

Times” does not allow itself sharp criticism of the White House, journalists prefer to blame all foreign policy failures of the former US president and his administration. There are also obvious differences in the presentation of materials. While “The Washington Post” is characterized by modal communicative strategy – an explicit display of editorial estimation of events, vivid and emotional criticism, “The Washington Times” is focused on neutral narration and considered evaluations.

Both publications use a conventional communicative strategy which overarching goal is to establish a dialogue between Russia and the United States. It is noteworthy, Anzhela Novoseltseva notes, that “The Washington Times” writes about the need to establish a dialogue with Moscow in terms of military cooperation in the countries with a terrorist threat, even despite variant readings about the fate of the Bashar Asad regime, interaction sets for dialogue. “The Washington Post,” on the contrary, directs the reader toward confrontation, pursuing the idea that the United States needs to get rid of Bashar Asad and regain from Russia the authority it has gained in the Middle East.

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KAMIL AZIMOV. SHIITE FACTOR IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN SAUDI ARABIA AND IRAN // *The article was written for the bulletin “Russia and the Moslem World.”*

Keywords: the Shiite, the Sunni, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Iran, haj, discrimination.

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Abstract. Except for rivalry on the oil market, relations between the two countries are influenced by early enmity between Persians and Arabs, Shiites and Sunnis. In current situation, these circumstances are used by the United States, which aims at dominance in the region.

About 10% of Saudi Arabia's population professes Shiism. However, there is no data on their exact number.¹ It is known that some 30,000 Shiites of different ethnic origins live in the capital of the Kingdom of Riyadh (Iranians, Pakistani, Yemeni and India born). The largest concentration of Shiite population is recorded in Eastern Province (Sharqia), where in a number of cities (Dammam², Zahran, Hufuf, Qatif) they make up almost half of the population. Approximately 250,000 Shiites live in the south-east and south of the region.

According to their religious views, Saudi Shiites differ: people from Iran belong to the main Shiite group – Imamism of the Jafarian type (Twelvers in the Russian Oriental tradition). The Ismailis are mostly members of the Banu Yam Arab tribe living in Najran Province, seized from Yemen in 1931.³ In the region of Yanbu (in the west of the kingdom) Shia Kaisanits⁴ are concentrated, and in the southern and western regions of the country – Zeidits.⁵

So far during the formation of the first Saudi state, conflicts and clashes between Sunnis and Shiites always took place. Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, the founder of Wahhabism, faulted the Shiites for rejecting the four guided caliphs.⁶ He gave them the nickname “Rafidah”⁷ (casting off), which his followers still use. However, this term is sometimes given a new meaning. Currently, Imamites are called Rafidah who did not legitimize the Omeyyad and Abbasid dynasty. The Shia

themselves give the word Rafidah a positive meaning, believing that the Rafidah are “believers who rejected the evil”.⁸

By the time of the spread of Wahhabism, representatives of different religions, including Christians and Jews, lived in the territory of the future Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Approximately till the 20th century in the Najran region, the Arab tribes of Arabia (Banu Taglib, Banu Tamim) professed Christianity, first they were taxed (jizya), but then they were forced to convert to Islam or resettle in Syria and Iraq by the authorities. But there are Christians among migrant workers (from Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Lebanon). Religious police (mutawwa'in) strictly monitor them, prohibiting public ceremonies.

Prior to the emergence of Islam, there were three tribes in Arabia that professed Judaism – Banu Nadir, Banu Kainuka and Banu Kurayz. Banu Nadir was hostile to Muslims, while the other two were tolerant of Muslims. As the years passed, Jews began to leave the region. Some have relocated to Yemen. Then in 1881 the exodus of Jews began also from Yemen. Before 1948, 15,430 people had legally emigrated. In 1949–50 Israel organized a special operation “Carpet,” as a result of which 44,000 followers of Judaism left Yemen. During this period, in view of the lack of clear boundaries in the Arabian Peninsula, Jews from neighbouring Arab countries have also moved for further emigration.⁹

In 1802 it was time of the Shiites, to whom the adherents of Wahhabism declared war. They invaded the town of Kerbela, Iraq, where they defeated Shiite holy places. As is known, the Wahhabis condemn veneration of the graves of saints and imams, but in this case, they were clearly guided by self-interests. The attackers looted the grave of Hussein (grandson of Prophet Muhammad)¹⁰, destroyed the dome of his turbe and took away gifts (carpets, precious vessels, fabrics, valuable copies of the Quran, gold and silver coins), donations of believers in honor of the imam in the mausoleum, and precious adornments were broken off the fence surrounding the burial place. The robbery

lasted 8 hours. According to Saudi chronicles, all trophies were sent to Mecca. The caravan with loot (including things taken from the city residents) consisted of 4,000 camels. At the same time, up to 5,000 residents of Kerbela were killed. At the same time, the Ottoman garrison, headquartered in Kerbela and didn't octroy the Shiites, fled the city. The proposed aid of the Persian ruler Fath-Ali Shah was rejected by the Turks. As A.M. Vasiliev notes, author of the book "History of Saudi Arabia," Feats of Wahhabis "were later described in the book of the Najd chronicler of the XIX century Osman ibn Abdallah Ibn Bishr "Symbol of Glory in the History of Nejd".¹¹

The story of the Arabian Peninsula is full of stories of banditry and robbery. Ibn Saud, expanding the territory of his demesnes, did not strain at any methods. Attacks on caravans and charges for almost every farsaḥ¹² of the way became a source of livelihood for many Bedouin tribes who were robbing. Therefore, having subordinated any territory, Ibn Saud established strict orders that satisfied more the people living there and visiting merchants.

The region of Al-Khasa (in the province of Al-Sharqiyah - "Eastern" - Arabian), where the majority of Shiites live today, was seized by the Saudis in 1913. Immediately, a customs fee (8%) was established for the merchants, as well as the size of the zakat (2.5%) for the harvest of dates, the main source of income of the local residents of this land of plenty.¹³ As historians noted, already then, Ibn Saud doubled both the territory and the treasury's revenues under his control. The Turkish garrison of Al-Hasa surrendered, handing over all weapons to the winner, and the population, tired of the raids of Bedouin robbers, almost did not resist. After Ibn Saud expelled Turkish garrisons from Al-Hasa and Al-Katifi¹⁴ local Shiite mujtahids, Sheikhs Musa ibn Abdullah Abu Hamsin (1874-1932) and Ali ibn Hassan Ali al-Hunayzi (1868-1943) urged the local population not to resist the Saudis. The king even signed an agreement with Shiite religious leaders to "guarantee religious freedom" for the

inhabitants of the province in return for their submission to the new state. At first, the king upheld his promise: Shiites were allowed to have their mosques where they performed their religious rituals, and there was also a Shiite civil proceeding.¹⁵

However, Ikhwans¹⁶ – the religious military militia on which Saudi Arabia's first king Abdul-Aziz ibn Saud (1902–1969) relied, which played a key role in the unification of different regions of the Arabian Peninsula into a single state – as early as 1925 they demanded that the king prevented the Shiites of Al-Hasah and Al-Katyf from practicing their religious ceremonies in public. In accordance with Wahhabite morality, they also demanded to ban the glorification of the Prophet, to celebrate the birthdays and deaths of the Prophet and the fourth righteous caliph Ali, and to go pilgrimage to the holy Shia cities of Kerbela and Najaf in Iraq. However, the king ignored the demands of the Ikhwans at that time.¹⁷

In the beginning of 1927, King Abd al-Aziz engaged in the Committee of Higher Ulemas to consider the attitude towards Shiites and prepare a report on their place in the state. The Committee issued a fatwa demanding that the Shiites “reject the wrong Islam” and convert to Wahhabite Islam. It was also recommended that the places of worship of the Shiites should be eliminated, including the graves of associates and members of the prophet's family in Medina. In addition, it was forbidden to celebrate 10 muharram, the day of the death of Imam Hussein.

The subsequent abolition of Ikhwan units in 1930 reduced tensions between the Shiites and the authorities. Within the higher religious clergy, it was given an opinion that Shiites could be treated like Zimmi, adherents of a different faith under the protection of Muslims and paying a special tax. Subsequently, when oil was discovered in this region (1932), the importance of Al-Sharqiyah Province and Al-Khasa Region increased multiply. In particular, there is the Ghawar field, the world's largest oil and gas mined deposit.

The accrescency of power of Saudis in the region came with a campaign to eradicate non-Islamic and even non-Sunni beliefs. In particular, as a result of the campaign to eliminate "Shiite remnants" in and around Medina, all mausoleum in the ancient Jannat Al-Baki Cemetery, (including the mausoleum of several Shiite imams) were destroyed on Ibn Saud's orders. As we noted above, the attitude of the Wahhabis towards places associated with the names of outstanding Muslims was defined by Wahhabite ideology, which rejects worship of sacred sites. So far, a funeral in the desert is being practiced in Saudi Arabia without the designation of a grave.¹⁸

King Ibn Saud's actions to destroy the mausoleum at al-Baki Cemetery were criticized by the Muslim world public. Eventually, some graves were returned with some indications paved around the perimeter or a small stele, but in 1975 the grave of Shia Imam Jaafar Al-Sadiq (702-765) was destroyed.

Residents of Al-Sharqiya Province tried to protest, but their demonstrations were violently dispersed. In addition, the establishment of an oil industry in the region contributed to some spring tide of the prosperity of the local population, as jobs emerged.

It's natural that, formation of the working class in the oil industry, especially in the post-war years, was accompanied by the emergence of political movements. The eastern province was no exception, and the Shiites took part in them. At the same time, the inhabitants of the province were influenced by the events in the neighbouring countries: the Islamic Revolution in Iran (1979) and the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988). Being in close proximity to Iran, Shiites of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia could receive Iranian radio and television broadcasts. Some Shia religious figures of KSA got education in Tehran, Meshed or Kum. Groups of Shia pilgrims went to Kerbela and Meshed. So, Ayatollah Khomeini's ideas were known to Saudi Shiites. In 1979, Iranian Shiites were able to hold mourning ceremonies in memory of Imam Hussein for the first time in many years. However, the low

level of education and lack of political activity prevented people from facing the realities of their situation.

During this period, Iraq unleashed war against Iran (1980–1988). In the Iraqi army, a significant percentage of the lower ranks were Shia (mostly foot troops). The leadership of the country, and first of all President Saddam Hussein, had to take steps to unite the population and iron out differences between Sunnis and Shiites. As the Russian researcher E. Tihonova noted, “Hussein actively began to emphasize the special role of Iraq as the center of world Shiism, declared all Iraqis descendants of Imam Ali and declared his own descending from the same Ali. There were made allocations for renovation of holy places in Najaf and Kerbela, and events of social and state character were opened by reading the Koran. S.Hussein was in active contact with the Shiite hierarches, and on the eve of making important decisions he visited the shrine of Imam Ali. Such a dramatic change of course was related to the Baathist regime's awareness of the possibility to use the religious feelings of Muslims¹⁹ in the war with Iran.

After the departure of the Shah of Iran (16.01.1979) and the return to Tehran of Ayatollah Khomeini (1.02.1979), the Shiite opposition in Iraq intensified. It advocated the overthrow of the Baas Party²⁰ regime and was eager to build an Islamic state on the Iranian model. It is natural that Tehran actively supported the Iraqi Shiite opposition, believing that it would be possible to implement Khomeini's ideas in such a manner. The slogan of “export of the Islamic Revolution” was aimed not only at the Shia Muslims of Iraq, but was also universal, i.e. it was addressed to all Islamic States. In Saudi Arabia, it was perceived as a call for a possible Shiite revolution, followed by the extension of Iranian expansion to other Persian Gulf countries²¹.

The ambitions of the Tehran leadership were extremely annoying Riyadh. Relations between countries turned into regional rivalries. In view of the Saudi kingdom's close

relationship with Washington, Khomeini called Saudi Wahhabism "American Islam."

The Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988) negatively affected the countries of the region. Navigation in the Persian Gulf was particularly affected, where oil vessels were attacked by fire. This war is called the "First War in the Persian Gulf." Among the 300 vessels that transported oil through the Persian Gulf during this period and were attacked during the hostilities, the Saudi tanker *Safina al-Arab*, with a draught of 357,000 tons, was injured²².

The events in the Persian Gulf were not adequately covered in the kingdom's media, so Saudi Shiites did not express solidarity with Iran during this period. Nevertheless, the Saudi Shiites were gradually awakening. Unexpectedly during the haj (31.07.1987), Shiite pilgrims from Iran staged a demonstration in support of Khomeini. There were casualties as a result of clashes with Saudi security services²³. The official media reported that pilgrims from Iran staged an "illegal demonstration." During the investigation of the incident, the Kingdom authorities deprived a great number of bladed weapons (knives) of Shia pilgrims, as well as the same wrist watches with the inscription "lyabbaik ya Khomeini."²⁴ The Kingdom's authorities considered what had happened as a provocation aimed at sowing chaos in the country. It was noted that "pilgrims overdid the hospitality of the government of the Servant of the Two Holy Places and carried out an action incompatible with the holiness of haj rituals"²⁵. In response, Khomeini blamed the Saudi authorities for the deaths of pilgrims and appealed all Shiites to rebel²⁶.

Everything what happened got several explanations. One of them (Saudi one) says that supposedly 25,000 pilgrims from Iraq attempted to block the entrance to Mesjid al-Haram (a forbidden mosque)²⁷, where they met with Saudi soldiers protecting it. This version is still seen in Riyadh as a planned provocation, as a result of which the mosque was to be captured, and the Iranians were to proclaim Ayatollah Khomeini the head

of all Islamic ummah. In return, the Iranians accused the Saudis of trying to put obstacles in way of Shia pilgrims, right down to limiting their participation in Haj.

In 1988, several Saudi oil pipelines were blown up. This time, the Saudi government accused its own Shia citizens of what happened.

That same year, Saudi Arabia's government severed diplomatic relations with Iran, preventing Iranians from going the pilgrimage to Mecca.

On July 9, 1989, two bombs exploded during another haj, which killed one pilgrim and injured 16 others. The Saudi authorities at first as usual wanted to blame the Iranians, but as the Iranian government prohibited its citizens from the haj that year, the Saudi authorities accused and then executed 16 Shia pilgrims from Kuwait. Saudi theologians took part in the anti-Wahhabite campaign. In particular, the Supreme Mufti of the Kingdom Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah Al-Sheikh (1910–1999) issued a fatwa in which he put Shiites on the same footing as *murtads*²⁸.

Some thaw between Iran and Saudi Arabia occurred after the end of the Persian Gulf War (1990–1991), when Iraqi forces intruded into Kuwaiti territory. The operation Desert Storm, created to take control over Baghdad, was supported by Tehran. In this case, the interests of Riyadh and Tehran coincided, as it was Iraq that was seen as the main threat in the region during this period. Relations between States became normal during this period. In 1993, a total amnesty was declared in the Kingdom: Shiite prisoners gained freedom, emigrants returned to their homeland, and some Shiite intellectuals were given the opportunity to work in state institutions and the private sector. Moreover, there was an incident that epitomized that the leadership of the country refused to pursue anti-Shia policy: during the visit to KSA of Ayatollah Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani (1934–2017), the imam of the Prophet Mosque in Medina tried to say anti-Shiite *khutbah* at Friday prayer in the presence of the Iranian delegation, after which he was fired²⁹.

That same year, King Fahd ibn Abd al-Aziz (1921–2005) held a meeting with Shiite imams and the kingdom's "respected people," during which he promised not to practice religiously motivated discrimination against Shiites. However, according to Arab researchers, the King's promises "were not fulfilled due to his illness," which allegedly prevented the implementation of all projects related to the changing position of the Shiites and their integration into Saudi society. As a result, some opposition activists left the country again³⁰.

After the end of the war with Iraq, the controversy between Riyadh and Tehran almost ceased. In the 1990–2000's, economic relations even intensified, and Iranian Presidents Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Mohammad Khatami visited Saudi Arabia, where they met with King Fahd³¹.

It cannot be said that nothing was done in the kingdom for Shiites, but these were individual cases. In 1993, three Shiites were incorporated into the Saudi Consultative Council³²; In 2005, some restrictions on carrying out events in connection with Shia commemorative dates were lifted; in the city of Al-Qatif, the Shia won 6 seats (out of 6) as a result of municipal elections, and in the city of Al-Ahsaa 5 out of 6³³. In the summer of 2006, the Shiites of the eastern provinces organized a celebration in honor of participation of the Shiite organization Hizbullah in the Second Israeli-Lebanese War.

However, this did not mean a complete change in attitude towards their Shia compatriots. According to the Russian researcher A. Fedorchenko, "there are cases when representatives of the law enforcement agencies of KSA without charge or trial arrested anyone who was directly or indirectly caught out sympathetic to the leader of the Hizbullah movement Hassan Nasrallah or his group."³⁴

Nevertheless, pressure from the world public and international human rights organizations made the Saudi authorities try to re-examine their attitude towards the Shiites of the kingdom. In 2003, National Dialogues were initiated

involving Shiites, Sufis and some liberal minded citizens. Thus, there was created a platform where Shiites could openly claim of discrimination. On April 30, 2003, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom was handed over the document "Partners in the Motherland," in which a group of Shiite political activists formulated principles of coexistence in the Kingdom. The document said that the citizens of KSA who profess Shiism are "an original, inseparable part of the loved Motherland, which is the only Homeland for them and to which they are infinitely committed." ³⁵

During this period, some Western media spread rumors of alleged plans to divide KSA and establish three independent states³⁶ on its territory, including a separate Shiite state in the east of the country (where intensive oil and gas production is realized), Hijaz state (with its sacred cities of Mecca and Medina) in the west, and Nejd state in the central part of the Arabian peninsula. Saudi religious extremists, considering the experience of American cooperation with Shiites in Iraq, saw it as desire of Washington to subordinate oil-bearing areas in the east of the country. They even claimed that the Shiites were co-sponsors of the draft.

Members of the kingdom's Shiite public who got the paper raised concern about the plans, which they perceived as an attempt to discredit Islam. They noted that the Palestinian tragedy, the occupation of Iraq by American forces, play into the Zionists hands. "The attacks go on the holy places of the ummah, its interests and even its very existence. The deadly danger threatens all Muslims, regardless of the doctrines and movements, which requires them to stick together in the face of this danger" ³⁷. The authors of the message noted that under these conditions all Muslims need to unite. They reminded that the opportunity to study and improve their educational level given to the Shia of the Kingdom gives them to be of benefit to their State, but there is still distrust towards the Shia, as a result service in the army, security forces and diplomacy are

inaccessible for them. The authors of the message proposed the establishment of a joint body (committee) with Shia, which powers would include issues related to the elimination of discrimination. To begin with, they also proposed an increase in the number of Shiites in the Consultative Council (Majlis al-Shura), as well as an increase in their representation in the Council of Ministers, within a number of ministries, institutions and the army.

This message was favourably accepted by the Prime Minister. Later, Najib Hunaisi, one of the Shiite activists, commenting on the text of the message, noted that the statement quite conformed to the spirit of the reform programme that the Saudi government had launched just before.

In addition, the authors of the message demanded the extending of Shia rights, including the establishment of Shia courts based on Shia legal doctrine. However, these activities were harshly criticised by Wahhabite radicals³⁸, who issued a petition calling for a fight against Shiites, and once again demanded that Shiites step back from their "erroneous" beliefs voluntarily and "return to the true pass" of Islam. At the same time, they threatened that otherwise Shiites would be killed, expelled or forcibly experienced "the right religion"³⁹.

Subsequent events in the Middle East once again made the Saudi authorities fear a Shiite threat⁴⁰. As a result of the American occupation of Iraq (2003–2011), Iraqi Shiites became the dominant force in the country's administration, Iranian influence in Iraq increased notably, that contributed to the activization of Shiites in neighboring Arab countries and led to downfall of relations between Iran and KSA. In March and November 2011, Saudi Arabia's Shiites held rallies brutally broken up by the authorities. The next year, the influential Shiite preacher Nimr al-Nimr was put in jail. In January 2016, he was executed along with 46 Shiites on terrorism charges, that caused a new escalation of Iran-Saudi relations⁴⁰. On January 2, 2016, troops were sent in Al-Qatif, the

home town of the executed sheik, to suppress mass protests, and the authorities pacified the demonstrators with tear-gas⁴¹.

In response to the demonstrative execution of the respected sheik, mass rallies were also held in Iran. The demonstrators even tried to set fire to the Saudi Embassy, attacked the consulate in Meshed. Similar protests took place in Lebanon and Iraq.

The events called the Arab Spring were a new reason for disagreement between Riyadh and Tehran. Riyadh became a sponsor of the Syrian opposition, while Tehran backed the Syrian government headed by Bashar al-Assad.

The king of Saudi Arabia Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (1935) who came to power in January, 2015 quickly enough delegated the government of the state to the son Mohammad ibn Salman Al-Saud (1985) who was appointed the successor of the throne (21.06.2017) by-passing other pretenders. Soon the Prince unveiled the program on modernization of the country "Vision-2030," which provides for decrease of dependence of KSA on oil exports. For these reasons, the Saudi authorities need to diversify the economy, modernize health care, education, infrastructure and tourism. The program was a cause for hopes for some "religious thawing" in the country.

However, in 2015, during another haj, a jostle in the Mina Valley killed pilgrims again. It is believed that more than 2,000 people were victims of the jostle on the Jamaat Bridge, although the data given by the Saudi media were clearly underreported. In connection with the death of its citizens (464 pilgrims from Iran), Tehran accused the Saudi authorities of poor organization of the haj and even called on Muslims of other countries to boycott it. Iranian President Ayatollah A. Khamenei even called for rethinking of the status of the Saudi monarch who is the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques⁴².

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Riyadh refused to apologize or provide financial assistance to the bereaved families. It is natural that, under these circumstances, competing accusations intensified. Sheikh Abdulaziz al-Sheikh, the supreme mufti of KSA, said in an interview for the Saudi newspaper "Mecca" that Iranians are not Muslims, they are "descendants of "magicians" and their hostility towards Muslims, especially Sunnis, is very ancient"⁴³. (Sheikh thought of Zoroastrians, the number of who in modern Iran is not large - 50,000 - ed.) In a number of countries where Shiites live, rallies in support of Iran took place. The following year, haj was peaceful, but the number of pilgrims went down significantly: only 2.4 million Muslims took part in it.

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Analyzing the situation around the Saudi Shiites, it should be noted that ancient enmity between Arabs and Persians counts here. As it is known, in the middle of the 7th century the Arabs subordinated Persia, making an end of the Sasanian dynasty in 651. At the same time, the Persian power was more economically and culturally developed, that allowed many educated people to take a rightful place first in the Baghdad Caliphate (750-945) and then in the Abbasid Caliphate (1194-1258). Later on, negativity towards the Shia and Iran was raised by the Ottoman Empire.

In 1908, the Anglo-Persian Campaign discovered oil fields in Mashid-i-Suleiman (in the South-West of the country). From then on Iran got a resource for development. Almost the whole 20th century Iran was the largest oil producer in the world, exiting envy of its neighbors. Iran (1951 and 1979) drove Western

campaigns out of the country twice. They could return to Iran only in the late 1990s. In 2010 they again had to leave the country because of sanctions imposed on Iran by Western countries. Since the late 1940s, Saudi Arabia came the oil market, gradually competing with Iran, and unlike Iran, it was backed by the United States. According to the researchers, "both countries are the largest producers of energy resources and constantly challenge for trading area of their main export products – oil and gas" ⁴⁴.

Human Rights Watch produced a report in 2009 detailing the situation of Shiites in the kingdom. The report said Shiites living in Saudi Arabia were "ersons of systematic discrimination in religion, education, justice and employment... Education in the kingdom is based on religious Wahhabite materials... From an early age, students are taught that Shiites are not Muslims, and that Shiism is a Jewish conspiracy, and so Shiites are worthy of death... Sunnis should not eat their food, and marry them... They cannot be buried in Muslim cemeteries, etc" ⁴⁵. Even the number of names Shiites can call their children is limited. The authors of the report claim that during 50 years there were no Shiite employees at the Saudi Embassy in the United States. Moreover, in Fairfax University, Virginia, USA, an affiliate of Mohammed ibn Saud Saudi University, students are also told that Shiism is part of a "Jewish conspiracy against Muslims."

There is no formed opposition in the kingdom. The police heed carefully any demonstration of heterodoxy. As an example, is the fate of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who was brutally killed in Turkey.

It is obvious that in the current situation, anti-Shiite sentiments in Saudi Arabia become aggravated by Riyadh's pro-American orientation and U.S. anti-Iranian policy. The kingdom's Shiites are seen as Iran's "5th column." Moreover, in recent years many Shiites from Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen have been denied access to holy cities during the haj period. Thus, it can be

said that the political marginalization of Shiites in the Kingdom touches on religious apartheid.

References

1. The authorities deliberately reduce the number of Shiites. Dontsov believes that this is approximately 1.5–2 million people. See Dontsov V.E. "Religiozno-politicheskoe dvizhenie shiitov s Saudovskoj Aravii" [Religious and political movement of Shiites from Saudi Arabia] // Middle East and modernity. Vol. 21. Moscow, 2004 P. 56
2. Ad-Dammam is the fifth largest city in terms of population and the second largest port in the country. Shiites predominate among the indigenous population. However, in general, the indigenous people in the city are no more than 40%. This is mainly an arriving workforce.
3. The Banu-Yam tribe refused to submit to King Abdel-Aziz, who was forced to make concessions. Najran, unlike other provinces, received some advantages. However, separatist ideas still exist among the inhabitants of the province. Yemen also claims to be in Jizan and Asher.
4. This is a Small moderate Shiite movement that emerged in the 7th century in Iraq. The etymology of the name is not exactly known.
5. Loginov I.V. O statuse shiitskoj obshchiny v Saudovskoj Aravii//Blizhnij Vostok i sovremennost' [On the status of the Shiite community in Saudi Arabia // Middle East and modernity] / Executive editor: Arunova M.R. and Filonik A.O. Vol. 17. // Moscow: Institute for the Study of Israel and the Middle East, 2003, P. 105.
6. The reasons for the rejection of the four righteous caliphs lie in the refusal of the Persians to recognize the principle of electing caliphs instead of inheritance of power by the descendants or closest relatives of the prophet.
7. From the root in Arabic - Rafada - reject.
8. Prozorov S. M. Rafida // Islam: enciklopedicheskij slovar [Rafida // Islam: Encyclopedic Dictionary] / Otv. ed. S.M. Prozorov. // Moscow, Science, GRVL, 1991. - P. 198.
9. Ari Ariel. Jewish-Muslim Relations and Migration from Yemen to Palestine in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries // Leiden-Boston. 2014. P. 8–9.
10. Hussein ibn Ali - (626–680) the grandson of the prophet Muhammad, the second son of his cousin and Fatima (daughter of the prophet), an imam revered by Shiite-imams.
11. Vasiliev A.M. Istoriya Saudovskoi Aravii [History of Saudi Arabia]. // Moscow, 1999. P. 106.
12. Farsah is a Persian measure of distance length equal to 5549 km.

13. The unenlightened monarchy. <https://ljwanderer.livejournal.com/369791.html>
14. In 1331, this city was visited by the famous Arab traveler Ibn Battuta, who described it "as a large and prosperous city inhabited by Arab tribes who were militant Shiites."
15. In Al-Katyf, Sheikh Al-Hunayzi was appointed as a Sharia judge, who ruled on cases of both Shiites and Sunnis.
16. Ihvany – (Ihvan man ata 'Allah – "Brothers submissive to Allah") – an association of militias of the Bedouin tribes. After the conquest of Hejaz, they entered into conflict with Abdul-Aziz, who managed to crush them at the Battle of Sabili in 1930. The remaining units entered the National Guard of Saudi Arabia.
17. Shiite religious and political movements in KSA // <http://www.aljazeera.net/in-dtpthshia/saudia/2003/6/6-1-2.htm> (10.09.2019)
18. In particular, on January 23, 2015, the King of Saudi Arabia, Abdullah Ibn Abdel Aziz, was buried in an unmarked grave (according to the strict Wahhabi canons of burial) at Al-Oud cemetery in Riyadh.
19. Tikhonova E. Sunnity i shiity Iraka. Ot Iraka «britanskogo» k «Iraku amerikanskomu». [Sunnis and Shiites of Iraq. From Iraq "British" to "American Iraq."] // <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/15109915> (09/10/2019)
20. Baath is the party of the Arab Socialist Renaissance. The founder of the Iraqi branch of the Ba'ath party in 1952 was the Shiite Fuad al-Rikabi, who attracted his relatives and friends to the party. At first, Shiites prevailed in the party, but by the end of the 1960s the Sunnis began to supplant them, and after coming to power of S. Hussein and his associates - immigrants from his hometown of Tikrit, the Sunnis ousted Shiites from the party leadership.
21. The history of interstate relations of Saudi Arabia and Iran. https://islam-today.ru/islam_v_mire/bliznij-vostok/istoria-mezgosudarstvennyh-otnosenij-saudovskoj-aravii-i-irana/?desktop=true
22. Tanker war. // <http://warhead.su/2019/06/27/tankernaya-voyna-kak-iraktsy-ohotilis-na-suda-drug-druga> (15.09.2019)/
23. Interstate relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran. https://islam-today.ru/islam_v_mire/bliznij-vostok/istoria-mezgosudarstvennyh-otnosenij-saudovskoj-aravii-i-irana/?desktop=true (12.09.2019)
24. The expression "Lababyke Allahumma Lababyke!" – "Here I am in front of you, O Allah," pronounced during the Hajj. This is the traditional response to the call for the Hajj. In this case, the replacement of the name of Allah with Khomeini means that the Iranian pilgrims, as it were, respond to the call of Khomeini.

25. 402 people (275 Iranians, 82 Saudi law enforcement officers, 42 citizens of other countries) were killed and 649 people (303 Iranians, 145 Saudis, 201 citizens of other countries) were injured as a result of clashes with Saudi security forces.
26. Lacey, Robert. *Inside the Kingdom: Kings, Clerics, Modernists, Terrorists, and the Struggle for Saudi Arabia* // Viking, 2009. – P. 102
27. The Forbidden Mosque (Mesjed al-Haram) is the main Islamic mosque, in the courtyard of which is the shrine of Islam – Kaaba (black stone). Its initial construction dates back to 638. Subsequently, the mosque was rebuilt many times for the needs of the Hajj, during which up to 800 thousand people are on its territory.
28. Ende, Werner, *The Nakhawila, a Shia community in Medina past and present* // *Die Welt des Islams*, 1997, XXXVII – P. 335.
29. Bradley, John R. *Saudi Arabia Exposed: Inside a Kingdom in Crisis*. // Palgrave, 2005. – P. 82–83.
30. Muhammad Ibrahim et al. *Al-Ahzaab wa al-harakat wa al-jamaat al-islamiya* // Beirut, Al-Markaz al-Arabi Li ad-dirasat al-Istratijiya, 2000. Part 2 – P. 583.
31. The history of interstate relations of Saudi Arabia and Iran // https://islam-today.ru/islam_v_mire/bliznij-vostok/istoria-mezgosudarstvennyh-otnosenij-saudovskoj-aravii-i-irana/?desktop=true. (09/17/2019)
32. Majlis al-Shura was created in 1993 by decree of the king. The council consists of trusted members of the royal family, as well as influential citizens. The Council holds consultations and has the right to make recommendations to the Council of Ministers and the king, who makes the final decision, accepts or rejects the recommendations of the Council. Fedorchenko A. *Mezhkonfessionalnye protivorechiya v Saudovskoj Aravii: "shiitskij vopros"* [Interfaith contradictions in Saudi Arabia: the "Shiite issue"] // *Bulletin of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations*. 2013. No. 2 (29). P. 109.
33. Beranek, Ondrej. *Divided We Survive: A Landscape of Fragmentation in Saudi Arabia* // <http://www.Brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB33>. // *Middle East Brief: journal*. – 2009. – January (vol. 33). – P. 1–7.
34. Subh M.A. *On the persecution of opposition representatives in some countries of the GCC* // // <http://www.iimes.ru/?p=15136> (09/28/2019)
35. *Saut al-arabiya* // http://www.aljazeera.net/in-depth/shia_saudia/2003/5/5-31-9.htm (02.11.2019)
36. Rumors were based on an article by Ralph Peters "Bloody Borders" (2006), in which he proposed the creation of three states on the territory of the current KSA, including a kind of "Holy Islamic State" – a kind of Muslim Vatican.
37. *Saut al-arabiya* // http://www.aljazeera.net/in-depth/shia_saudia/2003/5/5-31-9.htm (02.11.2019)

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38. It was also noted that Sunni courts refused to admit Shiite testimonies // Commings, David. *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia* – I.B. Tauris, 2009. P. 6.
 39. Ondrej. *Divided We Survive: A Landscape of Fragmentation in Saudi Arabia* // *Middle East Brief* : journal. – 2009. – January (vol. 33). – P. 1-7.
 40. The Saudis executed the Shiite sheikh and another 46 people // (<http://lenta.ru/news/2016/01/02/saudi1/> (11/23/2019)
 - 41 [Gazeta.ru](http://lenta.ru/news/2016/01/02/saudi1/). 02.01.2016.
 - 42 Keeper of two shrines, i.e. Mecca m Medina. King of KSA status since 1982.
 - 43 Zheleznov A.A. Saudovskaya Araviya i Iran: konfrontatsiya vokrug hadzha [Saudi Arabia and Iran: Confrontation over the Hajj.] 09/20/2016 // <http://www.iimes.ru/?p=29978/> (10/21/2019)
 - 44 The history of interstate relations of Saudi Arabia and Iran // https://islam-today.ru/islam_v_mire/bliznij-vostok/istoria-mezgosudarstvennyh-otnoshenij-saudovskoj-aravii-i-irana/?desktop=true (11/21/2019)
 - 45 [Human_rights_in_Saudi_Arabia/https://ru.qwe.wiki/wiki/Human_rights_in_Saudi_Arabia#Shia_Muslims](https://ru.qwe.wiki/wiki/Human_rights_in_Saudi_Arabia#Shia_Muslims) (23.12.2019)