

What Accounts for the Saudi Regime's Hysterical Belligerence? The Agony of Death

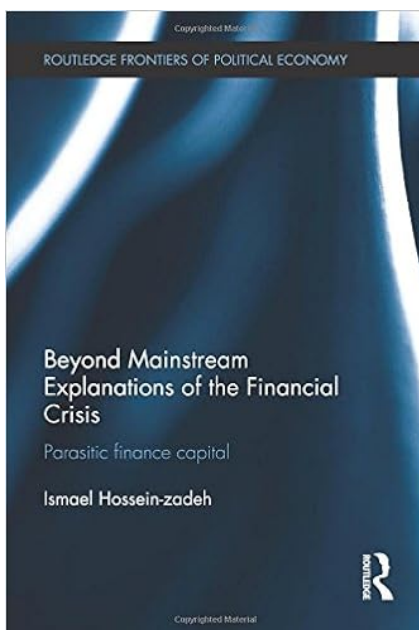
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The purpose of this essay is to explain, not describe, the frantically belligerent behavior of the Saudi regime. The goal is not to delve into what the regime and its imperialist enablers have done, or are doing; that unsavory record of atrocities, both at home and abroad, is abundantly exposed by other writers/commentators [1]. It is, rather, to focus on why they have done or are doing what they do.

In the Throes of the Agony of Death

The Saudi rulers find themselves in a losing race against time, or history. Although in denial, they cannot but realize the historical reality that the days of ruling by birthright are long past, and that the House of Saud as the ruler of the kingdom by inheritance is obsolete.



This is the main reason for the Saudi's frantically belligerent behavior. The hysteria is tantamount to the frenzy of the proverbial agony of a prolonged death. It explains why they react so harshly to any social or geopolitical development at home or in the region that they perceive as a threat to their rule.

It explains why, for example, they have been so intensely hostile to the Iranian revolution that terminated the rule of their dictatorial counterpart, the Shah of Iran, in that country. In the demise of the Shah they saw their own downfall.

It also explains their hostility to the Arab Spring uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia that ended the perpetual rule of Hosni Mubarak in Cairo and that of Ben Ali in Tunis. Panicked by the

specter of the spread of those revolutionary upheavals to other countries in the region, especially the kingdoms and sheikdoms in the Persian Gulf area, the Saudi rulers and their well-known patrons abroad promptly embarked on “damage control.” (The not-so-secret patrons of the House of Saud include mainly the military-industrial-security-intelligence complex, Neocon forces and the Israel lobby.)

The ensuing agenda of containment, derailment and preemption of similar revolutionary upheavals has been comprehensive and multi-prong. Among other schemes, the agenda has included the following:

- (1) brutally cracking down on peaceful opposition at home, including summary executions and ferocious beheadings;
- (2) pursuing destabilizing policies in places such as Syria, Iran, Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen by funding and/or arming rabidly violent Wahhabi/Salafi jihadists and other mercenaries;
- (3) trying to sabotage genuine international efforts to reduce tensions and bloodshed in Syria, Yemen and other places;
- (4) trying to sabotage the nuclear agreement and other tension-reducing efforts between Iran and Western powers;
- (5) pursuing policies that would promote tensions and divisions along ethnic, nationalist and religious lines in the region, such as the provocative beheading of the prominent and peaceful Shi’a critic Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr ; and
- (6) seeking “chaos to cover terror tracks,” as the well-known expert in international affairs Finian Cunningham put it [2].

To the dismay of the Saudi regime, while these depraved policies have succeeded in causing enormous amounts of death and destruction in the region, they have failed in achieving their objectives: stability in the Saudi kingdom and security for its regime. On the contrary, the reckless policies of trying to eliminate its perceived opponents have backfired: the regime is now more vulnerable than four or five years ago when it embarked (in the immediate aftermath of the 2011 Arab Spring revolutions) on the vainly aggressive policy of trying to eliminate the supposed dangers to its rule.

The illegal war on Yemen, carried out with the support of the United States, has turned from what was supposed to be a cakewalk into a stalemate. Not only has it solidified and emboldened the sovereignty-aspiring Houthis resistance to the Saudi-led aggression, it has also considerably benefited al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Likewise, the War on Syria, largely funded by the Saudi regime, has fallen way short of its goal of unseating President Assad. Here too the aggression has handsomely benefited a motley array of mercenary and jihadi groups, especially those affiliated with Jabhat al-Nusra, known as al-Qaeda in Syria, and the so-called Islamic State.

In both of these countries the power and influence of the Saudi regime and its partners in crime is in decline while the resistance is gradually gaining the upper hand, especially in Syria—thanks largely to the support from Russia and Iran.

Perhaps more tragically for the Saudi regime, has been the failure of its “oil war” against Russia and Iran. Recklessly saturating global markets with unlimited supply of oil in the face of dwindling demand and increased production in the U.S. has reduced the price of oil by more than 60 percent. This has led to an officially-declared budget deficit of \$98 billion for the current fiscal year, which has forced the regime to curb social spending and/or economic safety net programs. There are indications that the unprecedented belt-tightening economic policies are creating public discontent, which is bound to make the regime even more vulnerable.

A bigger blowback from the regime’s “oil war,” however, goes beyond economic problems at home. More importantly, it has led to an unintended consequence that tends to make the regime less secure by reducing its economic and geopolitical worth to its imperialist benefactors. Cheap and abundant energy in global markets is bound to undermine the indispensability of the House of Saud to its imperial patrons. In using oil as a weapon against their rivals, the spoiled big babies of Western powers in the Arabian Peninsula may have pushed their luck too far.

Combined, these blowbacks and ominous consequences of the Saudi regime’s belligerent policies have made the regime and its allies in the region more vulnerable while giving strength and credibility to the resisting forces in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Lebanon, supported by Iran and Russia. These unintended consequences of the Saudi rulers’ aggressions explain why they are panic-stricken and behave hysterically.

References

[1] See, for example, Finian Cunningham, “[Saudis Seek Chaos to Cover Terror Tracks](#)”; Jim Lobe, “[Neocons Defend Saudi Arabia](#)”; and Pepe Escobar, “[Fear And Loathing in the House of Saud](#).”

[2] Ibid.

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