

North American Foreign Policy in the Middle East and the "Cold War" between Saudi Arabia and Iran

The objective of this paper is to understand how US foreign policy is a determining factor in Saudi Arabia's rivalry with Iran and how the proxy war strategies of both rivals directly or indirectly affect the international concert of states in the Middle East. To this end, we first investigated US foreign policy strategies within the Middle East focusing on the Jacksonian political tradition, and analyzed this cold war senary among rivals in light of Hans Morgenthau's realistic theory. The origins of the conflict between the Shiite and Sunni currents were also addressed. The importance of US foreign policy in the tension between the two regional powers of the Middle East.

Keywords: *United States. Saudi Arabia. Iran. Cold War. Jacksonianism. Proxy War*

Introduction

The conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran can be treated as a historical conflict, which is perpetuated for 40 years, having as a milestone the Islamic Revolution (1979). Rivalry relations between the two countries, competing for hegemony in the Middle East, with funding from militias and alliance policies.

Saudi Arabia has as its biggest ally the USA, its main oil client and supplier of goods, including military equipment. The Saudi-North American bond began in World War II (1941), in the agreement signed between Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Saudi King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, establishing that the Arab country would primarily supply its oil to the Americans, in exchange for the protection of the Saudi regime by the Americans (VIEIRA, 2018). Such attitude can be characterized as the main strategy of American foreign policy action in the Middle East, consistent with the Jacksonian tradition.

The Americans have also exercised their influence over Iran, also a major supplier of oil, by supporting the authoritarian and pro-secular regime of Shah Reza Pahlavi. The Shah's dictatorial government began with the overthrow of Mohammad Mossadeq's nationalist government, called the White Revolution, with the westernization of Iran supported by a repressive system of the SAVAK secret service. (VIEIRA, 2018)

In the 1970s, in the midst of an economic crisis, when the regime disagreed about its proximity to the Americans and the British, it ended with the Iranian Islamic revolution, 1979, led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who established an Islamic republic, with theocratic bases, breaking up and antagonizing with the USA. (ELLIS, 2017)

Between 1979 and 1981, the new regime held 52 U.S. embassy officials hostage. President Jimmy Carter's government organized a rescue plan, which proved disastrous, with loss of life and military equipment. In the Reagan administration there was a negotiation with Iran, resulting in the release of the hostages, through the offer of armaments.

Due to the US intervention failures, the path was to strengthen the regional allies, especially Saudi Arabia, establishing an environment of rivalry, of "cold war".

Since the Arab Spring, relations between Tehran and Riyadh have become more strained. The Saudis supporting Sunni insurgency movements, including terrorist (ISIS) against the Syrian government of Bashar al Assad, Iran's ally, and the Shiite majority government of Iraq. Iran in turn supports the Shiite insurgency in Yemen (Houthi) and would be involved with the airport and Saudi oil tankers.

The article seeks to analyze the regional "Cold War" and its effects on the Middle East and its importance for American foreign policy (Jacksonianism), ensuring access to a vast "energy reserve" in the light of Hans Morgenthau's realistic theory and taking as a reference the concept of Proxy Wars, which according to Moraes (2015), "conflicts" between countries, financed by others.

American Foreign Policy and the Jacksonian Tradition in the "Cold War" in the Middle East

The Middle East is shrouded in constant conflict and political controversy with the United States as one of the main external agents, one of the main promoters of political, economic and social adversities among local countries. A means of maintaining its hegemon in the region.

The objective of American foreign policy is to assume a position of "hegemonic control" of the Middle East region, mainly due to its security policy and oil control. This objective is achieved through political and economic strategies known as "Hamiltonian" (commercial-financial expansion/free market primacy), "Jacksonian" (internal security conservation) and "Wilsonian" (universalization of the political-moral model). (COSTA, 2005, p.

6)

Such actions had, and still has, the goal of transforming the Middle East into a region of permanent reserve of energy resources, having Saudi Arabia and Iran as main agents. The control of energy resources involves, in U.S. foreign policy, security and defense issues.

In this sense, the United States manages the tensions between the two regional powers to assert their hegemony in the region.

According to journalist Sam Ellis (2017) of the Vox news portal, in the Middle East region "there are 4 states on the verge of extinction and 3 major wars generating disturbances in the region," and these two major countries are constantly vying for power and influence. Still according to Ellis, countless armed militias and terrorist groups operate in this region in the midst of chaos, and the two Arab superpowers use political strategies that can be characterized as cold war actions, with the purpose of influencing governments or armed groups in their favor.

Within this Cold War reality, one concept is fundamental to explaining the foreign policy strategies of the states participating in such a conflict within the scope of the Cold War, in other words, for international action to be defined as Cold War: the concept of Proxy War.

According to Moraes (2015), the concept of Proxy War, also known as Proxy Wars, can be defined as a way to "outsource" the conflict, seeking to achieve its political, economic and military objectives. Proxy War can also be understood as a way of waging war using armed forces or not, without the clear use of their flags. The definition of proxies extends to a chain of states or political movements, following the example of Hezbollah and Hamas groups, proxies of Tehran (BUZAN and WAEVER, 2003 apud MORAES, 2015, p. 34).

Proxies strategies will always be interesting to countries, because a conflict without the use of state flags brings numerous benefits to both involved (proxies and their funders). For the proxies, there is the possibility of ascension through power and economic gains, as well as preparation and military training of their funders.

The realistic theory and concept of maintaining the status/preservation of state hegemony is applicable in the Cold War in the Middle East, where each regional hegemon, using the form of a war proxy policy, exerts its influence on its neighbours with the primary objective of creating alliances to maintain the regional status quo. It can be analyzed that within the Middle East region, these two countries, holders of most of the "weights" of the regional balance of power are in a continuous and growing dispute for the status quo, generating drastic consequences for the local population, for the positioning of "choosing one side" before their neighbors and the actions of strategically financed militias and external international agents in the region (MORGENTHAU, 2003, p. 98).

Within the scope of the Cold War conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran, it can be said that the proxy policies that both exercise regionally can be understood as the imposition of their power within more vulnerable states. (MORAES, 2015)

The Jacksonian action of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, use the same as a reserve of oil energy, because it has interests and strategies for action throughout the region, especially within Saudi Arabia, which is one of the largest holders of oil in the world, and the fact that it is an important strategic geopolitical point. From this fact, Riad can be understood as an American tool to internationalize the American status quo, in other words, the U.S. enjoys oil, arms market and also establishes a point of hegemony in the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia is an American proxy and besides all the factors presented, Riad is also an excellent tool to contain the influence of Iran regionally, where from the rivalry between the two countries for control of the Middle East region, the Americans take advantage of this dispute to exercise their hegemony in the form of power.

As for the rivalry between Riyadh and Tehran, for the latter, the feasibility of using intervening actions through Proxy Wars strategies is greater than for Saudi Arabia, due to the fact that, for Iran, the "anonymity" of the conflict not only benefits it, but is a fundamental instrument for its survival, since it is not comparable in strength, technology and resources with Saudi Arabia and the United States. It is important to stress that Iran is the target of economic sanctions from the West.

Iran: Approach and Break with the Usa

Within the context of the American operations in the Persian majority country (61% of its population), Iran was part of its political, economic and military stratagems, being an important ally from the 1950s to the 1970s, but with the Islamic Revolution they became conflictive. Tehran is subject to economic sanctions and political threats from the U.S. and may evolve into possible conflicts.

Already in the early 20th century, the United States saw in Persia (now Iran) a great opportunity in the redesign of the international political architecture. Persia until then suffered from constant disputes between the United Kingdom and Russia. This dispute led to the Persian Constitutionalist Revolution, as its nationals, such as religious authorities, great merchants and noble classes revolted against Shah Mozaffar al-Din, and from enormous popular pressure and expressive rebellions, the royal proclamation was won, agreeing to the establishment of a constitutional monarchy and the formation of the Majles (Iranian Parliament) in 1906. The United States in this context was treated by the Iranians as the "third force", a decisive ally against the Russian-British dispute (BBC NEWS BRAZIL, 2019).

The Americans had great influence within this revolution. Howard Bakersville, who was considered one of the heroes of the popular rebellion, died during clashes with Shah troops. Morgan Shuster was sent by the U.S. government to assist Iran's economic organization, appointing him treasurer general. (BBC NEWS BRAZIL, 2019)

1 The new Iranian national political configuration after the establishment of
 2 the Majles Parliament is marked by the characteristics of secular thinking,
 3 resulting in a more stable and liberal monarchy, a fact considered uninteresting
 4 for England and Russia.

5 An "anti-British" sentiment has emerged in Iran, intensifying with the
 6 discovery of oil within Iran and the formation of the Anglo-Persian Oil
 7 Company, where the UK owned the majority of the company's shares and it
 8 alone controlled all Iranian oil exports. (BBC NEWS BRAZIL, 2019)

9 After World War II, Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadeq, driven by pro-
 10 nationalist movements, sought to nationalize oil exploration, which led to a
 11 coup d'état. In 1953, the coup secretly carried out with the support of the CIA
 12 and MI6 was successful and the monarch called Reza Pahlavi took control of
 13 the state. (PRESSE, 2018)

14 Its government's main characteristic was the lack of legitimacy within the
 15 state of Iran, since it began in an "undemocratic" way, and besides this fact, it
 16 governed the country in an authoritarian way, adopting extremely restrictive
 17 measures, consequently generating unpopularity. (ELLIS, 2017)

18 The government adopted by Mohammad Reza Pahlavi aimed at the radical
 19 transformation of Iran into a country with characteristics that were close to the
 20 West, but the level of corruption present in his government and the
 21 authoritarian and mainly uncontrolled action of the forces known as Savak (a
 22 secret police that served the government). (ROULEAU, 1980, p.4 apud
 23 EBRAICO, 2005)

24 Such inhumane action by this "police" resulted in the revolt by the Iranian
 25 population against the Shah, mainly due to the fact that this secret police had as
 26 its primary objective the fight against the movements of opposition to the
 27 government, especially Shiite movements. (ELLIS, 2017)

28 Another determining factor for the unpopularity of the Shah's government
 29 was the white revolution, where the aim was to transform Iran into an
 30 economic and industrial power in the manner considered Westernized, and this
 31 movement was implemented in a wrong way, precisely because it was driven
 32 by pressure from Western powers. (ELLIS, 2017)

33 In 1979, as a result of Iran's rather aggressive attempts at secularity and
 34 westernisation, accompanied by excessive and suffocating government
 35 pressure to repress the population, especially against pro-Islamic Shiite
 36 movements, the Muslim population of Iran revolted.

37 The Islamic Revolution succeeded in overthrowing the regime of
 38 Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and in his place Aiatollah Khomeini took over the
 39 government of Iran, becoming the supreme leader of the country (VIEIRA,
 40 2018). The Islamic revolution, led by the Muslim cleric Aiatollah Khomeini,
 41 had as its primary objective to halt the reforms of the "White Revolution"
 42 promoted by the Shah, and to establish a popular, Islamic, clergy-led
 43 government, with Khomeini being the country's supreme leader.

44 In 1979, when Aiatollah Khomeini expropriated the Shah and took over
 45 the government, this was the great fuse in creating the tension present in the
 46 Middle East today, in other words, the Islamic revolution transformed relations

1 between the two military and oil powers forever, creating real tension between
2 Saudi Arabia and Iran. (ELLIS, 2017)

3 The determining factor inciting the initial tension between the two regional
4 powers is not the Iranian revolution itself, but its expansive nature. The
5 expansion of the Islamic Revolution, under Shiite Jihadist rhetoric, is the cause
6 of Saudi concern. The Saudi government's concern was that the revolution
7 would motivate political instability within its territory by turning against the
8 Saudi family. Saudi Arabia is also considered to be the main Sunni religious
9 center of Islam, having under its control the two main holy cities of the Muslim
10 religion within its territory, which are Medina and Mecca. But according to the
11 newly established supreme leader of Iran, there will be a new Muslim religious
12 center in the Middle East (VIEIRA, 2018).

13 Aiatollah Khomeini and Iran's president Bani-Sadr not only had the
14 country's internal revolution in mind, but exported it to other Middle Eastern
15 countries, considered as "authoritarian regimes" or "Western-led regimes,"
16 helping other Islamic revolutionary groups in other countries, mainly Shiite
17 groups, and promoting international strategies of influence. Their forms of
18 internationalization of the Islamic revolution range from regional radio
19 propaganda about the revolution, aiding insurgent groups or armed militias that
20 share the same Iranian ideology as Ayatollah, and even sabotage and attacks on
21 oil-producing areas of the Persico Gulf countries (CIA, 2006). The rhetoric of
22 internationalization is still liberation, of protecting and guarding the Islamic
23 world (Jihadism and its cosmic connotation).

24 Pragmatically, the "export" of the revolution was also intended to avoid
25 the isolation of Iran and the strangulation of the political model created (CIA,
26 2006).

27 In response, Saudi Arabia had to redouble its internal defense and
28 legitimacy strategies, increase its network of regional influences, and not
29 measure efforts and capital to confront and curb the revolution. A source of
30 cooperation between these countries was created in this context, i.e. the Gulf
31 Cooperation Council (GCC). The GCC is a political and socio-economic union
32 of six Persian Gulf countries (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, United
33 Arab Emirates and Qatar) that took place in the 1980s, a time marked by the
34 rise of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran and Saddam Hussein in Iraq. For fear of
35 both countries, geographically very close to the Gulf States, the six countries
36 formed this cooperation as a way of ensuring the regional status quo - which
37 indicates that the driving forces were essentially security issues. (BROCKER,
38 2016)

39 The Saudis have ratified and intensified relations with the Americans,
40 taking into account the fact that both have Iran as an "enemy to be fought".

41 Still according to Brocker (2016) the GCC, in addition to creating a
42 politically and economically closed bloc in the Middle East region, both
43 member countries had strong oil-based economies, causing their economies to
44 grow equally for a period of time, but the main factor that legitimized the union
45 in its main objective was the creation, soon after the creation of the GCC, a
46 "unified military force", but this fact not only didn't solve the issue of

dependence, not only of the Saudis, but of practically all the countries involved in the GCC, but it was also responsible for the intensifying factor of this American arms dependence and of the training of its military forces coming from the Western hegemon.

From this context of strategic actions by both Iran and the GCC countries, regional tension was installed, in other words, "the stage" in the Middle East was ready for conflict.

The Iran-Iraq War

In 1980, the dictator Saddam Hussein, president of Iraq, with the aim of achieving a better regional hegemonic position, exploring the rich sources of Iranian oil and weakening the Islamic Revolution, put into practice an invasion against Iran (EBRAICO, 2005, p. 58). In this war, the North Americans, together with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, were the most interested in Iran's weakening, as they saw an opportunity to halt the network of Shiite interference in the region and destabilize their government.

Saudi support in this conflict began from the fact that it became clear that Iraq alone would not resist the war, to the point of running the risk of losing territories. The assistance of massive amounts of capital and diverse resources to Saddam Hussein's government and the growing international political and economic retaliation against the Iranian government was of paramount importance for Baghdad to ensure its survival and prolong the war with Iran. In 1988, the Iran-Iraq war ended with no winners from a UN mediated resolution through Resolution 598, implementing a 10-point peace plan, establishing a ceasefire, as both parties to the conflict were already extremely worn out. (MORAES, 2015; EBRAICO, 2005)

Saudi Arabia and the North Americans

Saudi Arabia, a country that has a family name, since its creation in 1932 is subject to the absolute monarchy of the Saudi dynasty (the Saudi Arabia).

Since the beginning of the massive success of oil exploration by American companies in the Saudi kingdom, relations between the Arab country and the United States of America have become a priority in their foreign policy agendas, consequently generating several millionaire contracts in the oil industry, in addition to the Arab country breaking world records in the purchase and sale of American arms. (BBC NEWS BRAZIL, 2018)

The US therefore has a Jacksonian agenda with Saudi Arabia clearly established by an historic agreement in February 1945, also called the "Saudi-American pact", where it guided many US actions in the Middle East.

The Rise of Saudi Arabia and the North American Endorsement

Two historical factors were of paramount importance to legitimize the consolidation process of Ibn Saud as ruler of the region known as Hijaz. The first occurred in June 1927, when sovereigns and presidents of Muslim states of the time in Mecca were summoned to an Islamic Congress in order to legitimize Saud as a ruler in the region known today as Saudi Arabia. The second factor was the signing of a trade agreement with the American company Standard Oil. (LEWIS, 2003).

The first, took more time to consolidate, as it divided opinions among the Arab community, taking a long time for the governance of Ibn Saud to be properly respected and recognized. The second, besides being a form that creates legitimacy to the throne of the government for Saud, guarantees development, maintaining mainly regional status quo, through economic factors, as well as its policies and Wahhabi doctrines (LEWIS, 2003).

After the legitimization of the State of Saudi Arabia, a doctrine preached by the Saudi family, also known as Wahhabism, spread not only in the Middle East, but throughout the Islamic world.

Wahhabism, which originated in Saudi Arabia, can be characterized as one of the most conservative and rigid currents within Islam, as explained by Raposo (2009, p.6). Wahhabism is a developed Saudi religious current Muhammad Bin Abdel Wahab (1703-1791), which denies interpretations (al-ijtihad), restoring life to the 8th or 9th centuries.

In fact, with the growth of relations with Westerners and the enormous amount of resources coming from energy exploitation, it brought about a colossal change not only in the religious field in Saudi Arabia, but also brought about the economic growth of the country.

American ties with the region are linked to maintaining Saudi oil reserves, preventing the European Concert States from taking over this market.

On February 26, 1945, U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt held a conference on board the U.S. cruiser USS Quincy on the famous Suez Canal in Egypt, welcoming four important state leaders from the Middle East region on board, the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, King Farouk I of Egypt, and King Abdul Aziz Ibn of Saudi Arabia. (TAYLOR, 2015)

The meeting between the US and Saudi leaders determined the political foundations of the relationship between the two countries, the Saudi-American Pact, where both assumed responsibilities and duties: the Saudis guarantee access to oil in the territory in favor of the Americans, who in return guarantee the stability and security of the Saudi regime. (TAYLOR, 2015)

Since then relations between the two hegemonies have intensified commercially, militarily and strategically. But that relationship has not been fully aligned. Over time, the two countries often did not agree on the attitudes, specifically foreign policy attitudes of both in the international concert, such as American support for the State of Israel. However, in all these situations, there was always a factor, or a common interest, or even a common enemy, causing

the two regional powers to have closer relations again, as with the rise of the anti-Western Iranian presence in the region (VIEIRA, 2018, p.144).

Religious Rhetoric of Justification of the Conflict: Shiism and Sunism

It is important to highlight the justifying/legitimizing reason, of a religious and rhetorical nature, for the rivalry between the two regional powers. With the death of the prophet Mohammed in the 7th century A.D., the Muslim religion was separated into two strands of thought and dogma, each with its own characteristics and peculiarities.

According to Palazzo (2008) and Kamel (2003), this event brought more consequences than their faithful could foresee, because a rupture was created within the religion, due to the fact that a civil war broke out to define who would be the next Caliph. The central point of the problem was that the prophet never made it clear who would succeed him and after his death, a period of 28 years of discussions and conflicts began that resulted in the death of Ali, young cousin of the prophet Muhammad, the so-called heir (the last orthodox caliph).

After Ali's death in 661 A.D., the Community of the Faithful ("Umma") girded itself into two groups or factions, and these two currents are known as the Shiites and Sunnis.

Both, for the most part, believe that the revelation ended with the death of Mohammad, but especially the Shiites believed it necessary to have a blood anointed spiritual guide ("Imam" / Fatima and Ali descendants), who would come only at the end of time. The political regime in Shiism, therefore, is the Imamate, in which the Imam is chosen by God (Alláh), that is, this kind of judgement of choice is made by bloodline, a descent with the prophet Mohammad. Therefore, until the Imam is revealed, the community should be in the care of the experts of faith and law. (KAMEL, 2003)

As for the Sunnis, they believed that with the end of the revelation by the death of Mohammad, it was only necessary to "follow the teachings present in the Quran, the Hadiths (sayings and deeds of the Prophet) and the Sunnis (the customs of the community of believers) (KAMEL, 2003). The political system in Sunism was established in the Caliphate and the customs, where the Caliph (Khalifah) is the elected representative of the Community of the Faithful, that is, he administers the state under the aegis of Islam and his principal objective is to maintain security, public and private infrastructure, and above all to defend the faith.

This difference between political systems, especially this distinction between ways of looking at reality and Islamic society rhetorically antagonizes Saudi Arabia and Iran, both being regional powers in the Middle East.

On the one hand, Iran is a protagonist of Shiism, characterized by a more "flexible" reading and interpretation of the Koran. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia represents Sunism, specifically a strand of Wahhabi Sunism, conservative, advocating the more rigid application of the legal and religious

sources of Islam (Sharia), which are the Koran, sayings and deeds of the prophet (Hadith), community customs (Sunnas), and a conceptual standardization of priestly consensus (Ijma / BARATA, 2007, p. 2).

Motivational Events of the Proxy War and the Iranian-Saudite Tensions in Jacksonian Logic

The first recent event on which the proxy wars were linked was the Gulf War. Saddam Hussein, feeling abandoned by his allies in order to leverage Iraq on the regional political stage and to respond to the economic crisis and over-indebtedness resulting from the Iran-Iraq War, took an expansionist stance by invading Kuwait (the country's largest creditor, along with Saudi Arabia (MORAES, 2015, p. 65), which refused to forgive the debt. Saddam also had the goal of taking control of Kuwait's oil fields, which would help rebuild his state destroyed by the war with Tehran (BERTONHA, 1996).

The imposition of economic forgiveness for the violence and the threat against Saudi Arabia, which evoked its protection pact with the US, brought international consequences for Iraq, leading Washington to intervene and fight for Kuwait. American interests revolved around the search for a strategic balance of the status quo of the oil market, in other words, the Americans had no interest in Iraq obtaining total control of one of the main pioneering countries of oil production in the Middle East.

As a consequence of these reasons, the US, together with Saudi Arabia and the legitimacy of the use of military violence arising from a UN permit, Washington organized under its leadership an historic military coalition known as "Desert Storm", where in less than a month, specifically in February 1991, Iraqi troops were expelled from Kuwait. (OLIVE TREE, 2013)

In a period of 15 years after the conflict between Iran and Iraq, Baghdad again became the scene of international conflicts, but this time against its former ally, the western hegemon, the United States.

In 2003, with the allegation that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, the Americans invaded Iraq, deposing Saddam Hussein. However, attitudes not calculated by W. Bush's government in Iraq changed political-economic relations, bringing Baghdad closer to Tehran.

The established democratic regime brought the Iraqi Shiite majority, once subjugated by the Sunnis, to power by taking retaliatory positions against the once dominant group (SPOHR, 2013; VISENTINI AND ROBERTO, 2015 apud MORAES, 2015, p. 69). This revanchist policy will see the formation of the Iraqi Sunni jihadist movements Al QAEDA, and later the ISI (Islamic State of Iraq), supported by the local Sunnis and initially financed by the Saudis. Iraq becomes a space of dispute between Saudis and Iranians, through Sunni and Shia (CAIRUS, 2015 apud MORAES, p. 72) militias (proxys).

Another decisive event was the Arab Spring, which began in 2011. Faced with the failure of the leadership of the uprisings by the Sunni Muslim Brotherhood movement, the Saudis are financing the Wahhabi combatant

1 movements. In Syria, the Al Nusra movement, which opposed the dictatorship
 2 of Bashar al Assad, a regime allied to Iran, united with the ISI, creating ISIS
 3 (Islamic State of Iraq and Sham), with Saudi support, generating direct and
 4 indirect responses from Iran (Hezbollah).

5 It is important to point out that Saudi support for ISIS has been
 6 discontinued under US pressure, as the US has become a target for the Jihadist
 7 group. The Americans even softened their rhetoric hostile to the Iranian
 8 regime, until the defeat of the common enemy.

9 There is also the Yemeni War, a conflict resulting from the Arab Spring.
 10 The Iranians support the Houthi insurgents, Shiites, against the Sunni
 11 government supported by the Saudi regime. Iran is accused of financing the
 12 insurgency, and Saudi Arabia has organised a military intervention to resettle.

13 Finally, the Iranian nuclear issue. With the Donald Trump government, the
 14 US has taken drastic measures against Iran, such as the resolution of the Iranian
 15 nuclear agreement proposed by former President Obama.

16 In 2015, the group formed by the five permanent members of the security
 17 council, together with Germany (group 5 + 1) concluded the agreement with
 18 Iran, in exchange for the definitive closure of the international economic
 19 sanctions Iran should give up its nuclear program, only allowing it to use its
 20 nuclear program for commercial, industrial and medicinal purposes according
 21 to international standards. The enrichment of uranium and plutonium at the
 22 Fordow and Natanz and Arak facilities was prohibited.

23 In May 2018, Trump made official the withdrawal of the United States
 24 from the nuclear agreement, reiterating the speech of the resumption of
 25 sanctions only more stringent with Iran. The U.S. president signed the
 26 withdrawal of the agreement, accusing Iran of being the main fomenter of
 27 terrorism in the world.

28 The American interest in destabilizing the Iranian nuclear agreement and
 29 the resumption of economic sanctions on it is aimed at diminishing Iranian
 30 influence and power as a regional power.

31 Iran declared that it would remain within the agreement, but with
 32 conditions to do so, that is, Iran was awaiting the positions of the other
 33 signatory countries of the agreement, but even so, Iran started a process of
 34 noncompliance with some of the international requirements of the agreement,
 35 because they alleged lack of commitment towards the Americans.

36 Saudi Arabia and Israel were the main opponents of the establishment of
 37 the Iranian nuclear agreement, fearing its regional strengthening and
 38 rapprochement with Western powers. (BBC NEWS BRAZIL, 2019)

39 Based on the regional cold war dispute between Saudi Arabia and Iran, a
 40 greater rapprochement of Tehran with Westerners could consequently remove
 41 Saudi Arabia's status Quo as an ally of the West and its regional hegemonic
 42 position, also losing its "exclusivity" in oil trade agreements and military
 43 contracts.

44 With the defeat of ISIS in Syria and Iraq, the discourse of common efforts
 45 against the same enemy ceased by the US government with Iran. The Trump

government resumed its hostile rhetoric against Iran, returning to its policy of confrontation.

In this sense, proxies in the Middle East intensified following the example of the attack on the Saudi oil production center, attributed to the Yemenis supported by Iran (September 2019) and the attacks on the Iranian tanker attributed to the Saudis and their allies (October 2019), increasing tension in the region.

Iran, in response to direct or proxy Jacksonian actions, took advantage of its influence and the critical conditions (political and economic) in Iraq, inciting protests, such as attacks against US citizens inside Iraq, following the example of a contractor in the service of the United States. In response, the US launched air strikes against Shiite militias, intensifying hostilities and culminating in the invasion of the US Embassy in Baghdad.

In retaliation, the U.S., through an air strike in Baghdad, killed Iranian General Qasem Soleimani, responsible for Iraqi affairs in the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. He was an influential political agent in Iran. The attack killed five other people, linked to the militia.

Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of Iran, hailed Jihad, threatening the U.S. and its regional allies, including threatening to bomb Haifa (Israel) and Dubai (Arab Emirates). In addition, the U.S. had its military base in Iraq attacked by missiles from Iran, which in response intensified economic embargoes, maintaining the cycle of tension.

The tension between the two countries and the repercussions between the U.S. network of allies are undefined. One must be wary of the Iranian breath in the attacks against the Americans and of taking risks in bringing proxies like Israel, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries into the conflict.

There is also uncertainty about Chinese and Russian support for the Iranians. Do the Chinese have rapid conditions for military mobilization and are they willing to aggravate a bilateral crisis with their main trading partner? Are the Russians, who are still fighting to maintain the Syrian regime of Bashar al Assad (Iranian proxy), willing to engage in yet another conflict in the Middle East, endangering their area of influence in Syria?

The outcome is unpredictable.

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