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The New Foreign Policy; Transition from the Power Politics to the Politics of Change

*Vahid Zolfaghar*¹

As the pragmatic and utilitarian perception; the absolute power of the state, and the consideration of the state as the detached logic of social forces; the symmetrical and authoritative *raison d'être* of the state and the prominence of conservative realism in the traditional approach were transformed into the foreign policy-making as the exclusive prerogative of the state. The discourse of anti-otherness, task-oriented and ceremonially inferior attitude towards social forces in the traditional approach, not only denies the independent political life of social forces but also pushes them towards political vacuum and powerlessness. Influenced by structural ontology; generalized epistemology; and unidimensional methodology, the intellectual assurance of the traditional approach to social forces is to consider the activity as malfunction that leads to the sterility offoreign policy. Thus, the main question of this paper is why the epistemological, ontological, and methodological logic of the traditional approach is defective for analyzing the new foreign policy? By critiquing the authority of the state, focusing on a processual-proportional perspective, and considering both low and high politics, the main hypothesis considers foreign policy not only as a contextual behaviour, but also as an action based on an understanding of reality. By using a social practice, the new approach is not only oriented towards the acceptance of otherness and emphasises the independent political life of social forces, but also considers their participation in foreign policy making as right. This research applies the theory of pluralist sociology and the analytical-comparative method to test the hypothesis at the micro (subnational), meso (national) and macro (transnational) levels. The results of the research show that the developments that have taken place are neither a symbol of the departure of foreign policy nor a harbinger of the discourse of anti-foreign policy, but rather signs of epistemological changes. But they are signs of an epistemological evolution that different social forces are trying to allocate portfolios and influence decision-making accordingly.

Keywords

Foreign Policy, State, New Social Forces, Low Politics, Cognitive Developments

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Responsibility under International Law and the Challenges of Applying Reservations to International Human Rights Treaties

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*Reza Mousazadeh*³

There is an important difference between the international responsibility of States in formulating a reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of a human rights treaty and other types of international responsibility. The difference is that such a violation makes the reserving state responsible not only to the objecting members, but also to the international community as a whole. The main question of this descriptive-analytical research is what distinguishes the international responsibility of states in formulating a reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of a treaty from the acceptance of such a reservation - especially in human rights treaties.

The result of the present research shows that the responsibility of states in formulating a reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of a human rights treaty can be seen through the flexible structure of Articles 19 and 20 of the International Convention on the Law of Treaties. While Article 19 prohibits states from formulating a reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the treaty at the stage of signing, ratifying, accepting, approving or acceding to a treaty, Article 20 does not take this prohibition into account at the stage of acceptance of the reservation by other states.

Keywords

international responsibility, formulation, acceptance, reservation, object and purpose.

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Chinese Energy Diplomacy in the Caspian Basin and its Impact on Energy Security of Europe

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In the anarchic international system, there is no superior authority and no coercive power to enforce law and order in international politics. Therefore, states rely on their internal capabilities to ensure their security. China needs abundant energy resources and an uninterrupted supply of energy to sustain its economic growth. It is seeking to diversify its energy import routes through pipelines. In addition, Europe has been trying to diversify its energy import routes away from Russia following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Caspian resources are an alternative for both sides. The aim of this study is therefore to examine Are the energy cooperation trends in the Caspian Basin based on interdependence towards China or Europe? The research hypothesis is that the stable growth of China's energy consumption and fewer conflicts in the eastern part of the Caspian Basin have led the Caspian countries to cooperate more with China in the energy sector than with Europe. The research findings show that China has been experiencing sustained growth in gross domestic product (GDP) and human development index (HDI) for years after its economic reforms. Moreover, Chinese energy diplomacy in the Caspian Basin can be defined within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI), the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and mutual cooperation with Caspian Basin countries. After all, the conflicts around the Caspian Sea in the west have geopolitical roots, but in the east of the Caspian Sea the conflicts have internal roots. Therefore, the current trends in the Caspian Basin have resulted in the Caspian Basin moving towards China.

Keywords

Europe, Energy Security, China, Caspian Basin, Energy Diplomacy.

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The Middle East's Quad and U.S. Policy to Contain Iran and China

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Since the beginning of the Cold War, the strategy of "containment" has been one of the constant pillars of US foreign policy. Both the Republican and Democratic parties in the United States have used containment in their foreign policy. At the beginning of the 21st century, while the neo-conservative Republicans under George W. Bush established a strong link between war and foreign policy, the Democrats under Barack Obama did not consider this path to be in line with America's national interests. After Obama, American presidents made changes to the US strategy in Asia, which are being implemented in both the Trump and Biden administrations. This article is written within the framework of the assumptions of the realist theories of "hegemonic stability" and "offshore balance". The article evaluates the Asian strategy of American foreign policy to contain Iran and China by the method of post-event analysis and trend analysis. Considering the anti-American policies of Iran and China in West and East Asia, this research tries to answer the question: How does the United States act in Asia to contain Iran and China? The results of this research show that Although the United States is reducing its geopolitical commitments in Asia, it is still emphasising the policy of containing Asian competitors through new economic, political and security institutions. The article argues that containing China and Iran is the primary goal of the United States in establishing Quad2.

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Discourse of Development in Saudi Arabia(2015-2022); Institution of Political Power versus Institution of Religious Legitimacy

Mohammad Mahmoudikia¹

Although the idea of development in Saudi Arabia has been discussed over the past few decades due to the rich oil revenues and the consolidation of relations with the West after the geopolitical change in the region, and the civilisational and concrete manifestations of this development are evident in this country, due to the hardening of religious thought, the ruler of this country and his entanglement with the ruling political family has strengthened the position of the Sunnah in Saudi Arabia. With the arrival of the new generation of Saudi leaders and their efforts to strengthen Saudi Arabia's position in the world, as well as the country's move away from oil dependency, we are witnessing reforms that are sometimes disruptive and in conflict with the prevailing traditions in the conservative and textual religious culture that governs this country.

This research uses the method of stratified causal analysis to answer the question of what is the relationship between the actions of the new Saudi elites in the field of development policy and the thought of Salafi and Wahhabi Islamists. The results of this research suggest that the force of modernisation in Saudi Arabia is influenced by the will of the country's political leadership, and that Wahhabi-Salafism is fundamentally incapable of planning and pursuing the idea of development in a conventional way, and in a sense cannot be a producer of development thought from a discourse point of view. Therefore, the continuation of the modernisation policies of the ruling elites requires that the institution of religious legitimacy maintains its conservative approach and acts in the direction of approving and legitimising the decrees of the institution of power. Consequently, this issue may lead to an increase in the dissatisfaction of the protesting Wahhabis and especially the Jihadi Wahhabis, and we can expect an increase in tensions between this section of Wahhabis, the conservative Wahhabis and the royal court in the near future.

Keywords

Saudi Arabia, the Idea of Development, Power Institution, Conservative Wahhabis, Political Elites in Saudi Arabia.

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The Study of Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations in the Light of Domestic and Regional Factors (2021-2022)

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Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan have seen many ups and downs. One of the critical points in this relationship occurred during the Taliban rule in Afghanistan (1996-2001). During this period, Pakistan became one of the main supporters of the Taliban. A policy that had to be abandoned soon after the US attack on Afghanistan. With the Taliban set to regain power in 2021, what impact has the Taliban's rise to power had on Afghanistan-Pakistan relations? What factors have influenced these relations? The hypothesis of the study is that the Taliban have not been able to meet Pakistan's political expectations and that this state of affairs has created challenges in the relationship between the two countries. By Using a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach and a library method for data collection, the research findings show that, contrary to Pakistan's expectations, the Taliban's rise to power in Afghanistan has not led to a reduction in border tensions on the Durand Line, the abandonment of separatist claims in Pakistan's Pashtunistan state, or a downgrading of Kabul's relations with Iran and India. Therefore, Pakistan seeks to maximise its security, economic and political interests in this country through a policy of exclusion towards India and Iran and targeted and selective interaction with China and U.S.

Keywords

strategic depth, extremism, Taliban, Afghanistan, Pakistan.

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Normalization of Arab and Israeli regime relations and its Implications on I.R. of Iran's National Security

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By applying the theory of "Balance of Interests" developed by Randall Schuller within the theoretical framework of neoclassical realism, this research attempts to answer the question: what consequences will the Abraham Accords have on Iran's national security?

The research hypothesis is that highlighting Iran as the greatest threat in the security perceptions of the Persian Gulf countries will lead to their synergy in making challenges to Iran's national security in terms of political, military-security and economic dimensions. By using a descriptive-analytical method, the results of the research show that by signing Abrahamic agreements with the Persian Gulf countries, the Israeli regime is trying to protect itself from diplomatic isolation and jeopardise Iran's national security. Other findings show that various factors at the international, regional and domestic levels have played a key role in the formation of these agreements, which reinforce and support each other. Therefore, increasing Israel's power in West Asia will have many consequences against Iran's interests and national security and will lead to regional power rivalry in favour of the Israeli regime.

Keywords

Realism, West Asia, Iran National Security, Abraham Accords.

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Explaining the Geopolitical Challenges and Opportunities of Iran-Egypt Relations

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The relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Arab Republic of Egypt in the global and regional system and their actions and mutual relations always create new issues in the Middle East and North Africa region, and in fact, any action of the two countries will face the geopolitics of the mentioned regions with extensive changes. In recent years, the developments in the Middle East have provided countless geopolitical opportunities for the development of Tehran-Qairo relations. In this context, the present research has studied the explanation of the geopolitical challenges and opportunities of Iran-Egypt relations by applying a descriptive-analytical method. Furthermore, the research considers political, regional and international factors as challenges and obstacles to the convergence of two countries and assumes that the removal of these obstacles will improve the regional status of the two countries and the existing geopolitical opportunities will also increase the convergence between them. The research has used a survey study to test the hypotheses. The statistical population consists experts and professors of geopolitics and international relations, and the sample size of 50 subjects was estimated based on Cochran's model and the mean test was used in SPSS software. The results show that the existence of historical and civilisational ties; the insensitivity of the two countries to each other's civilisational identity; and the change in the Egyptian government after Mubarak's rule are geopolitical opportunities to develop the relationship. However, a number of internal and regional factors remain obstacles to a rapprochement between the two countries.

Keywords

Iran, geopolitics, Middle East, Egypt, convergence.

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