



<https://doi.org/10.48269/2451-0610-ksm-2023-1-002>

Sayyad Sadri Alibabalu

PhD, Sakarya University

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4909-8411>

gizilbera@gmail.com

The geopolitical impacts of the Russo-Ukrainian war on Iran

Introduction

Iran's domestic policy after the withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA in 2018, the spread of COVID-19 and the sharp fall in the value of the national currency faced a heavy blow with Russia's attack on Ukraine. However, at the international level, Russia's attack on Ukraine was perceived by Iran as a form of revenge against the West and an insult to the pro-Western world order. In this regard, while Iran did not join the wave of international condemnation of Russia's attack, it did not officially support Russia's action by adopting a vague policy as well.¹ In the meeting with Putin in Tehran, Iran's Supreme Leader stated that

in the case of Ukraine, if you did not take the initiative, the other side would have caused the war with its own initiative. [...] If the road is open to NATO, it knows

¹ A. Azizi, "Iran-Russia Relations in the Aftermath of the Ukraine Crisis: Business as Usual", *Al Sharq Strategic Research*, 12.04.2022, <https://research.sharqforum.org/2022/04/12/iran-russia-relations> [accessed: 25.05.2023].

no boundaries, and if it were not stopped in Ukraine, it would have started the same war sometime later under the pretext of Crimea. [...] Of course, today, America and the West are weaker than before, and despite the tremendous effort and expense, the success of their policies in our region, including in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine, has been dramatically reduced. [...] Americans are both a bully and cunning, and one of the factors of the collapse of the former Soviet Union was being deceived by American policies. Of course, Russia has maintained its independence during your time.²

Securitization of Iran

From the perspective of the theory, securitization is not only a military action, but a verbal one that is formed intersubjectively by actors, in which a securitizing actor makes an issue or an actor appear as an existential threat, and therefore, it justifies urgent and exceptional measures to better deal with it. Therefore, securitization applies politics beyond the established rules and considers the issue as a special kind of politics or something beyond it. In this regard, securitization can be considered an extreme version of politicization.³

As a result, securitization is a strategic method to convince the audience to accept the claim that a certain issue or a threatening phenomenon is sufficiently threatening.⁴ In this framework, some believe that Iran does not acknowledge the logic of political and security frameworks of the international system, and this has caused many difficulties for its neighbours, the region, and even Iran itself.⁵

² “The Americans in Syria should be withdrawn from the east of the Euphrates River”, *The Office of the Supreme Leader*, 19.07.2022, www.leader.ir/en/content/25922/The-Leader-of-the-Islamic-Revolution-in-a-meeting-with-the-President-of-Russia [accessed: 27.05.2023].

³ B. Buzan, J. de Wilde, O. Waever, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998, p. 23; H. Stritzel, “Towards a Theory of Securitization: Copenhagen and Beyond”, *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2007, pp. 357–383.

⁴ C. Kaunert, I. Yakubov, ‘Securitization’, [in:] *The Routledge Handbook of Justice and Home Affairs Research* Routledge, eds. A.R. Servent, F. Trauner, Abingdon: Routledge, 2017, p. 30.

⁵ F. Rostami, M. Naderi, “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (BARJAM), the Iranian Nuclear Dossier and the Non-Securitization Context of Securitization”, *Political and International Scientific and Research Quarterly*, vol. 8, no. 27, 2016, pp. 151–175. (in Farsi)

Based on the identity of its political system, Iran has chosen revisionism as its main policy and welcomes any change in the structure of the international system. Because the rigid structure of the international system has not only not allowed Iran to pursue its macro targets in foreign policy, but following the securitization of the issue of Iran by powerful states and under the influence of numerous international sanctions, its foreign policy has been reduced to a defensive position. In this regard, government or pro-government media excitedly covered the news of the successes of the Russian army and fuelled the idea that Russia will soon erase Ukraine from the world map.⁶

Impacts on Iran's regional relations

From a regional point of view, Iran's presence in the crises that Russia had previously cast a shadow on its equations is striking. Therefore, the weakening of Russia's role strengthened Iran's presence in the war in Syria and the Karabakh conflict in the Caucasus.

Regarding the war in Syria, the difficult war situation in Ukraine forced Russia to withdraw some Russian forces from Syria and send them to Ukraine. In this regard, a number of Russian air bases have been handed over to Hezbollah and Iranian forces and various groups supported by Iran, such as Lebanon's Hezbollah, have taken dozens of positions and areas in Aleppo Province under their control after the start of the war in Ukraine and the reduction of Russia's influence in Syria. Iran has also taken control of large military depots, which it can use to strengthen its presence in Syria.⁷

Syrian authorities are worried that in the middle of the economic crisis caused by civil war, COVID-19, the uproar of Russia's war in Ukraine and the terrible earthquake of February 2023, the country will remain without support. Therefore, in an effort to ensure Iran's support, Syrian officials visited Iran repeatedly, which shows the strategic importance of Iran to the Syrian government. For Iran, which was waiting to breathe in Syria, this is an exceptional opportunity. Economically, considering that in the current international situation, Western countries do not show a desire to rebuild Syria, Iran along with China is Syria's first priority. This target was more evident in the unexpected visit of the

⁶ "Russia's Aim to Remove Ukraine from the Map", *Khabaronline*, 15.06.2022, www.khabaronline.ir/news/1641734 [accessed: 3.06.2023]. (in Farsi)

⁷ W. Al Nofal, "Amid War in Ukraine, Russia Withdraws and Iran Expands in Syria", *Syria Direct*, 4.05.2022, <https://syriadirect.org/amid-war-in-ukraine-russia-withdraws-and-iran-expands-in-syria> [accessed: 7.06.2023].

Iranian president to Syria in May 2023. Iran's aim was to emphasize that in the absence of Russia's presence in Syria, it will never leave its ally alone. Therefore, Iran "is attempting to redraw the map of its strategic interests in Syria through a face-to-face meeting between the two countries' leaders in Tehran."⁸

The stabilization of the current Syrian government convinced the Arab leaders in the region to have a different and non-western approach to Syria amid international chaos after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In this manner, as a result of changing their priorities, powerful Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE adopted a positive approach to Syria in order to control Iran's influence in Syria and the Middle East.⁹

Simultaneously with the unexpected visit of the President of Iran to Syria in May 2023, the decision of the Arab League to readmit this country ended the 12-year suspension of Syria. This decision is a turning point in the re-legitimization of Bashar al-Assad's government. Arab leaders hope that Syria will help to solve regional security concerns and important challenges such as the huge wave of refugees, drug smuggling from Syria to Arab countries and containment of Iran.¹⁰

The China-centered order in the Middle East

Until now, Iran has been trying to build balance by looking to the East policy, against the Western approach of its Arab neighbours, but this policy has failed.¹¹ This failure was due to the widespread mistrust of Iran among most of the Arab countries during the 2010s, and as a result of this, these countries became close to Israel, and Iran could not prevent the wave of Arab reconciliation with Israel. Although it is difficult for the Iranian authorities to accept this reality, they were forced to accept the new status quo with a realistic approach. Therefore, Iran is looking for its security and economic interests in

⁸ M. Al-Sulami, "Iran sends important message with Assad visit", *Arab News*, May 16.05.2022, www.arabnews.com/node/2083386 [accessed: 12.06.2023].

⁹ E. Loanes, "Why Arab Countries Are Welcoming Back Assad", *Foreign Policy*, 14.06.2023, https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/06/14/why-arab-countries-are-welcoming-back-assad/?tpcc=recirc_latest062921 [accessed: 15.06.2023].

¹⁰ S. Heydemann, "Syria's Normalization Signals A New Middle Eastern Order", *Brookings Institution*, 10.05.2023, www.brookings.edu/articles/syrias-normalization-signals-a-new-middle-eastern-order [accessed: 16.06.2023].

¹¹ S. Shahsavari, "The Beginning of the Series of Normalization of Relations Between Iran and Saudi Arabia", *Etemad Online*, 16.03.2023, www.etemadonline.com/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%A8%DB%8C%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D9%84-17/602618- [accessed: 5.06.2023]. (in Farsi)

the regional peace environment through the mediation of China, a policy that China is the founder of, and regional actors are connected to each other in line with China's de-escalation strategy in the world. In addition, Russia, which is severely isolated after the invasion of Ukraine, cannot meet Iran's expectations of a supporting superpower in the post-war environment. Therefore, Iran has no choice but regional initiatives.

According to the Copenhagen school, desecuritization is the optimal option in the long run because when the interests of the actor require it, the successful policy is the one that can bring issues out of the security space and into the political space.¹² In the atmosphere of mistrust of Western security approaches, the Arab governments also gave a green light to Iran after the beginning of diplomatic relations with Israel, and in the absence of the US and Russian active role, they reconciled with Iran in a historic move with the Chinese mediation. In this regard, in March 2023, Saudi Arabia and Iran signed an agreement in Beijing to resume bilateral relations and reopen embassies. This agreement aims to resolve regional conflicts such as the war in Syria and Yemen and the instability in Iraq and Lebanon. Although both actors are highly suspicious of each other, their long-term cooperation in regional security will definitely lead to consolidating regional stability. After this agreement, the conflicts between the Yemenis and the Saudi army stopped. Also, Saudi Arabia invited the Syrian president to participate in the meeting of the Arab League in Jeddah, and Bashar al-Assad made a historic trip to Jeddah in May 2023 which is a historical development in regional stability.

Prior to the normalization of Iran's relations with Saudi Arabia, Iran's relations with the UAE improved with the visit of UAE officials to Tehran.¹³ But strong steps were not taken and the re-establishment of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia opened the gate of the Arab world to Iran, and less than a week later, Ali Shamkhani, the Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, visited the United Arab Emirates.¹⁴ Despite the normalization of relations between the UAE and Israel, Iranian officials have stopped blaming the UAE and have focused on improving mutual relations.

Following the wave of normalizing Iran's relations with the Arabs and desecuritisation of it, Iran's relations with Bahrain also entered the operational

¹² B. Buzan, J. de Wilde, O. Waever, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹³ "A New Page in the Political Relations between Iran and the UAE after 7 Years Opens", *ISNA*, 17.07.2022, www.isna.ir/news/1401042517112 [accessed: 12.06.2023]. (in Farsi)

¹⁴ "Shamkhani's Visit to the UAE is a Continuation of the Iran and Saudi Arabia Agreement", *Mehr News*, 18.03.2023, www.mehrnews.com/news/5734134 [accessed: 24.06.2023]. (in Farsi)

phase, and only three days after the signing of the Iran and Saudi Arabia deal, on March 13, 2023, the Speaker of the Bahraini Parliament met with the Iranian delegation, attending at the World Inter-parliamentary Union (IPU) in Manama. On the same day, Nasser Kanani, the Spokesman of the Ministry Foreign Affairs of Iran, expressed hope for the improvement of relations with Bahrain after the reconciliation with Saudi Arabia.¹⁵

In this way, the circle of renewing Iran's relations with Arab countries extended to Egypt. Thus, with the mediation of Oman and Iraq, talks between Egypt and Iran began in earnest, and according to an Iranian official, an agreement has been reached between Tehran and Cairo to re-establish diplomatic relations and reopen the embassies of the two countries.¹⁶ The establishment of Tehran-Cairo relations after 40 years will be a heresy in the security system of the Middle East, which will have a great impact on regional politics, especially on the issue of Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and Palestine.

Also, Iran's relations with Morocco, which have been severed since 2018 following the Moroccan government's accusations against Iran for interfering in the country's domestic affairs, is an issue that Iran is trying to resolve. In this regard, Iran's foreign minister stated in June 2023 that Iran is ready to establish relations with Morocco. Considering the normalization of Morocco's relations with Israel, it seems that the Moroccan government suspects Iran of working against Israel in Morocco.

Iran's relations with the Arabs are improving with the positive approach of all parties, but there are territorial disputes between the parties. Recently, Russia and China have sided with the UAE and supported the UAE's territorial claims over three Iranian islands, which is an important geopolitical shift in the region.¹⁷ Russia and China supported the anti-Iranian statement for the first time in the history of Iran's relations with the two countries due to the fact that, by supporting Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Iran was in the weakest international position and as a result, subjected to securitization by the big powers. Therefore, in such a difficult situation where Iran has lost its international prestige and foreign policy has faced an impasse,¹⁸ it has little choice against Russia and China.

¹⁵ "Behind-the-scenes consultations between Iran and Bahrain", *Rouydad* 24, 18.03.2023, www.rouydad24.ir/fa/news/333065 [accessed: 22.06.2023]. (in Farsi)

¹⁶ "Fluctuations in Reviving Relations between Egypt and Iran", *Abna* 24, 20.06.2023, <https://fa.abna24.com/story/1374105> [accessed: 28.06.2023]. (in Farsi)

¹⁷ "The Russians, Like the Chinese, Supported the Arab Countries of the Persian Gulf!", *Bahar News*, 11.07.2023, www.baharnews.ir/news/415377 [accessed: 12.07.2023]. (in Farsi)

¹⁸ "Russia's Abuse of Iran's Foreign Policy Impasse", *Fararu*, 12.07.2023, <https://fararu.com/fa/news/648998> [accessed: 13.07.2023]. (in Farsi)

Securitization of Caucasus by Iran

Contrary to the positive trend of desecuritization of Arab countries by Iran, Iran securitized sharply its foreign policy towards the Caucasus. Following the accumulation of the economic crisis caused by the war in Ukraine and its integration with social pressures, Iran's domestic politics faced an unprecedented wave of demonstrations in September 2022 in protest against the killing of a girl due to an inappropriate government's standard hijab. In such conjuncture, extensive propaganda was carried out about numerous threats from the Republic of Azerbaijan, including its intention to occupy Armenian lands, the disconnection of Iran with Armenia, the Black Sea and Europe, the presence of Israel and ISIS terrorists on the border of Iran with Azerbaijan. Moreover, only two weeks after the protests started, the Iranian armed forces conducted an unprecedented military exercise in which the Iranian forces practised crossing the Aras River by building a bridge.¹⁹ A similar exercise was carried out after the end of the Nagorno-Karabakh war in 2020, which was met with the protest of Azerbaijan. These drills were conducted while Iran had not held any drills during the 30-year occupation of Azerbaijani lands by Armenia, and took place only after the status quo was changed.

Iran's perception was that since Russia was weakened in the Ukraine war, an opportunity has been provided for Iran to enter the equation of the Caucasus by intimidating its rivals. As a result, Iran intended to change the status quo in the region, which was stabilized in favour of Russia and Türkiye after the Second Karabakh War, to its advantage. Consequently, the relations between the two sides worsened and with the terrorist incident in the Azerbaijani Embassy in Tehran, the two countries came close to breaking diplomatic relations and even having serious confrontations.²⁰ But with the restraint of the parties, their friction did not go beyond the media level.

Apparently, Russia's absence or its low influence in Caucasus politics due to the war in Ukraine has encouraged the Iranian authorities to take bolder measures. Needless to say, for Russia, Iran's influence in the Caucasus geopolitics is more pleasant than Türkiye's powerful presence, especially after the heavy defeat of Armenia. Therefore, every step by Iran was met with the reaction of Azerbaijan, and the parties pushed the issue to the point of 'crisis'

¹⁹ "Rereading the 'IRGC Ground Forces' Iqtidar Drills", *Fars News*, 25.03.2023, www.farsnews.ir/news/14020105000442 [accessed: 20.06.2023]. (in Farsi)

²⁰ M. Salem, A. Goodwin, "Gun Attack on Azerbaijan Embassy in Tehran Kills Security Chief", *CNN*, 27.01.2023, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/27/middleeast/iran-azerbaijan-embassy-attack-tehran-intl/index.html> [accessed: 17.06.2023].

in the Caucasus for a while. On a closer look, it is obvious that the existence of a problem or crisis in foreign policy that can divert the attention of the public opinion of the two countries was necessary. In other words, the economic and social crisis in two countries, especially Iran, necessitated any kind of securitization of foreign policy issues to divert public opinion. Iran, which had engaged in extensive desecuritisation with its southern neighbours, by making the Caucasus issue more securitized, has made it possible to enjoy it.

Iran's global relations

In addition to regional issues, following the outbreak of Russia's war in Ukraine, Iran faced new opportunities and threats at the global level. The most important of these threats was Iran's nuclear program, which, with the outbreak of war in Russia, the relevant negotiations faced Russian obstructions. While the negotiations between Iran and the US to revive the JCPOA had reached its final stages, Russia, set a new condition for its signing. The Russian Foreign Minister said in a statement that Moscow wants a written guarantee from the US that the sanctions imposed against the Kremlin will not affect its trade with Iran.²¹

Following the rejection of this request by the US and other member powers of the UN Security Council, the aforementioned negotiations were closed and Iran could not complete the process of desecuritising its nuclear file. The success of these negotiations seems to depend a lot on the outcome of the war in Ukraine. Moreover, in the current polarized international environment, Russia is reluctant to lose Iran by signing the deal, which may open Iran's doors to the West. Therefore, from Iran's perspective, the first global result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine is the damage to negotiations and the continuation of severe international sanctions against Iran.

The second crisis Iran faced was Russia's use of Iranian drones in the attack against Ukraine. In this regard, if the media reports about sending weapons from Iran to Russia are true, it can be argued that Iran, which is looking to buy military aircraft from Russia, has finally been able to make Russia depend on it, at least in this case. According to the news published in the media, it seems that the weapons sent to Russia had an acceptable function for the Russians. Iranian officials have repeatedly denied sending weapons to Russia, especially suicide drones until Iran's foreign minister admitted that Iran had

²¹ "Russia Demands US Guarantees Sanctions Will Not Harm Moscow-Tehran Ties – Lavrov", *TASS*, 5.03.2022, <https://tass.com/world/1417379> [accessed: 17.06.2023].

sold drones to Russia months before the war. He declared that “if it is proven to us that Russia used an Iranian drone in the war against Ukraine, we will not be indifferent to it.”²²

In response to the back-breaking pressures of the West, Iran sought membership in Eastern organizations in order to gain international organizational support. In this regard, following huge efforts, in September 2022, Iran signed the memorandum of understanding for membership in the organization with the support of Russia and China and based on this, Iran expects to solve its economic problems with the help of the organization. However, it seems that such an intention will not be possible without signing the nuclear agreement and integrating Iran into the global economic system, and this is why the authorities are seeking to revive the JCPOA.

Conclusion

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has had wide consequences on the domestic, regional and international levels of Iran’s policy. At the domestic level, Iran’s economy, which had already been severely affected by the sanctions over the nuclear program and the COVID-19 crisis, faced a severe crisis of rising prices and rising inflation rates, which 7 months after the beginning of the war, it caused unprecedented demonstrations in most cities. Due to the special status of Iran in world politics and the foreign support for these demonstrations, the repression of protests took months. What is certain is that Iranian society is no longer the same as it was before the protests because the fear and ugliness of protest have disappeared as a result of the accumulation of economic and social problems. Therefore, at the domestic level, Iran has been directly affected by Russia’s war in Ukraine.

At the regional level, Iran has tried to reduce the security dimension of the Arab countries with the opportunities it has gained and has taken a conciliatory approach to them, taking advantage of the opportunity to improve its geopolitical influence. In this manner, Iran has launched a wave of normalization of relations with Arab countries, which has had positive results. However, Iran has also faced challenges. The most important challenge for Iran is the desire of Arab countries towards Russia and China and the reduction of Iran’s importance to these two countries. Also, Turkey, which is considered

²² “Amir Abdollahian After Denial: We Gave a Small Number of Drones to Russia!”, *Aftab News*, 5.11.2022, <https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/805958> [accessed: 2.07.2023]. (in Farsi).

Iran's strategic rival, by adopting a policy of neutrality while actively opposing Russia's aggression, has practically increased its geopolitical weight and established itself as a superior power in global crises. Turkey's mediation in this crisis has been met with international appreciation while Iran has not been able to even put down its discourse about not selling arms to Russia, and therefore the direct impact of Russia's war in Ukraine on Iran is the loss of international prestige. This is despite the fact that Russia has carried out destructive measures against Iran when its interests were in conflict with the support of Iran.

The distance of Iran's foreign policy from the logic ruling the equations of international relations has continuously exposed it to securitization, and the government's efforts to convince the main actors of the international system have not been very successful. In this way, by accumulating problems in foreign policy, Iran spends its energy on defending its policy, which has not had tangible results. It will take a long time for Iran to repair its damaged public image.

References

- "A New Page in the Political Relations between Iran and the UAE after 7 Years Opens", *ISNA*, 17.07.2022, www.isna.ir/news/1401042517112 [accessed: 12.06.2023]. (in Farsi)
- Al Nofal W., "Amid War in Ukraine, Russia Withdraws and Iran Expands in Syria", *Syria Direct*, 4.05.2022, <https://syriadirect.org/amid-war-in-ukraine-russia-withdraws-and-iran-expands-in-syria> [accessed: 7.06.2023].
- Al-Sulami M., "Iran sends important message with Assad visit", *Arab News*, 16.05.2022, www.arabnews.com/node/2083386 [accessed: 12.06.2023].
- "Amir Abdollahian After Denial: We Gave a Small Number of Drones to Russia!", *Aftab News*, 5.11.2022, <https://aftabnews.ir/fa/news/805958> [accessed: 2.07.2023]. (in Farsi)
- Azizi A., "Iran-Russia Relations in the Aftermath of the Ukraine Crisis: Business as Usual", *Al Sharq Strategic Research*, 12.04.2022, <https://research.sharqforum.org/2022/04/12/iran-russia-relations> [accessed: 25.05.2023].
- "Behind-the-scenes consultations between Iran and Bahrain", *Rouydad 24*, 18.03.2023, www.rouydad24.ir/fa/news/333065 [accessed: 22.06.2023]. (in Farsi)
- Buzan B., Wilde J. de, Waever O., *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998.
- "Fluctuations in Reviving Relations between Egypt and Iran", *Abna 24*, 20.06.2023, <https://fa.abna24.com/story/1374105> [accessed: 28.06.2023]. (in Farsi)
- Heydemann S., "Syria's Normalization Signals A New Middle Eastern Order", *Brookings Institution*, 10.05.2023, www.brookings.edu/articles/syrias-normalization-signals-a-new-middle-eastern-order [accessed: 16.06.2023].

- Kaunert C., Yakubov I., 'Securitization', [in:] *The Routledge Handbook of Justice and Home Affairs Research Routledge*, eds. A.R. Servent, F. Trauner, Abingdon: Routledge, 2017.
- Loanes E., "Why Arab Countries Are Welcoming Back Assad", *Foreign Policy*, 14.06.2023, https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/06/14/why-arab-countries-are-welcoming-back-assyad/?tpcc=recirc_latest062921 [accessed: 15.06.2023].
- "Rereading the 'IRGC Ground Forces' Iqtidar Drills", *Fars News*, 25.03.2023, www.farsnews.ir/news/14020105000442 [accessed: 20.06.2023]. (in Farsi)
- Rostami F., Naderi M., "Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (BARJAM), the Iranian Nuclear Dossier and the Non-Securitization Context of Securitization", *Political and International Scientific and Research Quarterly*, vol. 8, no. 27, 2016, pp. 151–175. (in Farsi)
- "Russia Demands US Guarantees Sanctions Will Not Harm Moscow-Tehran Ties – Lavrov", *TASS*, 5.03.2022, <https://tass.com/world/1417379> [accessed: 17.06.2023].
- "Russia's Abuse of Iran's Foreign Policy Impasse", *Fararu*, 12.07.2023, <https://fararu.com/fa/news/648998> [accessed: 13.07.2023]. (in Farsi)
- "Russia's Aim to Remove Ukraine from the Map", *Khabaronline*, 15.06.2022, www.khabaronline.ir/news/1641734 [accessed: 3.06.2023]. (in Farsi)
- Salem M., Goodwin A., "Gun Attack on Azerbaijan Embassy in Tehran Kills Security Chief", *CNN*, 27.01.2023, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/27/middleeast/iran-azerbaijan-embassy-attack-tehran-intl/index.html> [accessed: 17.06.2023].
- Shahsavari S., "The Beginning of the Series of Normalization of Relations Between Iran and Saudi Arabia", *Etemad Online*, 16.03.2023, www.etemadonline.com/%D8%A8%D8%AE%D8%B4-%D8%A8%DB%8C%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D9%84-17/602618- [accessed: 5.06.2023]. (in Farsi)
- "Shamkhani's Visit to the UAE is a Continuation of the Iran and Saudi Arabia Agreement", *Mehr News*, 18.03.2023, www.mehrnews.com/news/5734134 [accessed: 24.06.2023]. (in Farsi)
- Stritzel H., "Towards a Theory of Securitization: Copenhagen and Beyond", *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2007, pp. 357–383.
- "The Americans in Syria should be withdrawn from the east of the Euphrates River", 19.07.2022, *The Office of the Supreme Leader*, www.leader.ir/en/content/25922/The-Leader-of-the-Islamic-Revolution-in-a-meeting-with-the-President-of-Russia [accessed: 27.05.2023].
- "The Russians, Like the Chinese, Supported the Arab Countries of the Persian Gulf!", *Bahar News*, 11.07.2023, www.baharnews.ir/news/415377 [accessed: 12.07.2023]. (in Farsi)

Abstract

Russia's attack on Ukraine has had huge and destructive consequences for Iran. The war began when the nuclear negotiations between Iran and the Western countries for the revival of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) were in a promising state and the parties were in the final stages. This paper seeks to examine the effects of this war on Iran's foreign policy by considering securitization and desecuritization. Considering this, the paper concludes that Iran has faced the direct consequences of the war in its

domestic and foreign policies. At the foreign policy level, Iran has faced a decrease in international prestige due to its proximity to Russia, the use Iranian drones by Russia on the battlefield and the 'death' of the JCPOA. As the West securitized the issue of Iran, Iranian authorities desecuritized Iran's relations with Arab countries, while securitized relations with the Caucasus.

Key words: Iran, Ukraine crisis, securitization, Russia, Middle East