

# The Growing Saudi-Iranian Relationships in the Light of the Chinese Patronage

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## **Abstract**

This study aimed to demonstrating the importance of the reconciliation agreement for Saudi Arabia and Iran, demonstrating the Chinese strategy in the Middle East, and demonstrating the most prominent challenges facing the growing relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran. To achieve this objectives the study used historical approach in order to trace the nature of the competitive historical relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and address the historical information and resources that manifest competition between the two countries over time. The study also used the analytical descriptive approach which is considered as a suitable method to analyze the growing relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran under the Chinese patronage and analyze the decline of the American influence in the Middle East. The study results showed that the growing Saudi-Iranian relationships in the light of the Chinese patronage contributed to enhancing the concepts of cooperation and harmony, supporting the shared factors between the two countries, achieving shared cooperation in the security, political and economic domains. Lastly, the study suggests that the Saudi-Iranian relationships, given their position as two main regional powers in the Middle East, where reconciliation could contribute to enhancing the elements of security, political and economic cooperation.

**Keywords:** Leadership Style, Sustainable Performance, social responsibility, industrial companies, Jordan.

## **1. Introduction**

The growing relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran under the Chinese patronage represent a qualitative move towards re-establishing the Saudi-Iranian relationships in a transmission step from conflict to cooperation and reconciliation. The indicators of agreement are manifested by the constant compliance with the previous accords related to the scientific and political cooperation, the cultural exchanges as well as enhancing the principle of state's sovereignty and not intervening the internal affairs of other countries.

Reconciliation between the two countries would contribute to achieving a tactical reduction of escalation; it could serve the shared interests between the various parties that signed the agreement with regard to achieving security, and promoting political and economic stability in the Middle East.

Indeed, this situation will contribute to developing sustainable Saudi-Iranian relationships; therefore, we can't underestimate the importance of reconciliation in building mutual trust and paving the way to the upcoming steps that support the regional integration. Furthermore, the Arab Gulf region may witness a transmission towards a secure, peaceful and cooperative system in the light of a gradual process, where the Saudi-Iranian reconciliation is viewed as one of its inevitable stages.

Signing the agreement under the Chinese patronage confirms that China hasn't only been viewed as a political power in the Arab Gulf, but also as a possible competitor to the long-lasting role of the United States of America, and an ensuring party for the Gulf's security; considering China as a major consuming market to petroleum from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran. Indeed, China is considered as the only market for the Iranian petroleum in the face of the strict American sanctions imposed on petroleum transactions with Iran, where China has come a long way towards saving its vital oil supplies through its mediating role in the agreement.

Moreover, both Iran and Saudi Arabia are willing to achieve reconciliation under the Chinese patronage. By doing so, they can reach a better understanding concerning the mutual interests in the Middle East, and move forward towards a new stage that is based on cooperation which, in turn, allows more space for solving and settling complicated issues in Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and Iraq, and thus eliminate the doctrinal conflict between the two sides.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia may benefit considerably from the signed agreement with Iran, where the reconciliation reduces the aggressive attacks- such as the Iranian missile attacks and drone attacks against Saudi petroleum-production facilities – and reduces Iran's support to the Houthi movement that targeted vital areas in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As for Iran, retrieving relationships with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia represents a positive step towards getting rid of the international isolation that has been more intensive lately due to the Iranian brutal policy in controlling the wide-range local protesting, dealing with feminist movements, and its supporting attitude to Russia after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. However, the signed agreement is viewed as a promise from Iran to China concerning self-control in the region.

Indeed, the increased convergence between Saudi Arabia and Iran could lead to creating new attitudes towards China which, in turn, contributes to making international transformations towards a new global system that opposes the policy of the western countries. This situation is supported by the increased Chinese economic development, especially in the Middle East which could, in turn, contribute to establishing a new regional system that is mainly based on cooperation, and give more indicators concerning a decline of the United States' influence on Saudi Arabia in relation to a lack of agreement about some of the issues related to human rights in Saudi Arabia and the issue of reducing the Saudi petroleum production.

## 1.1 Study problem:

The study problem lies in addressing the topic of the future of the Saudi-Iranian relationships in the light of the growing relationships between the two countries under the Chinese patronage, considering that enhancing the relationship between these two competitors would contribute to achieving more stabilization in the Middle East and promote more economic cooperation between the two countries. In fact, the continuous competition and conflicts during the previous years resulted in a decline in the economy of some Arab countries. Therefore, convergence between the two countries could contribute to improving stability and increasing the opportunities of cooperation in the economic, political and security domains; this outlines the ambition and attitudes of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in relation to its strategy of ( 2030) as well as Iran's ambitions to get rid of the western pressures concerning the enriched uranium.

## 1.2 Significant of the study

The study importance is manifested within two domains: scientific and applied.

**The scientific importance:** the study could provide a scientific addition to researchers, specialists as well the Jordanian and Arabic libraries about the growing relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran under the Chinese patronage and the new role of China in the Middle East, particularly in enhancing the relationships between the two competitors in the area: Saudi Arabia and Iran.

**The applied importance:** the study's applied importance lies in demonstrating the importance of the growing relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran under the Chinese patronage by investigating the new attitudes of China towards the Middle East within the domain of achieving stabilization which, in turn, contributes to converting the Middle East as a consuming market to the Chinese products.

## 1.3 Study Objectives

This study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- 1- Demonstrating the importance of the reconciliation agreement for Saudi Arabia and Iran.
- 2- Demonstrating the Chinese strategy in the Middle East
- 3- Demonstrating the most prominent challenges facing the growing relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

## 1.4 Study Questions

This study aimed to answer the following questions:

- 1- What is the importance of the reconciliation agreement for Saudi Arabia and Iran?
- 2- What is the Chinese strategy in the Middle East?

- 3- What is the most prominent challenges facing the growing relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran?

## 1.5 Methodology

The study used the historical approach in order to trace the nature of the competitive historical relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and address the historical information and resources that manifest competition between the two countries over time. The study also used the analytical descriptive approach which is considered as a suitable method to analyze the growing relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran under the Chinese patronage and analyze the decline of the American influence in the Middle East.

## 1.6 The study limits:

**The spatial limit:** the reconciliation accord, China.

**The temporal limit:** the reconciliation accord, 2023.

**The objective limit:** the Saudi-Iranian relationships.

## 1.7 The Study Terms:

**Regional competition:** competition is a state of interaction between the international units, where this case emerges due to countries' efforts to achieve their interests and objectives according to their potentials; this competition may convert to be conflict (Al-Jobouri, 2019: 750).

**International relationships:** they refer to the interactions between international units, where they deal and interact within the domain of the international relationships. Those relationships include the various entities in the international relationships, including the official relationships represented by the international units or non-official relationships relating to organizations and non-governmental actors – the relationships could have political, military, economic, cultural or social dimensions, or they could aim to enhance the ties of religious brotherhood (Marwan, 2011: 3).

**The Middle East:** it is a geopolitical term, where its areas are mostly included in the definition of West Asia. Most countries of the Middle East are a part of the Arab World, in addition to Turkey and Iran. The Middle East include several ethnicity groups, including Kurdish, Turks, Turkmen, Persians, Azeris, Copts, Jews, Assyrians, and Greek Cypriots (Al-Afifi, 2012: 33).

**The Islamic Republic of Iran:** is a country located between the Arabian Gulf and the Caspian Sea. It covers an area of (1.745150) million square kilometers (673806 million square miles). Its coastal area is about (2440 square kilometers) (1516.1 square miles). Iran is one of the largest countries in Asia and the 18<sup>th</sup> largest country in the world. One tenth of Iran's population lives in the capital, Tehran. Iran is located at an average altitude of (1305) meters above sea level; therefore, it is considered as one of the highest countries in the world, and the highest mountain peak in it is (Damavand), with (5.604) meters above sea level.

Iran includes (45) islands in the open sea. It is bordered by seven countries: Iraq, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Iran has a population of about (87.923.000) people, and its climate is subtropical, and thus it is drier and warmer (Mishe'al, 1:2022).

**The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:** a country located in Western Asia. It covers the largest part of the Arabian Peninsula, with an area of about (2,150,000) square kilometers; (830,000 square miles); therefore, it is considered as the fifth largest country in Asia, the second largest country in the Arab world, and the largest in West Asia and the Middle East. It is bordered by the [Red Sea](#) to the west; [Jordan](#), [Iraq](#), and [Kuwait](#) to the north; the [Arabian Gulf](#), [Qatar](#) and the [United Arab Emirates](#) to the east; [Oman](#) to the southeast; and [Yemen](#) to the south. Most of Saudi Arabia's terrain consists of arid desert, plains, lowland and mountains. Its capital and [largest city](#) is [Riyadh](#). The country is home to the two [holiest cities](#) in Islam, [Mecca](#) and [Medina](#) (Al-Talafeeh, 2023:3).

**People's Republic of China:** located in East Asia. It has a population of more than (1.4) billion people. China spans the equivalent of five time zones, and is bordered by fourteen countries. It is the largest country in the world, with an area of about (9.6) million square kilometers, and is considered as the third largest country in the world in terms of the total land area. The country consists of (23) provinces, (5) autonomous regions, (4) municipalities, and two special administrative regions (Hong Kong and Macau). The national capital is Beijing, while the most populous city and largest financial center is Shanghai (Kholaf, 2:2021).

## 1.8 Theoretical framework

This study was based on the intellectual attitudes represented by the defining domains in order to identify the manifestations of international competition and the future of global transformation. The study used the liberal theory and realism theory to demonstrate the growing Saudi-Iranian relationships in the light of the Chinese patronage.

### **An introductory entrance: the new Chinese role in the international system.**

The manifestations of new global transformation were evident based on the secure, economic and political movements as well as the decline in the American influence. Indeed, the Russian-Ukrainian war could be amongst the reasons that weakened the American influence. Furthermore, the Chinese believe that their influence is based on three policies: predominating Asia, enhancing the centrality of its party, and the necessity of appreciating the major countries (Shawamreh, 2023: 3).

The whole world has witnessed rapid changes over the last century. However, peace and development are main issues in this era. Also, cooperation and mutual benefits to achieve joint interests are viewed as basic pillars towards building a better future and facing the increased global challenges. Indeed, countries won't be able to achieve stability and development without cooperation and partnership that are characterized by peaceful cooperation, mutual interests, openness, and shared growth (China–Arab States Cooperation Forum 2022: 7).

China entered a new developmental stage in the light of its attempt to completely construct its various domains to become a modern socialist state. China views its development within the context of the shared development of humanity as a whole, in that its future is closely related to the wealth of other countries, and the interests of the Chinese people are related to the shared interests of all people throughout the world. It is noteworthy that China will maintain its loyalty to its basic principles concerning the international developmental cooperation, considering its role in promoting the global peace and defending the global system. Indeed, China will continue cooperation to support the international development, improve the shared welfare of humanity and build a global community with shared future goals (Fatehi, 2015: 12).

Some factors helped China is more effective based on the mutual dependency among countries and have more obvious goals and philosophical bases among countries throughout the world, outlined as follows:

- 1- **The cultural and philosophical motives:** China is characterized by its national, personal and cultural basis, where it gives a great importance to good intentions, friendship and justice; this is an inherent power that promotes the Chinese developmental cooperation (Thorne, 2017: 12).
- 2- **The higher values of the Chinese nation for global harmony:** China seeks to reach an ideal world dominated by public interest. In this ideal world, all the countries should respect the principles of good neighborhood and understanding for the relationships with other countries, in addition to cooperation. These beliefs and ideas inherent in the Chinese culture inspire the Chinese developmental cooperation. The Chinese policy believes that all countries are members in a global village with shared future, and should deal based on more fair global relationships and enhance sustainability in the international development (Qasimi, 2022: 2).
- 3- **Providing help:** the Chinese people will always remember the support provided to China from the other international organizations and countries. The Chinese culture promotes the actual virtue resources. Indeed, China is ready to share its successful experiment without conservation; by doing so, China will enhance development in other places around the world and give more benefits to other countries (Al-Mashaqbeh, 2014: 377).
- 4- **Achieving the right of self-determination:** the Chinese people always encourage maintaining justice and feelings of empathy. In (1950), one year after the establishment of the People's Republic, China did more efforts to support other countries in their national independence. Over the last seven decades, China sought more development, and moved forward to more prosperity. The Chinese people hope to live peacefully with other nations, where they are ready to contribute to promoting the efforts of the developing countries in ensuring a better life quality to their people (Shanaqa, 2013: 2).

- 5- **The international responsibility:** China is considered as a basic establishing member in the United Nation, and a permanent member in the security council. It supports the internal values of humanity: peace, development, justice, fairness, democracy and freedom, and is committed to the path of development that is characterized by peace, openness and cooperation. China believes in its duty related to active participation in developmental cooperation, considering its role as a responsible member in the global community. It encourages doing more efforts to enhance humanity, and desires to benefit all the global community, and unify the efforts with other countries to make a better shared future (Abdul-Hai, 2026:2).
- 6- **The principle of mutual interest:** it is a basic principle that represents one of the cultural traditions of China, and promotes its belief in globalization. According to this principle, China does extended efforts to support more welfare, and hopes that the developing countries would achieve more prosperity by making advantage of opportunities. While considering the principle of mutual interest to achieve benefits for both parties, it provides more help to others, particularly for the developing countries (Farhan, 2012:13).
- 7- **Developmental international cooperation:** cooperation is viewed as a basic pillar, and the economic road-represented by silk road and sea silk road of the 21<sup>st</sup> century- is a path for important goods that China provides to the whole world in the light of the international developmental cooperation. Indeed, China cooperated with other countries with regard to enhancing policies, infrastructure, commerce, and communication among people with the aim of building a path towards peace, prosperity, openness, innovation, green development, cultural exchanges, and pure government (Qasimi, 2022:3).
- 8- **Achieving sustainable development:** helping other countries pursue the schedule of the United Nation (2030) for sustainable development is a main objective. Also, the plan of (2030) is considered as a directive plan for developmental cooperation throughout the world, where it has several common elements with belt and road initiative. The international community achieved a primary progress in achieving the objectives of agenda during the latest years. However, the global development is still insufficient and unsuitable. Covid-19 represented a dangerous threat to the plan of (2030) which, in turn, affected the possibility of achieving all its objectives among all people. Based on the international cooperation for improving the developmental capability and developmental partnerships, China helped other developing countries in alleviating the adverse effects of the pandemic, in an attempt to accelerate the plan of (2030) and achieve shared welfare (Ibn Saniah, 2013:2).

We can say that the principles upon which China relied are represented by: cultural motives, values and ideals of the Chinese nation, providing help, the principle of self-determination right, and the international responsibility. These principles helped China have a prominent role in facilitating reconciliation between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran, and they could have a role in enhancing peace in all the countries of the Middle East. China confirmed that the Western influence in the Middle East and North Africa has come to an end.

China also suggested that the imperial system that aims to impose its dominance at the regional and global level, by using the previously-employed tactics of "divide and rule", has no room in the modern world, and that it should be condemned by the global community.

## **Underline Theories**

The study used the liberal theory that asserts the principle of cooperation, dissemination of democratic values as well as highlighting the shared values and interests; these asserted principles are viewed as a part of the Saudi and Iranian attitudes towards reconciliation and reduction of the severity of conflicts. This situation is valid for Saudi Arabia that seeks to achieve the vision of (2030) towards gaining more investments, and for Iran that seeks to have more self-control after its alleged rights of extension at the expense of the adjacent Arab countries, and the decline in the Iranian economy. The study also used the realism theory that confirms that the basic pillars for the relationships between countries are power and achieving interests.

### **First, the liberal theory:**

There could be agreement or disagreement points between the liberal and realism school of thought. However, the main point of disagreement is represented by the case that the advocates of the liberal school suggested that the state isn't the only actor in the international relationships, where there are other actors whose influence can't be overlooked on the interactions in the international system; particularly, they suggested that the institutions and organizations of the civil community have an effective role in the international system, and asserted the role of multinational corporations that mobilize the policies of external countries and affect their decisions. Indeed, some organizations had budgets that surpassed those of some countries. The advocates of the liberal school suggested that we can't overlook the influence of those international actors on the international interactions. The supporters of the theory referred to the effect of terrorist groups that significantly affected the stability of the global system. However, the supporters of the liberal theory, suggested that the role played by those active actors won't deceive the fact that states are the most influential actors in the international system, but not the only ones (Michael, 1996:78).

### **A- The foundations of the liberal theory:**

The liberal thought focuses on several foundations to analyze the concept of the international relationships, outlined as follows (Jandali, 2014: 66):

- 1- The principle of cooperation: by establishing certain institutions and organizations to achieve cooperation in the domain of security and reducing the severity of conflicts.
- 2- Shared values and interests: liberalists suggested that the existence of shared values and principles has the potential of mitigating the severity of conflicts and crises between countries.
- 3- Disseminating the democratic values: democracy reduces the military factors in an active step towards enhancing security.



- 4- Liberal values: these are the most important pillars that confirm the individual's interest and freedom, considering it as a part of group's freedom. Therefore, liberalism asserted the freedom of market and international commerce among countries, given its role in establishing more connections concerning the economic interests of countries which, in turn, leads to more security and welfare among all the international actors.
- 5- Actors in the international system: they could be countries or international organizations, or international economic institutions, such as Atomic Energy Agency and the International Monetary Fund who can help overcome the selfish view of some countries by motivating them to waive their own interests in favor of those organizations, which serve as cooperating actors between countries which, in turn, mitigates the severity of security problems (Khodair, 2013: 151).

### **B- The theory's philosophy:**

The liberal theory is based on the philosophy that the freedom of individuals is a value that is related to mind; which means that liberalism has an optimistic view towards the human nature. However, this doesn't necessarily mean that they reached to the degree of perfection and idealism; therefore, liberal communities assert that humanity refers to a view that surpasses all the limits. In this vein, the liberal thought views asylum as a purely-human topic that isn't related to any ethnicity or ideology, but to humanity; therefore, all the obstacles that hinder cooperation should be eliminated. Liberalists confirm the mutual international dependency that ensure the rights of all refugees throughout the world, considering that life is based on cooperation among people in all the domains despite the war and circumstances which forced people to flee from their countries (Mansour, 2013:4).

The liberal theory confirmed the sacred value of human rights, and favored personal interest over social interest, considering the society's interest as a collection of individuals' interests; liberals suggested that achieving the individual's interest will automatically result in achieving the community's or the state's interest, confirming that the state's basic role is protecting individual liberty against any harm. Also, the state is responsible for compensating for the human incompleteness among people which, in turn, prompts them to appreciate system and peace. From a liberal perspective, this situation urged states to focus on the following values (Adlia, 2015:57):

- 1- Recognizing the humans' rights: liberals stressed the importance of recognizing people's rights, considering that people have rights derived from their human nature.
- 2- Confirming the human rights: the liberal theory focused on moral issues, which confirmed the necessity of providing people with a complete freedom, since freedom allows for more competition which, in turn, leads to better results for the individual and the community as a whole.

- 3- Social contract theory: Liberalism believes in social contract theory, represented by the individual's waiver of some interests in favor of public interest. Therefore, the theory suggested that the state's reconciliation efforts between individuals based on the contract idea contributes to ensuring their rights.
- 4- The economic theory: liberals assert the existence of a natural system to which all the economic phenomena belong; it is the best system due to its ability to ensure people's wellbeing.
- 5- The scientific theory: liberals believe in the principle of "survival of the fittest"; the natural progress entails the death of the weakest, and scarifying some individuals for the sake of a better life for others.
- 6- Liberals suggested that the principles of human values are manifested in the theory of cooperative international community, confirming the necessity of intervening in accordance with the principle of the moral and legal rights related to such an intervention.

C- **Using the theory:** It seems that the liberal theory limited the state's task to protecting itself and its people against any external attack, in addition to asserting individuals' liberty. The theory suggested that the state has the duty of protecting the rights of individuals, and thus it paid less attention to the concept of state and international system as opposed to the concepts of individuals, public opinion and humanity. Therefore, liberals focused on the role of active actors, other than countries. Also, the liberal theory confirmed that humans are the main actors in international relationships, and thus it focused on self-determination right and the respect of human rights. Therefore, the relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran are not governed by institutions, but by individuals who are viewed as a part of those relationships. This is, particularly, true after the emergence of non-governmental actors, represented by cross-national companies and organizations, where those actors affected the Saudi-Iranian relationships. Indeed, there has been several questions concerning the intervention of those actors, such as the case of the Houthi movement in Yemen, where their intervention was viewed as a breach of the state's sovereignty, especially in the cases of conflict. In such a situation, the state didn't have control over itself, as other organizations intervened in the issues relating to human rights, peace and security. Here, we can notice the Chinese role that mainly focuses on the developmental role, achieving sustainable development and developmental international cooperation, in addition to the right of self-determination and providing help.

## **Second, the realism theory:**

Realism in international relationships is considered as one of the old theories that emerged alongside with the evolution of the National state in Europe after signing Westphalia peace treaty in 1648. The realism theory was set due to the changes and transformations resulting from the international relationships.

The concept of power was cited as one of the basics of these relationships, where countries are considered as the main actors that have power. Therefore, the concept of power with all its tools demonstrates the nature of relationships between states and people (Elias, 2016:10).

In the current ages, Machiavelli is considered as the first to discuss the philosophy of realism in his book "the Prince". He suggested that power with all its economic and political tools is viewed as the basis for the stabilization of the state and the ruling system, to the extent that encouraged excluding the moral dimension from policy when he proposed the principle stating "end justified the means" (JOHN, 2013: 23).

Thomas Hobbes is another prominent writer who addressed the realism theory in his book "Leviathan", where he confirmed that the factors of power have obvious effects on setting the internal policy (Al-Shamaileh, 2020:22).

The most important philosophical principles and justifications for usage can be outlined as follows:

### **1- The statements of the realism theory:**

Hans Morgenthau suggested a real conceptualization for the concept of power and its role in the international relationships in his book entitled "Policy between Nations". He suggested that the international relationships represent conflicts for power, where those relationships provide the actors practicing them more control over the opposing actors. Morgenthau suggested that achieving the state's objectives depends on power, and viewed international relationships as the process of reconciling between the national interests of countries (Al-Hirmezi, 2012: 2).

Friedrich Schumann- one of the most prominent supporters of the realism approach for analyzing and explaining the development of the international relationships- confirmed that the international system consists of a number of independent countries that have the basic pillars of power and deny the existence of a higher authority than it among the other active international units. These types of countries save their national interests by using violent methods, including war in order to undermine the security and stabilization of other countries. Those countries mainly aim to protect themselves, and don't want accept any reservations or compromise (Al-Amarat, 2020: 17).

Arnold Wolfers, one of the most prominent supporters for the realism theory, suggested that "power isn't acquired as a final goal by itself, and it is only an instrument to achieve further objectives". He also stated that "without linking power with goals, it would be difficult to judge whether the achieved outcome for countries with regard to the potentials of national power approach the level of the selected external goals, or exceed that to become a sort of excessive use of power that isn't justified by the circumstances surrounding the objective-restricting choice" (Ghazi, 1965: 221).

## The philosophical principles of the theory:

**A- The principle of power:** this principle is considered amongst the most prominent variant factors within the criteria of international relationships, since the relationships between countries are based on power and power is a constantly changing variable; today's friend could be tomorrow's enemy, and vice versa. In the light of the enshrined rules that result in the absence of the international community, the international groups- within the range of the international system- act based on what can be achieved through physical power without consideration to ethics and values. Here, we suggest that power isn't the main method in the international relationships, where there are other tools that have an effective role in ceasing conflicts between countries, such as diplomacy and mediation. In fact, the absence of diplomacy will lead to more conflicts and wars (Al-Oqaibi, 2018:13).

**B- The principle of national interest:** Unfortunately, there is a correlation relationship between the concepts of power and national interest, where most countries view power as a basis for achieving their objectives and interests; in their perspective, power is the most prominent factor in the international relationships that contribute to achieving the state's objectives. Accordingly, the relationship is positive between achieving the national interests of countries and the amount of power possessed by those countries. Also, each state has a number of national interests, including the interest related to survival, which is the basic interest of any state; the interest of increasing the military power, as a means for showing power and defending itself against invaders; and the interest of increasing the political power, which is related to a number of social and political dimensions (Dashir, 2016:13).

**D-using the theory:** The growing Saudi-Iranian relationships in the light of the Chinese patronage contributed to enhancing the concepts of cooperation and harmony, supporting the shared factors between the two countries, achieving shared cooperation in the security, political and economic domains, and facing the challenges concerning the security domain and the strategic objectives. This applies to the Saudi-Iranian relationships, given their position as two main regional powers in the Middle East, where reconciliation could contribute to enhancing the elements of security, political and economic cooperation.

## 2.2 The Previous Studies:

(Abdul-Baseer, Aref, 2023) conducted a study entitled "the secrets of the Saudi-Iranian reconciliation.. What will Riyadh and Tahran benefit? And what is the role of China?" which aimed to identify the nature of the Saudi-Iranian agreement after cutting the relationships in 2016, following Iranian protestors' attacks against the Kingdom's embassy in Tahran, and consulate in Mashhad; this cutting continued over a period of (7) years. The study questions were posed concerning the causes that pushed the two sides towards reconciliation, and the expected benefits of this reconciliation as well as the nature of the role played by China to

reach this agreement. The study addressed the Chinese role in the Middle East and the United States' view concerning this new role. The study confirmed that the signed accord would benefit Saudi Arabia in achieving stabilization and mitigating conflicts with Iran as well as achieving political and economic stability as a part of the vision of (2030).

(Al-Aqgrabawi, Abdullah, 2023) conducted a study entitled "How retrieving the Saudi-Iranian relationships represents an interest and optimistic view for all the parties?" which aimed to demonstrate the exerted efforts to retrieve the Saudi-Iranian relationships after cutting the relationships over a period of (7) years. Those efforts were manifested as the Saudi and Iranian ministers of foreign affairs met in the Chinese capital Beijing to discuss the terms and conditions of reconciliation. The study demonstrated the regional and international reactions related to signing the Saudi-Iranian accord, and highlighted the United States' position concerning the signed accord and whether it will serve its interest in the region. The study aimed to answer the following questions: what are the interests of the three sides of the international dialogue: (Saudi Arabia, Iran, and China) from the signed agreement? Is there any interest for the United States from the Saudi-Iranian reconciliation? The study confirmed the importance of the Chinese existence in the Arab Gulf region and its new role in enhancing the stability of the highly important region for China; considering it as the largest exporter of petroleum in the region.

(Qahawji, Riyadh, 2023) conducted a study entitled "The causes of the increased Chinese influence and the decline of the American role. Towards a two-pole Middle East". The study addressed the strategic importance of the Middle East for China and the United States of America. The study demonstrated the American concern about the growing Chinese role in the Middle East after the deceleration of the successful Chinese mediation between Saudi Arabia and Iran which resulted in retrieving the diplomatic relationships and ending conflicts. The results revealed that the decline of the American role with regard to satisfying its promises for protecting the security of the Gulf States contributed to enhancing the Chinese position in the region. Indeed, China has offered its services to the Arabian Gulf states for more than two decades; considering its promising project of retrieving the Silk Road which will promote its economic power and expand its influence at the international level. The study confirmed the importance of the Chinese role in retrieving Silk Road and Maritime Silk Road which will contribute to controlling the commercial movement in the Indian Ocean and the ports overseeing the maritime road to Europe and East Africa.

(Al-Shami, Tareq, 2023) conducted a study entitled " How did America view the Saudi-Iranian agreement under the Chinese patronage?", where the study addressed the resumption of the relationships between Saudi Arabia and Iran under the Chinese patronage, and the consequences of that on the United States, particularly with regard to achieving its security objectives and the fears of declining its influence in the Middle East. The study also answered the question, stating "how does the United States view the Chinese role in achieving reconciliation? And what is the Israeli attitude concerning that? Indeed, the United States of America is worried about the increased Chinese role in the Middle East as opposed to the decline of the American influence over the previous decades.

The study showed the importance of reconciliation in renewing the previous agreements in the domain of trade and investment between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The results revealed that the signed agreement will contribute to creating new attitudes for Saudi Arabia towards the United States of America concerning the critical issues, and towards more openness with Russia and China.

(Jebreel, Dana, 2023) conducted a study entitled "the agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran: China has achieved progress in a severe conflict for years". The study addressed the Arabic, regional and international reactions towards the consequences of this agreement and its dimensions concerning the Chinese influence in the Middle East. The study addressed the attitudes of the external Chinese policy which viewed the reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran as a victory for dialogue and peace, where China will have a prominent role in dealing with the difficult issues in the Middle East and the World. The results demonstrated the reactions of the public Arabic opinion, and showed that the Arab leaders welcomed the Chinese mediation in converging the attitudes of the two countries which enhanced achieving more stabilization in the Middle East. The study showed that the Chinese mediation is amongst the most successful initiatives, and is the first political activity for China in the Arabian Gulf and the Middle East. Indeed, China doesn't have a previous imperial history in this region, and thus its mediating efforts between Saudi Arabia and Iran were successful.

(Tamara, Bru, 2023) conducted a study entitled "The role of China in the Saudi-Iranian reconciliation", which aimed to demonstrate the efforts exerted by China to achieve the Saudi-Iranian reconciliation after (7) years of cutting the relationships between the two countries. Indeed, the Chinese mediating efforts started as early as (2017) when the Saudi king Salman bin Abdul-Aziz visited China, and two years later, the crown prince Mohammad bin Salman visited Beijing. The results showed that the American role declined in the Middle East, since Donald Trump was elected as the president of the United States of America. This situation allowed the countries in this region to establish diverse external relationships with other major countries, such as Russia and China; the region started to manifest transformation in the international relationships. The results revealed that China has good relationships with Saudi Arabia and Iran, and its internal policy that is based on not intervening the internal affairs of other countries contributed to establishing an agreement between the two countries.

(Peter Baker, 2023) conducted a study entitled "Chinese-Brokered Deal Upends Mideast Diplomacy and Challenges US." The study addressed the signed agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran under the Chinese patronage in Beijing, which implied the re-establishment of diplomatic relationships between the two countries and the ending the alliances that have governed the region's diplomatic relationships for a long time in the light of the decline in the American role in the Middle East. The results revealed that the United States can't have a mediating role in this agreement, especially with Iran, as it has no relationships with Iran. It is clear that the Chinese considerable achievement shifts the situation towards a new diplomatic union, and surpasses the American position in the region since electing Biden as the USA president.

The results asserted the new Saudi attitude towards China, where the Saudi people welcomed joining Shanghai Cooperation Organization, since a large part of their oil is exported to China.

(Fatiha Dazi-Héni, 2023) conducted a study entitled "Saudi Arabia Relies on China to Secure its Normalization with Iran, Association". The study addressed the importance of the announcement in Beijing on 10 March 2023 concerning normalizing the Saudi-Iranian relationships and the role of that in establishing geopolitical balance between the two competing superpowers, China and the United States, in a region of tension, especially in the light of the unresolved Iranian nuclear issue.

The results asserted the effects of the re-establishment of the Saudi-Iranian relationships. The results also addressed the American worries concerning the successful Chinese effort in the region. The results revealed that signing this agreement under the Chinese patronage is an attempt by Saudi Arabia to re-balance the American influence in the region, since the Saudi prefer the Chinese approach that is based on negotiations to resolve conflicts between countries instead of proposing an alternative global security structure.

(Nadia Helmy, 2023) conducted a study entitled "China and the Saudi-Iranian agreement: Curtailing the U.S Israel influence in the Middle East". The study addressed the effect of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis on changing the balance of the international power map, where it represented a challenge to the American dominance on the international system; therefore, many countries, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia did more efforts in an attempt to re-establish its external policy in the light of the consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis and the conflicting relationships between the United States of America on the one hand and China and Russia on the other hand. The study demonstrated the importance of completing the reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran under the Chinese patronage, which indicates the Chinese intervention in the security of the Middle East. The results revealed that the Saudi openness to China allowed China to increase its existence in the Middle East. Indeed, Israel realize the danger of this situation, since China didn't enter the Middle East across the Israeli gate as planned by the military leaders in Israel, but that was across the Iranian gate based on the approaching between Iran and Saudi Arabia under the Chinese patronage. The study confirmed the importance of that reconciliation and the extent to which Israel recognize the significance of those countries in the Chinese road and belt strategy. All these factors will affect the strategy of the national security of the United States and the higher interests of the Israel.

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