

The Geopolitics of Energy & Terrorism

Part 4

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Table of Contents

Introduction

The Assassination of the Saudi King in 1975

The So Called Wars of Religion

Serbia Between Russia and Turkey

The Economic & Military Power of Germany and Japan

The Alliance Between Iran and Al-Qaeda

The Strategy of the Italian Prime Minister

Why ISIS Prefers Turkey and not Saudi Arabia

The Map of the Baghdad Pact

The Map of the Cold War Alliances

Russia's Oil Revenues

A Comparison Between Cold War 1 and Cold War 2

The Natural Gas Production of Iran and Qatar

Does Obama Support the Arab Spring in Saudi Arabia?

The Creation of Syria and Iraq

From Dagestan to Syria

Top LNG Exporters

The Ankara Terrorist Attack (February 2016)

The United States has Spent 35 Billion \$ in Afghanistan

Saudi Arabia Faces the Arab Spring

The European Division over Nord Stream 2

Can China Afford to Finish the War in the Middle East?

Introduction

The following chapters are independent essays that were written between July 2015 and February 2016. They appear in random order, and therefore they do not have to be read in the order they appear.

The issue in all the essays is the connection between the energy policies of various countries, their foreign policies, and the wars that break out at various parts of the globe, since all three are closely related. I describe many economic interests and many alliances in my essays. But alliances change and so do economic interest. Therefore what is more important for the reader is to have an idea of the global resources i.e. oil and natural gas in my essays, because global resources change at a much lower pace than economic interests and economic alliances.

The alliances and conflicts I describe in my essays might not exist in the near future, but if you have an idea of the global resources you will be able to see the alliances and the economic interests that will exist in the future.

I.A.

18.2.2016

The Assassination of the Saudi King in 1975

The Saudi King Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (King Faisal) was murdered on March 1975 by his nephew Prince Faisal bin Musaid bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. There are various explanations about why the Prince murdered the King. According to one of them the Prince revenged the assassination of his brother Prince Khalid bin Musaid al Saud. Prince was shot by the Saudi police during demonstrations in the 60s, when many Saudis were demonstration against the Saudi King's decision to allow the use of tv in Saudi Arabia. The assassin of King Faisal was sentenced to death and publicly beheaded.

Picture 1 King Faisal (1964-1975)



The assassinated King Faisal had become King in 1964 by forcing his elder brother King Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (King Saud) to resign. After his dethronement King Saud was exiled, and he went to Egypt, where he stood by the side of the socialist Egyptian dictator Gamal Nasser, who was fighting Saudi Arabia. For Gamal Nasser and Saudi Arabia see “The Intra-Arab War for Oil 1950-1970”.

<https://iakal.wordpress.com/2015/06/09/the-intra-arab-oil-war-1950-1970/>

After a while King Saud went to Greece where he died from natural causes in 1969. This was not the only time that members of the Saud family had collaborated with the Egyptian dictator against Saudi Arabia. In 1958 the “Free Princes Movement” was established by Talal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and other members of the royal family. They were inspired by the Free Officer Movement, which was the organization established by socialist officers of the Egyptian army in the 50s, with Gamal Nasser in charge, who later overturn the pro-Western King and aligned Egypt with the Soviet Union. The members of the Saud family who established the Free Prince Movement lived in Egypt for a while, until they were offered prestigious positions in Saudi Arabia and decided to return.

The Saud family has thousands of members. The founder of the third Saudi State, Abdulaziz ibn Abdul Rahman ibn Faisal ibn Turki ibn Abdullah ibn Muhammad Al Saud, had approximately 50 sons and 100 daughters. Each son has many wives and kids himself. Most Princes have some form of power i.e. in business, in religion, in the army, in the Saudi bureaucracy etc. There is a constant power struggle in Saudi Arabia, and the King very often

has to create new roles to keep happy members of the Saudi family who are popular and could create problems.

Αρθρα

“1975: Saudi's King Faisal assassinated”

http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/march/25/newsid_4233000/4233595.stm

“Free Princes Movement”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_Princes_Movement

“A history of treason - King Faisal bin Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud”, May 2014

18th, 19th Paragraphs

The struggle with King Saud continued in the background during this time. Taking advantage of the king's absence from the country for medical reasons in early 1963, Faisal began amassing more power for himself. He removed many of Saud's loyalists from their posts and appointed like-minded princes in key military and security positions, such as his brother Prince Abdullah, to whom he gave command of the National Guard in 1962. Upon King Saud's return, Prince Faisal demanded that he be made regent and that King Saud be reduced to a purely ceremonial role. In this, he had the crucial backing of the ulema, including a fatwa (edict) issued by the grand mufti of Saudi Arabia, a relative of Prince Faisal on his mother's side, calling on King Saud to accede to his brother's demands. In other words, Prince Faisal was backed by the religious establishment, which is headed by the Al Shaykh the descendants of Muhammad bin Abd al Wahab. In

addition, Prince Faisal sought authority through significant Sudairi backing which he cemented by his marriage to a Sudairi.

King Saud refused, however, and made a last-ditch attempt to retake executive powers, leading Prince Faisal to order the National Guard to surround King Saud's palace. His loyalists outnumbered and outgunned, King Saud relented, and on 4 March 1964, Prince Faisal was appointed regent. A meeting of the elders of the royal family and the ulema was convened later that year, and a second fatwa was decreed by the grand mufti, calling on King Saud to abdicate the throne in favor of his brother. The royal family supported the fatwa and immediately informed King Saud of their decision. King Saud, by now shorn of all his powers, agreed, and Prince Faisal was proclaimed king on 2 November 1964. Shortly thereafter, Saud bin Abdulaziz went into exile in Greece.

37th, 38th Paragraphs

One theory for the murder was avenging the death of Prince Khalid bin Musa'id, the brother of Prince Faisal. King Faisal instituted modern and secular reforms that led to the installation of television, which provoked violent protest, one which was led by Prince Khalid, who during the course of an attack on a television station was shot dead by a policeman.

Prince Faisal, who was captured directly after the attack, was officially declared insane. But following the trial, a panel of Saudi medical experts decided that Faisal was sane when he gunned the king down. The nation's high religious court convicted him of regicide and sentenced him to execution. Despite Faisal's dying request that the life of his assassin be spared, he was beheaded in the public square in Riyadh. The public execution took place on 18 June 1975 at 4:30 pm—three hours before sundown—before a throng of thousands at the Al Hukm Palace (Palace of Justice).

<http://islamtimes.org/en/doc/article/385050/>

“Faisal of Saudi Arabia :Struggle with King Saud”

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faisal_of_Saudi_Arabia#Struggle_with_King_Saud

The So-Called Wars of Religion

Very often you hear people talking about wars of religion, for both the wars of the 20th and the 21st centuries. I would like to give some examples about why it is very wrong to describe these wars as wars of religion. At the following map I have marked with red the West Central Asia, a region predominantly Muslim, which came under Russian control in the 19th century, and remained under Russian control until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. East Central Asia, also a region with Muslim majority, today called the Xin Jiang Province of China, came under Chinese control and remains under Chinese control to this very day. The Turkish nationalists call Xin Jiang “East Turkestan” and consider it as a region that should be under Turkish influence, as the rest of Central Asia should be according to them.

Map 1



At the map you can also see with green another predominantly Muslim region, which was controlled by the Ottomans until the First World War 1914-1918, when it came under British and French control, after the Ottoman defeat.

What we observe during the 20th and 21st century wars is that the Russian Christians supported the Muslims to drive away from the Middle East the English and French Christians. We also observe the English and the French Christians, and also the American Christians, supporting the Muslims of Pakistan and Afghanistan in order to drive away from Central Asia the Russian Christians. In all that we cannot see wars of religion. We can only see wars between the West and the Soviet Union. But if we do not look at the big picture, and we focus on regional wars, we might think that this is about wars of religion.

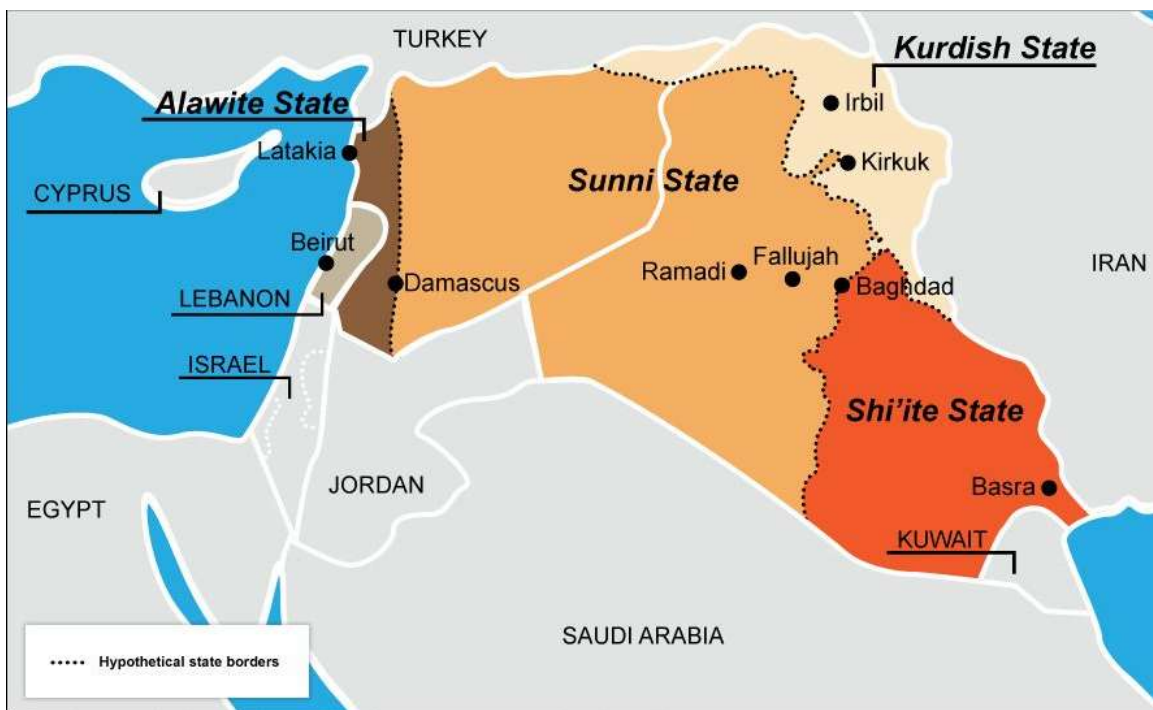
Today we might once more think that we are dealing with wars of religion, but that's not true either. For instance Russia, France, England and Germany might have started aligning against Turkey, which is the greatest military power of the Muslim world, but the United States, a Christian country, is a Turkish ally.

It is true that the Americans and the Turks have many problems in Syria and Iraq. In Syria the Americans support the Kurds of Syria and the Turks the Sunni Arabs of Syria. In Iraq the Americans support the Shiite Arabs and the Kurds, while the Turks support the Sunni Arabs of Iraq i.e. the people of

Saddam Hussein. But the Americans and the Turks remain united against Russia.

At the following map you can see the Sunni, Shiite (Shia), Alawite and Kurdish parts of Syria and Iraq.

Map 2 Alawites, Sunnis, Shiite (Shia) and Kurds of Syria and Iraq



Some analysts predict that the Americans might have to cooperate with Russia in the future, because all of the US allies in Europe are already doing it to some extent. This might happen in the future, but that's not what we see for now. Note that the cooperation between Russia, France, Germany and England is not a true alliance. They are just cooperating against Turkey and ISIS even though they have many differences among them.

For all of us who live in Europe, especially the ones living near Turkey, today's wars might again seem like wars of religion. But also note that the European left is aligned with the Islamists today. See Jeremy Corbyn in England (Labour Party), Pablo Iglesias in Spain (Podemos), Alexis Tsipras in Greece (SYRIZA) and many others. After the collapse of the Soviet Union most of the leftists turned to the Islamists. Actually the Islamists pay better than the Soviets used to.

Note that Islamic countries i.e. countries where the Koran is the law, fall into two categories i.e. the Islamic Monarchies and the Islamic Republics. Islamic Monarchies are countries where the Koran is the law and they have kings (monarchs) as their leaders. Islamic Republics are the equivalent of the communist countries in the Muslim World. Communist countries are called Democratic Republics or People's Republics, and the equivalent in the Muslim world is the so called "Islamic Republic". Communism almost bans religion and communism is normally not very welcome in the Muslim World.

People's Republics and Islamic Republics have almost the same economic models, but the Koran is the law of the Islamic Republic, while religion is almost non-existent in the People's Republics, where the law is the General Secretary of the Communist Party. Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait etc are Islamic Monarchies, and Iran, Pakistan and Sudan are Islamic Republics. Note that Turkey is in the process of becoming an

Islamic Republic. The Turkish Islamists came to power in 2003, and they are gradually moving Turkey from a secular state to an Islamic Republic.

Today the communist leaders are cooperating very well with Islamists leaders. I have mentioned before that a Greek Member of Parliament, Kostas Zouraris, an ex-member of the Greek Communist Party, and currently a member of the governing coalition, clearly supported the Jihadists who carried out the terrorist attacks in Paris (November 2015). Kostas Zouraris called the Jihadists fighters of freedom and dignity who fight against the French colonialists. All European communists would agree with him, even though they would not openly admit it.

Before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, communists would normally support socialist terrorists who were trained by Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, Hafez Assad in Syria, Saddam Hussein in Iraq, Yasser Arafat in West Bank and Gaza, Fidel Castro in Cuba etc. But now European communists also support terrorists who are trained by Islamic countries. It does not even have to be Islamic Republics, it might as well be Islamic monarchies. For example Qatar, an Islamic Monarchy with great influence on European left, is a famous supporter of Islamist terrorists.

The thing is that communists and Islamists see us in exactly the same way. They believe that our countries are not really countries but a sum of corporations, and that we are so corrupted and greedy that we would even be willing to sell our own mothers for money. Nothing from what I say seems to be a war of religion. The main element is always the economic and the cultural.

Serbia Between Russia and Turkey

Until 1991, Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, were united under one country i.e. Yugoslavia.

Map

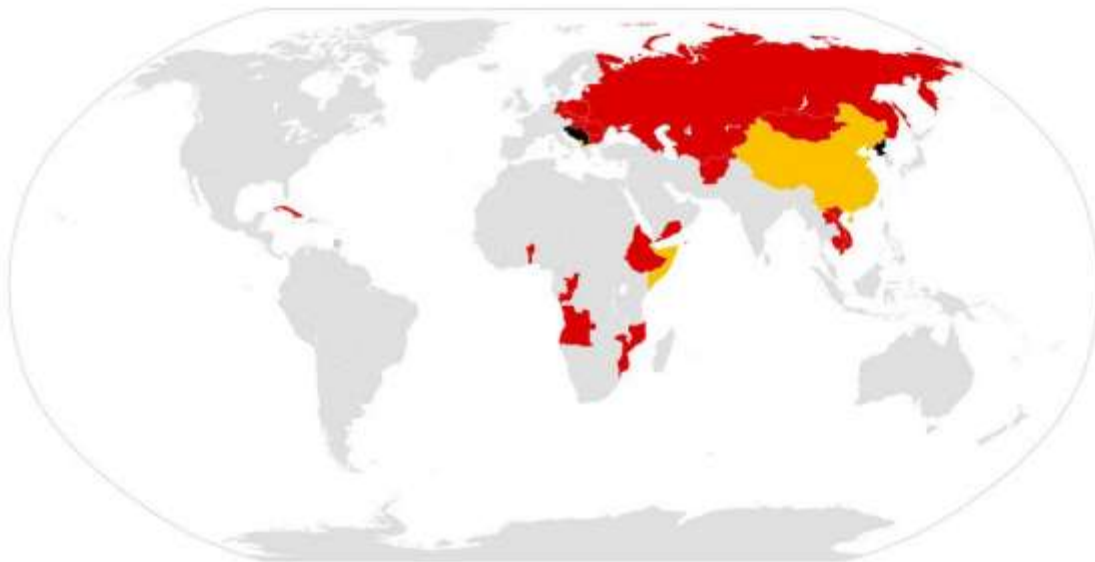


Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia are quite stable countries because their populations are relatively homogeneous. The Serbs are Christians Orthodox, and the Croats and Slovenes are Christian Catholics. In Montenegro and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Christians are the majority of the populations, but there is also a high percentage of Muslims. In Bosnia Muslims are the majority of the population but there is also a high percentage of Christians.

General Josip Broz Tito ruled all these countries under a regime of communist dictatorship, which did not allow religion and ethnicity to play a

role. Under Tito, Yugoslavia was a communist country which did not align itself with the Soviet Union or China, as most communist countries did. Yugoslavia and North Korea were the two communist countries which were not aligned with the Soviet Union or China, which were the main communist powers. At the following map you can see the communist world in 1980. With red color you can see the communist countries which were aligned with Russia, and with yellow the communist countries aligned with China. Yugoslavia and North Korea appear in black as non-aligned.

Map 2



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/54/Sino-Soviet_split_1980.svg/2000px-Sino-Soviet_split_1980.svg.png

Serbia is a close Russian ally, but she is also interested to join the European Union in order to receive economic aid, and currently there is a lot of tension between the EU and Russia. Serbia had heavily invested diplomatically and financially on the South Stream Pipeline project, which was promoted by

Russia, and which would transfer Russian natural gas to Bulgaria through the Black Sea. From Bulgaria the gas would go to both Southern and Northern Europe, and Serbia would be the main transit point of the northern route.

Map 3



In December 2014 Russia cancelled the South Stream Pipeline, and the Serbs were infuriated with the Russians, as you can read at the following Financial Times article titled “Anger and dismay as Russia scraps \$50bn gas plan”, December 2014.

10th Paragraph

Aleksandar Vučić, Serbia’s prime minister, told the country’s RTS channel that the decision was bad news for Belgrade and said he would urgently seek to speak with Mr Putin. “Serbia has been investing in this project for seven years, but now it has to pay the price of a clash between the great [powers],” he said.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/1a5954f0-7a41-11e4-a8e1-00144feabdc0.html>

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