the victory of the Islamic Revolution to the fall of Saddam. During this period, everything is affected by the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The image of an enemy from Iran was very prominent among its neighbors particularly for Iraq, which resulted in the creation of a common sense among neighbors. The region countries, especially Iraq and Saudi Arabia feared that the Islamic Revolution would penetrate their countries, Tried to find a solution to stifle the Iranian revolution. In this situation, Saddam's government, on behalf of all opposition governments, based on past border and territorial disputes, launched an eight-year war against Iran.

The second period can also be a peaceful coexistence period that has been going on since the fall of Saddam and the formation of the Shiite government (Dehghani Firouzabadi, 2010: 135). During this period, Iran welcomed the collapse of the Ba'athist government, insisted on the rapid withdrawal of foreign troops from Iraq and the development of friendly relations. During this period, the Shiites topped Iraq political system in the January 2005 elections. The trial of Saddam by the judiciary and the issuance of a statement by the Iraq government on the recognition of the Algerian 1975 treaty were other factors that changed the attitude of the Iranian diplomatic system towards the new Iraq government (Sadeghi, et al. 2017: 138).

Iraq's expansionism towards Iran is directly countered by Iran's national power. As Iran's national capability has diminished (or perceived by Iraqi leaders as such), its expansion has grown, and vice versa, at times when Iran has been powerful, Iraq's aggression has diminished. As a result, Iran is the best balancing force to restrain Iraq's eastward expansion. The political and ideological nature of Iraq has also played a significant role in intensifying and restricting the expanse of Iraq. Consequently, the

establishment of a democratic political system in Iraq, even if it is not revolutionary in nature, will pose less security threats to its neighbors, especially Iran in the future, because theoretically in the framework of democratic peace theory, one of the ways to moderate the aggression in Iraq foreign policy is a democratic order. On the other hand, the deployment of political system that has substantial and ideological differences with the Islamic Republic of Iran increases the threats. Therefore, in the state of formation the American oriented regime in Iraq it is likely to recreate its territorial and border disputes with Iran, as well as future Iraq-Kuwait disputes over border issues (Akbari, 2015: 312 -311).

## VII. Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran Foreign Policy

Governments, depending on their internal needs, geographical and geopolitical situation, and under the international system structure and function influence, choose their specific orientations and strategies to meet their national goals and interests. Since the international politics emerges in a dynamic environment, and the transformative factors emerge from all sides, one should not expect that the foreign policy structure and governments orientations will remain unchanged. What is certain is that these changes are sometimes slow, gradual, and at times rapid and underlying. The most important orientations and strategies of governments are neutrality, isolation, alliance and non-compliance (Qawam, 2002: 146). In other words, the foreign policy of each country consists of two parts, relatively stable and relatively changeable. The sustained part reflects the overall foreign policy framework within which the foreign policy exercises and strategies are structured and it is largely based on theoretical doctrines, value systems, and the dominant identity of society, while the second part is influenced by human experience and observes policies that are compiled and regulated due to the circumstances (Sabouri & Salehian, 2013: 177). In this field, with regard to the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979

and consequently Saddam Hussein's power in Iraq, the Islamic Republic of Iran foreign policy orientation has been briefly examined in both a) Saddam and b) post-Saddam periods:

**Saddam era**: The victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 transformed the political system in Iran and led to dramatic and profound changes in the Middle East and its coalition system, exactly at the same time Saddam Hussein took power in Iraq. It can be said that the biggest source of threat to the Islamic Republic of Iran in the first decade of the Islamic Revolution was Iraq and the Ba'athist regime. The attitude of these countries towards each other was in fact a security one and in fact, since the collapse of the Ottoman government and the formation of the Iraq government in west of Iran, policies adopted by Iraq officials have always been a threat to Iran's national security, and this country has rarely had friendly relations with Iran. The most important factor which showed Iran as an enemy to Iraq was the norms and principles that emerged from the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Due to its structure and identity, the Ba'ath regime sought to counter the Islamic Revolution from the very beginning. Saddam saw the Iranian revolution as a serious threat to his internal security and stability.

Under these circumstances, Ba'athist government imposed a full-scale war on  Iran for eight years on September 31, 1980, with a prior decision and plan to overthrow the nascent Islamic Republic of Iran. The Iraq War with Iran after the Vietnam War was the second long war of the twentieth century, during which the Ba'ath regime committed war crimes, genocide, and other inhuman acts. The war ended with the issuance of Security Council Resolution No. 598 by the temporary ceasefire between Iran and Iraq in the summer of 1988 (Golchin, 2019: 140).

From the end of Iran-Iraq war to fall of Saddam, Iraq's containment policy has gone through three stages. The first phase, from the truce to the Iraq invasion to Kuwait, was a kind of "neither war nor peace" state between Iran and Iraq. Secondly, it was a two pronged policy that spanned from the invasion to

Kuwait until the end of Gulf War. Since the beginning of Kuwaiti crisis, Iran has divided its policy on the invasion of Iraq from the policy it had taken on the unresolved issues of Iran-Iraq war. On the day of Iraq invasion to Kuwait, Iran condemned the move and called for "the immediate withdrawal of Iraq troops to internationally recognized borders and the peaceful resolution of the dispute." The third phase, covering the end of 1991 Gulf War until 2003, was in some ways similar to the first phase status, "no war, and no peace." (Ramazani, 2017: 85-87).

**Post-Saddam Era**: After the fall of Saddam, Islamic Republic of Iran was pleased with the fact that it was dissatisfied with the presence of occupiers especially the US in Iraq, and did not regard it as its national interest. Iran has several important principles regarding post-Saddam Iraq: 1. Opposition to any separatism in Iraq. 2. Opposition to creation or promotion of ethnic, religious and racial conflicts in Iraq3. Helping create security and stability in Iraq4. Opposition to continued occupation in Iraq5. Opposition to any foreign intervention and emphasizing on Iraq's destiny6. Promoting Shia position in Iraq condition (Akbari, 2017: 64).

Among Iraq neighbors, Iran has consistently supported the establishment of security, stability, territorial integrity and national unity in post-Saddam Iraq, while most of other Iraq's neighbors have not been satisfied (Niakui, 2016: 130). Iran which had pursued a policy of positive neutrality in Iraq crisis (Persian Second War), sought to maintain normal relations with its new government and pave the way for improved relations in the future. In post-Saddam, Iran has always insisted on Iraq's territorial integrity and has backed its official government. Overall, Iraq has had opportunities and threats for the Islamic Republic. The new Iraq government even if it shifts to a secular and pro-western government, due to its new civil and democratic structures will be less of a regular threat than Saddam's threat to Iran.

**Iraq Scenarios**: With the security situation in post-war Iraq, the impact of Iraq developments on the Islamic Republic of Iran

security issues has increased. The formation of ethnic and religious identities in future Iraq could give rise to a new concept and identity in the Middle East and towards the neighbors. Iraq is undergoing a period of political and security developments, and despite passing years of the Ba'athist government collapse, efforts to improve the security situation and organizing the political structure, speaking out about the institutionalization and stabilization of this country is too early. In this context, four possible structures and scenarios that Iraq may face in the future due to the identity crisis and the interference of the major powers need to be discussed:

**Iraq as a Weak Country** :this is the case when Kurds, Shiites and Sunni Arabs cannot agree to form a national state and Iraq is without a state and the ethnic groups cannot resolve disputes due to their conflicts. The most important contradictions and major divisions that may arise in the future Iraq are: the Kurdish-Arab dispute, especially regarding Mosul, Kirkuk and other areas of conflict between the two sides; Sunni-Shia continuing and diverse contradiction. Both groups are seeking to end violence, but for many reasons the problem still needs to be resolved. The mixed Sunni and Shia regions have not yet fully stabilized, and the competition for power and government centers and government resources is still intense. Disagreements among Shiites, including Sadris and al-Da'wa, Majlis A'la and al-Da'wa, etc. have always been slow to make progress on the above issues and there is a possibility of conflict. This is both an opportunity and a threat for the Islamic Republic of Iran. The unrest may weaken the Shiites, and this weakness will spread to Iranian borders. On the other hand, Iran can manage and mitigate these conflicts, especially disputes between Shiites that are not compatible with national interests. Saudi Arabia views these developments as the beginning of Iraq's disintegration. Turkey is also aware of the consequences of turning Iraq into a federal and dispersed state to serve its interests in the north.

   **Iraq as a Stable and Secure Country:** this scenario is long-

term for the evolution of current trends in Iraq. As the security situation improves and national reconciliation is finalized, Iraq's international standing will change. To amplify  stability in Iraq will open the door to foreign investment and construction in other sectors of the economy and will draw Arab investors into Iraq. With the gradual improvement of Iraq's security situation, Arab countries especially Saudi Arabia are being persuaded to lead Baghdad to a more active role in regional security and political affairs. This scenario is in the interests of the Islamic Republic if the Shia rule.

**Iraq as a powerful countr:** Iraq will become one of the most powerful Arab countries if it is stable and united with its democratic structure and significant oil reserves. If the central government can solve the problems of Kurds and moderate Shiite and Sunni Arab conflicts, then a powerful and nationalist Iraq will sound the alarm in other countries in the region and they will inevitably do so to change their policies. This scenario is dangerous for the Arab countries, since Iraq is likely to become a partner for Iran.

**Iraq as a failed country**: this is dangerous to regional security and to Iraq sovereignty, meaning the failure to achieve national consensus on subjects such as oil revenue sharing, the Kirkuk issue, and the inclusion of Iraq militias in national armed forces and also it means the failure to bolster political participation at the national level and defeat the current Shia and Kurdish coalition. This scenario is detriment to Iraq national security and unity and is not in Iran's interests (Akbari, 2015: 316-312). Each of these scenarios with various consequences differentiates Iraq's role and position in the Middle East, and could affect its neighbors particularly Iran.

## Conclusion

Some Countries in the region and world powers are strongly opposed to the prosperity and democracy in Iraq and seek to block Iraq's progress for two reasons: first, to prevent and stop the

process of democracy in Iraq that may affect the Arab countries in the region. Second, the Iran-Iraq coalition and its impact on the Persian Gulf that could threaten the interests of the West and its dependence rulers. What the Islamic Republic of Iran is looking for in Iraq is a stable, secure and powerful country, which must always take into account the possibilities and always monitor the political and social events in Iraq and take appropriate orientation and action in accordance with the Islamic Republic of Iran foreign policy principles. If national unity and integration are maintained, Iraq will be a calm and safe neighbor for Iran and the region. Iraq can be Iran's strategic ally in the ideological and political realm. But if it goes out of the way of national unity and integration, it will face internal crises resulting in poverty and insecurity. In this case, ethnic and religious groups will ignore their role and pave the way for other countries to intervene. In the worst case, the break up of Iraq would be within the federal government and could be a battleground for third powers to expand their influence in the strategic region of the Middle East. The way out of the current identity crisis in Iraq is to establish a strong, stable and pervasive government that will attract the trust and attention of all ethnic and religious groups.This article attempts to analyze the situation in Iraq in terms of ethnic and religious identity, and describe briefly the crisis that is followed in various historical periods, from the beginning of independence until 2003 to the fall of Saddam, and explain in detail from 2003 to early 2020.

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# Between Jihad and Terrorism in Imami Shiite Thoughts and Salafi Viewpoint

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## Abstract

'Jihad' is one of the important and sacred practices in Islamic perspective. However, recently it has been taken as a weapon against Islam and Muslims. Today, there are two main attitudes in Islamic world which both at the same emphasis on Jihad with two different approaches: *Imami* and *Takfiris*. Thus, our issue is the relation between Jihad and terrorism. The main question of the present paper is "how this relation can be plotted by two main political Islam approaches; *Imami* and *Takfiri*?

We examined two dominant political Islamist attitudes: Shiite Imami and Salafi-Takfiri Perspective, based on the views of both major leaders and thinkers. The paper argues that there are differences between these two viewpoints, such as: Jihad motivation, purpose, the relationship between means and the target, Jurisprudential position of Jihad, the opposite side, morality, spirituality and the distinction suicide attacks and martyrdom. In addition, other important aspect in Imami thought is the nature of Islam based on kindness, mercy, option, coexistence, and peace among Muslims and people of the worlds.

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Research findings concludes that based on *Imami* approach, Jihad is "a defensive act" to adjudication, disposal of oppression and it is opposes terrorist acts which are originally aggressive and inhuman. While in *Takfiri* approach using violence and terror are used a mean to spread Islam.

**Keywords:** *Salafi viewpoint, Imami Shiite Prespective, Identity Crisis, Constructivism, Foreign Policy Orientation*

## Introduction

Despite the viewpoint of the Qur'an and Islamic Hadith, some Eastern experts have stressed on rebuting terror in Islam. *Takfiri* groups kill the civilians and innocent people by suicide attacks and bombings according to the Qur'an and Sunna of Islam Prophet Mohammad Rasulallah (s). Given the common sense perspective, this statement is true for: 'It is the right word that provided mendacity ." (*Nahj al-Balaghah*, Speech 40) Based on Jihad superiority over other religious practices, and its geopolitical role, radical fundamentalists permit killing civilians with theological arguments and justification. (Ehteshami; 2002, Layali, 2018) Actually, the origin of radical fundamentalists' beliefs under influenced *Wahhabis* heresies(Saghaaf,2017, Alemaad,2017) and theorists of radical fundamentalist terrorists in keeping with the rigor and fanaticism of their ancestors without the support of rational in the name of Islam against it are tainted the anti-terrorist nature of Jihad. (Khosravi; 2006,) If beliefs, symbols and rituals have not monotheism which is the spirit of Islam, they fall in to deviant–fundamental ideologies, as it happened to ISIS. (Yazdani; 2010, Nejat,2017)

However, Jihad is one of the evident and undeniable fundamental obligations of Muslims. (*Nahj al-Balaghah*, speech 27) This has particularly been emphasized by political Islam supporters - including Sunni and Shiite.(Naderi,2015) On the other hand, it is necessary to know that the invitation means to convey the truth message and monotheism. There is no doubt in the history of Islam that many in the name of Jihad have turned to massacre of innocent people and terror and ISIS is one of them.

So the main issue is the relation between political Islam and Jihad with terrorism. The main question of this paper is whether the two main approaches of contemporary political Islam could reveal the relation between invitation, Jihad and terrorism. To ask this question, it is important to study Jihad and terrorism in Islam, and then consider the differences between the two approaches about Jihad, terrorism and invitation. The necessity of this research is to show the relation between Islamic Jihad and *Takfiri* Jihad in the current conditions of international relations. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to study and explain Jihad in Islam especially political Islam in *Imami* and *Takfiri* thought.

So, the authors try to test the hypothesis that in the original Islam, Jihad has a different nature from terrorism and *Imami*, by this sense, describes Jihad nature more differently than *Takfiri* does.

Our purpose in this paper is to compare the look at jihad in Shia viewpoint and Salafi-Takfiri. For this purpose, first we define terrorism, Jihad, and invitation (Islamic *Da'wah*) and then compare the importance of each in *Imami* and *Takfiri* thought. We examined two dominant political Islamist attitudes: Shiite Imami and Salafi-Takfiri Perspective, based on the views of both leading leaders and thinkers, and the achievements and outcomes of both in the contemporary world which have been analyzed by the analytical approach and comparative method. This paper has been conducted by the analytical approach, comparative method, and library research collection showing that in *Takfiri* thought terror Is a justifiable means to achieve goals. While in *Imami* thought, terror with any purpose or motivation is unacceptable and has no legal credibility.

## I. Conceptual Framework

In this section, with respect materials in format of the definition of Jihad, terrorism and invitation in original Islam, we study the relation between them, in an analytical manner, so that we are able to extract the differences between Jihad, terrorism and invitation

(*Da'wah*) in *Imami* and *Takfiri* thought.

**Terrorism**: Even though there is a lot of research on this area, there is no definition which has widespread acceptance in the scientific community. (Armborst, 2010:421-422) It can be said this semantic confusion of terrorism relates to our cultural, social and psychological mentalities based on which we signify terror and terrorism. This mentality makes the practice and scientific view of this concept difficult. As a result, any definition of terror and terrorism is necessarily optional definition that its main purpose is making a common point for further discussion. Regarding the definitions of terrorism, terror is from the Latin root word "*Ters*" meaning to scare and fear. (Larousse Encyclopedia; 2008: 258) The term 'terror' is related to the French Revolution between 1792 and 1794 known as the Reign of Terror. (Abdollahkhani; 2007: 19) According to Britannica Encyclopedia, terrorism means: 'The systematic use of terror or unpredictable violence against governments, peoples or individuals to achieve a political goal.' (Britannica, v. 11, 1986:650) In general, there are several definitions of terrorism. Authors study them and conclude that: 'Terrorism refers to any act of terrifying that Is done by different means and creating fear (and pressure)to achieve political goals in a society  to be able to raise their bargaining power and existence and present itself.

**Religious Invitation**: Religion, the invitation or advertising to convey its message to the world has been considered. In Islam like other religions, the invitation is the basic principle and fundamental of foreign policy. Regarding some Qur'anic *sura* like *Ahzab* (33), *Aaraf* (7), *Jenn*(72), delivering divine mandate and conveying messages of God to people has been characterized as a special divine prophecy which started with the fall of Adam (AS) continued to the mission of the last Prophet (PBUH); during that time thousands of pious and righteous people as messengers of divine invitation, conveyed the mission of God. Basically, the philosophy of the Prophets was conveying the messages of God and be a mediation in its recitation to people.(*Nahl*; 16)

The word invitation (*Da'wah*) literally means to call, start-up, direction and leadership (Moein ; 1981: 1539/2) or to show the way and express road signs. (Jamshidi; 2011: 307) In Islam, this word means advertising or conveying the messages and commandments of God to the people and explaining the necessity of the rule of divine unique system on the universe and encouraging human beings to accept this rule as the only way for salvation and happiness of human beings both in the material world and the hereafter or, in a general sense, inviting the whole world to destination of human interest and redemption.(Ghafoori; 2008: 78)

So, the invitation means to recall and in our term means to recall to monotheism, right, justice and truth. On the one hand, it is one of the principle rules on thoughts, attitudes and political life of the Prophet (pbuh), and on the other hand, it is the strategic, basic, and fundamental plan in the ideology of Islam. In this sense, perhaps it can be said the foundation of politics and foreign policy of Islam prophet (pbuh) has two major bases: 1) politics, leadership, and management of public affairs, 2) invitation, direction, and guiding people to the right path. Of course, the original invitation is based on truth seeking and the nature of God. It is formed in the shape of advertising, warning, evangelism, and etc and its goal is to free human beings and to bring them true happiness. So, it is not compulsive, but it is a call that human beings are autonomous and free to accept or reject it. (Jamshidi; 2011: 303)

In the other words, one of the most important subjects in invitation system which helps clear the invitation strategy is to understand structural elements of an invitation system. As of structure, there are the four structural elements in the invitation of every religion and thought: 1) the theoretical basis and foundation of invitation, 2) invitation methods, 3) invitation means and tools, and 4) invitation goals. (Zahiri; 2007: 50) These elements are the main elements in every invitation.

In each discipline and structure of invitation, methods and

tools with a specific framework are limited and defined. In religious invitation system, this framework is a fixed value system based on revelation. The goal of invitation is determined by revelation. The main goal of religious invitation is spreading and diffusing revealed concepts across the world to train human beings and religious society through invitation to monotheism, justice, invisible world, resurrection, moral virtues, internal revolution, devotion, and social and spiritual freedom. (Zahiri; 2007: 48-56) Of course, there is a difference between direction and invitation. While invitation meaning conveying truth message and explaining it, (Jamshidi; 2011: 307) it is every Muslim's duty, direction and directing non-Muslim to convert their religion to Islam is not every Muslim's duty. (Jamshidi; 2011:307) Furthermore, invitation methods and means are two variable criteria and can be changed or even rebuilt under the terms of time and space. According to Islam, the variable part of religious system should be done by considering the principles of non-interference with the fundamental values and main goals of invitation system.

**Jihad**: In Sharia, Jihad means to fight in the right way and literally it means 'religious war' and 'the fight between Muslims and infidels' (Moein; 1981: v.1/1257). The root of this word is from '*Jahd*' meaning hardship and difficulty or from '*Johd*' meaning extensive efforts as much as patience (Meghdad; 2001: 313). In the Qur'an and Hadith, Jihad means fighting based on the right path and includes various fields. In religious term, Jihad is a tool to protect Muslims against oppression and infringement. Also, it is developed as a legitimate war to protect religion, public discipline, and to prevent infringement and injustice (Ibn Manzoor; 2003: V.3/224). In legal term, Jihad has been defined as a war and fight in God's way with all tools like expression, property, and life (Ghorbannia; 2003: 30). In the Qur'an, war (*ghattal*) is mentioned (*Baghareh*; 190, 244, 246/ *Toubeh*; 29.36, 123…).

In Islam, the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims

is based on peace, coexistence and good behavior. Islam has never allowed his followers to murder non-Muslims because of their disbelief. And the existence of opposing opinions, as far as opinions remain Islamic does not give license to hostility.

Allah does not forbid you to be kind and to act justly to those who have neither made war on your Religion nor expelled you from your homes. Allah loves being just. (*Momtaheneh*; (60): 8)

Therefore, Islam does not agree with war by itself and its exception. 'So, if they keep themselves away from you and do not fight you, offer you peace, then Allah does not make any way for you against them.' (*Nissa*; (4): 90)

In Islam, it is important to retain good intention of Islam as well as Muslims, to provide security for peaceful invitation, to prevent infringement, to punish aggressors, to establish balance of power, and to maintain good relationship with other nations. So, the hidden Islamic goal in Jihad and war is achieving peace, justice, and faith (Barzanooni; 2005: 148). On the other hand, Islam said Jihad has value more than other worships and it is unique because Jihad means accepting suffering, difficulty, sacrifice, and benevolence (Shariatmadar Jazayeri; 2000: 15). Thus, Jihad in Islam is to provide security, to guarantee the sovereignty, independency, to defend Muslims, to establish peace, and to support divine religions and justice.

Furthermore, Islam said Jihad has not only an external aspect, but more importantly, it has an internal one. According to Islam, fighting with inner conflicts and tensions is '*Akbar Jihad*' (*Jihad-e Akbar*) because this fighting is fundamental (Horre Ameli; 1985: 159-161); in contrast, controlling external conflicts is '*Asghar Jihad*' (Jihad-e Asghar) because it is superstructure (Javadi Amoli; 2007: 25- Ahmadi; 2005: 92). The main point in both Jihad (*Akbar and Asghar*) is establishing security, stability, inner, and outer peace and calm for human beings to sublime divine personality of human beings in a safe context.

*Akbar Jihad* is fighting with ego and egoism to pure thought, will, and action of every man from evil so that s/he could walk

and move in perfection and bliss path. It is considered efforts to reconstruct and purge society from barriers and obstacles in man growing, to provide security, and personal and social peace. If it is done right, it is Jihad in God's way. This effort has a superstructure aspect. So, it is named *Asghar Jihad* (Ahmadi; 2005: 97-98 & 92- Ebrahimi & others; 2014: 1-25). Thus, Islam has specific cases in necessity of Jihad as a war for Muslims.

According to what was said above, to present a conceptual framework for research in addition to understanding it, it is required to determine a kind of relationship among three concepts existentially and logically. Are these three relating to one another necessarily and essentially? Existentially, based on ontologically perspective, it cannot be said Jihad is necessary for invitation, because invitation, as said before, is flowing messages of a religion freely or recalling others to Islam or conveying God's message.

In fact, invitation is recalling, declaring, and conveying religious message or revealing religion truth. So, the invitation does not lead necessarily to Jihad or war. Invitation is expression, lingual, and advertising by soft power rather than hard power. Joseph Nye writes about definition of soft power and its distinction from hard power: 'Ability to apply power to achieve its goals through attraction rather than coercion or financial reward' (Nye; 2004:x). In the other words, soft power means encouraging others to what you want (Nye; 2008: 44). So the genre of soft power doesn't mean to use violence (Bleack & Golshan Pajooh; 2010: 126). While accepting faith is based on freedom and liberty, there is no rational reason to have a necessary relation between religious invitation and fighting because religious invitation genre is from soft power and fighting genre is from hard power. Also, religious invitation is for the realization of faith and faith cannot be based on force and power. 'Say, this is the truth from your Lord. Let whosoever will, believe, and whosoever will, disbelieve it.' (*Kahf*; (18): 29)

We can see radical groups in different religions which resort

to fear, terror and victimizing innocent people to achieve their goals. So, blind bias to one religious ideology may lead to using violence and terror to the end of forcing opinions to others. (Capell, 2007:268-271& Prattabc, 2010:438-449)

In their original interpretations, divine religions do not describe or support terrorism, but a religion by its radical extremist interpretation like *Takfiri* could create violence culture. Notwithstanding the fact that, it cannot be the only terrorism agent but it can help create the worst conditions. Religions have influenced on the definition of violence because it has a focus on some concepts like truth, absolute reality, and good actions. In this sense, each group consider itself righteous and wants to spread truth and righteousness, hence using violence and force for invitation.( Sedgwick, 2004: 795-781)

Accordingly, in original Islamic framework, the relation among invitation, Jihad and terrorism cannot be established. Furthermore, terrorism is an inhuman act while Jihad is an inevitable and obligatory act to eliminate oppression, corruption, and intrigue.

## II. Terrorism in Imami and Takfiri Perspective

On *Imami* perspective, terrorism is stochastic so there is no indication about it in early *Imami* sources. Recent scholars also do not pay much attention to it. So, this word cannot explore in *Imami* sources but we can recognize its equivalents as follows:

● *Fatk* & *Eghtial* (both mean to kill suddenly) (Maaloof; 2000: 643): In jurisprudence, these terms describe trickery and hidden murders. These terms are synonymous and the difference is in their methods.

● *Moharebeh*: It is derived from *Harb* which literally means to murder and fight against each other (Sayyah; 2008: 283), and legally it means to use weapon to terrify people (Imam Khomeini; 2002: 239- Jafari Langeroodi; 1999: 32-37).

● *Baghy*: It means riot against innocent Imam. (Shahid Aval; 1993: 63) Of course, the Holy Qur'an, legitimate sources, and

great jurists' opinions emphasize on the reverence of hidden murdering and terror. 'Do not kill the soul whom Allah has forbidden except by right.'(*Isra*; (17): 33)

A reliable Hadith has been narrated by Abou Sabah Kanani to Imam Sadegh (AS):

> *'We have a neighbor who insults Amir Momenan, Imam Ali (AS). Do you allow me to take some action? , he said.*
>
> *'Do you really want to act?', Imam Sadegh (AS) asked.*
>
> *'I swear to God if you let me I wait till he sleeps, and then I'll kill him by sword.', he replied.*
>
> *'Abou Sabah! This is terror and our prophet Muhammad Rasoul Allah (PBUH) prevented his followers from terror. Islam absolutely has prevented terror.' Imam Sadegh (AS) said. (Sheikh Kioleini; 2009: V.7/375)*

Furthermore, it has been narrated from another Imam: 'The faith is against violence. The pious doesn`t terrify and avoids it. Like a person whose hands are tied and cannot do anything."(Boroojerdi; 2008: 413). There are numerous verses in the Holy Qur'an from different *Sura* like *Anaam*, *Kahf*, *Maedeh*, *Israa*, etc which have forbidden violence and murder: 'Whoever killed a soul, except for a soul slain, or for corruption in the earth, it should be considered as though he had killed all mankind.' (*Maedeh*; (5): 32)

According to this verse, except for two cases (homicide and corruption) killing a person equals killing all mankind. The aim of the present verse here is to make this point that Islam emphasizes on human dignity and honor and 'human life' is one of its applicable.

Also, the Holy Qur'an invited ignorant rebellious Arabs to peace: 'If they want peace, welcome them' (*Anfal*;(8) :61). Even on the field of battle, Islam pursues peace: 'Do not say to those who offer you peace, until it has been clarified: You are not

believers' (*Nissa*; (4): 94).

According to this verse, jurists believe that when some people fight against Muslims offer peace, it is obligatory for Muslims to accept it. (Ghartebi; 1985: 335-336).

From Qur'an and reliable Hadith, it can be inferred that the execution of corrupt people should be carried out only if required by righteous Imam or Islamic governor' permission in order to bring security to society. While violence against political and religious dissents is done to achieve political goals, it does not need Imam's permission. They often take action in secret and aim at disturbing public discipline (Tabatabaei; 1985: 533).

In *Imami* view, Jihad is the agent for safety and health, assuring the sovereignty, independence and the defence of the Islamic *Ummah*. Thus, the most important goal of Jihad is preparation and having the necessary capabilities to support Islam, the government, and Muslims. According to this and against some beliefs, Jihad is not a religious war to force others accept Islam, because this interpretation is incompatible with the nature of Islam and Sharia requiring freedom of opinion by this verse: 'There is no coercion and force to accept religion.' (*Baghareh*;(2); 255 & Ghasemi; 1982: 188). Jihad is justified when the enemy does not want to reconcile and Muslims are found in danger.

On the contrary, *Takfiri* groups like ISIS have a different interpretation from Islam. On the one hand, they believe their mission is inviting other people to Islam, and on the other hand, they have defined Jihad meaning violence and force as their most important tool to achieve this goal. They have named their brutal actions 'Jihad on God's path' and have done anything on this path. They have introduced Jihad equal to terrorism and necessary for invitation.

Given these differences, Jihad on *Takfiri* perspective is not secondary matter of religion but its primary principle. They think violence is necessary and introduce it as a preliminary for Islamic state. Based upon some divine verses and *Salafi* jurists' opinions, *Takfiris* justify Jihad and violence against people and have called

it 'Jihad on God's path or 'Jihad for God' (Kefira, 2015: 233-248).

*Takfiris* reduce the meaning of Jihad to war and terrorism and on the other hand raise its place as high as monotheism and prophecy. In fact, this interpretation of Islam shows that monotheism, prophecy, and Jihad are equal concepts (Jamali; 2011: 163). Moreover, in *Imami* view, Jihad is not one-dimensional and has different aspects beyond military aspects. For Jihad to become obligatory, some conditions and characteristics are necessary.

## III. Differences in Attitudes toward Jihad

Now according what we said before, we want to discuss the differences about Jihad in *Imami* and *Takfiri'* thought in international relations.

**The motivation of the fight**: Simply put, motivation is the power which forced people to do something. This power may have an external or internal origin. As said before, the motivation of Jihad and invitation is security for Muslims and even beyond that. When religious invitation is done freely and according to the conditions set forth in Islam and *Imami*, it will provide peace and security automatically. So, the Jihad will back peace and free religious invitation. (Soltan Mohammadi; 2006: 79-80)

But the motivation of *Takfiri* and terrorist groups is creating insecurity and terror in society. An example is ISIS attacks in Syria and Iraq. The goal of beheading people, Muslims, non-Muslims massacre, destruction of historic sites, and destruction of saints' tombs is creating horror and terror among people and to achieve what they want by putting pressure on people. Such method and thought have exactly been seen in terrorist attacks. The dominant atmosphere in both terrorist and *Takfiri* attacks is the same. Both use violence by different means to create fear in society for their goals. In *Imami's* view, there is no value for those motivations and incentives which are not in God's way. So another important difference between *Imami* and *Takfiri'* thought is about motivation. Jihad motivation in *Imami's* thought is

creating peace and security but the motivation of Jihad in *Takfiri* groups is creating insecurity and domination.

**The Purpose of Jihad**: It can be said the purposes of Jihad in *Imami* are: upholding justice and establishing it, defending Islam and Muslims, defending the poor and oppressed, and defending the unity of Islamic world. Also, we should consider other important aspects:

First, attempts to spread Islam freely. Spreading Islam by violence and force contradicts the nature of Islam. If spreading Islam by violence and force has a virtue so their spiritual influence should be wasted when Islamic states fall down, yet the purpose of Islamic war is supporting freedom in invitation and preventing infringements upon Islamic lands. Islamic war in *Imami* approach is defensive. Muslims never wage a war except in especial conditions and to prevent infringements. In *Imami'*s view, war has especial values and needs especial conditions; it has been based on honorable principles. The fighters are not allowed to do anything to achieve their goals. In other words, Shi'a Jihadi groups fight against oppression to achieve freedom, but Takfiri and terrorist groups limit social liberty by their violent operations (Molla Mohammad Ali; 2006: 68-84).

Second, maintaining peace. As its name implies, Islam is a religion of peace and security and is based on friendship and tolerance. Islam prescribes war only in specific condition without which it is considered as a sin. Thus, no one can wage war by any excuse. Jihad in Islam and *Imami* is necessary only by specific goals and conditions (Soltan Mohammadi; 2006: 102-104).

However in *Takfiri* view, the goal of Jihad and war is only for religious advertising and destroying infidels. An example is ISIS. It tries to create a universal government in which everyone thinks and acts the same. If one person has a different thought and belief, he must be eradicated, no difference what his religion is. Now the question is how can peace be established by such thought? How religion is freely advertising? And how could we decide about their choice freely?

Finally, there is a deep difference between *Imami* and *Takfiri* thought about this issue. In Imami's thought the invitation and Jihad are a means to create peace, but in *Takfiri'*s the only way to invitation and Jijad is using violence and force.

**The Relationship Retween Means and the Target**: In Takfiri's attitude, the transcendent purpose of Jihad, the religious invitation, makes means transcends. Therefore, the use of violence to invite others and salvation is permissible. Accordingly, the Takfiris reduce the meaning of jihad in terms of war and terrorism, and on the other hand,jihad equals to the principles of religion (Jamali, 2011: 163) But in Imamie's view, the transcendence of the goal is not equal to an instrument of excellence, that is, in any way, violence can not be used to invite others to religion or to emancipate and salvation them. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) says: " Whoever succeeds by sin, is not victorious, and he who has triumphed through evil and oppression, has failed. "(Nahj al-Balaghah, 1414: p. 381)

**legtimation Position of Jihad**: In the attitude of Shi'a Imamie Jihad, although is considered to be very high, it is one of the subordinate decrees of religion and is discussed in the divine law (Khomeini, 1381: 1: 485-492). While jihad is considered as one of principles of religion in the Salafi-Takfiri view. They consider the use of violence as obligatory and essential, and it introduces the introduction of the Islamic state. (Kfira, 2015: 233-248)

**The Opposite Side: Jihad with Whom?** From the Imami's viewpoint, Jihadi groups confront enemies. They do not kill innocent people. But terrorist groups use violence and kill innocent people to put pressure on the opposite side (Jamali; 2011: 163-164). According to verses about Jihad and *Imami'*s thought, we can conclude in *Imami* Jihad the opposite side is the groups or people whom their goals are destroying Islam and Muslims, otherwise the principle of relation with Muslims or even infidels is based on peaceful coexistence. Various verses imply that if in the middle of battle the enemies submit and want to give up the battle, it is necessary to reconcile with them. More

importantly, in the battle no one is permitted to misbehave children, women and the disabled. Even beyond that the Jihadist should not destroy agricultural lands or kill livestock (Mohaghegh Damad; 2007: 152-154). The best example of this kind of Jihad is the Jihad of the prophet of Islam against Bani Gharizeh Jews' sabotage and harassment.

Opposite to this thought are terrorist and *Takfiri* groups. For example, when ISIS usurps some regions it destroys agricultural lands even livestock and there is no security for women, children, and the elderly.

**Morality and Spirituality**: In *Imami'*s view, Jihad is bounded by some behavior and moral standards. Jihadists should also have special manners, behaviors, and characteristics like faith to God, insight, intuition, wisdom, patient, and obedience to the leader, sincerity, and martyrdom. So, Jihadists who have such characteristics put morality and spirituality at the top of Jihad duty.

In this regard, Amir Momenan (AS) said: 'When you defeat enemies, do not kill the fugitives, disabled, wounded, or do not tease the women, even they curse you and your leaders.' (*Nahj al-Balaghah*; letter 14). In contrast, there are terrorists and *Takfiris* who torture prisoners and captives as worst as possible and then kill them. An example of is ISIS and its heinous operations like beheading captives, and setting fire to them. Now the question is: can religious invitation and Jihad be justified by such cruel and non-human operations?

**Martyrdom (*Istishhad*) and Suicide Attacks**: Suicide literally means kills oneself as well as in jurist language (Some researchers; 1431:344). In Shiʻa *Imami*, suicide is an undesirable action and a great sin, as it is an example of manslaughter. Suicide legally means one person kills her/himself due to worldly greed or anger mood. A person who commits suicide cannot have a divine goal and this action shows lack of faith and s/he falls in divine retribution (Dastgheib; 2010: 105). In the Holy Qur'an, there are some verses strictly emphasizing on forbidding suicide: 'Do not

kill yourself as God is always merciful to you (*Nissa*; (4): 29). 'If a person kills himself because of oppression and infringement, we will throw him in a fire soon and its easy for God (*Nissa*; (4): 30). 'Spend in the way of Allah and do not cast into destruction with your own hands. Be good doers; Allah loves the good doers .(*Baghareh*; (1): 195)"

Given these verses and suicide definition, we can infer that suicide attacks have a negative charge. The accuracy, incentive, and goal of martyrdom differ from suicide and suicide attacks. If this essential difference is neglected, martyrdom cannot be distinguished from suicide attacks (Molla Mohammad Ali; 2005: 114). In Imami view, martyrdom is observed in Muslims' attack to enemy positions who have occupied Muslims' land and infringed upon them. The purpose of this operation is defending Islam and Muslims (some researchers; 1431; 350).

In *Imami*'s thought, there are necessary conditions for martyrdom (*Istishhad*) as mentioned below:

● It is necessary for defending Islam and Muslims.

● It is done by Sharia leader' permission.

● Innocent people should not be killed.

● The goal of this operation is weakening enemies and countering infringement.

● This operation must be done against infidels but not all of them, only those who have occupied Islamic lands or have declared war against Muslims or have fought with them.

● The doer must be sure that it defeats, kills, weakens, or injures the enemy and encourages Muslims.

● This operation should have benefits for Islam and Muslims.(Molla Mohammad Ali; 2005: 112-113 & Varaei; 2003: 328-343)

By ignoring such differences between martyrdom (*Istishhad*) and suicide attacks, some Westerners assume that martyrdom means suicide attacks and that there is no difference between them. There is no doubt the *Takfiri* groups have promoted this idea. Every day, ISIS kill thousands of innocent people and show

it to the world by its advertising and media.

**Table of comparison criteria**

| Row | Criterion | Imami Shiite Thought | Takfiri- Salafi Thought |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | the motivation of the fight | peace and security | domination and insecurity |
| 2 | the purpose of Jihad | defense and justice | religious advertising |
| 3 | the relationship between means and the target | the goal justifies the means | the goal does not justify the means |
| 4 | the position of Jihad | Jurisprudential position | Belief position |
| 5 | the opposite Side | Those who fight Muslims. | Dissidents |
| 6 | Jihad behavior | principles of justice & Islam | the rules of domination and purification |
| 7 | Spirituality or no | Spirituality & mercy | - |
| 8 | Veteran & to be killed | Martyrdom (Istishhad) | Suicide attacks |

## Conclusion

Islam like other religions has been distorted and some people by their radical (extremist) interpretations justify their terroristic actions. These groups call themselves Muslims and using 'Islamic Jihad' to justify their operations. In their point of view, Jihad is a holy war that all Muslims have to join to invite others to Islam and spread it.

But in original Islamic interpretation, it can be understood that there is necessarily no relation among religious invitation, Jihad and terrorism. Jihad is a holy war with military and non-military aspects. Non-military include human spiritual growth and military entails specific conditions to defend Muslims to maintain security and peace. By this interpretation of pure Islam, *Imami* implies that Jihad has different kinds and is not limited to military aspect. It also requires some conditions without which no one can wage war or Jihad. Furthermore, *Imami* believes that Jihad is worship so it

has some requirements to being a holy one. The purpose of Jihad in *Imami* and *Takfiri* thought is different. Jihad must be in God's way and in favor of Muslims not only for expansionistic goals. There are also other differences between these two viewpoints: 1) Jihad motivation,2) Target and purpose, 3) The relationship between means and the target, 4)Jurisprudential position of Jihad, 5) The opposite side(enemy), 6) morality, 7) spirituality and 8) the distinction suicide attacks and martyrdom. In addition, other important aspect in *Imami* thought is the nature of Islam based on kindness, mercy, option, coexistence, and peace among Muslims and people of the worlds. In this way, *Imami* emphasizes on peace and peaceful relations. Justice can be established only by such peace to achieve human happiness and perfection.

After all, Jihad in *Imami'*s perspective is a 'defensive action' to destroy oppression and intrigue. It contradicts violent and terrorist operations. Thus, Islamic Jihad cannot justify terror and violence for religious invitation.

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# The Competition Between Iran and Saudi Arabia: Internal Factors

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## Abstract

The rivalry between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia in the Middle East can be examined based on fundamental variables affecting the foreign policy behavior of each of these two actors. Among the effective variables are internal factors and resources that have a significant impact on the process of foreign policy behavior. Internal resources can be defined on two principles: first: material internal factors, such as military power, political system structure, economic power, and geopolitical position, and second: intangible internal factors, such as identity and ideology. Each of these can explain how the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia compete in the Middle East; Accordingly, this article tries to answer the question with a descriptive-analytical method, what are the internal factors affecting the competition between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia? In this regard, it tests the main hypothesis that domestic factors are the main source of regional competition between the two countries. Therefore, in this research, an attempt is made to examine each of these factors using theoretical framework of neoclassical realism and with emphasis on a single level of this theory.

**Keywords:** *Iran's energy demand security, 2030 EU Energy StratBegy, Goal programming approach, Greece Energy Policies*

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## Introduction

The competition of international actors, especially in one area, is more than the competition between two great actors. Regional actors compete to expand their influence on a region and create the right conditions for the benefit of all the resources and interests that every nation in the region embodies. There are many factors and variables to achieve these goals and benefits for competing countries in the region. It influences the internal factors to the effective regional and international factors that both rival actors in the region can use for these variables in their favor. The conditions for benefiting from regional and international factors are more affected by internal factors. The internal factors of one of the most important or other language sources are a way of achieving the goals of each side. These factors can be summarized in two groups of material and immaterial (spiritual) factors. Among the domestic material agents, one can mention the financial resources, economic conditions, military power, and government structure, each of which is described in detail in this article. From non-material (spiritual) factors one can also refer to identity and ideological factors. To examine the regional competitiveness of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia, attention to internal factors can be a way to explain other variables in the region and the international arena. This paper tries to explain these factors.

## I. Theoretical Framework

neoclassic realism is a title given by Gideon Rose to a series of international relations theories, that, in explaining the foreign

policy and beyond, use many realistic insights in defining international relations, and insists that "the scope and ambition of a foreign policy of a country, First of all, stems from its position in the international system, and in particular its capabilities in the field of military power. But at the same time, it is emphasized that" the impact of these capabilities on foreign policy is indirect and complex because the pressures of the system should be translated through intermediate variables at the level of units, that is why they are neoclassicisms. "The attention of the non-classic realists to power is more than anything else; they define power as the realist based on ability. Unlike new realists, most of the novels, not only focus on the system-level factors, but also emphasize on mental conception and internal structure of governments, and somehow emphasize the need to look at different levels of analysis. They, while realizing the anarchy as real-life realists, also emphasize the insights of classical realism and therefore call them "neoclassic "(Moshirzadeh, 129: 2013). The key presupposition of this theory is that "in a complex world, no meaning theory can be true at all times, and no policy can be right for all situations.

The most important task of the experts is to determine in which conditions, in which different theories of discovering the causal relationships are important, to provide a basis for describing policies that are most likely to be effective. neoclassic realism, based on this belief, tries to use useful variables in other theories to explain events or to reject their significance based on objective events; however, it still maintains itself to the realism paradigm, and despite critiques of explanatory power Realism, especially after the failure of neo-realism in the anticipation of the end of the Cold War, still maintains realism. (Salimi, Ebrahimi, 16: 2014) The neoclassic realism approach in response to these allegations blended the classical realist elements with non-realism. On the one hand, and the anarchy's influence on the behavior of states, with the assumption that the "anarchy international system" of foreign policy options and choices is independent of the

systemic variables. In other words, these goals and ambitions of the foreign policy of countries are preceded by their relative material power, but on the other hand, like classical realism, the influence of the characteristics of countries and variables on the level of a single unit on the behavior of states is considered. (Haghshenas. 65: 2013).

The neoclassic realism examines the central role of the state and tries to explain how and under what conditions the internal characteristics of countries are between their decision-makers' assessments of international threats and opportunities and their foreign policy. So, the goal of reforming the theory of neo-realism by adding intermediary variables, such as the structure of the international system, does not mean that it can explain the foreign policy and its behavior in the sense of the distribution of power and the level of external threats alone. But also a combination of international constraints and opportunities, the level and extent of foreign threats, and the opportunities and limitations of domestic foreign policy behavior. In the sense that the definition and definition of stabilization and change in the distribution of power and threats and external conditions have a decisive role in determining the response of the countries to them (Firoozabadi Dehghani, 93: 2011). The neoclassic realism as a foreign policy theory affecting the relative power of the state in the international system (as an independent variable) through the structure of government and perceptions, understanding, and estimates of decision-makers from the relative strength of the country (as a mediator variable) on foreign policy and strategic behavior of countries in the international system as a dependent variable). (Firoozabadi Dehghani, 93: 2011). According to some scholars, a more classicist realism is a realist theory of foreign policy.

While the theory of international politics seeks to explain international phenomena, the theory of foreign policy seeks to explain why behaviors? To achieve such a goal, neo-realism, due to deliberate explanation of causes, is too inflexible and realistic, such as liberal theory and other theories of domestic politics, is

too specific, and for this reason, the explanation of international behaviors and the drawing of a vision of the future require a more developed theory Which can include the system agent and the inside surface of both. To this end, the neoclassic realism breaks out the general view of systematic theories and is in search of the internal mechanisms of the units and the reason for the appearance of certain behaviors and events, and therefore, the case. Neoclassical realism, meanwhile, is an attempt to systemize a wide variety of realistic views. While acknowledging the complexity of the world of international relations and reflecting events as a reflection of diverse factors, it introduces this diversity into a theoretical study and, based on that, identifies reforms for other realistic theories (Salimi, Ebrahimi, 17: 2014).

## II. Internal Factors Affecting the Competition

Basically, foreign policy is the continuation and sequencing of the domestic policy of the countries, which includes the fundamental principles and objectives pursued the national interests of the countries, and the elites active in the field of foreign policy, pursue and provide these goals as a leader of their activities and movements in the field of foreign policy. (Aghaei, Ahmadian, 2: 2009). Until the twentieth century, many theorists in the field of international relations, especially the theoretical look of realism, considered foreign policy to be completely separate from the internal affairs of the countries, and viewed the international situation of each of the actors in the world as billiards, and the interpretation of domestic politics, like the box Black was thought to be, but with the advent of developments and theories of decision making and the changing conditions of the international system, the influence of policies and internal factors on the theorists was apparent. The internal influential factors that can be mentioned are economic power, geopolitical and geostrategic position, decision-making bodies, and government structure, but these are affected by material factors and can be referred to as intangible factors such as identity, culture, ideology.

## III. Domestic Material Factors

**Government structure**: Structuralisms' are one of the major think tanks in the field of political science and international relations, which after the Second World War, and especially since the 1960s, their thoughts have found a special place in the issues of social development and social renewal. Proponents of this intellectual movement believe that they are in a state of instability and instability to examine the status of governments and to realize that governments have firmness and stability. It is imperative to pay attention to the socio-political structures governing society. In the opinion of the structuralisms' of each society, various constructions and contexts are formed, and on this basis the relations governing the way exchanges and interactions between these textures and, in other words, different structures of society, indicate the strength or weakness of that society. The Saudi government is in fact a kind of royal and tribal government in which the king has the loyalty of various tribes and tribal chiefs always obey his commands. The government in this country is a hereditary inheritance based on the custom of the eldest son of King Abdul Aziz of the Saudi family (Zeraatpisheh, 2012: 112-111).

According to the classification of political systems, the political system of Saudi Arabia, based on the ideas of a Western thinker named John Blundell and based on his criteria, has a conservative political system, in which both the king rule and reign, the legitimacy of the system to the rights of God is the king and the ruler of the Faith, which of course has religious beings. This system is very limited in terms of political participation and is in the ranks of authoritarian regimes (Zeraatpisheh, 114: 2012). In the structure of the distribution of power in Saudi Arabia, the royal family is the first and foremost group. In addition to the Al Saud family, one of the critical forces influencing Saudi politics and government is ulama(Religious scholars) or religious leaders, tribes are other forces that are in the power structure in Saudi Arabia and are considered an important element, Saudi Arabia has

had a latent tribal-based structure. The main tribes in this country, which include the eight main tribes and at least fifteen sub-tribes, are among the most influential power groups in the traditional economy, which are considered to be Saudi Arabia's most important and influential families. However, it should be noted that power in Saudi Arabia is based on traditional patrimonialism, authoritarian, and patriarchal (Al-Rasheed, 2005: 189). The nature of the political system of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the structure of government, and the bureaucracy play a decisive role in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Since the Islamic Republic of Iran is a system based on the rule of law, the leader plays a decisive role in foreign policy. Therefore, Iran is a semi-parliamentary, semi-presidential, and dual-pronged state, because part of the executive branch is exercised by the leadership and is composed of three distinct powers. Also, there are other pillars, such as the Expediency Council, and others that are effective in foreign policy. There are, of course, several political, military, security, and economic agents in the country that influence foreign policy (Qaziyani, 2015: 41).

Generaly, the conditions for the establishment of two sovereignty and the structure of the sovereignty and the degree of dependence of nations and systems show significant differences between the two countries. It is clear that there is a set of fundamental differences between the structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia, the most important of which is that the constitution of Iran is not a gift from the king, but following the popular revolution of Iran by choosing the founding council for the drafting of the law A fundamental and then democratic referendum has been put in place to prove it, contrary to the Saudi constitution, which was issued as a gift from Fahad after 90 years of rule. In explaining the competition between the two actors, in particular in a certain  region, some elements are very influential in determining the foreign policy behavior of two rival actors. One of the most significant and influential factors in the foreign policy behavior of countries is political system and

government structure. In the region of the Middle East, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been trying to target conservative political systems in the region due to the revolutionary nature that precedes global and regional behavior, and in this respect, Saudi Arabia has an old system and Also, in the new era of states, an individual as the supreme authority cannot control all matters in the position of the king. In the same strategy and based on the revolutionary nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and one of the basic principles of the Iranian revolution, the issuance of revolution to The other points are among the Middle East countries, the Islamic Republic of Iran is trying to model in this regard, not only some of the supporters of the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially the Shiites in the countries of the region who try to dominate the Islamic Republic of Iran's governing structure in their own countries but also some of the group Educated and new generations in the countries of the region, especially in Saudi Arabia, are demanding a change in the political order and the sovereignty of Saudi Arabia.

This is under pressure from the conservative political system of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, Saudi Arabia is trying to show that the royal structure and the conservative system of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are a good way to run the country in the Middle East. For this reason, it explains the reasons for maintaining political stability. On the one hand, this kind of government system is an indigenous example and is followed by patterns and processes of governance past, and most people in these areas are familiar with this kind of rule, and on the other hand, the conservative Saudi system against a Pan Arabism is Ba'athist and other radical groups, which is a source of motivation in Saudi Arabia by which Saudi government maintains itself as a constant political power  over the pressure of foreign groups, including the political system of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Diansaee & Yurtaev.2017: 85-84). At the end, the result is that the Islamic Republic of Iran, with the bases for the issuance of the revolution, seeks to increase its influence over the other countries of the

region; and the opposition groups of the political system of the countries of the region are in the same position as the Islamic Republic of Iran and try to have the power to overthrow the political system of the country and this is a manifestation of the Islamic Republic of Iran's attempt to represent its political system into other regional systems and political systems. The efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran are in opposition to the efforts of Saudi Arabia, for these reasons there have been competition between the two countries in the region.

**Economic power**: The energy economy is considered a strategic topic in international relations literature. Energy is one of the most influential issues in the world community's struggles, the country's efforts to save and conserve its energy are abundant and do nothing to reduce the extent to which many scholars, wars and unrest in the Middle East originate from the existence of rich energy resources, in particular, Oil and gas are known in this region. (Mottaghi et al., 2015: 5). Energy sources are the key elements for government power, with each other having a greater government resource. Of course, energy resources are capacities that, if a government can extract and use it properly, the government power will increase. Looking at energy sources as the material elements of power, according to what scholars have said, will lead to the speculation that energy resources in the field of foreign relations should be analyzed using two theories of realism and idealism (Shirkhani, Mohajeripour, 2012: 4). Saudi Arabia's economy is largely based on oil, with oil sales and the resulting revenues affecting many domestic and foreign policies and economic programs. Saudi Arabia holds about 25% of the world's crude oil resources and has the largest capacity to produce and exploit these resources (Masihi E Kuhestani, 2013: 85). Saudi Arabia is a single-state product that generates its oil revenue. The economy of this country is structurally linked to the world capitalist system (Rahmanian, 2015: 87). Saudi Arabia is definitely important to the world economy because of its dominant position in oil affairs. The kingdom has more than a quarter of the

world's most proven oil reserves and is the largest world's oil producer (Cappelen&Choudhury, 2000:10).

The economic structure of Saudi Arabia is based on the production and sale of oil. In this country, oil dollars are centered on economic and political orientations. Saudi Arabia's economic system was largely based on the trade and revenues from the hajjai's journey to the country over the past decade, but in recent decades the decisive economic movement has been able to transform the face of society (Rahmanian, 2015: 87). Saudi Arabia's oil revenues are very impressive compared to other oil companies in the region, due to the high oil production in the country. As Saudi Arabia has always been the world's leading oil producer in the last decades of the 20th century, It has begun efforts to reduce its dependence on oil during last two decades, which has been successful since the trade, agriculture, and especially industry sectors have gradually become the country's economy (Asadi, 2011: 4-263). Saudi Arabia's economic structure is very fragile due to its dependence on oil, as all other economies activities, including industrial, service, and commerce are dependant on the state of oil (Zaraatpisheh, 2005: 279). The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a Saudi competitor, has an almost identical structure and economic resources, so that the economy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is a single product based on foreign exchange earnings due to the extraction and export of oil. Therefore, the most important economic activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran are: The oil industry (Asadi, 221: 2011).

The Islamic Republic of Iran holds the second place in the world for the reserves of natural gas after the Russian Federation. Of course, apart from major oil and gas reserves, the Islamic Republic of Iran is the only Gulf state Whose non-oil minerals like its vast hydrocarbon is of great importance. In another perspective, it should be emphasized that Iran has a special position since It belongs two main sources of energy in the world, the Gulf, and the Caspian Sea. However, agriculture in the economy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is not desirable

considering the potentialities of the country and the world standards, and it does not make a significant contribution (Asadi, 226:2011). The Islamic Republic inherited the characteristics of the socio-economic system based on oil and the oil status of Iran in the division of the international economic instrument. While in the first years after the revolution, the new elites attempted to hand over Iran's economy and trade system, the war with Iraq effectively ruled out opportunities for the removal of the economy from the extreme dependence on oil, and thus the prospect of a change in Iran's relations with the system International capitalism is out of reach (Hayne Bush, Ehshamami, 2011: 505). The economic approach of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran, based on huge energy resources, is being pursued competitively in the region. This approach is important for the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia, which suggests that both countries having rich economic resources, including energy, will determine the kind of relationship with other countries, including the world's top powers, in terms of their goals and desires. Saudi Arabia, for example, is considered a major player in the global oil market, and the country's most important geopolitical component has 25% of the world's resources. Saudi Arabia can produce up to 12.5 million barrels of oil per day and thus play a decisive role in the global oil market. Average daily oil production of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia and the member states of the brand Says Saudi Arabia alone has more than 30% of OPEC production, but the Islamic Republic's share of OPEC production in October 2016 is only about 11% (Hassantash.2014: 9-10). However, Saudi Arabia's role in reducing oil prices was one of the policies that emerged as part of the regional competition between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia in terms of economy and energy. Saudi Arabia's oil policy was the economy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, but the Islamic Republic seems to have suffered less damage than Saudi Arabia. The Islamic Republic of Iran's economy was accustomed to the lack of oil revenues due to international sanctions. After the

conclusion of an agreement on the payment of blocked money, Iran entered the Iranian economy, and with the gradual removal of barriers to trade with other countries, Iran's oil exports rose and the republic Islamic Iran could also expand in other non-oil fields (industry, tourism, and transit) (Hassantash.2014: 9-10).

The competition between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia has always been related on their economic terms since both countries are known as single-country, but the important point in discussing the economic competitiveness of these two countries is the discussion of renewable resources such as natural gas that the Islamic Republic Iran is one of the main holders of this energy source in the world. The Islamic Republic of Iran is ranked as the second in the world concerning gas resources after Russia, which creates a competitive advantage for the Islamic Republic of Iran. Because today, according to the Paris agreement, as well as the climate change debate, most countries are moving towards replacing renewable sources rather than fossil fuels. Natural gas is a clean fuel that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, provides a solution to environmental challenges, and provides a road map for a sustainable future. It has essentially changed the global energy equation, where oil has been challenged by natural gas. Some non-OPEC actors, like Russia, dominate the market (gas), and it is anticipated that a cartel such as OPEC that can regulate the gas market is expected to be realized by establishing the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF). An international organization was created to plan and establish policies based on long-term contracts, market supply for producers, sustainable supply for consumers, and infrastructure maintenance. (Vrushal.Ghoble, 2017: 83). Gas resources of the Caspian Sea are also one of the main sources of energy in the Islamic Republic. In this regard, the gas sources of the Islamic Republic of Iran and some Central Asian countries, such as Turkmenistan, could shake Saudi Arabia's oil in the Eurasian region. Finally, the various routes of gas sales to the Islamic Republic of Iran can be summarized as follows: (1). The

Anatolian pipeline route from Turkey to the European Union (2). The peace pipeline route, which moves from Pakistan to India and China, and ultimately (3). The countries of Arizona are working through Turkmenistan. The policies of Iran's natural gas exports to other parts of the world could create a variety of energy policies and outperform Saudi Arabia's competitive energy markets.

**Military power**: Within the framework of the military power, military and military equipment, military personnel, leadership, military bases, military techniques, troop movements, and logistics facilities should be taken into consideration. The correct and accurate assessment of the elements constituting military power Concerns this subject that foreign policymakers need to consider their ability to influence the structure of other political units to achieve their goals and provide their own national interests (Qawam, 2011: 92).

Although the Saudi government's desire to assign national defense to the domination of the international forces, it is important to understand the historical progress of the armed forces, which is a sign of the larger political calculations of the ruling family in Saudi Arabia. Saudi elites want a strong army to dominate their neighbors to avoid regional competition, but they are not strong enough to deal with this issue. The armed forces are divided between sectarian and tribal groups and this force is not possible without the help of the foreign kingdom (Royal Saudi land force history www.globalsecurity.org). The kingdom's military hierarchy is sensitive to changes related to the royal structure, however; apart from the Ministry of Defense and the National Guard of Saudi Arabia, overseeing the four major branches of the Royal Army, the Army, the Air Force, the Navy, and the Defense Forces, directly under the command of the court Royal and crown prince. With all these interpretations, the number of military personnel in Saudi Arabia is about 205,000 to 227,000 personnel in the forces under the control of the king (Cordesman, 2; 2009).

Military power is one of the main components of the foreign

policy behavior of countries towards others; that is why a country with great military power in the region tries to play an active role in terms of military power, competition, and threats against other powers of the region. For nearly two decades, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia have been competing, and both regional actors are trying to establish a balance of power with each other. The military rivalries of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran can be highlighted in two main directions: the first is the purchase of military weapons, which Saudi Arabia collects a large number of dollars each year for military weapons, Saudi authorities have expressed their aim for buying military weapons the Islamic Republic of Iran's excessive influence in the region and the possibility of dealing with the Islamic Republic of Iran. According to a report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) on the import of Saudi Arabia's advanced weapons that the weapons transfer database will bring a long list of weapons imported by Saudi Arabia in 2013-2017. Since these weapons are generally advanced, Saudi Arabia is well armed in the Gulf region because of its modern equipment. Just a few examples to illustrate the latest types of weapons that are crucial to assessing Saudi Arabia's ability to fight in Yemen, while at the same time making domestic military maneuvers, maintaining military power on the border with Iraq, confronting the Islamic Republic of Iran is militarily considering the possibility of deploying its army in Syria, which is of great importance to Saudi Arabia (Wezeman, 2018: 14 December). Since early 2015, when Saudi Arabia leads coalition leadership in a military campaign against rebel forces in Yemen, the intervention has included air strikes, land operations, and air and sea siege of Yemen. Instead of a quick victory or conflict resolution, the struggle continues, and hostile parties have been accused of violating international humanitarian law. The United Nations and non-governmental organizations accuse Saudi Arabia of widespread and systematic attacks on civilian targets. Saudi Arabia also has military conflicts, including support for insurgent

groups in Syria, the use of military aid to influence Lebanon and the fight against Shiite minority groups in the eastern provinces of Saudi Arabia, or even one a direct clash between Saudi Arabia and its allies. A high level of military planning in Saudi Arabia needs analysis to understand how this will help the country's ability and willingness to become a military force in regional conflicts and tensions. The second issue, that military competition of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia, is the proletarian wars that can be referred to Yemen as the most important pro-war with the passing of Syria. Saudi Arabia has participated in two global and regional alliances for the fight against terrorism (in the global coalition) over the past four years and for the Houci and Ali Abdullah Saleh in Yemen to fight with. The fate of the coalition was so unsuccessful that, according to American circles, ISIL's proliferation of influence was also culminating. But the alliance that was formed on the initiative of Saudi Arabia for the war against Yemen has become one of the most humorous treaties of the world. The Pakistani government has declined to form the coalition, with the Egyptian government contributing to the provision of refugee services and several warplanes, despite having received $ 5 billion in the form of a strengthening of its banking system.

The Sudan, which has the largest share of its membership in the coalition, did not even survive the preservation of several harbors and freebies in Aden. The United Arab Emirates, which had taken dozens of deaths in the ranks of high commanders following a military strike on their command center in the outskirts of Aden, gradually returned troops to the country. This is the fate of Saudi Arabia's major military alliance. Saudi Arabia has also stated that the presence of Iranian forces and Hezbollah fighters and Russian forces is a reason for the difficulty of war in Syria. The third factor is the existence of paramilitary groups in the region, in which Iran's power is much higher than Saudi Arabia due to strong militias including Lebanon's Hezbollah, Hashad Sha'bi in Iraq, Ansar al -Allah in Yemen, which reflects

the influence of Iran in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia has been trying to equip Sunni radical groups in the region with dollars spent on oil and ideological views but based on the international approach and the process of radicalization of these militant groups of international alliances to eliminate these militia-backed groups the Saudi side has been formed. These include the ISIS, the Taliban, and al-Qaeda.

**Geopolitical position**: The foreign policy of neighboring countries is severely affected by one another, with joint geographic features, an area of regional convergence infrastructure. In such regional structures, if there are multiple poles claiming power, the most competitive among the poles in the flow has a relative geopolitical balance, and if this competition deepens and prevents regional macro-materials, the region will face a lot of challenges and its effective functions will be weakened (Hafez Nia, Romina, 11: 2017). The competition between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia has been struggling over the past decades. One of the most important competitive factors that will be mentioned in this study is the geopolitical rivalry of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia, in which the geopolitical competition of these two countries can be examined based on two important issues. One of the important axes of the geopolitical position of the two countries in the region, as mentioned above is the important geopolitical identity of the Islamic Republic of Shiite and Saudi Arabian Sunnis.

Geopolitical Identity: Each of the sects based on Islam has different intellectual and ideological centers. These centers provide the intellectual and religious backing of their believers. Since these centers may be in the geographical space of rival countries, they will have geopolitical action. Each country of Iran and Saudi Arabia has geopolitical interests within each other's borders that these geopolitical interests provide the basis for interference in the internal affairs of each other. Sunni sector of Iran is regarded as a geopolitical interest of Saudi Arabia, and the

Shiites sector and Mecca in Saudi Arabia is the  geopolitical interests for the Islamic Republic of Iran. Another geopolitical position is the identity between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia, the Eastern Mediterranean, where there has always been disagreement and competition between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia. In this region, due to the existence of Lebanon and parts Of Syria, where Shiites live and in history, they have also had cultural and commercial ties with Iran, and have always been in favor of Iran because of the presence of pro-Iranian groups, including Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Assad government in Syria, between two Regional power (the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia) has been rivaled. This geopolitical rivalry of identity does not just end in the eastern Mediterranean (Lebanon and part of Syria), and there are other competitive spaces such as western Iraq and eastern Syria, northern Yemen, the Persian Gulf (Bahrain and the three islands).

Of course, it can be said in a brief statement that, based on the different identities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia, the geopolitical identity of the identity of each region that exists alongside Shiites is considered to be the geopolitical code for the Islamic Republic of Iran. Therefore, both countries have an inseparable approach to real or imagined interests in space and periphery. This approach provides for the persistence of conflict and a constant competition and challenge between the two countries (Hafez Nia, Romina, 1396: 18 -14) The Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia have been more and more geopolitical in their competition than at any other time. At the beginning of Saudi Arabia's interpretation, after the Arab Spring and its associated instability, it was understood by the threat, but the Islamic Republic of Iran Take an opportunity (Diansaee & Yurtaev.2017: 85-86).

**Identity**: Identity is a series of interpersonal features that are rooted in the actor's understanding, which is affected by the fact that other activists represent the actor in the same way (Went, 2013: 326-325). The national identity is capable of influencing

through various forms of foreign policy and foreign affairs. First, through the influence of norms, the identity variables of society that are produced and reproduced in a two-way process in society are the form and nature of the political system that determines which characteristics can form the identity of that society.

Foreign diplomacy in Saudi Arabia, like many other countries, is affected by domestic features. The first feature of Islamic Sharia is the Arab-Islamic identity. Saudi Arabia's diplomacy, like many other countries, is affected by domestic features. The first feature of Islamic Sharia is the Arab-Islamic identity. Saudi Arabia is a good example of the influence of the internal components of foreign policy. Cases such as baptism protection, the land of revelation, and the world's largest oil producer have all contributed to pursuing Saudi Arabia's policy based on a particular identity (Ebrahimi, 6: 2015). Saudi Pan-Islamism, led by Saudi Arabia, to overcome national-territorial differences and the unification of various entities in the region, has become an element of divergence and disagreement. Saudi Pan-Islamism, as a great ideology, is a controversial issue with rival identities such as Pan-Islamic Shi'a and the brotherhood of Pan-Islamism (Darwich, 2014, 5). In the case of the identity of the Islamic Republic of Iran, we can say that the Iranian national identity is composed of three distinct layers. Iranian identity from the beginning of Iranian history to the coming of Islamic states in Iran, and from this particular time point, the norms and characteristics of many positive and negative characteristics have been inherited to us by Iranians, and the scope of these norms has been drawn up to the present time. (Parastar, 013: 141). The second layer is the Islamic stratum, which, with the norms of oppression and protection of the oppressed, the expedient and the united nation, is also one of the sources of the identity of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which has become a kind of political ideology, and in addition to the formation of a specific identity for the Islamic Republic of Iran, moral and special value for judging policies have established and determined the actions and

behaviors of this country with other countries (Mirbagheri, 2004: 558).

The third layer forms the Iranian identity triangle on a modern and modern level, with norms such as international law, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, respect for international law, which is mainly of a legal and international nature. The historical and collective memory of Iranians seems to have played a key role in adopting this strategy. The reason for this statement by Imam Khomeini at the beginning of the victory of the revolution was Iran's dependence on the superpowers and the domination system that had reached its highest level during the reign of Pahlavi (Parastar, 2013:144). The discourse of the Islamic Revolution of Iran made a new step towards the spread of the wave of social revolutions within the framework of Islamic discourse. In this way, the discourses and norms underlying the Islamic Republic of Iran are liberation and justice, the fight against oppression and corruption, anti-American and anti-Israeli anti-Semitism. But on the other hand, the main norms of Saudi foreign policy are always the leadership of the Muslim world and the mission of the universal publication of Islam based on Sunni religion. In the Persian Gulf region, these norms are based on attempts to lead the region, the unity of the Arabs of the region, and their leadership, preventing the Shiites and revolutionary centers and pro-Islamic movements of Iran from gaining power and limiting the influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran. From a security perspective, Saudi Arabia also emphasizes a security order linked to the West, especially the United States.

Saudi Arabia and the United States have common interests in controlling the Islamic Republic of Iran, ensuring the free flow of the Gulf oil, stability in Yemen and the Horn of Africa, and eliminating the influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran among the Arabs. In the whole identity of the Iranian political system, Iranian identity is Islamic, Islamic revolutionary, and non-aligned Shiite, while in contrast to the identity of Saudi Arabia, it is an Arab identity, Sunni Salafi Islamic, conservative, and western-

oriented Islam. Identifies these identities with the definition of "self" and the perception of "the other" and defines the interests, preferences, and roles of each actor. These identities in each era of relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia have been influenced by internal, regional, and international conditions in a prominent or diminutive manner or different from the "other" to play a role in relations (Samiy Isfahani et al. 2015: 11-13)

**The ruling ideology**: Concerning the theoretical background of the ideology of Saudi Arabia, we can say that the turning point of this ideology is Wahhabism. Wahhabism was founded by Mohammad bin Abdul Wahhab in the 12th century as one of the Islamic sects, with the help of Ibn Taymiyyah and others in the seventh and eighth centuries of the Lunar ages (Jamshidi rad, 2: 2010). The Saudi government is one of the Middle Eastern identity states, the government in Saudi Arabia established a political-religious system in Saudi Arabia based on the Wahhabism tradition, and on the one hand, a new impetus for political centralization was provided because the importance of jihad in the teachings of Wahhabi, It allowed the occupation of Islamic lands. The expansion of Wahhabism, the removal of Saudi Arabia from non-Orthodox religious forms, and the empowerment of Sharia within the Arab community were the main demands of the Wahhabi movement. Wahhabism provided Saudi leadership with a new instrument that was essential for the coherence and development of Saudi rule. Indeed, Saudi leaders, using this religious tradition, provided an ideological justification explaining why they should rule it? This ideological justification is used as the main source of legitimacy and its claim to power, and the root cause of their sovereignty is the same religious thought (Ataee & Mansouri Moghadam, 2013: 136).

in Iran and with the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution led by Imam Khomeini in 1979, it led to the emergence of an independent and new political system in the international system called the Islamic Republic of Iran, the identity of which, the most

important foundational meanings of it, the norms in culture, the Islamic religion has been emphasizing the Shiite element. These norms led to the emergence of a "revolutionary-Islamic" identity for the country in the international system. Ms. Mushirzadeh said: "the identity of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in addition to safeguarding the country's independence and national interests, includes transnational responsibilities and duties in the framework of numerous transnational roles and a military value and judgment or a new intellectual form has created" (Moshirzadeh, 2010: 156).

However, it is concluded that Islamic ideology and discourse influence in several ways the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. First, ideology plays a very important role in determining and defining the national identity and national role of Iran. Second, Islamic ideology and discourse define national interests and goals through the identification and national role of the Islamic Republic. The Islamic Republic of Iran has ideological and Islamic interests, such as preserving the existence of Islam and Shi'ism, preserving religious and revolutionary values, and defending Muslims. Third, the ideology creates a certain intellectual form, in which the realities, messages, and references of the external environment and other countries are within that context. Fourth, Islamic ideology provides a specific picture of the present and future of the world by defining the main stages of historical development and socio-political development, according to which it outlines a certain perspective and horizon for this country (Dehghani Firoozabadi, 2009: 29-22). At the moment, the issue of leadership of the Islamic world, on the one hand, and the dispute over the interpretation of Islam, has been the most influential factor in the relations between Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Following the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the developments in Iraq after Saddam, which led to the power of the Shi'ites in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab states became more concerned with the region, as the developments in Iraq strengthened the position of the Shiites in

the region.

Each of the two countries carries a dynamic ideology. After the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the Shi'a political and revolutionary ideology has quickly rebelled against Saudi-led Sunni Wahhabi ideology, in which both ideologies questioned the legitimacy of each other. Both of these countries are considered as two possible contenders for this type of ideology. This Focalism of the two countries, by emphasizing the other influential variables, has increased contradictory action (Hafeznia, 1396: 5-4). Saudi Arabia considers the Islamic Republic of Iran as the main source of instability in the region and believes that the Islamic Republic of Iran is seeking to establish a Shiite crescent to dominate Sunni Arabs in the region.

These two countries, especially after the Islamic Revolution, have always been the two rivals in the Persian Gulf region, whose ideological rivalry is at the core of their rivalry in geopolitical, geostrategic, and geo-economical areas. Relations between Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran have been tense in recent years due to major political developments in the Middle East. Saddam's fall for Saudi Arabia was the end of Sunnis' dominance over Iraq and the power of the Shiites and the promotion of the regional status of Iran in the region. The upgrading of the regional status of the Islamic Republic of Iran after the revolutionary developments in the Arab world and Iran's nuclear deal has also led Saudi leaders to realize that the regional power and influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran has increased and the balance of regional power is changing in favor of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

## Conclusion

This article examines the effective factors of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran and answers the question of the hypothesis that there are effective domestic factors in the competition between Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran. It can be said that the internal factors affecting the

competitiveness of these two actors include material factors, such as the structure of government, geopolitical position, military power, and economic power, as well as non-material factors that include identity, ideology. Based on the political order in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia, the basic principles of competition between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia can be summarized as follows: The Islamic Republic of Iran, following the principles of the issuance of the revolution, has more influence over other countries of the region; and opposition groups in the regional political system have been working together with the Islamic Republic of Iran and are trying to overthrow their country's political system, and this effect of the Islamic Republic of Iran's efforts to present  a political system Itself to other political systems and political systems in the region The Islamic Republic of Iran is opposed to the efforts of Saudi Arabia and this has created a rivalry between the two countries in the region. Each of them, based on its political order, tried to prove its effectiveness and also the Islamic Republic of Iran following the issuance of a desirable political order, and Saudi Arabia seeks to preserve royal and conservative systems. This is the most important issue in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia's rivalry about the political structure. This kind of competition is an obvious example of economic competition and even ideological and identity competition in the region. The efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia to surpass each other in the regional arena based on internal factors provide a broader field of activity for both actors.

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# Domestic Factions and the External Environment in Iran's Foreign Policy

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## Abstract

Since 1979 Iran's foreign policy has swung from pan-Islamism to nationalism, from ideology to pragmatism, from détente to post-détente. This article aims at explaining how domestic factionalism has affected Iran's foreign policy over the past 40 years and, vice-versa, how it has been shaped by external stimuli. Factionalism can be considered as an intervenient variable which, alongside the external environment, may have an impact on Iran's foreign policy making. But it can also be considered as a dependent variable which may be affected by external constraints. I argue that when factionalism emerges, Iran's foreign policy generally tends to be characterized by ideology. However, this may also be a function of increasing external pressures. At the same time, factionalism is generally toned down when either domestic imperatives or external forces push Iran to adopt a more pragmatic stance in foreign affairs. The background argument is that despite an influential role of religion in the country's politics and policies, Iran has remained committed to defensive and realist imperatives for most of the last 40 years. The main questions here addressed are: how does factional politics in Iran reflect upon a certain foreign policy making? How does factionalism is in turn affected by external challenges/ threats and how does it translate either into an ideological or a realist and pragmatic foreign policy?

**Keywords:** *Iran, Foreign Policy Analysis, Factionalism, Ideology, Pragmatism*

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## Introduction

Many scholars have dealt with the debate whether Iran's foreign policy has beenaffected by ideology, pragmatism or a combination of both. At the same time, many others have studied the dynamics of factional politics in Iran and how it affected relations among competing institutions within the Islamic Republic. However, it seems that in the literature of *IR* and *foreign policy analysis* (FPA) there is a gap about how factionalism has affected Iran's foreign policy making and, vice-versa, how it has been shaped by the external environment. This article aims at filling this gap. The goal is to assess to what extent factional politics has affected Iran's decision making to produce either an ideological or a pragmatic attitude in the country's foreign affairs. It focuses on Iran's policy-making and foreign policy stance over the past four decades.

The primary assumption is that factionalism historically stems from the Iran's institutional architecture adopted as of 1979 and shapes the domestic political structure. Secondly, the institutional system is based on a complex mixture ofboth political and religious bodies. As a result, Iran's foreign policy has swung from Islamism to nationalism [Guolo, 2007: 131][1], from ideology

1. In the literature of Islamic fundamentalism, panislamism stands for an approach that appeals to the whole Islamic nation and claims for overcoming rigid historical schemes set up backto the origins of Islam, namely between Shiites and Sunnis. The purpose is to avoid *fitna* (internal sedition or war) while devoting all efforts to fight primarily against the external enemy (Israel and the United States). On the concept of *fitna*, see: Kepel (2004).

to pragmatism [Ramazani, 2004; Menashri, 2007; Rasmussen, 2009; Hunter, 2003; Rubin, 2006], from détente to post-détente [Ehteshami, 2007]. All things considered, the hypotheses is that whether the two blocks of competing institutions find a common ground, the system works in harmony and efficiency with a tendency to both tone down factional politics and exhibit a rather pragmatic stance in foreign affairs than ideological; but also, if some material conditions (either domestic or external) force Iran to adopt a pragmatic foreign policy line, factionalism is softened as well. If, on the contrary, disagreements over the ultimate goals emerge, the result is conflict, whilefactionalism exert a dominant role in shaping policy-making and foreign policy decisions and stances as well. In such cases, as will be outlined below, the intensity of domestic factionalism and the resulting foreign policy stances also depend on internal perceptions of external threats. If the external environment is challenging, it potentially leads decision-makers to exhibit a rather ideological foreign policy. If it is accommodating, this generally creates more opportunities to tone down domestic factionalism and exhibit a rather pragmatic foreign policy attitude. As Masoud Kazemzadeh has brilliantly outlined, the independent variable in Iran's foreign policy is not Islam in itself, but the distinct interpretations each faction has «of Shia Islam and fundamentalist ideology, which in turn have been transformed to distinct ideological and policy platforms» [Kazemzadeh, 2017: 199].

The main questions here addressed are: how does factional politics in Iranreflect upon a certain foreign policy making? How does factionalism is in turn affected by external challenges/threats and how do they translate either into an ideological or a realist and pragmatic foreign policy? A historical-political perspective will be adopted, keeping *foreign policy analysis* on the background as well. First, a focus on the Iranian constitutional structure and competing factions willbe sketched out. Secondly, a complete overview of the main phases in which the Iranian foreign policy can be divided from 1979 to the present

day will be presented. Interestingly, one can find a remarkable correspondence between specific turning points occurring both at home and abroad. This somehow reflects frequent interrelations between domestic politics and international events, an aspect that political scientists often refer to as "intermestic". Michael Brecher was the architect of a FPA model which keeps into account how the domestic structure and the external environment impact the foreign policy decision-making. Consequently, the foreign policy of any country can be examined as «a flow into and out of a network of structures or institutions which perform certain functions and thereby produce decisions. These, in turn, feedback into the system as inputs in a continuous flow of demands on policy» [Brecher et al., 1969: 80].

In the end, a short roundup of the main characteristics which come to light and a verification of theinitial hypotheses will be outlined.

## I- Iran's political structure

The political system of the Islamic Republic of Iran hosts a vast array ofinstitutions. Each of them appeals to one out of two different sources of legitimacy: political-democratic and Islamic-religious [Buchta, 2000; Guolo, 2007: 158-168]. To put it with Italian scholar  Renzo Guolo, the Islamic Republic resembles a «political oxymoron». Such a framework potentially generates competition among them. Disputes had been kept under control as long as Imam Khomeini stayed alive. On account of his authority and charisma, in fact, he sublimated the unity of the state under the banner of Islam. Political authority and spiritual leadership were thus matched together in his figure, according to  the principle of *velayat-e faqih*  (tutorship of the jurisconsult) proclaimed at the dawn of the 1979 Revolution. Anyway, as Imam Khomeini himself put it, factionalism would not represent a big problem for the safety of the Islamic Republic as long as its founding principles (Revolution and Islam) received support [Behrooz, 1991: 611].

## II- Constitutional Tenets and Historical Constants

The principles of Iran's foreign policy are established in Chapter X of the Constitution, under articles 152-155. Indeed, they can be subsumed not only by some other constitutional provisions but also catching a glimpse to history.

First of all, independence. Iran has always rejected any form of domination aiming at undermining its territorial integrity. This is reflected in a constitutional declaration of non-alignment respect to the hegemonic superpowers (art. 152). Iran has always perceived a sense of strategic loneliness, since it is surrounded by fifteen states and has often felt threatened by Iraq, Russia, Turkey and the Arab countries. This has resulted in a syndrome of encirclement. A Supreme Council for national security is established under the article 177. It aims at «safeguarding the national interests and preserving the Islamic Revolution, the territorial integrity, and the national sovereignty». It is headed by the President. All in all, the first historical characteristic of Iran's foreign policy has to do with geopolitics [Ehteshami, 2002. For further historical accounts, see: Ramazani, 2004; Ramazani, 2008].

The second main trait of Iran's foreign policy is represented by its identity and role [Ehteshami, 2002: 286]. They have to do with Iran's particular understanding of religion and nationalism as well as its self-perception of cultural, linguistic, ethnical and religious distinctiveness from its neighbors [Rubin, 2006: 142]. Such a paradigm stemmed from Iran's rooted self-perception to constantly live within a state of "exceptionalism", from an ethno-national and religious point of view. First of all, Iran is a Persian nation,ethnically quite homogeneous while surrounded by a neighborhood of Arab states. Religiously speaking it is almost wholly Shiite within a Sunni-dominated region. This extraordinary situation of authenticity in the Middle East – in part shared only by such countries as Turkey and Israel – has brought Iran to constantly feel threatened from outside and frightened to be invaded by foreign powers [Ramazani, 2008]. The Islamic

character of Iran's foreign policy is also highlighted by additional provisions in the Constitution such as: the task to defend the rights of all Muslims (art. 152); the proclamation of its Army to be Islamic, meaning that it has to be committed to Islamist ideology; the establishment of an Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC, known also as the *Pasdaran*) in charge of protecting Revolutionary values. Moreover, the preamble provides the  basic elements for the continuation of the revolution domestically and on  the international scene, emboldening the strive with other Islamic movements in order to achieve the common end of a «single world community» as the Holy Book requires.

## III- Foreign Policy Decision-Making

After Imam Khomeini passed away, the IRP split into two main camps: the pragmatic Rightist faction and the Left faction. The former is supportive of the private property and in favour of economic liberalization. It backs the interests of the *bazaaris* (the traditional Iranian bourgeoisie), abandoned the idea of exporting the Revolution and privileged the need to reconstruct the country's economy after the 1980-88 war against Iraq. The latter advocates state intervention in the economy, continues to back the exportation of the Revolution [Behrooz, 1991: 598], calls for a more isolationist foreign policy and a  confrontationist stance against the United States (US). The former camp mostly comprised the religious leaders, both traditionalists  – the  so-called  Right [Buchta, 2000: 13] –  like  the  current  Leader Ayatollah Ali  Khamenei  and technocrats  such  as  then President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani – the so-called Modernist Right [*Ibidem*] or *Kargozaran*. The latter camp comprised social revolutionaries, the independent clergy and religious laypersons [Rakel, 2009: 116, who were framed into the Combatant Clerics Society – whose main figures are Mohammad Musavi-Khoeiniha, former President Muhammad Khatami.

Factionalism evolved into a new fashion when a new political group stepped into the spotlight in the second half of the Nineties,

the Reformist faction, which came off the Left. Being represented by then President Khatami, this group had been progressively diverging from radicals in all camps. In domestic politics for instance, they supported the idea of social pluralism and predicated free economic enterprise to keep up with economic development. In foreign affairs, they advocated dialogue among civilizations and a normalization of relations with the West and the U.S. in particular, fully distancing themselves from the hardliners who kept on viewing the world as it was divided into two opposing camps, in line with the most influential fundamentalist approaches in political Islam [See: Kepel, 2000; Kepel, 2004; Lewis, 2003][1]. They totally abandoned the idea of exporting the Islamic Revolution abroad, while in some way their political views got closer to the positions of Rafsanjani's Modernist Right, who was in turn at odds with the traditional conservatives.

Before entering the next section, just a few words about the foreign policy decision making must be spent. It is implemented by four main levels or groups of actors: the Foreign Minister and the department heads, the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), a ministerial committee and a bunch of strategic figures comprising the President and the head of the SNSC.

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1. The importance of a deep dichotomy at the basis of the belief-system and world vision of contemporary Islamic fundamentalists is renowned. Islamic thinkers such as Hasan al-Banna and then Sayyid Qutb in Egypt, Abu Ala Mawdudi in Pakistan and Imam Ruollah Khomeini in Iran strongly believed in the division of the world into two main camps: *dar al-harb* (house of war) versus *dar al-Islam* (house of Islam), faith against infidelity or ignorance (*jahillyah*). This would direct all efforts to a «re- islamization of modernity» against the Western attempt to modernize Islam, by representing the appeal for rediscovering the roots of a «true Islam» and fighting against Western colonialism and imperialism from any point of view, military, political, economic and cultural.

## IV- Iranian Foreign Policy and its Different Phases:

**The Eighties: Ideology Dominates Foreign Policy**: In the Eighties, Iran's foreign policy remained committed to an ideological rather than pragmatist approach. It was inspired by Imam Khomeini's most famous motto proclaimed at the dawn of the Revolution: «Neither East, nor West, only Islam», mirroring one of the most meaningful battle cries of the Revolution, «*Esteqlal, Azadi: Jomhouri Eslami*» (Independence, Freedom: Islamic Republic). At least three issues reflected the dominance of such religious zeal. First of all, the eight-year war against Iraq (1980-88) [Karsh, 1989; Potter and Sick, 2004; Hiro, 1991]. The erstwhile Algiers Treaty (1975) that settled a border dispute engendered by Iraq's craving for directly accessing the Persian Gulf left Saddam unsatisfied and looking for revenge. For this reason, Saddam decided to invade Iran, just exploiting the confusion after the ousting of the Shah's regime. All the Arab countries' efforts to support Iraq against Iran were perceived as a serious danger to its national territorial integrity. Iran showed a high capacity to face Saddam's challenge, by rallying and mobilizing millions of young people recruited within the *Basij*, the religiously inspired militias bound to the *Pasdaran* (Guardians of the Revolution) who were imbued with revolutionary values.

The second issue is represented by the diplomatic isolation stemming from the U.S embassy's activity in Iran. On 4th November 1979 a group called "Muslim student Followers of the Imam's line" (*Khat-e Imam*) took over the US Embassy in Teheran in support of the Iranian Revolution. The crisis ended after 444 days when the U.S embassy staff were leaved Iran although all diplomatic channels with Western powers remained closed. This event brought about devastating consequences on the war against Iraq. However, Iran did not avoid to be swallowed by one of the bloodiest conflicts of the XX century which lasted almost till the end of the decade.

Finally, the harsh dispute between Iran and Saudi Arabia

during the Eighties was evidently characterized by its ideological nature. The main issue of contention was the management of pilgrimage (*hajj*). The Iranians put the blame on the Saudis for trying to "wahhabitize" the pilgrimage. During the 1987 *hajj*, for example, hundreds of Iranian pilgrims were killed after being attacked by the Saudi security forces. Iran's efforts to summon all Muslim world up against Saudi Arabia waned since Riyadh had already rallied both all the Islamist movements and the governments of the Muslim countries around it [Guolo, 2007: 135]. It goes without saying that the *hajj* represented the battlefield in which Iran and Saudi Arabia fought for reaping consensus within the *ummah*. In claiming to be the right and successful model to follow, Iran and Saudi Arabia tried to undermine each other's legitimacy [Khosrokhavar, 2003]. The Imamite doctrine in particular has always been seen by the al-Saud family as a heresy.

Just before passing away, Imam Khomeini managed to revise the Constitution. A vast array of provisions was taken. One of them concerned the head of power. The Prime Minister was suppressed and its prerogatives were taken by a stronger President of Republic, chief of the executive power and responsible of the foreign policy process through the mechanism set up by the National Security Council(NSC). But Imam Khomeini's political masterpieces were both the introduction of new rules to become Supreme Leader and the establishment of the Council of Expediency. The principle of *marja-e taqlid* (source of emulation) was upset so that the new Leader would not necessarily have been an *Ayatollah*. By dropping the rank to become Leader, Imam Khomeini meant to both increase the political profile of the new *Faqih* – who would be elected by the Assembly of Experts not for his theological knowledge but for his political capacities – while promoting Ayatollah Khamenei to his own succession.

Concluding, even though factional politics had not fully emerged in this period yet, one can observe that a thorough hostile external environment (independent variable) pushed all internal

forces to coalesce, an output that was made easier thanks to Imam Khomeini's ability to channel ideological divisions, settle all disputes between opposing interests and prevent major clashes among competing factions.

**The Rafsanjiani Presidency (1989-1997): Economic Reconstruction and Strategic Constraints**: Iran's foreign policy in the Nineties was dominated by the need of economic reconstruction determined by the end of the painful war against Iraq and thetransformations of the international system (1989-91). As Ayatollah Khamenei was appointed asLeader of the Revolution, the new elected President of Republic was Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, former speaker of Majlis. After the end of war with Iraq, the country was devastated, its infrastructures shuttered, its economy seriously damaged, whilethe oil market crumbled; the unemployment was high and so was the import dependency. At that time, the main bone of contention between the conservatives and the radicals was how to lead the reconstruction. While the latter called for a more interventionist role of the state, the former pushed for foreign involvement and investment and access to international markets [Behrooz, 1991: 608].

This initial phase was characterized by a process of de-ideologization compared to the previous decade [Ansari, 2008: 108-109; Ehteshami, 2002: 291; Guolo, 2007: 136; Parsi, 2007: 262]. In fact, the need to re-launch the country's economy sparked the government to adopt a pragmatic foreign policy both with Iran's neighbors and toward Western powers. Such a foreign policy line met the favors of the conservatives bound to the Supreme Leader. Factionalism in this phase was thus toned down due to an increased political consensus shared by competing institutions about the ultimate goals of the Islamic Republic, in parallel with the overshadowing of the Radical Left, which lost the election for the third *Majlis* (1988-1992) and was then sidelined [Mohammadi, 2014: 10-13]. Rafsanjani was in this sense able to reap consensus among members of the new middle

class and vast swathes of people sharing liberal tendencies [Rakel, 2009: 117-118].

The end of the Cold war produced various rebounds on the Middle East scenario and determined numerous consequences on Iran's foreign policy stance. Among them, a redefinition of the country's relationships with the Western powers, the Arab countries and Israel. Iran's cautious approach to the West (and Europe in particular) was primarily dictated by economic imperatives. In those years, the Iranian economic system experienced a process of deregulation and liberalization, formerly held in large part in the hands of the State. A major shift in Iran's foreign policy occurred in 1991. While Iraq was noticeably weakened after two devastating wars, Israel turned to see Iran as a foe inasmuch «as the only country left in the region with an offensive capability that can threaten Israel» [Parsi, 2008: 137]. Oddly enough, only four years before, in 1987, Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres had publicly labelled Iran as a geostrategic friend. Now, despite the decreasing revolutionary zeal in Iran's foreign policy, things totally changed. Under Democratic President Bill Clinton, the U.S. administration inaugurated a «dual-containment» policy aimed at isolating both Iraq and Iran. In compliance with this political goal, Israel engaged in what was dubbed the Israeli-Palestinian peace-process.

The first step of this strategy was the 1991 Conference in Madrid (from which Iran was deliberately excluded) that brought the two conflicting parts to negotiate an agreement, formally signed at Oslo in September 1993. Israel's efforts to isolate Iran paralleled the weakening line of the pragmatist faction in Iran. In the 1992 *Majlis* elections, the right wing won a landslide victory; even if Rafsanjani was confirmed in the 1993 Presidential elections,his power started to decline and the foreign policy process came back in the hands of the traditionalist conservatives. That is why Iran, fearful of isolation, attempted to boycott the peace-process and to summon up the Islamist front in the Middle East restoring the traditional Islamist slogan against

the «Little Satan», a derogatory epithet used for referring to Israel. Such a move pushed the U.S. to establish the ILSA (Iran and Libya Sanctions Act)[1], the first of a series of economic sanctions which have been crippling the Iranian economy up to 2015.

To sum up, Rafsanjani's first presidency can be catalogued as a period when factional politics (dependent variable) was toned down because of prevailing environmental constraints (independent variable), namely the need to aim at economic recovery at home; in the second (1993-1997), factionalism grew and Iran's foreign stance turned to be more ideological because of an increasingly threatening external environment.

**The Khatami Era (1997-2005):** At the turn of the mid-Nineties the conditions were already prolific in Iran for the rise of political forces not more leaning to a conservative stance in both social and economic issues but committed to a full political openness and an emphasis on  civil society [Mohammadi, 2014: 16]. Rafsanjani's efforts to  mend fences with Western powers proved to be unsuccessful, while the domestic economic situation brought about negative afterwards. The electoral success of the reformist candidate Muhammad Khatami in 1997 – who defeated former speaker of Majlis Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, backed by the conservatives – was seen as a staunch and committed backlash against the conservatives. Khatami, despite his clergy membership (he had also been the Ministry of culture in the Eighties), was able to gain consensus among a vast majority of the population, a less pervasive state and more chances in the labor market.

Khatami's political discourse was characterized by his insistence on reforming both the domestic and foreign policy realms. At home, he focused on some concepts such as the «Islamic democracy», «people's government» (*mardom-salari*), «civil society» (*jameh-madani*) «pluralism» (*kathrat-garai*).  On the foreign policy side, Khatami championed the so-called

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1. https://www.congress.gov/bill/104th-congress/house-bill/3107/text.    Accessed: 10/24/2017.

«dialogue of civilizations», based on peaceful cooperation among diverse nations and religions, especially between Islam and the West, Iran and the US. Although he acknowledged bitter cultural and religious differences, he believed that there was no reason to support and justify the so-called «clash of civilizations»[1]. Khatami's understanding of the concept of religion was meant for peaceful purposes and «reinforced the non-ideological aspects of Rafsanjani's foreign policy» [Ehteshami, 2002: 302]. His political masterpiece was in fact to set and coordinate the OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference) meeting in Tehran in 1997, a move that made him popular among the Arab countries and outside the Middle East too.

While Iran-U.S. relations after 1979 have always been characterized by reciprocal mistrust, Khatami's foreign policy was aimed at thawing them. However, his steps never totally complied the Clinton Administration's will. Althoughthe U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright showed a conciliatory stance towards the Iranian reformist government, several elements played against any rapprochement.On the Iranian side, the economic sanctions did not ease the situation. Israel and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) pressured the Clinton administration to sink the engagement. According to precious accounts in Parsi (2007), Kepel (2004) and Mearsheimer and Walt (2007), the AIPAC is a powerful political lobby that had been exerting pressures on the U.S. administration to adopt a pro-Israeli foreign policy. It gained growing ascendancy by the half of the Nineties and has been particularly active under the Bush Administration. The terrorist attacks in 2001 urged the U.S. to realize «that the real Islamic threat did not lay in Shia Iran – as Israel had insisted since 1991 – but in extremist elements in the Sunni world» [Parsi,

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1. During the Nineties the clash of civilizations was a very popular thesis, especially among Western circles, that was postulated by Samuel Huntington in his book published in 1996, which discussed in details the same idea expressed within an article issued in 1993 on Foreign Affairs.

2007: 225]. Since the new threat came from a Sunni Islamist group, sheltered by the Taliban emirate of Afghanistan (a fierce enemy of Shia Iran), the Bush Administration believed that Iran could act as a suitable counterbalance to Al-Qaeda. But this proved to be a big illusion and soon waned. Initially, Khatami sent numerous signals to President George W. Bush in order to offer Iran's collaboration in the struggle against global terrorism. The Iranian President just tried to exploit such an opportunity to once again reconcile with the U.S.. However,despite Khatami's initial domestic and international popularity, Iran's conservatives had gradually succeeded in regaining ground. They exploited the failure of the Israeli-Palestinian peace-process in Summer 2000, restored the traditional anti- Israeli rhetoric to make a direct appeal to Islam [Kepel, 2004] and paved the way for the rise of the neoconservatives – also known as principalists (*Osoulgarayan*) – who first won the 2003 local elections and then succeeded in winning the Presidency in 2005 [Mohammadi, 2014: 17-18].

**Mahmud Ahmadinejad (2005-2013):** At the dawn of the new millennium Iran had the chance to fulfil long-standing aims of regional hegemony. After the 9/11 events the collapse of two among the most seriously challenging states to Iranian security – Taliban Afghanistan and Ba'athist Iraq – turned into a panacea for Tehran. Iranian leaders welcomed the opening of the Geneva channel established by the U.S. in October 2001 to look for cooperation inAfghanistan against al-Qaeda. For Iran this represented a great opportunity to approach Washington and try to settle political disputes over its role in the Middle East bound to both favoring Islamist movements and threatening Israel. Therefore the 2002 Bush's first State of the Union address claimed for a renewed US' engagement in the Middle East and warned about the emergence of an «Axis of Evil» formed by Iran, Iraq and North Korea. The new neoconservatives-dominated U.S. Administration's outlook to international relations resulted in a renewal of a pro-Israel stance grounded on a strategy based on

such concepts as «regime-change» and «exportation of democracy» in the Middle East.

Iran's top priorities in Iraq were to safeguard its own security along with the establishment of good relations with neighbors and Baghdad in particular [Barzegar, 2008b; Barzegar, 2010], to concretely play an active role in the country's post-war reconstruction and to exert an influenceover the vast Iraqi Shia community, especially the new coalition of government and the most influential local Shiite factions – al-Dawa, the Supreme Council of Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) and al-Sadr's group. For this reason, the Arab states were frightened that Iran could exert the function of an «extra-state guardianship» [Guolo, 2007: 131-132] on all the Shiite communities in the region [Ehteshami and Zweiri, 2007: 118]. Indeed, King Abdullah of Jordan warned his Arab counterparts in 2004 about the emergence of a «Shiite crescent» resulting from Iran's projection and influence all around the Middle East [Barzegar, 2008a].

It is worth mentioning that in that phase Israel felt more threatened by Iran than Iraq [*Ibidem*, 239]. Tel Aviv became increasingly fearful of Tehran's nuclear program – which had moved forward over the previous years [Lotfian, 2008]. In this stage, Iran's stance towards the U.S. depended just on the prospective outputs of nuclear negotiations. As the U.S. neoconservatives were more inclined to support Israel's position rather than agree with Iran, the dealings over the nuclear question failed in the end, while a grand bargain regarding security issues irreparably sank.

Consequently, those who succeeded in exploiting such a challenging situation inIran were the neoconservatives. They gathered around former Mayor of Tehran Mahmud Ahmadinejad who became President. Felt betrayed by the U.S. and acknowledging the failure of accommodationist policies pursued by Khatami, Ahmadinejad resorted to revolutionary rhetoric against Israel. This, in addition to the new politics of confrontation towards the US, the renewal of support to the

Islamist movement in the region, the backing of Hezbollah during the war against Israel on July 2006 and the  standoff over the nuclear issue, further  increased  Arab  states'  fears. Despite rhetoric, Ahmadinejad was indeed supportive of negotiations with the US. The  split  within  the  conservative  camp  consolidated during Ahmadinejad's second presidential-term. As the domestic economic situation deteriorated, Iran's position in the regional chessboard was going to be troublesome.

In summary, Ahmadinejad's first term was characterized by a rising  challenging  external  environment.  This  resulted  in coalescing  domestic  factions  charged  with  decision-making powers. Consequently, Iran's foreign policy resorted to fierce realistic Ness. Given bad economic performances and rising domestic rifts, Ahmadinejad's second term was characterized by an increasingly high factionalism which in turn pushed foreign policy makers to look for cooperation to the detriment of rival factions – in spite of new rounds of sanctions from the U.S. – a stance that paved the way to the following era of President Hassan Rouhani.

**The  First  Presidential  Term  of  Hassan  Rouhani  (2013-2017):** For  the  next  presidential  mandate,  Hassan  Rouhani represented the best possible option due to his affiliation to the pragmatic-conservative camp as well as having received support from such reform-minded politicians as Rafsanjani [Mohammadi, 2014: 29]. Officially, for both Western and Middle Eastern media the master of the final agreement known as *Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action* (JCPOA) reached in Vienna on July 2015 was just the new President.

Iran's comeback to a realist foreign policy was the natural outcome of a systemic process of interactions between external and internal environments. If the achievement of a nuclear deal with Western powers was facilitated by a climate of confidence among  US  President  Obama,  European  countries  and  Iranian President Rouhani, it looks like that such a breakthrough was sustained by an  increasing internal public demand for economic

growth. Due to long-standing sanctions, the country expressed the need to enjoy new opportunities and be more competitive in the international markets. When Rouhani took office, he stated that Iran would pursue a policy of constructive interactions with neighbors and world powers based on cooperation in the fields of energy, trade, environment and security. Nevertheless, if the JCPOA proved to be a game changer for Iran in the regional balance of power, Arab states felt uncomfortable with the new power position reached by Iran. Tehran was accused to destabilize regional security by promoting sectarian policies all around the Middle East and resorting to "Persian nationalism"[71]. In Western perceptions, noticeable examples are given by Iran's support for Assad and Shiite groups in Syria, Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan, military and economic assistance to Houtis in Yemen, cooperation with Hezbollah in Lebanon and Syria.

Indeed, and contrary to Western beliefs, Iran's ramifications beyond its national borders proved to be once again neither ideological nor based on irrationality. They just represent the cornerstone of a «strategic depth» doctrine based on the «idea of stretching the frontlines of conflict outward from Iranian borders to reduce rivals' options for attacking Iranian territory directly» [Barzegar and Divsallar, 2017: 48]. Indeed Iran's efforts are not aimed at maximizing competitive advantages typical of ideological-revolutionary states in search of hegemonic power by adopting offensive positions. On the contrary, such a defensive approach towards Middle East issues – especially during Rouhani's first mandate – rather mirrors Iran's conservative orientation towards balance of power, balance of threats and deterrence.

Rouhani's first term was thus characterized by a recovery of an accommodationist foreign policy line due to a more cooperative external environment. This resulted in mitigating domestic factionalism after years of exacerbated public debate, economic sanctions and social unrest.

## V- The Main Argument:

The main goal of this paper was to show how factionalism has influenced Iran's foreign policy since the 1979 Revolution, alongside external constraints. In the Eighties, Iran's foreign policy was characterized by a rather ideological approach on the surface due to the intensity of revolutionary zeal combined with the aim to become a model for neighboring states. Exhibiting such an ideological attitude was also due to Imam Khomeini's key position on top of the system whose presence functioned as a «balancing force» [Behrooz, 1991: 612] between competing sources of legitimacy which merged into his figure. As long as Imam Khomeini was alive, factionalism was not a prominent aspect of the Iranian political system yet. This represented the exception that proves the rule because through his charisma he was able to appease disputes and conflicts.

At this point, the power of ideology must be clarified. Both ideology and religion (or rather the ideological and political exploitation of religion) have often played a big role, given the country's self-perception of a combination of both an identity-related exceptionalism and a strategic loneliness in the Middle East/Muslim world. However, a more accurate focus shows that Iran has normally acted as a «rational actor» [Ehteshami, 2002: 284] so that its ideological approach to foreign affairs (and the Middle East in particular) may be considered as a mere facade. While the Shia factor has undoubtedly exerted a prominent role on Iran's strategic considerations, it was rather tactical and instrumental: «although ideology is an extremely important factor in Iran's foreign policy, the role that it plays in this particular relationship serves more pragmatic and strategic purposes  and the factor of ideology is placed in the service of Iran's national interests and as a means of achieving the objectives of national security and other interests» [Barzegar, 2008: 53]. Indeed, Iran's foreign policy has always been dominated by strategic considerations, while religion has often been an important factor.

In the Nineties the economic hardships inherited from the war

against Iraq compelled Iran to act in a pragmatic way and search for mending fences with almost all the main Muslim neighboring countries. Under the presidential mandates of both pragmatic Rafsanjani and reformist Khatami, Iran's foreign policy was characterized by a restoration of realist imperatives in foreign conduct. Rafsanjani's presidency was marked by a rather evident "commonality of interests" with the Leader regarding either economic matter and foreign policy goals. As a consequence, political factionalism was markedly toned down and resulted in a pragmatic foreign policy attitude in his first term. Economic reconstruction and normalization of dealings with the West became predominant. In Khatami's era, Iran tried to legitimize itself as an international player by exploiting religion to establish a dialogue among civilizations in order to reach cooperation, coexistence and peace as well as to restore its political legitimacy in the Middle East after an exhausting struggle against Saudi Arabia in the Eighties.

The 9/11 events represented a major shift in Iran's foreign policy. As Iran's initial effort to bridge the gap with the US over the war on terror went wrong, the rise of *principalists* around Ahmadinejad led to a restoration of an ideological approach against the "Great and the Little Satan" (the U.S. and Israel). This opened a new era opf confrontation between the US and Iran, which tried to regain legitimacy in the Middle East by reinforcing its relations with Islamist movements like Hezbollah and Hamas and by exerting its influence over the Shia communities in Iraq.

However, the case of Khatami's second mandate (2001-2005) brings to the surface a scheme in mutual influences between factional politics and foreign affairs. It confirms one of the hypotheses given in the introduction. External threats normally push internal forces to coalesce, despite eliciting clear-cut divisions. Especially when such rifts do not have to do with the ultimate goals of the Islamic Republic, factionalism is usually toned down, Even the case of Ahmadinejad's second mandate (2009-2013). During this time the system was able to exhibit a

realistic need to mend fences with external powers and create the conditions for the ensuing cooperative and pragmatic attitude in response to U.S. President Barack Obama's attempts to find a solution to the nuclear issue.

**Table 1. How domestic factors combined with the perception of external environment affect Iran's foreign policy \***

| Government | External environment | Domestic factionalism | Foreign policy stance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Imam Khomeini 1979-89 | Challenging | Kept under control | Ideological |
| Rafsanjani 1989-93 | Accommodating | Low | Pragmatic/cooperative |
| Rafsanjani 1993-97 | Challenging | High | Ideological |
| Khatami 1997-2001 | Accommodating | Low | Pragmatic/cooperative |
| Khatami 2001-05 | Challenging | High | Ideological |
| Ahmadinejad 2005-09 | Challenging | Low | Ideological |
| Ahmadinejad 2009-13 | Challenging | High | Pragmatic/cooperative |
| Rouhani 2013-17 | Accommodating | Low | Pragmatic/cooperative |
| *Rouhani 2017-21* | *Challenging* | *High* | *Ideological* |

\* Source: author's overview based on case analysis presented in this article.

## Conclusion

Based on the analysis made in this article, and synthesized in the Table 1, it can be claimed that a high degree of domestic factionalism does not necessarily result in ideological policies against rivals and foes – even if it often may occur. At the same time, a low degree of factionalism does not inevitably translate into the search of a cooperative engagement in foreign affairs – although there is a noticeable correlation. Thus, it must be stressed the crucial importance of the external environment alongside factionalism to result in specific foreign policy stances. Some patterns emerge. The most remarkable is that when an accommodating external environment is associated to a mitigation in domestic factionalism, Iran's foreign policy exhibit a pragmatic cooperative attitude. On the contrary, the most dissonant and peculiar case is represented by Ahmadinejad's first term (2005-09), when a low degree of factionalism was made possible upon

sidelining the Reformists, while a threatening external environment pushed domestic forces to coalesce. A challenging external environment was the main driver which pushed decision-makers to adopt a rather ideological foreign policy stance before restoring a more suited realist attitude in the 2009-2013 period.

Rouhani's second mandate (2017-21) was not included in the analysis (that is why it appears in italics in the Table), but it seems that a recurring pattern emerges anyway. The strengthening of a challenging external environment – especially after then-US President Donald Trump announced his country would withdraw from the JCPOA on May 8th 2018 – created the premises for the deterioration of internal economic performances which damaged Rouhani's consensus. This situation pushed Iran to restore an ideological foreign policy stance towards regional rivals about such issues like the conflicts in Syria and Yemen and resulted in the escalation with the US which culminated into the brutal assassination of IRGC General Qassem Soleimani on January 3rd 2020.

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# The 2030 EU Energy Strategy and Iran's Energy Demand Security

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## Abstract

Identification of reliable and stable markets is one of the most important requirements for oil and natural gas exports. The importance of this issue can be answered from standpoint of energy security demands. China, India and the European Union are Iran's potential strategic energy markets, regardless of sanctions. In October 2014 The European Council agreed on a new 2030 Framework for climate and energy, including EU-wide targets and policy objectives for the period between 2020 and 2030. In this study, we seek to investigate the effects of this policy on the security of Iran's energy demand. To this end, we examine the effects of this policy on the energy demand of one of the EU countries, namely Greece, which was also a customer of Iranian oil. Despite the fact that the EU Energy Strategy 2030 reduces the security of Iran's energy demand, it is necessary to examine the possible scenarios of this strategy and assess the Iran's situation in each of these scenarios. During the next ten years  Greece energy policies will have to be harmonized with the European Union Directives, focusing on the reduction of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, penetration of renewable energy sources (RES) and energy saving. In this study, Goal

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programming method is used to model the macro-energy policies of Greece up to the 2030 EU Energy Strategy. After creating the mathematical model of goal programming, environment scenario and Renewable efficiency and Influence scenario have developed. The Shannon-Wiener index and the share of oil and natural gas in primary energy in Renewable efficiency and Influence are higher than in environment scenario. Therefore, Renewable efficiency and Influence scenario in EU countries is favorable for Iran in terms of increasing security of energy demand in 2030.

## Introduction

Identification of reliable and stable markets is one of the most important requirements for oil and natural gas exports. The importance of this issue can be answered from standpoint of energy security demands. There are several definitions for the term "energy security" in various sources which can be exemplified in the following: In all definitions of energy security, the term "security of supply" and "energy security" are equivalents and not differ semantically (Koyama & Kutani, 2012). Therefore, there is no need to define separately "energy security", since "energy supply security" of an energy-importing country equals "energy demand security" of an energy-exporter country. In other words, energy demand security ascertains to purchase enough energy at an affordable price. Therefore, considering the mentioned definitions and the nature of Iran's oil and natural gas exports, determination of export destinations is an essential factor to guarantee energy demand security. The most vital questions that need to be answered in oil and natural gas exports is which market is better in oil and natural gas exports demands at present time and in the future. Oil and natural gas, as vital fuels, have a special place in economic policies of oil-producing countries. Also, they have a special importance in security strategies of energy consumers. Thus, access to energy resources is not the only concern of old importers like EU countries, but also it is an important issue for newcomer countries of energy consumers such as China and India. In this study, we review resources and literature of the subject along with China, India and the European Union energy markets in 2015, 2020 and 2030 in terms of energy

consumption and imports, energy transfer routes and major energy supplying countries. Focusing on the EU 2030 energy strategy, we will assess the impact of this policy on the energy system of Greece by Goal programming approach, which was a former customer of Iranian oil, and analyze the security situation of Iran's energy demand. It should be noted that in this study, the effects of sanctions on the security of Iran's energy demand have not been seen and all potential markets have been addressed. The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 shows energy markets conditions. Section 3 explains Case study of Greece. Section 4, Overview of the Greece energy system. Section 5 explains the objectives of Greece and the European Union energy policy until the 2030 horizon. Section 6 shows research methodology. Section 7 explains details of Mathematical model. Sections 8, 9, 10 and 11 are Research background, Research scenarios, Comparison of scenarios in terms of energy security and Conclusion and Analysis respectively.

## I. Energy Markets

### China

Nowadays, China is one of the most important countries playing a big role in shaping future energy thorough the world. China's energy demand as the world's largest energy consumer and continued high economic growth, over the past decade, imply its important role in making energy market development. Current outlooks indicate the continued need for energy consumptions and imports, thus making China the target of several energy exports projects. In Fig. 1, china's energy demand, oil and gas consumption are specified in 2015, 2020 and 2030.
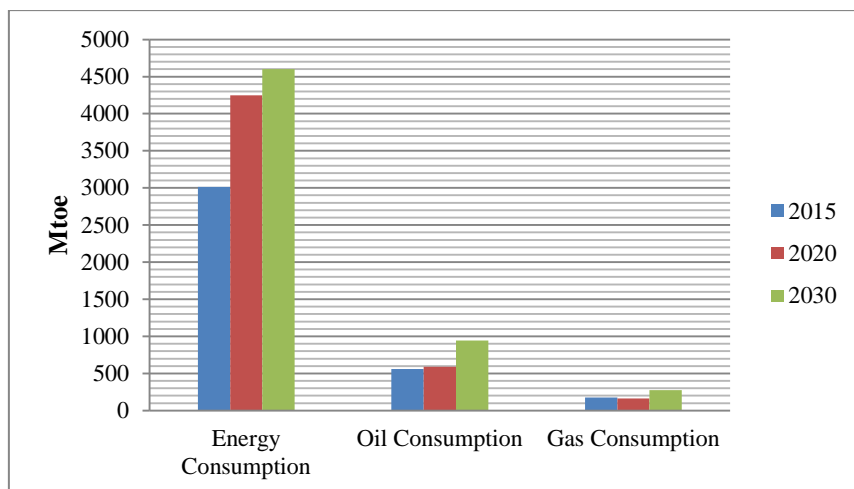
**Figure 1. Energy, oil, natural gas consumption in China market**

Source: Statista 2015 and Berkeley Lab, China energy and emissions paths to 2030

China's energy demand grows 41 and 52 percent compared to 2015 respectively in 2020 and 2030. In addition, China's energy consumption will reach 4,600 Mtoe by 2030 and 3,014 Mtoe by 2015. Also, oil and natural gas demand are 559.7 and 177.6 Mtoe respectively in 2015. Oil and gas demands are 592 and 161.8 Mtoe, respectively, at 2020 indicating oil demand increase 5.7 percent and gas demand decrease 9 percent, respectively, in comparison to 2015. Oil and gas demand is 945.4 and 274.4 Mtoe at time 2030, which will be 69 and 54.5 percent more than in 2015. The growing trend of energy consumption, especially oil and gas carriers, makes all sellers and exporters of the energy carriers to pay attention to China market as a reliable market for the long run. In the following, Fig. 2 shows China's import rate of crude oil and natural gas in 2015 and in 2020 and 2030. According to Fig. 2, oil and natural gas imports to China have been continually increasing. Crude oil and natural gas imports rate is 335.5 and 64 Mtoe, respectively, in 2015. Also, in 2020, oil and gas imports are 386 and 38 Mtoe respectively which is 15% higher, for oil, and 40% lower, for natural gas, than in 2015 as well as in 2030 the imports will be 744.1 and 140.8 Mtoe, which will respectively increase 121 and 120 percent in 2015.
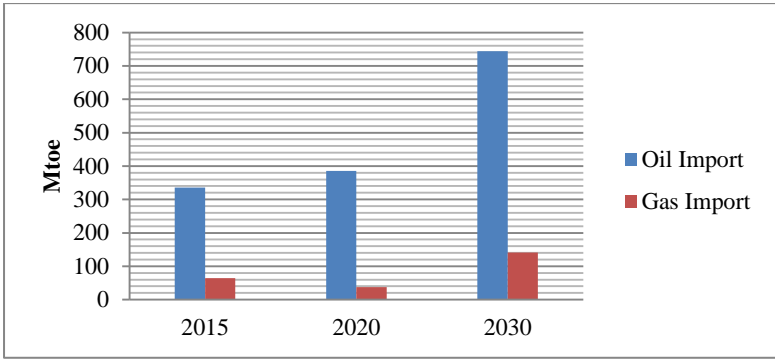
**Figure 2. Oil and natural gas import in China market**

Source: BP 2015 and Northeast Asian Energy Community, Energy Outlook in
China for 2030

China's economic growth in next two decades, while reducing
dependency on coal and decreasing energy basket its share to
reduce pollution emissions, imply gradual oil and gas
consumption increase in China's energy basket (Refers to 5th
China Development Plan). In Fig. 3, the countries that supply
China's crude oil is demonstrated precisely. Of course, Chinese
politicians give priority to improve energy supply security through
Central Asia pipelines, Russia pipelines, and deep water ports in
Southeast Asia (Maleki & Raufi, 2016).
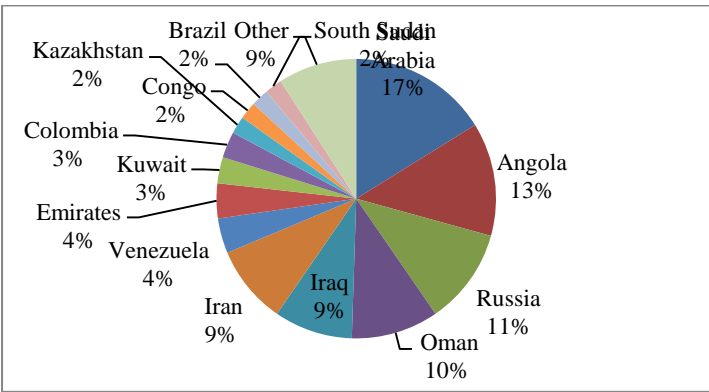


**Figure 3.Oil exporter countries to china in 2014**

Source: IEA 2016

Natural gas has been imported to China via LNG and through pipelines. Also, China was the third-largest LNG importer in the world, after Japan and South Korea according to international statistics established in 2015. China invests in pipelines to import gas from the west and the north of the country. In 2010, the first gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to China was implemented through the Central Asia–Center gas pipeline system (CAC). Later, natural gas from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan was exported to China through this pipeline in 2013. Over these years, China has completed the Myanmar pipeline to increase gas supply security and has invested $ 400 billion in pipelines to increase the total capacity of pipelines to 1.3 trillion cubic feet per year by 2018. In 2014, China's natural gas imports volume was 31.2 and 27.1 billion cubic meters through pipelines and via LNG respectively (IEA, 2015a). In the following, Fig. 4 shows the status of natural gas pipelines and LNG ports to China implying China's strong strategy of diversifying energy supply routes.
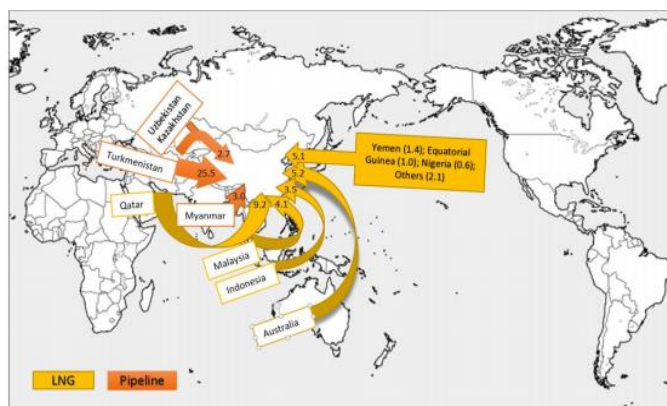


**Figure 4. The LNG ports and natural gas pipeline feeding China in 2014**

Source: IEA 2015

Fig. 5 demonstrates the share of countries exporting natural gas to China. Clearly, the number of countries exporting natural gas to China is 9 in 2013 which reveals China is seeking to implement a strategy to import natural gas from various countries (IEA, 2015a).
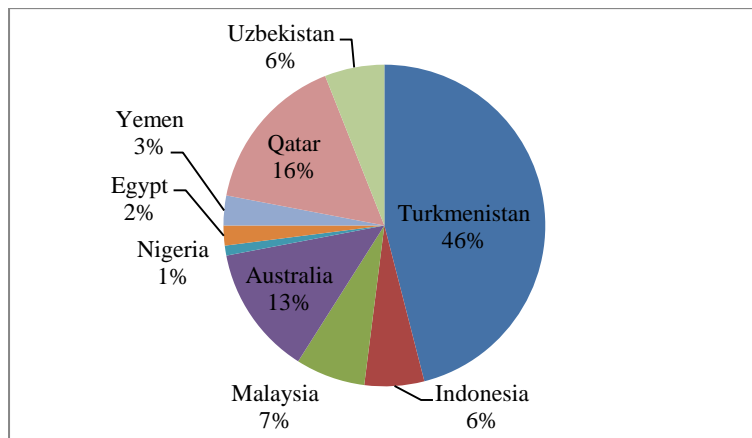
**Figure 5. Natural gas exporter countries to China in 2013**

Source: IEA 2015

## India

Nowadays, India, as one of the five emerging economies and member of the Brix Group, is the world's largest industrial pole which has further increased India's energy demand. As shown in Figure 6, India's primary energy demand has been on an upward trend. Therefore, based on the new policy scenario, energy demand in India is estimated at about 900, 1018 and 1440 Mtoe in 2015, 2020, and 2030 respectively. In 2015, India's oil and natural gas demand is 219 and 54 Mtoe respectively, which makes India the world's third largest energy consumer after Japan (IEA, 2015c). Nowadays, it has a much-growing oil demand due to economic development and high energy demand in its factories and automotive sector. According to Figure 6, India's oil and gas demand will be 229 and 58 Mtoe respectively in 2020 where the growth of 4 percent for oil demand and 7.5 percent for natural gas demand could be observed compared to 2015. Also, in 2030, India's oil and gas demand will be 329 and 103 Mtoe which face the growth of 50 percent, for oil demand, and 90 percent, for natural gas demand compared to 2015.
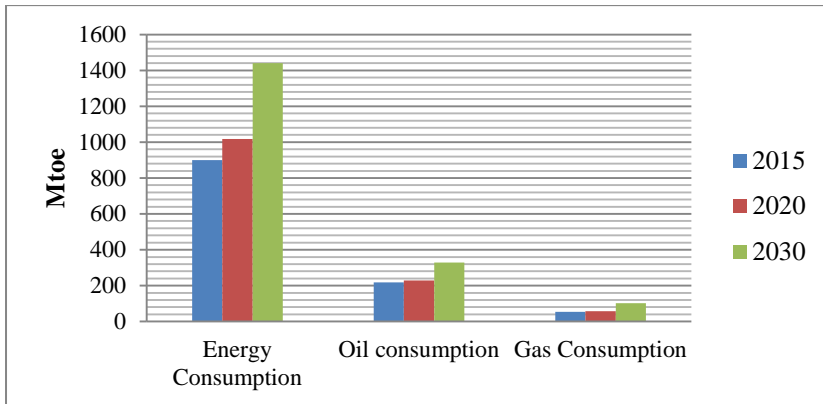
**Figure 6. Energy, oil, and natural gas consumption in India**

Source: IEA oil market report 2015 and India Energy Outlook 2040

In 2015, India's oil and natural gas import needs are 170.9 and 24 Mtoe respectively (Trading Economics, 2016). As shown in Fig. 7, India's oil and natural gas import, in 2020, will be 194 and 26 Mtoe, therefore, there are the growth of 13.5 % for oil import and 7.5 %, for natural gas import compared to 2015. Also, in 2030, India's oil and natural gas import demand is 298 and 57 Mtoe respectively which provides growth of oil and natural gas imports 74.3% and 137% higher compared to 2015.
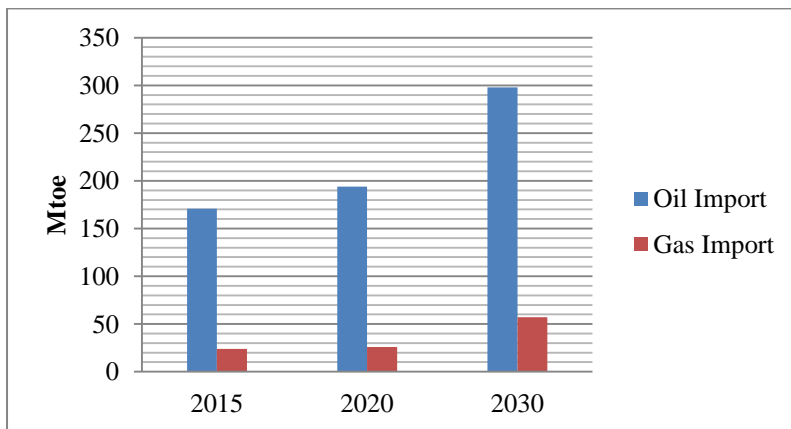


**Figure 7. Oil and natural gas imports in India**

Source: Trading Economics 2016 and India Energy Outlook 2040

In the following, Figures 8 and 9 demonstrate various countries exporting oil and natural gas to India using LNG (export of natural gas to India using pipelines is zero in 2015).
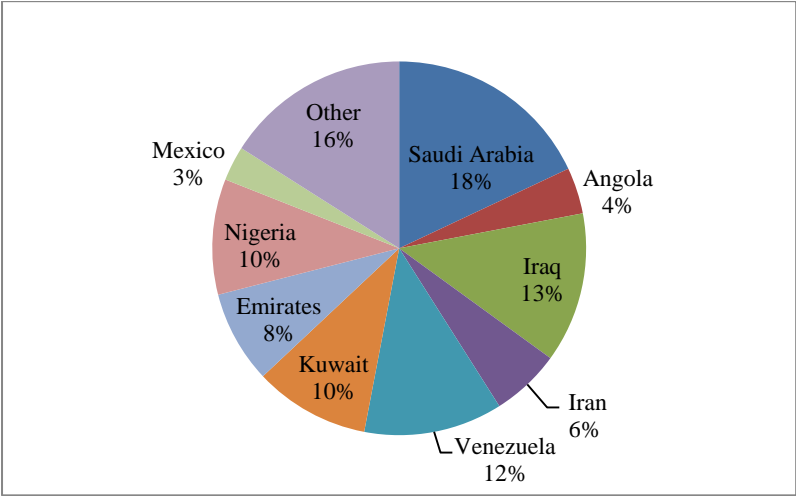
**Figure 8. Oil exporter countries to India between 2014 to 2015**

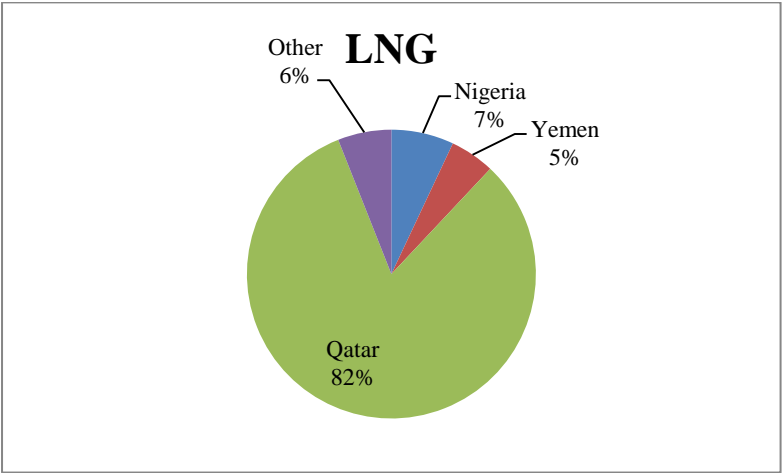Source: IEA 2015, India Energy Outlook 2040

**Figure 9. Natural gas exporter countries (LNG) to India between 2014 to 2015**

Source: IEA 2015, India Energy Outlook Outlook 2040

As it is shown in Figure 10, in 2030, 10 billion cubic meters of natural gas will be exported to India through pipelines crossing in the Middle East and the Caspian region which implies the development of gas pipeline toward India in the long run.
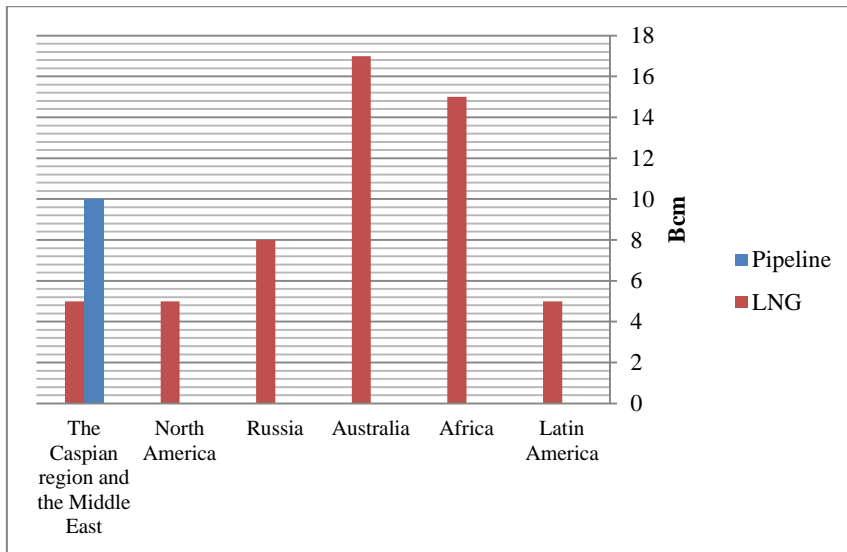


**Figure 10. Natural gas imports to India in 2030**

Source: IEA 2015, India Energy Outlook 2040

As shown in Figure 11, oil products demand in India transportation sector is 2.1 and 3.3 Mboe per day in 2020 and 2030, respectively. Also, the share of other energy carriers, such as biofuels, in supplying transportation needs is very low, therefore, it is not possible to eliminate India's dependency on crude oil in the transportation sector of India.
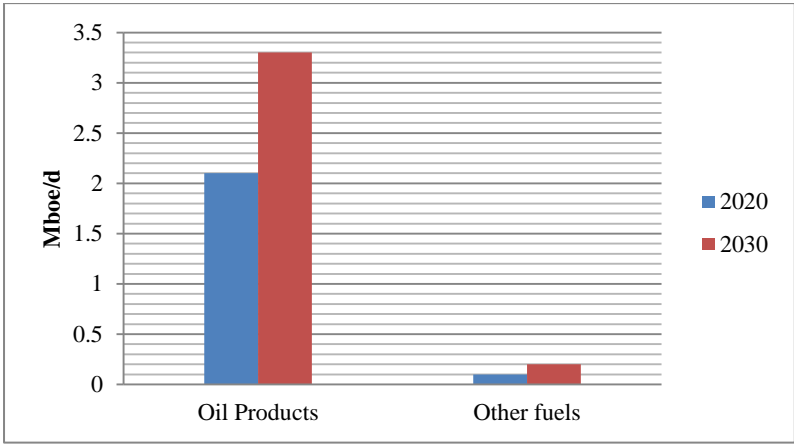
**Figure 11. Share of different fuels utilization in the transportation sector of India**

Source: IEA 2015, India Energy Outlook 2040

## European Union

Analysis of the procedure of consumption and import of energy in the European Union energy market, especially utilization of oil and natural gas, is essential for exporter of both energy carriers. As depicted in Fig. 12, the use of oil and natural gas in the European Union, in 2015, are 735 and 353 Mtoe, respectively. Also, in 2020 and 2030, European Union oil consumption is 551 and 520 Mtoe, respectively, whilst natural gas consumption is 406 and 397 Mtoe. As mentioned earlier, the European Union seeks to decline fossil fuel utilization due to its policy concerned with environmental issues and diversifying energy primary resources.
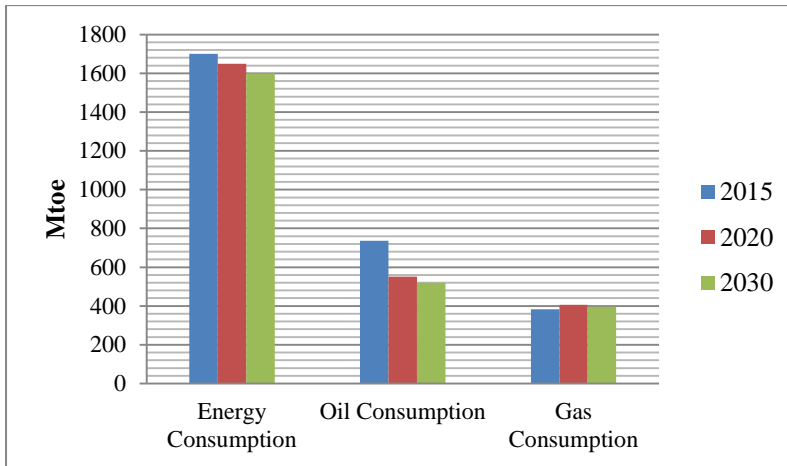
**Figure 12. Energy, oil, and natural gas consumption in EU**

Source: European Commission  2016 and Europe Commission, Trends to 2050

In 2015, import of energy carriers in European Union, as about 20 percent of total EU commodity import, is about 1 billion Euro per day. Nevertheless, 90 percent of oil usage and 66 percent of natural gas consumption in the EU are imported from abroad in 2015 (European Commission, 2016). As depicted in Fig. 13, it is obvious that import of crude oil is decreasing and natural gas import is increasing.
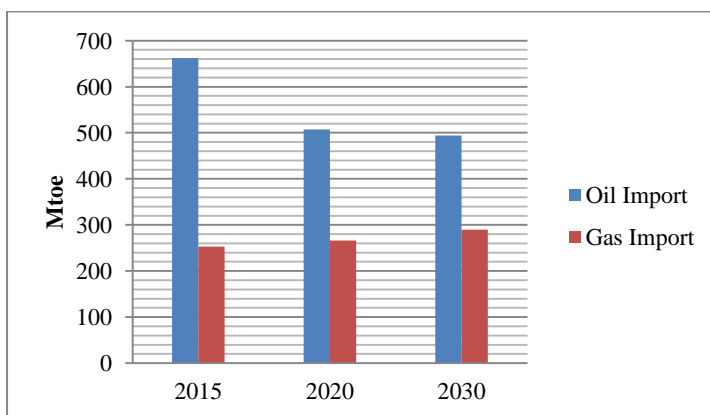


**Figure 13. Oil and natural gas import in the EU**

Source: European Commission  2016 and Europe Commission, Trends to 2050

In the following, as illustrated in Fig. 14, European Union imports share of 56, 52, 53 percent of its primary energy needs from out of the union borders in 2015, 2020, and 2030, respectively.



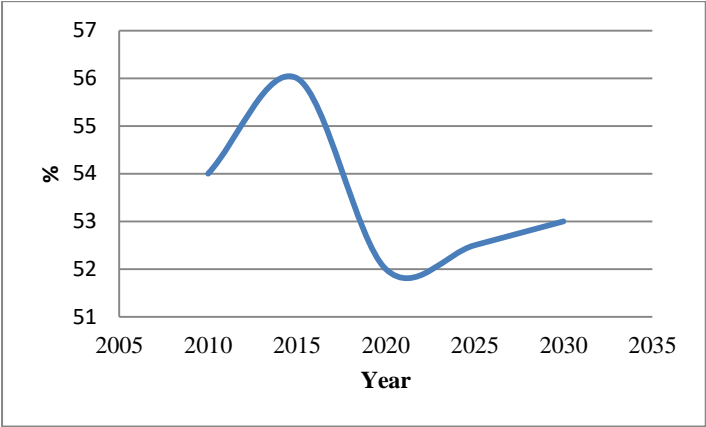**Figure 14. EU Energy import**

Source: EU energy, transport and GHG emissions: trends to 2050

Also, the share of countries exporting oil to EU, in 2014, is depicted in Fig. 15. As shown in the figure, Russia is the biggest oil exporter to EU by supplying share of about 28.9 percent of total EU oil consumption.
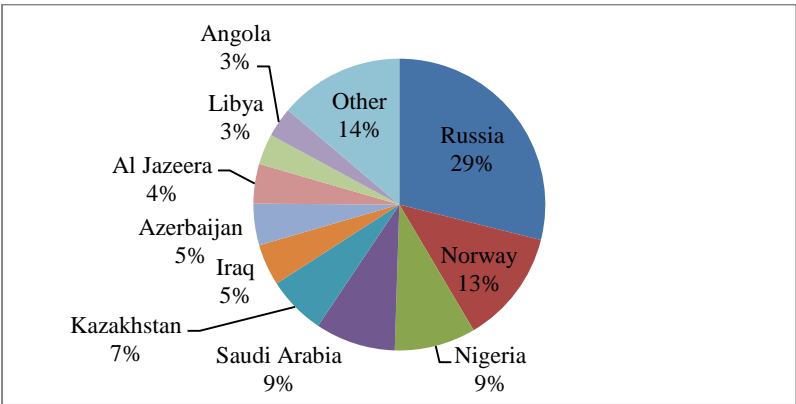


**Figure 15. Oil exporter countries to the EU in 2013**

Source: European Commission 2014

In the same manner, Fig. 16 shows the detail of EU natural gas import share in 2014 and 2015. It is noteworthy that Russia, indeed as the biggest oil supplier of the EU, is also the supreme country exporting gas to EU.
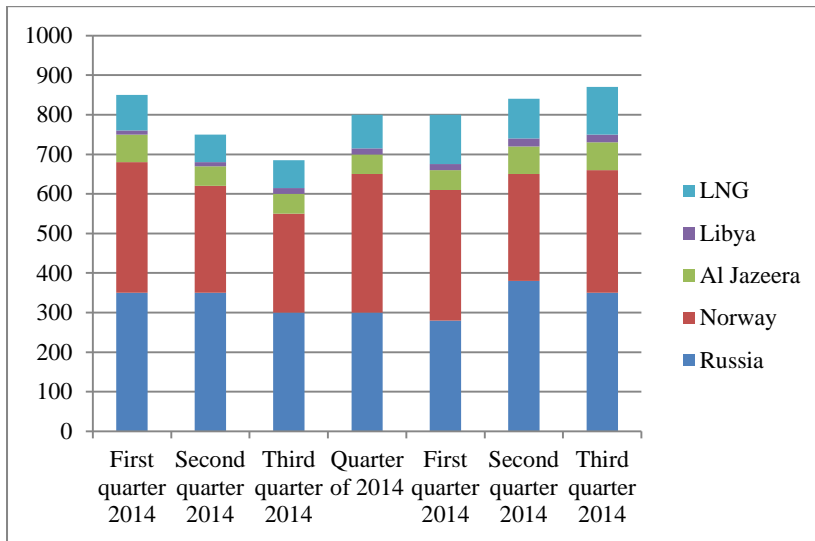


**Figure 16. Natural gas exporter countries to the EU in 2014 to 2015**

Source: ENTSO-G 2015

Fig. 17 shows the details of oil and natural gas transmission projects heading to EU which are under construction or planned to be constructed in early future. Baku- Tbilisi- Ceyhan and North Stream transmission pipelines are the most important of the under-constructed projects as well as Nabucco pipeline, Agri pipeline (in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Romania), South Stream pipeline, Khazar pipeline, and etc. are the long-term projects of EU to supply natural gas throughout the union securely (ENSTO-G, 2015).

**Figure 17. Available gas transmission pipelines feeding the EU**

Source: ENTSO-G 2015

## II. Case study of Greece

Focusing on the EU 2030 energy strategy, we will assess the impact of this policy on the energy system of Greece by Goal programming approach, which was a former customer of Iranian oil, and analyze the security situation of Iran's energy demand. In October 2014 The European Council agreed on a new 2030 Framework for climate and energy, including EU-wide targets and policy objectives for the period between 2020 and 2030. These targets aim to help the EU achieve a more competitive, secure and sustainable energy system and to meet its long-term 2050 greenhouse gas reductions target. Development of renewable energy (RE) has been at the forefront of European policies (Lavidas 2019). Greece is at a pivotal point regarding the formulation of energy policies in conjunction with environmental protection. During the next ten years these will have to be harmonized with the European Union Directives, focusing on the reduction of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, penetration of renewable energy sources (RES) and energy saving (Angelis-Dimakis, Arampatzis et al. 2012).

The Greece government clearly needs to develop a comprehensive energy and climate policy that goes beyond the EU target and that specifically takes into consideration ambitions

for energy efficiency and renewable energy. Such a comprehensive policy would also support infrastructure planning by enhancing certainty for investors. It should be reflective of the domestic resource endowment and economic and environmental considerations, and aim to use the country's impressive skills base. The government's commitment to prepare a national energy and climate plan towards 2030, by the end of 2017, is commendable. The Greece government's declared policy is to diversify energy sources and reduce the carbon dioxide ($CO_2$) intensity of the economy while increasing energy security and implementing comprehensive energy market reforms to make the sector more competitive (IEA 2017). Greece, in particular, is considered to be among the most attractive countries to invest in solar photovoltaics (PV) in, mainly due to the country's solar irradiation levels. A series of policy efforts, starting in 2011, to encourage solar investments resulted in Greece ranking among the top countries worldwide for solar power share (more than 7%) in electricity generation, in just three years (Ramírez, Honrubia-Escribano et al. 2017). In this study, Goal programming method is used to model the macro-energy policies of Greece up to the 2030 EU Energy Strategy. In this model, the 2030 energy objectives of the European Union and Greece in the field of power generation and plant capacity are examined, and ultimately, the composition of the Greek power plant is determined.

**Greece energy system:** According to Figure 18, the primary supply of energy from 1990 to 2000 increased from 21,000 to 27,000 tons of oil equivalent and then decreased by 2015 from 27,000 to 23,000 TOE in Greece (IEA 2017). Since 1990, the energy consumption intensity has been roughly equal to 0.0001 tons (TOE/ 2010 US $). Given the persistence of the energy intensity index and per capita energy supply, as well as the growing trend of gross domestic production, it can be concluded that the Greek economy is not energy-based. However, the role of energy saving programs at the state level, in accordance with EU programs is evident in the stability of energy.
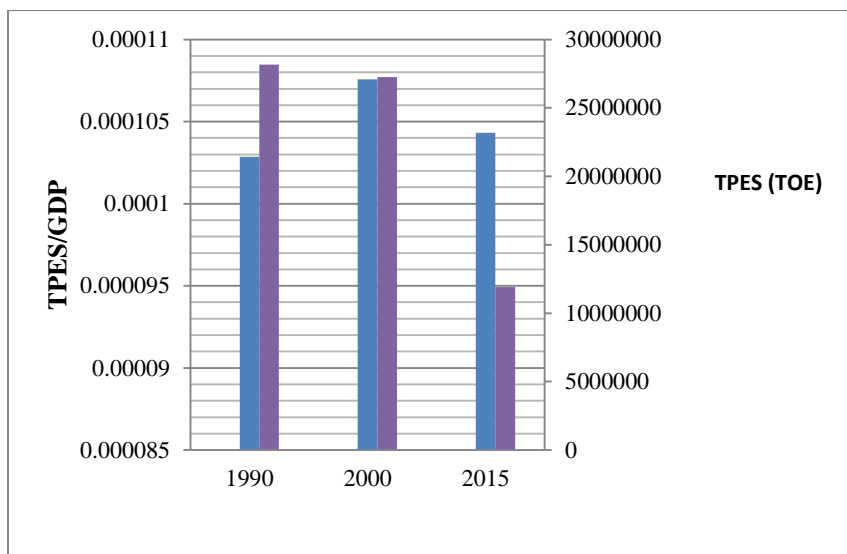
**Figure 18: Primary supply of energy and energy intensity changes.**

The diagram has been elaborated based on the IEA data (2017)

The policies adopted from 1973 onwards have focused on the exploitation of domestic energy resources, such as lignite and hydro, the creation of domestic infrastructure for generating electricity and oil refining, the construction of electrical interconnections to neighboring countries, and finally, the diversification of supply (Angelis-Dimakis, Arampatzis et al. 2012). In the twenty-first century, the energy policy and energy supply of Greece faces both challenges and opportunities. One of the most difficult issues concerns the country's heavy reliance on fossil fuels (Arapostathis and Fotopoulos 2019). The proportion of imports to total imports and primary energy production in the country was 30 percent in 1990, 33 percent in 2000 and 81 percent in 2015, indicating an increase in dependence on energy imports during 1990 to 2015. The share of natural gas (from 1 to 7 percent), crude oil (from 63 to 69 percent), renewable energy (from 4 to 7 percent), and electricity (from 0 to 2 percent) in primary energy resources has risen during 1990 to 2015, but the share of coal has fallen from 32 to 15 percent, which can be

attributed to environmental policies. Among the renewable energy sources in Greece, biomass with 1266 TOE (46%), geothermal with 939 TOE (34%) and hydropower with 524 TOE (20%) have the highest share in total primary energy supply (TPES) in 2015 (IEA 2017). Biomass is seen as a possible sustainable and renewable energy source and also as a way to reduce the global warming potential (GWP) of transportation fuels (Kraatz, Sinistore et al. 2013). The government support policies for deployment of solar and domestic solar heaters energies have also led to the development of these technologies in recent years. Greece's major energy imports consist of crude oil and petroleum products (94% crude oil import). Natural gas imports reached 9 percent of total imports in 2015 from zero percent in 1990. This is because of government policy to increase the diversity of energy sources supply. Electricity imports in Greece indicate that the country is connected to the electricity network of neighboring countries, which was 953 thousand TOE exported and 127 thousand TOE imported electricity in 2015. The share of electricity imports of total imports declined from 5% to 3% during the 1990-1995 period (IEA 2017). With the creation of an integrated electricity grid in Europe, the energy exchange between the member states of the network has increased since 2000. Greece imported 61 TOE in 1990 and 826 TOE in 2015 from the integrated European electricity grid. As shown in the Figure 19, power generation by fossil power plants increased from 1990 to 2000, followed by a decreasing trend in 2015 (IEA 2017). The reason is that the share of CHP plants and renewable sources of electricity has increased.
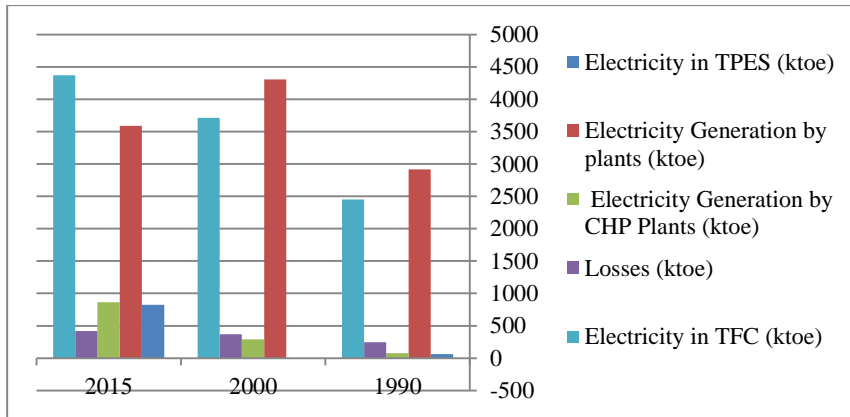
**Figure 19: Electricity generation and losses in conversion sector.**

The diagram has been elaborated based on the IEA data (2017)

While the Greek population has remained almost constant, the energy consumption of the country has risen exponentially. Electricity loss in Greece is less than 10% of the total generated electricity, which was 8% in 1990 (European average 6,804%), 7% in 2000 (European average 7.222%) and 7% in 2015 (average European 6.444%). The share of CHP electricity increased from 2% in 1990 to 15% in 2015, as the result, the share of fossil power plants in electricity generation Dropped from 88% in 1990 to 63% in 2015 (IEA 2017). With Greece moving toward industrialization from 1990 to 2000, final consumption of energy in the industrial sector of the country has increased over these years. But then the Greek government reduced the energy intensity of the industry sector by applying energy efficiency policies, and eventually reduced its industrial energy consumption in 2015. According to the same logic, the increase in final energy consumption and energy consumption in the transport sector in 2000, compared to 1990, and its reduction in 2015, can be justified (Figure 20).
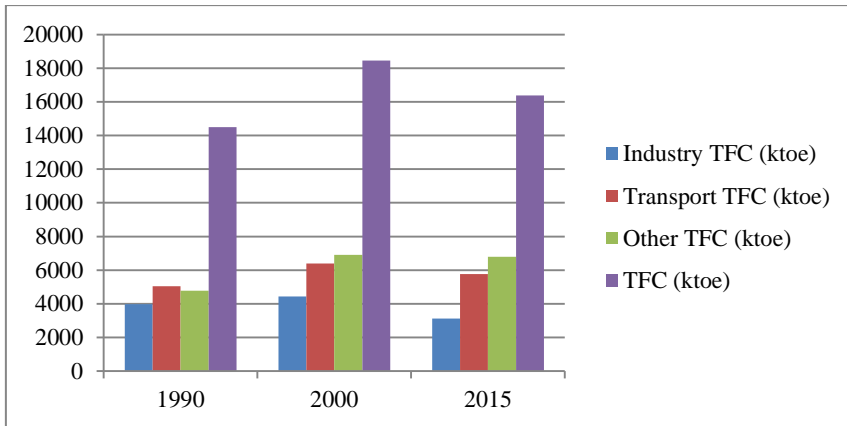
**Figure 20: Final energy consumption by sector.**

The diagram has been elaborated based on the IEA data (2017)

The share of energy consumption in the industry fell from 29% in 1990 to 20% in 2015. Also, the share of consumption of the transport sector has remained stable between 37-36% (IEA 2017).

## III. Greece and the European Union energy policy until the 2030 horizon

In October 2014, the EU approved the 2030 Energy vision in the framework of the Energy Community Initiative. The objective of the strategy is to send a strong signal to the market, encouraging private investment in new pipelines, electricity networks, and low-carbon technology. The targets were based on a thorough economic analysis measuring how to achieve decarburization by 2050in a cost effective way. The cost of meeting the targets does not substantially differ from the price we need to pay anyway to replace our ageing energy system. The main financial effect of decarburization will be to shift our spending away from fuel sources and towards low-carbon technologies.

These objectives are as follows (deLlano-Paz, Fernandez et al. 2016):

● 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990

- 61% reduction in power plant sector
- 27%increase in energy efficiency
- A 27% share of renewable energy consumption
- 43% share of renewable electricity

## Conclusion and Analysis

China, India and the European Union are Iran's potential strategic markets, regardless of sanctions. In October 2014 The European Council agreed on a new 2030 Framework for climate and energy, including EU-wide targets and policy objectives for the period between 2020 and 2030. In this study, we seek to investigate the effects of this policy on the security of Iran's energy demand. To this end, we examine the effects of this policy on the energy demand of one of the EU countries, namely Greece, which was also a customer of Iranian oil. In this study, the security of the country's energy supply was examined in accordance with the 2030 EU Energy Alliance goals set by the Energy Union in October 2014. These three goals are as follows: • 61% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in the power plant compared to 1990 • An increase of 27% in energy efficiency • A 43% share of renewable electricity.

After creating the mathematical model of goal programming, environment scenario and Renewable efficiency and Influence scenario has developed. In order to assess these two scenarios in terms of energy security, the Shannon-Weiner Index is used in this study. The Shannon-Wiener index and the share of oil and natural gas in primary energy in Renewable efficiency and Influence are higher than in environment scenario. Therefore, Renewable efficiency and Influence scenario is favorable for Iran in terms of increasing security of energy demand in 2030.

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# The Confrontation between US-Turkey's Strategic Interests in Northern Syria and Iran's Foreign Policy

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## Abstract

The beginning of the political crisis in Syria, each regional and trans-regional actors have adopted different policies based on their interests and goals in relation to this country. Syria is an exceptional issue for countries in the region and the world's powers like the United States of America, and any transformation in that form might have a fundamental impact on the interests of each of these regional and global powers. Turkey as a regional power and the United States has always been present in the Syrian crisis as a regional power based on its interests. But the United' support of the present groups in Syria has sought to fight ISIS extremists, which Turkey has called for terrorist groups to reduce the US and Turkey relations. The present study was conducted using descriptive-analytic method and using documentation sources to provide a theoretical framework, the question of why Turkey is against United States about the Syrian Kurdish issue? This study investigates the presence of United States in Syria and the support of Kurdish groups, as well as the reaction that Turkey and Iran have been involved in. The findings of this article indicate that the United States support the Kurdish groups in northern Syria has led to conflict of interest between the two countries.

**Keywords:** *Strategic, Confrontation, Syria, Turkey, United States*

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## Introduction

Due to its geopolitical and geostrategic position, Syria has always been the center of attention of major international powers. Syrian independence in 1946 and under the French mandate of its consideration, the strategic importance of Syria in the formation of the Arab Republic in the Decade 1960, the Strategic unity of the Soviet party with the Eastern Bloc, security cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran, opposition and conflict with Israel in the border regions of the two countries and finally the Cold War of At the level of the international system, as a result of the beginning of the internal crisis in the country, including the most important symbols of Syria at the international level(Ghasemian et al., 2018: 160). The anti-government protests in Syria began in March 2011 and, like the other Middle East protests, in such conditions, Bashar al-Assad, who opposed protests, released security services (Hafeez Ullah Khan and Waseem Khan, 2017: 588). The Syrian crisis caused regional and trans-regional actors to adopt various orientations in relation to Syria, which enjoys an important geopolitical and geostrategic position in the Middle East. Syria is an exceptional issue for countries in the region and the world's powers like the United States, and any transformation in that form might have a fundamental impact on the interests of each of these regional and global powers. This is an exception to the strategic complexity, radical developments in Syria and the multiplicity of regional and international actors in the Syrian issue, and that creating a balance between the opposing forces in Syria is not simple and the conflict of interest between countries in Syria's developments is clearly visible (Ajorlu and Rammaz,

2013: 192). Turkey as a regional power and the United States has always been present in the Syrian crisis as a international power based on its interests. But the United States' support of the present groups in Syria has sought to fight ISIS extremists who are considered terrorist groups of the US and Turkey's cold relations. In recent years Turkey has pursued an integrated strategy in northwestern Syria, which aims to achieve intrusion control through a combination of military occupation and a complete reconstruction of Turkish-based and the use of domestic Turkish machine abroad (leeuwen & veen, 2019: 4). In a recent years with widespread support from Syrian Kurds in confronting ISIS in this country, Syria, which has been marginalized before the crisis of the country, now has a quarter of Syrian Territory in their control and attempted to establish an autonomous authority. They also seek to establish a federal system in Syria. At the same time, in Syria, the United States was looking to create an independent army in northern Syria, which was not so pleasant for Turkey, and knew it as a threat to himself and Through military operations, we seek to avoid this issue and occupy a part of the Syrian-controlled territory, including the Afrin region. The country has threatened other areas under the control of Kurds as well.

Therefore, according to the above-mentioned content, it is said that Considering the main factor in the conflict between Turkey and the United States in Syria is the Kurdish forces of this region, why Turkey oppses to United States about the Syrian Kurdish issue? Therefore, the authors uses the descriptive-analytic method and was the library studies. the hypothesis which in response to this question, is that Turkey considers the Syrian Kurdish forces a threat to its existence, and Turkey's efforts to undermine these forces have led to conflicts of interests to the United States and Turkey.

## I. Theoretical Framework

The most central doctrine of political realism in foreign policy is the emphasis on power and wealth (according to Gilpin's neo-

realist political economy), which is defined in the context of national interests. The greatest scholar who played a prominent role in shaping political realism and presenting its teachings in foreign policy is Hans Morgenthau. Although the theoretical roots of realism go back to Hobbes 'political views, Morgenthau developed Hobbes' realistic interpretations of human nature in relations between countries and the understanding of the behavior of the male government on the international stage (Ebrahimi et al., 2010: 120).

A methodological examination of Morgenthau's political realism shows that he sought to find objective political laws based on the duty of statesmen to understand and discover these laws and to implement them naturally in foreign policy. In his book Politics between Nations, Morgenthau considers one of the principles of political realism to be the belief in the existence of objective laws independent of human will and belief in politics and society (Ebrahimi, 2009: 120).

The theory of realism dominated the study of international relations in the United States from the 1940s to the 1960s. In addition, the so-called traditional mindset of the international system is based on the assumptions found in the theory of realism:

1. National governments are key actors in a "state-centered" system

2. Domestic politics can be seen as a struggle for power in an environment without a central authority.

3. International politics is a struggle for power in an environment devoid of Mercury supremacy.

4. In a decentralized international, composed of states with legal equality or sovereignty, there is a hierarchy between nation-states in terms of their capabilities as larger powers and smaller states. (Doherty, Gunther Graf, 1373: 143).

Realism assumptions define an ideal type of world politics. They allow us to imagine a world in which politics constantly finds active or potentially conflicting hostility between states, in which force is used whenever possible and every state tries.

Defend their land and interests against real or perceived threats (Linklater, 1378: 206).

According to the above four assumptions, a country that formulates and implements its foreign policy in the international arena must 1- have wise and rational decision-makers and actors 2- seek to achieve power and wealth within the framework of national interests 3- Has a scientific and behavioral methodology 4- Consider the world political environment as it is 5- Has an objective definition of concepts such as power, government, interests and politics 6- Lack of moral and value policy, but not lack of political ethics Be (Ebrahimi, 1389: 122).

During the 1960s and 1970s, realism was attacked from two sides. First by the behaviorists, who considered the basic texts of realism unscientific and fictional, which in turn created a major debate between traditionalists and scientists in international relations. The second invasion and challenge was carried out by transnationalists, transnationalists attacked the realism model from two fronts, the first invasion was about a change in the nature of world politics, while the realists' emphasis on power and security may have been in the decade The 1960s were right, but the world of the 1970s had changed so much that realism in the early 1980s was revived by the Cold War and the arms race between East and West under the guise of neo-realism with structural realism. Texture. One of the pioneers of neo-realism was Kent and Eltz, who tried to organize the disintegrated body of realist ideas with classical realism and present it as a formal theory.

According to Walter, the international system has a precisely defined structure in which the principle of systematization, the characteristics of the units in the system and the quality of the ability distribution of units must be considered. Accordingly, in domestic political systems, the principle of regulation is hierarchical, in which power is based. Accordingly, in domestic political systems, the principle of regulation is hierarchical, in which power is based on judicial powers. Legal as well as political processes apply. Whereas in the international system, the

behavior of governments towards each other is regulated by the lack of central authority. Based on this argument, the regulator of the international system forces the governments to perform their primary task of strengthening military power and self-reliance, regardless of their capacity. In fact, in the process of socialization, governments learn to maintain their security by relying on themselves and distrusting others by accumulating opportunities to fight each other.

Thus, unlike classical realists who emphasize the power and nature of human power, structural realists believe that human nature has little to do with the power of nations. They argue, on the other hand, that it is the anarchic structure of the international system that forces countries to seek power. Because a system without supreme authority and the central government of countries that prevents them from using force and aggression against others, creates a strong and powerful incentive for countries to become strong enough to protect themselves.

Hence, structural realist theories do not consider the role and effect of cultural and ideological differences and differences, the nature of the political system in the foreign policy of countries; Because the international system creates largely the same motives for countries, the democratic nature of the dictatorship of a country's political system has little effect on foreign policy and the way they treat other countries. Also, foreign policy makers and their personality and psychological characteristics do not play a role in the foreign policy of countries. Countries are like black boxes that function as similar units in the anarchic international system, providing the same security.

## II. United States and Turkey Relations

Political relationships among countries have long been associated with ups and downs. So that most countries in their foreign relations have experienced options such as collaboration and competitiveness, friendship and hostility, war and unity, etc. US and Turkey relations are not no exception. In a way that the two

countries have been involved in many issues in the past years and have expanded their bilateral relationships and have been disputed with different topics. Of course, the cooperation between Turkey and the United States has been more pronounced than the two countries. Meanwhile, the two countries are known as the two traditional, which have numerous differences in the field of bilateral relations and regional and international issues. With the rise of Ataturk's work in Turkey raised the United States, as a superpower after World War I and II caused Ankara to close proximity to the United States. In particular, the US is the only country that could be politically, security and economic to support and protect Turkey against the Soviet Union. Therefore, close ties between Turkey and the West in the years following World War II were largely formed in the form of Turkish and United States relations (Bahman, 2019). With the collapse of the Soviet Union 1989 the strategic importance of Turkey in the U.S. foreign policy was designed on the basis of the communist confrontation, and the two countries ' relations were usually continued in the form of joint military cooperation at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). But after Turkey invaded northern Iraq several times, it caused the relations of two countries to become worse. The obvious example is that in 2003 the United States has arrested Turkey's operations forces and caused Turkey to protest(Mosafa & shahabi, 2017: 15). With the rise of the Justice and Development Party on August 14, 2001 in Turkey, the country's foreign policy was changing. In the belief of the Turkish authorities and policy-makers, with the end of the cold war period, at which time military alliances and political blocks were the main element of determining international relations, was created a new era in countries ' relations. In Turkey's new foreign policy, the United States is not the only supplier of Turkey's security, but also regional and transnational powers, and of course, emerging powers can play a role in the country's strategic policies. In other words, Turkey has followed the policy and attitudes towards the east and West in the head of its signboard. But with serious

tensions between Turkey and the United States, Washington has still looked at Turkey as a strategic ally and was trying to maintain the friendship with the help of its efforts. Washington was trying to support Turkey's membership in international organizations such as membership in the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), security and Cooperation Organization of Europe and J20. The United States has also supported Turkey's membership in the European Union, so that even from Ankara with the European Union in this regard (IRIB News). However, in recent years, the Syrian crisis and the role of the US in the coup d'état 2016, Turkey's relations with two countries once again were stressed. Therefore, the pinnacle of two U.S. countries in Turkey in the years following World War II, Turkey with NATO membership in 1956 was not only considered as a major ally of the organization but also an important role in the United States regional initiatives and strategies(Mosafa & shahabi, 2017: 17). Since the United States relationship with no predictable country, the relationship between the country and Turkey is not an exception to the Syrian crisis, and like all countries that do not have the same relationship, the US and Turkey relations are also changed in different periods and in the interests of the parties concerned And transformed, so that in a period of two united and in another period, the enemy has also appeared in the international system.

**Syrian Crisis:** The Syrian crisis is one of the most important events in the international system in recent years, according to the geopolitical position of the State, it was considered as many regional and transnational actors. The United States is the most important international actors who have intervened in the Syrian crisis. To believe that many analysts have taken up against the Syrian crisis a vague policy of the America's statesmen, what caused the legitimacy of the Bashar al-Assad. The need for immediate withdrawal is due to the independent role that the Syrian government has played in the developments of the Arab world. The US at the beginning of the Syrian chemical weapons in

2013 has only taken into practice propaganda and made the country's developments in Syria for its allies, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The other important and influential actor involved in the Syrian crisis is Turkey, which has played an important role in becoming more severe. This country with the power to reach the justice and Development Party contrary to the past that had a policy of attitude to the West. He tried to take his attention to the issues of the Middle East and was looking to have a more active role in the region's issues. Of course this does not mean switching of their Western allies. Turkey, in recent years, has taken a policy of zero tensions with neighbors in 2011 to some extent lost its independence and most of the America's policies have been accompanied by the developments in the Middle East region (Asgarian & Tajri, 2017: 152-154). Through the Syrian crisis, he tries to take the glory and greatness of the Ottoman emperor and through Syria to find a way to enter the Arab world and to achieve its interests and desires and bring itself as an important and influential region actor. Turkey is a connection to the Syrian regional and regional opposition, and has been involved as a NATO member in becoming more likely to take measures against Damascus. Also, by giving a variety of privileges and facilities to various rises of Syria, especially the military and armed rises of their hostile policies in exchange for Damascus. It can be said that Turkey's policy towards the Syrian crisis first align with the United States and the West as well as efforts to become an influential country in the region (Habibolahi,2016: 50-57). Therefore, in relation to the Syrian crisis, two countries were first almost the same position and with the start of the Syrian crisis, the United States, as a trans-regional power, initially wanted to conduct political reforms by Bashar al-Assad and to reduce Syrian relations with Iran, the Hamas movement and Lebanese Hezbollah. But by not meeting the demands of the country, the regime's Bashar al-Assad was a tougher stance. And repeatedly emphasized the end of the legitimacy of the Bashar al-Assad government.      Another

influential actor in the crisis is Syria that it acted as a regional actor. Turkey was also working as the United States at the beginning of the Syrian crisis to encourage the Assad government to do the reforms. But after the protests in this country became more severe and following a part of the Syrian people immigrated to Turkey, Turkey's stance, such as the US, became more severe to Syria and defended the regime's change and the loss of Bashar Assad (Bagheri Dowlatabadi & et al, 2012: 42-44). It should be said that although two countries of the United States and Turkey have been in the first days of clashes in Syria, they have been changed in order to change the position of the two countries in accordance with decided. America's support for the purpose of combating ISIS groups has sought to criticize Turkey, As Turkey's Kurdish forces considered to be the enemy. Therefore, this was why the two countries in the same relationship become problematic, and they adopt conflicting policies regarding Syria. Finally, Trump's decision to exit the country has led to Turkey, one of the most active and important countries in the Syrian crisis, to start its own interest in northern Syria.

**United States interests in North Syria:** Understanding the position of the United States as the leader of the West and the most important actor in the international system is not possible, regardless of the strategic goals and strategy of the country in the Middle East region. Washington in the Middle East follows a few basic objectives and strategies. Strategies such as ensuring the regional energy flow to the west, advancing the so-called peace process of the Middle East, providing its allied interests namely Israel in the region, confronting Islam under the fight against terrorism and fundamentalism, confronting countries that are against the interests of the country and expanding the culture of the United States, an American in the guise of creating democracy, creating a free market and secularism in the Middle East(Ghasemian et al, 2018: 171). Trump has always stressed that he has been confined to Syria and in March 2018, he said that the United States was impossible to leave his troops very quickly

from Syria (International Crisis Group, 2018). This is while Russia's Defense Department has announced that the United States is seeking the Syrian to seize possessions that is only owned by the Syrian people and the US presence in Syria is not with the aim of combating ISIS. Among the goals of the United States is the Syrian, who wants to limit the number of Iranian land forces in Syria to prevent a vague path to the Mediterranean Sea (Snyder, 2019). The main goal of the United States is the military presence in Syria, reducing the power and influence of Iran in the region and especially Syria. Washington is attempting to change the power and political and social equations governing Syria to the benefit of Washington and its empowerment. Among the most important reasons and objectives of the White House, the decision for military presence in Syria can be pointed out in the following cases: The United States has been struggling with this military presence to continue its support for the Syrian Democratic forces against Bashar al-Assad and with this action, hegemony to prevent Syria from all over-the-fold, and also hinder the absolute victory of Moscow and Damascus and Tehran in the Syrian war. Another important issue that could justify the increase of 33% of the United States military in the Middle East in the second half of 2017 is the existence of rich energy resources and oil fields in northern Syria. The most important issue in the current situation is how to divide these energy sources in Syria as well as the access of Kurds to the mentioned sources. While many believe that Kurds should be in military, foreign policy and energy dependent on the Syrian central Government. However, the US authorities tend to independence of Kurds in northern Syria in the field. The US government in Syria is following strategies that include: preventing Iran from penetrating and securing the United States in east Euphrates and Syria is based on the press agency. The United States, a few years ago, will cooperate with Syrian democratic forces against ISIS, and the free zones in the control of Kurds and the coalition are transformed into the strategic areas of the United States in Syria. So we can say the United States seeks to establish

a banned flight in north and east Syria. The United States when it sees the actions of Turkey in attacking Kurdish areas leads to the cooling of Kurdish forces in the battle with ISIS. And this makes it again to power by sending its forces to the border areas, a message to Ankara that the United States is looking for a long-term presence in Syria and supporting Kurds. US, first, has a dual approach to Syrian Kurdistan. On the one hand, they considered Turkey's interests and on the other hand, in terms of the United States, Kurdish was the subject of Kurds and always invited to pay for citizenship by the Kurdish problem. The government sought to maintain the integrity of Syria, where he expressed concern about the autonomy of the Syrian Kurdistan by the United States Democratic Union Party and opened the necessity of Syria's integration (Bagheri Dowlatabadi & Rahimi Dehgolan,2015: 145). The Joint Chiefs of the US Army Chief General Joseph Dunford said the ISIS terrorist group still has a significant presence in Iraq and Syria. PKK & YPG[1] need to support the United States of America-led international coalition to fight ISIS survivors. It is important to ensure the security and tranquility of the clean areas of ISIS terrorist groups. Therefore, to preserve the region (northeast of Syria), it should be given to 50 to 60 thousand local military training forces, which are still taught 50%. Alliance between the United States and "YPG", the chorus was opened to the U.S. air of Kuban city, and towns and villages around Isis in 2015. The US authorities initially told Turkey that their alliance was YPG with temporary and the weapons that they made for the fighters to restore the Kuban, are then taken. But these promises were quickly resumed by the need to create an effective ground force against militias in eastern Syria (Karen DeYoung & at El, 2019: 5-6). YPG is the vanguard of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), which controls the majority of the north and eastern Syria. American troops have been deployed in the region for many years and have trained and armed the Seekers War of the Islamic

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1. Kurdistan Workers' Party & Kurdish People's Protection Units

government. The America's support for YPG has enraged Turkey, which is a security threat to the insurgents in Turkey. (Ellen Francis & at El, 2019: 12). In this regard, the presence of the United States in the Syrian crisis has shown that the country is contrary to the human rights and democracy, and the weaker countries in the pretext of non-observance of human rights. In the Syrian crisis, the country was merely pursuing its interests and the country of his loved and ally, as Israel, though this country had a conservative policy towards the Syrian crisis. In the following, we will discuss Turkey's response to support Kurdish forces in Syria. It is evident that the support of Turkish opposition has sparked the America.

**Turkey's Interests in Northern Syria:** Turkey is an influential regional actor in the Syrian crisis. With the onset of unrest in Syria, it was evident that Turkey could not be indifferent to its neighboring developments. Because the developments in the side were in conflict with the new Ottoman doctrine of the Justice and Development party leaders and a party would have to challenge the Turkish interests in economic, political, and security with serious challenge (Bagheri & Rahimi Dehgolan, 2015: 141). In this regard, or the beginning of the Syrian crisis and the type of Turkey's stance on this crisis, the Syrian became the most important subject of Turkish foreign policy; That all important issues of Turkish foreign policy have been associated with the Ankara approach to Damascus over the past few years. In this regard, Turkey's foreign policy towards Syria has made several steps the most important index in all stages of "interventional in Syrian internal affairs". Since the beginning of the crisis, Turkey was first backed by a verbal support for domestic change in Syria. But in the later stages, with the cessation of political relations with Damascus and armed and naked, he began a practical intervention in this crisis to become one of the active actors of the Syrian crisis with the regime's overthrow and the power of its vertebrae.

- The operation of Turkey in Afrin lacks any justification. Syrian Kurds, although supported by United States, can be

considered as the cause of the aggression of Turkey to the north of Syria, but in this scene the owner of the house will come into account and to confront the alien army and the occupation is the right. In order to have a justification for military aggression, Erdogan said that Kurdish measures are dangerous in northern Syria to secure the borders of the southern country of southern Turkey. However, because the entire Syrian population is between 300 to 500 thousand people, and at least in three separate regions, they live, despite the serious opposition of the Syrian central government, it is not able to isolate the north and cannot form an independent or even federal government. Therefore, it can be said that according to the population of about 20 million Turkish Kurds and their complex, the developments in the region of Syria will not affect Turkey's security.

- The Turkish action has undoubtedly weakened the Sochi and threshold, achieving an agreement and a coalition to expand the lesser-involved regions between Iran, Russia and Turkey with serious obstacle. This could lead to the escalation of the Syrian crisis more easily and more complicated.

At the beginning of the Syrian civil war, President Erdogan was the overthrow of the Assad Bashar, even though it meant support for extremists through the Turkish border with Syria. Ankara's initial unwillingness to cooperate with Washington in the fight against ISIS caused the United States to create an American-led Syrian (YPG) protection unit in northern Syria, dependent on the Kurdistan Labor Party (PKK). The Turkish Government's approach to national policy in Syria is influenced by its domestic politics. Because by approaching the local election analysts believe that in 2019 there are evidence about harsh conditions of recession. And the same has led to the Turkish president, a border operation of the people's attention from the domestic economic crisis. Tayyip Erdogan has used this approach for two times, Once the Euphrates shield operation began 40 days after the Turkish coup and ended 23 days before the referendum of April 2017 and once again, 89 days before the general elections in June 2018 the

operation of the olive branch began to renew Erdogan's agenda for five others. Erdogan must also balance the internal reaction against Syrian refugees, which has been more severe in the economic crisis of the country. Since the beginning of the civil war, the Turkish government has charged more than $30 billion for nearly four million displaced persons, and such an increase in the growing anger of voters has been increased. Erdogan's plans for the resettlement of Syrian refugees in areas that have been taken from YPG from one hand to the anti-immigrant feelings and to appease the anti-immigration supporters. In general, the priorities of foreign policy and security of the Turkish Government are primarily controlled in the northern regions of Syria YPG (Erdemir, 2019: 5). Erdogan warned against those who targeted our country as an enemy and terrorist group like ISIS and PKK as well as the promise of executing an aggressive attack on the east Euphrates begins. After the United States said it would create a retaining area for Kurdish YPG in the Syrian border. This shows that the US has expired because Washington in Syria will support groups in which Turkey considers their enemy (Reuters, 2019). Turkey has sought to create a safe area in northern Syria since 2013, but Ankara officials have not been able to convince Washington to implement such an action. Therefore, Ankara, with a threat to the commencement of military operations, has attempted to strengthen its positions in negotiations on the establishment of a security retaining area during the Syrian border. Given that the Syrian army started the liberation of the northern regions of the terrorist groups and, according to Damascus, these areas will soon be freed from the occupation of Takfiri, so Turkey is trying to achieve this goal.

**Turkey and Kurdish groups:** Turkey repeatedly plans to initiate military attack against YPG groups, SDF and PKK. YPG the backbone of the U.S.-led coalition of the US, against the Islamic government in northern Syria is fighting. The Turkish military operations in Syria are partly designed to tackle the riots in its own merits. The link between the Syrian conflict and the

homeland security of Turkey has caused internal political instability in the country and has been a conflict in the United States and Turkey relations in Syria. Although some goals of the United States and Turkey in the north of Syria are also complementary but are contradictory in some targets. The different actors who are present in this conflict follow targets that are in the United States of conflict. Most of these groups target the Islamic government. Therefore, the United States will consider the impacts of its intervention in northern Syria on its united Turkey in NATO and is looking to fix problems with Turkey (Stein, 2017: 2-3). Turkey, who is experiencing the referendum of Iraqi Kurdistan region and is afraid to create a referendum in its borders to create an independent zone. The dependence between Kurdish forces in Syria with the PKK Group in Turkey to create an independent area in the event of success, can be transformed as a template for Turkish Kurds and face serious trouble in the country (Mortimer, 2018: 2-3). Because in the end of crisis and current tensions in Syria, groups and militias in Syria can also strive to succeed in Turkish Kurdistan Labor Party. In addition to these stresses, Turkey fears that the American arms are given to Kurdish groups, eventually to the " PKK" group inside Turkey, and they also use the weapons against the Turkish security forces (Chan, 2018: 2). Turkey knows YPG group to group and Workers ' Party of Turkey Kurdistan and as it is clear, the PKK that fought Turkey for decades In the beginning to become an independent country, and recently to obtain the independence of Kurds in Turkey. With the start of the year 2016, the Turkish forces in the western part of northern Syria prevented a major part of the country in order to prevent U.S.-backed Kurds with other Syrian Kurdish groups and create a strong line along the border. Turkey is accused of being attacked in the north of the border while the Syrian Kurds were engaged in the lobe of mortar and artillery into the Turkish Territory. (Karen DeYoung & at el, 2019: 5-6). That is why many Turkish leaders believe that the Democratic Alliance Party is the cause of insecurity and has the intention of divergence and

separation. Meanwhile, the Turks believe that the Syrian region is under the support of the Democratic Party and the border with Turkey, the Turkish independence and territorial integrity of the strikes. So that they are strongly opposed to the formation of Syrian Kurdistan climate, such as Iraq. In this regard, Turkey is not passive in the face of any ethnic minority activity that jeopardize Syrian territorial integrity and tries to consider it in any design for the future of Turkey and try to enter to Afrin to achieve this issue with the cooperation of the Syrian Free Army. According to the Turkish strategy, Kurdish forces are weakened and will not be able to create an independent area (Gardner, 2018: 3). According to the said material, we can say today, Turkish and American relations have reached its lowest level. With the starting of the American action in the region and mainly the occupation of Iraq, it led to the liberation of the forces, which brings a direct threat to Turkey. Since the advent of ISIS to increase the importance of PKK in Iraq, until the recent support of the United States of YPG in Syria, Turkey sees its interests as threatened by a unified partner of NATO (Arnold, 2019: 5). In the aftermath of Erdogan's threats to attacking Syrian forces at the border of the U.S. Embassy, Ankara, after a week tense of negotiations on Wednesday, issued a provocative statement stating that the agreement on "the initial measures for the elimination of security concerns of Turkey", the establishment of the center Joint operation Turkey and the US, he has been trying to restore Syrian refugees. Turkey's defense minister, Holsi Akkar, announced that the negotiations were "constructive" and that US counterparts have been close to our stance (Petti, 2019: 1). While Turkey and the United States have been agreeing to create a safe area in northern Syria, they still disagree on five important issues: The first issue is the depth of the safe zone. Turkey says Trump has given a promise of 20 miles (32 kilometers) deep Whereas, according to the report, the U.S. officials are suggesting a safe area that is comprised of three different security belts. In the first bar of Turkey and the United States, we do a depth of 5 kilometers

of joint patrols. Turkey also calls for removal of all terrorist groups from the safe zone. While the US of Americana said only the PKK-dependent groups should be eliminated while the majority of SDF should stay the area. The third issue is YPG heavy weapons. Turkey, accused United States to provide military equipment for terrorists. The fourth problem is related to of the America– Turkey security agreement on the city of Manbiay in the Syrian in the year 2018. Turkey is demanding that the Turkish and US forces of the United States become northern Syria and take control of certain areas. The fifth and final difference between the two countries is related to administrative structures in Kurdistan cities. The United States is seeking to continue their work in pre-established governments. As Turkey insists that these governments must be governed by the Arab and Turkmen majority. And it also accuses YPG of changing the demographic (Yeni, 2019). Turkey and the US therefore agreed to create a joint operational center to manage the tensions between the US and the Turkish forces in northern Syria. Although, this agreement has not been finalized yet. Finally, after months of threatening a few days, the Trump administration began to withdraw the American forces in Syria and Turkey on September 17 (October 9), in the Syrian border of Turkey. This country has launched a wave of air strikes and artillery bombings against Syrian Democratic forces along the borders of Turkey. Rejeb Tayyip Erdogan said that the attack on the "Fountain of Peace" operation is known and in order to retreat of democratic forces that Turkey considers to be a terrorist group. He also announced his mission for the attack to prevent the establishment of a terror corridor in southern borders of Turkey to establish peace in the region. Turkey attacks Syrian troops cause regional instability, increase humanitarian and weakening progress against ISIS. It should be said that Turkey's goal of attacking north Syria is that the troops in the region are going to take away from its boundaries, and it is possible to create a safe area within the territory of Syria, who have sheltered Turkey's territory during these years and Deploy within your country. Of

course, the Turkish strikes have no reaction, and have followed the reaction of European countries; European countries immediately after Turkey attack in Syria condemned the attack and demanded a Security Council emergency meeting.These countries demanded an immediate moratorium on the attack and warned that Turkey will weaken the stability of the region. In this regard, the French and Netherlands, and then Italy summoned Turkey's ambassadors in these countries, and urged them to halt their military operations (the operation of Peace originated) as soon as possible. Russia has also invited the parties involved in the war to discuss and negotiate this way to resolve the crisis. But Donald Trump has provided a reaction to the attack on conflicting messages. He was a bad idea, but it was not demanded to stop the attack. He has stated that the parties are talking to the end of the war.

## III. Iran's Policy in Syria

The Islamic Republic of Iran is one of the most important players in the Syrian crisis and Syria's most powerful regional supporter. It can be said that Iran's support for Syria has so far made bashar al-Assad's government able to withstand all-out pressure from the West and many Arab countries as well as Turkey. As one of the region's major powers, Iran is trying to force other countries to recognize it as one of the region's future decision-makers, particularly on Syria, which is what the U.S. and Israel don't like (Valerstein, 2012). U.S. opposition to Iran's presence at international summits on Syria reflects a dual U.S. policy. The United States is trying to further isolate Iran by diminishing Iran's role in the region. In addition, Iran's participation in Geneva's Ajalash and its assistance in stabilizing Syria are interpreted as Iran's power in international politics and believes that the international community without Iran can achieve the desired results in Syria.

The Syrian crisis has also raised tensions and conflicts at the regional level. This, in turn, has led to a decrease in the

willingness to cooperate and increased discord among actors affecting the Syrian crisis. The Islamic Republic of Iran's relations with Turkey and Qatar have been cooled by the Syrian crisis. In addition, the level of disputes between Iran and the Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia has become more severe due to the Syrian crisis.

Since the beginning of the crisis in Syria, the Islamic Republic of Iran has expressed its full support for Syria while supporting the demands of the people, emphasizing reforms and the need to maintain national sovereignty in Syria. Iran has also strongly opposed any foreign interference in Syria's internal affairs and has tried to prevent foreign power from interfering in Syria's internal developments by negotiating with other Syrian supporters such as China and Russia. Iran also rejects any armed operations inside Syria, supports talks between various Syrian sides, and has repeatedly tried to bring together Syrian dissidents who oppose foreign interference in Syria in Tehran to naturally discuss Syria's future with the country's ruling system. However, Turkey is one of the countries most stressed with Iran in the region over the Syrian crisis (Mousavi, 2015:172).

Turkey's expansionist policies and intentions after the developments in the Arab world made Iran a threat to its own interests and, despite having a good relationship with the country, balanced it through a coalition with Russia. The culmination of the confrontation between Iran and Turkey at the regional level can be seen in the Crisis in Syria and Iraq (katz, 2013:38). As the Syrian crisis began, Turkey intervened in Syria's internal affairs and all-out support for Assad's opponents, calling on Syria to implement the opposition's desired reforms and accept democracy. As a result, relations between the two countries deteriorated and the Turkish embassy in Damascus was closed. Turkey also continued its support for the rebels by holding a conference on the transition to democracy and helping to form the National Council and the Free Syrian Army, giving its borders and the port of Alexandron to the rebels, giving them military training and active

participation in the Geneva 1 and 2 summits, and efforts to oust Assad.

In Iran's view, Turkey's influence in Syria, which is Iran's political and cultural spheres of influence, poses a direct threat to its national interests and security (Khoury, 2013: 47). Balancing the Middle East through a coalition with Russia that has common interests with Iran and opposes the expansion of U.S., European and Turkish influence in the Middle East has been Iran's response to Turkey's threats. Many analysts have called Russia's intervention in the Syrian crisis and the U.S.-Russia confrontation a kind of cold war revival

## IV. U.S. Forces Withdrawal from Syria

The United States has invested in the country of the Syrian crisis since its arrival. And this group is also inclined to work in the United States because they are geopolitical in the deadlock. But, if the U.S. forces exit Syria, the region has been able to cooperate with Syria, Russia, and partly to the Islamic Republic in order to balance Turkey. With the announcement of the withdrawal of U.S. military force from Syria, the country has improved its relationship with the Bashar al-Assad government. Democratic forces have been admitted to the Syrian flag in some areas, which means it is accepting the rule of the Bashar al-Assad government. In contrast to Damascus also put the economic support of oxad in some spheres in the agenda (bakhshi, 2018). Since 2015, the United States has deployed special operations in Syria against ISIS. In 2017, Trump approved the efforts of anti-ISIS military effort in the years to advise his political advisors and military advisors in accordance with his instincts. This ensured the liberation of Raqqa (the time of the capital Khalifa) in October 2017 and helped weaken the rapid ISIS military. Although he had a significant cost for civilians, the axis of Syrian fighters and physical infrastructure, about 2,000 U.S. soldiers stationed in dozens of Syrian bases in Syria, who participate in war missions and air support. So after the America's support, the Syrian forces

decision Donald Trump, the US President of the United States, who had announced December all US military to leave Syria. In addition to the resignation of the Minister of Defense, James Mattis, and his Special envoy for the fight against the Islamic State or ISIS, was released (Toosi & Morgan, 2019: 5), Regional and trans-regional actor's responses in the country were followed. As a regional power in this crisis, Turkey has welcomed the decision of Donald Trump, the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu said Turkey is welcomed by U.S. decision to withdraw its military from Syria. It has also been said that in the process of withdrawal of United States in Syria, coordination is important and the measures should be taken to prevent vacuum generation in this region. In connection with the possible reasons Donald Trump's decision to withdraw U.S. troops from the strain can be said: The U.S. presence in Syria has not been able to change equations in favor of the United States and only add to the costs of the country(Jeremy M. Sharp,2013: 5). Therefore, to reduce these costs, withdrawal of the United States from Syria seems necessary, especially the case of Trump's logic of any military presence outside, it is subject to an objective and rapid achievement, in the realization of Trump's electoral slogans about the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Western Asian region, reducing military-security tensions with Turkey, and preventing further closure of the country to Russia and Iran.

As it was noted, Turkey's policy on the crisis of Syria has been a trend of progress and downs, so that in the beginning of the crisis with the support of armed Takfiri and non-fairy groups, it provides a form of more crisis in Syria and in its collaboration with Persian Gulf countries, the establishment of parallel institutions to the Syrian system. With the more critical of the situation in the north and northeast of Syria, the Kurds of this country have defended themselves and followed some of their goals, such as obtaining autonomy. The Kurds supported the United States and Europe gradually became powerful and turned into one of the main actors of the Syrian crisis. This resulted in the

formation of a serious threat to the southern boundaries and becoming a major threat to Turkey. Due to the lack of the United States and Europe with Turkey in the Kurdish issue, the country gradually went towards cooperation with Russia and Iran, which was the result of the trend of the threshold process. Today, and by existing the United States forces from the east Euphrates, Turkey's concerns over Kurdish threats will be reduced. And its consequences can also be further cooperation with Russia and Iran as well as the Syrian system to obtain guarantees for further control of northern Syria. However, if Turkey seeks to stabilize its position and its aligned forces in northern Syria, it is possible to increase the challenge between Damascus and Ankara. There is a possibility to increase the attacks of Turkey's dependent groups after leaving the United States and the Turkish army will also increase its cross-sectional and controlled attacks inside Syria.

Eventually in October 2019, the Western coalition led the United States were excluded from the cities of Raqqa and the Tabaqqeh and Lafarge cement factory in the north. In this regard, Turkey announced that the presence of Syrian forces in the city of Manbij under the Russian flag and its support is not accepted. Colin the spokesman for the Erdogan Recep Tayeb said: Groups so far backed by the United States to marauding and impose their own rules will not see peace because Turkey is determined in his action.

**Establishment of Safe Zone in Northern Syria:** Turkey and the United States have finally agreed to establish a safe area in northern Syria (Macaron, 2019: 7). They also agreed to create a joint operational center. In this agreement, measures are required to resolve the security concerns of Turkey. (Lafleur, 2019: 2-3). It is said that the establishment of this joint operation center is more a political consensus and has been done in order to reduce the current tensions in Syria. Tensions between the United States and Turkey in northern Syria have been intensified a year ago, and the Kurdish militia (Syrian Democratic Forces) removed the city of "Manbij" from the occupation of the ISIS terrorist group and took

control of it. The proposed area is more than 400 kilometers (250 miles) along the northeastern border of Syria with Turkey, the majority of which is YPG by the militant group, which was controlled by U.S. military support for the Islamic government. It is while Ankara YPG a terrorist that is a big security threat and has asked us to cut his relations with the Militia (Dadouch, 2019: 2).

This agreement allows Turkey to protect its borders against Kurdish-Syrian forces, which considers terrorist threats and provides a safe place to return for Syrian refugees in Turkey. In both countries, defense officials issued a separate but similar statement after three days of conversation in Ankara, the capital of Turkey. In these statements, there is no detail about the size of the area or how it is administered, which may not yet be the result, but the agreement has been presented by Turkey as a meeting of its demands. The United States in this region has military forces and has partnered with Kurdish-Syrian forces or S.D.F in combating the Islamic government to have warned Turkey about any unilateral measures in the region. Discussions are focused on S.D.F, according to the United States Embassy in Ankara, the delegation agreed on "Rapid implementation of the initial measures to resolve the security concerns of Turkey and establish a joint operational center in Turkey to coordinate and manage the establishment of safe zone. The statement has been added: The safe zone will become a peace corridor and everyone should try to return to the Syrian displaced persons (Gall, 2019). Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said if the United States will be delayed, Turkey runs its plan because the Ankara map is ready but the United States has been a very disturbing one (Turkey) in the northeast of Syria. It is believed that the accession to Turkey's demands will result in other demands, including the delivery of Kordidarian bases to Turkey and the submission of all the weapons provided to Syrian Kurds (Pearson, 2019: 5). As noted after the withdrawal of U.S. troops in northern Syria Turkey has given a big trophy and attacked north Syria Recep Tayyip

Erdogan, the president of Turkey said that he wants to create a safe area within the Syrian territory two million Syrian refugees often Arab Sunni religions reside in a land that is currently under the control of military forces.

## Conclusion

In general, the authors in this research seeks to answer the question of why Turkey is against the US in Syria? To answer this question, we have been using the new theoretical framework of Kent's defensive realism, a hypothesis that is proposed: Turkey has called on Syrian troops a threat to its existence, and the Turkish effort to undermine these forces has followed the conflict of interest for the US and Turkey. Since the beginning of crisis in Syria, regional and transnational powers of any way to achieve their interests came to Turkey as a regional power and the Us as a no exception power of the region, and every way to intervene in Syria. Therefore, since realism emphasizes the balance of power between countries, especially major powers. Based on international policy and the balance of the region, which is formed in anarchy conditions. And all governments are looking to increase their strength and security. And regional balancing requirements make the actors to use their inner capabilities to promote stability and balance in competitive, collaborative and offensive conditions. Therefore, according to this theoretical framework, it can be said that the United States and Turkey who are seeking to increase their power and security would prefer to gain an agreement on the safe area in northern Syria. The findings of the study show that the U.S. presence in northern Syria has supported the Kurds in the country to achieve its goals in Syria. And this has caused Turkey to be more likely to feel the Kurdish groups of their enemies than before. to prevent the formation of autonomous groups in Syria or the independence of these party's initiate military operations to northern Syria borders. So, by approving the hypothesis, it can be claimed that the US main difference in Turkey in north of Syria is over the issue of the

Kurdish region. Supported by the United States in the form of autonomous region and the stimulation of Turkey. These differences made the Turkish and American ties to the lowest level in history and the United States became a result of the US-Turkey to discuss the safe area in northern Syria. Finally, after U.S. and Turkey's withdrawal troops from northern Syria, the pretext of creating a safe area that can be found in the region is far from its boundaries. And when those who were sheltered in Turkey's territory during these years, he began his attack. Turkey also said the attack was planned to retreat to Democratic forces that Turkey considers them to be a terrorist group. It has also announced its mission for the attack to prevent the establishment of a terror corridor in southern borders of Turkey to establish peace in the region.

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