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**ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИЕ ОТНОШЕНИЯ РОССИИ И БАХРЕЙНА В
КОНТЕКСТЕ ТРАНСФОРМАЦИИ РЕГИОНАЛЬНОЙ ПОДСИСТЕМЫ
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INTRODUCTION

The relevance of the research topic stems from the growing importance of the Arabian Gulf sub-region in the international arena.

In the context of subject-object relations in global politics, the Kingdom of Bahrain belongs to the category of smaller and medium-sized powers, which in many respects determines, and accounts for, the nature and direction of its foreign policy aspirations. Thus, the traditional course for such countries to cooperate with more influential players in the international arena provided Manama with a historical experience of international multi-vector cooperation.

At present, the Russian Federation is "going through" the stage of returning to the Middle East region, which is connected with building ties with local actors on a fundamentally new level, and implies a strategic vision for the most pressing problems of the region and its own place in it. At the same time, realization of aspirations of any kind and scale implies stronger ties with local actors.

The economy is one of the central spheres of cooperation on the Russian-Bahraini agenda. In today's conditions, multicomponent economic development becomes an important factor of sovereignty, since the backlog on this track provokes a gradual loss of political power. Moreover, in this context, the sphere of economy is a kind of framework for the formation of a new quality of bilateral relations, since both states realize that cooperation of states in areas of strategic importance at the level of joint development and even the supply of high-tech equipment inevitably implies a certain level of political dialogue and mutual understanding.

Despite the fact that, at the time of writing, Russia did not occupy leading positions in Bahrain's financial, economic and trade external relations, the parties enjoyed a fairly wide range of points of contact due to the different, and therefore complementary, structures of national economies.

At the same time, the thesis on working with the GCC countries through Bahrain seems especially relevant not only because of entering new financial markets in conditions of partial isolation of Russian banks from Western capital, but also because of the strengthening of the role of the Gulf states in the Middle East political process, the intensification of the issues of the Iranian-Saudi competition in the emerging regional security system.

The interest of Manama in steadily developing relations with Moscow is explained by Russia's growing role in the tectonic shifts unfolding in the Middle East. Solid long-term cooperation with the Kingdom of Bahrain is of strategic importance for both sides, given the geographical location of the Kingdom and its traditional ties with the region's axial players - Saudi Arabia and the United States.

As the author concludes, and bears out convincingly by this study, both parties have, potentially, a broad array of possibilities for establishing partnerships in various spheres of the state's life, from trade and economic cooperation to the crisis settlement, and all that against the favourable backdrop of fundamentally non-dissonant views on key problems.

The contribution of this research project is determined by the lack of analytical elaboration of this problematic, as well as, on a more applied side, by the need to rekindle the interest of the Russian and Bahraini academic community in interdisciplinary research combining features of applied regional studies and foreign policy analysis. Despite the growing interest of domestic and international experts in the problems of the Middle East region, there continues to be a gaping lacuna of topical works on the prospects and difficulties in developing Russia's relations with the countries of the Arabian Gulf, in particular Bahrain. The reason for this is, admittedly, the historical context - the interests of the USSR, and the very specific geostrategic reasons why the Russian Federation, if we speak about the Middle East was focused mainly on the Islamic Mashreq subregion (Syria, Iraq, Israel, the Palestinian Autonomy), whereas the US and Western countries have been and continue to be

orientated towards Saudi Arabia and the Arab Sunni monarchies of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf.

All of the above allows us to conclude we are likely to expect growing demand in the near future from the relevant policy, consultancy and business entities for analytical materials on the issues of foreign and domestic policy of the countries of the Arabian Gulf. Thus, this research is acquiring obvious **practical significance**.

The subject matter of the dissertation is a complex of bilateral relations, consisting of military-political cooperation and associated economic cooperation between the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Russian Federation.

The purview of the present study entails identification the specifics of the development of Russian-Bahraini at the present stage, the problems and prospects of these relations in the conditions of a tense political situation in the Middle East, to highlight the main trajectories of the transformation of the the regional security system, of the redistribution of influence and spheres of interests among regional and extra-regional actors and to account for this dynamic. **The main research question** thus being: factors of which order of magnitude or level of analysis have a more pronounced effect on the Russian – Bahraini relations – global, regional/subregional or national.

The chronological scope of the study covers the period from the moment of the formation of the international antiterrorist coalition in 2001 up until the present time. The choice of the chronological framework is linked to the fact that it was precisely after the tragic events of September 11, 2001, that a radical transformation of the approaches of both regional proto-hegemons and world powers began to exert meaningful impact on the security situation in the Middle East.

The objective, or the principal goal, of this study is, by overviewing the available primary and secondary sources and literature, to present an up-to-date picture of the political and economic relations between Russia and Bahrain and trace back its roots and origins in the ongoing processes of the current formation of a regional security system.

Achievement of the goal set in the study implies the fulfillment of the following **tasks**:

1) to analyze the approaches of Arab, Russian and foreign researchers to the definition and interpretation of the concept of “security” in all its diversity, taking into account the specific relationship between the concepts of “national security” and “national interest”;

2) to review the main approaches to the study of the regional dimension of global processes through analysis of the concept of the "regional security complex/subsystems” and the appraise role of smaller and medium-sized powers in this process;

3) to reveal the specifics of ensuring the security of the Middle East, paying special attention to the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf, as the core of the subregional security system;

4) explore avenues of cooperation between Russia and Bahrain in the field of regional security and economy, as well as to define the major points of foreign policy overlap and divergence between the two countries and how it affects the collaborative agenda of Moscow and Manama.

The theoretical and methodological basis of the study is an interdisciplinary approach privileging applied analysis of foreign policy (as developed first and foremost by the representatives of the MGIMO school of applied foreign policy analysis) situated within a larger and firmly established both in Russia and elsewhere framework of the regional studies tradition and structural realism as its metatheoretical inspiration. The thesis insists on the use of the systems methodology as the main analytical approach to collecting and interpreting evidence. This methodology dictates that the system of international relations be examined and construed as prone to constant change and transformation in line with internal and external preconditions, but at the same time as having special built in “control and stabilizing mechanisms” through which the whole has an impact on the functioning of parts. Consequently, it is possible to speak fairly

about the influence of the existing external environment on the formation of the foreign policy course of an individual state as the primary operational assumption on which the core argument of the dissertation draws.

Literature review. *The theoretical basis* of the dissertation was constituted by the research of foreign and domestic scholars on the problems of regionalism, the definition of a regional security subsystem and other important theoretical issues of international relations. A significant contribution to the study of this problem was made by well-known experts - A. Bogaturov¹, B. Buzan², H. Bruck³, M. Valerie⁴, A. Vasiliev⁵, A. Voskresensky⁶, G. Kimble⁷, A. Kornilov⁸, A. Korotyshev⁹, V. Korsun¹⁰, D. Lake¹¹, V. Lukin¹², O. Leonova¹³, A. Mahan¹⁴, E. Primakov¹⁵, V. Pokshishevsky¹⁶, J. Ettinger¹⁷, J. Nye¹⁸, R. Rousseau¹⁹, V. Stratanovich²⁰, A. Fedorchenko²¹, B. Hettne²²,

¹ Богатуров А.Д., Косолапов Н.А., Хрусталеv М.А. Очерки теории и политического анализа международных отношений. – М.: НОФМО, 2002; Хрусталеv М.А. Анализ международных ситуаций и политическая экспертиза: очерки теории и методологии. – М.: НОФМО, 2008.

² Buzan, B. *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* / B. Buzan, O. Waever. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. – 564 p.

³ Bruck, H. *Decision-Making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics* / H. Bruck. B. Sapin. R. Snyder. - Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954. – 120 p.

⁴ Valerie, M. *Foreign Policy Analysis: Actor-Specific Theory and the Ground of International Relations* / M. Valerie // *Foreign Policy Analysis*. – 2005. – №1. – P. 1–30

⁵ Россия на Ближнем Востоке и в Северной Африке в эпоху глобализации. Ин-т Африки, РАН, 2011, - 139 с. ISBN 978-5-91298-093-0

⁶ Воскресенский А.Д. Регионализация в международных отношениях / А.Д. Воскресенский // *Современные международные отношения* / Под ред. А.В. Торкунова. - М.: Аспект Пресс, 2012. - С. 103-116.

⁷ Kimble, G.H.T. (1951): *The Inadequacy of the Regional Concept*, *London Essays in Geography*, edd. L.D. Stamp and S.W. Wooldridge, pp. 151-174.

⁸ Корнилов А.А. Процесс формирования внешней политики: Исторический опыт США, Государства Израиль и стран Западной Европы. – Н. Новгород: Изд-во ННГУ, 1992.

⁹ Коротышев А.П. Меняющаяся геополитическая реальность в регионе Большого Кавказа и перспектива новых альянсов. *Avrasya İncelemeleri Dergisi (AVID)*, II/2 (2013), s. 323-333 <http://www.journals.istanbul.edu.tr/iuavid/article/view/5000066693/5000062116>

¹⁰ Корсун В.А. Внешнеполитический процесс в странах Востока / Ред. Д.В. Стрельцов. - М.: Аспект пресс, 2011. - 336 с.

¹¹ David A. Lake, «Regional Hierarchy: Authority and Local International Order», - *Review of International Studies*, - Vol. 35, *Globalising the Regional, Regionalising the Global*. Feb. – 2009. – pp. 35-58

¹² Лукин В. П., Уткин А. И. Россия и Запад: общность или отчуждение? – М.: Сампо, 1995.

¹³ Леонова О.Г. Макрорегионалистика – новое направление развития учебной дисциплины // *Вестник Моск ун-та. Серия XXVII Глобалистика и геополитика*. 2011. №1-2. – 234 с.

¹⁴ Mahan, A. «The Persian Gulf and international relations»// *Open Library*. – [Electronic resource]. — Mode of access: https://openlibrary.org/books/OL18595166M/The_Persian_Gulf_and_international_relations

¹⁵ Примаков Е.М. Конфиденциально. Ближний Восток на сцене и за кулисами // М.: ЛитРес, 2016, - С. 530.

¹⁶ Покшишевский В. В. Место экономико-географического страноведения в системе географических наук // *Изв. АН СССР. Сер. геогр.*, № 5. – М., 1960, № 5.

¹⁷ Этингер Я.Я. Межгосударственные организации стран Азии и Африки. М., 1976

¹⁸ Nye, J. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. / J. Nye. – New-York: Public affairs, 2014. – 362 p.

Hentz²³, T. Shakleina²⁴. Among the sources used by the author of the dissertation are speeches and statements of the leaders of the states that are members of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf, as well as the leaders of the organization, official materials prepared by the General Secretariat or the Information Agency of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf. At the same time, the author in his work relied on a wide range of studies on the problems of the Arabian Gulf region and the states located there. A true evidence to the greatest achievements of Arab regional studies were the works of Andreyan R.²⁵, Berg I.²⁶, Bodyansky V.²⁷, Vasiliev A.²⁸, Grappo G.²⁹, Georgiev A.³⁰, Egorin A.³¹, Isaev V.³², Lippman T.³³, Markaryan R.³⁴, Medvedko L.³⁵, Melkumyan E.³⁶, Naumkin V.³⁷, Ozoling V.³⁸, Pollack K.³⁹, Primakov E.⁴⁰, Rabinovich I.⁴¹, Filonik A.⁴², Friedman L.⁴³,

¹⁹ Rousseau, R. Saudi Arabia And Iran: Opposite Poles In The Persian Gulf / R. Rousseau. – N.Y.: NBM Publishing, 2012. – 339 p.

²⁰ Стратанович В.Ф. Ближневосточная проблема (80-е гг.). – В кн.: Международные проблемы Азии 80-х гг. – М., 1983.

²¹ Федорченко А.В. Региональная экономическая интеграция в странах Магриба: состояние и перспективы / А.В.Федорченко // Международная аналитика. №3, 2016. – С 54-70

²² Hettne Bjorn, «Beyond the «New» Regionalism», *New Political Economy*, 10:4 – December, 2005, pp. 543–71.

²³ Hentz, J.J. 'Introduction: New Regionalism and the "Theory of Security Studies" - Burlington, VT : Ashgate, 2003. – 216 p.

²⁴ Шаклеина Т.А. Великие державы и региональные подсистемы / Т.А. Шаклеина // Международные процессы. - 2011. - Том 9. № 2. - С. 29-39.

²⁵ Андреасян Р. Н., Эльянов А. Я- Ближний Восток. Нефть и независимость. М., 1961.

²⁶ Берг И.С. «Арабская весна» в бахрейнском формате: мнения экспертов и немецких СМИ [Режим доступа] // Институт Ближнего Востока, 2011. URL: <http://www.iimes.ru/rus/stat/2011/08-06-11.htm>

²⁷ Бодянский В. Л. Бахрейн. М.: «Наука», 1962. – 279 с.

²⁸ Васильев А. М. Персидский залив в эпицентре бури. – М.: Наука, 1983. – 213 с.

²⁹ Grappo, G.. The Islamic State's Challenge to the GCC. *Gulf State Analytics Open Library*. – [Electronic resource]. — URL: <http://gulfstateanalytics.com/archives/work/the-islamic-states-challenge-to-the-gcc>

³⁰ Георгиев А.Г. Нефтяные монархии Аравии: проблемы развития. – М.: «Наука», глав. ред. восточной лит-ры, 1983, - 222 с.

³¹ Егорин А.З. «Война за мир на Ближнем Востоке» / Институт изучения Израиля и Ближнего Востока / Востокведный сборник - Том 8, 2007, – С. 300

³² Исаев В.А., Филоник А.О. Королевство Бахрейн: опыт развития в условиях изменения ресурсной организации. М., 2006

³³ Lippman, T.W. The United States, the GCC, and Iran: The Crisis that Wasn't // The Middle East Institute. – [Electronic resource]. — URL: <http://www.mei.edu/content/article/united-states-gcc-and-iran-crisis-wasn%E2%80%99t>

³⁴ Маркарян Р. В. Зона Персидского залива (проблемы, перспективы). М., 1986. - 158 с.

³⁵ Медведко Л.И. К востоку и к западу от Суэца. М., 1980.

³⁶ Мелкумян Е.С. ССАГПЗ в глобальных и региональных процессах. – М.: Институт востоковедения Российской Академии Наук, 1999.

³⁷ Наумкин В.В. Ближний Восток, Арабское пробуждение и Россия: что дальше? / Институт востоковедения РАН, - Москва, - 2012, - 595 с.

³⁸ Озолинг В.В. Нефть и доллары аравийских монархий. //Азия и Африка сегодня. - М.: «Наука», 1982

³⁹ Pollack K. M., *Security Dynamics in the Middle East Monday* // The Brookings Institution. – [Electronic resource]. — URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/on-the-record/security-dynamics-in-the-middle-east/>

⁴⁰ Примаков Е.М. Персидский залив. Нефть и монополии. М., «Наука», 1983

Yakovlev A.⁴⁴, Yurchenko V.⁴⁵ Arab authors also published a sizeable number of works devoted to the activities of the Gulf Cooperation Council. This is mainly the monographs of Arab scholars such as Hussein Abdul Aziz⁴⁶, Bishar Abdallah⁴⁷, Abdullah Hamid Al-Din⁴⁸, Sayraf Badriya Abdullah Al-Awadi⁴⁹, Mohamed Al Shahat Abdul Ghani⁵⁰, Shafiq Ali⁵¹, Ahmad Hasem Mohammad Ali Al-Ghazi⁵², Yusuf Khalifa Al-Yusuf⁵³.

Approaches to the analysis of the formation of a regional organization that united Arab Gulf monarchies are built according to the author's view on the nature of integration and cooperation in the Arabian Gulf subregion. Supporters of the concepts of country nationalism, which is narrower than the Arab one, criticized the founders of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf for forcing that young states to delegate some of their sovereignty to obscure bureaucratic structures. At the same time, researchers working in the states that became members of this organization considered its creation to be natural, serving the interests of not only the

⁴¹ Rabinovich I. The End of Sykes-Picot? Reflections on the Prospects of the Arab State System // The Brookings Institution. — [Electronic resource]. — URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-end-of-sykes-picot-reflections-on-the-prospects-of-the-arab-state-system/>

⁴² Филоник А.О. Кувейт: контуры экономических перемен / Институт изучения Израиля и Ближнего Востока, М., 2003. С. 10.

⁴³ Фридман Л.А. Экономические структуры арабских стран: экономико-статистический анализ. — М.: Наука, 1985, - 339 с.

⁴⁴ Яковлев А. И. Новый этап экономических отношений Саудовской Аравии и Запада. — Нефтедоллары и социально-экономическое развитие стран; Ближнего и Среднего Востока. М., 1979.

⁴⁵ Юрченко В. П. Военное сотрудничество арабских монархий: намерения и реальность [Режим доступа] // Институт изучения Израиля и Ближнего Востока. URL: <http://www.iimes.ru/rus/stat/2002/22-12-02.htm> (дата обращения: 15.01.2017).

⁴⁶ من المؤلفين، من مجموعة "المسألة القبرانية ضاها.. العرب في الخليج لدول التعاون مجلس" كتاب تأليف 280 "Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Persian Gulf ... current problems and future issues", group of authors, 280 pages, divided into four volumes

⁴⁷ Abdullah Ashhaal: 10 actions of the Gulf countries against Egypt, aggravation of the crisis with Qatar // القاهرة. — [Electronic resource]. — URL: <http://www.cairoportal.com/story/الله-الأشغال-ع-بدا-الله-قطر-مع-الأزمة-فاقم-حال-مصر-ضد-خ-ل-ج-إجراءات-10-الأشغال-ع-بدا-الله>

⁴⁸ Opportunities and Challenges in the Gulf States, Abdullah Hamid, 2010

⁴⁹ Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and international standards, Badriya Abdullah al-Awadi, 1976

⁵⁰ The book documenting the success of the Gulf Cooperation Council over the past decade of joint history // Bahrain News Agency. — [Electronic resource]. — URL: <http://bna.bh/portal/news/697175>

⁵¹ Gulf Cooperation Council, Ali Shafiq, 1989

⁵² Ахмад Гасем Мохаммад Али Аль-Гази. Совет сотрудничества арабских государств Персидского залива в системе международных отношений : автореферат диссертации кандидата исторических наук : 07.00.03.- Киев, 1995.- 27 с.: ил.

⁵³ خليفة يوسف الدكتور الأجنبية والقوى والنفط الوراثة مثلث في الخليجي التعاون مجلس، 2010، Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Persian Gulf in the triangle of heritage, oil and foreign powers, Dr. Youssef Khalifa, (2010)

countries that entered it, but the entire Arab world, even though the latter concept also continue to cause skepticism among representatives of Pan-Arabism.

The main provisions to be defended are as follows:

1. Bahrain regards Russia as a world's leading powers and a pole in the emerging multipolar structure of the international system. Hence, in the Kingdom's strategic view, Moscow's endorsement in dealing security issues in the Arabian Gulf region is of fundamental importance from the standpoint of enhancing the efficiency of its foreign policy. The country belongs to the category of smaller and medium sized states, whose sovereignty and physical security depend on the success and strength of alliances with more influential states. Manama fears realization of Iran's hegemonic aspirations in the region, which publicly articulates the top leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Under these circumstances, a new qualitatively upgraded level in the relationship between Moscow and Tehran, achieved, inter alia as part of some joint efforts undertaken on the Syrian front, can serve as a platform for resuscitation of the multilateral regional dialogue whereby Iran will have to face off with Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf and not its individual member states.

2. Bahrain, possessing highly developed infrastructure, liberal legislative base, conducive and comfortable for foreign partners' direct investments, observing international business standards, can act as an outpost for working with the Gulf countries in accordance with a new type of cooperation mode in building political dialogue through economic instruments and then jointly solving security problems. Considering the focus of the island's leadership on the development of Bahraini-Russian cooperation, major Russian businesses can effectively act as emissaries to promote the Russian foreign policy course for "exporting security" to the region. Furthermore, access to foreign markets with products of high added value looks especially promising for the Russian Federation, since in the context of the depreciation of the ruble, Russian products and services are becoming far more competitive in pricing terms. This is complemented by Bahrain's orientation to diversification of the support sectors of the economy and foreign economic partners.

3. Institutional design in the form of bilateral commissions and target working groups, as well as documentary fixation of intentions through various agreements and declarations, is a distinctive feature of Russian-Bahraini relations quite distinguishable at the level of the member countries of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf.

4. Relations between Russia and Bahrain, despite the dynamically developing economic area, have limitations from the standpoint of the scope and boundaries of potential areas of interaction. The niche of the partner supplying military-technical equipment seems has been historically (Britain and the USA)occupied and geographically (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) by other established partner countries. Similar, “objective” hurdles also exist in other spheres of interaction. In a competitive market, the one who has previously taken a strategically correct position has higher chances of winning out. Russia must take this into account.

5. The dynamics of the development in the relations between Russia and Bahrain is largely contingent on the reaction to this process by the axial allies of the Arab kingdom - the United States, Saudi Arabia and Britain. At the moment, in essence, they are the guarantors of the economic and political sovereignty of Bahrain. The theoretical significance of the thesis lies in the formulation the concept of "regional security" on the example of the balance policy pursued by the Kingdom of Bahrain. The practical importance of the work lies in the possibility of using its results for political decision-making, building and holding up the foreign policy line of Bahrain in relation to Russia.

Structure. The thesis consists of the Introduction, four chapters of three sections each, Conclusion and Bibliography.

CHAPTER I

CONCEPTUAL BASES OF REGIONAL SECURITY. KEY DEFINITIONS

1.1. Correlation of the Concepts of “National Interest” and “National Security” in the Foreign Policy of Modern States

The concept of “national interest” emerged at the dawn of the modern-type state international system. Almost concurrently with the formation of a sovereign state as the preeminent actor of international relations, the category of “national interest” came to be employed by the ruling class to strengthen the internal social cohesion when confronted with of an external enemy, has served as an excuse or pretext for aggressive campaigns, as an incentive for dynastic marriages, etc. Most fully and succinctly, this was subsequently expressed by the formula: "The princes command the peoples, but the princes command interests", by the Duke de Rogan⁵⁴.

The concept of “national interest” was elaborated in the works of such great thinkers and philosophers as Jean Baudin, Nikolo Machiavelli, Henry Bolingbroke. Defining the doctrine of the interests of individual states, Voltaire wrote: “The state interest is the sovereign wisdom of kings”⁵⁵.

Today, several centuries on, the notion of “national interest” continues to be widely discussed by researchers and politicians, journalists and military leaders alike. Experts in the field of international relations build their forecasts around this category, referring to it as the starting reference point for identifying the major threats to territorial integrity and sovereignty more generally. The concept of “national interests” is indispensable to comprehending how a country-specific perception of security is defined. This perception exists in two dimensions at once - objective (for example, direct protection of the population from threats of physical violence) and subjective (for example, preventing the uncontrolled presence of foreign investors in the military-

⁵⁴ Поздняков, Э.А. Философия политики: В 2 ч. Ч. 2 // Э.А. Поздняков. – М.: Махаон, 2004. – С. 81.

⁵⁵ Ibid. – p. 95

industrial complex)⁵⁶. National interests play a decisive role in shaping foreign policy priorities, developing a defense and economic strategy, constructing legitimizing narratives and refining foundational, state building myths.

Typically, national interests are conceived and spelled out by the ruling elite of the state in a deliberate signaling effort to indicate its approach to a wide range of issues and challenges that the state faces in securing its survival. They form the core of the essential needs of the country. It goes without saying that national interests are developed in the light of the structure of international relations, the flow of events and developments unfolding globally and in the immediate vicinity of a country in question, first and foremost its neighborhood. Nevertheless, irrespective of this, this concept represent how these long and medium-term variables are reflected in the collective consciousness of the political class. This is why it would be permissible to characterize this category as *only partially objective*⁵⁷.

On the objective side, it is customary to refer to enduring vital interests, such as the physical security of the territory, the integrity of the state and its power configuration (political regime); protection of the lives of its citizens, critical elements of the of vital life sustaining systems (infrastructures); economic sustainability and social peace stability. Being forged throughout the entire of the state, they remain virtually unchanged, and their significance is clear to everyone.

The subjective aspect of “national interests”, and therefore the main vulnerability of this category, accentuates the specific, time dependent interpretations of the objective components of national interests. This part is the most flexible and is characterized by five major factors, such as systemism, appropriateness, awareness, adaptability and historicism.

The systemic nature of state/national interests lies in their place in a multi-level complex decision making system. Inter-institutional consistency and structural coordination play a crucial role when it is necessary to clearly articulate the position on a

⁵⁶ The Underlying Causes of Stability and Unrest in the Middle East and North Africa: An Analytic Survey. // Centre for Strategic & International Studies. – [Electronic resource]. — URL: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/underlying-causes-stability-and-unrest-middle-east-and-north-africa-analytic-survey-0>

⁵⁷ Burchill S. The National Interest in International Relations Theory. — Palgrave Macmillan, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited, —2005, — p. 75.

broad array of hierarchically organized issues, facilitate the identification and public justification of declared priorities, both domestically and internationally, to enhance the level of coordination between various segments of the state during the implementation of nation-wide projects.

According to S. Proskurin, the backbone of national interests, is a strict hierarchy, which is also typical of the ranking of threats in the military security domain. The orientation towards achieving the main goal, in a narrow sense, of the “non-threatened state” of progressive development, brings together the key factors of the formation of national interests and the category of national security in a single system, including the “geostrategic positioning of the state, the availability of raw materials, the quantitative and qualitative composition of the population, the level of economic development , the presence of external and internal threats, the nature of the state political system”⁵⁸.

Appropriateness is all about separating imaginary, delusional interests from real, genuine ones. Proceeding from the complex nature of national interests, their formulation and implementation is the prerogative of the state. But to get the real sense of how national interests are formulated, one has to disaggregate the state. In the ideal world, the orientation of genuine national interests should always be improving the quality of life of citizens. However, not only the leaders of the state take part in this process, business structures, lobby groups of legal and illegal nature join the struggle monopolize the interpretation of national priorities. Often the influence of lobby groups do not benefit the state, but vice versa. According to Khrustalev, efforts to accomplish delusional national interests not infrequently result in the depletion of economic resources, human potential, and ultimately the credit of people's trust in the state authority.

For decades, the image of the capitalist Western society as the paramount enemy was cultivated in the Soviet Union. And the dominant claim was that only permanent build-up of the military-industrial complex, an increase in the arsenals of the weapons of mass destruction could assure security and survival. It became clear later on that the

⁵⁸ Прокурин, С.А. Национальные интересы и внешнеполитические приоритеты России // С.А. Прокурин. – М.: Власть, 1996 – С. 52

de facto arms race did not meet the objective criterion of security (the notorious volumes of nuclear weapons, which allow for the assured destruction of the enemy more than once), the development needs of neither side. Thus, incorrect goal setting in the development of national interests can lead to disastrous consequences⁵⁹.

Awareness of national interests is also considered a rather important characteristic of this category. Awareness of the integrity of national interests and the importance of their consistent implementation is achieved through cooperation between all agents in the political field. Only by using the collective resources of the society in all of its manifestations, starting from social movements and individual activists and up to the media, can we achieve any approximation to the objective concept of a construct reflecting the political reality and the needs of the state and society supporting it⁶⁰. Ability to articulate, and then clearly express the national interests of the country, consistent not only in theory, but also implemented in practice makes it possible to distinguish state wisdom from political adventurism and narrowly defined vested interests of unaccountable individuals.

According to the Russian political scientist B. Mezhuyev, defining national interests is a multifaceted and multistage process, the end-result of which is drawing up a strategy of improvement on the socioeconomic situation of the country. To do so, they must reflect the public consensus on a particular problem⁶¹.

Adaptability of national interests is their another crucial characteristic. In this day and age it is impossible to flesh out the category of national interests of any country without paying heed to the interests of other states, and, increasingly, the collective interests of the entire world community. This gives rise to a new paradigm of politics “special mode of social interaction, the logic of which differs both from the logic of markets and from the logic of the government”⁶². Therefore, the success of a country in

⁵⁹ Воскресенский А.Д. Сравнительная политическая экономия взаимоотношений Восток-Запад / А.Д. Воскресенский // Практика зарубежного регионоведения и мировой политики. М.: магистр - Инфра-М, 2014, с. 154-222.

⁶⁰ Pham J. P. What Is in the National Interest? Hans Morgenthau’s Realist Vision and American Foreign Policy// American Foreign Policy Interests, - № 30, - 2008. – 256-265 pp.

⁶¹ Межуев, Б.В. Моделирование понятия «национальный интерес» (На примере дальневосточной политики России конца XIX - начала XX века) – М.: Полис, 1999. – С. 26-35.

⁶² Burchill S. The National Interest in International Relations Theory – Palgrave Macmillan, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited, – 2005, – p. 50.

fulfilling its interests specifically depends on the degree of its integration into the realities of the world arena. There is also a need to build a system in which medium-term interests do not run counter to long-term interests, but intersect with them, coinciding, organically integrating into the picture of the world that foreign ministries are trying to create.

The category of national interests should, therefore, be based on the geopolitical realities in which the state exists, meet the values of the country's traditions, its cultural and confessional identity (ideally – in the harmonious coexistence of many cultures and confessions within and without a particular nation), its role in the international political arena reflecting and reconciling its self perception in the past, the present and the future. The very essence of the value system, which at a certain stage begins to embody the crus of state/national interests, and the national historical aspirations determine the archetypal features and inalienable characteristics of the society, and typically express cultural continuity of the nation throughout its history. Only thus construed national interests can serve as the solid foundation of a state's foreign policy. It is for this reason that those involved in the discourse about the content of national interests should inevitable include people thinking in terms of the categories of the nation as a historically identical and evolving whole, its material and spiritual heritage, ideological attitudes, values, traditions, and historical memory.

Historism is another indispensable quality of national interest. It implies that this category is changing in connection with the evolution of the whole system of international relations. Challenges and needs at different stages of the historical development of society will differ not only in form, but also in content over time. For example, today the threat from international terrorism for some European countries (Belgium, France) is a much more significant problem than aggression of other states, particularly neighbours.

Relying on the above, it can be summarized that national interests as a state project perform two basic functions: instructive and formative.

Sound foreign policy is a rationally developed course of action, based on the correctly interpreted “national interest”. The essential contradiction faced by both an IR

scholar and a state leader is that the human nature of power itself impedes “deep rationalization, generates moral dilemmas, political risks and intellectual surprises”⁶³. However, the subjective factor can and should be minimized. The instructive function of interest lies precisely in excluding a speculative approach to pursuing a foreign policy. Without assuming a clear algorithm of actions, national interests delineate the framework that separates what is possible from what is desired, thereby emphasizing efficiency and impartiality in public administration.

In order to take a closer look at the second function as a starting point, it is necessary to turn to the point of view shared by the Russian scientist V. Pastukhov, who is the author of the expression: “The state and the nation are not two social subjects, but one”⁶⁴. According to his works, these concepts are next to identical, since there is no modern state without a nation, as there is in fact no modern nation without a state. The state today is merely an organizational design for a specific period of a historical nation’s life. It is worth noting that the concept of “nation” is treated in a fairly broad sense of supra-ethnicity. The state and the nation are not only complementary. They firmly relate to each other as “form and content”.

Furthermore, just like state and national interests (or sometimes we tend to look at the them as one and the same – state/national interests), the state and the nation are essentially products of historical development, influenced by a variety of ideologies, schools of thought, civil society institutions political parties and authoritative personalities. E. Pozdnyakov also associates the notion of “national interests” with the internal social consensus, “uniting in a single whole a completely diverse people and making possible the existence of peoples, nations, states as distinct entities”⁶⁵.

With a sufficient degree of development of civil society institutions that reduce the distance between society and power, a balanced “nation-state” system arises, in which mechanisms are developed for balancing public and state interests. Thus, the formational function of national interests harmonizes relations between the state and

⁶³ Кулаков, А.В. Геополитика и актуальные проблемы национальных интересов России на государственной границе // А.В. Кулаков. – М.: МИФ, 2004. – С. 172.

⁶⁴ Пастухов, В.Б. Национальный и государственные интересы России: игра слов или игра в слова? // В.Б. Пастухов. – М.: Полис, 2000. – С. 92.

⁶⁵ Поздняков, Э.А. Философия политики: В 2 ч. Ч. 2. // Э.А. Поздняков. – М.: Махаон, 2004. – С. 81.

society, directly contributing to internal, society-wide communication, thereby strengthening the country from within. Correctly understood “national interest” implies recognition of the rights and respecting the interests of all interacting societal units.

It is necessary to underline that the category of “national interest” is mainly used within the school of political realism, in large part because this concept was widely employed in the works of realist theorists such as H. Morgenthau⁶⁶ and R. Aron⁶⁷. At the same time, supporters of the realistic paradigm do not have a monopoly on this research concept, even though they have made the category of "national interest" the starting point of all their analysis. The states remain the main players in the international arena, the conflicts between them continue to be at the top of the agenda, the diplomatic and strategic behavior of the powers remains a fact of world politics. These theses go beyond inter-paradigmatic rivalry within IR and have universal applicability.

What is more, *the importance of national interests for the historical destiny of the country, as well as the people, allows us to consider any threat to the integrity of the process of national interests formulation as a threat to national security*. According to W. Lippmann, “A **nation** has **security** when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by war”⁶⁸. According to D. Collins, national security is “a measure that any country or coalition takes to protect itself against any adverse effects, both external and internal”⁶⁹. The problems of interrelation and interpenetration of these two categories remain important, and the number of references to national interests as part and parcel of the national interpretation of security, is growing.

1.2. The Problem of "Security" in International Relations, its Content and Types

The concept of security in political discourse is inextricably linked with the category of national interests, with the former being derived from the latter. The

⁶⁶ Morgenthau, H. *Politics Among Nations. The Struggle for Power and Peace* / H. Morgenthau. – New York: STFU, 1955. – 156 p.

⁶⁷ Aron R. *République impériale: Les Etats-Unis dans le monde, 1945-1972* // R. Aron. – Lanham: University Press of France, 1973. – 274 p.

⁶⁸ Lippmann W. *U.S. foreign policy*. – N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 1953. – 177 p.

⁶⁹ Collins J. *U.S. defence planning. A critique*. - Colorado: West-view Press, 1982. – 309 p.

primary meaning of the national security of any sovereign state is ensuring the guarantee of the inviolability of the vital interests of the state, namely: national sovereignty, territorial integrity of the state, inviolability of its ideational political domain, including the country-specific political regime, protection of its population. To ensure these interests a state is likely to enter an open armed conflict. It follows that national security strategy should be understood as a strategy aimed at ensuring the vital interests of the nation-state⁷⁰.

A similar approach to understanding the problem of security in international relations is suggested by theorists of political realism. From the point of view of the theory of political realism, the category of security is decisive, since international relations exist “in the shadow of war”, as R. Aron, one of the founders of the theory, defined them⁷¹.

Neo-realisms in their interpretation of the reality of international relations rely on the notion of “mature anarchy”, which a priori focuses on the state's ability to a more rational approach on the foreign policy track, thus balancing the consequences of the clash of national interests.

In other words, neo-realists partially rescue international relations from the “shadow of war”⁷², arguing that the concepts of “interests” and “security” cannot be fully attributed only to the state level of analysis, because today they are most directly related to the structure of the international system. According to the theories of realism and neo-realism, the attitude to state power remains unchanged, which continues to be the main means of achieving and protecting national security. Power, defined primarily through its military and political components, is the main operational tool in the arsenal of players in the international arena, while the balance of power acts as the main structural driver of the international architecture that determines the conditions and parameters of the international security environment⁷³.

⁷⁰ Mangold P. *National Security and International Relations* // Routledge. – 1990. – 117p.

⁷¹ Hoffmann S. Raymond Aron and the Theory of International Relations // *International Studies Quarterly*, No. 1. – 1985. – p. 13-27.

⁷² Waltz K. *Theory of International Politics*. – Addison-Wesley, 1979. – P.91

⁷³ Ibid.

One of the key features of the classical understanding of security is built on the fact that security is primarily protective (or defensive): it is statically viewed as a state in the absence of threats⁷⁴. According to the Russian scholar A. Voskresenskiy, in some cases, such interpretation of the concept of security leaves outside or even ignores its dynamic significance as a set of measures to ensure such a state⁷⁵. Underestimating security as part of a more general “life-sustaining” grid of the state mechanism can, for example, lead to the collapse of public, incl. higher, education as one of its main cornerstones⁷⁶. Thus, the USSR paid priority attention to the development of its military potential and internal special services, nevertheless the state disintegration occurred not because of an attack by an external enemy and not due to the activities of internal opposition, but because of lack of the system's day-to-day viability – among other things, of course.

From the standpoint of political realism, the main actor of national and international security is the state. This is the main link, cause and effect, as well as the main source of threats. In this sense, it is precisely the concept of political realism that is the basis for constructing security structures in the confrontation between poles, coalitions, blocs, spontaneous associations and individual powers, depending on the type of the functioning security model⁷⁷.

It should be especially noted that the real-politik paradigm in understanding the security of the Cold War period is not the only approach to this problem. Outside of the strategic studies studying the relationship of the two opposing blocks, the preference was gradually given to a wider understanding of security. The search for alternative views on the security problem became necessary in connection with the emergence of new global challenges: the danger of a nuclear war, intensification of cross-border issues (terrorism, smuggling, drug trafficking, etc.), rise of interconnectedness and

⁷⁴ Pollack K. M., Security Dynamics in the Middle East Monday. // The Brookings Institution. [Electronic resource] – URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/on-the-record/security-dynamics-in-the-middle-east/>

⁷⁵ Воскресенский А.Д. Мировые стратегии великих держав и императивы внешней политики России / А.Д. Воскресенский // Российская государственность: исторические традиции и вызовы XXI в. материалы всероссийской научно-общественной конференции. - М.: Научный эксперт, 2013. - С. 215-228.

⁷⁶ Giulio M. Gallarotti *Cosmopolitan Power in International Relations: A Synthesis of Realism, Neoliberalism, and Constructivism*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. – P. 142.

⁷⁷ Cofman T., Real security: The interdependence of governance and stability in the Arab World // The Brookings Institution. [Electronic resource]. – URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/politics-governance-and-state-society-relations>

economic interdependence, legal and other normative restrictions on the deployment of the state military, as well as moral issues to do with the doctrine of mutually assured destruction⁷⁸. Such ideas, especially by the beginning of the 21st century, are becoming more widespread. An important place in the new ideas about security is taken by such security features as indivisibility and reciprocity: a reduction in the level of security of one party provokes a decrease in the level of security by other parties⁷⁹.

Some shortcomings of the theory of political realism in regards to security were noticed by the theorists of complex interdependence of J. Nye and R. Keohane who in 1989 wrote: “The balance between power theories and national security is poorly adapted to the analysis of problems of economic and ecological interdependence. Security in the traditional interpretation is probably not a fundamental issue faced by governments”⁸⁰.

Indeed, researchers ought to pay attention to the fact that the resolution of various issues requires different power resources. Nevertheless, all these new approaches must take into account what neorealists so aptly described - the structure of the international system, or, in other words, how power is distributed between states⁸¹. Of course, one might say that this approach is much more relevant to the realities of the cold war. Undoubtedly, in the modern world this interpretation deserves a critical attitude, but it would be wrong to completely deny its positive significance for understanding not only the past, but also the current period of the development of international relations. It is another matter completely, however, that what contemporary neorealists could do is to explain how all these new different power dimensions could be integrated into our understanding and calculation of the international structure. This is a perennial question of IR theory of how to measure power. The debate still goes on.

⁷⁸ The Changing Global Security Structure // Centre for Strategic & International Studies. – [Electronic Resource] – URL: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/changing-security-structure-middle-east-0>

⁷⁹ Federated Defense in the Middle East // Centre for Strategic & International Studies. – [Electronic resource]. – URL: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/federated-defense-middle-east>

⁸⁰ Giulio M. Gallarotti *Cosmopolitan Power in International Relations: A Synthesis of Realism, Neoliberalism, and Constructivism*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. – P.42.

⁸¹ Федорченко А.В. Ближний Восток: ориентиры российской внешней политики [Электронный ресурс] // МГИМО. - 3.01.2013. - Режим доступа: [news/experts/document234357.phtml](https://www.mimo.gov.ru/news/experts/document234357.phtml)

I argue in this study that classical strategic studies of security problems within the political theory of realism and neo-realism remain largely relevant, particularly to the study of the Middle Eastern regional security and power dynamic. For example, in the early 1990s one of the most prominent representatives of neo-realism, S. Walt, presented to the world community the theory of threat balance, which, Walt agreed, should supplement and perfect the classical realistic theory of balance of power. The latter, as is known, shows how the states would behave in the event when one (or several allied) state reaches a level of aggregate power far exceeding the power of the others⁸².

The disequilibrium of power takes place if one state of the system or their coalition has a much greater power than another powerful state or coalition. The reaction of the rest of the system's players to this situation will be the build-up of their own strength or the conclusion of allied treaties against one another against the strengthened state (coalition), that is, states are trying to balance out the increased strength of one coalition's overall power, measured by its military, economic and demographic ingredients, as well as access to critical raw materials. Quite interestingly, Walt was using the Middle Eastern cases to prove his point.

The concept of S. Walt demonstrates the desire of the paradigm of political realism to change in accordance with today's changes due to the emergence of new objective megatrends (globalization, regionalization, etc.) that shape the international reality regardless of the desire of individual states⁸³.

These conclusions do not mean that by default the ideas and provisions developed by liberal theorists, including the hypotheses on collective security or interdependence should be dismissed. They, too, merit an unbiased review and ought to be used when relevant conditions apply. For this reason, the concept of security has always remained within the purview of the liberal-idealistic paradigm. One of the central points in this

⁸² Waltz K. *Theory of International Politics*. – New York: McGraw Hill, 1979. – 256 p.

⁸³ Мегатренды. Основные траектории эволюции мирового порядка в XXI веке / Т.А. Шаклеина, А.А. Байков, Э.Я. Баталов, Н.А. Симония и др.; под ред. Т.А. Шаклеиной и А.А. Байкова. - М.: Аспект Пресс, 2013. - 448 с.

paradigm has been the attainability of a normatively favoured international cooperation based on universal values and universal human rights⁸⁴.

From this perspective, the actors of international relations who deny cooperation, violate the generally accepted moral and legal norms and, therefore, represent a major security threat. Central to the liberal-idealistic paradigm are the concepts of general disarmament and collective security, as well as the fundamental focus on the idea of rights and freedoms of the individual⁸⁵. From the point of view of liberals, collective security is the only way to overcome the security dilemma through the widespread institutionalization of international political interaction with reliance on international law.

The notion of “collective security”, which was formalized in the days of the League of Nations, has gained large following not only in the academic circles of researchers since the 1970s, but also among the political circles engaged in the development and implementation international security strategies around the world. This concept is actively used by a new layer of international actors: intergovernmental organizations (UN, LAS, MERCOSUR, OIC, etc.), as well as non-governmental organizations (SILPM, Socialist International, Pugwash Movement of Scientists)⁸⁶.

In the same years, other concepts of security, similar to the above, are born. For example, the concept of “general security” (common security) as a counter-theory to so called containment strategies. This concept implies long-term state obligations in the field of implementing instruments for national security, which are formed taking into account the concerns of other states regarding their own security, to maximize the degree of interdependence between states through joint work on different vectors of the foreign policy course⁸⁷.

⁸⁴ Moravcsik A. "Liberal International Relations Theory; A Scientific Assessment" in *The Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field*, ed. Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman (Cambridge MIT Press, 2003), 165 p.

⁸⁵ Bull, H. 'Society and anarchy in international relations', in M. Wight and H. Butterfield (eds) *Diplomatic investigations*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968. First edition - pp.35–50

⁸⁶ Воскресенский А.Д. Структурирование регионального пространства и его основные акторы. Регионализация и трансрегиональное сотрудничество / А.Д. Воскресенский, Е.В. Колдунова, А.А. Киреева // *Мировое комплексное регионоведение* / Под ред. А.Д. Воскресенского. М.: Магистр-Инфра-М, 2014. – с. 80-107

⁸⁷ James J. Hentz, Morten Bøås *New and Critical Security and Regionalism: Beyond the Nation State* International political economy of new regionalisms series / Ashgate. – 2003. – 216 p

Another concept is the concept of “general and collective defense”. It means joint protection of members of the security community (for example, the CSTO or the Shield of the Peninsula within the framework of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf) against aggression by actors outside the organization⁸⁸.

In this connection A. Bogaturov considers the relationship between stability and security as follows: “While security implies the desired condition of a state or the system, then stability is the type of change in their real states that can be characterized by greater or lesser security. Or in another way: security embodies the absence of threats to survival, and stability - the ability to compensate for such threats in the event of their emergence due to the internal adaptive capabilities of the system.” Thus, the concept of “security” as a complex multifaceted social phenomenon has a specific historical character and is closely related to all forms and areas of interaction in the “state-society-individual” triad. Any concept is developed in accordance with specific historical conditions. Previously, each state was left largely to its own resources to prevent and reduce the severity of external (and internal) threats. At present, most of the problems related to the security of the state cannot be resolved by any state alone, which is why the efforts of all the states of the world are objectively required⁸⁹.

In the most abstract sense, the relevant up-to-date understanding of international security was articulated when the UN was being born, in the first article of the Charter of this organization, where its main task was clearly laid out: “...to maintain international peace and security and, for this purpose, to take effective collective measures to prevent and eliminate threats to peace and to suppress acts of aggression or other violations of the peace and to conduct by peaceful means, in accordance with the principles of justice and international law, the settlement or settlement of international disputes or situations, which can lead to a breach of the peace”⁹⁰.

⁸⁸ Воскресенский А.Д. Регионализация в международных отношениях / А.Д. Воскресенский // Современные международные отношения / Под ред. А.В. Торкунова. - М.: Аспект Пресс, 2012. - С. 103-116.

⁸⁹ Современная мировая политика: Прикладной анализ / Отв. ред. А.Д. Богатуров. М.: Аспект Пресс, 2009. – 558 с.

⁹⁰ The Charter of the Organization is indicated by Chapter I, Article 1. [Electronic resource] // The official website of the Organization is indicated on. URL: <http://www.un.org/ru/charter-united-nations/>.

By and large, international security, along with its national dimension, is one of the key spheres of activity of any state, as well as the subject of close scholarly inquiry. Let me now in turn consider the main attributes of various security systems, briefly touched upon above.

Typically, in the expert community, when discussing this issue, two types of international security models are used based on different criteria. The first type includes four competing models of international security, built in function of the number of great powers (or poles) in the system: unipolar, “concert of powers”, multipolar, global⁹¹.

The basis for differentiating the second type of international security models is the nature of the relationship between actors in these security systems. The second type includes three basic models: collective, universal and cooperative⁹².

The notion of *collective security* was coined in the early 1930s, when, attempts were made to develop a mechanism for preventing a new world war, mainly on the basis of an international organization of the League of Nations. The idea is predicated on the premise regarding the existence of a group of states brought together by a shared goal of protecting their own security and a system of military and political measures directed against a potential enemy or source of threat both within and without this totality of states.

The second model of universal security was first mentioned during the Cold War in the report of the Palme Commission of 1982, led by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Olof Palme. The Commission proposed “the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone on both sides of the border between the Eastern and Western blocs, which would cover a space of three hundred kilometers, in order to provide a security zone, as well as providing for the possibility to resolve new arising problems”⁹³.

This model, unlike collective security, focuses on the multidimensional nature of international security, which encompasses not only the traditional “hard” but also “soft” security dimensions, as well as the need to take into account the legitimate interests of

⁹¹ Шаклеина Т.А. Лидерство и современный мировой порядок: нужен ли миру лидер? / Т.А.Шаклеина // Международные процессы. 2015. – №4. – С. 6-19.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Народы и культуры. – М.: Инфра – М. под ред. Р. Хоггарта, 2002.

all members of the world community. Ensuing from that assumption is the fact that the institutional framework for universal security should not be so much military-political alliances as collective security implies, but rather universal international organizations such as the United Nations.

Despite the fact that the concept of universal security is undoubtedly a significant step forward in comparison with the model of collective security, it has a number of shortcomings above all the vagueness of the definition of international security (identifying security with a public good); and weak institutional design⁹⁴.

The model of cooperative security gained popularity in political discourse in the mid-1990s. Its authors and followers seem to assume that this model has embraced the best two worlds. On the one hand, it acknowledges the multidimensional nature of international security. On the other hand it sets forth a clear cut hierarchy of priorities.

While not giving up fully on “hard” security, the model of cooperative security emphasizes the priority of political and diplomatic means in resolving inter-state disputes. This concept calls for different actors from the world community to cooperate and establish contacts, but can rely on the existing system of military-political alliances in solving specific issues. Finally, recognizing the state as the main subject of international relations, the concept of cooperative security pays much attention to the use of the potential of international and transnational organizations and, therefore, is more open to a network-based, rather than state-centric, negotiation patterns drawing on the principle of the “equal footing” of actors.

It should be noted that many of the specific parameters the cooperative security model have yet to be fleshed out. Theorists disagree on the question of which institutions should become the nucleus of the new system of international security, what are the limits of the use of force in international politics, how we should treat state sovereignty, how to avert backsliding of the current system of international relations into a precarious standoff of military-politically alliances, including the existing ones that seem to take on a second breath.

⁹⁴ Глобальная безопасность: инновационные методы анализа конфликтов. Под общ. ред. Смирнова А.И. – М.: Общество «Знание» России, 2011. – С. 176

The next level and integral part of international security is regional security. In modern political discourse, the notion of regional security is understood as “an integral part of international security characterizing the state of international relations in a specific region of the world community as free from military threats, economic dangers, etc., as well as from intrusions and outside interference related to damage, encroachments on the sovereignty and independence of the states of the region”⁹⁵. The regional level of security differs in a certain way from global security taking into account the specific features of a particular region of the modern world, namely, the configuration of the balance of forces, historical, cultural, traditional, ethno-religious characteristics⁹⁶. Another difference of regional security is that its provision can be answered both by specially created for this institutional structures (for example, the OSCE in Europe) and by wider associations (for example, OAS in the countries of the Americas, the CSTO in Central Asia)⁹⁷.

Over the past decade, its subregional sub-level has become increasingly important in ensuring regional security. The end of the cold war, the development of regionalization processes and, consequently, the transition from confrontational forms of maintaining stability to multi-level cooperation in various regions of the world contribute to deepening this process, its transition to more compact and bound interrelated subregions.

The most comprehensive theoretical substantiation of the processes leading to the formation of regions as constituent components and actors of world politics is contained in the theory of regional security complexes, proposed by the representatives of the Copenhagen School of International Relations Barry Buzan and Ole Waever. They maintain that the key role in any regionalization processes is played by the problems of security.

⁹⁵ Шаклеина Т.А. Внешняя политика и безопасность современной России. 1991-2002. Хрестоматия в четырех томах. Редактор-составитель Т.А. Шаклеина. Том II. Исследования. М. : Московский государственный институт международных отношений (У) МИД России, Российская ассоциация международных исследований, АНО «ИНО-Центр (Информация. Наука. Образование.)», 2002. – С. 340

⁹⁶ Воскресенский А.Д. Мировое комплексное регионоведение и перспективы построения незападной теории международных отношений / А.Д. Воскресенский // Полис. - 2013. - № 6. - С. 82-96.

⁹⁷ Шаклеина Т.А. Великие державы и региональные подсистемы / Т.А. Шаклеина // Международные процессы. - 2011. - Том 9. № 2. - С. 29-39.

In the opinion of Buzan⁹⁸ and O. Waever, at the present stage, certain regional security subsystems as components of the international system have significant autonomy, in contrast to the comprehensive rigid structure of the times of the Cold War. With the collapse of the bipolar system of international relations, the extent to which the world powers interfered with processes taking place in various parts of the world has decreased. As a consequence, the status of regions in the system of international relations has changed: from the arenas of rivalry between the two superpowers, the regions began to gradually evolve into independent elements of the global security architecture that directly influence the policy of global players. In some cases, the regions act as centers of power in their own right⁹⁹.

As the next logical step, awareness of the need for collective efforts within a single geographic region to resolve security problems and counter common threats over time leads to the creation of a regional security complex (RSC) - a group of units whose main processes occur within the political society of the regional countries, during which the perception of a factor as a significant threat, become so widely shared that the problems of their national security cannot be considered separately from one another"¹⁰⁰.

Nevertheless, not every group of neighboring states ends up with a regional security complex. In order to be able to talk about the appearance of the RSC, the regional space must meet certain criteria. Thus, the American expert on the study of the theory of regional security complexes, Patrick Morgan, laid out the following conditions for the formation of a RSC:

- 1) self-identification of members of the RSC as representatives of one region, as well as appropriate perception by external actors;
- 2) geographical proximity of participants;
- 3) certain autonomy of the RSC from other complexes, as well as from the influence of global players;

⁹⁸ Buzan B. Security: A New Framework for Analysis // B. Buzan, O. Weaver, J. de Wilde. Colorado, L, 1998. – P. 201.

⁹⁹ Barry Buzan, Ole Waever. Regions and Powers. Regions and Powers. – P. 10-11

¹⁰⁰ Buzan B. Security: A New Framework for Analysis // B. Buzan, O. Weaver, J. de Wilde. Colorado, L, 1998. – P. 201.

- 4) regular and intensive interactions between members of the RCU;
- 5) a high degree of political, economic and cultural similarity¹⁰¹.

One could add to this that regions are not “equal” in terms of the hierarchy of importance of regions in the global security realms from the standpoint of their conflict potential and the presence of potential threats to international security and the security of the major global players. Furthermore, each region is obviously different in terms of formalization and institutionalization of regional security systems, including regional organizations, treaties, agreements, arms control regimes, forms of collective responsibility, ways to provide mutual assistance, etc. The highest degree of such institutionalization can be found in the Transatlantic area, a similar system is gradually being formed on a large Eurasian space, the prerequisites for its formation are observed in the integration efforts of ASEAN and the African Union. The least degree of institutionalization is characteristic of security processes in the Middle East and Northeast Asia¹⁰².

The specific weight of all the above processes and factors that determine the new parameters of international security is not equivalent and not constant. Nevertheless, in order to gauge the emerging new quality of international security on a global scale and to identify the determining trajectory of its long-term development, it is necessary to ensure, as far as possible, an objective and systematic consideration of these parameters, since their deliberate exclusion from the categorical apparatus will adversely affect the quality of the analysis.

Over the past decade, regional and subregional levels of analysis have proven increasingly important in our understanding of global security¹⁰³. The above description of the notion of regional security confirms the assumption that regional cooperation in the field of security begins with the realization of the prospect of such cooperation and of the commonality of national interests and national security strategies¹⁰⁴. This, in turn,

¹⁰¹ Morgan Patrick M.. Regional security complexes and Regional Orders. Regional Orders// Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World. ed. by David A. Lake, Patrick M. Morgan. The Pennsylvania State University Press. University Park, Pennsylvania, 1997. – P. 26.

¹⁰² Бакланов. А.Г., Ближний Восток: региональная безопасность и интересы России, М., - 2010 - С.43.

¹⁰³ А.С. Засыпкин. Безопасность в Персидском заливе. // Международная жизнь, №1, 2009, С. 3-15.

¹⁰⁴ Воскресенский А.Д. Специфика политической идентичности в глобальном мире / А.Д.Воскресенский // Сравнительная политика. №1. - 2016. - с. 135-139.

implies the transformation of the ways countries deal with these issues towards their super-nationalisation, a RSC being of most likely but far from the only upshot of this realization.

1.3. Basic Approaches to the Study of the Phenomenon of Regionalization in the Context of the Notion of "Regional Security"

The process of transformation of the existing system of international relations, the dynamic of change and the end result of the ongoing processes are undoubtedly bound up with the termination of the Cold War and the end of the bloc confrontation. The collapse of the bipolar world order marked the disintegration of the international order based on a system of checks and balances that had existed for four and a half decades and determined the forms of international interaction, its goals and the circle of participants. The emergence of a multi-polar international system is normally closely connected in the literature with the notion of regionalization, which became widespread in the late XX - early XXI century.

Regionalization is a collection of empirical processes that result, typically, from the trends of microeconomic integration in the areas of trade and industrial cooperation in manufacturing and mutual direct investments and lead to the formation of institutions of cooperation within a certain transnational geographical space¹⁰⁵. As driving forces of regionalization, intra-regional processes, as well as external influence, are often mentioned. Specialists distinguish two types of regionalization¹⁰⁶.

The first type is the emergence of regional powers that are active in their efforts to improve their own positions both within the region and in the international arena. As a result, such actors seek to build relationships with smaller states in the region in order to maximize their use in their political and economic interests, through agreements, treaties, and various informal practices¹⁰⁷.

¹⁰⁵ Robert Z. Lawrence, *Regionalism, Multilateralism and Deeper Integration* - Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1995. – 297 p.

¹⁰⁶ Абрамов Ю. А., Куйбарь В. И. Глобальная регионализация: к обоснованию понятия // Социально-гуманитарные знания. 2008. № 1. С. 242–250.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

The second type of regionalization process involves the formation of regional integration groups, whose purpose is also to create a certain regional economic and political environment that exists separately within the framework of the world system. At the same time, as a rule, the leading driving force of economic integration is the result of political decisions by participants in the relevant regional groups¹⁰⁸. Moreover, in a number of cases, economic cooperation is seen as an effective means of resolving existing or potential political contradictions, minimizing political risks and overall improving the security of the region, both within and outside the regional space¹⁰⁹.

When analyzing world politics at the regional level, one normally resorts to a systems approach which theoretically singles out the regional level and regional subsystems as independent units of analysis of research.

The issue of regional and subregional subsystems are subject to debate and varying opinions. In the bipolar world order the role of regional powers as well as regional cooperative arrangements was subordinated to the overall logic and laws of system-wide bipolar confrontation. However, after the demolition of the bipolar international system, the situation became much more complicated and calling for a different theoretical explanation and conceptualization. Let us assume that we are seeing now in the works is a fledgling multipolar world. Then, it would be fair to view it as a result of the crumbling of a bipolar realm of mainly political, vertically organized relations into relatively bound geo-economic regional and/or subregional entities¹¹⁰. What is more, one could argue that with the demise of bipolarity there is only one level of analysis left to researchers of IR, and that is the regional and subregional level of interaction¹¹¹.

Furthermore, at the end of the 20th century, one felt a pressing need for a clear delineation of the general and particular problems of international relations. The reason for this view lay in the parallel trends towards intensified globalization, on the one

¹⁰⁸ Wilfred J. Ethier, «The New Regionalism», - *The Economic Journal*, 108 - July 1998, - p. 1161.

¹⁰⁹ Абрамов Ю. А., Куйбарь В. И. Глобальная регионализация: к обоснованию понятия // Социально-гуманитарные знания. 2008. № 1. С. 260.

¹¹⁰ Bjorn Hettne, «Beyond the «New» Regionalism», *New Political Economy*, 10:4 – December, 2005, pp. 543–71.

¹¹¹ Современные международные отношения: Учебник под ред. А.В. Торкунова, А.В. Мальгина, - М.: Издательство «Аспект Пресс», 2016. - С. 104.

hand; and to fragmentation and regionalization, on the other. Researchers of international relations noted that regional processes of international interactions, alongside interactions at the global level, have a certain qualitative autonomy. In each specific case of such "non-global" interactions there are characteristic specific patterns (economic, geographical, ethno-cultural, confessional, etc.) of these new, distinct and relatively independent subsystems of international relations¹¹².

What matters is that processes occurring at the regional level can counter influences exerted by the global agenda and even transfigure them in their own peculiar way. Figuratively speaking, regionalization is a kind of emancipation of the regional level of international relations¹¹³. De facto it means the return of the category of space/spatiality into international political and economic analysis. Diversification of powers operating at the regional level leads to the formation of new fields for research, in which the category of space becomes decisive, such as regional studies, comparative macro-regional analysis, "new geopolitics" – you name it¹¹⁴.

Over the past decades, experts have been able to observe the reformatting of the global system of international relations in favor of the one where the regionalization processes play an axial role, the influence of the regional level of international relations on the global level is growing, and new macro-regional alliances are shaping that largely determine the composition and content of the new regional orders in the modern world¹¹⁵.

Regionalization in its contemporary shape and form is a fairly recent phenomenon. This concerns the definition of the belonging of a certain country to a particular region (geographical, political, civilizational), and to the definition of the boundaries of regions. However, regardless of the ongoing debate, a region is for sure a geographically enclosed area the countries of which demonstrate the specifically

¹¹² Журавлев В. Е. Использование методологии теории комплексов в региональной безопасности // Регионоведческие исследования 2011. №2.

¹¹³ Walter Mattli, 'Ernst Haas's Evolving Thinking on Comparative Regional Integration: of Virtues and Infelicities', *Journal of European Public Policy*, - 12:2 – April, 2007. - pp. 327–48.

¹¹⁴ Воскресенский А.Д. Место мирового комплексного / зарубежного регионоведения на «карте наук». Развитие мирополитических теорий и «проверка теорий» / А.Д. Воскресенский // Мировое комплексное регионоведение. М.: Магистр-Инфра-М, 2014. с. 368-392.

¹¹⁵ Raimo Vayrynen, 'Regionalism: Old and New', *International Studies Review* – 5 – 2003. - pp. 25–51

endemic patterns of interaction manifest in first and foremost distinct behavioral features inherent in its dynamics and arising from a shared cultural, economic and political co-development¹¹⁶.

With the collapse of the bipolar system, an impetus was given to comparative regional studies. As part of this process it became clear that regions can act simultaneously as objects and actors of world politics and occupy the middle level of the system of international relations, between the global level of the international system and the level of the national state. As a result, according to the American international scientist J. Hentz, at the present stage, there is an increase in the interdependence and mutual influence of the policies of individual national states and other international actors within their respective regional spaces¹¹⁷. In other words, regionalization does not only or necessarily implies an ever closer interconnectedness of neighboring countries in various issue areas. What, in my view, comprises the main political meaning of the concept regionalization is the devolution of global politics to the regional level of agenda setting and negotiations.

On a more practical note, in political discourse the term “regionalization” is commonly employed to denote two different phenomena: the rise of regional powers in world politics (a synonym to polycentrisation of world politics) and the establishment of regional integration groupings. Another relatively new direction for political science discourse is the definition of regionalization as an economic precondition and a driving force for regionalism, or institutionalization of multilateral cooperation within a bound regional space. The latter is looked at within the framework of such disciplines as international political economy¹¹⁸.

Thus, the concepts of regionalization and regionalism emphasize the interconnectedness of a certain number of countries and the transition of national issues (in the economic, political domains) of these countries to a supranational regional level.

¹¹⁶ V. Milner, ‘The New Wave of Regionalism’, *International Organization*, – 53:3 – Summer, 1999. - pp. 589–627

¹¹⁷ James J. Hentz, ‘Introduction: New Regionalism and the “Theory of Security Studies” - Burlington, VT : Ashgate, 2003. – p. 216

¹¹⁸ Воскресенский А.Д. Политические системы и политические структуры Востока. М.: Восток-Запад, 2006. - С. 7.

It follows that regionalization allow countries to accomplish national interests at the regional level with lower transactional costs and higher efficiency than going it alone.

The processes of regionalization, the result of which is the growing interdependence of states, directly affect the areas of political and economic interaction, as well as cooperation in the field of security. The conclusion is that the interaction in one of these three spheres is directly related to the successful achievement of the objectives in the framework of the other two areas. This is the manifestation of the complex nature of the processes of regionalization, which initially had as their basis the need to resolve security problems.

As historical experience shows, the conflict is always present in the practice of international relations. In modern conditions, when various threats acquire a global character, the importance of maintaining regional security as an integral part of international stability cannot be underestimated. Moreover, the identification of threats and challenges of a regional nature is very important for the effective implementation of the domestic and foreign policies of the state.

According to the concept of American political scientist D. Lake, the spatial division of the world in international relations is based on the civilizational-geographical and cultural-political logic of development of each country, proceeding from the definition of the international political region as a complex tied to the “territorial-economic and national-based on the specific homogeneity of geographical, natural, economic, socio-historical, political, ethnic and cultural conditions, serving as a base for its identification”¹¹⁹.

Also, as part of the systems approach to the analysis of international relations, it is possible to consider parts of the system as *subsystems*. Consequently, it is fair to believe that regional systems of international relations may have distinct laws when it comes to interstate cooperation. The functioning of regional subsystems, as it is described in the relevant literature can be summarized as follows:

¹¹⁹ David A. Lake, «Regional Hierarchy: Authority and Local International Order», - Review of International Studies, - Vol. 35, Globalising the Regional, Regionalising the Global, - Feb.,- 2009. - pp. 35-58

- 1) While the parameters of international political dynamics are common for the entire world, at the regional subsystems generate their own processes of interstate interaction of a more local order, while being part of the global context;
- 2) Since the regional specificity is unique, the study of the parameters of the functioning of one regional subsystem will have limited significance for understanding the practical organization of processes in other regional subsystems;
- 3) Nevertheless, due to the fact that regions *per se* are considered as an independent level of analysis, identifying the particular and the common in the structure and features one regional subsystem can be instrumental in making sense of what goes on in other regions, even though said processes can manifest themselves differently various forms¹²⁰.

With reference to modern international relations, one can speak of the existence of the following international political macroregions: Middle Eastern, Pan-American, European, African, Asian; and some of the generally accepted subregional subsystems—the Western European and Eastern European (part of the European subsystem), the North American and Latin American (part of the Pan-American subsystem), the Maghreb, the Levant, the Middle East, the Central Asian (the large Middle Eastern subsystem), the South Asian, Southeast Asian, East Asian (parts of the Asia-Pacific subsystem) etc. Obviously, due to different characteristics, individual countries can enter into several regional spaces at once, which, due to the vagueness of the boundaries of imaginary constructs, intersect with each other¹²¹.

In addition, other political, economic, cultural and geographical groups of states are often distinguished, depending on the criterion underlying the classification - the dominant type of economic management, the desire to build a joint security system or the presence of unresolved territorial, interethnic, confessional disputes¹²². In addition,

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ R. Fawn «Regions» and their study: where from, what for and where to? - British International Studies Association, - Review of International Studies, - 35, - 2009. - pp 5-34

¹²² Edmund Herzig, 'Regionalism, Iran and Central Asia', - International Affairs, - 80:3, - May, - 2004. – 270 p.

the division of the world into regions according to the geo-economic or geopolitical principle seems legitimate.

Based on the boundaries of these macroregions, it becomes possible to carry out various types of co-opposition, and multilevel analysis, and also to make forecasts. Such approaches to the knowledge of political reality serve as the basis for a more ambitious and traditional practical historical-diplomatic and structured political-economic analysis.

CHAPTER II

BASIC COMPONENTS AND MAIN PROCESSES IN REGIONAL SUBSYSTEM THROUGH THE PRIZM OF THE PROBLEM OF SECURITY

2.1. Regional Dimension of Global Processes in the Context of Modern Approaches to the Study of International Relations

Normative theories have stimulated the emergence of a number of derivatives that have approached international relations either from the agent's point of view or from the structural point of view¹²³. It is assumed that the specifics of the system sets the framework for the behavior of states in the international arena. That is, through the peculiarities of the system of international relations, one can explain the behavior of an individual state. Proceeding from this assumption, it is obvious that the notion of world order is more convenient to conceptualize from the point of view of system-structural theories.

The present research will be concentrated on theories that operate with system-structural categories and can be tested empirically - neo-liberalism, neo-Marxism and neo-realism. We realize that normative theories and authors who follow them do not exhaust the range of available approaches. For example, we deliberately eliminated from this study constructivism, as it distances itself from the system-structural vision. Its empirical verification is possible at the agent level, rather than the structure. This makes it suitable for studying the ideas about the world order of individual agents (for example, political leaders of states), but does not allow studying the world order as a system and its regional elements as its components¹²⁴.

The most important aspect in all the approaches considered and included in the theoretical framework of this project is the analytical isolation of the global level of the

¹²³ Rosenau, James "Governance, Order and Change in World Politics", in James N. Rosenau and Ernst-Ottawa Czempiel (eds.), *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics*. Cambridge University Press. - 1992 - Chapter 1, - P. 1-29.

¹²⁴ Wendt, Alexander. "Social Theory of International Politics". Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. – 1999. – P. 20-46.

system of international relations, which is characterized by “some self-sufficient systemic autonomy that allows describing and analyzing international relations as a coherent set of interactions”¹²⁵.

At the same time, as we made clear in the previous Chapter, starting from the early 1990s, a need to distinguish between general and particular issues of the systems of international relations and to single out the regional level of international relations as an independent level of analysis has become increasingly justifiable¹²⁶. The regional level of IR – through a variety of specific manifestations – be it in the Middle East, in Eurasia or in East Asia – clearly has a distinct qualitative specificity and behavioral autonomy (the concrete extent of which varies among regions) that requires to be explained and conceptualized¹²⁷. For this reason, new theories of international relations have appeared on how global trends (Megatrends) are “refracted” at the level of subsystems.

The liberal wing of the IR theory emphasized the outstanding role of economic interdependence in reducing the anarchy of the international environment. Globalization, the dying away of trade barriers between developed countries, and the division of labor between them have given rise to fundamentally new structural features of international relations, where regional processes can be presented as alternative to the global ones¹²⁸. The new structure transferred economic competition to a different aspect, tearing it away from the tools of power politics, which at the level of regions was expressed in the integration communities that are formed around local proto-hegemons. States began to form network structures that came to replace the hierarchical imperial or

¹²⁵ Колдунова Е.В. Мировое комплексное регионоведение как исследовательский подход и учебный дисциплина / Е.В. Колдунова // Вестник МГИМО. 2016. №5 (50). - С. 63-69

¹²⁶ Воскресенский А.Д. Место мирового комплексного / зарубежного регионоведения на "карте наук". Развитие мирополитических теорий и "проверка теорий" / А.Д. Воскресенский // Мировое комплексное регионоведение. М.: Магистр-Инфра-М, 2014. - с. 368-392.

¹²⁷ Воскресенский А.Д. "Открытый" и "закрытый", "старый" и "новый" регионализм. региональные комплексы безопасности / А.Д. Воскресенский. Е.В. Колдунова, А.А. Киреева // Мировое комплексное регионоведение / Под ред. А.Д. Воскресенского. М.: Магистр-Инфра-М, 2014, С. 109-134.

¹²⁸ Федорченко А.В. Региональная экономическая интеграция в странах Магриба: состояние и перспективы / А.В.Федорченко // Международная аналитика. №3, 2016. - С 54-70.

quasi-imperial models¹²⁹. This significantly curtailed the conflict, which was largely brought to the periphery of international relations.

The theoretical lacuna explaining how the global agenda is being manifested in different parts of the periphery was originally filled with neo-Marxist system-structural theories. The most prominent among them is the world-system approach of Immanuel Wallerstein¹³⁰. World order is conceptualized by I. Wallerstein in terms of the capitalist world system. It is understood as a system formed by the position of states in the world division of labor. Structurally, it consists of a core, semi-periphery and periphery. Capital and high-value-added industries are concentrated in the core, while the periphery is a resource and raw material base.

What is particularly noteworthy in this theoretical construction is how it conceptualizes the role of semi-periphery. States semi-peripheries combine two qualities. Their economy is more or less peripheral. However, their state (meaning state capacity) is robust and strong enough to carry out “modernization from above” and also use its political power in bargaining with the core and negotiate a political goal to join it. For the world order this category is extremely important because it is represented by large developing states whose political role in international affairs cannot simply be ignored. According to modern interpretations of this concept, the BRICS countries and ASEAN are the most vivid representatives of the contemporary semi-periphery¹³¹.

The core, periphery and semi-periphery are in a state of dynamic equilibrium. Once this equilibrium is broken, the world order is in crisis. I. Wallerstein defines it as a state of the world-system, in which a cumulative set of contradictions makes it impossible for it to stay on indefinitely in the same form and necessitates a transition to a different quality and configuration¹³². The fact that the core now increasingly uses

¹²⁹ David A. Lake, «Regional Hierarchy: Authority and Local International Order», - Review of International Studies, - Vol. 35, Globalising the Regional, Regionalising the Global, - Feb.,- 2009. - pp. 35-58

¹³⁰ Wallerstein, Immanuel Maurice. World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004 – 490 p

¹³¹ Шаклеина Т.А. Формирование мирового порядка: новая державная и институциональная полицентричность / Т.А.Шаклеина // Ситуационные анализы. Выпуск 5: Международные институты в мировой политике. Под ред. Т.А.Шаклеиной. / Т.А.Шаклеина, Э.Я.Баталов, А.В.Худайкулова, Д.А.Дегтерев, И.А.Истомин, А.И.Смирнов, Е.Н.Ямбуренко и др. М.: Изд-во МГИМО, 2017. - С. 94-125.

¹³² Wallerstein, Immanuel Maurice. World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004 – 301-311 pp.

military force to solve problems on the periphery, according to I. Wallerstein, is one of the signs of such a crisis.

The neo-realism of Kenneth Waltz was a pioneer in putting normative principles of conservatism and realism on a system-structural basis. It was K. Waltz who in fact adapted the political and philosophical core of realism to the requirements of modern empirical political science¹³³. As a result, a qualitatively new theory was obtained that operated on realistic categories, but acquired a new explanatory apparatus using the concepts of system analysis. In the Soviet Union, and later in Russia, this approach has also received serious development. Mark Khrustalev, Yevgeny Primakov, Alexei Bogaturov and other Russian international experts all claimed allegiance to the structural theory, even though they did adjust it in one fashion or another.

As part of their work, a fundamentally new approach is being developed to assess the quality of the impact of regional processes on the global level of international relations¹³⁴.

Interestingly, K. Waltz intentionally distances himself from the Marxists, criticizing them for explaining international politics by non-political factors (economy and division of labor). From this point of view, power and influence, as the main criteria that determine the regional hierarchy, allow us to view the world order as a political system in which the hierarchy of global problems and threats will differ in different regional segments of the international political arena¹³⁵.

Despite a common understanding of the strength of the state's ability to ensure its security and achieve its interests in various regional subsystems, this quality has to be updated and specified in different ways. In the subsystem, the problem of ensuring energy security will actively influence the realization of the national interests of actors, while for most of the actors in the Middle East subsystem the security threat from the "filibusters formations" is more urgent¹³⁶.

¹³³ K. Waltz *Theory of International Politics*. – Addison-Wesley, 1979. – P. 23.

¹³⁴ A View From the Gulf: A Discussion of Gulf Politics and Security [Электронный ресурс]. // The Middle East Institute. URL: <http://www.mei.edu/audio/view-gulf-discussion-gulf-politics-and-security>

¹³⁵ Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, "Security-Seeking Under Anarchy: Defensive Realism Reconsidered." *International Security* 25 – 2001. – P. 40-75.

¹³⁶ James J. Hentz, 'Introduction: New Regionalism and the "Theory of Security Studies"' - Burlington, VT : Ashgate, 2003. – P. 216

In other words, the various parameters of force are usually interrelated: large states have considerable military power, are strong economically, can afford to project force in various non-military ways, for example, through regional integration projects that include key subjects of the subsystem.

Finally, it is also important that there are few really strong states in the system. It consists of many weak and only a few strong. Strong players form the poles of the international system, making it either unipolar, or bipolar, or multipolar. The more poles in the system, the less stable it is, the higher the level of uncertainty in the relations between the poles, the more it will be anarchistic and the more likely the world order will undergo changes. Against this background, according to T. Shakleina, the most stable regional subsystems have one clearly expressed hegemon, whose strength exceeds the aggregate strength of all other elements of the subsystem. In this interpretation, we are primarily talking about military force¹³⁷. But behind it lie the economic parameters - an effective military organism requires a developed economy.

Based on this, A. Voskressenskiy believes that “different elements of the regional subsystem or different combinations of regional actors affect the global level in different ways: they can support and strengthen the global order, contribute to its radical demolition and subversive or evolutionary transformation into a new quality”¹³⁸.

This is an important thesis that cautions against the risks of multipolarity, which in fact is demonstrated by the situation in the Middle East, where several local proto-hegemons compete for regional dominance, provoking instability of the entire system at the regional level. In this case, the situation in the subsystem will be appropriate to be extrapolated to the global level.

In the Russian political discourse, it is customary to perceive multipolarity as a blessing. Indeed, such a system gives a greater diplomatic maneuver and is theoretically more democratic. The downside is the risk of aggravation of contradictions between the poles and a more complex process of finding compromises. We emphasize that the

¹³⁷ Шаклеина Т.А. Феномен и параметры великодержавности в мировой политике XXI века / Т.А. Шаклеина // Мегатренды. Основные траектории эволюции мирового порядка в XXI веке / Э.Я. Баталов, А.А. Байков, Н.А. Симония и др.; под ред. Т.А. Шаклеиной и А.А. Байкова. - М.: Аспект Пресс, 2013. – С.178-195.

¹³⁸ Воскресенский А.Д. Регионализация в современных международных отношениях. (Окончание) / А.Д. Воскресенский // Восток. - 2012. - №6. - С. 5-12.

poles are determined precisely in terms of military power, as well as the technological and economic grounds that provide it.

K. Waltz also addressed the concept of interdependence, which is relevant in today's economically integrated world, as opposed to liberalism and Marxism, which interpret it more economically, albeit with different emphases (liberals - with an emphasis on the advantages of trade, Marxists - with an emphasis on the costs of inequality) . K. Waltz agrees that for interdependence the key problem is precisely the inequality. But it should be understood in political, and not in economic categories, that is, in terms of power¹³⁹.

The states that are relatively equal to each other can be interdependent. If they are not equal, then interdependence turns into a dependence of some on others. That is why interdependence within the framework of the theory of neo-realism decreases as the number of powers in the system decreases - most of the states become dependent on a small number of centers of power.

By way of summing up, one should reiterate that isolation of the regional level of international relations (regionalization) “rehabilitates” the category of space in international political and economic analysis and favours development of new sub-disciplinary approaches “at the crossroads” of international relations, world politics and comparative political science¹⁴⁰.

A spatial dimension is beneficial because it allows for understanding globalization and regionalization as not being juxtaposed, but being functionally interconnected. This permits us to employ the category of space as a system-forming one (as opposed to “power” in the purely realist or even neoliberal worldview) and to identify the regional level of international relations as a relatively independent object for theoretical and practical analysis.

¹³⁹ Waltz, Kenneth (1998). “Globalisation and Governance”, PS: Political Science and Politics, Vol. 32, No. 4, pp. 693-700.

¹⁴⁰ Barakat S., The case for a regional reconstruction strategy [Электронный ресурс]. // The Brookings Institution. URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2016/03/04/the-case-for-a-regional-reconstruction-strategy-for-the-middle-east/>

2.2. Role and Place of Medium and Smaller Powers in the Processes of Building Regional Security Systems

As we found out earlier, the military force and the threat of its use has commonly been viewed by theorists as a key factor in the development of world processes. In this context, major powers are positioned as the main actors in these processes, since “the stability of the system was ensured by maintaining a balance of power between them. Any redistribution of material opportunities, provoked by a violation of this equilibrium, manifested itself in large-scale conflicts and redistribution of the world between great powers”¹⁴¹.

In these conditions, smaller and medium-sized states, as a rule, received less attention, despite their growing importance in an unstable multi-polar world. For example, H. Morgenthau believed that “small nations always owe their security to the balance of power or to the protection by a Great Power, or unattractiveness from the point of view of the imperialist aspirations of others”¹⁴². However, over time, what seemed to be so obvious in relations between bigger and smaller states ceased to be treated quite unequivocally in favor of the great powers.

In the second half of the 20th century, the great powers began to gradually lose their relative dominant influence in the world distribution of power. This was facilitated by the creation and spread of nuclear weapons, which made new global wars a senseless and even dangerous instrument for achieving foreign policy goals. At the same time, the gradual development of international law and the processes of decolonization increased participation in international processes of smaller and medium-sized countries. Thus, the role of the states “having a strong and weak influence in their immediate environment, but at the same time sufficient funds for preserving their independence and territorial integrity”, was revised¹⁴³.

One of the notable signs of this trend was the classic work of St. Walt in relation to the success of asymmetric strategies of smaller and medium-sized countries, which

¹⁴¹ R. Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, - London and New York: Routledge, 2000 – 300 p.

¹⁴² Morgenthau H. *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. N.Y., P. 1978 – 79-80

¹⁴³ Kassimeris C. *The foreign policy of small powers //International Politics*. – 2009. – T. 46. – №. 1. – C. 84-101.

allowed conceptualizing two ground models of the behavior of states - balancing and bandwagoning¹⁴⁴.

The first strategy presupposes opposition to the increasing power of the opponent and attempts to restrain his development, the second - rapprochement with him (most often - forced). Accordingly, it was believed that balancing is peculiar first of all to strong states - great powers, whereas bandwagoning to smaller and medium-sized countries who are unable to provide effective resistance to a rising hegemony. In the future, combining these strategies, by analogy with the concept of “smart power” as a combination of “soft” and “hard”, was singled out as a separate behavioral category and defined as “maneuvering”¹⁴⁵.

In the conditions of the polycentricism of the world system and the “diffusion of force”, the maneuvering strategy acquired additional significance for smaller and medium-sized powers. New independent countries needed diversification of sources of foreign aid, including through developing relations with non-traditional and extra-regional centers of power.

Historically, the policy of balancing was attributed to smaller and medium-sized countries because of their inability to formulate their foreign policies in accordance with their own national interests under conditions of external pressure from the great powers. However, at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, the course towards regional integration at the level of small and medium powers became one of the most visible areas of their own version of the balancing policy.

For example, the Final Communiqué of the first GCC summit noted: “Responsibility for the security and stability of the region is borne by its peoples and states. The Cooperation Council, as an expression of the will of these states and their right to protect the security of the region and its independence, confirms the unacceptability of any foreign intervention, considering it inadmissible to turn the region into a field of confrontation between world powers and, in particular, to

¹⁴⁴ Keohane R.O. Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics. International Organization. Vol. 23, Issue 02. Spring 1969. 291-310 pp.

¹⁴⁵ Browning C. S. Small, smart and salient? Rethinking identity in the small states literature //Cambridge Review of International Affairs. – 2006. – T. 19. – №. 4. – C. 669-684.

accommodate foreign military fleets and bases”¹⁴⁶. The basis of its “joint activities” of the GCC was proclaimed “principles of non-alignment”¹⁴⁷.

According to political scientist E. Lust, “the emphasis on “self-reliance” and emphasis on the military-political aspect of security was natural for the Arab states of the Arabian Gulf, since the states that created the union were interested in ensuring the security of the Arabian Gulf zone, not only because of changes in regional politics, but also in light of the threat of filling the political vacuum created by the departure of Britain, from the powerful external actors of the bipolar era - the USSR and the United States of America”¹⁴⁸.

Despite the existence of such a mechanism for ensuring the national security of small and medium powers, for a long time the Middle East was not a self-sufficient region from the point of view of ensuring its own security. Security - as, indeed, most of the threats - were the subject of regional imports and provided by external forces¹⁴⁹.

The end of the Cold War era and the disintegration of the bipolar system made significant adjustments to this situation. In particular, smaller and medium-sized countries have gained new opportunities to balance external threats to their own sovereignty through tactics of bandwagoning. Using the example of the GCC, the aggression on the part of Saddam Hussein, the growing power of Iran and the problems of terrorism broadened the block's view of approaches to solving security problems. Speaking on July 11, 2012 at the Cambridge Gulf Research Center, the Secretary General of the GCC, Dr Abdulratif AL-Zayani stressed: “The instability of the regional situation and the threat of terrorism require the strengthening of relations in the sphere of military cooperation and the fight against terrorist movements not only between the countries of the Cooperation Council, but also between them and friendly states. The

¹⁴⁶ 1981 بيان القمة الاختتامى الأولي لدول مجلس التعاون الخليجي [The Final Communiqué The First GCC Summit, 1981] [Electronic resource] // Al-Jareda. – URL: http://www.moqatel.com/openshare/Wthaek/Europe1/KematMglsT/AKematMglsTawn1_1-1.htm_cvt.htm

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Lust E., Waldner D. Parties, Polarization, and Transition in the Arab World. Strauss Working Paper. 2014. P. 4.

¹⁴⁹ Корольков Л. Меняющаяся геометрия ближневосточных раскладов // Международные процессы. 2015. Том 13, №1.С. 97–106

countries of the Council consider that their security and stability should be provided by their own forces, as well as by the international cooperation that they develop”.

Following the new tendencies, political science paid more and more attention to the relations of unequal potential countries. In the 1980s, a new stage in the development of the theory began, connected with the emergence of a series of breakthrough studies devoted to the study of the policy of smaller and medium-sized countries. Among them is the theory of the balance of threats by St. Walt, according to which balancing is seen as a country's response to external challenges, and not a consequence of availability of power from other players¹⁵⁰.

The end of the cold war and the two decades that followed it were characterized by a radical weakening of military tension and as a consequence, a reduction in confrontation in the international environment. In the new conditions, the content of balancing and bandwagoning gradually changed¹⁵¹. Increasingly, they presupposed a non-military foreign policy tool for spreading or, conversely, deterring influence.

Outside the system of balance of power, the policy of balancing by smaller and medium-sized states and countries of the great-power type can also vary depending on their geographical location, the degree of dependence on cooperation with the great powers, and the interest of the latter in spreading their influence over the territories occupied by these states¹⁵². Thus, the balancing of countries of the great-power type is due to the lack of interest or opportunity on the part of the great powers to spread influence on their territories.

The situation, however, is different for those small and medium-sized states, who are strategically important objects for spreading the influence of great powers. International political processes in the late 20th – early 21st centuries. showed that if the system of balance of power is at the stage of formation, some states with a view to survival begin to pursue a policy of no-balancing - conscious refusal to join one of several (two or more) forces vying for influence in a particular region. According to the

¹⁵⁰ Walt S. *The Origins of Alliances*. – Cornell University Press, 1990. – 336 p.

¹⁵¹ Лунев С.И. Сравнительный анализ воздействия цивилизационных особенностей сверхкрупных стран на социально-политическое и экономическое развитие. С.И.Лунев, А.Д.Воскресенский // Сравнительная политика. – 2016. – №3. – С. 85–106.

¹⁵² *Small states in international relations* / ed. by C. Ingebritsen – University of Iceland Press, 2006.- 128 p

work of R. Haass, such a policy can bring substantially greater dividends than the policy of bandwagoning as it diminishes the aspiring hegemony's capacity to impose its order on the region¹⁵³.

Meanwhile, the final touch to this line of theorizing on the issue was added in the works by R. Schweller, who disagreed with the Walt's interpretation of bandwagoning as a form of surrender. He developed a theory of balance of interests, within which he considered the non-military bandwagoning by one state vis-a-vis another for the purpose of deriving opportunistic economic benefits¹⁵⁴.

In his later works R. Schweller attempted to propose his own classification of balancing policy. In it, he identified: balancing itself, which involves creating a counterweight to a dangerous aggressor through uniting military potentials and containing excessive reinforcement; overbalancing, when the goal is not to counteract a concrete, obvious threat, but to increase one's own security; nonbalancing, which can take the form of inaction, the routine of diplomacy; underbalancing, or erroneous balancing, when the state either does not counteract the real threat, or does it ineffectively, as the Baltic states do, refusing any ties with Russia, leaving even economically viable projects¹⁵⁵.

The economization of regional policy, the creation by the countries of a region of institutions and regimes designed to stimulate economic growth with a broad social base and a balanced distribution of benefits can significantly reduce the degree of ethnopolitical and geopolitical conflicts. This narrative is equally relevant for the region of the Middle East, where the potential for transformation towards qualitative economic growth still remains with respect to the sum of the initial possibilities (the quality of human capital, the resource and industrial base) (taking into account in particular the high synergetic prospects for combining industrial and scientific possibilities of Iran and

¹⁵³ Haass R. N. The Age of Nonpolarity. What Will Follow U.S. Dominance // Foreign Affairs. – 2008. – Vol. 87/3. – P. 44–56.

¹⁵⁴ Schweller R. Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back in // International Security – 1994. – Vol. 19:1. – 72–107 pp.

¹⁵⁵ Schweller R. Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back in // International Security – 1994. – Vol. 19:1. – P. 72–107

Turkey with the resource base of the Arabian Gulf states)¹⁵⁶. A fundamental obstacle to such transformation is the extremely negative (and deteriorating) dynamics of political processes.

Any regional integration process is not predetermined. For a small country, there is the right to choose - to drift closer to a stronger partner and thereby limit one's own independence or preserve all the fullness of state sovereignty, but to risk the possibility of being isolated in relation to one's surroundings. In most cases, economic integration turns out to be beneficial for smaller and medium-sized countries, which, as a rule, need access to external resources (natural, labor, financial), a larger market for finished products and stable macroeconomic conditions for development¹⁵⁷.

The rapprochement with a stronger and more competitive state through the formation of a customs union, a zone of free movement of capital, goods, services and labor is often an effective way to address these issues. The motivation for rapprochement may also be subjective: for example, governments in some “third world” countries often seek to draw closer to other states to balance not external but internal threats (for example, to weaken competing political groups). Moreover, both reasons can be a factor catalyzing the desire to integrate with a more influential neighbor, as Bahrain relies on Saudi Arabia and the GCC, not only because of fears of direct aggression from Iran, but also because of the serious internal political divisions that other actors could use and instrumentalize. Bahrain has repeatedly accused Tehran of interfering in its internal affairs, supporting groups across the microregion that seek to overthrow monarchical regimes. Bahrain has also accused the Iranian Revolutionary Guards of training the citizens of Bahrain for carrying out terrorist attacks inside the country¹⁵⁸.

¹⁵⁶ Угрозы международной безопасности на Ближнем Востоке и в Северной Африке. // Актуальные проблемы международных отношений и глобального развития: сб. науч. ст. Вып. 2 / сост. Е. А. Достанко ; редкол. : А. М. Байчоров (гл. ред.) [и др.]. – Минск : БГУ, 2014. – 208 с. С. 201-205

¹⁵⁷ Fedorchenko A.V., Krylov A.V. Middle East: Possible Scenarios of Transformation Process / A.V. Fedorchenko, A.V. Krylov // Best Works of the Scientists from the Institute for International Studies (Digest in English and Russian), 1st edition / Ed. by A. A. Orlov. – Moscow.: MGIMO – University publications, 2013. – PP. 73-75.

¹⁵⁸ Rebuilding Security in the Persian Gulf [Electronic resource] // The Middle East Institute. – URL: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/01/bahrain-accuses-iran-training-rebels-201413144049814960.html>

By and large, for smaller and medium-sized countries, combining economic bandwagoning with defensive balancing and attempts to uphold their sovereignty through reliance on extra-regional centers of power, lying outside the integration core is quite characteristic and even emblematic.

Involvement of Middle Eastern countries in various forms of regional economic integration can, too, become the basis for the normalization of the political situation, a prerequisite for the influx of investment and, as a result, increase in the standards of living¹⁵⁹.

The role of Russia in the integration in the Arab world is not very noticeable as yet, since the restoration of the previous level of Russian-Arab economic ties has not by far been accomplished for all the lofty official declarations. However, Moscow is interested in reducing the conflict potential of this Arab subregion, including through the development of regional economic integration.

Against the backdrop of highlighting the diversity of possible strategies of states, the agency of smaller and medium-sized countries has now to be more clearly defined, as previously they were merely seen as objects of the policy of centers of power and their fierce competition¹⁶⁰. In a less confrontational international environment, new, broader opportunities for balancing external threats and beneficial contiguity have opened up for the Gulf states, for examples, building new relations with Iran¹⁶¹.

This group of Arab monarchical states managed to preserve the ruling regimes and internal political stability, despite the mass protest movements that took place in 2011 in Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain. Indeed, in Bahrain, anti-government protests were the most massive and lengthy, in the course of their development, demands were voiced to overthrow the monarchy and to transition to republican rule, but the authorities

¹⁵⁹ Федорченко А.В. Арабский мир: итоги и перспективы экономической интеграции / А.В. Федорченко // Ежегодник Института международных исследований 2010. - М., 2011 – 117 с.

¹⁶⁰ Кудряшова И. В. Легко ли быть средневеликим // Международные процессы. – Т.6. – № 3(18). – 2008. – С. 20-35.

¹⁶¹ Rebuilding Security in the Persian Gulf [Electronic resource] // The Middle East Institute. – URL: <http://www.mei.edu/events/rebuilding-security-persian-gulf>

managed to launch a “national dialogue” and gain the support of the majority of the country's population¹⁶².

The smaller states of the Gulf actively manifest themselves in the political context of resolving regional crises. For example, they contributed to the recognition of the National Coalition of Opposition and Revolutionary Forces (NCDS) of the Arab League, which was reflected in the fact that Syria's membership in the Arab League was frozen and at a meeting of the League in March 2013 in Cairo¹⁶³. According to the Russian researcher T. Bordachev, “the ability of these states to simultaneously pursue a policy of balancing and bandwagoning becomes a stable feature of contemporary international relations. On the one hand, they act as supporters of integration, receiving practical benefits from it. On the other hand, the constant development of integration - in which its more powerful participants are interested - contradicts the strategic aspirations of smaller countries. Thus, they are objectively orientated towards hindering this process. In other words, the integration policy of a smaller or medium-sized state is to maintain the optimal balance between balancing and bandwagoning. Any decision concerning the implementation of one of the strategies is a conscious step by the political leadership of the country. It is influenced not only by external circumstances, but also by internal factors - national consensus, political order, etc”¹⁶⁴.

Balancing and bandwagoning strategies their significance as the basic archetypes of the behavior of states in the modern international environment in general and in the processes of regional integration in particular. At the same time, due to the decreased confrontation, they are increasingly being considered in the context of exclusively military-political strategy. The institutional basis of the world system is more fragmented. Organizations of different levels and scales are becoming larger, but at the same time structures appear legally more flexible (G20, APEC Forum), which

¹⁶² Bain, W. Between anarchy and society: trusteeship and the obligations of power. // Oxford: Oxford University Press, - 2003 – 230 p.

¹⁶³ المعارضة يدعو والخطيب السوري الوطني للاف تلاف سفارة أول تسلم قطر [Qatar receives the first embassy of the Syrian National Coalition. The preacher calls the opposition] [Electronic resource]. Asharqa Al Awsat. – URL: <http://www.aawsat.com/print.asp?did=722455&issueno=12539>

¹⁶⁴ Elman M. F. The foreign policies of small states: Challenging neorealism in its own backyard //British Journal of Political Science. – 1995. – T. 25. – №. 02. – C. 171-217.

allow regional powers on a par with world powers to discuss development problems on a more equal footing, but do not force the powers to surrender their sovereign rights.

In this light the focus of regional studies research is increasingly shifted to the economic component of the relationship amongst smaller and middle-sized countries as well as between them and great powers, both intra- and extraregional.

At the present stage in the Middle East region, this is taking shape in the consolidation of coalitions, caused by the intensification of interstate rivalry. One of the main parameters of such associations is their multiplicity and representativeness with a view to justifying and legitimizing the "correctness" of the tasks of the coalition¹⁶⁵. In this context, the cumulative importance of the voices of smaller and middle-sized powers acquires an additional dimension¹⁶⁶, as does each individual decision to exclude themselves from such formats and organizations¹⁶⁷.

2.3. Constructing a Regional Security System in the Middle East in the Context of New Challenges and Threats

The spatial configuration of the Middle East as a region is not unambiguously defined in the scientific community. For this reason, it seems important to start this chapter off by once again delineating the boundaries of the region. The phrase "The Middle East" was first used by the British General Thomas Gordon in his speeches at the beginning of the 20th century when covering the security of the transport corridor between Britain and India in connection with the emergence of new threats to British interests (including from the Russian Empire) in the military -political space to the south and south-east of Europe. Almost simultaneously the term "Middle East" began to enter into wider usage.

¹⁶⁵ «الإرهاب» تحارب دولة 39.. الإسلامي ال تحالف [Islamic military alliance .. 39 countries fighting «terrorism»] [Electronic resource] // Al-Jazeera. URL: <http://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/military/2015/12/15>

¹⁶⁶ الإرهاب- تحارب دولة-34- العسكري- الإسلامي-ال تحالف URL: <https://www.cfr.org/blog/contest-regional-leadership-new-middle-east>

¹⁶⁷ [Oman joins the Saudi-led Islamic Alliance Against Terrorism] [Electronic resource] // CCN Arabic. – URL: <https://arabic.cnn.com/middleeast/2016/12/29/oman-joins-saudi-led-islamic-coalition>

The boundaries of the region vary in accordance with the objectives of the a given researcher: thus, Zbigniew Brzezinski introduced the concept of the “Greater Middle East” to blur the geopolitical significance of the traditional region and artificially incorporate into its new definition parts of the post-Soviet geostrategic space, including the Eurasian Balkans, the South Caucasus (Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia) and the state Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan,) together with Afghanistan¹⁶⁸.

When stressing the general socio-political unsettledness and high level of conflict, the UN and G7 documents refer to the term “the broader Middle East”, where the traditional geopolitical Middle East space is supplemented by countries of West Asia (Pakistan, Afghanistan).

Today’s researchers of the Middle East region include in its make-up states that have a similar economic structure, a single civilizational basis, ethno-confessional composition¹⁶⁹. Thus, in order to avoid contradictions and misinterpretations, it becomes necessary to outline the boundaries of the region, which will be considered in this study.

At present, the geopolitical massif of the Middle East is expanding, primarily due to part of Asia Minor (Turkey), the Middle East (Iran) and North Africa (Egypt). The basis for such integration tendencies is primarily economic (development and transportation of energy carriers), civilizational factors (Islam), as well as the desire to form the regional security system.

Proceeding from the internal civilization-geographical and cultural-political logic of the development of the Eastern countries, A. Voskresenskiy and A. Torkunov propose the following definition of the Middle East international political microregion, in which they include “...Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Syria , Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Iraq and the states of the Arabian Peninsula”¹⁷⁰.

¹⁶⁸ Greater Middle East Initiative: Off to a False Start [Electronic resource] // Carnegie Endowment for International Piece. – URL: <http://carnegieendowment.org/2004/03/18/greater-middle-east-initiative-off-to-false-start/>

¹⁶⁹ Панин, В.Н. Политический процесс на Ближнем Востоке: влияние России и США / В.Н. Панин. – Пятигорск: Изд-во ПГЛУ, 2004. – 235 с.

¹⁷⁰ Восток и Запад: Региональные подсистемы и региональные проблемы международных отношений / пред. редкол. А.В. Торкунов; отв. ред. А.Д. Воскресенский. – М.: Изд-во МГИМО-Университет, 2005. – 576 с.

This definition of the region, as an independent spatial system, takes into account the socio-historical, territorial-economic and national-cultural criteria. In addition, according to the classical spatial organization of the eastern regions, it is precisely such a politico-geographical space that is implied by the majority of modern researchers using the term "Middle East".

The Middle East region plays a decisive role in the system of modern international relations. This significance is determined by a number of factors of economic, social, political, religious, cultural and military nature.

The region has also gained economic weight, first of all, owing to the impressive hydrocarbon reserves, which are now an indispensable component of the existence and development of virtually any country in the world that claims to be significant and independent. Only in the territory of the Arabian Gulf states more than half of all world oil and gas reserves are concentrated¹⁷¹. Such concentration of valuable raw materials has a double effect on the positioning of exporting countries on the international scene: on the one hand, the dependence of many developed world economies on oil and gas supplies from the region forces the importing countries to take into account the opinion of suppliers, to allocate technical and human resources to ensure the safety of energy routes; on the other hand, the region is in a state of permanent danger to be under someone's control, because due to its unstable development in the past, today it cannot compete in power terms with the main "architects" of international relations, building absolutely autonomous control systems.

The Middle East at the present stage of the development of the world order is one of the most important geostrategic areas on the political map of the world. In this region, the vectors of interests of several centers of power intersect; they secretly or officially declare this subcontinent a zone of their national aspirations. Figuratively speaking, engagement in the Middle Eastern affairs of a great power have become an indicator of the true direction of its policy and the means that it is ready to use to

¹⁷¹ География отраслей мирового хозяйства [Электронный ресурс] // Вести. Экономика. – URL: <http://www.vestifinance.ru/articles/60550/print>

implement this policy. For example, at the time of the adoption of the UN Security Council resolutions on Syria that China acted as an active part of the negotiations¹⁷².

One should not forget about the favorable geographical location of the countries of the Middle East from the point of view of the international trade and transport system. Convenient access points to the World Ocean in the south and in the north not only make the region one of the most strategically important communication corridors, but also makes its transport and logistical infrastructure targets for pirates, terrorist groups and smugglers. The Middle East through its sea and air routes links the Old World with the increasingly powerful powers of southern and Southeast Asia. The Strait of Gibraltar and Hormuz account for up to 90% of the supply of Europe, South Asia and the Far Eastern countries to hydrocarbons falls on (the main consumers being China, Japan, India, Korea)¹⁷³.

The Suez Canal plays an important role not only in abstract world shipping, but in a very concrete Egyptian economy, which annually receives impressive dividends for granting the right to use it. The transport importance of the Mediterranean Sea for Western Europe is also increasing steadily since the beginning of the 20th century, due to the increasing dependence of the main indicators of welfare and development of countries on oil and gas supplies. The oil route requires a certain infrastructure. Hence, it is no coincidence that the number of southern ports and pipelines orientated towards supplying raw materials to the customer countries is growing, which through high prices for Arabian Super Light and direct investments prove their interest in this. From the point of view of organizing the supply of hydrocarbons to the world markets, it is also important that the main deposits of the region are competently correlated and concentrated relative to the objects of transport infrastructure. For this reason, the attempts of extra-regional corporations to intercept the control over the transportation of hydrocarbons continue to be undertaken. We constantly observe attacks from market manipulators on economically one-sidedly developed states of the region.

¹⁷² Session Four: Regional Consequences: The Geopolitics of the Changing Middle East [Electronic resource] // Council on Foreign Relations. – URL: <https://www.cfr.org/event/session-four-regional-consequences-geopolitics-changing-middle-east>

¹⁷³ Симония Н. Нефть в мировой политике [Электронный ресурс] // Журнал «Международные процессы». – URL: <http://www.intertrends.ru/nineth/001.htm>

The Middle East region is located at the junction of three continents and is the conductor of the Arab-Muslim culture in Western European civilization, including through the emigration processes from the countries of the Maghreb and the Levant to the states of the European Union. It is here, in this multinational / religious / ethnic area, that the principles of tolerance and mutually beneficial cohabitation are tested on a par with interfaith conflicts and nationalist wars over territory and the right to cultural self-identification.

This region is one of the most unstable in the world conjuncture, in many respects the clashes go back to the colonial legacy and then the satellite history of some countries in the Middle East. In the era of bipolar organization of the world order, when the system of international relations was based on the confrontation between the two superpowers, the region was a theater of ideological struggle between the USSR and the US. Trying to expand their sphere of influence, both superpowers provided support to intraregional actors in the social, military, scientific and industrial spheres: they supplied specialists, equipment and goods, which subsequently led to the dependency strategy of the latter on the world stage, dependence on the “metropolitan state” in the neocolonial fashion.

Later, from the donors' point of view, the opportunity and desire to provide such active support withered away, however, the host country could not get rid of the need for assistance, which in turn was transformed into the Weimar Syndrome, namely, a sense of non-competitiveness in comparison with the states that succeeded in development in conditions of global rivalry in the contemporary, tightly integrated world, which reveals their inability to adapt to new geopolitical realities¹⁷⁴.

As already mentioned, the Middle East geopolitical region is extremely controversial, and the consequences of clashes of interests of various structures, like circles on water, go far beyond the region: the Arab-Israeli confrontation, the conflicts in Iraq and Syria, the maturing Kurdish issue, which, should it erupt, will directly affect several states (Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria). In the subcontinent, the number of potential and actual conflict zones, where, due to one careless step on the part of the authorities or

¹⁷⁴ Byman D. Sectarianism Afflicts the New Middle East // *Survival*. 2014. Vol. 56, No. 1. P. 79–100

a tactical move by extra-regional players, an acute internal political crisis that spills over into a civil war can break out. Meanwhile the processes of interdependence in the region intensify¹⁷⁵. And this is not always a good thing. For example, the danger of a series of civil wars cannot be dealt with in view of the high terrorist activity in the region, the fragility of regimes and the relatively close ties between states that are at approximately the same stage of development, can all lead to terrible consequences by the “bush fire” scenario and engulf this whole territory.

Additional difficulties for reaching political decisions arise from deep-seated mutual distrust. The decades-long crises (border-territorial, social, economic, demographic) lead to the emergence of generations who are not familiar with life in a peaceful environment and regard violence as a norm of existence. That complicates the possibility of a dialogue on the issues of an inclusive region-wide security system¹⁷⁶.

All of the above reinforces an increasing desire of states to ensure their security through the buildup of military capabilities, that is, by means of the ubiquitous arms race. In the postwar period only in the Near and Middle East weapons of mass destruction (chemical weapons: Iraq-Iranian, Syrian conflicts) were used. A special danger would be the proliferation of nuclear weapons in this area, which is saturated with conflict potential. The scale of this catastrophic scenario cannot and must not be underestimated.

Another significant feature of the Middle East region is the fact that extremist and terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State, Jaysh Al-Fatah, Al-Qaeda and others originating here and being fed from local sources act as serious players in the international arena¹⁷⁷. The diffusion of local terrorist potential has long been not a hypothetical but a very real, tangible threat: terrorist attacks are increasingly being committed in the contiguous areas of the southern Mediterranean¹⁷⁸ and Europe¹⁷⁹.

¹⁷⁵ Fragile States Index 2014 [Electronic resource] // Informational and analytical portal Center for Humanitarian Technologies URL: <http://gtmarket.ru/news/2014/06/26/6836>

¹⁷⁶ Toward a Regional Framework for the Middle East: Takeaways from other Regions Ross Harrison [Electronic resource] // The Middle East Institute.– URL: <http://www.mei.edu/content/toward-regional-framework-middle-east-takeaways-other-regions>

¹⁷⁷ Ридер РСМД Антиправительственные экстремистские организации в Сирии [Электронный ресурс] // Российский совет по международным делам. – URL: <http://russiancouncil.ru/syria-extremism>

¹⁷⁸ Серия терактов в Париже [Электронный ресурс]// РИА Новости. – URL: http://ria.ru/trend/paris_14112015/

The active participation of groups of this kind in public administration, the conduct of foreign policy as wartime (civil war in Syria, where Lebanese Hezbollah is at war with government forces, and the opposition is supported by local branches of Al Qaeda, such as Jabhad al-Nusra) render the regional situation ever more unpredictable for any reliable geopolitical and geoeconomic forecasts, which has an impact on the attitude of the international community towards the region¹⁸⁰.

The need to eradicate terrorism, nevertheless, created certain prerequisites for the strengthening and development of Arab states' cooperation with NATO, especially after the events of 9/11, on the grounds of conducting joint large-scale military exercises and maneuvers to prevent terrorist actions. Among the exercises of NATO with the armies of the Arab states are "Bright Star", which were held every two years in Egypt, "Security and vigilance at sea: and - since 2008 with the participation of the naval forces of Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia - "Phoenix Express" on the Mediterranean Sea. Among the joint anti-terrorist exercises and operations, the American "Trans-Saharan counterterrorism initiative" is singled out with the Sahel countries. Algeria, Israel and Morocco are participating in NATO's "Active Effort", patrolling the Mediterranean. The Maghreb countries participate in the activities of the "5 + 5" group (Maghreb states + Spain, Italy, France, Portugal and Malta). Within the framework of the Mediterranean and Istanbul cooperation initiatives have been unfolding since the 1990s, including dialogue with Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, as well as with a number of countries in the Arabian Gulf on issues of security and cooperation in the military field. Since the beginning of the 21st century, plans have been developed that provided for a landing of rapid-response landing forces with the use of the military forces of Morocco and Tunisia to restore legitimate regimes in North Africa, in the event of the seizure of power by extremists in one of the Maghreb states.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Toward a Regional Framework for the Middle East: Takeaways from other Regions Ross Harrison [Electronic resource] // The Middle East Institute.– URL: <http://www.mei.edu/content/toward-regional-framework-middle-east-takeaways-other-regions>

Training is also under way to train local military corps in the tactics of tracking down and seizing the forces of bandit underground¹⁸¹.

At the same time, dependence on foreign actors continues to play a negative role - they are constantly asked for help, requesting financial, military or humanitarian support. “It's time for the Middle East to grow up and cease to be the source of only problems”¹⁸², Nabil Fahmi, the former Egyptian Foreign Minister, said on one occasion.

One of the characteristic features of this subcontinent is the absence of a recognized leader. This only increases competition (including by extra-regional actors, expanding the classical boundaries of the “game of nations”), spurring on further chaos of interstate relations in the region¹⁸³.

As one would expect, the systems of international relations that are in the process of transition are determined by the struggle between the preponderant and emerging powers. For the latter the vision of the regional order as the principal building blocks of the global order will prevail. The rising powers are trying to extend their control and influence to other territories, other states, regional economic privileges and the whole complex of rules and rights governing interaction between states (such as international norms and regimes, the nature of diplomacy, image factor, informal distribution of zones of influence, property rights on a global scale). According to the expert in international relations R. Gilpin, this is a classic case of hegemonic war and changes on a regional scale.

One of the most important disintegrating factors for the entire regional system is the demographic situation in the region. By the end of the 20th century in the countries of the Middle East, there was a marked acceleration in the rate of population growth - up to 3.0%. According to the CIA World Factbook over the past few decades, the

¹⁸¹ Michael Doran What Is the Central Strategic Question in the Middle East? [Electronic resource] // The Brookings Institution. – URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/markaz/2014/09/30/what-is-the-central-strategic-question-in-the-middle-east/>

¹⁸² Statesmen's Forum: Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy [Electronic resource] // Centre for Strategic & International Studies. – URL: <https://www.csis.org/events/statesmens-forum-egyptian-foreign-minister-nabil-fahmy>

¹⁸³ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

demographic potential in the Middle East is characterized by a stable positive rate of natural population growth, on average it is about 3.2% per year in 2000-2018¹⁸⁴.

Such rates of demographic growth already today cause a whole range of problems: from lack of jobs and to full-fledged risks to food security. All these factors are exerting a negative impact on the social position of broad segments of society, the dialogue between the electorate and the state does not always fit into the constitutional framework. Against this background, extremist sentiments are gaining popularity, and the number of members of terrorist groups is growing. Without exaggerating the role of the ethno-confessional factor, we must note that in Syria, a country with unemployment above 50%¹⁸⁵, and an unprecedented level of migration and internally displaced persons, a salary of 500-800 dollars (average fee for an insurgent in 2013-2015)¹⁸⁶ is not a matter of stimulating certain moods, but a question of economic survival of whole layers of the population.

The type of the age structure of the population (a high proportion of young people) in states with an undeveloped system of social mobility lifts and the inability to ensure the reproduction of the adequate number jobs at the proper levels of qualifications fuels dissent and dissatisfaction.

So, since 2011, a wave of demonstrations and antigovernment movement have been rolling across the region, known as the Arab Spring (the name refers to the expression Spring of Nations, the period of revolutions in Europe 1848-1849). In fact, this is the second passionary shift (using L.Gumilev's original terminology¹⁸⁷) in the Middle East. The previous one, which occurred as a result of the collapse of the colonial system in the 1950s-1960s, led to the nationalist governments in the leading countries of the region, who generally successfully used the confrontation of the two superpowers to solve their problems of postcolonial development.

¹⁸⁴ Central Intelligence Agency. The World Factbook. URL: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/ URL: www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/

¹⁸⁵ سورية في الفقر البطالة [Unemployment and poverty in Syria] [Electronic resource] // Mafhourm. – URL: http://www.mafhoum.com/syr/articles_01/nabil/nabil.htm

¹⁸⁶ الم تشدد ن أحضان في العراق بين ترمي ملايا الإسلامية الدولة محاربة [Fighting the Muslim state financially aims at Iraqis in the arms of militants] [Electronic resource] // Middle East Online – URL: <http://www.middle-east-online.com/?id=208541>

¹⁸⁷ Гумилев, Л.Н. Этногенез и биосфера Земли / Л.Н. Гумилев. - Ленинград: Изд-во ЛГУ, 1989 год. - С. 40-50.

After the destruction of the bipolar system of the world order, the Arab world temporarily found itself on the “periphery of history”, developing dangerously close to the “civilizational fault line” between the integrating Europe and emerging as an influential geopolitical player in Asia, led by the PRC and India rapidly gaining economic, political and demographic power.

Against this background, the scope of the spread of radicalism and fundamentalism expanded during the second "passionary" shift, which significantly influenced the geopolitical situation of the region as a whole, and the position of the main players on the subcontinent. In the years proceeding the “Arab spring”, the social contract between the authorities and the people rapidly deteriorated, and the ruling class could not offer the population any positive agenda. It is for this reason, based on the logic of the work of A. Voskressenskiy¹⁸⁸, the analysis of the situation on the ground must be carried out through the prism of local changes in individual countries, enabling us to soberly assess the new alignment of forces in the Middle East and describe the forces the local regimes are trying to curb and channel into the right direction¹⁸⁹.

In the short term, the consolidation of political-ideological blocs that is currently underway in the region leads to the emergence of clear dividing lines between local players. This deprives the system of regional relations of certain flexibility and raises serious concerns regarding its sustainability. In the longer term, the problem of the disunity of the social foundations of the political order in the region can come to the fore as the main stumbling block. To prevent new threats to international security, the regional powers need to understand how to respond to sources of destabilization. Meanwhile, the solution of this task is hampered by differences in the interests of world players involved in the region and the restrictions that they themselves impose on themselves.

Within the framework of a new actively globalizing space, the conflict of national interests of the main actors becomes the cause of events shaping the

¹⁸⁸ Воскресенский А.Д. Общие закономерности, региональная специфика и концепция незападной демократии / А.Д. Воскресенский // Демократия в российском зеркале / ред.-сост. А. Мигранян, А. Пшеворский. - М.: МГИМО-Университет, 2013. - С. 289-349.

¹⁸⁹ Наумкин В.В. Ближний Восток, Арабское пробуждение и Россия: что дальше? / Институт востоковедения РАН, - Москва, - 2012, - 595 с.

geopolitical configuration of the Middle East, on which, in turn, the variability of the entire architecture of international relations depends. Mass protests that engulfed the Arab countries in 2011, gave impetus to the "tectonic shift" in the Middle East. There is a total reconstruction of the whole system of cultural, social, economic and political relations. It is caused mainly by internal reasons - both political and cultural-civilizational, but the connection with the most disturbing trends of global development is also obvious. The loss of controllability by international processes, the return of the factor of brute force into them, the increase in the role of chance, the strengthening of the world periphery, the crisis of national states and identities find here a concentrated expression.

Most of all, the failure of state building in the region is due to the fact that within the arbitrarily drawn borders of the countries, of which the Middle East region currently consists, there are no full-fledged established nations¹⁹⁰. In all the most successful countries of the world, the processes of state and national construction run parallel to each other. In the region of the Middle East, the notion of a nation state was introduced from the outside at a time when the indigenous population was not yet ready to learn it¹⁹¹. With the passage of time, the problems of nation building were increasingly acutely felt. The policy of the state was aimed at inculcating a sense of community on the people by means of: the development of a policy on the protection of national borders, the issue of passports, the introduction of a system of legislation and taxation, the development of national education systems. Still it has yielded virtually no result¹⁹².

In some countries there has been an expansion of political participation, modernization of political systems, some of the elite are being modernized; there was an awareness of the need for reform and the search for effective responses to new threats and challenges. However, today the weakening and sometimes the destruction of the

¹⁹⁰ N. Ayubi, *Over-stating the Arab state: Politics and Society in the Middle East* - London: IB Tauris, -1996, - P. 218 p.

¹⁹¹ R. Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2000);

¹⁹² Наумкин В.В. Кризис государств-наций на Ближнем Востоке // *Международные процессы*. 2018. Том 15. №2 (49)

statehood of several countries, the civil wars in Libya, Syria and Iraq, the hundreds of thousands of victims and millions of refugees, humanitarian catastrophes, the expansion of terrorism, the strengthening of the "jihadist alternative" that has again turned this region into a global threat.

The overall result of the transformation of the region is so far negative. Reformatting the regional system of international relations has resulted in the destruction of the old and the formation of new alliances. A key role is played by non-state actors, sometimes pursuing their own goals, and sometimes acting as agents of external forces. The countries destroyed by civil wars have turned into arenas of new "proxy wars". At none of the levels the transformation process has not only been completed, but has not reached its climax. The contours of the future design of the region are still not visible, and it is hardly possible to talk about the complete dismantling of the old system.

A significant part of the states of the region this far shows high adaptability to changing conditions. Whether they can create a strong foundation for a new Middle East, or they themselves will be plunged into a cycle of turbulence tomorrow, is unknown. Russia is convinced that the all-round strengthening of their institutions today is becoming an important task, as important as the settlement of ongoing conflicts. The operation of the Russian military in Syria under these conditions contributed to a change in internal balances and may have opened the possibility for seeking breakthrough approaches in the context of intensifying a political settlement. This unexpected decision was not entirely motivated by the tasks of strengthening Russian influence in the region. It appears that it was based on concern about the growth of destructive tendencies close to Russia's borders, the apotheosis of violence and terrorism, and the agony of statehood.

Another curious feature: virtually all conflict situations in the Middle East are prone to rapid internationalization. Military intervention drew particular attention to the role of global powers, which seemed to increasingly influence the regional situation and contribute to the formation of trends to reduce the influence of regional forces. It should be noted that over the last quarter of a century Washington's transition from offshore

balancing to active positioning has not developed an effective system of multilateral institutions for regional security¹⁹³. Existing organizations (the League of Arab States or the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf) are not able to assume the basic functions for ensuring security in the region, as was clearly demonstrated in recent conflicts in Libya, Syria, and Yemen.

An additional complicating factor was the collapse in prices for energy resources in 2014-2016, which provoked a sharp aggravation of socio-economic problems not only in the oil and gas exporting countries, but throughout the Arab world, which stimulates the escalation of threats to domestic political stability.

Seizure of nuclear materials by terrorist groups, “dirty bomb” in their hands or in the “failed” states remain a threat. The very possibility of expanding the group of “failed” regimes is high on the agenda. The list of candidates for getting into this group, can be increased so far by seemingly stable states. What is particularly alarming is that some global and regional players are likely to continue to seek to apply certain means of pressure against certain regimes, such as sanctions, including unilateral, and even the use of military force.

At this stage, Russia adheres to an extremely conservative approach to international affairs, proceeding from the fact that any change in the status quo will provoke instability. Its current regional strategy appears to the wisest and most consistent one – a tactical wait-and-see. In the era of chaotic changes reliance on the principles of state sovereignty, international law and allies are supported by countries whose position in the system of international interactions was viewed merely as objects of great powers’ aspirations only half a century ago¹⁹⁴.

¹⁹³ John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, The Case for Offshore Balancing A Superior U.S. Grand Strategy // Foreign Policy. – July-August 2016. – 70-84 p.

¹⁹⁴ Российский консерватизм оказался беспроигрышным на Ближнем Востоке [Электронный ресурс] // Российский совет по международным делам. – URL: <http://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/comments/rossiyskiy-konservatizm-okazalsya-besproigryshnym-na-blizhne/>

CHAPTER III

PROBLEMS OF REGIONAL SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST FROM 2003 AND UNTILL 2019

3.1. Approaches to Ensuring the Regional Security System in the Middle East

Meanwhile, with all the significance of each of the above-mentioned complex problems, they are all, in the final analysis, manifestations of a fundamental crisis of the interstate system in the Middle East. Obviously, without reforming this system, one can hardly hope to overcome the various consequences of its current crisis.

With obvious differences in the past, all cases of functional regional security arrangements that have ever existed in the Middle East shared a few fundamental characteristics. *First*, the main elements of the system were states of the region, and the most significant security threats were determined by interstate contradictions and conflicts. Significant violations of the status quo led to military conflicts¹⁹⁵. In the opinion of the expert community, today this alignment of forces has changed, and it is essential to include in any new arrangement, at least in the short term, extra-system elements in the form of armed formations (formed on clan, ethnic, religious, tribal basis) that ready and willing to join the political process¹⁹⁶.

Secondly, external players acted as guarantors of security and stability in the region. And for the external guarantors of security, the region invariably represented a significant value justifying the need for a large-scale presence - economic, political, military. This statement today also lends itself to a partial adjustment, since the direct value of the region as an energy supplier for the United States will fall due to the development of its own deposits thanks to the shale revolution. At the same time, for other players in the international arena such need remains and the desire to influence the nature and direction of supplies remains relevant for Washington.

For this reason, it is necessary to address the *third* root factor of any format of regional security, namely, the degree of stability of authoritarian political regimes in

¹⁹⁵ Mayall, J. (ed.) The new interventionism. - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003 – 245 p.

¹⁹⁶ Jackson, R. Quasi-states: sovereignty, international relations and the third world. / Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, - 1993 110 p.

most countries of the region. Over the long period, the same leaders (or narrow clan groups) remained in power for many decades, mass social protests were successfully prevented or suppressed, and explicit threats to the statehood of the countries of the region arose only in exceptional cases¹⁹⁷. In general, the foreign policy orientations of the countries of the region remained stable; when these orientations changed (the sharp turn of Egypt from the USSR to the USA in the mid-1970s or the fall of Iran from the orbit of American influence after the collapse of the Shah's regime in 1979), external guarantors managed to maintain overall regional stability by adjusting bilateral or multilateral balances within the system¹⁹⁸.

At the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, the once unchanging foundations of regional security displayed their fragility and instability. For the states of the region, it was time for the “perfect storm”, when almost simultaneously all the above-mentioned features of the regional system stopped working. With the beginning of the "Arab awakening", the stability of a number of authoritarian Arab regimes collapsed¹⁹⁹. Thus, one of the central problems provoking an extensive and intensive expansion of the crisis is the problem of the stability and effectiveness of state institutions. This should be the starting point of any discussion regarding ways to build a lasting security arrangement in the region.

Due to limited public recognition and a lack of legitimacy, the ruling state apparatus faced various challenges stemming from tribal, ethnic, religious and social groups that not only resisted the state, but also occasionally entered into direct confrontation with it²⁰⁰. To strengthen the power of the state over society, the ruling elites have resorted to a policy of carrots and carrots. In particular, to increase the legitimacy of the state, co-optation is widely practiced, i.e. the inclusion of individual groups or figures in the composition of political structures to expand their social base. Sometimes an alternative method is used, which made it possible to ensure the stability

¹⁹⁷ Baldwin D. A. The concept of security / Review of International Studies, -1997, - P 23-26

¹⁹⁸ Внешнеполитический процесс в странах Востока / Ред. Д.В. Стрельцов. - М.: Аспект пресс, 2011. - 336 с.

¹⁹⁹ Печуров С. Л. Арабский восток : от «весны» к хаосу? / Под ред: В.В.Наумкина Вячеславович, Р.Я. Эмануилова // Институт востоковедения РАН, - Москва, - 2013, - 120 с.

²⁰⁰ M. Hudson, Arab Politics: The Search for Legitimacy, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977).

of the state apparatus, despite its narrow caste nature²⁰¹. This refers to a kind of "Rantherism" in which citizens renounce certain social and political rights, in particular, the right to participate in political life, in exchange for the provision of social security and tax exemption. But to maintain the state apparatus, overt violence has often been used as well. At the expense of limiting the political mobilization of the masses, the ruling circles kept using such methods to suppress civil society movements and democratic political initiatives, which arise mainly in Islamist guise.

In a sense, it can be argued that various governance strategies, including patrimonialism and power authoritarianism based on oil money, as well as loyalty to the military top and judicial system, provide the state structures with relative stability. However, while maintaining the stability of state power by such methods, the ruling circles neglect the need to build a fair and just social state, which, alongside the organization of an effective power apparatus, acts as one of the fundamental components of the security system at the state level.

At the interstate level, special attention is commonly drawn to the lack of an intra-regional institutional base for maintaining and strengthening regional security. Of course, the main factor that aggravates instability, as we have shown before, is socio-economic problems in the Arab countries²⁰². But to address this situation, a comprehensive concept is needed to build and strengthen mutual trust, primarily between Arab countries and their neighbors, which would take into account the interests of all states located in the region of West Asia and North Africa. For this purpose, efforts should be made to create and develop a system of collective regional security.

Despite the positive message of this initiative, the appearance of such a format, according to the expert of the Brookings Institution K. Pollack, is unlikely in the medium term²⁰³. This is largely due to the significant differences in understanding

²⁰¹ E. Bellin (2004), "The robustness of authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in comparative perspective." *Comparative politics*, 36(2): 139–157

²⁰² Восток и политика: Политические системы, политические культуры, политические процессы: Науч.-метод. комплекс / Под ред. А.Д. Воскресенского. – М.: Аспект Пресс, 2011. – 685 с.

²⁰³ Pollack K. M. Security and public order [Electronic resource]. // The Brookings Institution. URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/security-and-public-order/>

among the states of the region and the states involved in the affairs of the region, ways and methods of forming and developing such a security system.

Transformational processes in the Arab world, which began in 2011, severely undermined the previously fragile political balance of power in the countries of West Asia and North Africa. Nevertheless, these processes reveal new opportunities for the formation of a more stable system of regional relations. In this case, according to the research of A. Fedorchenko, the key importance will be cross-country projects of an economic and infrastructural nature, in which a significant role can be played by Russian companies and specialists²⁰⁴.

A new Middle East as a regional security complex evolving in tune with with global trends is possible only if the West accepts the emerging regional model of democracy with greater consideration for local characteristics.

The security of the countries of the Middle East is at the junction of the interests of not just local states. Russia, as a member of the UN Security Council, is closely following the rapidly developing events here, especially in places with a complex national and religious composition. In order to ensure security, it focuses on issues of common interest, and on the long-term development of relations.

In this format, the states of the region can work in the humanitarian and economic areas of interaction. The Middle East is forced to import a significant amount of food, as well as feed grain. The scarcity of fresh water leads to the inability to develop agriculture without significant investment, and for the development of the economy, including in addition to agriculture the urban infrastructure and some water-intensive industries, it is necessary to develop an independent capital-intensive industry for extraction and desalination, and freshwater transportation. In this context, the Arab states can build a system of ad-hoc interactions with the State of Israel, which has made great progress in this industry. Subsequently, such a relationship, according to the

²⁰⁴ Федорченко А.В. Российские экономические интересы на Ближнем Востоке / А.В. Федорченко // The MidEast World. - 2013. - № 1. - С. 17-33.

theory of transfusion (spill-over), can lead to a full-fledged complex interaction at the interstate level²⁰⁵.

Over the past fifteen years, threats from the Middle East have become such a habitual component of international politics that they are often been overlooked or taken for granted. The region is called the core of the “arc of instability” in Eurasia. Nevertheless, the perception of the Middle East as a tangle of insoluble problems, as well as attempts by external players to respond individually to crisis situations, does not appear to be a particularly productive way of trying to make sense of what defines regional dynamics. Instead, according to the Russian scientist M. Saprónova, it would be worthwhile to pay attention to the general socio-political landscape of the region and try to assess the relationship between regional processes and exogenous influence and, based on that, to develop a mutually acceptable system of regional interaction²⁰⁶.

Following from such aspirations, it is possible to use the experience of effective models of interaction from the past, for example, the working group on arms control and regional security, which was established at a meeting of the US, Russian and Middle Eastern countries (active between 1992-1996). The group was an effective platform for developing security measures in the region (monitoring, establishing military contacts).

Undoubtedly, an effective system by definition should be inclusive, and in an all-encompassing format, the military-political problems of the region cannot be separated from socio-economic, energy, confessional or humanitarian ones. According to former Russian Foreign Minister I. Ivanov, the format of the “three baskets” (security, economy and humanitarian cooperation), which became the basis of the Helsinki process in Europe 40 years ago, could, with obvious amendments to the regional specifics, should lie at the heart of any new system of collective security in the Middle East, if we are ever to build it²⁰⁷.

²⁰⁵ Обустроить Ближний Восток. Где искать основы? [Электронный ресурс] // Российский совет по международным делам. – URL: <http://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/obustroit-blichniy-vostok-gde-iskat-osnovu/>

²⁰⁶ Сапрónова М. Становление новой государственности на Арабском Востоке // Международные процессы. 2015, Том 13, №3. С. 26–39.

²⁰⁷ Три корзины для Ближнего Востока [Электронный ресурс] // Российский совет по международным делам. – URL: <http://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/tri-korziny-dlya-blichnego-vostoka/>

The basic principles of the Helsinki process - the refusal to use force and the threat of force to resolve disputable problems, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, the commitment to the settlement of territorial and border disputes exclusively through negotiations or other peaceful means, and the conscientious fulfillment of international commitments taken of the modern can work for the Middle East just as they suited Europe in 1975.

Of course, the current military situation in the Middle Eastern sub-system is much more complicated and, what's more, complex than it was on the European continent in the mid-1970s. Here, there are neither two military-political blocs rigidly opposing each other, nor even a system of full-fledged national states that can force other actors to fulfill certain obligation. And nevertheless, with the mediation of extra-regional actors, the regional powers can begin a dialogue on military doctrines, hold regional meetings of defense ministers, establish hot lines between military departments, gradually moving towards "transparency" in the military sphere. Along these lines, even taking into account the so called "eastern regional specificities", arrangements are possible for exchanging preliminary notifications of military exercises and flights of military aircraft, exchanging observers for exercises, exchanging data on purchases of large quantities of weapons²⁰⁸.

It seems more than urgent to begin the disarmament process in the Middle East, which is becoming one of the most militarized regions in the world²⁰⁹. The first steps in this direction could be the creation of demilitarized zones, the prohibition of destabilizing accumulations of conventional weapons, including anti-missile weapons, a symmetrical reduction of armed forces by the main military powers of the region and neighboring countries. For example, J. McLaughlin suggests returning to the discussion of plans to turn the region into a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, even if the practical implementation of these plans will take a long time²¹⁰.

²⁰⁸ Rabinovich I. The End of Sykes-Picot? Reflections on the Prospects of the Arab State System [Electronic resource] // The Brookings Institution. - URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-end-of-sykes-picot-reflections-on-the-prospects-of-the-arab-state-system/>

²⁰⁹ A. Fakhri. Qualitative Military Superiority. / Cairo, - 2015, - 220 p.

²¹⁰ McLaughlin J. The Great Powers in the New Middle East [Electronic resource] // The Brookings Institution. - URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-great-powers-in-the-new-middle-east/>

The agenda for regional security will be incomplete if it does not include countering unconventional threats - combating international terrorism, illicit trafficking in arms and drugs, organized crime and illegal migration. Apparently, for each of these areas, a separate international regime should be established with its own procedures and a unique composition of participants concerned and directly affected. In this context, according to the researchers of MGIMO A. Fedorchenko and A. Krylov, the states of the region can be facilitated by the experience of Moscow, obtained during the formation and operationalization of the formats of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)²¹¹.

Otherwise, opposing strategic aspirations, general mistrust, as well as tactics of reducing security risks at the expense of other participants in economic cooperation, can significantly hamper the development of an effective regional security infrastructure.

Such a context promotes the development of the Russian concept of achieving security through the economy in the region, which is based on a system of interaction on the principle of pragmatics in trade / finance / economics to pragmatics in politics.

Russia has a wide range of competencies that it can offer to regional actors - developments in technology, applied scientific research, water use, agriculture, environmental protection, etc. Cooperative relations and successful business relationships with as many legal entities and individuals as possible are needed not only for business, but also for the formation of groups of supporters and agents of influence, as it was in Soviet times²¹².

According to A. Fedorchenko, at this stage, integration is primarily feasible in the mode of bilateral relations. This form of regional cooperation mainly entail production co-operation in the shape of joint production in the manufacturing industry, agriculture, construction of infrastructure facilities²¹³.

²¹¹ Федорченко А.В., Крылов А.В. Трансформационные процессы на Ближнем Востоке и в Северной Африке и национальные интересы России / А.В. Федорченко, А.В. Крылов // Ежегодник ИМИ – 2013. Вып. 1(3). – М.: МГИМО-Университет, 2013. – С. 171-203.

²¹² Федорченко А.В. Российские экономические интересы на Ближнем Востоке / А.В. Федорченко // The MidEast World. - 2013. - № 1. - С. 17-33.

²¹³ Федорченко А.В. Российские экономические интересы на Ближнем Востоке / А.В. Федорченко // The MidEast World. - 2013. - № 1. - С. 17-33

At the same time, the Arab East has already given negative evidence to Russia in terms of its countries' reliability as economic partners. The events of the "Arab Spring" sharply knocked them out of the ranks of its long-standing partners in economic relations - Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen. Only in Libya, losses are estimated at 4 billion dollars, not counting other costs. Stabilization through security minimizes this development, allowing economic interests to organically complement geopolitical ones, strengthening the presence of the state in the region in a non-confrontational way.

Thus, the reduction of the level of polarization in the region would most certainly meet the interests of the majority of actors in the region and beyond. This would allow us to return to classical, not crisis, diplomacy. In this context, Russia declares its adherence to the rapprochement of regional forces, overcoming their differences in order to combat the growing groups of radical extremists.

3.2. Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf as a Regional Military-Political Organization

The Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf, including six oil-producing states of the region - the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, is one of the most consolidated and effective regional associations²¹⁴. The Council was established in February 1981 following a meeting in Riyadh, while the first summit meeting (the highest legislative body of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf) was held in May of the same year in Abu Dhabi. The approved Charter of the organization identified the main purpose of its activities, which was by no means limited to pursuing a single defense policy or achieving economic integration. Even then it was noted that the activities of the Cooperation Council should not be limited to the geographical

²¹⁴ U.S.-Gulf Relations in the Age of Trump: The End of the Trust Deficit? Gerald M. Feierstein [Electronic resource] // The Middle East Institute.– URL: <http://www.mei.edu/content/us-gulf-relations-age-trump-end-trust-deficit>

framework defined by its name, but on the contrary - the Council should contribute to the stability of the entire Arab geopolitical area²¹⁵.

The provisions of the Charter and the activities of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf are based on the principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and wherein the Council itself has the status of permanent observer²¹⁶. Thus, the organization positions itself as an integral part of a multipolar world, developing a strategic dialogue with partner countries represented by the United States, the EU, Russia (since 2011), China, ASEAN, Turkey and Latin America. Another important area of the Council's international activities is the “dialogue of civilizations, religions and cultures”, created at the initiative of King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, the Former King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Indeed, this kind of “dialogue” is an important component in strengthening mutual understanding between peoples and ensuring security through international cooperation. Systemic and extraordinary meetings of foreign ministers of the countries of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf are also held within the framework of the organization. As a result, a final document is drawn up expressing the joint opinion of the member states on the most pressing issues of regional and global policy, after which, according to practice, the document should be subsequently passed on to the approval by the heads of state.

And yet, in the conditions of permanent regional instability, the member states of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf initially focused on the military component as the main instrument for ensuring security in the Arabian Gulf and throughout the region of the Middle East. From the very beginning of the existence of the Council, the issue of the establishment of national armed forces on the basis of a unified strategy of the council was on the agenda²¹⁷.

²¹⁵ Мелкумян Е.С. ССАГПЗ в глобальных и региональных процессах. – М.: Институт востоковедения Российской Академии Наук М., 1999, - С. 12.

²¹⁶ الأخذ بجي التعاون مجلس دول // الرقم المكتبة [The digital library, GCC countries]. [Electronic resource]. – URL: <http://www.gcc-sg.org/ar-sa/CognitiveSources/Pages/Agreements.aspx>

²¹⁷ Michael Barnett and Etel Solingen, ‘Designed to Fail or Failure of Design?’ The Origins and Legacy of the CCGS’, in Acharya and Johnstone, - 2010, - 180 p.

The first step towards achieving this goal was made in December 2000 in Manama during the XXI Summit of the Cooperation Council, while the joint defense strategy was adopted at the 30th Summit of the Council in Kuwait²¹⁸. This strategy called on the participating countries for defense integration and assumed the formation of a joint rapid reaction force. In 2001, the Council countries established the Supreme Defense Council, as well as the system for identifying and tracking aircraft, the “Belt of Cooperation”. Formation of a unified air defense system “Shield of the World” had been completed in 1995²¹⁹.

After the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, the Security Council's activities in the sphere of security became much more active. In 2005, at the initiative of the Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, an international anti-terrorist center was established in Riyadh with the participation of all members of the organization, and in 2006 a permanent antiterrorist commission of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf was set up.

In addition, in June 2004, a delegation from the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf participated in the Istanbul Summit of NATO, where the well-known “Istanbul Initiative” was adopted to develop relations with the countries of the “broader Middle East” pertaining specifically to the countries of the Council to assist them in combating terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, conducting exercises and assisting in the preparation of the border guard. Concerning the Arab states of the Gulf, the initiative underscored NATO's readiness to cooperate with the following Union members: the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait. During the first three months of 2005, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait joined the Istanbul Initiative, and in June 2005 - the United Arab Emirates followed suit. The absence of Oman and Saudi Arabia on this list does not mean their rejection of contacts with NATO²²⁰.

²¹⁸ الإخـلـيـجـي الـتـعـاـوـن مـجـلـس دـول // الـرـقـمـة الـمـكـنـة 218. [The digital library, GCC countries]. [Electronic resource]. – URL: <http://www.gcc-sg.org/ar-sa/CognitiveSources/Pages/Agreements.aspx>

²¹⁹ Юрченко В. П. Военное сотрудничество арабских монархий: намерения и реальность [Электронный ресурс] // Институт изучения Израиля и Ближнего Востока. – URL: <http://www.iimes.ru/rus/stat/2002/22-12-02.htm>

²²⁰ The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). Fact Sheet [Electronic resource] // North Atlantic Treaty Organization. – URL: http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2014_04/20140331_140401-factsheet-ICI_en.pdf

At the time of the formation of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf, the leaders of states were far from the idea of open cooperation with Western countries, limiting their ties with them to bilateral agreements²²¹.

Only after the 1990s did the members of the Council begin to express their willingness to cooperate and strengthen relations primarily with Washington in the sphere of ensuring regional security. After the riots in 2011 in Riyadh, the strategic cooperation forum of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf - USA was held, during which the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia openly announced the decision to form a joint commission of the Gulf and the United States on security affairs. The main goal of this structure was the creation of a “missile shield” to protect the region, and most importantly - to reduce the regional role of Iran. Dr Abdel Latif al-Zayani, secretary general of the association, stressed the particular importance of the project, capable of repelling any “biological and radiation threats”²²².

According to the widely held view amongst the Arab countries, the main source of threats and the main strategic enemy for the countries of the Council is the Islamic Republic of Iran. Initially, in addition to the purely geopolitical component of the struggle for forms of control over the territories, the problem lay also in politico-ideological differences. In addition, Iran has for a long time adhered to a strictly anti-Western course, while the countries of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf have considered the US and the EU countries as their strategic partners. The Cooperation Council insists on a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and does not recognize Iran's contacts with Hamas and Hezbollah²²³.

The antagonism between the two countries threatens not only the immediate parties to the conflict. Thus, even before the conclusion of the “nuclear deal”, Israel has repeatedly stated its intention to destroy from the air underground uranium enrichment

²²¹ Thomas W. Lippman The United States, the GCC, and Iran: The Crisis that Wasn't [Electronic resource]// The Middle East Institute.– URL: <http://www.mei.edu/content/article/united-states-gcc-and-iran-crisis-wasn%E2%80%99t>

²²² Leverett F. L. Iran: The Gulf between Us [Electronic resource]// New York Times. 2005. January 24. – URL: <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/24/opinion/the-gulf-between-us.html>

²²³ Gulf States' Policies on Syria [Electronic resource] // Centre for Strategic & International Studies. – URL: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/gulf-states-policies-syria>

centers in Iran, since, from the point of view of the Israeli authorities, the nuclear program threatens the security of this country and the region as a whole. Iran, in turn, promised to deliver strikes not only on Israel, but also on the military bases located in the region²²⁴.

The “export of the Islamic revolution” is an insurmountable obstacle to the settlement of relations not only with individual countries of the Council, with which Tehran has developed particularly tense relations (as, for example, with Saudi Arabia), but also with the rest of the participating countries. The accusations by Saudi Arabia of Iran's support for clashes on the Saudi-Yemeni border in 2009, as well as the outbreak of Shiites in the Eastern Province of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and in Bahrain in early 2011, compelled the Gulf Cooperation Council to reaffirm the principle that *aggression against one state of the Council is aggression against the whole organization*²²⁵.

Of course, the Council of Cooperation of the Arab Gulf countries is almost the only multilateral regional platform for discussing security issues. And still, the organization itself has a number of shortcomings that stand in the way of effective and full-fledged functioning. Above all, paradoxically, a full-format dialogue within the framework of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf is hampered by the fact that such states as Iran and Iraq are not part of it. In this connection, the contradictions between the coastal states are even further exacerbated: Iran insists on the withdrawal of American troops, while the Arab states support the American presence as a counterweight to Iranian hegemony.

However, reliance solely on the US presence in matters of national and regional security does not seem appropriate or adequate. Washington in practice in the Syrian conflict and the nuclear deal with Iran demonstrated that it can be a very unpredictable ally for its Arab partners.

²²⁴ الامد تملة وتهديداتها الإيديولوجية والأسلحة ترسانة [Iran's arsenal and potential threats]. [Electronic resource] // Post. – URL: <https://www.sasapost.com/iran-weapons-arsenal/shtml>

²²⁵ Wehrey F. et al. Saudi-Iranian Relations Since the Fall of Saddam: Rivalry, Cooperation, and Implications for U.S. Policy / RAND Corporation. – Santa Monica, 2009.

²²⁵ The Great Powers in the New Middle East [Electronic resource] // Centre for Strategic & International Studies.– URL: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/great-powers-new-middle-east>

May 15, 2015 in Camp David ended the joint summit of the United States and the countries of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States. Note that this was the first attempt by the United States to “revisit” this international regional organization and impose Washington’s agenda on it. Previously, there had simply been no need for this. The member countries of the Cooperation Council were closely tied to the US by a close strategic partnership, and their principal foreign policy steps were controlled by Washington. The meeting in the new format was proposed precisely because the Gulf countries are breaking more and more out of American control, which was clearly demonstrated by the Saudi military operation in Yemen.

During the summit, Barack Obama unequivocally made it clear that he had no right to sacrifice a unique historical chance - for the sake of the peace of the leaders of the Council - the opportunity to achieve significant results in the nuclear negotiations with Iran. “I would like to speak very clearly. The goal of a strategic partnership cannot be either the preservation of a long-standing confrontation with Iran, or even the marginalization of Iran”, the US president said at that time²²⁶. Apparently, B. Obama managed to convince his interlocutors that the nuclear agreement does not at all testify to the “pro-Iranian orientation” of the United States. As a demonstration of the unity of their foreign policy positions, representatives of the Cooperation Council publicly endorsed Washington's efforts to ensure a positive outcome of the ongoing negotiations with Iran, saying that a comprehensive and verifiable agreement on the nuclear program was in their interests too.

It is very significant that one of the agreements reached at the summit was an agreement on the joint development of regional missile defense systems and ballistic missile early detection systems. Some states of the Cooperation Council already have the necessary defense armament (the Patriot short-range anti-aircraft missile systems in Saudi Arabia, the THAAD high-altitude defense system in Qatar), but the new agreement provides for the deployment of an integrated system providing missile defense of short, medium and long ranges. These plans take on special significance in

²²⁶ [Obama stresses at the Camp David summit Washington's "firm" commitment to the security of the Gulf states] [Electronic resource] // إسرائيل يل أوف تلي مز /و-ال التزام دي ف يدكامب-قمة في يي وكدا-أوب اما/ [Times of Israel] – URL: <http://ar.timesofisrael.com/وا-ال التزام دي ف يدكامب-قمة في يي وكدا-أوب اما/>

the light of the fact that at the end of 2014 the countries of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States agreed to establish a joint armed forces (often interpreted as an Arab version of NATO). American defense installations will constitute the basis of the Council's anti-missile defense system. It turns out that the main beneficiaries of the agreements concluded at Camp David were American arms suppliers, for which already the countries of the organization are the largest buyers. From this point of view, this is only a logical continuation of already existing agreements providing for the supply of arms and the training of military personnel.

The United States and the countries members of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf have confirmed that their relations in the security sphere are “the basis of strategic partnership and the cornerstone of regional stability”.

The missile defense system will cost 25 billion dollars. This amount will be financed by the countries of the Cooperation Council. As a result, the Americans once again skillfully took advantage of the fears of the elites of the member countries of the Council concerning the “Iranian threat”. In the same vein, the Joint Statement envisages the provision of permanent military supplies from the United States to the countries of the Arabian Gulf. The countries of the Cooperation Council pledged to spend in the next 5 years on the purchase of only naval equipment worth up to 8 billion dollars²²⁷. The main suppliers of arms and military equipment for Bahrain are the United States and Britain.

In order to appraise the scope of cooperation between the countries of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf and the United States in the sphere of the military-industrial complex and to appreciate the scale of this one-sided dependence, it seems appropriate to take a closer look at the example of Bahrain. After the announcement of the intentions of the Air Force of Bahrain, represented by the chief of the planning department of the Air Force of Bahrain, Colonel Salah al-Mansur, about the large-scale modernization of the fleet of aircraft until 2019, the military began to consider almost exclusively the proposals of American and British companies.

²²⁷ [Learn about the most prominent peaks of the Gulf Cooperation Council] [Electronic resource] // الجزيرة [The island] - URL: <http://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/events/2016/12/6/عرف-ال-تعاون-مجلس-قمم-أب-رز-على-ت-عرف>

As part of the first phase of the Air Force program, Bahrain intended to modernize the AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters. It is planned to install new armament and on-board radio-electronic equipment for these machines. F-16C / D Fighting Falcon fighters will also be upgraded. Combat aircraft will receive new weapons, avionics, communication systems, sensors and computer systems. The fighters will also have new radars with an active phased array antenna supplied by the American corporations *Raytheon* and *Northrop Grumman*. Finally, the British BAE Hawk training aircraft will be upgraded, the British party will be supplemented by the supply of *Typhoon* fighter aircraft. In addition, after 2025, the Bahrain Air Force plans to acquire new fighters, which will be used on a par with the F-5 Tiger II and F-16. However, as already mentioned, the staffing of national aircraft with foreign-made equipment always carries some risks, but purchases from only one / two partners put the country in a clearly dependent position.

Major transactions in the arms market imply a long-term partnership, since technology of this level always requires accompanying contracts for maintenance, training in use, and additional purchase of necessary spare parts. Thus, your trading partner should be sure that the contacts will not be cut off as soon as his competitor offers hypothetically more favorable terms. Among developing countries, fidelity to their obligations is particularly appreciated when a geopolitical competitor makes proposals to your ally with responsibilities that are not prescribed in a standardized contract.

Over the past ten years many countries of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf have made efforts to improve relations with Russia. This strategy was instigated, inter alia, by the notion that the US has recently curtailed its involvement in the region, as a result of which the countries of the Council have sought to expand their strategic partnership with other key international players. Saudi Arabia itself has signed an investment agreement with Russia worth 10 billion dollars. In

addition, cooperation continues between the two countries in the field of nuclear infrastructure development²²⁸.

Undoubtedly, at present there is a positive dynamic of the development of relations between the countries of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf and Russia. The improvement of relations between the two blocs was positively evaluated by the residents of the Arabian Gulf region, many of whom hailed cooperation with Russia as a departure from the lopsided orientation towards the United States. Saudi Arabia also expressed interest in acquiring Russian tactical missile systems “Iskander-E”²²⁹, frigate “Tiger”, air defense systems, as well as other military equipment. According to some reports, Bahrain is also interested in purchasing short-range air defense systems “Pantsir-C1”²³⁰.

The Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies of Bahrain, displayed interest in Russian military equipment, as well as commercial agreements. This forms a decent stepping stone for cultivating mutually beneficial political interaction in the future²³¹. Thus, the concept of the formation of the rudiments of the security system through economic instruments does not cause categorical rejection among the expert circles of the Kingdom. Consider the following case in point.

Since October 2012, the Sudanese leadership has twice allowed the ships of the Iranian Navy to go to Port Sudan “with friendly visits”. These visits caused pronounced nervousness in Riyadh and Manama, since all this was happening in close proximity to their territorial waters.

Work with Sudan was conducted immediately in several directions and by 2016 the Arabian Gulf countries became the largest investors in the Sudanese economy, especially in the field of agricultural products and trade. The GCC countries are also the main hope of Khartoum for obtaining loans in order to do away with the budget deficit

²²⁸ Saudi Arabia to Invest up to \$10 Billion in Russia [Electronic resource] // The Wall Street Journal. – URL: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/saudi-arabia-to-invest-up-to-10-billion-in-russia-1436198674?alg=y>

²²⁹ السعودية تريد شراء صواريخ «إسكندر» الروسية [Saudi Arabia wants to buy Russian Iskander missiles] [Electronic resource] // Sputnik. – URL: <https://arabic.sputniknews.com/russia/201606061019085678/>

²³⁰ Defence & Security News – Bahrain. // Army Recognition [Electronic resource] – URL: http://www.armyrecognition.com/october_2015_global_defense_security_news_uk/bahrain_shows_interest_to_purchase_russian_pantsir-s1_short-range_air_defense_system_12810154.html

²³¹ لـلدبابات المضادة «كورنيت» بصواريخ تـ تزود البحرين [Bahrain is equipped with anti-tank "Kornet" missiles] [Electronic resource] // Sputnik Arabic. – URL: https://arabic.sputniknews.com/arabic.ruvr.ru/news/2014_08_13/275884020/

and replenish the stock of cash currency. Therefore, it was hardly news for close observers that Sudan became the third state after Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, which severed diplomatic relations with Iran in January 2016 in protest after the attack on the Saudi embassy in Tehran. Moreover, Riyadh undertook to do everything possible to lift American sanctions from Sudan, under which the country had been for more than ten years in connection with the accusation of sponsoring terrorism. And the first step in this direction was made by the previous President Barack Obama, who before his departure signed a decree on the partial lifting of the embargo. This trend continued in 2017 - in the public space, Sudan's representatives are in agreement with the position of Saudi Arabia, condemning Iran's interference in various conflicts in the Middle East region²³².

3.3. The Problems of Building a New System of Collective Security within the Framework of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf

As the most balanced and lasting agreement between the states of the Arab world, the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf, which includes six states, seriously rethinks its actions in response to regional conflicts and the prevailing instability. The time to avoid involvement in conflicts and to entrusting other, extra-regional states to solve local problems, has passed²³³. The current state of affairs is such that the countries of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf have demonstrated that today they will no longer be able to continue to remain idle, but, on the contrary, should pursue a more proactive macroregional policy in the context of the complex situation in the Middle East. Although Oman continues to demonstrate its neutrality, the rest of the Council has become more self-sufficient and resolute on the issue of protecting its common interests not only in the Gulf subregion but also in the Middle East. The issues of concern to the states of the Council of

²³² «الإب رانية الأمخططات» ضد السعودية مع ت ضامنا إيران مع الأدب لوماسدية اتالعلاق قطع يؤكد السودان [Sudan confirms the severance of diplomatic relations with Iran in solidarity with Saudi Arabia against «Iranian plans»] [Electronic resource] // CNN Arabic. – URL: <http://arabic.cnn.com/middleeast/2016/01/04/sudan-saudi-iran-tensions>

²³³ Imad K. Harb. *New Developments in GCC Security Thinking* // Gulf Affairs, Oxford, UK. 2016. – P.2

Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf forced them to take a more determined political stance, especially because of Iran's regional activity - the “cold” confrontation in Lebanon and the “hot” proxy conflicts in Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

The absolutization of Iranian interventionism rallies the Gulf States, forcing them to iron out certain differences or postpone the most pressing issues for an indefinite time.

For the leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its understanding of the threats to the regional security of the bloc, the current state of affairs seems unacceptable, which is indirectly confirmed by the analysis of the report on the regional security problem of the Gulf countries, which was published in Arabic in early 2016 by the Saudi research center Gulf Research Center²³⁴. One has to admit that the perception of Tehran's activity in the interpretation of the authors of the report is not just destructive, but archaizing, aimed at destroying the national statehood in the region, which is viewed exclusively through the prism of Pan-Arabism. In this context, it is the policy of the Arab Gulf states that aims to cement the traditional institutions of statehood. Since the crisis liberated by the protest movement of the “Arab Spring” brought the historically established pillars of the Arab world (Iraq, Syria, and Egypt) out of active participation in the “game of nations”, the responsibility for the future of the region and its security fell on the Council states²³⁵.

Nevertheless, not all the states that are members of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf share the views of Saudi Arabia, the head of this organization, on the development of relations with Iran. Alliances in the region in this turbulent time are changing quite rapidly under the influence of regional and international conflicts. Following the signing of the agreement on the Iranian nuclear program in July 2015 and the relative warming of the relations between the Islamic

²³⁴ New perspectives of economic development: Department of the Middle East and Central Asia. May 2015 [Electronic resource] // Official site of the World Monetary Fund. - URL: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/reo/2015/mcd/eng/pdf/mreo0515st.pdf>

²³⁵ 2008 منذ مرة لأول إن تاجها خ فض على ت ت فق «أوب ك» [“OPEC” agrees to cut production for the first time since 2008] [Electronic resource] // Al-Arabiya. URL: <https://www.alarabiya.net/ar/aswaq/oil-and-gas/2016/11/30/ال-فلاح-الاتفاق-التوصل-من-ي-ق-ترب-ون-أوب-ك-أعضاء.html>

Republic of Iran and the West, that took place until Trump's decision to break the deal, many countries in the region began to rethink their tactics regarding Tehran²³⁶.

After coming to power of President Hassan Rouhani, he declared that after the solution of the nuclear problem the next task was the normalization of relations between Iran and the Arabian gulf countries. However, if the first task was successfully solved, then the second cannot be solved simply because of deep political, economic and geopolitical reasons. Saudi Arabia views Iran as its main enemy. The goal of Saudi Arabia was, therefore, to break the "axis of resistance" (Iran-Iraq-Syria-Hezbollah movement) and, according to some experts, has become one of the triggers of the conflict in Syria currently.

Despite the similar context of counterparty actions, the team of the new president Hassan Rouhani made a number of attempts to normalize relations with the neighbors over the Arabian Gulf. In the summer of 2014, a high-ranking delegation from the United Arab Emirates visited Tehran. Then came the visits of Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to Kuwait and Qatar. However, the contradictions between the two leading countries of the Islamic world proved insurmountable, the crises in the relations ultimately led to a unilateral rupture of diplomatic relations. The result of diplomatic disturbances at the moment is a speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Adel al-Jubair, at the Munich conference on February 17, 2017, where Saudi Arabia called Iran the main sponsor of global terrorism and renounced Tehran's calls for dialogue²³⁷.

At the same time, the member countries of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf are not at the moment inclined to flaunt their own contradictions, so in the public field they often demonstrate a unified position. In January 2016, at a press conference, Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shukri noted that after a regular summit of the League of Arab States, a special group consisting of the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt was set up to work out responses against

²³⁶ Regional Economic Outlook Update Middle East and Central Asia Department. May 2015. – URL: <https://www.alarabiya.net/ar/aswaq/oil-and-gas/2016/11/30/> <https://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/03/09/199529.html>

²³⁷ The Ground Shifts in the Middle East. [Electronic resource] // Council on Foreign Relations.– URL: <https://www.cfr.org/blog/ground-shifts-middle-east>

Iranian activity in the region, adding that “Iran takes advantage of inter-confessional wars in the countries of the Middle East”²³⁸. Another important statement of the report is the provision that all elements of regional security in the Middle East are interrelated and interdependent; therefore, ensuring the security of the Gulf countries in isolation from the rest of the region is impossible. Thus, implicitly not only the space of the Arabian Gulf was placed in the sphere of influence of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf, but the entire territory of the Middle East, implying the Levant and part of the Maghreb with Egypt and Libya²³⁹.

The absence of a separate emphasis on systemic regional conflicts - Syrian and Arab-Israeli - makes it necessary to describe the proposed system as hierarchical, not based on a balance between its various elements, but on the basis of ensuring the interests and security of the Gulf countries that perceive the rest of the region as a strategic depth area. The statement in the above mentioned report about the naturalness of the succession of regional leadership by the Gulf countries from Egypt, Syria and Iraq presupposes the inclusion of these countries in a single regional system of relations, which also does not imply parity in the ranking of states. So, the specific perception of Yemen is characteristic not only as a sphere of interests of the Gulf States, but also as the object of their policy rather than the subject of relations. *It is no accident that the authors take the liberty to determine the true interests of the Yemeni people.*

A new threat to the countries of the Arabian Gulf was the activities of the terrorist organization “Islamic State” (ISIS), which arose in the territories close to their borders. ISIS does not represent a typologically new threat, but rather a quintessence of the already existing danger of the rise and spread of fundamentalism in the Middle East. This danger, which affects the countries of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf from within, is aimed at their territorial integrity²⁴⁰.

²³⁸ Mustafa Al Zarooni. Arab countries mull unified approach to face Iranian threat [Electronic resource] // Khaleej Times. – URL: <http://www.khaleejtimes.com/nation/general/arab-countries-mull-unified-approach-to-face-iranian-threat>

²³⁹ روابط ساحة مركز [Revolutionary Guards Iran's external arm] // روجي الخايد ران ذراع ال ثوري ال حرس [Electronic resource]. – URL: <http://rawabetcenter.com/archives/56>

²⁴⁰ ال فارسي ال خ ل ي ج ف ي ج د ي د ا م ن ي ن ظ ا م [Imagine a new security system in the Arabian Gulf] [Electronic resource]. // ك ا ر ن د ي ع ي ك ز م ر . [Carnegie Center] – URL: <http://carnegie-mec.org/2015/11/19/ar-pub-62028>

Manama, as well as Riyadh, sees Iran as the main threat to regional security, repeatedly stressing the need for greater integration by transforming the Gulf Cooperation Council of the Arab States into a Union with a significant military branch. Yet, it is impossible to counter Iran's expansionist policies only by the forces of the Council. Consequently, further financial support from Washington will be needed, whose presence in the region will not contribute to resolving the disputes, but will only lead to further tensions in relations with Iran. It is de facto a blind alley.

An important element of regional security for the member countries of the Cooperation Council is the internal protest potential. The popular unrest in 2011 in a number of large Omani cities and provinces (Muscat, Suhar and Salalah), in Manama and a suburb of the Bahraini capital, in the eastern provinces of Saudi Arabia, etc. threaten not only the existence of current regimes, but also the entire current set of regional relationships, since the foundation and guarantor of the latter is precisely the traditional autocratic nature of foreign policy decisions in the Arab Gulf countries²⁴¹.

The states of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf use a variety of tools to solve these problems. The most important steps that significantly influenced the outcome of the confrontation between the Arab "street" and the government were the decision of the countries of the Cooperation Council to allocate to Oman and Bahrain in March of the same year 20 billion dollars to overcome financial difficulties, which allowed the countries mentioned to a certain extent to douse the domestic flames insofar as meeting the financial and economic requirements of protesters was concerned.

The most telling illustration of Oman's position on the issue of expanding the geography of the members of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf due to the accession to this organization of Morocco and Jordan is a remark made by the Foreign Minister of Oman, Juan Ben Alawi, during his talks with his Jordanian counterpart N. Jude in Muscat on the sidelines of the meeting of foreign ministers of the countries of the Cooperation Council in 2011. Responding to the

²⁴¹ Bahrain puts groups on terrorism list after bomb kills three police [Electronic resource] // Reuters. – URL: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-bahrain-unrest-idUSBREA231FC20140304>

Jordanian minister for his remark that 95% of Jordanians support the idea of Jordan joining the organization, Y. Ben Alawi said, in turn, that the same percentage of the population of the Gulf is against this idea²⁴².

Thus, at this stage, we can safely state the growing divergence in views and positions of the countries of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf on a number of priority tasks that require a consolidated approach with a view to minimizing the negative consequences for both the said regional organization and for each individual country-participants of the association.

²⁴² Bahrain puts groups on terrorism list after bomb kills three police [Electronic resource] // Reuters. – URL: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-bahrain-unrest-idUSBREA231FC20140304>

CHAPTER IV

RUSSIAN-BAHRAINI RELATIONS. MAIN AREAS OF BILATERAL COOPERATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE REGIONAL SECURITY PROJECT

4.1. Russian-Bahraini Relations in the Trade and Economic Sphere at the Present Stage

The expansion of economic ties with the countries of the Middle East has become an integral part of Moscow's long-term strategy in the region. Energy - the main export commodity of the Russian economy, for most Arab countries remained an irrelevant factor - either due to the own wealth of mineral resources, or because of the lack of a powerful energy-intensive industry. At the same time, Russia proved to be a competitive supplier of industrial finished goods, including products of the nuclear, space, automotive industries and, of course, armaments. The Middle East has also become an important area for the growing supply of agricultural products²⁴³.

By the end of 2010, Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Syria and Turkey had become important trading partners for Russia in areas not related to oil and gas. A special place in this row is occupied by smaller and medium-sized powers interested in the Russian technological potential in a bid to diversify their economies. Despite close ties with Washington, countries such as Bahrain not only did not join Western sanctions against Russia, but also began consultations on preferential trade agreements with Russia on multilateral trading platforms (like EEU)²⁴⁴.

Socio-political movements of 2010-2011 exposed the actual strengths of the Russian strategy in the region. The policy of “equal tolerance” allowed Moscow to gain recognition and made it less dependent on partner relations with any one country.

Russia's stepping up on Syria did not cause a break in relations with the countries of the Arabian Gulf. On the contrary, in 2015 a number of symbolic visits

²⁴³ Байков А.А., Истомин И.А. Неожиданные партнеры России на Ближнем и Среднем Востоке // Международные процессы. 2013. №2. С. 121–128

²⁴⁴ Middle East Notes and Comment: Russia, the United States, and the Middle East [Electronic resource] // Centre for Strategic & International Studies. – URL: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/middle-east-notes-and-comment-russia-united-states-and-middle-east>

took place at the ministerial level. Moreover, Saudi Arabia offered lucrative investment projects in exchange for softening Moscow's policy in Syria with respect to some resistance groups²⁴⁵. Since early 2016, Russia and Saudi Arabia, as the two largest energy producers, have been engaged in discussing measures to stabilize the oil market²⁴⁶.

Although many of the initiatives have not been implemented precisely because of current ideological differences, the intensity of the dialogue indicates the recognition by the Middle Eastern players of the fundamental importance of Russia's presence in the region. Economic and financial instruments under these conditions act as a stabilizing platform for the formation of pragmatic political interaction. The Russian position on Syria and the substantial contribution of Moscow to the conclusion of the deal on the Iranian nuclear program confirmed its ability to rationally use the opportunities that were opening up²⁴⁷. As a result, the opinion in the region about the inappropriateness of ignoring, removing or diminishing Moscow's regional involvement. On the contrary, it became clear in local capitals that it was necessary to build strong economic ties with it, which would later allow local players to more vigorously argue for a win-win interest of the Kremlin²⁴⁸.

The authorities of Bahrain position the kingdom as a "gateway to the Arabian Gulf region." These claims are substantiated by the historical and geographical status of Bahrain (from ancient times the island has been the center of trade), supplemented already at the present stage by a developed transport infrastructure: the island has a modern airport and a seaport. The discovery of the oilfield in 1932 was a turning point in the economic and social life of Bahrain, and also significantly and comprehensively influenced modern development²⁴⁹.

²⁴⁵ Саудовская Аравия инвестирует в экономику России \$10 млрд [Электронный ресурс] // пресс-служба Российского фонда прямых инвестиций (РФПИ). 07.07.2015. – URL: <http://www.vestifinance.ru/articles/59685>

²⁴⁶ Khan M. Hopes of Saudi-Russian entente sends oil price rocketing [Electronic resource] // The Telegraph. 28.01.2016. – URL: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/oilprices/12128514/Oil-prices-rocket-on-hopesof-Saudi-Russian-entente.html>

²⁴⁷ Obama Thanks Putin for Russia's Role in Iran Nuclear Deal [Electronic resource] // 16.07.2015. – URL: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-russia-call-idUSKCN0PP2RI20150716>

²⁴⁸ Suchkov M.A. Russia's Plan for the Middle East. The National Interest. 15.01.2016. – URL: <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/russias-plan-the-middle-east-14908>

²⁴⁹ Бахрейн: маленькая страна, большие возможности? [Электронный ресурс] // РСМД.– URL: http://russiancouncil.ru/inner/?id_4=8157#top-content

At the beginning of the new century, Bahrain faced with the threat of a reduction in hydrocarbon reserves, in particular oil resources, which forced the authorities to begin developing technologies for refining and distilling oil. Bahrain has become the only state of the Arabian Gulf importing crude oil. It was the transition from oil production to its processing and distillation that increased the inflow of foreign capital into the country, and the growing volumes of liquid cash predetermined the development of Bahrain as an international banking center. However, oil is a limited resource, in addition, its reserves of "black gold" are much inferior to the volumes of neighbors along the Gulf. An additional argument in favor of economic diversification and the development of human capital is the price crisis experienced by the oil market since 2014.

In order to strengthen the economic growth and attractiveness of Bahrain for investors not only from the Middle East countries, but also the world, the new King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, who came to power in 1999, initiated economic and political reforms based on the liberalization of the economic sector and the promotion of private enterprise. To date, the Kingdom of Bahrain is characterized by a significant openness of the economy, holds a leading position in international ratings on the indices of financial freedom and economic development²⁵⁰.

As a result, despite the decline in revenues from the export of petroleum products, the economy of Bahrain is in the growth stage. This is evidenced by the investment policy of the kingdom. The project on modernization and expansion of the international airport (the volume of investments of 1.1 billion dollars) has begun. A tender was announced for the implementation of the project of about 5 billion dollars to expand production capacity of the *Bapco* refinery from 260,000 to 350,000 barrels in a day²⁵¹. By the end of 2017, the construction of a new oil pipeline to pump crude oil from Saudi Arabia to Bahrain worth 300 million dollars and a design capacity of

²⁵⁰ Бахрейн: маленькая страна, большие возможности? [Электронный ресурс] // РСМД. – URL: http://russiancouncil.ru/inner/?id_4=8157#top-content

²⁵¹ 2016 Index of Economic Freedom [Electronic resource] // Heritage Foundation. – URL: http://www.heritage.org/index/pdf/2016/book/index_2016.pdf

400,000 barrels should be completed in a day. The launch of the LNG terminal is planned for this year (2019), the project cost is more than 600 million dollars²⁵².

The growth of the construction sector and property prices in Bahrain, in contrast to other countries in the region, also points to economic stability and is an indicator of the prospects for the entry of Russian investors into the market of Bahrain²⁵³.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has a reasonably strong position in the world economic arena and has a history of long-term international economic cooperation. Bahrain was the first state in the Middle East region to sign the Free Trade Agreement with the United States. As of today, the key regional partners of Bahrain for export are Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. At the international level, the country conducts an economic dialogue with the United States, Japan and the countries of the European Union. Undoubtedly, the main part of economic relations of Bahrain belongs to the Arab states-members of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf, especially in the oil and gas industry. Thus, in accordance with Article 10o, paragraph 2 of the Basic Law of the Kingdom, the state makes efforts to achieve economic unity with the countries that are members of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab Gulf Countries and the League of Arab States, including the entire package of measures, which leads to “deepening of relations, cooperation, coordination and mutual assistance between them”²⁵⁴.

At present, Russia does not yet occupy leading positions in economic and trade ties of Bahrain, but has a fairly wide range of mutual interests because of the various, and therefore complementary, structures of national economies. Thus, both sides have a wide range of promising areas for establishing a strong economic partnership. For example, the Kingdom has an attractive fiscal regime: no income tax, no VAT, no corporate tax. Since 2006, the International Investment Park of Bahrain (MIBP) has

²⁵² Россия и Бахрейн обсудили потенциал увеличения инвестиций и товарооборота [Электронный ресурс] // Официальный сайт Министерства промышленности и торговли РФ. – URL: http://minpromorg.gov.ru/press-centre/news/#!rossiya_i_bahreyn_obsudili_potencial_uvelicheniya_investitsiy_i_tovarooborota

²⁵³ Trade Profile. The Kingdom of Bahrain. [Электронный ресурс] // World Trade Organization URL: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/countries_e/bahrain_e.htm

²⁵⁴ [Constitution / Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain] // وال تشريع هيدنة [Legislative and Statutory Commission] [Electronic resource] – URL: <http://www.legalaffairs.gov.bh/102.aspx?cms=iQRpheuphYtJ6pyXUGiNqq6h9qKLgVAb>

been in operation - an industrial area of 247 hectares, where all conditions are created for companies orientated to work with the entire region, and not only with the market of Bahrain. The cost of renting one square meter in the MIBP is less than one and a half dollars per year (including utilities). At the same time, the Kingdom allows complete foreign ownership of companies. And if you consider that Bahrain has an agreement on free trade with the US and a simplified visa regime with a large number of countries, it becomes clear why many companies operating in the region prefer to keep their head offices in Bahrain.

For this reason, one of the key areas of bilateral cooperation is cooperation in the field of investment. According to the Minister of Trade of the Russian Federation D. Manturov, today Russia considers the Kingdom of Bahrain as a reliable investment partner. As from today, an agreement is in place between the investment funds of the two countries to invest 250 million dollars from the Bahraini side in joint projects and 9 of them have commenced²⁵⁵. Over 50 million dollars has already been invested in retail trade, commercial real estate, mining and logistics services. Several dozens of projects are currently under consideration. In 2017, six more transactions involving the Bahraini side were closed, including investments in regional airports in Russia, real estate, and agriculture.

In order to develop investment cooperation in April 2014, the countries signed an agreement on the promotion and protection of investments. At the same time, the Bahraini investment fund Mumtalakat signed an agreement with the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RFPI). In December 2014, these organizations agreed on the participation of Mumtalakat in co-financing almost all RFPI projects at a rate of 5%²⁵⁶.

Russian banks and companies may consider Bahrain as a platform for listing their securities on the local exchange list (the list of securities admitted to exchange trading). Bahrain is interested in increasing the liquidity and capitalization of the stock market, diversifying investment opportunities. Before the IPO of Zain

²⁵⁵Россия и Бахрейн обсудили потенциал увеличения инвестиций и товарооборота [Электронный ресурс] // Официальный сайт Министерства промышленности и торговли РФ. – URL: http://minpromtorg.gov.ru/press-centre/news/#!rossiya_i_bahreyn_obsudili_potencial_uelicheniya_investiciy_i_tovarooborota

²⁵⁶المباشر الروسي الاسد تشار صندوق حول [About the Russian direct investment fund] [Electronic resource] // Invest in Russia. – URL: <http://ar.investinrussia.com/about>

telecommunications company in autumn 2014, the last public offering in Bahrain was held in 2010²⁵⁷. Political support for financial interaction with Russia and the readiness of the regulatory authorities to create conditions for the placement of Russian securities also back up this possibility.

In the same breath, Bahrain has the potential to act as a suitable platform through which Russian business can gain access to the financial markets of the region. The partial isolation of the largest Russian banks from the European and American financial markets and the increased pressure of sanctions on trade cooperation, the need for alternative sources of stable financing for infrastructure and industry projects all served as a stimulus to the discussion of the regulation of the activities of Islamic financial institutions in Russia. Entry to the market can be made through the entry into the capital of local or regional banks, the creation of joint funds. Some Bahraini (Al-Salam Bank-Bahrain, Habib Bank Limited) and Russian (Rosselkhozbank and Gazprombank) financial institutions are considering the possibility of bilateral transactions in the territories of both countries, including syndicated lending to state corporations, purchase of government bonds denominated in dollars, refinancing in the oil and gas sector, servicing deals in this area at the interstate level. Between Russia and Bahrain there is already an agreement on the promotion and mutual protection of investments²⁵⁸.

Among the most attractive vectors of bilateral Russian-Bahraini cooperation at the present stage, one normally hears energy, oil and gas industry, agriculture, financial sector, civil aviation, tourism and pharmacological industry.

It should be noted that the potential of bilateral trade and economic relations has not yet been realized, despite the positive dynamics. Since 2007, the Russian-Bahraini Business Council has started its work. The former head of Vnesheconombank V. Dmitriev is the chairman of its Russian part; Bahrain's vice president of the Chamber

²⁵⁷ Economic Indicators // Central Bank of Bahrain. September, 2014

²⁵⁸ Аль-Тамими Х. Российско-бахрейнские отношения в торгово-экономической сфере на современном этапе // Международные отношения. 2017. № 3. С.1-13. DOI: 10.7256/2454-0641.2017.3.23884

of Commerce and Industry of Bahrain Khalid Abdurrahman Almoayed is the Bahraini president²⁵⁹.

The trade turnover between Russia and Bahrain, not including oil deals, grew at a very fast pace - from \$ 6 million in 2008 to almost 135 million in 2011. Then Russia took 43rd place among export destinations and 18 – among importing countries in Bahrain²⁶⁰. The basic document of bilateral trade and economic cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Kingdom of Bahrain is the Agreement on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation, which entered into force in 2001.

As for the sphere of trade at the present stage, in 2016 the trade turnover between the countries increased almost 5 times as compared to 2015²⁶¹. In 2015, the trade between the two countries amounted to 12.2 million dollars. The main items of Russian exports (4.3 million dollars) were ferrous metals, paper and cardboard, lasers, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, chemical products. Imports from Bahrain were 2 times higher than the volume of goods exported from Russia and amounted to 7.9 million dollars, and in 2016 Russian exports increased more than 11 times²⁶².

One of the leading positions on the bilateral economic agenda is trade in aluminum, products from it, as well as work to create an alternative model for assessing the aluminum market, allowing buyers to protect themselves from the risks of price fluctuations. The last of the mentioned types of interaction represents an incomparably deeper level of interaction than traditional trade exchange.

The “Aluminum trend” continues to develop, so following the results of the meeting of the intergovernmental Russian-Bahraini commission on trade, economic and scientific and technical cooperation of February 22, 2017 and held negotiations, important decisions were made, including the creation of a profile multilateral

²⁵⁹ О встрече спецпредставителя Президента Российской Федерации по Ближнему Востоку и странам Африки, заместителя Министра иностранных дел России М.Л.Богданова с Послом Бахрейна в Москве А.Аль-Саати [Электронный ресурс] // Официальный сайт Министерства иностранных дел РФ. – URL: http://www.mid.ru/ru/maps/bh/-/asset_publisher/xqa5gwVgSi2T/content/id/2384161

²⁶⁰ [The annual report of the achievements of the Ministry of Industry and Trade during the year 2011] // وزارة الصناعة وتجارة وإدارة الموانئ والتجارة الخارجية [Ministry of Industry and Trade, Kingdom of Bahrain - Foreign Trade Laws] [Electronic resource]. – <http://www.moic.gov.bh/En/Main/AnnualReport/Documents/202011%20العام%20خلال%20والصناعة%20وزارة%20لإذجازات%20السنوي%20القرار>

²⁶¹ Annual Review 2015. Aluminium of Bahrain – P. 68

²⁶² Ibid.

international organization on industrial production aluminum. Such a measure will help prevent inefficient spending of resources, stabilize the market and ensure the normal functioning of the global aluminum industry.

Moreover, this sphere, because of the close intertwining of industrial sectors of modern economies, serves as a kind of platform for deepening bilateral relations. During the second meeting of the Russian-Bahrain Working Group on Cooperation in the Sphere of the Aluminum Industry on February 8, 2016, agreements were reached on the exchange of information on potential projects for the production of aluminum products with added value in Russia that are of interest to the Bahraini side, which implies an integrated exchange of experience, expansion of cooperation in the field of R & D and safety standards²⁶³.

In addition, dialogue on a wide range of issues is accompanied by an intensification of contacts, and on the margins of such meetings (full-scale bilateral cooperation, as a meeting between King Hamad Al Khalifa, Prime Minister Khalifa Al Khalifa, Crown Prince Salman Al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of the Defense Forces Khalifa bin Ahmad Al Khalifa and their partners from the Russian side, of a multilateral nature, as a forum-exhibition "Trade and Industrial Dialogue Russia-Arabian Gulf" 2014, IV International Air Show Bahrain International Airshow - 2016, the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, etc.) could discuss issues that were not directly related to the agenda, since the format implies the representation of the parties at a sufficiently high level - the ministers of the core industries and their deputies.

The innovation-technological segment of cooperation as a whole is an important area where Russian companies can offer not only to Bahrain, but also to other countries of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf competitive services and products. In 2014, the Russian company Macroscop came to the Kingdom's market with software for city security systems; in the same year, optical devices were supplied from Russia to Bahrain for the amount of 800 thousand dollars²⁶⁴.

²⁶³ Россия и Бахрейн выходят на новый этап развития взаимоотношений [Электронный ресурс]. // Polpred. –URL: http://polpred.com/?ns=1&ns_id=2087223

²⁶⁴ Россия и Бахрейн продолжат сотрудничество в алюминиевом секторе [Электронный ресурс] // Официальный сайт Министерства промышленности и торговли РФ. – URL: http://minpromtorg.gov.ru/press-centre/news/#!rossiya_i_bahreyn_prodolzhat_sotrudnichestvo_v_aluminiumovom_sektore

Another potential segment for partnership in the field of high technologies is outer space. In 2014, the National Space Science Agency was established in Bahrain. Roskosmos can offer Bahrain cooperation in the field of space research, the creation of space vehicles, the reception and processing of space information obtained from them, the production of an integrated Russian-Bahraini space remote sensing system that allows the use of the existing group of spacecraft resources to solve problems in the interests of both states, access to the unique system of the orbital communication group "GLONASS", as well as the development and implementation of space technology navigation, space education projects flights to the ISS. Bahrain can be considered as a center for the promotion of space services and products in the Gulf and Africa.

Among the major Russian technology centers, which also showed interest in cooperation with the Arabian monarchies, are the Central Research Institute of Engineering Technology, the National Research Nuclear Institute MEPhI. Zayed Ben Rashid Al-Zayian's visit as an honored guest to the international industrial exhibition "INNOPROM-2015" and the organization of a collective exhibition of industrial companies and organizations of Bahrain at the main event in Russia of this format, also confirmed interest from the Bahraini side.

Both sides highly appreciate the interaction between the Engineering Center of NNIU MEPhI and Riyad Group in the field of medicine, pharmacology, and relevant technology equipment. The scope of the interaction is not limited to purchase and sale, but also the joint development of new projects, the localization of manufacturing. In February 2015, Bahrain was visited a delegation of representatives of Russian pharmaceutical companies, which managed to reach an agreement on cooperation in the relevant field. In continuation of cooperation in 2016, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain sent a letter to the Ministry of Health of Russia with a proposal for cooperation in the medical and pharmaceutical fields²⁶⁵. Then Bahrain proposed the exchange of experience in the training of medical personnel, joint work in the field of cancer, pharmaceuticals, including the exchange of information on medical research.

²⁶⁵ Бахрейн предложил России сотрудничество в сфере медицины [Электронный ресурс] // Российско-арабский деловой совет. – URL: http://www.russarabbc.ru/rusarab/index.php?ELEMENT_ID=40239

According to the head of the corporate development department of Stada (Russian pharmaceutical holding) Ivan Glushkov, almost three dozen plants have been built in St. Petersburg, Yaroslavl, Kaluga, Tomsk and the Moscow region, which in many respects surpass the plants operating in other countries, and such companies as "Nizhpharm", "Biokard", have an impressive experience in the world markets²⁶⁶.

In addition, an agreement was reached between Russia and the Kingdom of Bahrain to provide assistance to Russian specialists in developing a program of medical rehabilitation in this Arab monarchy.

In Moscow, the interest in this direction is explained by the need to promote Russian bioengineering centers in the practical implementation of the tasks of import substitution and the implementation of a high-tech segment in production, which has the potential for commercialization and the emergence of products in demand in the partner countries markets.

The access to foreign markets with products of high added value for the Russian Federation is particularly promising, since in the context of the depreciation of the ruble, Russian products and services are price competitive. Bahrain's commitment to diversifying its foreign economic partners creates additional opportunities for Russian suppliers to enter the market.

In October 2014, the national carrier of Bahrain - the airline Gulf Air - began flights to Moscow in response to the growing demand for this direction from passengers (one of the strategic goals on the bilateral agenda is a significant increase in the bilateral flow of tourism), and to make access to Bahrain and other countries of the Arabian Gulf are more convenient for Russian businessmen. The installation of direct air communication between the two states presupposes the technical maintenance of this task, therefore in December 2014 the delegation headed by the Minister of Industry and Trade of Russia D. Manturov arrived at the international business forum in Manama on the business version of Sukhoi Superjet 100 to visually demonstrate our international partners advantages of this aircraft.

²⁶⁶ بـ سورية والوضع الـ ئنائـي الـ تعاونـيـ بـ بحثـانـ روسـيا وـ الـ بحرين [Bahrain and Russia discuss bilateral cooperation and the situation in Syria] [Electronic resource] // Al-Wasat.– URL: <http://www.alwasatnews.com/news/1210655.html>

Discussing with the members of the international delegations of the Arabian Gulf countries the prospects for developing joint projects in aviation, the head of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Russia noted that the project for the construction of SSJ 100 aircraft in the business version will develop: the range of its flight in the future will reach 8 thousand km, and customers will be able to get an individual layout of the salon, which is a curtsey towards the audience of consumers of luxury aircraft²⁶⁷.

In the field of oil and gas, cooperation in the use of advanced Russian technologies to increase the productivity of oil wells, reconnaissance operations in transit zones and at great depth, supply of liquefied gas, construction and operation of gas pipelines is paramount. Joint implementation of projects in the energy sector is an effective way to reduce competition for Russian companies in the Gulf markets.

“Rosgeologiya” State Corporation was authorized to conduct seismic and other works to search for oil and gas in the territory of the Kingdom of Bahrain. This became possible due to the agreement concluded in 2016 between "Rosgeologiya" and the oil and gas holding company of Bahrain Oil and Gas Holding Company²⁶⁸.

The agreement on mutual understanding and long-term cooperation in the field of oil and gas on the territory of the Arab state provides for the development of cooperation in the field of training engineering and technical personnel, the exchange of technology and experience in the oil and gas sector, the possibility of carrying out on a commercial basis geophysical studies, in particular seismic operations at sea and land areas of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

In addition, the cooperation will include the processing and interpretation of seismic data, the search for oil and gas in transit and deep water zones, monitoring the state of the geological environment of the continental shelf and land of the kingdom, geophysical studies of wells, the supply of geophysical equipment and equipment. Also

²⁶⁷ Денис Мантуров представил бизнес-версию Sukhoi Superjet 100 партнерам из арабских стран [Электронный ресурс] // Официальный сайт Министерства промышленности и торговли РФ. – URL: http://minpromtorg.gov.ru/press-centre/news/#!denis_manturov_predstavil_biznesversiyu_sukhoi_superjet_100_partneram_iz_arabskih_stran

²⁶⁸ Россия и Бахрейн выходят на новый этап развития взаимоотношений [Электронный ресурс] // Polpred.– URL: <http://www.rosgeo.com/ru/content/rosgeologiya-i-neftegazovaya-holdingovaya-kompaniya-bahreyna-nogaholding-zaklyuchili>

discussed were questions of Russian companies joining the projects of modernization of the Bahrain pipeline system.

In Bahrain, a test project of one of the Russian companies is already under way, according to which a decision will be made to carry out full-scale geophysical data processing.

During the bilateral meetings, the possibility of delivering gas to the Bahraini market is also explored in detail. In Bahrain, plans are made to build the first terminal for the reception of liquefied natural gas, the launch of which is expected in 2019. Given the deferred launch of this terminal, the Russian side by this time expects to increase the volume of production and production of liquefied gas, which will make it possible to supply part of these volumes for export, in particular to Bahrain. The goal of creating a regional gas hub potentially satisfying the demand in the countries of the Arabian Gulf, the Levant and the Maghreb is very promising.

A strong long-term cooperation with the Kingdom of Bahrain is of strategic importance for Russia, given the geographical position of the Kingdom and its traditional ties with the regional players for the region - Saudi Arabia and the United States. Objectively, one can speak about the presence of certain influence on the part of Saudi Arabia, the leader of GCC and the largest importer for Bahrain. Saudi Arabia is one of the leading actors in the Middle East region, including a strong position in OPEC. The price of oil largely depends on the position of the Saudis, which is also important for Russia. It is through bilateral cooperation with Bahrain, along with other countries in the Middle East, that Russia will be able to maintain its own positions in the sub-region of the Arabian Gulf, as well as the Middle East in general.

The fact that this partnership is considered one of the most promising areas for development in the Arabian Gulf subregion is a cogent testimony to the above-mentioned claim on the strategic importance of Russian-Bahraini economic cooperation. Likewise, the Bahrain business expresses increasing interest in attracting Russian companies to participate in national projects.

The signs of recessions in certain areas of the Russian-Bahraini economic partnership does not affect the overall structure of bilateral ties, which are multi-level

and diversified. The potential for the development of purely quantitative indices of commodity turnover, which, among other things, plays an even more important psychological role during the perception of relations on the part, and it clearly exists in the area of increasing the export of grain and fodder. Implementation of the agreements reached already in 2017 in the supply of ready-made meat products available to the consumers of the Kingdom of Bahrain - raw beef, lamb and poultry. Practical projects in the food field of the Bahraini side were proposed back in April 2014 during the visit to Manama of the Russian business delegation²⁶⁹.

In the short term, there is a need between countries to strengthen direct contacts between representatives of business communities, now there are episodic and can hardly be a stable basis for building contacts. Making them more regular will give an additional impetus to the establishment of direct ties between Bahrain and the regions of the Russian Federation. An example of cooperation of this kind is the practical implementation of the agreements between the President of Tatarstan Rustam Minnikhanov and the King of Bahrain Hamad ibn Isa al-Khalif - the company "Chelny-Broiler" (part of the holding Agrosila, Naberezhnye Chelny, Tatarstan) will be the first Russian enterprise that in 2017 to supply heal products from poultry to the Kingdom of Bahrain²⁷⁰.

Bahrain, having a developed infrastructure, the most liberal legislation in the region, professional staff, observing international business standards and being distinguished by a friendly cosmopolitan atmosphere, is a convenient outpost for working with the Gulf countries. Given the focus of the island's leadership on the development of Bahrain-Russian cooperation, Russian business can use the existing conditions to access a wider regional market.

²⁶⁹ 2014 العام خلال وال تجارة الا صناعية وزارة لإذجازات ال سنوي ال تقرير [The annual report of the achievements of the Ministry of Industry and Trade during 2014] [Electronic resource] // وزارة الا صناعية وزارة ، وال تجارة الا صناعية وزارة [Ministry of Industry and Trade, Kingdom of Bahrain - Foreign Trade Laws]. –URL: <http://www.moic.gov.bh/Ar/Main/AnnualReport/Documents/202014%20عام.pdf>

²⁷⁰ Челны-Бройлер начнет поставки халяльной продукции из мяса птицы в Бахрейн [Электронный ресурс] // Официальный сайт Министерства экономического развития РФ. URL: <http://www.ved.gov.ru/news/22145.html>

The leadership of both countries classified the bilateral business partnership as strategic. King Hamad al Khalifa, King of Bahrain flagged up on numerous occasions the wide opportunities in the development of trade and industrial relations between the two countries: “Today Russia's potential is obvious, the country's leadership looks to the future without looking back”, he said.

4.2. Cooperation between Russia and Bahrain in the Provision of Regional Security

During the 2000s, Russia, first of all, sought to avoid the risk of inadequate disproportionate alliances. By the middle of the second decade of the 21st century, Moscow managed to build a system of constructive relations with almost all significant forces in the Middle East, despite their rivalry with each other and deep mutual distrust. To maintain such a status, it was required to avoid the temptation of excessive rapprochement with any one party, solidarization with only one narrative in an extremely ideologically divided region²⁷¹.

The formation of this fragile system of relationships was due to the goal of ensuring security and the desire to obtain a certain economic benefit. Back in the 1990s, Moscow was faced with an increasing threat from religious radical extremists both inside the country and in the post-Soviet space. It was first of all in the interests of Russia to deprive these extremist groups of ideological support from outside, both in finance and in human resources.

The lack of political stability in the broader Middle East has created fertile ground for the spread of extremist organizations around the world. As a result, Moscow has shown its readiness to support any forces capable of making a constructive contribution to ensuring stability in the region. In the context of general concern over the spread of radical extremism, Cairo, Damascus, Tehran, the moderately Islamist

²⁷¹ Katz M. Russia's Greater Middle East Policy: Securing Economic Interests, Courting Islam. *Russie.Nei.Visions* No. 49. IFRI. April 2010.

regimes of Ankara and Gaza, as well as Amman and the Arabian Gulf were among the most eligible partners.

The escalation of tension in Syria and Yemen significantly influenced the position of the Arab countries of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf regarding security at both national and regional levels. As for the Syrian crisis, it underwent several transformations that turned the civil war in Syria into a full-fledged international conflict when the largest foreign players are now fully involved in the war.

Following a wave of protest movements in several countries of the Arab region in 2011, the states of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf made considerable efforts to improve relations with Russia. This strategy was caused, inter alia, by the notion that the US reduced its activity in the region, as a result of which the Gulf countries have sought to expand their strategic partnership with other leading international actors. For example, Saudi Arabia signed an investment agreement with Russia, continued cooperation between the two countries in the development of nuclear infrastructure²⁷², an agreement was reached to reduce oil production in the OPEC framework.

Bahrain supports the aspirations of the Geneva and Astana formats for the settlement of the conflict through the political process. Its involvement in the Syrian case is limited to providing funding for the construction of refugee camps and humanitarian support for the population of Syria²⁷³.

At the same time, due to the geographical proximity of Bahrain to the borders of Syria and Iraq, the problem of ensuring security is included in the list of priority tasks for the authorities in Manama, and in recent years Bahrain has demonstrated an obvious desire to increase military cooperation with Russia. So, in May 2015, an intergovernmental agreement was signed on military-technical cooperation between Russia and Bahrain.

²⁷² Saudi Arabia to Invest up to \$10 Billion in Russia [Electronic resource] // The Wall Street Journal. – URL: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/saudi-arabia-to-invest-up-to-10-billion-in-russia-1436198674?alg=y>

²⁷³ Aliboni R. The International Dimension of the Arab Spring // The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs. 2011. Vol. 46, No. 4. P. 5–9.

In December 2015, Moscow hosted talks between the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain. One of the issues on the agenda was the settlement of the Syrian crisis and the fight against terrorism. Shiekh Khaled bin Ahmed officially notified the Russian Foreign Ministry in the person of Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov about the program of real actions of the coalition of Islamic states formed at that time against terrorism on the initiative of Saudi Arabia²⁷⁴. The issue of the program of action of the Islamic Coalition against Terrorism was included in the agenda of Russian-Bahraini talks, because of Russia's own articulated security concept for the Arabian Gulf sub-region, which first introduced in the early 1990s. The proposals were based on the peaceful existence of Arabian Gulf countries in the conduct of mutually beneficial trade and economic cooperation, taking into account the strategic importance of the Arabian Gulf region in geopolitics and the world economy.

Promoting this initiative, Russia sought to understand to what extent a trustworthy dialogue between the Arab countries of the Gulf and Iran was possible. At the same time, permanent members of the UN Security Council, the League of Arab States and the European Union were invited to support the formation and implementation of the Russian concept of security in the Arabian Gulf region. The Russian initiative was in particular supported by the Kingdom of Bahrain, but it was never realized due to the existing disagreements between Saudi Arabia and Iran, as well as the reluctance of the United States to see Russia's active presence in the traditional area of American interests.

The 2015 negotiations in Moscow confirmed the existing in both countries of the view that the past years demonstrated the need for systematic Russian-Bahraini cooperation. The main reasons were, on the one hand, the aggravation of the threat of terrorism as a common challenge for the Arab states of the Arabian Gulf as well as for Russia and other countries in the world.

²⁷⁴ الروسية الغاز شركة مع ل لتعاون ت تطلع ال بحرين: رجدةال خاوزير... لاف روف مع صحافي مؤتمرفي [At a press conference with Foreign Minister Lavrov: Bahrain seeks to cooperate with a Russian gas company] [Electronic resource] // Al-Wasat. – URL: <http://www.alwasatnews.com/news/1057694.html>

Immediate steps towards rapprochement between Russia and Bahrain in the field of security were made in September 2016 during the visit of King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalif to Moscow. This was the second bilateral meeting at such a high level during one calendar year: previously the leaders of the two countries met in Sochi in February 2016 and agreed to increase cooperation in energy, trade, investment and financial spheres. The King of Bahrain arrived at a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin to discuss specific tasks to build a coordinated foreign policy on “tensions” in the Middle East in the framework of bilateral cooperation, as well as the security situation in the region²⁷⁵.

During the visit to Moscow, the King of Bahrain also visited the international military technical forum "Army-2016". The participation of Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalif in this exhibition is notable for the fact that the King paid special attention to Russian military equipment, because, according to the leader's statement, that Bahrain is interested in upgrading its own air defense systems. In particular, the king got acquainted with the Russian anti-aircraft missile systems S-300 and S-400. This interest is especially relevant in the light of the plans of the member countries of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf to reorganize the missile defense system, which are regularly discussed at multilateral meetings. The fast-growing market of the Arabian Gulf is clearly opening itself up to successful Russian enterprises operating in international markets²⁷⁶. In recent years, Bahrain has demonstrated a clear desire to increase military cooperation with Russia. As early as 2014 it became known that the Kingdom was the first customer of Russian anti-tank complexes "Cornet-EM." In January 2016, the King of Bahrain Hamad ibn Isa al-Khalifa, during the Bahrain International Airshow-2016 air show, visited the hangars of Sukhoi, Rosoboronexport and the Russian Helicopters holding, where he showed interest in the newest Russian T-50 fighter and to the Russian helicopters presented at the air show.

²⁷⁵ الأوسط الشرق في لروسيا ميا مهمما شريك كاتع تبريد حرينال: بوتين [Putin: Bahrain is an important partner of Russia in the Middle East] [Electronic resource] // Sputnik. – URL: <https://arabic.sputniknews.com/russia/201602081017391960/>

²⁷⁶ Экономическое и военно-техническое сотрудничество России и Бахрейна [Электронный ресурс] // РИА Новости. – URL: <https://ria.ru/spravka/20160208/1370305032.html>

However, the main topic of the talks was the issue of the security situation in the Middle East and North Africa, especially in the context of the fight against international terrorism. During the visit of the Bahraini King to Moscow, many Arab experts, in particular the director of the Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies of Bahrain expressed the opinion that the meeting between Vladimir Putin and the King of Bahrain marked a new step on the part of the Russian leadership in relations with the Arab states of the Arabian Gulf²⁷⁷.

Boris Dolgov, a researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, spoke about the positive prospects of the Russian-Bahraini military dialogue, as well as the strategic importance of cooperation with the Arab gulf countries for Russia. The expert noted that “although Bahrain is a member of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf and in one way or another is influenced by Saudi Arabia, the kingdom plays an independent role in the region both in terms of economic strategy and in political relations with other states”²⁷⁸.

However, the strong connection of Bahrain with GCC, whose main goal is assuring security in the Gulf region, and with Saudi Arabia implies the undoubted priority of Bahrain's agreements with other Arabian Gulf countries over cooperation with the Russian Federation. The agreements with Russia, one way or another, will be coordinated in terms of the general orientation of the political course of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf and must comply with it. In this connection, at the present stage the first place in Russian-Bahraini relations will be occupied by projects in the field of economy. At the same time, due to the mutual importance of such a dialogue and the parties' interest in military cooperation, it is impossible to completely exclude the possibility of expanding contacts between Moscow and Manama politically.

No wonder that when Russia managed to reach preliminary agreements with Saudi Arabia on stabilizing the world oil market, there were signs of a rapprochement

²⁷⁷ Defence & Security News – Bahrain. // Army Recognition. [Electronic resource] –URL: http://www.armyrecognition.com/october_2015_global_defense_security_news_uk/bahrain_shows_interest_to_purchase_russian_pantsir-s1_short-range_air_defense_system_12810154.html

²⁷⁸ GCC-Russia Relations: A GCC Perspective // Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies. January 16, 2017

between Russia and Bahrain. It was at this moment that there appeared real prospects for establishing mutual understanding between the two countries on a wide range of issues: from energy and medicine to military-technical cooperation and joint work to resolve the Syrian crisis²⁷⁹.

The annual forum “Manama Dialogue” is the only one in the region and a very important discussion platform for a free exchange of views on the main problems of the Arab world. Among the forum participants are the Foreign Ministers of Great Britain, Canada, Egypt, Iraq and the United Arab Emirates, as well as the Ministers of Defense of France, Great Britain and Yemen. In 2015, the participants were the President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, in 2016, Prime Minister of Great Britain Theresa May became one of the main guests in 2014. Within two days, experts, politicians and military from around the world discuss key issues that concern the region - measures to combat terrorist groups, the situation in Syria and Iraq²⁸⁰.

Optimism regarding the future of Russian-Bahraini relations is confirmed by political signals coming from Bahrain. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom, Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmad Bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, said at a news conference following the Russian-Bahraini talks that the parties discussed the possibilities for a strategic dialogue between Moscow and the Arabian Gulf countries. Then the head of the Bahraini Foreign Ministry said the importance of the role that Russia plays in the settlement of the civil war in Syria and the prevention of the humanitarian crisis in that country²⁸¹.

If we carefully study the geopolitical dynamics in the Middle East, it becomes obvious that the idea of a deep crisis in the relations between Russia and the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf, in particular in the field of security, is erroneous. To date, it can be stated with certainty that the successful struggle of the Russian military against terrorism and the clearly articulated desire to adhere to

²⁷⁹ Экономическое и военно-техническое сотрудничество России и Бахрейна [Электронный ресурс] // РИА Новости. – URL: <https://ria.ru/spravka/20160208/1370305032.html>

²⁸⁰ Defence & Security News – Bahrain. // Army Recognition. [Electronic resource] – URL: http://www.armyrecognition.com/october_2015_global_defense_security_news_uk/bahrain_shows_interest_to_purchase_russian_pantsir-s1_short-range_air_defense_system_12810154.html

²⁸¹ GCC-Russia Relations: A GCC Perspective // Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies. January 16, 2017

the norms of international law have increased Moscow's geopolitical influence in the region of the Middle East, as well as the prospects for establishing a strategic partnership with Bahrain.

For Bahrain, the support from Russia, which it views as one of the world's leading powers, the security problems in the Gulf region, is of fundamental importance. Bahrain is one of those states in the region that are very concerned about the possibility of Iran's appearance of nuclear weapons. It is no coincidence that the joint Russian-Bahraini communiqué also called for support for efforts aimed at combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear disarmament, as well as supporting the call for the transformation of the Middle East into a zone free of weapons of mass destruction²⁸².

The positions of Russia and Bahrain on issues of mutual interest on the bilateral and international agenda are recorded in the Statement on the Further Development of Friendly Relations between the Russian Federation and the Kingdom of Bahrain, adopted on December 1, 2008. It reflects, in particular, the coincidence or proximity of our countries' approaches to the majority global and regional problems. The Bahraini side also supports dialogue with Russia on issues such as the Arab-Israeli settlement, the situation around Iraq and Iran, countering international terrorism and other challenges and threats. Bahrain positively perceives the Russian concept of providing security in the Arabian Gulf zone. In October 2008 representatives of special units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Bahrain took part as observers in international exercises on the antiterrorist issues in Sochi. The Russian delegation led by the Head of the Apparatus of the Antiterrorist Committee, Deputy Director of the Russian Federal Security Service, V. Kuleshov took part in the international forum and exhibition on regional security in Manama on 24-25 February 2009²⁸³.

²⁸² Визит короля Бахрейна в Москву [Электронный ресурс] // Институт Ближнего Востока. – URL: <http://www.iimes.ru/rus/stat/2008/07-12-08.htm>

²⁸³ Российско-Бахрейнские отношения [Электронный ресурс] // Официальный сайт Министерства иностранных дел Российской Федерации. – URL: <http://www.mid.ru/ru/maps/bh/-/category/10498#relation-popup>

4.3. Main Directions of the Foreign Policy Course and Peculiarities of the Internal Political Situation of the Kingdom of Bahrain and their Influence on Russian-Bahraini Relations

Historical experience inevitably influences the process of formation and development of relatively “young” interstate relations. Intensification in the relationship between Moscow and Manama refers to the period of modern history, and bilateral contacts in many spheres are at the embryonic stage. The desire of both sides to bring cooperation to a new level is not in a vacuum, but in a dynamic international situation, which implies a certain reaction from traditional partners of Bahrain, both regional and global.

The Kingdom of Bahrain, as has been already mentioned, is the general headquarters of the 5th US Navy fleet and the accompanying infrastructure. The Arabian Gulf, the Red and the Arabian Seas are part of the responsibility of this element of the global presence of the United States. The operational groups of the 5th Fleet are based on the naval base in Manama, and there is also a regional advanced command post for the US Special Operations Forces. Air Force Base Sheikh Isa, where the command post of the US Air Force is located, is used for patrolling the Arabian Gulf and protecting transit traffic. These bases were of key importance during the period of the Afghan and Iraqi campaigns, and the level of trust between Bahrain and the United States was high. So much so that in 2001, President George W. Bush decided to grant Manama the right to purchase weapons of the same modifications as NATO members.

To ensure the actions of military aviation, the Bahraini air traffic control center is used. In Bahrain, up to three and a half thousand US troops are deployed. In 2004, a free trade agreement was signed between Washington and Manama, within the framework of which it was decided to include the fuel and energy sector, the

development of joint technologies for desalination of sea water, coordination of actions in the financial sector and purchases of aluminum rolled products²⁸⁴.

It is necessary to note that Washington is focused on the same areas of interaction with Manama, which are of interest for Moscow. Nevertheless, there has not been a direct clash, for example, in the tender purchases of Russian and American companies. Until recently, teams for concluding contracts for the supply of military-technological equipment, which seemed very promising for the Kremlin, were automatically sent to the United States or Great Britain. However, since 2016, the King of Bahrain Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa began to show interest in Russian military equipment. Moreover, after visiting the Russian forum "Army-2016" the head of Bahrain discussed the purchase of the S-400 air defense system with the Russian President Vladimir Putin, and even invited Deputy Prime Minister D. Rogozin, who is in charge of the defense bloc.

The engine of progress in the domain of military-technical cooperation between Russia and Bahrain is the intergovernmental agreement on military-technical cooperation signed in early 2015. And yet, experts on the region assume that the process of reaching an agreement on the delivery of the S-400 will not be easy²⁸⁵.

In addition, Russian companies often offer a very advantageous package of additional services when concluding a deal, which accompanies all major contracts. With access to the Bahraini market, representatives of military industrial holdings not only represent a product line and negotiate with existing operators and potential customers of equipment from the Middle East and North Africa, but also offer opportunities for post-sale service organization

For example, one of the key areas of sales will be the development of an integrated software system that provides high-speed, high-quality maintenance of helicopter equipment throughout its life cycle. The fleet of Soviet-Russian and Russian-made helicopters in the countries of the Near and Middle East today numbers more than

²⁸⁴ U.S. Relations With Bahrain [Electronic resource] // U.S. Department of State. – URL: <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/26414.htm>

²⁸⁵ Подгорнова Н.П. «Арабская весна» в странах Магриба / Институт Ближнего Востока. М., 2014. 80 с. ISBN 978-5-89394-249-1

500 civilian and military vehicles. The ability to perform maintenance and repairs in your region will allow operators to ensure the correct operation of helicopter equipment and reduce costs in a timely manner²⁸⁶.

Cooperation with Washington for the monarchies of the Gulf is not limited to bilateral relations. In 2002, Bahrain, the third most important Arab country after Egypt and Jordan, was granted the status of a "significant US ally outside NATO". It is known that with the individual Arab countries, the North Atlantic Alliance exchanges intelligence information, while Kuwait and Manama are participants in multilateral contact with NATO to exchange information in the framework of international efforts to combat terrorism. Also, the officers of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf are trained according to NATO standards. Since 2007, the Council's officers have been trained at the Middle East Faculty of the NATO Military College in Rome. The NATO School in Germany and the College in Italy train representatives of those countries of the Middle East who are participants in programs and joint projects on the issues of peacemaking, arms control, security and contingency planning²⁸⁷.

The foreign policy course of Bahrain is also bound up with that of Great Britain. The Kingdom is a former British protectorate, the imperial heritage not only allowed London to build strong ties with the leadership of the Arab state, but also influences the perception of Britain's role in the current political course of the Bahraini leadership. Hence, the announcement that the United Kingdom will formalize its presence in the Gulf through the construction of a naval base in Bahrain.

Strongly expressed orientation to the views of the ruling elites in building their foreign policy towards the countries of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf does not contribute to reducing the tension on the regional security system in the region. So, on December 7, 2016, speaking at a meeting of the Cooperation Council in Bahrain, British Prime Minister T. May reassured the audience that Britain would help its traditional allies to rebuff, as she put it, "Iranian aggression"

²⁸⁶ «Ka-52» Russia prepares Egyptian naval forces for confrontation in the Middle East [Electronic resource] // Sputnik. – URL: https://arabic.sputniknews.com/arab_world/201604031018157984/

²⁸⁷ UK admits training Bahrain police in 'public order' tactics [Электронный ресурс] // Middle East Eye. – URL: <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/canadian-firm-sells-bahrain-software-used-censor-internet-report-1693000193>

in the region. This approach, in the opinion of the Russian leadership, can serve as an excuse for achieving tactical advantages²⁸⁸.

For the Russian Federation, when forming new areas of cooperation with Bahrain, it is necessary to take into account the factor of influence of the Saudi counterparties. Promising for multilateral cooperation in this capacity is the global oil and gas market. When the price of oil was high, the oil powers did not need cooperation in oil production. However, at the moment when the world economy is unstable, Russia and the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf are forced to develop effective cooperation in the sphere of deep processing of oil and gas, in various fields of petrochemistry and in a number of other sectors, as well as in agriculture. This is the only way to avoid the dependence of their national economies on oil exports. Russia can actively cooperate with GCC countries in this realm.

It is obvious that radical extremist groups, first of all ISIS, threaten the stability, national security and territorial integrity of not only Syria, but also other countries of the region, including Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, the countries of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf. The leadership of ISIS voiced the goal of expanding its presence in the territory of these states. Perhaps, this situation arose because of the lack of understanding of the political situation in the region, underestimation of the threat emanating from radical Islamism, and the priority of short-term benefits. An increase in the number of radical Sunni groups, such as ISIS, who openly threaten to “enter Mecca and Medina”, may lead to the spread of terrorist activities in Saudi Arabia and other countries of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf, as well as their destabilization²⁸⁹.

Russia managed to stay above the bout, that is, in a favorable position relative to other parties to the conflict, however, further balancing around the status quo may not be possible because of the high likelihood of an escalation of tension along the Saudi-Iranian line.

²⁸⁸ Аль-Тамими Х. Сотрудничество между Россией и Бахрейном в области обеспечения региональной безопасности // Вестник МГИМО-Университета. 2017. 4(55). С. 194-209. DOI 10.24833/2071-8160-2017-4-55-194-209

²⁸⁹ UK admits training Bahrain police in 'public order' tactics [Электронный ресурс] // Middle East Eye. – URL: <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/canadian-firm-sells-bahrain-software-used-censor-internet-report-1693000193>

CONCLUSION

Summing up the conducted research, we can draw the following conclusions.

The Middle East at the present stage of the development of the world order is one of the most important geostrategic areas on the political map of the world. In this region, the vectors of interests of several centers of power intersect. They covertly or officially and quite bluntly declare it a designated zone of their national aspirations (sometimes the term “concern” is used). Within the framework of a new actively globalizing space, the conflict of national interests of the main actors becomes the cause of events shaping the geopolitical configuration of the Middle East, on which, in turn, the variability of the entire architecture of international relations hinges.

Mass protests, that engulfed the Middle East in 2011-2012 (the so called “Arab Spring”), gave impetus to the "tectonic shift" in the Middle East. There is a total reconstruction underway of the entire system of cultural, social, economic and political relations. It is caused mainly by internal reasons - both political and cultural-civilizational, but its connection to the most disturbing trends of global development is also obvious. The loss of controllability of international processes, the return of the factor brute force into them, the increase in the role of chance and adventurous decision making, the strengthening of the world periphery, the crisis of national states and identities find here a concentrated expression.

Under the circumstances, the Kingdom of Bahrain has been noticeably revisiting its foreign policy course in contrast to the period preceding 2011. In general, this transformation, in the author's opinion, manifests itself in:

- pursuing a policy which is much less dependent on the foreign policy course of the leader of the Council of Cooperation of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf - Saudi Arabia;
- expressing views on the Syrian crisis, different from the positions of most countries of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf;

- conducting a course aimed at building closer bilateral trade and economic relations with Russia;
- diversification of contacts regarding the resolution of the “Iran issue” through cooperation with Russia in the field of regional and national security;
- pursuing a more open and potentially multi-vector economic policy than in most Arab monarchies of the Arabian Gulf.

Almost all conflict situations in the Middle East tend to be rapidly internationalized. Military intervention drew particular attention to the new “old” role of the global powers, which seem to be increasingly influencing the regional situation and contributing to the formation of trends to reduce the influence of regional forces. In fact, the deepening involvement of global forces in the confrontation in the Middle East has not only not led to the marginalization of regional actors (including non-state actors). It has also “brought home” to the global powers’ the idea of enhanced responsibility for recreating the region on new conceptual and normative grounds. In a sense, it worked for a more willing embracing of the idea of Russia’s greater involvement in the region. All this creates favorable conditions for elevating Russian-Bahraini relations to a new level. At the same time, their approaches to the region and the vision of its future not only do not coincide, but often turn out to be mutually exclusive. Moreover, it also has conflicting views of the region’s development with most of other local and global powers.

Russia's position in these conditions is centered around the doctrinal statement that the new security system in the region should be inclusive; all states, including the nearest neighbors of the Arab world - Israel, Iran, Turkey should become its participants. An alternative option, which experts say, is the creation of a defense alliance of Arab countries in the format of the "Arab analogue of NATO" led by the Sunni regimes of the Arabian Gulf. It is necessary to note here that the option of replicating the archaic system of the Cold War in the Middle East, contrasting the Arab world with its traditional regional opponents, will not bring security to the region, either directly or indirectly, only to accentuate and exacerbate current contradictions.

Bahrain belongs to the category of smaller countries, its territorial and demographic resources are not great, in addition, the kingdom occupies a central geographical location among the monarchies of the Arabian Gulf, contributing to the “objectification” of this state in the local system of interstate interaction. The instability of state institutions of power is largely due to a short, by historical standards, period of sovereign existence. The combination of these factors, reinforced by the traditional orientation toward Britain and the United States in the matter of building a political course, predetermines the foreign policy of Manama, based on constant balancing among the larger players in the international arena, especially in matters of security.

Based on the analysis of sources and literature, the key features and characteristics of the current stage in the political and economic relations, as well as bilateral cooperation in the field of building a regional security system, between Russia and Bahrain have been revealed.

At the beginning of the new century, Bahrain was confronted with structural problems in the economy, characteristic of countries prone to the so-called “Dutch disease”. This prompted the authorities to start developing technologies for processing and distilling oil. Bahrain has become the only state of the Arabian Gulf importing crude oil. It was the transition from oil extraction to its processing and distillation that increased the flow of foreign capital into the country and turned Bahrain into an international banking center. Nevertheless, the economy of Bahrain, like the Russian one, still remains largely dependent on the influence of external factors, namely, on the prices of hydrocarbons. Both Moscow and Manama pursue a policy aimed at reducing the direct dependence on commodity prices. In this context, both countries have continuously displayed interest in exchange of experience in addressing the issues of creating and managing free economic zones, ports and other infrastructure, as both capitals look at them as potential ways of diversifying their respective national economies. This makes it possible to predict the pooling of efforts to develop appropriate programs for economic restructuring based exchange of experience on work already done. In addition, it helps the Russian state achieve multi-vector consolidation in the region, working towards complementarity of political and economic efforts.

However, the resource of time plays against Moscow in this situation. For example, Western and Chinese competitors managed to squeeze out Russian business in metallurgy and in the construction of energy infrastructure in Algeria, where a significant part of the national importance was built with the assistance of the USSR: a metallurgical plant in Annaba, TPP in the city of Žižel, the Alrar-Tinfueye gas pipeline -Hassi Messaoud, the dams "Beni-Zid" and "Tiledit", the facilities of the metallurgical plant in Al-Hajar.

What we observe now is a situation when the use by Russian competitors of lobbyists in the Arab countries, defending not only the business interests of companies, but also the political aspirations of the state, is one-sided because of the absence of such efforts from Moscow; the continuing volatile situation in some countries of the Middle East and North Africa makes very high investments in the economies of the countries of the region highly risky; the worsening of Russia's political relations with some Arab countries due to the divergence of assessments of the situation in Syria negatively affects regional security.

Cooperation with Bahrain will allow these contradictions to be leveled and resolved through a positive example of interaction that may later on bring about appropriate changes in the views of the leadership of the countries of the subregion regarding the Russian global policy of supporting allies and non-interference in the sovereign affairs of other states.

At present Russia does not occupy leading positions in the economic and trade ties of Bahrain, however it has a wide range of mutual interests, which gives both countries the prospect of establishing a strong economic partnership, since the potential of mutually beneficial cooperation covers several large areas. The main areas of bilateral Russian-Bahraini cooperation at the present stage are energy, pharmacological industry, agriculture, financial sector, civil and space aircraft construction, and the metallurgical industry. The Kingdom is also interested in increasing its production capabilities in the military field. It should be noted that the potential of bilateral trade and economic relations has not yet been realized, despite some positive dynamics.

In the field of oil and gas, cooperation in the use of advanced Russian technologies to increase the productivity of oil wells, reconnaissance in transit zones and at great depth under conditions of increased complexity, the supply of liquefied gas, construction and operation of gas pipelines is paramount.

Prospects of Russian companies on the market of the Cooperation Council can be estimated as quite favorable. In the context of the depreciation of the ruble, Russian products and services are becoming more price competitive. Bahrain's commitment to expanding the traditional list of foreign economic partners creates additional opportunities of market entry for the Russian suppliers interested in contacts that imply the sale of products with high added value.

A strong long-term cooperation with the Kingdom of Bahrain has a strategic political implication for Russia, given the geographical position of the Kingdom and its traditional relations with Saudi Arabia and the United States. One cannot deny the influence of Saudi Arabia, the leader of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Arabian Gulf and the largest importer for Bahrain, on the latter's foreign policy. Saudi Arabia is one of the leading actors in the Middle East region more generally, including its strong position in OPEC. The position of the representatives of the Saudi Kingdom has a significant degree of influence on the current issues for the Russian Federation - from pricing in the oil market and to the regional security system. It is through bilateral cooperation with Bahrain, the use of its nascent status of the negotiating platform to stabilize the Middle Eastern highly conflict-prone space, that Russia will be able to maintain its own positions in the Gulf subregion and the Middle East in general. All elements of regional security in the Middle East are interrelated and interdependent, respectively. This means that the security of the Gulf countries in isolation from the rest of the region is impossible.

At the same time, it is in Bahrain that the main base of the United States' fifth fleet is deployed. And in spite of partial distancing from the fears of its Arab allies of normalizing relations with Iran during Obama's presidency, Washington continues to be a key guarantor of the national security of small and medium-sized states in the Gulf region Bay. A clear confirmation of this thesis is provided by the "backward drift" of

the administration of the US President Donald Trump, whose foreign policy team consists of ardent opponents of Iran and a number of supporters of toughening sanctions against Russia.

In this situation, Moscow will not manage to build relations from the position of unilateral domination, because the US is unlikely to sacrifice its traditional allies. The Bahraini side, in the course of bilateral meetings, supports the development of a dialogue with Russia on such issues as the Arab-Israeli settlement, the situation around Iraq and Iran, countering international terrorism and other challenges and threats.

Bahrain positively perceives the Russian concept of providing security in the Arabian Gulf zone. The interest of Bahrain in expanding all-round contacts with Russia is also welcome in Moscow, which is trying to find reliable partners in the Middle East in the light of unstable relations with Turkey, as well as lack of strategic mutual understanding with Saudi Arabia.

In the long-term period, in addition to creating an inclusive dialogue format and developing communication channels, an important problem in bilateral Russian-Bahraini relations is the problem of determining which social forces can be recognized as legitimate in the forthcoming transformation of the region. For Bahrain, this direction is particularly important because of the very high polarization of society within the country and the tendency for regional actors to work with dissatisfied segments of the population to pursue their own interests. Interaction in this direction implies identifying what ideological trends are unacceptable because of their proximity to radical extremism and terrorism, and with which trends, including, possibly, Islamist groups, it is worth building a dialogue.

Russia advocates a different, less antagonistic agenda, since events can be observed at its borders, to which such hateful rhetoric has led in the past and what independent destructive dynamics it acquires with a change of generations.

Cooperation with Bahrain for Russia is part of an important trend that was outlined in 2016 - the expansion of the circle of partners in the Middle East. According to V. Naumkin, the high level of cooperation with Egypt, Israel the agreements on limiting the level of oil production with the OPEC countries, including Saudi Arabia

and, of course, the normalization of relations with Turkey (formation Astana format of the Syrian settlement). In this context, the scale of the trend is a sign of its stability and duration. The importance of the outlined prospects for the Russian-Bahraini rapprochement is also determined by the mutual need for states to build ties with actors not included in the traditional aura of influence and cooperation. Diversification of contacts in the emerging geopolitical reality is not only a guarantee of presence in key regions, but for individual players it is also a matter of preserving sovereignty.

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