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Martindale: The complete drug reference [book on CD-ROM], Englewood, Co: Micromedex; 1999. Based on, Parfitt K, (ed.), Martindale: The Complete Drug Reference, London: Pharmaceutical Press; International Healthcare Series.

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ABSTRACT

The Flaws of the Proliferation Cascade Scenario: Iran-Saudi Relations in Perspective

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This paper argues spiral arms race in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is spurious and highly unlikely to lead to further stability. There is substantial evidence to suggest that the threat of arms race and the so-called “proliferation cascade” is a bogus excuse to thwart Iran’s nuclear deal with the “P5+1” group. Our central argument is that the notion that arms race intensifies regional rivalries may seem reasonable on its face, but it fails to match reality. Arguably, an arms race does not currently exist between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The situation can be more accurately described as a one-sided arms buildup where Saudi Arabia has out-spent Iran by colossal amounts while Iran has worked to compete with Saudi Arabia without a corresponding increase in military spending. While it is possible in theory that improved efficiency in the procurement of arms could result in real military capability gains—often disguised by stable military expenditure—there isn’t ample evidence to support the idea that this is indeed the case.

Keywords: Arms race, military expenditure, nuclear deal, military capability, military strategy, domestic threat.

Changes in Russia-US Relations under Medvedev

Elaheh Koolae,

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After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US and Russian Federation relations have been experienced ups and downs. The period of believing the end of long-lasting competition between the two countries after the cold war was too short enough to approve the optimistic analysis of Westerners politicians. The next developments showed quickly the distance between Moscow and Washington's views on issues of international peace and security. On the one hand, Russia's growing concerns about the former republics on its own periphery were intensified by the increasing effects of the Global War on Terrorism. On the other hand, the US growing presence in West Asia, Afghanistan and Iraq, and then Syrian crisis, Iranian nuclear program and deployment of the US Missile Defense System in Europe, prepared the ground for creating more confrontation between them. A decade after the independence of the former Soviet Republics, Russian president, Vladimir Putin, crafted and fixed a pragmatic foreign policy. Dmitry Medvedev, the next President of Russia, put this policy on the path of "reset", which is now facing with complicated problems. However, the question raised by this article is: "What internal, regional or international factors changed the Russian and US relations during Medvedev's presidency? This paper is based on a descriptive-analytic method, and to examine the mechanisms of this change from the Russian point of view, it studies the positions of its experts.

Keywords: Russia, the US, Europe, Medvedev, Obama, Putin, Bush, Near Abroad, Middle East, Missile Defense System, New START Treaty

United Arab Emirates' Armed Forces in the Federation-Building Process: Seeking for Ambitious Engagement.

Dr. Eleonora Ardemagni

Persian Gulf analyst, Nato Defense College Foundation, Aspen Institute Italy.

This research paper investigates the complex relation between United Arab Emirates (UAE) and their armed forces. While in the Seventies the process of state-making was primarily rent-driven, deeper federation-building efforts has now been focusing on modern integration among the seven armed forces. From a domestic perspective, this strategy has enhanced Abu Dhabi's neo-patrimonial supremacy on the military system. Armed forces play also a crescent role in the new UAE foreign policy, oriented towards "ambitious engagement" through defense expenditure, cooperative security with Western powers and Nato, regional military assertiveness in the Middle East. Moreover, UAE armed forces and the domestic arena have a circular relation, since pilots and soldiers, due to their commitment abroad, have been gradually becoming vectors for UAE federal consciousness, fostering collective identity and so contributing to enhance Abu Dhabi's political weight within Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Through qualitative analysis, this paper problematizes the role and evolution of UAE armed forces, in a framework of complex realism.

Keywords: United Arab Emirates, armed forces, foreign policy, neo-patrimonialism, Persian Gulf Cooperation Council.

**From Dialogue to Alliance of Civilizations:
*Iranian and Spanish Initiatives Revisited***

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The Dialogue of Civilizations and Alliance of Civilizations initiatives, launched by the former Iranian president Mohammad Khatami and the former Spanish head of government Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero are analysed in this paper. By comparing the two cases we will try to address the question of the objectives both governments had in mind when proposing such initiatives to the international forums, as well as the success or failure of both initiatives in regards to those objectives. The paper argues that both projects failed to prevent the eruption of violent conflicts since their launching, mainly because they focused in governmental institutions rather than civil society organizations.

Keywords: Clash of Civilizations, Dialogue among Civilizations, Politics, Iran, Spain

Philosophy, Art and Critique: A (short) conversation with the “other”¹

Arshin Adib-Moghaddam

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Abstract: The article sketches a nexus between philosophy, art (poetry) and critique with a particular emphasis on the contribution of classical Muslim philosophers. At the same time, it demonstrates how luminaries such as Omar Khayyam and Ibn Sina, contributed to the renewal of philosophy as a freedom seeking exercise and as a means to pursue happiness through knowledge. In the second part of the article this discussion is geographically de-located to include critical theories from mainland Europe. The conclusion focuses on the comparability of these contemporary critical theories with the philosophies of the “east”.

Keywords: Dialogue, Middle East, Philosophy, Art, Political Sciences, Critique, Other.

1. A version of this article was commissioned by Kimiya-ye Honar Magazine in Tehran.

Étude comparative de la responsabilité du fait des produits défectueux : droit européen, droit français, droit américain et droit iranien

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Les comparaisons réalisées dans cet article sont un œuvre personnel du rédacteur. Le droit américain et le droit européen de la responsabilité du fait des produits sont les droits les plus développés dans le monde. La notion de produit dans la directive communautaire de 1985 sur la responsabilité du fait des produits défectueux ainsi qu'en droit français est plus protectrice pour les consommateurs que celle de the third restatement of torts aux Etats-Unis d'Amérique et que le droit iranien. The third restatement of torts aux Etats-Unis est plus protectrice pour les consommateurs que la directive communautaire, le droit français et le droit iranien quant aux personnes responsables puisqu'elle a prévu certaines obligations à la charge des personnes responsables qui n'ont été prévues ni par la directive communautaire, ni par le droit français ni par le droit iranien. Le régime de la responsabilité du fait des produits instauré par la directive communautaire et le droit français est plus protecteur pour les consommateurs que celui de la troisième restatement of torts aux Etats-Unis et que le droit iranien. La directive communautaire, le droit français et le droit américain sont plus développées et plus protecteurs pour les consommateurs que le droit iranien.

Keywords: Responsabilité, Produit, Défaut, Fabricant, Vendeur, Consommateur.



The Flaws of the Proliferation Cascade Scenario: Iran-Saudi Relations in Perspective

Mahmood Monshipouri*

William Chu**

Introduction

The unraveling of the Arab Spring uprisings and the ensuing promise of peaceful democratic change have been accompanied or followed by one of the most significant developments in the non-Arab Middle East region—that is, the possible rapprochement between Iran and the United States. If the nuclear deal between Iran and Western powers evolves into a steady normalization of relations between them, it could potentially bolster Iran’s geopolitical and geo-economic status in the region, a development which holds drastic implications for US allies such as Israel and Saudi Arabia. While Israel is afraid of Iran’s emerging economic and political powers as a major challenge to the

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former's hegemony, Saudi Arabia deems the rapprochement between Iran and the West crucial not only to Iran's rising political stature but also to the resurgence of sectarian competition in the region.

As a key regional competitor of Saudi Arabia, Iran figures prominently in Saudi security interests and concerns. The same is true when it comes to Iran's regional geostrategic considerations, especially considering the political uncertainties in the context of the post-Arab Spring uprisings. The Saudi's concerns and fears about Iran's heightened role in regional affairs are partly justified and partly overstated. Iran's influence in neighboring Shia-majority countries, such as Iraq and Bahrain, poses a destabilizing challenge to Saudi Arabia's minority Shi'ites who live mostly in the north eastern part of the country.

Nevertheless, just as the Saudi's fear of Iran's Shia revolutionary meddling in the region is somewhat overstated, so is its concern regarding Iran's nuclear program, given that Iran's capacity to build a nuclear bomb has been dramatically reduced according to the July 14, 2015, nuclear deal signed between the P5+1 group (China, England, France, Russia, and the United States, plus Germany) and Iran. The nuclear accord manifestly stipulates that Iran must destroy 98 percent of its enriched uranium, all its 5-20 percent enriched uranium, remove and store two-thirds of its centrifuges (including all advanced centrifuges), terminate its enrichment activities at its Fordow nuclear facility and make inoperable the key operations of its Arak reactor, which could have been used to generate plutonium. This should be perceived as a dramatic reduction of the potential threat of a nuclear Iran for the region.

It is regularly argued that improving relations with Saudi Arabia entails significant implications for unstable locations throughout the region, specifically: Iraq, Bahrain, Lebanon, Yemen, and Syria. The penetration of Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS—known as “Dae'sh” locally) has created a common threat to both Iran and Saudi Arabia, linking, in a rather unprecedented way, the Iraqi and Syrian crises. It is important to note, as Kamran Bokhari argues (2015), that Dae'sh capitalizes on Saudi Arabia's geo-sectarian strategy to advance its jihadist goals. Dae'sh is fueling speculation that Riyadh and the jihadists are on the same page insofar as fighting Shia is concerned.

Yet Saudi Arabia cannot afford to alienate Arab Shias and push

them toward a welcoming Iran. To Stop Dae'sh attacks on the Shia, Bokhari (2015) continues, Saudi authorities must crack down on Salafists who assist Dae'sh's operations in the kingdom. Dae'sh seeks to drive a wedge between the kingdom and its Salafist establishment, a political strategy that may explain why it is essential to understand that although Dae'sh is targeting Shias, they are using them as instruments to obtain the real prize: Saudi Arabia.

Although, Iran and Saudi Arabia have been at odds over regional issues for decades—including: energy politics, the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the U.S. presence in the region, and the external meddling in the fractious political environments of Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq, and Syria—they both realize that festering distrust and sectarian and ideological competition between them could be detrimental to the region's stability (Monshipouri and Keynoush, 2008). In both Yemen and Syria—the site of the latest and most perilous arena of competition and conflict between the two countries, with Iran supporting Houthis in Yemen and the Assad regime in Syria, as well as the Shi'a Hezbollah pitted against Saudi-backed Sunni Muslim insurgents—lingering sectarian and geopolitical impediments have had destabilizing consequences for the region at large. Precisely for this reason, both Iran and Saudi Arabia have much to gain from ratcheting down the intense sectarian nature of their competition. The sectarianization of the region will no doubt continue to undermine the long-term interests of both countries and the broader region.

Pursuing common regional interests may be an effective first step in expanding regional cooperation on such issues as finding a mutually acceptable solution to the Syrian crisis. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani also hopes that the improvement of relations with one of the key regional U.S. allies would have a positive impact on possible future Iran-U.S. rapprochement (Monshipouri and Dorraj, 2013). Moreover, Rouhani's election demonstrated that a critical mass in the country was weary of ideological extremes and ideology-based policies, and that most Iranians were looking for a common ground based on pragmatism and Iran's survival as a country and culture (Hunter, 2014:257-258).

In the meantime, experts remind us that the United States will become self-sufficient in energy by 2030, as new drilling technologies, alternative fuels, and curtailing local consumption will dramatically reduce the need

to import oil (BP Energy Outlook, 2015). A key ramification of this oil independence policy might very well be that the United States cuts down on its military commitments in the Persian Gulf region. This policy is bound to undermine the Saudis' strategic status, especially as the Obama administration and future US administrations may pivotally turn their attention to Asia. The Obama administration has been unwilling to take a leadership role in the non-oil producing Arab countries, in part because of the failed interventionist policies of George W. Bush and also due to the fact that its own key foreign policy priorities lie in Asia. In short, the Obama administration has been leery of making substantive investments, choosing instead retrenchment and selective commitments over overt engagements (Gerges, 2013:321-322).

The Israelis will face an emerging power broker, namely Iran, in the Persian Gulf region. Under such circumstances, the Saudis will do well if they reconsider their hostile relations with their neighbor to the east: Iran. The consistent exaggeration of Iranian power in the region needs further examination given that evidence flies directly counter to claims by Iran's Arab neighbors that Tehran is bent on outspending them in military hardware and technology. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), for instance, finds that the Arab states of the Persian Gulf have "an overwhelming advantage over Iran in both military spending and access to modern arms" (Chomsky, 2015).

It is in this context that the Saudi Arms race merits further examination. From a security perspective, a spiraling arms race in the region is highly unlikely to lead to further stability. We aim to demonstrate that there is substantial evidence to suggest that the threat of an arms race and the so-called "proliferation cascade" in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is a spurious excuse to thwart Iran's nuclear deal with the P5+1 group. Our central argument is that arms races by their nature intensify regional rivalries that may seem reasonable on their face, but fail to match reality. We also argue that it is equally important to acknowledge limits on US-Iran reconciliation, given that conservatives in Iran, while unable to stop the nuclear deal, would resist improved ties with America (Hunter, 2014:273). That said, US foreign policy needs recalibrating if it desires a non-military solution to the region's problems. Perhaps fostering Saudi-Iran rapprochement is the best place to start.

In the sections that follow, we first define what is meant by an arms race. We then expose the spurious assumptions behind the arms race

scenario, as allegedly precipitated by the Iranian nuclear deal. Our focus subsequently shifts to a comparison of the military expenditures of Iran and Saudi Arabia. A discussion of the real military and strategic capabilities will follow to shed light on the Saudis' motivations for arming. Finally, our analysis turns to the risks and rewards of the arms race, both internally and from an external standpoint.

The Arms Race Defined

In order to determine if Saudi Arabia and Iran are engaged in an arms race with each other in a regional struggle for dominance, it is first necessary to define what this paper means when it refers to an arms race for the sake of clarity. In this case an arms race will be considered “the participation of two or more nation-states in apparently competitive or interactive increases in quantity or quality of war material and/or persons under arms” (Smith, 1980). This definition will be utilized because it encompasses the core facets of an arms race that most political scientists can agree upon.

It is important to note that this definition factors in not only increases in real military capabilities but also intent, as “not all military spending constitutes arms racing . . . only those coupled with hostile or competitive foreign policy statements” (Smith, 1980). For Iran and Saudi Arabia to be considered as engaged in an arms race, real military capability building must also be coupled with evidence that they are triggered in direct response to the other's actions.

Iran's military spending, as experts illustrate, is in fact “a fraction of Saudi Arabia's and far below the spending of the United Arab Emirates. Altogether, the Gulf Cooperation Council states—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates—outspend Iran on arms by a factor of eight—an imbalance that goes back decades” (Chomsky, 2015). In fact, three countries—Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey—account for more than half of all military expenditures in the region, with Saudi Arabia's average military expenditures (as percentage of GDP) at 30 percent, Turkey at 13 percent, and Israel at 12 percent (Cammett, Diwan, Richards, and Waterbury, 2015:357-359). For example, from 2006 to 2012, Saudi Arabia spent 8.2 percent of its GDP on military expenditures, while Iran's expenditures stood at 2.8 percent (Cammett, Diwan, Richards, and Waterbury, 2015:358).

A Phony or Real Arms Race?

Political analysts and observers have thrown around the idea that Saudi Arabia is engaged, or will soon be engaged, in a Persian Gulf arms race against its regional rival Iran. A cursory glance at the headlines of major news agencies reveals this anxiety, giving the impression that an arms race is the open secret about Saudi-Iranian relations. Yet to characterize the security situation between the Saudis and Iranians as an arms race would be to misunderstand the actual situation on the ground. While the Saudi defense budget has continued to show growth year after year, Iran's defense budget remained stagnant by comparison. It is worth noting that tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran over regional influence are very real, and deserve serious consideration to prevent being blindsided by an unforeseen consequence of diplomacy with Iran.

Is there or will there be a Saudi-Iranian arms race? What will be the consequences of a Saudi-Iranian arms race? What then are the current and historic motivations behind Saudi defense spending? This paper argues that while the Saudi-Iranian rivalry is very real, an arms race does not currently exist between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The situation can be better described as a one-sided arms buildup where Saudi Arabia has out-purchased Iran by astronomical amounts while a comparatively quiet Iran has worked to compete with Saudi Arabia without a corresponding increase in military spending. In order to maintain stability in the Persian Gulf Region, the United States should recognize that while the situation is not truly an arms race, the perpetuation of the narrative that an arms race exists is in itself a product of the Saudi-Iranian rivalry, created as a means of damaging Iran's nuclear deal prospects by pressuring Saudi Arabia's allies in the West. In understanding this dynamic, the United States should sidestep potential landmines hidden in its foreign policy dealings across the MENA region. While Iran will be factored into this study, the focus will be primarily upon the Saudis as the primary instigators.

In terms of quantitative analysis, the Saudi and Iranian Defense Reports compiled by Business Monitor International for Q1 and Q2 of the 2015 fiscal year provide the opportunity for conducting a comprehensive comparison between the two nations not only in the realm of military expenditures, but also in real manpower and strategic resources, factors which weigh heavily in security policy but may often

be overlooked in favor of defense spending. This will explain what is happening in both Iran and Saudi Arabia, and how the balance of power does not support the notion that an arms race is underway.

Comparison of Military Expenditures

In order to satisfy the first criteria of an arms race, military expenditure, a commonly used indicator of military capabilities, will be examined. According to the estimate of Iranian defense spending by Business Monitor International, Iranian defense spending has held steady at 2.2% of its GDP from 2011 to the present. In pure terms however, Iranian defense spending has actually fallen from its highest point of \$12.2 billion USD in 2012 to an estimated \$9.4 billion in 2014, corresponding to a weakened Iranian economy under the pressure of international sanctions (*Iran Defense and Security Report*, 2015). This time period also corresponds with the heightened threat Iran faced from a potential attack on its nuclear facilities to the gradual improvement of security conditions as it engaged in negotiations with world powers.

During this same time period, Saudi Arabia has spent an average of 7.5% of its national GDP on the military, reaching peak levels of \$59.1 billion USD in 2014. This places Saudi Arabia into the top 5 countries by military expenditure, behind only great powers like the United States, China, Russia, and the United Kingdom. As a comparison, Saudi defense spending per capita dwarfs the Iranian spending per capita with the Saudis spending roughly \$1,600 per person across the last four years and Iranian spending holding at \$70 at its peak, to roughly \$32 in 2014 (*Saudi Defense and Security Report*, 2015).

Based upon these numbers alone, it is abundantly clear that Saudi Arabia has Iran considerably outspent, yet there is insufficient evidence to suggest that each nation's military expenditures have significantly grown in relation to each other. Saudi Arabia consistently maintains spending at high levels, while Iran also maintains a consistent military spending as a percentage of its GDP. While there have been major fluctuations in defense spending over the past several years, there have been no major shifts in spending patterns beyond regular adjustment for the growth or shrinkage of GDP. An increase in military budget alone falls short of determining if it were done as a response to the other party. These relatively steady numbers merely suggest that perhaps no correlative relationship exists.

Comparison of Real Military and Strategic Capabilities

Military spending alone however, cannot provide the entirety of the picture. The balance of power must also be examined in real terms, in the number of troops each nation has fielded, and in the quality and quantity of its armaments. While Saudi Arabia vastly outspends Iran, the Iranian military maintains a force of around 565,000 men under arms, a number that has remained steady since 2005 with only a minor reduction of a few thousand during that time period (*Iran Defense and Security Report 1*, 2015). The Saudi Armed Forces number only 249,000, yet this number is a major increase from its 2005 level, which numbered at 216,000 (*Saudi Defense and Security Report*, 2015). For all of Saudi Arabia's military spending, the advantage that Iran holds in population and numbers translates into distinct advantages for Iran, explaining to a certain degree the cautiousness of the Saudi Regime toward Iran—its sheer size grants it geopolitical influence that cannot be bought with money.

Thus far the comparison has demonstrated the balance of power between Iran and Saudi Arabia, yet there has been little evidence of a growing arms race of any real significance. An examination into the way that the defense budgets have been spent fails to reveal anything significant or worthy of attention either. Shortly after an agreement on the Iranian nuclear deal was reached, Saudi Arabia concluded a \$1.9 billion deal to purchase helicopters from the United States for its navy, as well as another \$2 billion contract to obtain Patriot air defense missile systems (*Saudi Arabia Defense and Security Report*, 2015). These were contracts that raised the attention of the media, but these purchases have been occurring regularly over the past decade and mark no drastic departure from Saudi defense procurement.

On Iran's part, its relatively meager defense budget has not been able to obtain weapons capable of dramatically altering the security balance short of a nuclear weapon. The sale of the S-300 missiles to Iran by Russia during the nuclear deal negotiations in early 2015 stands out as a sign of a potential arms race escalation between Saudi Arabia and Iran (MacFarquhar, 2015). Unlike the Saudi example, the ability for Iran to spend their defense budget on advanced foreign weaponry does mark a departure from past years, where previously Iran was limited in its foreign arms suppliers. The easing of arms

sanctions by Russia is a clear cut example where the same amount of money spent by Iran on defense could potentially result in higher yields. Yet there has not been a cascade of foreign arms rushing into Iran, and cases like the S-300 does not necessarily translate into wider upgrades for the rest of the Iranian military.

The overall conclusion is that while it is possible in theory that improved efficiency in the procurement of arms could result in real military capability gains, disguised by stable military expenditures, there is simply not enough data to support the idea that this is the case. Neither Iran nor Saudi Arabia has achieved any buildup of real military power that deviates significantly from their pre-nuclear negotiations norm, something that the military expenditure analysis also indicated. Each nation may still be trying to modernize its military capabilities to the best possible degree in anticipation of its rival, but each continues to do so with the budget that they have, largely independent of the spending and procurement of the other.

Saudi Motivations

The data thus far falls short of supporting the idea that an arms race exists in reality, but there has been a great deal of rhetoric from Saudi Arabia and US pundits hinting at the existence of one. The motivation for doing so can be distilled down to a very simple set of principles, the rejection of diplomacy with Iran on its nuclear program, and furthering Saudi national interests.

An interview conducted with a Saudi official by the BBC illustrates how closely linked the nuclear deal has been to the arms race narrative: Prince Turki al-Faisal, the former head of Saudi Intelligence, warns the BBC that any rights given to Iran regarding uranium enrichment would also be expected by Saudi Arabia (Usher, 2015). Statements by Saudi officials hinting at a nuclear arms race with Iran should the nuclear deal proceed are based almost entirely upon one assumption: the idea that Saudi Arabia will embark on a path toward acquiring nuclear weapons should the passage of the Iranian nuclear deal, the effective enforcement and domestic focus of which the Saudis are particularly dubious of, become final. Viewed in this light, combating the Iranian nuclear deal by promoting the arms race narrative is a means of advancing Saudi national interest.

The Risks and Rewards of the Arms Race

Saudi Arabia and Iran have not demonstrated that they are currently engaged in a military buildup beyond their regular arms development models; however, Saudi Arabia has perpetuated the idea that it will soon engage in an arms race to outdo and counter Iran. This arms race does not exist in a quantifiable form; it is merely a creation of rhetoric, ideas, and belligerent posturing. Interestingly enough, the consequences of threatening an arms race, alongside actual high military expenditure, creates effects not dissimilar from an actual arms race.

First, an arms race between Iran and Saudi Arabia places pressure upon Saudi allies in the West, such as the United States, to take Saudi concerns seriously. The outbreak of an actual conventional arms race amongst the Arab states of the Persian Gulf sparked by Saudi-Iranian conflict could lead to a potential powder keg in the region. Similarly, Smith argues in his piece “Arms Race Instability and War” that many arms races have historically tended toward destabilizing outcomes that ultimately resolves in outright war. When states begin to participate in arms races against an opponent, it is more likely that each side will only continue to grow in strength until one or the other concludes that open conflict is the only path out of an unsustainable and unwinnable security dilemma. If Saudi Arabia knows that the United States must intervene to prevent this, they could effectively utilize the threat of instability to galvanize its allies into providing assistance.

Although the rhetoric issued by Saudi Arabia should be taken seriously, there also exists a high chance of a major backlash. According to Christopher Hobbs and Matthew Moran, there are substantial economic reasons why Saudi Arabia would not choose to engage in a nuclear race. If Saudi Arabia were to try and out-compete Iran at the pursuit of nuclear weapons, it might expect to see international investment dip substantially as its hostile actions makes external support untenable. Erratic actions may also force its protectors to reconsider the rationale behind an alliance in the first place. The political signals a state sends out during the process of preparing for an arms race is so destabilizing that its costs may well exceed potential benefits (Hobbs and Moran, 2012).

On the matter of business, David Sorenson argues that Saudi Arabia utilizes its oil wealth to purchase arms as a means of securing political support in the United States while US companies grow

dependent on the promise of a Saudi-enforced regional order. Over the years, arms contracts, such as the most recent arms deal between Raytheon and the House of Al Saud, have provided US military industries with a significant and reliable source of income whose special interests prevent them from being easily cut. The size of the Saudi security state has a momentum of its own, making cutbacks to defense spending a difficult prospect for the foreseeable future. Across the MENA region, the sale of US arms to authoritarian states has generated profit, but in doing so US corporations have been integrated into positive feedback loops of arms, repression, and war.

Domestic Threat Factors

Iran, while frequently framed as Saudi Arabia's primary geopolitical foe, may not in actuality be the primary threat to Saudi national security. Rather the greatest threat comes from internal dissent from within. Saudi Arabia currently contends with the threat of Islamic extremists spilling over from conflicts to its north, Shia unrest in Bahrain and its eastern provinces, the Houthi rebellion in Yemen, and of course the threat that its own people may rise up against the regime as was done in Egypt or Tunisia during the Arab Spring uprisings. As Gregory F. Gause III (2014: 185-189) states Saudi Arabia is a "militarily weak state that seeks to preserve its independence by preventing the emergence of regional hegemony" with the primary goal of its foreign policy to "safeguard the stability of the domestic Al Saud regime." Saudi Arabia views its foreign policy as a means of promoting its royal family. This almost necessarily indicates that domestic opposition to the royal family may be more likely to occur than the premise of invading troops. Saudi Arabia's military spending numbers are said to be inflated because it must take into account the large number of forces necessary to repress the populace, diluting the actual capabilities of the military in fighting other armies.

While Gause's assertion of Saudi Arabia's status (2014:189) as a "weak state" might not seem intuitive given Saudi Arabia's massive security expenditures, a deeper examination of the internal organization of the Saudi security apparatus may lend further understanding to why Saudi Arabia has good reason to worry about the efficacy of its forces. Stephanie Cronin explains in "Tribes, Coups and Princes: Building a Modern Army in Saudi Arabia," that the Saudi military was never transformed into a national and professional institution in the same vein as, for example, the

Egyptian military was. The organization of the Saudi army has, and continues to be, based upon tribal and personal loyalty ties to the Saudi royal family. As a result of this nepotism, the Saudi military is plagued by a limited level of competency amongst its military leadership which may be incapable effectively of utilizing its arsenal of modern weapons in a real war. In the absence of a truly professional officer corps, Saudi defense may not correlate with actual combat success.

Conclusion

The idea that Saudi Arabia and Iran are engaged in an arms race that threatens to unravel the security of the MENA region, unless the United States takes tougher actions toward Iran has been widely proliferated in popular media, yet the available evidence reveals no such competition. The rift between Iran and Saudi Arabia in military spending is so wide that Iran cannot in reality be considered part of the competition. Furthermore, the example of a few high profile weapons deals provides inconclusive evidence of an arms race. This paper began trying to find hidden patterns in the data that would reveal the existence of an ongoing crisis. What it discovered instead is that the arms race narrative is one based largely on divisive rhetoric perpetuated by parties with a vested interest in scuttling the ongoing nuclear negotiations with Iran.

The fact that a real arms race does not currently exist is not a reason, however, to dismiss all of the concerns raised by vital US allies. The Persian Gulf region is extremely important to US strategic interests. Maintaining security in the Persian Gulf depends on both Iran and Saudi Arabia. The myth of the Saudi-Iranian arms race has thus far been employed as essentially a cautionary tale, but the conflicting interests of Saudi Arabia and Iran mean that such an arms race has every reason to exist. When Iran gazes toward Saudi Arabia and its allies in the Gulf, Iran may notice the gaping hole in military spending between itself and its neighbors, tilting the military balance firmly in favor of Saudi Arabia. Conversely when Saudi Arabia confronts Iran, they may be unnerved by their much larger foe, and see military technology paid for by petro-dollars as the only means of compensating for the deficit. The worst case scenario would be if both powers decided that their only security guarantee would have to lie with nuclear arms. ❖

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Causes of Changes in Russia-US Relations under Medvedev

Elaheh Koolaee *

Introduction

The disappointment of the Russian pro-West leaders of the US aids in resolving their country's economic crisis and the transformation of political balance in Russia after independence, resulted in significant changes in its relations with the US. In the second half of the 1990's, Following the overall decline of the pro-West forces, the Eurasian Nationalistic approaches achieved more attention and significance. Russian government's attempts to keep its composing nations unified and preserve the country's ties with "Near Abroad" republics, which was accompanied by various Washington interventions, intensified the tensions in its bilateral relations with that. Slow paces of the economic reforms, the delay in the democratization of Russia according to its political culture, and centralism and authoritarianism in the country all intensified the pessimistic views of the west seriously.

During the first and the second rounds of Putin's presidency (2000-

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2008), pragmatism fixed in the foreign policy of Russia and during Medvedev's presidency (2008-2012), Russian and US leaders tried to rebuild mutual relations. In 2009, Following the proposal of US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton, for "Reset" of relations, the two countries entered a new path. In this regard, the *Russian Newsweek* wrote that in February 2010, Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs drafted and submitted a document to Medvedev for approval (Blank, 2010; 333). The document emphasized on the significance of the new movement in foreign policy on the basis of common economic and cultural interests with the US and the West. Valery Zubkov's Deputy Premier call for large-scale Russian-Canadian cooperation and Canadian investment in Russian technology, and Deputy Premier Sergei Ivanov's travel to the US also worth mentioning in this regard. The same changes happened for the relations of Russia with France and Germany as well. Of course, long before these developments, through facilitating the talks for joining the "World Trade Organization" (WTO), and civilian nuclear cooperation agreement with the US, Moscow had already benefited from the advantages of expanding ties with Washington (Blank, 2010; 334).

Russia's entry to the WTO, which made the US companies worry about its effects - due to higher Russian tariffs than their competitors from other countries - has been one of the main factors in changing the two countries' relations (Cohen and Riley, 2012). Just before official decleration of the "reset" policy in May 2009, Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. proposed a "reset" with Russia (Terekhov, 2009, 1). Using this metaphor was a signal of readiness for change of relations between the two, and also a new start for regulating those ties (Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 2009; 1). Some experts considered this policy as a unique opportunity for Russia, and a "strategic window" for improvement and expansion of its relationship with the US (Karaganov, 2011: 8). Then, Russia increased pressure on Tehran and underscored his support of the US operations in Afghanistan. In return, US also tried to decrease the anti-Russian feelings in the former Soviet Republics, the pace of NATO's Eastward Expansion and the transfer of weapons to Georgia. (Karaganov, 2011, 8).

Regarding the "Reset", Alexei Fenenko in his article published in *International Affairs* magazine in Moscow, mentions three reasons:

1. Concerns of weakening arms control regime, because the "Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty" (START I) signed in 1991, has been expired in December 2007;

2. The fear of a military confrontation between them, especially apropos of the Russia-Georgia 5-day war in August 2008; the biggest challenge facing the two countries since 1983. There was a possibility of such conflict in Western and Central Europe as well;
3. Obama's demand for a remarkable reduction of Russian military arsenals.

In his speech on April 5, 2011 at the "Munich Security Conference", Hilary Clinton emphasized on the necessity for a 75% reduction of nuclear weapons, annihilation of tactical nuclear weapons and leading to real deterrence. Some of his points had formerly been mentioned in the Wyoming Agreement during the Soviet Union era in 1989 (Fenenko, 2011).

The US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, began discussions on resetting relations on March 6, 2009. In the next months, some steps were taken to implement their agreements. For example, at Russia-NATO Summit in Lisbon on November 2010, they agreed to cooperate on the so-called European Missile Defense System. But in winter 2010, NATO members rejected the Russian proposal for a new European security treaty. Finally, in January 2011, NATO Council reiterated that the Missile Defense will go forward with or without Russian cooperation (Fenenko, 2011).

However, despite disagreement on the aforementioned issues, during their meeting on the sidelines of the APEC Summit in Honolulu on November 2011, Presidents Dmitry Medvedev and Barack Obama agreed to resume their talks at the NATO Summit in Chicago in May 2012 (Yermolin and Yunanov, 2011; 24). There was a concern that in the event of any problem in these talks, the START treaties and also Prague agreement on European Missile Defense System could be in danger, too. Moreover, regional difficulties added to these strategic disagreements. The first, they could not reach to any agreement on the agenda for European security talks. Another important issue in this regard was the extending its scope to include the UK and France in arms control talks. The second was the issue of cooperation in Central Asia and Afghanistan. The third issue was that Washington and Moscow failed to establish an appropriate security system for cooperation in Asia-Pacific region.

Eventually, it made clear that "Reset" of relations during Obama's presidency is not an easy task. The developments in the two countries'

relations after the collapse of the Soviet Union properly indicated that even under the new conditions, some important factors block a comprehensive cooperation between them. After all, the present paper tries to answer this question from Russian experts' viewpoints that "What internal, regional or international factors changed the Russian and US relations during Medvedev's presidency?" It should be noted that although in the recent years some important factors, specially the Ukraine crisis have contributed to change in the US-Russia relations, since the focus of this article is on Medvedev's presidency, only the developments in the 2008-2012 period and the related developments in the immediate aftermath are discussed and analyzed.

Internal Factors

Russian Foreign Policy Concept of 2000 had accorded a special place to the Ministry of Defense. The importance of the research and educational institutions and the governmental and non-governmental organizations had been also emphasized. Additionally, the document stressed the need to be transparent in foreign policy, so that the direction of internal changes could reflect itself in foreign relations. This document approved for public release, because there were no secret issues. The idea of Network Diplomacy and the role of religion in Russian foreign policy were considered, too. Some international approaches like "growing trend towards the establishment of a unipolar structure of the world with the economic and power domination of the United States" had been criticized in this document. From this perspective, "The world order of the 21st century must be based on the mechanisms of collective resolution of key problems" more than before. The US war in Afghanistan after September 11, 2001, and its unilateral action against Iraq in 2003 were also mentioned as examples of great costs for the people of the region.

During Medvedev's term, visible changes took place in Russia's foreign policy. At the beginning of his period, Russia had the presidency of "The Group of Eight" (G8), it had also joined with the "Council of Europe" and several other important international organizations. In recent years, the issues of foreign policy had also a special place in president's annual reports to the State Duma (Kramarenko, 2008; 28)

By and large, Foreign Policy Concept of 2000 was a reaction to the

internal and external changes of Russia and the whole world, which had made the change of foreign policy compulsory. After that, the terrorist attacks of 2001 made additional revisions. However, the document of 2000 had stressed on improvement of the hard international conditions and establishment of a multipolar system. It had also referred to the importance of cultural diversity and different approaches to the development. For some Russians, despite extensive international communications, focusing on cultural independence - like the era of Peter the Great in the late 17th and early 18th centuries - could prepare the ground for having an independent role in the international arena (Kramarenko, 2008; 29). Based on the document authors' viewpoints, under the new international conditions that the US tries to establish 'Pax Americana' worldwide, Russia must also design and implement proper new approaches in accordance with its own interests. They believe that the US has shown no respect for other countries in creating a system for international peace and security. For them, the Western system has failed to solve the increasing global difficulties. Therefore, Washington's persistence on its ideological view has intensified these problems.

Maybe one of the influential factors on Russian foreign policy is an emerging class, which Mikhail Khodorkovsky named it "Pipeline Class" (Khodorkovsky, 2011; 4). This class is directly linked with the energy transit from Russia and the former republics of the Soviet Union. Another factor is the Russian monopoly on energy supplies that has deeply influenced its foreign policy. Russia's attempt to play as an energy superpower in the world politics is intertwined with the interests of some groups of politicians and energy sector (including oil and gas pipelines) executives. It's obvious that a more peaceful and less confrontational international arena could bolster the chances for Russia to more actively participate in the major international energy projects and better serve the benefits of these people. Thus, the new Russian Foreign Policy Concept has put aside the confrontational approach and follows the views of some of historical leaders; Figures like Tsarist Foreign Minister Alexander Gorchakov who announced the end of Russia's confrontational approach towards world In August, 1856 (Kramarenko, 2008; 29). Thus, in Russia's point of view, all countries around the world should have an equal say on their interests.

Six months after Putin's return to the Kremlin, a report published about his government achievements. According to this report, Russia's

foreign policy had been directed toward preparing the conditions for comprehensive development of the country, and reconstructing the economy fundamentally and making it competitive (Yeryomenko, Gabuyev and Chernenko, 2011, 8). Also, it was emphasized on the least capacity of military forces for defense, but allocating 20 billion Rubles for procurement of weapons and equipments was in conflict with such an approach.

This program was proposed by Medvedev, and Putin approved it. The authors of the report claimed that the ratification of the new START¹ is along the same lines of reducing military costs. The report also referred to the failed attempts in receiving security guarantees from the US about the deployment of the Missile Defense System. However, Dmitri Trenin, director of the Carnegie Moscow Center, warned in this regard and pointed to the clear violation of security guarantees by Hitler's Germany in 1939 and its later invasion of Russia in 1941. To Trenin, these guarantees must be designed and preserved through political dialogues and behaviors (Yeryomenko, Gabuyev and Chernenko, 2011, 8). Of course, Wikileaks documents have also revealed that there have been no considerable achievements in this field.

As mentioned in that report, one of the gains in foreign policy was NATO's Purchasing of Russian Mi-17 Helicopters for Afghan Air Force. The contract also covers support, repair, spare parts and training. Cooperation on transferring necessary equipments for fighting with the Taliban and the Arctic Council's resolution for preventing US and Europe's influence in the region were mentioned as the other gains of Putin's government.²

The emphasis on the United Nations' global role in maintaining international peace and stability was another point mentioned in this report. The Russian government also considered the pipeline construction planning for transferring the country's gas to Europe as one of its successes.

At the beginning of his third presidential term, Putin refused to attend the G8 Summit at Camp David in May 2012, With this pretext that he was too busy finalizing cabinet appointments (Gabuyev, Solovyov,

1. Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty

2. The Arctic territories, believed to hold vast untapped oil and gas reserves, have been at the center of disputes between the United States, Russia, Canada, Norway, and Denmark.

Chernenko and Konstantinov, 2011, 1). With no respect for Obama's invitation to the summit, Putin visited China in his first trip since Kremlin comeback to show the continuation of his Policy of Eurasianism. Since the Yeltsin's visit to China in 1997, Russia has followed Primakov doctrine on foreign policy. Primakov had advised Russia to ally with China and India and to approach the Islamic countries. In other words, this doctrine was the clearest reflection of the Eurasianism principles in Russian post-Soviet foreign policy until then, which continued to influence the country's foreign policy throughout Putin's presidency.

Regional Factors

The change of Russia's regional policies became more evident following the basic changes in its periphery region and the Middle East. The growth of political Islam and the difficulties of the transition period in these countries, forced the Russian leaders to think about tightening security ties with these regions.

- Russia and the Peripheral Republics

During the official visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to Kyrgyzstan on September 2012, both sides agreed on the Russian use of Manas Air Base and building the Kambarata-1 hydropower plant. At a joint Press Conference with Putin, Almazbek Atambayev, president of Kyrgyzstan announced that the US will evict Manas Air Base by 2014, and Russia will be allowed to have a joint military base in Osh for 15 years starting from 2017 (Barbashin, 2012; 9). The lease for the Russian Kant Air Base was also extended for another 15 years. Indeed, This was a great success for Russia.

In this regard, Russia has enhanced its political influence through increasing economic relations with Central Asia. Russia's aid in reconstructing Bishkek Power Plant, not only helps this country achieve self-sufficiency in power sector, but also makes it possible to export the surplus. Beyond Central Asia, this plan enters Russia into the energy markets of Asia and especially India through Afghanistan and Pakistan. According to this plan, Russia can also participate in completing the hydropower plant of Rogun in Tajikistan. Therefore, it will take a great step toward consolidating its position in Central Asia.

Meanwhile, Russia extended its military presence in Tajikistan for 30 years. Thus, Central Asia's developments show Russian growing interest in strengthening its influence in the region. Along the same lines, It seems that a trilateral pact is forming among Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Since the US still needs Kyrgyz route to support the Afghan government, Particularly after withdrawal in 2014, Russia's presence in the region makes more difficulties for the US. At least, Russia's growing presence puts it in a better position for bargaining. Of course, this needs the cooperation of other regional countries. For example, Russian-Led "Eurasian Customs Union" (EUC) including Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan, Without Kyrgyzstan is nothing. However, apart from economic interests in Central Asia, fear of spreading political Islam is another reason for the Russian presence in the region.

Despite this situation, Russia and Uzbekistan relations are getting worse and Tashkent's Withdrawal from "Collective Security Treaty Organization" (CSTO) in June 2012 was a sign of it. Following the agreement between Russia and Kyrgyzstan, and also changing the Manas Air Base into a center just for transferring forces and equipments, the US, in contrast, tried to make an agreement with Uzbekistan. However, on August 30, 2012 and at the prodding of Uzbek President Islam Karimov, Uzbekistan's parliament endorsed a bill, banning the country's hosting of foreign military bases.

By the way, Russia pursues the following goals in Central Asia:

- Reducing the threat from the South;
- Increasing economic cooperation with the region, especially in the field of energy transfer;
- Strengthening the regional integration and the former ties as a priority;
- Protecting the cultural integrity, and supporting the Russians and their language in the former republics.

The Russia-Georgia War of 2008 severely strained the relations between Russia and US and changed the Washington's view of Moscow. With the unilateral recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia by Russian Federation, Georgia lost 20% of its territory. The US in turn showed its opposition to Russia's pressure on Tbilisi by passing a resolution in the Senate, in which unanimously supported Georgia's territorial integrity and recognized Abkhazia and South Ossetia as regions "occupied by the Russian Federation" (Simonyan, 2011; 6)

Some experts claim that the Moscow's dissatisfaction of alternative routes Georgia opened for transporting energy through its territory was the main reason behind this war. But, Medvedev told Russian soldiers in Vladikavkaz that Moscow waged war in Georgia against the NATO enlargement (Dvali and Reutov, 2012; 2). To this end, Putin has built good relations with Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili to reduce Tbilisi's cooperation with NATO. However, the breakaway of Abkhazia and Ossetia has threatened Georgia's territorial integrity and to Moscow, NATO membership of its former Soviet republics is "a red line".

- Russia and the Middle East

In October 19, 2007 and just two days after Putin's official visit to Tehran for attending Caspian Sea Littoral States summit, Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, visited Moscow for a few hours, to express concern over Russia's nuclear cooperation with Iran (Reutov and Asmolov, 2007, 9). For America and Israel, Putin's presence in Tehran on October 17, implied its support of Iran. Although Olmert's visit was arranged before Tehran's summit, Putin preferred the News was not published to prevent its impact on his visit. Zvi Magen, the former Israeli ambassador to Russia, said that this visit represents Russia's attempt to create a balance in its relations with Tehran and Tel Aviv. In Iran's talks with world powers, Russia showed its willingness to play the role of an important power on the regional and international developments. Iran's case provides an appropriate opportunity for the country to demonstrate its independence at the time of collaboration, as well.

However, in November 2009, Iranian officials waiting to receive S-300 missile system from Russia, encountered Moscow's refusal to deliver. Russia's avoidance in fulfilling its one-billion-dollar commitment was faced with Iranian strong objections. Russian authorities related their delay to technical problems again, but it was clear that it is due to political reasons (Solovyov, 2009, 4). Iran had the same experience on Bushehr Power Plant; Russians were deliberately delaying and politicizing the project under European and American pressure over and over again. Many Iranian officials also criticized their behavior. Russia's breaking promise of delivering Bushehr plant increased the discontent of those Iranian willing to develop the relations with that country (Terekhov, 2009,1).

However, Russia, China, India and some other countries, have always tried to resolve Iranian nuclear dossier through negotiations. In this context, Russian officials continue to reject the American claims that Iran's nuclear energy program has military purposes. Nikolai Patrushev, the secretary of the "Security Council of Russia", has repeatedly denied this claim (Koryashkin, 2012,6). Accordingly, they also have not accepted the Missile Defense System in Europe to defend against a likely missile attack by Iran. The Russians had many tactical turns on Iran's nuclear program, too. However, after the collapse of the Gaddafi regime and despite intense dissatisfaction with NATO's military operations, the Russians refused to deliver S-300 missiles in the light of cooperation with the US.

There has been also an enduring attempt by Russia to influence Arab-Israeli conflicts. The visit of President Mahmoud Abbas, the Fatah leader, to Moscow can be analyzed in the context of Russia's efforts to make a compromise between Hamas and Fatah. Moscow hoped its traditional relations with the "Palestine Liberation Organization" (PLO) can help to achieve this goal. In fact, after the victory of the Islamists in the Palestinian elections in June 2006, when Hamas gained the control of Gaza and left the Fatah ruling in the West Bank, the US and Europe had also emphasized on the necessity of talk with them (Reutov, 2007, 6). Israel and West hoped to reach an agreement with the "moderate" Fatah against the growing influence of Hamas, a group which rejects Israel's right to exist. Rather, Moscow's aim is to integrate the Palestinian people and build an alliance between the two organizations.

Contrary to its flexibility toward the American and European policies on people uprisings in some Arab countries - known as Arab Spring - Russia has supported Bashar al-Assad in the bloody civil war in Syria. Russian officials believe that the US and NATO along with such Persian Gulf countries as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, help the Syrian opposition and provide them with military equipments. Russian politicians always look with concern at the role of the Qatari government in the Arab League's measures against Syria. For some of them, the state of Qatar also has been very active in strengthening the Islamists of Caucasus (Konstantinov, 2012, 7). Qatar had been very active in the events leading to the fall of Ghadafi.

Many Russians believe that the US and NATO want to play the same role in Syria that they did in Libya and want to overthrow

Assad's regime through military means (Koryshkin, 2012, 6). On the other hand, since the current al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri has declared war against the Syrian government (Satanovsky, 2012), sending weapons and other military equipments to Syrian opposition is very difficult for the US and NATO. On Syria, They also believe that the US and NATO are going on the same path they did in Libya, in which the Russian views were neglected (Volkov and Samodin, 2011, 9). Indeed, Russia has played an important role in deterring the US and Europe from pursuing their policies against Assad. One reason for this, is the Russian concern over losing one of its arms customers. Russia sold Syria about \$4 billion in arms from 2007 to 2010 and exported around \$1 billion of them in 2011 (Vedomosto, 2012, 6). Tartus Syrian Naval Base on the Mediterranean coast of Syria - one of the largest naval facilities of the Soviet Union in the past - has a strategic importance for Russia. Maybe it's not very important politically, but is still a critical military facility.

The current leader of Russia is more compatible with the current political trends in Syria. With the all-out support of the Russian Leaders, until now, the Syrian authoritarian regime has opposed the demands for building a free political atmosphere. From the Russian leaders point of view, developments in Syria are analyzed according to the conspiracy theory rather than paying attention to the internal needs of this country. They assess the fight of Assad's oppositions just on the basis of the power equations in the region and the world, not internal conditions. In fact, the importance of Syria for Russia is much more than a buyer of arms; since the Soviet Union era, it has been a strategic ally against the US and Israel for that. Russia is very concerned with the fall of the Syrian regime, maybe the battle will move to the southern border of Iran (Vedomosti, 2012, 8). Fyodor Lukyanov, editor in chief of the journal *Russia in Global Affairs*, says Kremlin warns the White House and its Arab allies not to exclude Moscow and ignore its point of views in the region's policy. In the words of Georgy Mirsky, a senior fellow at the "Institute of World Economy and International Relations" (IMEMO) of Russian Academy of Sciences, Vladimir Putin wants the history always remember him as a figure who restored Russia's global power. The case of Libya and Gaddafi's murder - an ally of the Soviet Union during the Cold War - was an unforgettable contempt for Russia.

In Summer 2012, Putin proposed the possibility of deploying Russia's troops outside the border of CSTO members. Given a further deterioration of the regional situation in the Middle East, his main purpose has been the emphasis on the Russian capability to more intervention in the regional developments against the increasing intervention of the US, Europe and some other Arab countries in that region (Konovalov, 2012, 1). Nikolai Bordyuzha, the general secretary of CSTO, announced that the primary studies on this issue has been started (Current Digest, 2012, 15-16). Due to Syrian developments, Putin's visit to some European countries in June 2012 was not satisfying. In his meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Putin was greeted by protesters who held Syrian flags and their protest indicated the extreme dissatisfaction of his policies on Syria. In France, his visit with President Francois Hollande was described very cold and called "deaf conversation" (Latynina, 2012, 8). Effective support of Europe and the US from social movements in Arab countries, caused Moscow to become more active in supporting authoritarian states. Thus, the geopolitical confrontation between Moscow and Washington became more clear by these developments.

Internal Factors

After two decades since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has not yet achieved its acceptable political-economic cohesion. This country, with the largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons and various natural resources, faces with significant divisions among its political elites about the power structure. While emphasizing on the territorial integrity as a security consideration, they don't have any consensus on Russia's international standing (Zelobin, 2012). Therefore, a stable political system has not yet established and the problems of Medvedev and Putin eras confirm this view as well.

In many cases, recent years' Developments show that the Russian elite perspectives are heavily affected by cross-sectional and ad hoc interests, rather than the long term macro ones. Some factors can be mentioned in this context: First, the prevailing view in Russia about the place of this country in the world that is more ideological than scientific and realistic. Second, the influences of different pressure groups, interest groups and ruling apparatuses are considerable. On

many occasions, their interests are substituted for the Russia's real interests. The views of Russian Defense Ministry have been effective on this issue, too. The adoption of strategic doctrines requires an open, competitive and transparent condition which does not exist in Russia and the role of Individuals, not institutions, is undeniable in this case. Although there are so many well-known scholars and researchers in Russia, decision makers typically do not pay attention to their views and advices. This is the same common problem in all less developed countries in the world; the countries that Russia is the most developed among them. In fact, Researchers have not the opportunity to associate and collaborate with the foreign policy decision makers.

At the end of the bipolar system and the Cold War era, the leaders of the Russian Federation, such as Boris Yeltsin and his pro-West colleagues emphasized on the importance of the formation of a multi-polar world. But many, like Nikolai Patrushev, Russian Security Council Secretary, don't acknowledge Europe as a pole that is able to shape a multi-polar world (Koryashkin, 2012, 6). For some Russians, Europe is neither an ally, nor an effective partner (Ivanov, 2012, 47). They don't see any technological advantages in relations with that. Of course, many see the Russia itself as an important part of the European civilization that extends from the Ural (region) to the Pacific Coast, Far East and Central Asia (Gromyko, 2012). Given its geographical position, Russia is a powerful center for Asian countries affecting on their internal developments. So, Moscow has found itself in a place in which it should play an important role in international affairs.

Russian leaders have always insisted on the peaceful solutions to international problems. This approach has been very important on the issue of North Korea and Iran. Putin also has introduced a cooperative and not confrontational approach in his foreign policy - an approach that is seeking to strengthen the global integration. Moreover, he has emphasized the importance of economic issues in the same area. His emphasis on the necessity of state support to the merchants, reflects Putin's seriousness about this issue. In his view, the policy of deepening and expanding integration of the CIS members, should be the focal point of the Russian foreign policy. Accordingly, reinforcing the "Eurasian Economic Union" (EEU) is taken into consideration (Putin, 2012, 4). This is while, the US and Europe have adopted various policies to increase their influence and secure their interests that conflict with Russia's ones.

Security and Arms Control

In 2010, NATO proposed a joint missile defense shield with Russia stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Indeed, Some Russian Generals believed that constructing an efficient missile defense system is not possible without actual participation of their country (Sharavin, 2010, 12). So, they thought that S-300 and S-400 “surface-to-air missile” (SAM) systems could play a decisive role in this regard. Russia's 2010 military doctrine gives air and space services a more prominent place (Arbatov, 2011, 3). In fact, Russian efforts to build a missile defense system of its own, indicates the value of these forces in Russian military in providing the country's security. For Russians, its missile defense shield is designed solely for defense purposes against airborne threats. Of course, it is well known that the US is the only country widely seen as a possible threat to Russia. Thus, Moscow cannot have two missile systems simultaneously; one against the Washington and the other to share with it. Prominent Russian political scientist Georgy Arbatov and a member of the “Russian Academy of Sciences”, however, believes that the two countries could cooperate in a joint system to a limited extent (Arbatov, 2011, 3).

US officials at different levels have repeatedly stated their commitment to the continuation of the Missile Defense System program. Instead, Russia is pessimistic that the US intends to protect its forces and NATO allies from Iranian short- and medium-range ballistic missiles. From the Russian point of view, since the US always underlines that It will not let Iran go nuclear, then they should not have any concern about their safety. What's the reason behind this? Russia sees no threat form Iran’s and North Korea’s ballistic missiles. Russian military experts point to the US technical and technological problems in its missile defense shield and say that Americans definitely will pursue their goals when they fixed the problems.

The progress in US-Russia relations in 2010, has led some observers to characterize this year as a good one for them. In April 2010, they signed the “Strategic Offensive Weapons Reduction Treaty” (SORT). Additionally, the US-Russian agreement on peaceful

nuclear cooperation, known as the “123 agreement”¹, entered into force (Fenenko, 2011). It should be noted that the cooperation between the two countries in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy which began under Putin and Bush in 2008, suspended after the Russia-Georgia War. Russia's Admission to WTO and “Jackson-Vanik Amendment” repeal were also signs of a new “Reset” in US-Russia Relations.² Moscow has been seeking WTO membership since 1993.

For many analysts, China and not the US is the main rival of Russia and ratification of the New START Treaty was the most important gain in resetting relations (Rogov, 2012, 1). This treaty was signed on 8 April 2010 in Prague and after its ratification by both sides entered into force on 5 February 2011. But yet, the leaders of both countries face with a lot of obstacles. In the process of New Start ratification, the US Congress provided that the talks on Intermediate-Range and Short-Range Missiles should be continued (Kosachov, 2011, 6). Of course, Moscow and Washington failed to reach an agreement on the numbers of offensive and defensive strategic weapons, even though, reducing strategic weapons and military expenditures was very important for Russia. In this regard, Konstantin Kosachyov, the Chairman of the State Duma International Affairs Committee said that the ratification of this Treaty was an indication of cooperation between both sides. He also stressed on the confidence-building and measures like inspection as the necessary conditions for reaching the desired results.

Following the ratification of new START treaty, a group of Russian and American top military-political experts began the work on cooperation in missile systems, especially in Europe (Solovyov, 2011, 8). In addition to building a lasting base for cooperation between the two countries, they put two key issues on their agenda: nuclear nonproliferation and nuclear disarmament. Given their agreements on the new START treaty, Moscow and Washington must take concrete steps for reducing strategic weapons. For example, both

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1. Section 123 of the United States Atomic Energy Act of 1954, titled "Cooperation With Other Nations", establishes an agreement for cooperation as a prerequisite for nuclear deals between the US and any other nation. Such an agreement is called a “123 Agreement” and allows US companies to share nuclear technology and materials with foreign counterparts, carry out joint research and development activities, and bid jointly on civil nuclear projects.
 2. The Jackson-Vanik amendment was a 1974 provision in United States federal law, intended to affect US trade relations with countries with non-market economies (originally, countries of the Communist bloc) that restrict freedom of emigration and other human rights.

parties should reduce their number of nuclear warheads to 1550 units, as well as their delivery weapons to 800 units (Solovyov 2010, 1).

The main difficulty in their bilateral relations is deploying the Missile Defense System in Europe that both have different views on that. Its roots trace back to the decision of President Ronald Reagan and the Cold War era for exerting economic pressure on the Soviet Union. After the soviet fall, President Bill Clinton stopped this policy. Russian journalist Pavel Felgenhauer, known for his publications critical of Russia's political and military leadership, compares Medvedev's attempt for improving relations with the US to the same effort by Gorbachev in famous Reykjavik summit meeting of 1986 with Reagan. In his view, in contrast of Gorbachev, Medvedev failed to suspend missile deployment in Europe (Flengauer, 2011, 10). It is estimated that building this missile defense costs \$85 billion over ten years for the US. During the talks on missile defense, Medvedev announced a new round of arms race and Putin threatened to retaliate against an anti-missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic (Solovyov, 2010, 8). To Alexei Arbatov, senior Russian analyst, the goal of US in deploying this missile system is to undermine Russian strategic capabilities. Russian negotiators had the same concern, too (Yermolin and Yunanov, 2011, 24-26).

At the 47th Munich Security Conference in 2011, all saw an exchange of harsh rhetoric between both sides. On the one hand, Hillary Clinton said that Washington accepts no limit on missile defense and on the other hand, Sergei Ivanov emphasized on the necessity of reaching a deal on this issue between both parties (Fenenko, 2011, 9). Michael McFaul, the US Ambassador to Russia in a Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on October 12, 2011, favored the continuation of the Missile Defense System in Europe and then its remarks caused Russian objection (MacFaul, 2011, 7). Although, the new NATO strategic concept does not define Russia as an enemy, but Moscow announces this missile defense as a threat to itself. In reference to the mutual problems and the ratification of the new START treaty, Medvedev hoped that in 2010 with keeping promise to commitments in the framework of this treaty, there would be a different world. Otherwise, he warned that in the event of deploying missile system, they'll witness a new cold war era. Opposing this view, Yuri Solomonov, a top engineer at Moscow's

weapons design Institute of Thermotechnics sees no threat for Russia from the US Missile Defense (Felgengauer, 2011, 10). So, it could be said that at the time, there wasn't a unified position among the high ranking Russian officials against the Missile Defense System and this set of hopes and fears, led to the continuation of the talks on the subject. By the same token, Despite the announcement of Completing the first phase of the system by the NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen in Chicago Summit on May 2012, talks continued between them.

The US and Russian Officials reiterated repeatedly that the Cold War is over and the two countries should try to eliminate its remnants and erase the past. This shows that there are many serious disagreements and many unresolved problems between them. In fact, the Soviet Fall didn't solve their technical and technological problems and their missiles are aimed at the other side's critical facilities. It reminds us that there is no difference between the worlds of 2000s and 1980s in terms of the numbers of lethal weapons. Of course, we are expected to see a major shift in that trend by 2020.

Mutual nuclear deterrence is the key concern of Moscow and Washington and despite the agreements, their nuclear weapons are still developing. Although Barack Obama proposed a minimum deterrence and a major reduction in nuclear weapons, Russian State Duma ratified New START Treaty with adding some provisions to the ratification in terms of bilateral relations. Since 1962, UK nuclear weapons were recognized as part of the US nuclear forces, but the 1987 "Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty" (INF Treaty) in Gorbachev era for the annihilation of short- and medium-range missiles didn't make any reference to them. Moreover, In November 2010, France and UK signed a treaty under which they will develop and test nuclear warheads together (Fenenko, 2011). Accordingly, the US can help them develop nuclear weapons without violating its obligations under the New START Treaty. Thus, such an act would disrupt the balance of nuclear forces in Europe; a situation that truly concerns the Russians.

Although new START Treaty has passed, but the question of tactical nuclear weapons (TNW) remains a tough issue and at least for now, both sides have failed to reach a deal on nuclear non-proliferation. This different look is more evident in Russian nuclear

cooperation with Iran and North Korea. Also, Washington insists on reviewing NPT and Moscow continues to resist changes to the treaty. Instead, for fear of weakening their own place in the future European security system, the US and other NATO members refused Russian proposed plan in this regard. Nevertheless, Russia reacted to the US plan for the European security system with a positive look, but again raised such issues as the reduction of Tactical Nuclear Weapons, stationing European Missile Defense System, a review of the “Conventional Armed Forces in Europe” (CFE), the future of Intermediate-Range missiles and entering UK and France nuclear forces in disarmament and arms control talks with the US.

By the way, NATO enlargement to the East remains a major challenge in two countries’ relations. Russian representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin has refused a Global political police role of NATO (Solovyov, 2010, 8). Russia expected NATO to be dissolved when the Soviet collapsed, but following waves of insecurity in Europe, this organization decided to expand toward Russia’s borders with changing its missions, approaches and functions. In the words of Russian Ambassador to Portugal Pavel Petrovsky, European security and defense policies prepared the ground for more non-military NATO activities. As a result of NATO talks in Lisbon on 20 November 2010, we saw major changes in its structure for facilitating not only its military roles but also its political-security responsibilities (Petrovsky and Dedushkin, 2011, 49- 57).

NATO Secretary General Rasmussen invited Medvedev to the summit meeting, although Russia accepted this with a delay to ensure that NATO is ready for resetting relations with Moscow. In essence, Moscow needed to ensure that NATO will pay attention to Russian geopolitical security imperatives and then participate in its summit. Thereafter, both sides announced their new strategic partnership in a joint statement. as the statement says: “...the security of all states in the Euro-Atlantic community is indivisible, and that the security of NATO and Russia is intertwined.” Of course, the existence of deep geopolitical differences made it difficult to achieve the stated goals.

The Russian invasion of Georgia in August 2008, asserting authority over parts of its territory and threatening its territorial integrity were among important factors that impeded translating the agreement provisions into action. For Russians, US invasion of Iraq in

2003 and its huge bombing run counter with NATO Strategic Concept (Petrovsky and Dedushkin, 2011, 49- 57). However, they agree to cooperate in these areas: a joint ballistic missile threat assessment; pursuing missile defense cooperation; and a comprehensive joint analysis of the future framework for missile defense cooperation. Certainly, the necessity of cooperation in Afghanistan, have convinced the two sides to cope with many differences in their mutual relation. In Lisbon Summit, NATO leaders understood that without Russian cooperation, they will not be successful in solving the main international problems such as security in Western Asia and proliferation of weapons of mass destructions (WMD).

War against Terrorism

Following September 11, 2001, the two countries could make great strides toward the fighting terrorism, especially in Afghanistan, and then the advantages of their cooperation became more apparent. Russia sees a serious terrorist threat from its southern borders, especially from Afghanistan and Pakistan, entering its Muslim territories (Lukin, 2011, 57). For many Russian analysts, the threat of these countries to Russia is very high and this is more evident after the Taliban's dominance of Afghanistan and Al-Qaeda's terrorist acts in September 2001. However, the fact that the Pashtun Taliban has no followers among the Tajiks and the Uzbeks in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, is a positive point for these analysts. Accordingly, the Islamism expansion from Afghanistan and Pakistan to the Central Asia will decrease, but as the events of 9/11 showed, the ability of Islamic radicalism for penetrating in this region is still very impressive. Aside from exporting Islamic fundamentalism, Afghanistan is the main center of opium production that a high volume of it (35%) smuggles into Russia (Lukin, 2011).

As the main supply route into Afghanistan, Pakistan's continuing insecurity has made the Russia's cooperation a necessity for the US and its allies. Thus, at NATO summit in Lisbon, members emphasized on transporting supplies and equipments required by "International Security Assistance Force" (ISAF) and Afghan army through Russia's route. The US always has asked Russia to facilitate the cooperation between ISAF and CSTO, because the latter has had many successful efforts in fight against drug trafficking in Central Asia and its surrounding areas. For

fighting more effectively against drug trafficking from Afghanistan, once again in October 2010, the US urged Russia to further cooperation with ISAF (Petrovsky and Dedushkin, 2011, 49 - 57). Since Russia is one of the main drug routes from Afghanistan to Europe, this cooperation is also very important to it. In their first-ever joint operation; Russia, ISAF and the Afghan army identified four drug laboratories and seized 932 kilograms of heroin.

Many experts believe that the Russian cooperation with ISAF is the result of resetting relations with the US. Under the auspices of “NATO-Russia Council” (NRC), This cooperation has also provided conditions for training to fight terrorism and drug trafficking. Moreover, it has had a dramatic reduction of the costs for both in pursuing their goals. Yet, NATO’s attack on Libya and Gaddafi’s death, strained the relations between them. Indeed, Libya Invasion, Missile Defense System, INF Treaty, Syrian crisis and Iran’s nuclear program have strained their ties.

Democratization Programs

Some consider that public diplomacy is part of the state program, designed and implemented to inform and direct the public opinion in other countries. Thus, this type of policy is formed with the specific aims and plans. Some others have called it popular foreign affairs. Bearing in mind this issue, a significant number of Russian politicians believe that the US State Department seeks to plan and carry out various programs for weakening the Russian government and its legal institutions (Bovt, 2012, 63). To Russia’s conservatives, Washington seeks to interfere in Russia’s internal and external affairs and in different ways supports its opposition. Stirring up “Color Revolutions” in the former Soviet republics has offered them good evidences in this regard.

However, Russian domestic institutions also have repeatedly criticized the limitations on the legal freedoms. Official reports have made references to the illegal interference of the state in the people’s freedom of choice and behavior, too (Moshkin, 2010, 3). Yet, we still see a continued forcible suppression of protests in Russia. In response to the death of Russian lawyer Sergei Magnitsky in Moscow jail, that Russian opposition believes he had died from being beaten and tortured by several officers of the Russian Ministry of Interior, the US Congress introduced a new law, entitled “Justice for Sergei Magnitsky

Act of 2010” that will make those implicated in the repressive arrest and death of Magnitsky ineligible for admission to the US and will revoke any existing US visas.¹ In retaliation, Moscow banned some of the former US Administration officials from entering the country due to human rights abuses at facilities including Guantanamo Bay. In fact, Russia did it to prevent further Washington’s sanctions against Russian officials.

Economic Relations

Russian leaders know well that international politics and international economics are intertwined. Given the Soviet-era experience, they also know that rebuilding military power needs a powerful economic infrastructure and making up for their technological lag vis-a-vis the West needs to expand the relations with developed countries, especially the US (Karaganov, 2012, 12). For this reason, Kremlin is considering to join such trans-regional organizations as “Asia-Europe Meeting” (ASEM) which is constituted by ASEAN and European member countries (Koldunova, 2010, 27- 32). Strengthening of the so-called "BRICS" group (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) is another option for Moscow (Isachenko, 2012, 112, 121).

Despite the importance of political-security issues, the relation of two countries has not resulted in strong economic ties. The volume of US investments in Russia’s economy had been very low, half of which have been made in the energy sector. Thus, the US has been removed from the list of the top ten investors in Russia. The US total investment in Russia does not reach \$10 billion and only \$3 billion of that has been done directly. Trade relations between the two countries do not exceed \$10 billion, which is much less than US trade with China (Bovt, 2012, 63). Many US investors have demanded changes in the Russian economic environment. Regarding the financial corruption in Russia and Washington’s measures to restrict its impact on the relations between the two countries, US investors do not show any willingness to operate in Russian economy. The past has shown that expanding US relations with the authoritarian regimes, like Russia and China, depends heavily on the lucrative economic ties between the two countries.

1. This bill was introduced on April 15, 2011, but was not enacted.

In October 2012, when it was announced that eight Russians and Americans have been arrested on charges of illegally exporting hi-tech components to Russian military forces and military-industrial complexes with a value of \$50 million, it was felt a heavy shadow of security considerations on their bilateral relations. Considering the modernization program of military systems in Russia, the importance of this issue has substantial sensitivity in Moscow and Washington. American conservatives judged this attitude as an act against the national interests of their country. Also, Moscow understood that it should focus more on internal capacity building (Felgengauer, 2012, 8).

Conclusion

After Obama's election in 2008, his promise for a change in the US foreign policy reflected itself in relations with Russia and the "Reset" policy injected a new dynamism in their bilateral ties. Officials of both countries tried to consider the economic aspects in bilateral relations and take the advantages of their mutual capacities to meet their common demands. Their regional and international cooperation also increased, so that the two sides displayed a good collaboration on Iranian Nuclear program. Russia which was completing Bushehr power plant and was on the side of Iran, showed a behavior more consistent with the US, though didn't give up its concerns. On Syrian crisis, there are serious gaps in dealing with the Assad's government and its oppositions, but it did not destroy the possibility of cooperation in the areas of common interest.

In November 2011, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov, announced that the US-Russia relations have been improved much more than anticipated (Flengauer, 2011, 3). On the one hand, he noted the American positive role in making peace and reconciliation in Georgia and on the other hand, stressed on the cooperation with Washington to help Moscow's entry into the WTO. He also said that the two countries' cooperation in the Obama - Medvedev era has been very effective and that they are considering bilateral visa facilitation. So their citizens will receive a three-year visa to visit the other country repeatedly.

Generally speaking, there could be three scenarios for the future of two countries' relationship. First, Obama's administration helps the growing improvement of all aspects of the two countries' ties. For many analysts, the possibility of this scenario is very low. In contrast, It's

very likely that in his second term, Obama rebuilds its soft approach toward Russia. In this case, the Cold War hostility would be put aside and the reconstruction of mutual trust between the two countries would be considered. Facilitating visa issuance between the two is the first step in this direction. Cooperation on defense projects, as well as developing NATO's relations with the CSTO, more cooperation in Afghanistan and continuing dialogue about INF Treaty are other options in this regard. Any progress in the above areas will pave the way for the increased cooperation in other fields. In the second scenario, continuation of "Reset" is the base; however, the Missile Defense System remains unresolved. Of course, their relations will have its stability, although other disagreements will continue. Political figures like US Ambassador to Russia, Michael McFaul, believe that the "reset" of relations will be continued. The third scenario believes in the fundamental failing of "reset policy". However, Obama reelection reduced the likelihood of this.

At the end of 2011, By pointing to the signing of the New START Treaty, continuing the non-nuclear cooperation between the two countries and US' consent to Russia's WTO membership, Sergei Lavrov called Hillary Clinton and himself as "pragmatists" (Gusman, 2011, 1). He also emphasized that the two countries' constructive cooperation on the areas of common interest and favoring a joint approach to settle international problems has important outcomes for both parties.

Finally, it should be said that with pondering the consequences of growing confrontation and its costs, the Moscow and Washington favored "Resetting" relations to meet their common interests. In addition, After the events in Afghanistan and Iraq on the one hand, and the revival of Russia's influence in the Near Abroad and the war in Georgia on the other hand, the ratification of New START is considered one of the most positive results of the "Reset policy" in US-Russia relations. Of course, It cannot be denied that there have been always various difficulties in their bilateral relations. Thus, the case of Sergei Magnitsky, arresting Russian spies in the US and the recent case of a US intelligence leaker, Edward Snowden, have shown that despite all difficulties, the leaders of both sides are confronting real challenges to improve and strengthen their bilateral ties.

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United Arab Emirates' Armed Forces in the Federation-Building Process: Seeking for Ambitious Engagement.

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Introduction

This paper investigates the complex relation between United Arab Emirates (UAE) and their armed forces. In the first and second paragraphs, it contends that while in the Seventies the process of UAE state-making, following the 1971 unification, was primarily rent-driven, deeper federation-building efforts, from the Nineties till now, has been focusing on modern integration among the seven armed forces. This strategy has enhanced the primacy of Abu Dhabi *élite* within the federation, balancing geographical areas and tribal clans in military ranks and so allowing al-Nahyan royal family to exert a neo-patrimonial supremacy on the military system. The third paragraph deals with the crescent role of the armed forces in acting UAE foreign policy, while the historical nuclear deal between Iran and the group of 5+1 can reshape geopolitical alignments in the region. As a matter of fact, Emirates external projection is performed through huge defense

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expenditure, cooperative security with Western powers and NATO, regional military assertiveness. As a small state, United Arab Emirates are not interested in open competition with Saudi Arabia, even though they experienced quarrels (border disputes) and now seem to play in a similar ideological-rhetorical field, both against Qatar's pro-Muslim Brotherhood foreign policy. Nevertheless, an increased political-military proactivity at a regional level could also empower UAE's weight inside Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and it has been already differentiating -although softly- UAE foreign policy approach from the Saudi one. In the fourth and last section, this paper hypothesis that armed forces -and especially air forces- have been gradually becoming a vector for United Arab Emirates federal identity, through recurrent engagement in peace support operations and the introduction of conscription for the army. As this research frames, Abu Dhabi's aim is to foster and convey, through the military tool, a sense of group-ness and belonging to a federal "state-tribe". In fact, even though local tribal affiliations are still strong, the huge demographic imbalance between nationals and expatriates have been shaping, in the perception of UAE citizens, a unique sense of privileged minority inside the federation, which could bring to the empowerment of UAE collective identity. Combining previous literature and press documents within a framework of *complex realism*,¹ this paper problematizes the role and evolution of UAE's armed forces, since the federal unification till now, analyzing how the military dimension has been impacting on federal foreign policy. With this purpose, the concept of *ambitious engagement* is here introduced to define UAE external behavior after 2011 uprisings, with the aim to update the previous notion of *constructive engagement*.

1. Armed forces in the looser-federation.

In 1971, the Arabian shaykhdoms (the so-called Trucial States) created the federation of the UAE (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah,

1. As outlined by Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond Hinnebush, this foreign policy analysis approach is built upon realist concepts (i.e. state centrality, balance of power, military dimension), but takes also into consideration political culture, identity and role expectations, as suggested by constructivism. See Ehteshami A.-Hinnebush R., 2013, "Foreign policy-making in the Middle East: complex realism", in Fawcett L. (ed), *International Relations of the Middle East*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp. 225-244.

Ajman, ‘Umm al-Quwain, Fujairah, while Ra's al-Khaimah joined in 1972): United Kingdom had just withdrew from the Gulf. Notwithstanding the invitation, Bahrain and Qatar refused to join the new federation. In a context of state making without war making,¹ the institutional consolidation of United Arab Emirates was essentially rent-driven. After the pearl sector collapse in the Thirties, the discovery of oil assured to the new city-states revenues from natural resources, so allowing the allocation of rent through welfare policies. Soon, the rent-welfare pattern became the pillar of the Arab Gulf region and, in this case, of the UAE; the purpose was also to amalgamate composite communities based on the dichotomy between coastal merchants and inner tribes. For instance, the al-Nahyan dynasty, rulers of Abu Dhabi, and the al-Maktoum ones, rulers of Dubai, both belong to the Bani Yas tribal confederation, proceeding from the Aneza (Najd area). However, al-Nahyan are characterized by deep *bedu* linkages, with respect to the *hadhar* al-Maktoum, historically commercial-oriented. In the Seventies, while the rent was the first vector of the federation, armed forces were really little affected by the gradual integration process. In 1976, a presidential decree promulgated by *shaykh* Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan, the charismatic Abu Dhabi ruler, established unified armed forces: in fact, since 1971 to 1976, each emirate had conserved its own military structures, so led by seven different emirs. The decision to unify armed forces was taken after a technical report elaborated by Saudis, Jordanians and Kuwaitis officers: this group of experts recommended Abu Dhabi ruler to continue with his military integration project on federal base, in order to empower defense capabilities and coopt paramilitary groups, such as tribal militias. However, new armed forces were meant to reproduce power imbalances among emirates, due to pre-existent structural asymmetries in territorial size, percentage of native population and armies capabilities. This is why, despite formal military unification, Dubai, Ra's al-Khaimah and Sharjah

1. Schwarz defines “rent driven” the construction of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, in contrast with the European experience theorized by Charles Tilly, where the war acted as the foundational element of nation-states (to summarize, “the state made the war and the war made the state”). Cfr. Schwarz R., “Does War makes states? Rentierism and the formation of states in the Middle East”, 2011, *European Political Science Review*, 3, 3, pp.419-433.

obtained from Abu Dhabi, the natural leader inside UAE, to conserve partial military autonomy.¹ Moreover, in that moment, Sharjah and Ra's al-Khaimah were engaged in a harsh power struggle within the al-Qasimi ruler dynasty. Until the Nineties, regional command systems (formally abolished in 1978) allowed spaces of influence to the middle-size emirates of the federation.² At the beginning, United Arab Emirates political architecture appeared as a "looser federation", where the lack of full military integration highlights "the consensus-oriented approach to governance"³ embodied not only by shaykh Zayed, but then also by shaykh Khalifa, who understood the political necessity to avoid impositions from above to the rest of the federation. Since the start of the project, Abu Dhabi and Dubai didn't share the same view on how the federation should be: while the first looked at UAE as led by one-guiding emirate (Abu Dhabi of course), Dubai intended the federation as a *primus inter pares* agreement among emirates. Thus, tribal consensus has always been crucial, also for the al-Nahyan, in order to control the society, constructing supremacy day by day, with the purpose to become the federal hegemon.⁴ Even for these reasons, armed forces didn't play a significant role in the first UAE federation-building phase, from 1971 to the Nineties. Then, something began to change, probably due to the raising power of a new generation of princes⁵ and the ascendance of a new, Western-educated *élite* of technocrats, together with the

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1. For size (87% of UAE territory), oil/gas resources, national population and military corps. Abu Dhabi army was created by British officials in 1965 (air forces in 1968), while the second army to be organized, the Dubai one, followed only in 1971. Moreover, Abu Dhabi troupes helped Omani Sultan's levies to quell Dhofar uprising between 1971-74.
 2. West military command was led by Abu Dhabi, the central by Dubai and the northern one by Ra's al-Khaimah.
 3. Kupchan C.A., *How Enemies Become Friends. The Sources of Stable Peace*, 2010, Princeton, Princeton University Press, pp.333-4.
 4. "Le patrons politiques trouvent dans ce réseaux de solidarité (le tribus, le clans, le communautés), un moyen de contrôle de la société et même de modification de ses équilibres bien plus efficace quel les instruments □modernes□ d'encadrement comme le partis de masse ou la surveillance policière". Picard E., *Le liens primordiaux, vecteurs de dynamiques politique*, in Picard E. (ed), *La politique dans le monde arabe*, Paris, Armand Collin, 2006, pp.55-77.
 5. With regard to this point, Maestri underlines the strength of the informal political alliance between the Emir of Dubai, *shaykh* Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum (already federal defense minister) and the crown prince of Abu Dhabi, *shaykh* Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahyan, an alliance aimed to foster the liberalization and modernization process against royal conservatives. Cfr. Maestri E., 2009, *La regione del Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Sviluppo e sicurezza umana in Arabia*, Milano, Franco Angeli, p.88.

convergence of security and economic interests between Abu Dhabi and Dubai, especially after the latter financial crisis in 2008.

2. The Security Sector and Abu Dhabi's neo-patrimonial centralization.

In 1997, al-Maktoum family allowed the integration of Dubai's military structures into the federation: a decision probably due to the decline of oil resources, that weakened the resistance of small emirates (as Ra's al-Khaimah), so producing a snowball effect in favor of military integration. Therefore, the creation of unified armed forces could start, under the general headquarter in Abu Dhabi, paving the way not only for the modernization and partial professionalization of the UAE military system, but also for the supremacy of al-Nahyan family (and in particular of Bani Fatima clan) upon the security sector.¹ So, after 1997, armed forces became the vector of United Arab Emirates federation building, even if -we have to remind- this was a top-down, complex process, which was intertwined with the establishment of a centralized, neo-patrimonial network led by Abu Dhabi rulers and, especially from 2004, by *shaykh* Khalifa bin Zayed al-Nahyan (president of UAE and commander of the armed forces) and his half-brother *shaykh* Mohammad bin Zayed. In the Gulf monarchies, security sector is the pillar of royal patronage networks: this creates obstacles for the complete professionalization of armed forces and for security sector reform, because structural reforms could bring to the fall of the whole authoritarian systems. In a perspective of internal geopolitics, the presence of Bani Yas (the al-Nahyan and al-Maktoum tribal confederation²) was balanced, within army ranks, with the inclusion of militaries belonging to the al-A'in group (as the prominent Bani Ka'ab), proceeding from eastern areas of UAE, as the contested Buraimi oasis. The cooptation of peripheral, small emirates inside new military apparatus produced, as a consequence, the

1. Bani Fatima are the five sons of the UAE founder and his favorite wife, Fatima: the eldest is Mohammad bin Zayed al-Nahyan, Abu Dhabi crown prince and vice commander of the armed forces. Inside al-Nahyan family, Bani Fatima clan exerts a tight control on security sector and signature of arms contracts.

2. According to data collected for 1968 UAE census, Bani Yas tribal confederation encompasses about 40% of Abu Dhabi population and 50% of those of Dubai.

incorporation of tribal clans from the northern federation, boosting al-Nahyan's patronage wire on the territory -not without resistances- and also increasing the number of nationals in the armed forces (because at least 61% of Emiratis nationals comes from the north) even among officers.¹ UAE's state development is built on a peculiar relation of balance and dependence among emirates, which underlines a structural, recognized complementarity within the federation (especially from a security point of view), till to establish a system of pyramidal clientelism², with Abu Dhabi at the top of the imagined pyramid. Through military integration, Abu Dhabi has been achieving a better level of military interoperability among emirates if compared with the past, prioritizing the development of modern air forces, which are now, together with Omani pilots, the most effective of the Gulf monarchies (the only, for instance, able to strike against moving targets and operate air refueling).³ Obviously, as the other GCC monarchies, United Arab Emirates can't still be self-sufficient in terms of security and they need the engagement of external security providers, primarily the United States. Abu Dhabi fostered the beginning of a national military-industrial complex of private and mix companies, under the oversight of Mohammad bin Zayed al-Nahyan; a project aimed to develop local expertise in manpower formation and arms maintenance. Abu Dhabi's neo-patrimonial rule on the security sector in the United Arab Emirates started and enhanced in a federal framework of late-rentierism. In this scenario, natural rent continues to be a key element of state-society relations, even though federal economy, acting and attempting to attract globalized investors, is now

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1. In the Nineties, the national population was distributed as follows: Abu Dhabi 27%, Dubai 11%, Ra's al-Khaimah 23%, Sharjah 18%, Fujairah 13%, 'Umm al-Quwain 5%,Ajman 2%. See Van der Meulen H., *The role of Tribal and Kinship Ties in the Politics of United Arab Emirates*, 1997, Thesis, Medford, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, cit. in Gervais V., *ibid*.
 2. See Hasbani N., 2011, *La politique de defense des Emirats Arabes Unis au sein des enjeux géopolitiques du Golfe arabo-persique*, Doctoral thesis, Université de Paris 8- Vincennes Saint Denis, U.F.R. Institut français de géopolitique, March, available from <http://www.1.static.e-corpus.org> Accessed April 24, 2015.
 3. Instead of Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Cfr. Wehrey F., 2014, "Gulf Participation in the Anti-Islamic State Coalition: Limitations and Costs", *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Syria in Crisis*, September 23, available from <http://carnegieendowment.org/syriaincrisis> Accessed October 3, 2014.

energy-driven and no more energy-centered. Oil and gas revenues are so invested in efforts of economy diversification, moving towards patterns of post-oil economy (as already is in Dubai, financial and re-export hub in the Middle East). Thus, military industry is one of the main sectors where revenues and foreign direct investments (FDI) can be successfully channeled and attracted. In fact, as I will analyze, defense expenditure represents a significant component of UAE foreign policy, with the purpose to shape a recognizable profile of external projection in the region and within the GCC.

3. Armed forces as foreign policy drivers.

Due to geographical position and small territorial-demographic size, UAE foreign policy is predominantly about containment of Iran,¹ the external Gulf rival or, in some historical phases, the perceived enemy, but is also concerned to limit and erode the superpower of Saudi Arabia, the main ally and sometimes uncomfortable internal Gulf rival. Moreover, Hormuz strait gives to the federation the projection on a commercial, energetic choke-point without pairs in the Middle Eastern region. As a matter of fact, Abu Dhabi's border disputes with Iran (Abu Musa and Tunb islands) and with Saudi Arabia (the contested Buraimi oasis) hasn't been officially solved yet and remained, in both cases, sensitive diplomatic issues. Notwithstanding the UAE have usually aligned with Saudi Arabia in recent times, especially against Qatar's pro-Muslim Brotherhood foreign policy. If compared with the *Wahhabi* kingdom, Emirates are a small state with a deficit of power which causes a weak ability to mobilize material and relational resources.² Nevertheless, "UAE and Qatar, in many ways, do not fit the defined model" of small states; instead, they show what can be called civilian power, as a combination of personal and state-owned wealth and stability along with strategic and clever use of these assets.³ Contemporary literature on United Arab Emirates foreign policy stresses at least two dominant features. Firstly,

1. Bandar-e Abbas Iranian main navy base is located just in front of UAE's coasts.

2. For the general concept of small states, see Rickli J.M., "European Small States' Military Policies after the Cold War: From Territorial to Niche Strategies", 2008, Cambridge Review of International Affairs, September, 21, pp.307-325.

3. Cfr. Mehran Kamrava on International Power Realignment in the Gulf, 2009, Georgetown University, School of Foreign Service in Qatar, Center for International and Regional Studies, News & Events, March 10, available from <http://www.cirs.georgetown.edu/events-cirs> Accessed May 11, 2015.

the decision-making process in a federal state must take into account, with regard also to foreign policy, the interests of all member states: this was true until 2008. However, after Dubai financial crisis in 2008 -which was overcome thanks to Abu Dhabi intervention- Dubai has progressively renounced to its own, commercial-oriented foreign policy, sometimes not overlapped with the Abu Dhabi one, with particular reference to Iran.¹ Then, it is not by chance that UAE harshened their position against Iran before the signature of the historical nuclear deal between Teheran and the group of the 5+1, till to support openly the Saudi sectarian narrative. Secondly, some authors argued that United Arab Emirates foreign policy of “constructive engagement” develops into four, intertwined circles. The Gulf circle, with a strong reference to the Gulf Cooperation Council; the Arab circle, through the Arab League and the support for the Palestinian cause; the Muslim circle, as a founding member of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), but especially with the role of many Islamic charities on the ground; and the international circle, based on a strong set of alliances with United States, United Kingdom and France.

Marking a difference with Riyadh.

After the Arab uprisings in 2010-11, United Arab Emirates’ external projection has assumed a more proactive attitude if compared with last decades. This has probably been caused by the enhanced perception of (structural) security dilemmas which affect the country: for instance, the crackdown on Muslim Brotherhood groups operating in the Emirates, which is combined with the anti-*Ikhwan* policies enacted by UAE in the whole Middle East, in particular in Egypt and Libya. In the UAE, since 2011 till now, Abu Dhabi-led foreign policy in MENA countries has been characterizing for a deep counter-revolutionary connotation, coupled with a new seek for regional leverage, out of the traditional Arabian peninsula’s borders, mixing money and selective military power. The couple “*counter-revolution* and

1. Dubai and Sharjah guest a significant Shia community, partially of Persian origins (about 17% of the overall population), and share strong commercial ties with Iran. Around 20% of Emirati population is Muslim Shia. With respect to Abu Dhabi, Dubai’s attitude towards Teheran has always been friendlier. In 1980-88, during Iran-Iraq war, Abu Dhabi, Ra’s al-Khaimah and ‘Ajman supported Iraq, while Iran was sustained by Dubai, Sharjah and Umm al-Quwain.

regional leverage through foreign aid policy”, proper to define the current United Arab Emirates’ external posture, can almost be overlapped with the foreign policy of Saudi Arabia. In fact, Abu Dhabi and Riyadh have played, until now, the same match in the region, becoming (together with the smaller Bahrain) the bulk of GCC counter-revolutionary efforts with regard to the so-called Arab springs. Nevertheless, the complex military dimension of foreign policy -a variable not directly linked with an offensive use of force- distinguishes Emirates external behavior from the Saudi one, shaping a distinctive, more nuanced and sophisticated kind of foreign projection. For instance, Abu Dhabi has chosen not to be at the forefront on the Syrian file, differently from Riyadh and Doha, which were engaged there in a deep intra-Sunni rivalry within Assad’s opponents. The current centrality of the military dimension in UAE foreign policy-building is emphasized by at least three recognizable trends: rising defense expenditure, cooperative security alongside Western powers, increasing military assertiveness in the Arab world. While the first and second trends can be considered stable during the last decade, even though they are now showing a growth, the last one is a new outcome.

Military expenditure and cooperative security with NATO.

In 2014, United Arab Emirates’ military expenditure reached 5,1% of the GDP; during 2005-2009, UAE accounted for 57% of the volume of imports of major conventional weapons.¹ Arms purchase is already a tool of foreign policy, because it bonds allies in a mutual partnership based on convenience, with the suggestion of further investments in the future, exerting leverage on partners. It is not by chance that, with the exception of Russia, the main UAE’s armies suppliers are also their strongest international allies and security providers, as United States and France.² Washington, London and Paris signed defense agreement with the Emirates; in particular, France -who opened in 2009 a permanent military

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1. 4,7% of GDP in 2012, 2013 estimate is not available. Cfr. SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, available from <http://www.sipri.org> Accessed May 14, 2015; Solmirano C.-Wezeman P.D., *Military Spending and Arms Procurement in the Gulf States*, 2010, SIPRI Fact Sheet, October, available from <http://www.books.sipri.org> Accessed on April 2.
 2. According to SIPRI, between 2005-2009, United States provided 60% and France 35% of the overall UAE arms import, especially Patriot surface-to-air missile systems and F-16 combat aircraft (from US) and Mirage combat aircraft (from France). Russia started to export air defense systems in 2007. See Solmirano C.-Wezeman P.D., *ibid*.

base in Abu Dhabi- has a formal, written commitment to protect UAE in case of external aggression¹. Despite other Gulf monarchies (as Saudi Arabia), Abu Dhabi leadership has demonstrated to be focused not only on the purchase of heavy, expensive weapons, but to be also aware about the necessity to improve communication, radar and intelligence systems, anti-ballistic defense, plus local expertise and skills. Since the Nineties, United Arab Emirates has been frequently involved in UN or NATO-led peace support operations, even out of the Middle Eastern region,² with the purpose -at the same time- to enhance international alliances and domestic military know-how. In Afghanistan, about 1200 Emiratis militaries were engaged, from 2006 to 2013, in full combat operations against Talibans alongside Jordanian special forces in Kandahar, one of the most dangerous areas of Afghan's insurgency.³ Moreover, UAE are the GCC member most committed with NATO in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI),⁴ a practical, bilateral cooperation framework established in 2004, focusing on defense transformation, military-to-military cooperation, intelligence-sharing, training courses.⁵ UAE are the first Arab country to have sent an Ambassador to the NATO Headquarter (HQ) in Bruxelles (2013) and are co-founding member of the new NATO Interoperability Platform, launched during the summit in Wales.⁶ On February 2015, an inter-ministerial delegation from United Arab Emirates visited NATO HQ, discussing how to develop the Individual

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1. See the interesting analysis of Cher-Leparrain M., 2014, "Le coût prohibitif des ventes d'armes françaises dans le golfe. Faut-il assurer la défense de monarchies de la région?", *Orient XXI*, June 17, available from <http://www.orientxxi.info/magazine> Accessed June 28, 2014.
 2. As in Somalia (1992), Bosnia (1995), Kosovo (1999), Afghanistan (ISAF 2003), Lebanon (2006).
 3. See among others Chandrasekaran R., "In the UAE, the United States has a quiet, potent ally nicknamed 'Little Sparta'", 2014, *The Washington Post*, November 9, available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com> Accessed November 15, 2014.
 4. As showed by a NATO Defense College research in 2008, ICI states participated in 57 cooperation initiatives (UAE 25, Qatar 13, Bahrain 12, Kuwait 7). Cfr. Razoux P., "What future for NATO's Istanbul Cooperation Initiative?", 2010, NATO Defense College Research Paper, January, n°55, p.3. In 2014, NATO Defense College in Rome and the UAE Ministry of Defense signed an agreement for education, research and training.
 5. Saudi Arabia and Oman don't take part in it, even though they often participate in ICI informal events and public diplomacy. Cfr. "Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI): reaching out to the broader Middle East", 2011, November 18, available from <http://www.nato.int> Accessed March 12, 2015. See also Gaub F., *The Odd Couple: NATO and the GCC*, in Alcaro R.-Dessi A. (eds), *The Uneasy Balance. Potential Challenges of the West's Relations with the Gulf States*, 2013, Institute for International Affairs, IAI Research Papers, Rome, pp.113-126.
 6. The summit was held in Wales, on September 4-5, 2014. Bahrain, Jordan, Morocco are the other Arab members.

Partnership and Cooperation Programme, in ICI framework. Therefore, constant engagement in cooperative security, as already designed by NATO Lisbon's Strategic Concept in 2010,¹ is also a way to tighten and deepen UAE's relation with the United States, increasing not only the regional weight of the federation, but even the strength of Washington's committed to Emiratis external defense.² Al-Dhafra air base is a fundamental facility for the United States in the Gulf. As the UAE ambassador in the United States recently highlighted in a conference at the Atlantic Council, "we have fought alongside US troops in six wars" and we deserve "some sort of recognition and some kind of process", in order to upgrade a "gentleman's agreement with the United States about security" in "something in writing...institutionalized".³ Now that United States seem partially to disengage from the Gulf and the perception of threats coming from Iran and the domestic realm rises, United Arab Emirates have begun to use their military power in the region, with an assertive attitude.

Regional military assertiveness.

From 2011 Arab uprisings till now, UAE have carried out four military operations, all crucial to define their current Middle Eastern foreign policy. In March 2011, 700 Emirates policemen were deployed in Manama, under the request of Bahraini king, with the purpose to help local army to settle the Shia protest, which was calling for equal

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1. Cooperative security for collective defense and crisis management, see NATO, Active Engagement, Modern Defense: Strategic Concept, November 2010, available from <http://www.nato.int> Accessed March 17, 2015.
 2. Emirates have also recently shown to be "dialectic allies" of the United States. After the disappearance of Jordanian pilot Muath al-Kassasbeh, then burned to death by the so-called Islamic State, UAE suspended their airstrikes between Syria and Iraq, demanding to the Pentagon improvements in search-and-rescue measures, claiming for instance the use of V-22 Osprey helicopters for fast rescue of in-danger pilots. Cfr. Cooper H., 2015, "United Arab Emirates, Key U.S. Ally in ISIS Effort, Disengaged in December", The New York Times, February 3, available from <http://www.nytimes.com> Accessed on March 4, 2015.
 - 3 See Kumar Sen A., "With an Eye on Iran, Gulf Countries Seek US Security Guarantee", 2015, Atlantic Council, May 7. The public conference quoted was held at the Atlantic Council, Washington, May 7, with the title "The Road to Camp David: The Future of US-Gulf Partnership". However, US-GCC summit in Camp David on May 14 showed that this was not the case, since no written agreement was signed, but was released only a joined politically-binding statement on mutual defense cooperation.

opportunities with respect to the small ruling Sunni minority.¹ In September 2014, UAE air forces joined the international coalition led by the United States against the so-called Islamic State (IS), bombing between eastern Syria and northwestern Iraq; Emirati planes are second only to U.S. air fighters in the number of sorties flown.² After the impressive murder of a Jordanian pilot by “IS”, UAE and Jordan hit Jihadi positions in the Mosul area, as retaliatory measure. In August 2014, UAE unilaterally stroke against Jihadi militias -with the logistic support of Egypt- in Tripoli, Libya,³ so attempting to actively support Tobruk recognized government. In March 2015, United Arab Emirates engaged with the Arab Sunni air military coalition, led by Saudi Arabia, against Shiite militias in Yemen (some of them, the Houthis, also backed by Iran), supporting the legitimacy of Abdu Rabu Mansur Hadi’s *interim* presidency; here, since summer 2015, UAE’ units have been revealing fundamental to organize the coalition’s land intervention to support and coordinate Yemeni regular forces.⁴ As in a mosaic, every military intervention sheds light on a feature, a detail of United Arab Emirates foreign policy: counter-revolutionary intent (Bahrain, Yemen), cooperative security with Western allies (“Islamic State”), regional military assertiveness connected with anti-Muslim Brotherhood policies (Libya), transnational containment of Iran (Yemen). Moreover, Abu Dhabi is one of the main sponsors, together with Saudi Arabia and Egypt, of the Arab joint military force organized by the Arab League, to be deployed against emergency threats, as terrorism. As a matter of fact, Sunni Arab coalition which intervened in Yemen against Shiite militias can be considered the air-vanguard of the project. During the

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1. Were also deployed about 1000 soldiers of the Saudi National Guard, “pres de 800 militaires jordaniens revêtus de l’uniforme bahreïnien”, plus a Kuwaiti warship to patrol the coasts. Dazi-Héni F., *Le Conseil de Coopération du Golfe: une coopération de sécurité et de défense renforcée?*, 2011, Sciences Po-CNRS CERI, September.
 2. Cfr. International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), “Douglas Barrie, Arab air power and Operation Inherent Resolve”, 2014, Manama Dialogue blog, December 6, available from <http://www.iiss.org/en/manama-s-voices> Accessed March 2, 2015.
 3. See McGregor A., “Egypt, the UAE and Arab Military Intervention in Libya”, 2014, *Terrorism Monitor*, The Jamestown Foundation, vol.12, issue 17, September 5.
 4. Cfr. Browning N., “Arab Solidarity, fear of Iran bring hi-tech Gulf troops to Yemen desert”, *Reuters*, September 16, 2015, available from <http://www.uk.reuters.com> Accessed September 16, 2015; Barthe B., “Au Yémen, les pays du Golfe combattent au sol”, *Le Monde*, September 17, 2015, p.3.

first Abu Dhabi Strategic Debate, a conference organized on October 2014 by the Emirates Policy Centre (EPC) to discuss regional issues, EPC underlined that “United Arab Emirates, GCC states and their strategic depth are not recipients of regional and international powers impact only, but are regional and international actors as well”, a statement that synthetizes the new Emiratis approach to foreign policy.¹

4. Armed Forces as tool of UAE’s collective identity.

In the Middle East, war doesn’t make states and especially it doesn’t construct strong states. Nevertheless, war helps to foster a sense of belonging to a peculiar community and, in this sense, it is a formidable driver of national identity and self-consciousness. In the case of United Arab Emirates, I can’t avoid to remark two points. First, the federation doesn’t engage in regular, classical war among armies, but only in wide peace support operations (i.e. Afghanistan, Kosovo), NATO-led military interventions (Libya 2011), unilateral air-strikes (Libya 2014), Arab-Sunni military interventions (Yemen), “police-style” operations (Bahrain). Second, UAE are a “work in progress nation”: they are a federation of small emirates, ruled by a “dominant social coalition” which encompasses tribal chieftains, rich merchants and Western-educated technocrats.² Despite of common religion, language, culture, tribal loyalties tend to prevail with respect to UAE national identity, which remains weak in each emirate, especially in the relation between coastal and inner lands.³ Paradoxically, the presence of a huge number of expatriates in the United Arab Emirates (employed in particular in the army, in the navy and in the private sector) has been fostering the development of a national sense of belonging. In fact, the “population imbalance” between nationals and expatriates has nourished, in the eyes of UAE citizens, firstly the perception and then the awareness of being “a minority in their own country”, till to look at themselves as a “completely undisputed class of privileged few”.⁴ Between United Arab Emirates’ armed forces and the domestic arena exists a circular relation. Armed forces, in particular air forces, are -as I said before- a

1. Cfr. Abu Dhabi Strategic Debate 2014, Events Details, available from <http://www.epc.ae> Accessed May 24, 2015.

2. Lawson F., 1993, “Neglected Aspects of the Security Dilemma”, in Bryner R.-Korany B.-Noble P., *ibid.*, pp.100-126.

3. Cfr. Kupchan C.A., *ibid.*, p.335.

4. Heard-Bey F., “The United Arab Emirates: Statehood and Nation-Building in a Traditional Society”, 2005, *Middle East Journal*, 59, 3, Summer.

central actor of current Emirates foreign policy: through the active engagement in peace support operations and regional coalitions, this external military projection fosters the formation of a sense of federal belonging. This could feed the raise of an Emiratis collective identity, since it conveys a feeling of group-ness and unity: the image of UAE's pilots committed in military interventions abroad helps to strengthen self-consciousness, as the collective mourning for national "soldiers martyred in Yemen" has been doing.¹ As stresses by shaikh Muhammad bin Rashid al-Maktoum during the 39th anniversary of the unification of the Armed Forces "the building of our Armed Forces was the most important chapter of our great national epic...at the heart of the process of building the state and society".² This is the rhetoric used to address with the military system. In fact, intervention "is triggered by perceived threats, but it is also about branding, identity-construction":³ it is not by chance that national voluntaries join air forces due to their prestige, while the federal army and naval forces need still to rely predominantly on foreign soldiers.

Militaries as identity-mobilizers.

The impact of foreign military engagement on the rise of UAE federal identity can be seen as a bottom-up dynamic, because it emerges, in a horizontal way, at popular level. On the other hand, Abu Dhabi institutions are attempting to operationalize and maximize this phenomenon through top-down measures, in order to enhance intra-federal ties and so UAE collective identity. In 2014, the introduction of military conscription by the federation⁴ was presented as an effort to "dynamize the nation", also boosting a sense of commitment into national security among nationals. In the Arab states, national security encompasses regime security: in practice, they are overlapped,

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1. On September 4, 2015, 45 Emirati soldiers were killed in the area of Mareb, central Yemen, by a Houthi's missile. See Khaleej Times, 2015, "UAE salutes 45 soldiers martyred in Yemen", September 5, available from <http://www.khaleejtimes.com> Accessed September 13, 2015.
 2. Gulf News, 2015, "Building of Armed Forces most important chapter of UAE history: UAE vice President", May 5, available from <http://www.gulfnews.com> Accessed May 20, 2015.
 3. Cfr. London School of Economics and Political Sciences, LSE Middle East Centre, 2014, The New Politics of Intervention of Gulf Arab States, Workshop Summary, March 26.
 4. The law establishes compulsory draft for male citizens between 18-30 years, for a period of service from nine months till two years. For women, draft is voluntary. See Cher-Leparrain M., 2014, Deux monarchies du Golfe instaurent un service militaire obligatoire, Orient XXI, February 19, available from <http://www.orientxxi.info> Accessed March 7, 2014.

“making them difficult to disentangle”.¹ Therefore, promoting a feeling of federal engagement through the armed forces it is a way, for Abu Dhabi leadership, to protect regime security, especially in this unstable regional scenario, after Arab uprisings, the spread of jihadism and the rise of the Iranian transnational role. UAE media are increasingly covering news about their armed forces, highlighting the positive effects on Emirates self-perception.² Many national media underline that the involvement of young citizens in the armed forces it is also a way to prevent Jihadi radicalization among them, so promoting “a strong sense of belonging” and shaping “collective identity”. At the same time, others emphasize the healthy impact of draft on youth life-style, in order to avoid sedentary diseases and emotional imbalances³, till to picture military service as something “cool” and “fashionable”. Notwithstanding the introduction of military conscription, UAE traditional pattern of security is no meant to change: national population is too little to become a game-changer in the military system and rulers prefer to rely on foreign soldiers. In the Gulf monarchies, keeping small armies has always been an effective coup-proofing strategy, in order to avoid or settle potential threats coming from military ranks. Thus, the introduction of compulsory draft would act, in Abu Dhabi’s intentions, as an *identity-mobilizer*, helping United Arab Emirates to cope with a raising troubled regional landscape; due to the low percentage of nationals, this political choice should be able to maximize positive effects (contributing to the enhancement of federal identity), minimizing instead risks related to the increased involvement of citizens in political and military affairs. In this way, military conscription is an example of “*conservative reformism*”: a counter-revolutionary measure within an unstable Middle Eastern environment, aimed to strengthen royal political authority, fostering a *rally around the flag* national feeling among citizens.

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1. Bryner R.-Korany B.-Noble P. (eds), 1993, *The Many Faces of National Security in the Arab World*, London, Palgrave MacMillan, p.27.
 2. As one young soldier says, conscription “makes me pride to live here”. Cfr. The National, 2015, “National service will help the country”, Letters to the Editor, Mar 30, available at <http://www.thenational.ae> Accessed April 3, 2015.
 3. See among others Almazouri A., “Military Service is a good start towards a healthy life-style”, 2015, The National, March 29, available at <http://www.thenational.ae> Accessed Apr 3, 2015.

Conclusions.

When it started in the Seventies, United Arab Emirates federation-building process was primarily rent-driven. From a military point of view, UAE were a “looser federation”, due to the fact that military integration among emirates was only formal and not substantial. The rivalry between the two biggest federation’s emirates, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, marked the decision-making process of the UAE; for instance, there was no unified foreign policy, since Dubai followed commercial-oriented relations with Iran, while Abu Dhabi was much closer to the issue of the islands contested with Teheran. Only in the Nineties, when a different regional context and new generation of princes raised, armed forces became to acquire a crescent role within the federation-building process. In this sense, armed forces can be considered late federation-builders, because they were used by al-Nahyan rulers to centralize Abu Dhabi’s governance on the other emirates (as the inner competitor Dubai), through a neo-patrimonial network linking the security sector with the royal family, especially the Bani Fatima clan. Moreover, tribal presence inside military ranks was balanced, in order to increase territorial loyalty and the number of nationals involved in the army. Nowadays, armed forces are a vector of UAE foreign policy: this trend has been strengthening after 2011 *thawrat* and the empowerment of Iran’s transnational leverage in the Middle East. Thus, Abu Dhabi -now the main foreign policy master in the federation- has begun to engage in counter-revolutionary efforts (together with Saudi Arabia) through foreign aid and the military tool (i.e. Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, Yemen). The centrality of the military dimension in the current United Arab Emirates external projection can be identified in at least three dynamics: increased military expenditure, cooperative security with Western powers and NATO, raising military assertiveness within the Arab system. Nevertheless, the level of military integration among UAE emirates -and also among GCC countries- remains incomplete: acquire better interoperability will be the first challenge of the future. Between United Arab Emirates’ armed forces and the domestic realm exists a circular relation. UAE’s armed forces, especially air forces, contribute to enhance a sense of federal belonging and self-consciousness, through active engagement abroad. At the same time, UAE institutions are attempting to maximize this

bottom-up, popular phenomenon, introducing top-down measures (as military conscription) aimed to shape a shared, collective identity, coping with *intermestic* security threats.¹ In this way, armed forces perform as identity-mobilizers, playing also a role of conservative reformism. Looking at UAE foreign policy posture since 2011, it is possible to argue whether this external projection could be still considered an example of constructive engagement² or, better, of *ambitious engagement*, combining counter-revolutionary efforts with rank aspirations, especially now that the historical Iranian nuclear deal marks a new geopolitical phase for the region. The passage from “constructive” to “ambitious” is emphasized by shaykh Muhammad bin Rashid al-Maktoum’s words, when he affirmed that “without providing reasons of self-strength, the talk of peaceful coexistence, good neighborliness and problem-solving by dialogue has no value, weight or context”.³ Without any doubt, such new approach is more Emirates, prestige and military-centered, with respect to the previous one.

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 3. Cfr. Al-Khoori A., 2015, “*UAE Armed Forces have positive role in regional justice, Dubai Ruler says*”, *The National*, May 5, available from <http://www.thenational.ae> Accessed May 18, 2015.

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From Dialogue to Alliance of civilizations: Iranian and Spanish initiatives revisited.

Luciano Zaccara *

Introduction

This paper briefly analyses comparatively the initiatives of Dialogue Among Civilizations (DaC), proposed by the former Iranian president, Mohamed Khatami, in 1997 and the Alliance of Civilizations (AoC) initiated by the president of Spanish government, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, in 2005. Both proposals will be analysed through 3 key factors in order to assess their contribution to the Dialogue for Peace:

1. The political orientation change of the governments headed by Khatami and Zapatero respect to their predecessors;
2. The international forums in which these proposals were presented and the repercussion they generated;
3. The external and internal legitimacy objectives they seek.

The final comparison ended with a non-optimistic conclusion regarding the relative failure of both initiatives in preventing the actual conflicts that affect the MENA region. The possible hypothesis behind this failure could be the excessive focus of both initiatives in

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high level governmental meetings, disregarding the civil society participation.

Khatami, Zapatero and their predecessors

Both head of governments represented “reformist” or “progressive” political orientation in comparison with the previous governments of Hashemi Rafsanjani and Jose Maria Aznar respectively, that were considered as “conservative”. In that sense, both initiatives represented a change in the external orientation of both governments. On one hand, Khatami’s diplomatic approach to Iranian foreign behaviour, based on confidence building measures, mainly with the regional neighbours, but also with extra-regional powers, such as the European Union countries, as well as with international organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency-IAEA and the United Nations. On the other hand, Zapatero’s less interventionist policy, represented by the quick withdrawal of Spanish troops from Iraq once he assumed power in 2004 –something he promised during his campaign, following the strong anti-war sentiment portrayed by most of the Spanish people against the Popular Party decision to directly support the 2003 occupation and to participate in the military control of some provinces during the provisional government.

Thus, in both cases the result of this change in the ideological orientations of the heads of governments produced a change in their foreign policy options that ended with an improvement of the external prestige and image of Spain and Iran as a less confrontational states, not only at the regional level but also internationally. While Rafsanjani was sometimes associated with a more revolutionary approach to the Iranian foreign policy, which granted Iran with a very bad reputation mainly within European countries, Khatami drastically changed this perception due to his diplomatic offensive toward, among others, European states, including also the Vatican. On the other hand, while Aznar was associated with the “Canarian Summit” – the meeting between President George Bush, the Prime Minister Tony Blair and President of Government Jose Maria Aznar in Canary Island where the decision to participate in the Iraq invasion was made–, Zapatero was associated with a more tolerant approach toward the Middle East problems, including all the pending bilateral issues with one of the most important Spanish Arab neighbours, Morocco.

The Dialogue among Civilizations

The Iranian proposal of DaC was presented for the first time in the 8^o Islamic Summit Conference at Tehran in December 1997. Called “The session of Dignity, Dialogue and Participation”, the final statement included the decision of creating a committee to develop guidelines to strengthen regional arrangement to promote systematic dialogue and reinforce cooperation and confidence between member states. The final statement of the summit was the result of the two discourses made by the president Mohamed Khatami and the Iranian leader Ali Khamenei. The first one calling for promotion of confidence building measures in Middle East and Persian Gulf region, the second by ending the ideological struggle of the Islamic Republic in face of the rest of the Islamic states.

The first consequence of the summit was the beginning of the re-approach between Iran and Saudi Arabia, and a timid attempt with Egypt, even though any of them ended with the persisting bilateral tension. After that, with the good international acceptance of Khatami’s discourse and diplomatic initiative, the initiative was presented at 53^o Plenary Session of the General Assembly of United Nations on 21st September, 1998. On that occasion the Assembly declared 2001 the International year of Dialogue Among Civilizations, upon the Iranian proposal.

Khatami’s discourse was looking to put in the UN discussion table several international situations in which the Muslim population were suffering, like Afghanistan, Palestine, Kosovo, but stressing the necessity of philosophical discussion about the history and construction of civilizations, and the importance of inter-religious dialogue and the returning to spirituality in civil society.

On November 4th 1998 the Iranian delegation proposed the resolution project of DaC. It was approved on November 16th, asking UN and UNESCO to plan cultural, social, and educational program on DaC, including conferences and seminars, and other information activities around the world. There were several preparative meetings like the Panel Discussion and the Islamic Symposium on DaC in New York on May 1999. This meeting adopted Tehran Vision Statement, supporting the initiative made by Khatami and proposing a 10 years program. The participants in the forums and conferences were related with religious, intellectual and academics fields and not with governmental institutions.

The first goal of DaC was cultural discussion and promotion of different vision of the world to eliminate intolerance and intercultural and religious violence. There were not a political or security goals in terms of elaboration of concrete policies of fighting against terrorism or wars. We must remind that even the year of DaC was 2001, the proposal was made three years before the New York terrorist attack on September 11th 2001.

The conclusion of that year was written and sent to the UN General Assembly by the representative of Kofi Annan to the DaC, Giandomenico Pico. The final document was called “Crossing the divide: Dialogue among Civilizations”. The institutional repercussion of the year of DaC was broad, as it is show in Table 1, with six resolutions from the General Assembly of the United Nations dedicated to the Dialogue

Table 1: GA/UN Resolutions

Document Symbol	Date	Summary
A/RES/56/6	21/11/01	Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations.
A/RES/56/3	11/05/01	Decides to convene the plenary meetings devoted to the item entitled “United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations” on 8 and 9 November 2001.
A/RES/55/23	13/11/00	Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-sixth session the item entitled “United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations”.
A/55/492/Rev.1	09/11/00	United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations: Report of the Secretary General
A/RES/54/113	10/12/99	Decides to include in the provisional agenda of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly the item "The United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations".
A/RES/53/22	16/11/98	Proclaims the year 2001 as the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations.

Source: <http://www.unesco.org/dialogue/en/sources.htm>

The international body in charge of the activities and meetings, UNESCO, also reflected the relevance given to the year of DaC, as it is shown in the resolutions and declarations issued during that year (Table 2) in order to establish not only the framework for the discussions and the program and plan of action but also to start a long awaited debate on cooperation to prevent terrorist actions worldwide.

Table 2: UNESCO Decisions/Resolutions/Declarations

Document Symbol	Date	Summary
Resolution 25	02/11/01	31 C/Resolution 25 adopted by the UNESCO General Conference: UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity
Resolution 39	20/10/01	31 C/Resolution 39 adopted by the UNESCO General Conference: Call for international co-operation to prevent and eradicate acts of terrorism.
161 EX/INF.14	21/05/01	Report of the Director-General of UNESCO on the Execution of the Programme adopted by the General Conference: United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations -- UNESCO Framework for Action
Resolution 31	17/11/99	30 C/Resolution 31 adopted by the UNESCO General Conference: Preparation by UNESCO of the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations

Source: <http://www.unesco.org/dialogue/en/strategy.html>

Although the year of DaC was only 2001, the cultural activities related to UNESCO program still continued from 2003 until 2006, as it is show in the Table 3. The high level meetings, held in Africa, Asia, Europe and America, covered a wide range of topics related to intercultural, religious and civilizational dialogue.

Table 3: UNESCO Dialogue among Civilization Meetings 2003/06

Date	Title	Location
20 - 21 June 2006	African Regional Conference on the Dialogue among Civilizations, Cultures and Peoples	Abuja, Nigeria
1-2 June 2006	Communication of Heritage: A New Vision of South East Europe	Opatija, Croatia,
14-16 June 2005	Conference on Fostering Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations through Concrete and Sustained Action	Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco
6 to 8 May 2005	Dialogue among Civilizations: Islam and the West	Laval University, Sainte-Foy, Quebec, Canada
20-22 December 2004	Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on "Dialogue among Cultures and Civilizations for Peace and Sustainable Development"	Hanoi, Viet Nam
9-10 December 2004	Regional Summit on Inter-religious and Inter-ethnic Dialogue	Tirana, Albania
4-6 October 2004	Second International Conference on Turkic Civilization: "The Role and Place of the Turkic Civilization amongst World Civilizations"	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Date	Title	Location
6-8 September 2004	“New Ignorances, New Literacies – Learning to Live Together in a Globalizing World”	Barcelona, Spain
10-11 June 2004	High Level Conference Eurasia in the 21st Century - Dialogue of Cultures or Conflict of Civilizations?	Issyk Kul, Kyrgyzstan
10 -11 February 2004	Colloquium on the Dialogue among Civilizations and Cultures	Sana’a – Republic of Yemen
17 - 19 January 2004	Euro Mediterranean Forum for Science, Development & Peace: The 'Clash of Civilizations' will not take place	UNESCO HQ, Paris, France
15-17 December 2003	International Congress on Dialogue of Civilization, Religion and Cultures in West Africa	Abuja, Nigeria
17-21 November 2003	International Conference on Intercultural Dialogue and a Culture of Peace in Central Africa and the Great Lakes Region	Libreville, Gabon
9-11 November 2003	International Experts' Symposium on "A Culture of Innovation and the Building of Knowledge Societies"	Moscow, Russian Federation
29 & 30 August 2003	Regional Forum on Dialogue among Civilizations	Ohrid, FYR of Macedonia
30 & 31 July 2003	Globalization with a Human Face -- Benefiting All	Tokyo, Japan
9 & 10 July 2003	International Ministerial Conference on the Dialogue among Civilizations "Quest for New Perspectives"	New Delhi, India

Source: <http://www.unesco.org/dialogue/en/conferences.html>

Once the UNESCO program ended in 2006, the activities related to the DaC were continued by the Foundation of Dialogue among Civilizations (FDC), institution established in 2007 “to promote the institution of regular dialogue between the world’s peoples, cultures, civilizations and religions in order to promote peace, justice and tolerance”¹, according to their mission statement. The foundation is located in Geneva, and headed by the former Iranian President Mohammad Khatami. The FDC has been keeping alive and active the spirit of the Iranian DaC initiative through a series of meetings and cultural, artistic and scientific activities, involving NGOs and

1. See <http://dialoguefoundation.org/>

international organizations such as IESCO, ECOSOC, in order to promote “mutual understanding, tolerance, peaceful coexistence and international cooperation and security”.

The Alliance of Civilizations

The Spanish proposal of AoC was presented in the 59^o Session of the UN General Assembly in September 2004 and then before the League of Arab States. Following consultations between the Spanish government and the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan in June 2005, both head of government decided to co-sponsor the initiative in order to provide it with a multi-cultural and multi-religious framework. The initiative was officially proposed for General Assembly approval on July 2005 with the joint support of the Turkish and Spanish governments, and with the official support of the by then Secretary General of the General Assembly Kofi Annan, who announced the launch of the AoC initiative in New York on 14th July. On October 24th the General Assembly approved the proposal and the creation of the discussion instrument and methodology proposed. The proposed program included fundamental issues such as antiterrorist cooperation, overcoming economic inequalities worldwide and intercultural dialogue.

The proposal included the creation of a High Level Group (HLG) of 20 people including governmental and non-governmental personalities. The HLG worked in two different aspects: political and security matters and cultural matters. During its first years the HLG was chaired by the Spanish Federico Mayor Zaragoza and the Turkish Mehmet Aydin. Mohammad Khatami, the former Iranian president, was one of the 20 personalities included in the HLG. The program included four high level meetings during that inaugural year. The first were held at Palma de Mallorca (Spain) on 26th November 2005, the second at Doha on 25th February 2006 and the third at Dakar on 28th May 2006. In all these meetings Mohammad Khatami had a relevant role, as the AoC was recognized as the continuation of the Iranian initiative of DaC impulse by the former Iranian head of government.

There were others meetings of the Group of Friends created in the United Nations General Assembly. This group is composed by governments of 30 countries and 3 international organizations –European Union, League of Arab States and Organization of Islamic Conference.

The AoC initiative is still active, and the GoF is composed nowadays by 139 members including states and governmental organizations. The United States government joined the GoF on May 2010, under the presidency of Barack Obama, who recognized the “value of the Alliance of Civilizations as an important initiative that is aimed at a better understanding among cultures and people”.

A central goal of AoC since its creation was to identify similar initiatives engaged in bridging current global direction through dialogue and action and to counter the rise of extremism and polarization. The character of AoC was then primarily political at difference with the DaC, that was mainly focused on cultural and academic initiatives. The AoC looks for practical recommendations for governmental actions, to fight against terrorism and violence in first place and promote a concrete active plan on educational, mass media and social integration fields.

Table 4: Alliance of Civilizations Meetings 2005/14

Date	Title	Location
26-29 November 2005	First meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations High-level Group	Palma de Mallorca, Spain
25-28 February 2006	Second meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations High-level Group	Doha, Qatar
28-30 May 2006	Third meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations High-level Group,	Dakar, Senegal
05-06 September 2006	Working meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations High-level Group	New York
22 September 2006	First Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends at United Nations Headquarters	New York
12-13 November 2006	Fourth and Final Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations High-level Group. Presentation of the High-level Group Report to UN-SG Kofi Annan	Istanbul, Turkey
26 September 2007	Second Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends at the United Nations Headquarters	New York
15-16 January 2008	First Alliance of Civilizations Forum and the Third Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends	Madrid, Spain

Date	Title	Location
24 September 2008	Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends at United Nations Headquarters	New York
2-3 October 2008	First Meeting of the Focal Points of the Alliance of Civilizations' Group of Friends.	Paris, France
6-7 April 2009	Second Alliance of Civilizations Forum and the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations' Group of Friends	Istanbul, Turkey
8 April 2009	Second Meeting of the Focal Points of the Alliance of Civilizations' Group of Friends	Istanbul, Turkey
26 September 2009	Sixth Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends at United Nations Headquarters	New York
10-11 November 2009	Third Meeting of the Focal Points of the Alliance of Civilizations' Group of Friends,	Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco
27 May 2010	Fourth Meeting of the Focal Points of the Alliance of Civilizations' Group of Friends	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
27-29 May 2010	Third Alliance of Civilizations Forum and the Seventh Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends at the Third UNAOC Forum	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
24 September 2010	Seventh Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends at United Nations Headquarters,	New York
25-27 October 2010	Fifth Meeting of the Focal Points of the Alliance of Civilizations' Group of Friends	Berlin, Germany
23 September 2011	Eighth Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations' Group of Friends at United Nations Headquarters	New York
2 November 2011	Sixth meeting of the Focal Points of the Alliance of Civilizations' Group of Friends	Lisbon, Portugal
11-13 December 2011	Fourth Alliance of Civilizations Forum and the Ninth Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends	Doha, Qatar
31 May-1 June 2012	First Partners Forum for the Alliance of Civilizations	Istanbul, Turkey

Source: <http://www.unaoc.org/>

The Table 4 shows the HLG, GoF and ministerial meetings held under the umbrella of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations initiative, since its launching in 2005 until 2012. Even though the high level meetings finished by 2012, the initiative is still active through a diverse kind of events and gatherings such as the Global Forums held in Doha in 2011, in Vienna in 2013 and the Bali in 2014. These forums were mainly dedicated to promote the dialogue among civil society and youth organizations about shared values and principles.

The internal and external objectives

The Iranian and Spanish governments privileged the aspects related to the exterior image of both countries, which were damaged because of the previous government foreign policies. Iran wanted to break the international isolation and to promote the distension in the Persian Gulf and in the relations with the European Union mainly. Is possible to say that DaC was the continuation of Khatami internal goal of searching for political reform in the Iranian political system, based on the spreading of Islamic or religious civil society that didn't mean separation between religion and politics or government but only the improvement of certain aspects of Iranian society like local elections, freedom of press and women participation in political or social issues.

On the other hand, Spain sought to change the image after the intervention in the Iraq war, mainly between the Arab and Islamic countries. The withdrawal of the Spanish soldiers from Iraq was the first step that showed the future attitude of the Socialist Party in foreign policy. And is possible to say that in the internal front was looking for more legitimacy considering the little difference of votes between Popular Party and PSOE in March 14th election and after the March 11th bombing at Atocha, claimed by Al Qaeda. In that sense it was a very different approach towards the international terrorist threat in comparison with the United States response portrayed by George Bush Jr. administration.

Another comparative elements is that while Iranian DaC was started by a Muslim state, with an international bad reputation since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, and within an Islamic context (OCI Summit), with general goals and long term objectives, the Spanish AoC was initiated in a more general context as UN-GA an with a more concrete focus, with

defined political goals and operative and short term objectives. And even both initiatives were launched within a governmental context, the DoC then became a mainly non-governmental initiative, while the AoC remained as a high profile level governmental meetings.

Even though the 11th September terrorist attacks against the United States and the resulting wars of Afghanistan and Iraq shadowed the outcomes of the DaC proposal, the initiative was able to overcome religious divisions, proving that the Iranian government maintained to some extent the universalistic appeal of the Islamic Revolution though with a different strategy and diplomatic tone. And more important, for the first time, an Iranian initiative was supported by the most representative governmental institution in the world, the General Assembly of the United Nations. On the other hand, the AoC initiative was also launched in the middle of a politically contaminated regional environment as a result of the occupation of Iraq. The Arab Spring events, followed by the conflicts erupted in Libya, Syria, Iraq and Yemen, and the reinforcement of some authoritarian regimes such as the Arab monarchies and Egypt, also shadowed the Spanish-Turkish initiative.

One final assessment that is possible to elaborate as a preliminary conclusion on the success or failure of both initiatives is that, the DaC and AoC initiatives benefited mainly those countries that proposed and launched them. Their images changed in the international community, as well as the own personal images of the statesmen that proposed them – Khatami, Zapatero and Erdogan. However, it is arguably the effectiveness of both initiatives, in the light of the current situation of events in the whole Middle East and North African region. The efforts exerted by both, individual personalities and governments, from Western and non-Western states, proved to be fruitless in order to prevent religious and sectarian confrontation in the region, and to promote the peaceful solution of internal conflicts. The actual existence of more ‘failed states’ since the Arab Spring, without a prospect for a negotiated solution, corroborate the conclusion that these initiatives, involving mainly head of government and states, finally never reached the civil society and people from those states.

Philosophy, Art and Critique: A (short) conversation with the “other”¹

Arshin Adib-Moghaddam *

Art and philosophy have a common effect on the human mind: They detach the subject from “reality” and hijack him into another realm.¹ Philosophy and art are “theories” of what is possible. In this way they suggest a libertarian impulse. They simulate another world to which the individual could escape. They are intoxicating because they always also chime with our romantic and utopian yearnings, at least when philosophy and art are forcefully freed from the shackles of conformity. There is a second factor that makes philosophy and art comparable. Both human pursuits are located in historical contingent constellations that defy simple definitions. Of course there have been efforts to “define” philosophy and art, but their trajectories escape artificial encampment. As such, philosophy and art do not have an origin. There is no text or object that could be consolidated as foundational despite stringent efforts in the western canon to that end. But even Eurocentric depictions which claim

1. A version of this article was commissioned by Kimiya-ye Honar Magazine in Tehran.

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philosophy and art for the “west” have failed to mute the critical promise that many artists and philosophers believe in. The emergence of cosmopolitan theories of art, comparative philosophies and global thought are contemporary scholarly manifestations of this rather more inclusive trend. Hence, the systematic effort to reduce the history of art and philosophy to the “west” and to gentrify its genealogy from the impact of the “other” has failed, exactly because art and philosophy have to escape the mould of (western) “art” and “philosophy” in order to exist. Whenever a limit is defined for artists and philosophers, it is immediately

My rather abstract introductory suggestions will become clearer and more specific in the next paragraphs when I will explore the nexus of art, philosophy and critique with insights that are taken from several cultural loci. This is to show that the freedom that art and philosophy simulate and call for is a universal sentiment and not merely “western”. Every philosophy and artwork is an interregnum, a suspension and an interruption and interference in the humdrum affairs of society. This is why they elicit responses, for instance emotions such as happiness, anger or repulsion. In this way art and philosophy continue to entice despite of the vulgar commodification of the university and the art-world.² Once art and philosophy cease to provoke, they cease to exist as human activities. We have not reached this point yet. Today, the western “self” and the “other” are engaged in a dialectic, which is productive and which creates novel forms of critique and negation. This dialectic has thrown a lifeline to the making of art and philosophy. It is in this constructive interaction that art and philosophy find their true calling and hybrid “identity”.

God and critique

Art and philosophy as critique can be adequately explained by focusing on the way classical Muslim philosophers dealt with contentious subjects such as religion and God. The confines of this article do not allow me to give a full account of these issues of course. But I hope to sketch a forward looking modality in classical Islamic philosophy which I think inherently critical and inclusive. In the philosophy of polymaths such as Abu Nasr Farabi and Ibn Sina and in their poetry, life takes on a forward-looking modality adequate to this idea of the capacity for change which is always the pre-requisite for any critical theory and practice. Their emphasis on learning and constant renewal created hope and

possibility, an optimistic call for the betterment of human existence. In that vein, in his *uyun al-hikmah* Ibn Sina writes that *al-hikmah*, (which he uses as being the same as philosophy) is the perfection of the human soul through conceptualisation [*tasawwur*] of things and judgment [*tasdiq*] of theoretical and practical realities to the measure of human ability.³ Learned individuals are encouraged to follow a path of finding this supreme knowledge, not at least in order to transcend the humdrum affairs of their everyday reality and to attain a higher form of contentment or happiness.

Ibn Sina went on in his later writings to distinguish between Peripatetic philosophy and what he called ‘Oriental philosophy’ (*al-hikmat al-mashriqi’yah*) which was not based on ratiocination alone, but included revealed knowledge (it also set the stage for the influential treatises of Sohrawardi, and here especially his *kitab hikmat al-ishraq*). There is a particularly striking poem by Ibn Sina about the fate of the human soul, which exemplifies this emphasis on congruence between rational analysis and metaphysical opportunity which was central to the canons of the classical philosophers of Islam:

Until when the hour of its homeward flight draws near,
And ‘tis time for it to return to its ampler sphere, It carols
with joy, for the veil is raised, and it spies Such things as
cannot be witnessed by waking eyes. On a lofty height
doth it warble its songs of praise (for even the lowliest
being doth knowledge raise). And so it returneth, aware
of all hidden things In the universe, while no stain to its
garment clings.⁴

The ultimate object here is the perfection of the intellectual faculties of the individual, who does not carry an exclusive identity, who is only presumed in his or her physical constitution. There is no realm of knowledge that is exclusive to Muslims in the writings of Ibn Sina, no discernible schematic dichotomy that permeates his narratives. Ibn Sina searches for a supreme truth, not a supreme civilisation or race. He and many of his contemporaries managed to write their poetry and philosophy without the emergence of a discourse that would legitimate subjugation of the “other”, without a hysterical call for arms. In this sense their message was not “identitarian.” Rather the contrary, their writings

called for freedom of thought through the pursuit of knowledge, primarily in the form of philosophy.

It has been established in the scholarly literature on the subject matter that all of this happened in close dialogue with the Aristotelian tradition and ancient Greek philosophy in general. Classical philosophers of Islam (*falasifa*) such as Ibn Sina, Ibn Arabi, al-Kindi, Ibn Rushd, Farabi, and others employed complex methods explaining how ‘truth conditions’ can be rationalised through the study of language, judgement, nature, syllogisms, deductions and inductions. *Falsafa* (philosophy) was considered to lead to the knowledge of all existing things qua existent (*ashya' al-maujudah bi ma hiya maujudah*) and philosophy itself was deemed to be the art (*sind'ah*) of arts and the science (*ilm*) of sciences. What came surreptitiously into existence in the writings of these philosophers, in short, was nothing less than the renewal of philosophy as a critical practice, world-view and form of life.

All of the classical philosophers of Islam under scrutiny here were polymaths, both poets and scientists, engaged in theology and mysticism, interested in philosophy and “metaphysics” as much as in the empirical worlds. Yet despite their wide-ranging studies they did not advance a concrete concept of “identity” that could signify a monologue within the *umma* or that would organise Muslims within a militant, coherently formulated ideology. Theirs was an emancipative philosophy almost entirely depleted of identity politics or a concrete and dichotomous notion of self and other. The historical circumstances they were writing in, the presence of functioning Islamic polities, the absence of a direct threat to their ‘Muslim identity’, did not merit, or require them to write in a stridently ideological mode. The violence exercised over the Islamic worlds during the colonial period changed all that.

I have suggested that for the classical philosophers, in many ways up until Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), reality is not exhausted by explaining what offers itself to immediate knowledge and perception. The understanding of the surrounding world must also include an aspect of future potentiality, a utopia wherein the discrepancy between the present and the future opens up. This is why in the philosophy of Farabi and especially in Ibn Sina’s intricate *danish-namaha-ye alai* (Treatise on Knowledge) philosophy takes on a forward-looking modality adequate to this idea of the capacity for change as indicated. In the words of Ibn Sina: the contingent existent (*mumkin al-wujud*) is always relative to the necessary being (*wajib al-wujud*).⁵ Within such a dialectic one is alerted

to criticise the present in order to bridge the gap between the ontology surrounding the individual and the transcendental promise which is relegated to God, without, however, forcing a total causality upon this process. The world Ibn Sina sees is secular exactly because God is conceptualised to another realm of human existence.

The world of the philosopher and poet Omar Khayyam (1048-1123) is a good place to unravel further the contribution of the idea of God to critical art and philosophy and to invite him to contribute to a global understanding of their “identity”. The world-view of Khayyam can be called “critical” because of the libertarian momentum that his concept of God elicits. To his mind, God was the necessary being or *mumtani al-wujud* in Arabic (Ibn Sina termed God *wajib al-wujud* as indicated). By necessity human beings were relative to this other-worldly constant. In the world portrayed in the poetry of Khayyam, there is freedom because in relation to God, reality is socially engineered. In the absence of the godly ordained, perfected order, we are at liberty to live our lives in pursuit of happiness. For Khayyam the necessary being, that is God, continuously entices the relative being, that is the individual in his/her pursuit of such perfection. In Khayyam’s world there is doubt exactly because in relation to God, this world we are living in is disorderly, intransigently complex and not comprehensible in its entirety. ‘Whenever it is said that such and such an attribute has a necessary existence in such and such a thing,’ Khayyam writes, ‘what is meant is that it exists in the mind and the intellect, *and not in reality*. Similarly whenever it is said that the existence of such and such an attribute is dependent upon the existence of some other attribute, what is meant is *existence in mind and the intellect*.’⁶ Khayyam reveals himself here as an early ‘postmodernist’. He is convinced that our surrounding world is constructed because the realm of actual reality belongs to God. In other words, in his philosophy Khayyam alerts us to the fact that relative to God, the self-concocted world surrounding us appears ‘unreal’. Khayyam expresses the momentum thus ensued, the critical effect that the unavailability of Godly reality created in him, in his world famous quatrains:

Since neither truth nor certitude is at hand
Do not waste life in doubt for a fairy land
O let us not refuse the goblet of wine
For sober or drunk in ignorance we stand⁷

Khayyam's quatrains and philosophy serves as a measure of what poetry and art might yet bring about in this irresistibly critical mode. Khayyam expresses his alien reality, thus giving the lie to notions of religion (including Islam) as a total system immune from the grim realities of historical events. In his own words:

Eternity! – for it we find no key;
Nor any of us past the Veil can see.
Of Thee and me they talk behind the Veil
But when that parts, no more of Thee and me.⁸

The very failure of Khayyam to redeem himself, the fact that neither his poetry nor his 'drunkenness' can bring him closer to God, is also, paradoxically, the source of the irresistible critical merit of his poetry and philosophy. Khayyam presages that the individual is constantly obliged to bridge the gap between this alien world and the necessary and absolute Divinity designated as God. Yet this utopia is by definition unattainable, sameness with God is the 'impossible ontology' or *mumtani al-wujud* in Ibn Sina's words. In this way, Khayyam and the Avicennian tradition establishes 'an ontology based on the "poverty" of all things before God and their reliance upon the Source of all being for their very existence'.⁹ Mysticism (Sufism), poetry, the arts and philosophy become the inevitable routes to seek respite from the mundane world and to simulate closeness with God. They hold out the promise, never to be kept, of a realm of consciousness where the individual could at last find an image of perfect equilibrium, of sensuous pleasure that would rescue her from the antinomies of her present existence. As such, philosophy and poetry embody a much perfected form of ontological negation. The idea of God functions as a propeller for a productive form of criticism and as an incubator for progressive expressions of art and philosophy.

Embraces of self and other

Let me expand this discussion now and relocate it at the same time. To my mind the music of Wagner, Bach and Beethoven's late style express the same power of negation, the ethos of a sensuous escape from the ontological order, that the radically transcendental philosophy (and poetry) of Rumi, Khayyam, Hafiz, Saadi, and Ibn Sina embodies. I would

even go one step further, following Adorno. In the aesthetic expression of utopia the construction of dichotomous identities, whether of Orient and Occident, is minimised, because works of art with maximal aesthetic value are depleted of 'tribal identities'. This is why Rumi, Hafiz, Khayyam, Bach, Wagner, Beethoven are almost universally revered. Their art positions itself beyond categories. They give us a glimpse into the 'Natuschöne', the naturally sublime, a sign of reconciliation between self and other.¹⁰

The German Marxist thinker Ernst Bloch expresses a similar belief in aesthetic reconciliation especially with regard to the mediating power of music. 'Only the musical note, that enigma of sensuousness,' he writes, 'is sufficiently unencumbered by the world yet phenomenal enough to the last to return — like the metaphysical word — as a final material factor in the fulfilment of mystical self-perception, spread upon the golden sub-soil of the receptive human potentiality.'¹¹ Bloch alludes to the dual constitution of music, which has both formal properties and transcendental ones. In this he concurs with other German thinkers such as Schopenhauer and Nietzsche who coined the term 'musical ecstasy' in his *The Birth of Tragedy*. They all agree that music is 'at once the most humanly revealing form of art and the form most resistant to description or analysis in conceptual terms.'¹² From this perspective, music both rationalises and mystifies, it has both mathematical structure and emotional power. If musical aesthetics could hitherto not negotiate between these two extremes, it is an indicator that music brings both to the fore, without reconciling them in a final, grand synthesis. There is no transcendence or unity, for what music potentially presages is a 'figuring-out *in fonte hominum et rerum* that is utopian and fermenting, in an area of intensity that is open only to music.'¹³ For Bloch, especially Beethoven's compositions are anti-Hegelian, even contra-Enlightenment because they do not mimic perfect harmony. Beethoven may touch and tease the irreconcilable, but he finally keeps them apart. In this, music is the most successful of the arts 'succeeding visuality and belonging to the formally eccentric philosophy of inwardness, its ethic and metaphysics'. For Bloch this means that '[b]oth the existence and the concept of music are only attained in conjunction with a new object-theory, with the metaphysics of divination and utopia.'¹⁴ Thus the transformative force of music lies in its unreconciled vigour which defies capitulation to Hegelian totalities.

Art expressed in this form is ‘trans-historical’ without prescribing tribal passions. I get emotionally aroused when I listen to Wagner, so did Hitler. The pop singer ‘Madonna’ is fascinated by the poetry of Rumi, so was Ayatollah Khomeini. It is in this sense that art embodies the potentiality of change without, however, falling into the trap of Hegel’s big promise that it can bring about the final reconciliation of opposites, the great myth of perfect harmony. This is art as continuous renewal that does not usher in a grand synthesis. For Adorno there is

more pleasure in dissonance than in consonance: and this repays hedonism in due measure. What is incisive is dynamically sharpened, differentiated from itself and from the monotony of affirmativeness, and becomes an attraction. This attraction, no less than a disgust with optimistic nonsense, leads the new art into a no-man’s-land that represents the inhabitable earth. ... Negation is able to transform itself into pleasure, not into what is positive.¹⁵

Once it is realised that the contrapuntal composition of art is not reconcilable, the Hegelian promise reveals itself as a fallacy. Here we can establish a nuance between Bloch and Adorno. Whereas the former professed in the ability of music to effectively respond to emergent social and historical configurations, the latter’s negative dialectic is notably more pessimistic. For Adorno, the ‘promise held out by the work of art that it will create truth by lending new shape to the conventional social forms is as necessary as it is hypocritical.’ It is necessary because art unleashes irresistible transcendental powers:

That factor in a work of art which enables it to transcend reality certainly cannot be detached from style; but it does not consist of the harmony actually realised, of any doubtful unity of form and content, within and without, of individual and society; it is to be found in those features in which discrepancy appears: in the necessary failure of the passionate striving for identity.¹⁶

And it is hypocritical because with the advent of the modern ‘culture industry’ the emancipatory and redeeming forces of art are subjugated to the cult of consumption (e.g. pop shows such as the ‘X Factor’ or ‘American Idol’). Instead of exposing itself to the intrinsic resistance of art to lose the power of negation and critique, the culture industry pushes art towards conformity with the status quo; art as commodity and ‘obedience to social hierarchy. ‘Today,’ Adorno writes, ‘aesthetic barbarity completes what has threatened the creations of the spirit since they were gathered together as culture and neutralised.’¹⁷ The only way the critical theorists could escape this conundrum, is to free himself from the determinations of his day and age, to seek the powers of negation, if necessary in music and literature (Becket in Adorno’s case). It is true, that Adorno famously concluded that writing poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric. But this does not mean that he advocated cultural, political and social apathy. Like Khayyam, who tampered his despair by positioning himself within the realm of Islamic mysticism (if necessary by drinking a few carafes of wine), Adorno identified radical negation as the only means to prepare ourselves for the massive process of ‘final displacement’ that will be brought about by the messianic utopia awaiting him:

The only philosophy which can be responsibly practised in the face of despair is the attempt to contemplate all things as they would appear from the standpoint of redemption ... Perspectives must be fashioned that displace and estrange the world, reveal it to be, with its rifts and crevices, as indigent and distorted as it will appear one day in the messianic light.¹⁸

Critical theory reveals itself here as a prophylaxis to prepare humanity for the experience of the absolute realm of possibility, *mumtani al-wujud*, encapsulated in the ‘suridealistic’ encounter with God. According to Adorno, this final encounter will evaporate all residues of our superstitious belief in an ‘orderly’ world. As long as the poet, composer, artist, mystic, philosopher and intellectual do not despair in their effort to bridge the gap between the status quo and that utopia, they are compelled to search for the ‘truth’ which engenders a critical attitude towards the status quo. Adorno agrees with both Ibn Sina and Khayyam here. To

their mind, it does not if it is History or God which constitutes the horizon, the place towards which all meaning strife in the quest for the ‘ultimate surideal’, the ‘end of history’ or ‘judgment day’. It does not matter if it is the dialectical materialism of Marx or Jesus’s ‘Kingdom of God’, the Buddhist Nirvana or the Hindu Karma, that animates critique. It only does, when the continuous transformation towards a future potentiality is monopolised by the state, the party or another polity or when values such as equality, social justice and human rights are compromised. It does not really matter which utopia inspires us, as long as it compels us to sustain a global impetus against reification, against quests for authenticity, against hegemony, against totalities, against the deification of power. As long as utopia holds out the promise of continuous transformation towards a better tomorrow, where the relation between knower and known is a dialectic potentially open for contrapuntal re-imagining, it is not something that we should be afraid of.¹⁹

It was Immanuel Kant who asked whether one should leave the comforting bosom of one’s own rationality and venture out to discover the ‘other’. After some serious critical contemplation he remained where he departed from. Others did dare to venture further. Some of them paid a heavy price—delusion and insanity in Nietzsche’s case, melancholy and despair in the case of Khayyam. Optimistically, I do believe—and in my rather more recent writing have tried to demonstrate—that today we can appreciate the archives filled with the work of eastern and western, northern and southern thinkers in a truly comparative manner. It is not at least thanks to the availability of a counter-archive to Eurocentric readings of philosophy and art, that we have enough knowledge at hand to free ourselves from the shackles of tribal thinking. So that the next time we read a history of the ‘west’ or ‘Islam’, we immediately ask how the ‘other’ is represented; if she is not abused as a supplement in order to enunciate what the ‘self’ stands for. Next time we attend a seminar or lecture, we would pierce the speaker with questions about the validity of categories such as race, nationality, religious confession etc. We would ask her if it is analytically unproblematic to place ourselves inside such suspicious totalisations.

No discourse is innocent, nothing in the social world is apolitical and I hope that some of the ideas in the foregoing have indicated that all unities

are dubious. Freeing oneself from their totalitarian impact is utterly rewarding. Mind you, it does shatter the infinitesimally small mosaics out of which we have created our identities. But once we pull our self together and start the process of picking up the pieces, they will appear clearer to us; we will be able to analyse and comprehend them more easily and to reconfigure them within a wider frame than before. And so it is that we can attain to a multicultural consciousness without committing any pagan betrayal of our own Mosaic composition. At that stage of our intellectual journey, we are truly liberated.

References

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5. See further Nasr with Aminrazavi (eds.), *An Anthology*, pp. 196. ff.
6. Umar Khayyam, 'The Necessity of Contradiction, Free Will and Determinism (Darurat al-tadadd fi'l- alam wa'l- jabr wa'l-baqa)', in Nasr with Aminrazavi, *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia*, p. 404, emphasis added.
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8. *Ibid.*, p. 283.
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17. *Ibid.*, p. 131.
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« Étude comparative de la responsabilité du fait des produits défectueux: droit européen, droit français, droit américain et droit iranien »

Ali Ariaeipour *

Introduction

Il existe différents modèles de la responsabilité du fait des produits défectueux dans le monde. Les Etats-Unis d'Amérique, le Canada, l'Europe, l'Australie, la Chine, les pays en voie de développement et les autres pays du monde ont chacun leur propre droit de la responsabilité du fait des produits. Parmi eux le droit américain et le droit européen sont particulièrement significatifs. L'étude comparée de la responsabilité du fait des produits réalisée dans cet article se fait sur le droit européen, le droit français, le droit américain et le droit iranien. Le droit américain a été choisi puisqu'il constitue la source d'inspiration du droit européen. Les Etats-Unis d'Amérique sont à la pointe du droit de la responsabilité du fait des produits dans le monde. Le droit américain de la responsabilité du fait des produits est l'un des droits les plus développés dans le monde.

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Le choix du droit européen s'est fait dans le but d'étudier le droit qui s'applique dans le cadre de la communauté économique européenne. De plus, le droit européen de la responsabilité du fait des produits comme le droit américain est l'un des droits les plus développés dans le monde. Le choix du droit français qui est la transposition du droit européen en droit interne français s'est fait dans le but de nous montrer les petites différences entre le droit européen et le droit français. De plus, l'étude du droit français peut nous aider à mieux comprendre le droit européen en analysant le texte européen dans les détails tout en bénéficiant des multiples sources du droit français de la responsabilité du fait des produits. Le choix du droit iranien avait pour seul but la connaissance du droit iranien. De plus, l'étude comparée du droit iranien avec le droit des pays comme la France et les Etats-Unis d'Amérique pourrait avoir l'intérêt d'aider le législateur iranien d'améliorer l'état du droit iranien. Finalement, la comparaison du droit américain, du droit européen, du droit français ainsi que du droit iranien de la responsabilité du fait des produits pourrait avoir l'intérêt de nous permettre de connaître les avantages et les inconvénients de chaque régime juridique.¹

Il faut ajouter que l'objectif de la rédaction de cet article est plutôt d'assurer une protection maximale du consommateur et non pas du fabricant ni même un équilibre entre la protection du consommateur et l'intérêt du fabricant. Donc, dans les comparaisons faites entre le droit français, européen, américain et iranien, l'évaluation d'état de développement de droit de la responsabilité du fait des produits de ces pays a été faite d'après le niveau de la protection des consommateurs.

L'étude de droit de la responsabilité du fait des produits peut commencer dans une première partie par le domaine de la responsabilité tandis que la deuxième partie sera dédiée au régime de la responsabilité. Le domaine de la responsabilité est le champ d'application de la responsabilité et le régime de la responsabilité détermine les conditions d'application de la responsabilité ainsi que les moyens d'exonération de la responsabilité.

I. Domaine de la responsabilité

Le champ d'application de la responsabilité du fait des produits est constitué par les produits et les personnes. On peut donc délimiter le domaine de la responsabilité quant aux produits et quant aux personnes.

A) Domaine de la responsabilité quant aux produits

La notion de produit dans la directive communautaire de 1985 sur la responsabilité du fait des produits défectueux est plus protectrice pour les consommateurs que celle de *the third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis d'Amérique puisqu'elle contient le sang, les éléments et les produits issus du corps humain alors qu'ils sont exclus de la définition du produit dans *the third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis. Elle inclut également l'électricité alors que l'électricité est soumise à l'appréciation du juge américain d'après les circonstances de l'espèce et donc elle n'est pas toujours considérée comme un produit aux Etats-Unis. Autrement dit, l'électricité n'est considérée comme produit selon *the third restatement of torts* que si le contexte de sa distribution et utilisation est suffisamment analogue à la distribution et utilisation des biens mobiliers corporels. En plus les produits d'occasion ont été considérés comme produits dans la directive communautaire et donc soumis au régime de la responsabilité sans faute sans distinction entre le type de défaut qu'ils contiennent alors que dans *the third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis les produits d'occasion même s'ils ont été considérés comme produits, ne sont soumis au régime de *strict liability* que lorsqu'ils contiennent un défaut de fabrication mais lorsqu'ils contiennent un défaut de conception ou un défaut d'information, ils sont soumis à une responsabilité pour faute ou négligence. En revanche, le seul avantage de droit américain par rapport au droit européen sur la notion de produit est le fait que les immeubles ont été considérés comme produits d'après *the third restatement of torts* aux États-Unis alors qu'ils sont exclus du champ d'application de la directive communautaire. Donc, les constructeurs et les vendeurs des immeubles sont soumis au régime de *strict liability* pour les défauts de construction de l'immeuble alors qu'en Europe ils ne sont pas soumis au régime instauré par la directive communautaire.

Le droit spécial français (les articles 1386-1 à 1386-18 du code civil français) a, conformément à l'autorisation donnée par l'article 15 de la directive 85/374/CEE, pris une notion plus large que celle donnée par l'article 2 de la directive sur la définition du produit puisqu'il contient également les produits du sol, d'élevage, de la chasse et de la pêche dans la définition du produit. Mais cette définition est conforme à la définition donnée du produit par la directive 1999/34/CE. Par contre quant à l'électricité, le droit français est conforme au droit européen puisqu'il considère l'électricité comme un produit.

Les produits génétiquement modifiés ont été considérés comme produit, non seulement en droit français et en droit communautaire mais aussi en troisième *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis puisqu'ils constituent des biens meubles et donc inclus dans la définition de produit présentée par *the third restatement of torts* et la directive communautaire.

Les biens mobiliers incorporels n'ont pas été considérés en tant que produit et donc n'ont été soumis au régime de la responsabilité du fait des produits ni dans la directive communautaire ni dans *the third restatement of torts* aux États-Unis.

B) Domaine de la responsabilité quant aux personnes

La directive européenne, le droit français, *the third restatement of torts* aux États-Unis et le droit iranien ont tous considéré les fabricants, les importateurs et les vendeurs commerciaux de produits comme responsables des dommages causés aux victimes des produits défectueux vendus par eux. Donc, de ce point de vue il n'y a pas de différence entre le droit européen, le droit français, le droit américain et le droit iranien. Par contre, les distributeurs commerciaux non-vendeurs de produit n'ont pas été considérés comme responsables en droit iranien alors qu'ils sont responsables en droit européen, en droit français ainsi qu'en droit américain.

Les fabricants des matières premières et des parties composantes ainsi que les fabricants des produits finis sont responsables dans les mêmes conditions dans la directive communautaire, le droit français et *the third restatement of torts* aux États-Unis et donc il n'y a pas de différence entre eux en ce domaine.

Contrairement à la troisième « *restatement of torts* », la directive communautaire et le droit français n'ont aucune disposition sur la responsabilité du vendeur de produit pour la fausse affirmation (qu'elle soit frauduleuse ou par négligence) et les conséquences dommageables qui en résultent.

La troisième *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis, la directive communautaire et le droit français ont tous accepté le parrainage de produit à savoir la responsabilité des sociétés qui, en apposant sur le produit leur propre nom ou marque commerciale, assument la responsabilité du producteur.

The third restatement of torts aux États-Unis est plus développée et plus protectrice pour les consommateurs que la directive communautaire

quant aux personnes responsables puisqu'elle a prévu certaines obligations à la charge des personnes responsables qui n'ont pas été prévues par la directive communautaire. Autrement dit, le vendeur américain selon *the third restatement of torts* est tenu d'une obligation d'avertissement après-vente ainsi qu'une obligation de retrait après-vente de produit défectueux alors que ce n'est pas le cas dans la directive européenne. De la même manière, *the third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis a prévu la responsabilité des sociétés successeurs pour les défauts des produits vendus par la société prédécesseur et a mis l'obligation d'avertissement après-vente sur les dangers des produits défectueux vendus par la société prédécesseur à la charge des sociétés successeurs alors que la directive communautaire n'a pas prévu une telle disposition. En plus, la responsabilité du fournisseur professionnel en droit américain est plus lourde que celle en droit européen puisque selon ce dernier le fournisseur professionnel a une responsabilité subsidiaire alors qu'en droit américain sa responsabilité est principale et analogue à la responsabilité du fabricant. Autrement dit, en droit américain les fournisseurs professionnels sont responsables du fait du défaut des produits sans limitation de leur responsabilité au cas où la victime ne peut pas identifier le producteur ou s'ils ne sont pas capables de déterminer l'identité du producteur ou importateur de produit ou celle de leur propre fournisseur dans un délai défini. La directive communautaire et *the third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis sont plus développées et plus protectrices pour les consommateurs que la loi de la protection des consommateurs en Iran.

La directive communautaire, le droit français ainsi que *the third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis sont plus développées et plus protectrices pour les consommateurs que la loi de la protection des consommateurs en Iran sur la question des personnes victimes des produits défectueux puisqu'elles protègent toutes les victimes de défauts de produits sans distinction entre elles selon le caractère contractuel ou non-contractuel de leur relation avec le vendeur alors qu'en droit iranien la seule victime acheteur de produit est protégée par la loi de protection des consommateurs.

II. Régime de la responsabilité

L'étude du régime de la responsabilité du fait des produits défectueux peut se faire en deux sections. Section I : conditions de la responsabilité et

section II : exonération de la responsabilité. Les conditions de la responsabilité sont les éléments essentiels de réalisation et

d'imposition de la responsabilité aux personnes responsables qui sont le dommage, le défaut de produit et le lien de causalité entre le défaut et le dommage. L'exonération de la responsabilité concerne les moyens dont disposent les personnes responsables pour échapper à la responsabilité.

A) Conditions de la responsabilité

La directive communautaire, le droit français et la nouvelle *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis ont, tous, établi une responsabilité qui est au-delà de la distinction traditionnelle entre la responsabilité contractuelle et délictuelle. *The third restatement of torts* a distingué les trois types de défauts alors que ni la directive européenne, ni la loi du 19 mai 1998 en France n'a prévu une telle distinction. Les rédacteurs de la directive n'ont pas déterminé les différentes catégories du défaut alors que la doctrine et la jurisprudence effectuaient déjà la différenciation. La loi de protection des consommateurs en Iran a simplement défini le défaut de produit dans son article 1-4 sans en définir les différents types. Selon cet article, le défaut de produit est tout excès, manquement ou changement d'état qui sera la cause de la réduction de la valeur économique du produit.

La directive communautaire et le droit français ont imposé une responsabilité sans faute au fabricant et vendeur de produit pour tous les types de défaut de produit qu'il s'agisse d'un défaut de fabrication, de conception ou d'avertissement alors que la troisième *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis n'a admis la responsabilité sans faute du fabricant et du vendeur de produit que pour les défauts de fabrication mais pour les défauts de conception et les défauts d'avertissements, elle a instauré une responsabilité fondée sur la négligence. En revanche la loi de protection des consommateurs en Iran n'a admis qu'un régime de responsabilité fondée sur la faute qui s'applique à tous les types de défaut. Donc, le régime de la responsabilité instauré par la directive communautaire et le droit français est plus développé et plus protecteur pour les consommateurs que celui de la troisième *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis. De la même manière la directive communautaire, le droit français ainsi que *the third restatement of torts* aux États-Unis sont plus développées et plus protectrices pour les consommateurs que le droit iranien.

La directive communautaire et le droit français sont plus protectrices des consommateurs que le droit américain sur la question de l'attribution de la charge de la preuve de la défectuosité de produit puisqu'elles présument l'antériorité de la défectuosité de produit par rapport à sa mise en circulation alors qu'en droit américain selon les règles dominantes à l'attribution de la charge de la preuve, il incombe au demandeur de prouver que le défaut existait lorsque le produit a été mis en circulation.

Le critère de l'appréciation du défaut dans la directive communautaire et le droit français est le critère des attentes légitimes des consommateurs et pas le *risk-utility test* admis par la *third restatement of torts*. En revanche, *the third restatement of torts* n'a accepté *consumer expectations test* que de manière indirecte pour l'appréciation des défauts de conception et défauts d'information.

En droit iranien l'article 1- 4 de la loi de protection des consommateurs de 07/10/2009 donne une définition du défaut de produit en disposant : par le défaut, dans cette loi, on entend tout excès ou manquement (déficit) ou changement dans l'état de produit qui cause la diminution de prix de produit. L'article 3-2 de cette loi dispose que les fournisseurs et les producteurs des produits sont tenus de mettre à la disposition des consommateurs toutes les informations nécessaires y compris les informations sur le genre, la qualité, la quantité, les informations pré-consommation, la date de fabrication et la date d'expiration du produit. Donc, cette loi a simplement donné une définition générale sur le défaut de produit et a imposé l'obligation d'information sur les fournisseurs de produits mais elle n'a aucune disposition sur la notion et le critère d'appréciation du défaut de sécurité de produit (test de l'attente légitime des consommateurs).

Le champ d'application de la loi française et de la *third restatement of torts aux Etats-Unis* est plus large que la directive communautaire sur la question des dommages réparables puisqu'aux termes de l'article 1386-2 du code civil français, la loi s'applique à la réparation d'un dommage qui résulte d'une atteinte à la personne ou à un bien autre que le produit défectueux lui-même sans distinction entre les biens à usage professionnel ou à usage privé. *The third restatement of torts* n'a pas fait de distinction non plus entre les dommages causés par une atteinte aux biens à usage professionnel ou à usage privé alors que selon la directive ne sont réparables que les dommages causés par une atteinte aux biens normalement destinés à l'usage ou à la

consommation privée et utilisés par la victime principalement pour son usage ou sa consommation privée.

La directive communautaire et le droit français ont prévu une limite minimum pour le montant des dommages réparables (les dommages causés aux biens de consommation) qui est 500 euros mais *The third restatement of torts* n'a pas prévu une telle limite. Donc, tous les dommages mêmes ceux qui sont inférieurs à 500 euros sont réparables d'après le droit américain, ce qui est plus favorable aux victimes. Enfin, tous les types de dommages sont réparables d'après le droit français, la directive communautaire ainsi que *The third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis. La loi de protection des consommateurs en Iran n'a pas prévu une telle limite.

La directive européenne a autorisé les états Membres à plafonner la responsabilité à condition que son montant ne soit pas inférieur à 70 millions d'Ecus pour le cas des dommages causés par la mort ou des lésions corporelles et causés par des articles identiques présentant le même défaut alors que *the third restatement of torts* n'a pas prévu un tel plafonnement. La loi française n'a pas accepté le plafonnement de la responsabilité instauré par la directive et c'est donc le principe de la réparation intégrale qui s'applique. On peut conclure que le droit français et *the third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis sont plus développés et plus protecteurs de la victime par rapport à la directive communautaire puisqu'ils n'ont pas prévu le plafonnement de la responsabilité. La loi de protection des consommateurs en Iran n'a pas prévu le plafonnement de la responsabilité non plus.

Contrairement à la troisième *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis ni la directive communautaire ni le droit français ni même la loi iranienne n'ont aucune disposition sur les dommages aggravés (*enhanced injuries or increased harms*) en responsabilité du fait des produits défectueux. Donc, de ce point de vue *the third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis est plus développé et plus protecteur de la victime que le droit communautaire, le droit français ainsi que le droit iranien.

La directive communautaire, le droit français et la nouvelle *restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis ont tous accepté la possibilité de réparation des préjudices économiques sous le régime de la responsabilité du fait des produits s'il ne s'agit pas de pertes purement économiques. La loi de protection des consommateurs en Iran a accepté la réparation des tous les préjudices dans son article 2 et 18 mais elle n'a aucune disposition sur la réparation des préjudices économiques.

Contrairement à la directive communautaire, le droit français et la troisième *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis, la loi de protection des consommateurs en Iran vise, dans son article 2, non seulement les cas du défaut de sécurité de produit mais aussi les cas de la non-conformité et des vices cachés de produit alors que la directive communautaire et le droit français ainsi que la troisième *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis ne visent que le défaut de sécurité de produit.

La directive communautaire, le droit français et la troisième *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis ont tous accepté explicitement l'existence d'un lien de causalité entre le défaut de produit et le dommage comme une condition de la responsabilité du vendeur et producteur de produit. En droit iranien l'article 2 de la loi de protection des consommateurs n'a pas mentionné explicitement l'existence de lien de causalité comme une condition de la responsabilité mais elle a disposé dans son alinéa que si les dommages sont causés par les défauts ou la mauvaise qualité de produit les fournisseurs des produits et des services doivent réparer les préjudices qui en résultent. Donc, elle a accepté implicitement la nécessité d'existence de lien de causalité entre le défaut et le dommage comme une condition de la responsabilité.

B) L'exonération de la responsabilité

L'article 7 alinéa c de la directive a exigé la preuve d'absence de fabrication de produit par le producteur dans le cadre de son activité professionnelle comme une condition d'exonération de la responsabilité, alors que l'article 1386-11 du code civil français n'a pas prévu une telle preuve comme une condition de l'exonération de la responsabilité de producteur. Donc, la charge de la preuve posée sur le fabricant par la directive est plus lourde que la charge de la preuve posée sur le fabricant par la loi de transposition en France. Autrement dit, la directive communautaire est plus favorable à la victime que la loi française. En revanche, la loi française est plus favorable aux fabricants que la directive communautaire.

L'article 7, point e de la directive communautaire du 25 juillet 1985 parle du risque de développement comme un moyen de défense du producteur. Selon cet article : « Le producteur n'est pas responsable en application de la présente directive s'il prouve : e) Que l'état des connaissances scientifiques et techniques au moment de la mise en

circulation du produit par lui n'a pas permis de déceler l'existence du défaut ». La loi française a, conformément à la directive communautaire, accepté l'exonération pour risque de développement sauf pour le sang humain, les éléments et les produits issus du corps humain. La *third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis n'a pas une disposition explicite sur la notion de risque de développement mais elle a fondé la responsabilité du fabricant pour le défaut de conception et d'information sur les notions de la prévisibilité de risque de dommage (*foreseeability*) et *reasonableness*. Donc, on peut conclure que *the third restatement of torts* a accepté implicitement l'exonération pour risque de développement pour les défauts de conception et les défauts d'avertissement même si elle ne l'a pas indiqué explicitement. Mais quant à la possibilité d'exonération pour risque de développement pour les défauts de fabrication, la nouvelle *restatement* n'a pas une disposition même implicite qui peut nous conduire à une telle conclusion. Donc, *The third restatement of torts* est plus protectrice des consommateurs quant aux défauts de fabrication que la directive communautaire et la loi française puisqu'elle n'a pas admis l'exonération pour risque de développement pour ce genre de défaut. En Iran la loi de protection des consommateurs n'a aucune disposition sur la notion de l'exonération pour risque de développement.

Le droit français conformément à la directive communautaire a accepté le fait du prince comme un moyen d'exonération du producteur à sa responsabilité. Autrement dit, la responsabilité du producteur est écartée s'il prouve que le défaut est dû à la conformité du produit avec des règles impératives émanant des pouvoirs publics. En revanche, le droit français, contrairement à la directive communautaire, a prévu que le producteur pouvait être responsable du défaut alors même que le produit a été fabriqué dans le respect des règles de l'art ou de normes existantes ou qu'il a fait l'objet d'une autorisation administrative. *The third restatement of torts* n'a pas prévu le fait du prince comme une cause d'exonération. Par contre, comme le droit français il a accepté que la seule preuve de la conformité de produit avec les lois et les règles de l'art n'exonère pas le producteur de sa responsabilité. La loi de protection des consommateurs en Iran n'a aucune disposition sur l'exonération du producteur pour les dommages causés du fait du prince.

La directive communautaire et le droit français ainsi que la troisième *restatement of torts* ont tous accepté l'exonération totale ou partielle du producteur et du vendeur de produit pour la faute de la victime

demanderesse dans l'utilisation du produit. Mais la loi de protection des consommateurs en Iran n'a aucune disposition sur cet aspect de la responsabilité du fait des produits.

En droit français comme en droit communautaire le fait d'un tiers n'est pas une cause d'exonération partielle du producteur mais ni *the third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis ni la loi de protection des consommateurs en Iran n'ont une disposition sur le fait du tiers et sa conséquence sur la responsabilité du producteur.

Les clauses limitatives ou exonératoires de la responsabilité pour les dommages causés à la personne ont été interdites par le droit français, le droit communautaire ainsi que par la troisième *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis. En revanche, la loi française a, contrairement à la directive communautaire, autorisé l'insertion de ce genre des clauses dans les contrats conclus entre professionnels et pour les dommages causés aux biens à usage professionnel. En Iran, la loi de protection des consommateurs n'a aucune disposition sur les clauses limitatives ou exonératoires de la responsabilité et leurs effets.

Le droit français conformément à la directive communautaire a prévu un délai de la prescription de l'action en responsabilité selon lequel l'action en réparation se prescrit dans un délai de trois ans à compter de la date à laquelle le demandeur a eu ou aurait dû avoir connaissance du dommage, du défaut et de l'identité du producteur. Contrairement au droit communautaire *the third restatement of torts* aux Etats-Unis et la loi de protection des consommateurs en Iran n'ont prévu aucune disposition spéciale sur le délai de la prescription de l'action en responsabilité du fait des produits.

Le code civil français conformément à la directive communautaire a prévu un délai d'extinction de la responsabilité en disposant dans son article 1386-16 que « Sauf faute du producteur, la responsabilité de celui-ci, fondé sur les dispositions du présent titre, est éteinte dix ans après la mise en circulation du produit même qui a causé le dommage à moins que, durant cette période, la victime n'ait engagé une action en justice ». Contrairement au droit communautaire, *the third restatement of torts* aux États-Unis et la loi de protection des consommateurs en Iran n'ont prévu aucune disposition spéciale sur le délai d'extinction de la responsabilité du producteur.

On peut conclure que malgré les avantages de la troisième *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis par rapport à la directive communautaire et le

droit iranien sur la question des personnes responsables et les obligations mises à leur charge, la directive communautaire est plus avantageuse pour les consommateurs que *the third restatement of torts* aux États-Unis et que le droit iranien sur la notion du produit et le régime de la responsabilité. La directive communautaire et le droit américain sont plus protecteurs pour les consommateurs que le droit iranien.

La responsabilité du fait des produits de droit commun français (qui n'est plus applicable) était fondée sur le même régime de la responsabilité que celui de l'art. 402 A de la seconde *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis d'Amérique. En plus, le régime de la responsabilité objective de plein droit (strict liability) imposé par l'art. 402 A de la seconde *restatement of torts* aux États-Unis est le même que celui imposé par la directive communautaire (Art. 1 de la directive 85/374). En revanche, le régime de la responsabilité imposé par section 402A de *second restatement of torts* aux États-Unis est un peu différent du régime de la responsabilité imposé par *third restatement of torts* aux États-Unis, puisque selon section 402A de *second restatement of torts* la responsabilité est stricte qu'il s'agisse d'un défaut de fabrication ou d'un défaut de conception ou d'un défaut d'information alors que selon *third restatement of torts* le régime de la responsabilité n'est strict que pour les défauts de fabrication et les défauts de la conception, et les défauts d'information ont été soumis à une responsabilité pour faute.

Bibliographie

1. Il faut noter que les comparaisons réalisées dans cet article sont un œuvre personnel du rédacteur réalisé dans sa thèse qui a été soutenue à l'Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3 en France le 16 Mars 2012 avec la mention très honorable avec les félicitations du jury et donc son originalité justifie l'absence des références.

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