

Russia And Iran Role In Post -Assad Syria: An Analysis

Uroosa Ahmad^{1*}

¹PhD scholar at Qurtuba university peshawar,Pakistan

ABSTRACT

The Syrian war has garnered significant international attention, with Russia and Iran emerging as major foreign Forces backing the Assad administration. However, the fall of administration's collapse in 2024 has put both nations at a strategic crossroads, and raised doubts about the sustainability of their involvement in post-Assad Syria. The study uses a qualitative methodology that rely on secondary sources and adopting interpretivist ontological and subjectivist epistemological view-points, to analyze the evolving roles of Russia and Iran. It investigates whether their continued changing presence serves as a strategic asset or has growing become to be a burden in terms of liability amid shifting political, military, and local dynamics. This study examines how Russian and Iranian strategic interests in Syria are increasingly challenged by the emergence of non-state actors, growing grassroots resistance, and a changing regional order. While both countries were instrumental in securing Assad's survival, their post-conflict roles are marked by contradictions. The military presence in Russia that is pegged on main facilities at Tartus and Hmeimim is getting shaky. Fractiousness within Syria, and an increased local animosity have undermined what was regarded as a stable basing point. All these weaknesses are made worse by the fact that the country has to deal with economic burden of international sanctions and enormous costs of reconstruction. The much older policy of the Iranian state called the Axis of Resistance also faces the pressure. Overland supply lines to Hezbollah (once considered the most valuable proxy group of Tehran) are destroyed by changed battlegrounds. At the same time, further escalation of sectarian forces and growth of both the Kurdish and Sunni militias have contributed to sinking the Iranian influence in the region. This study finds a marked reversal of fate in the creation of the same interventions that well assured Russian as well as Iranian power in Assad, becoming strategic liabilities in Syria post war palimpsest. The dominance of Iranian backed militias and Russian airpower have been replaced with the decentralization of power and local empowered forces openly fighting against foreign influence. This development is a warning example of the shortcomings of interventionist approaches. The analysis concludes that the active intervention of Moscow and Tehran in Syria will eventually have negative outcomes that do not save them, but rather reduce their greater geopolitical positioning in the Middle East, unless the much-needed realignment occurs. The results add to three main topical debates, the sustainability of proxy warfare in the long-term, the reality of reconstruction in occupation, and the ambiguity of great power presence in weak or transition states. The Syrian case presented in this analysis can serve, to some policymakers, as a cold reminder of how short-term military successes hide the longer term and impactful outcomes of foreign action.

KEYWORDS:

Syrian war, Russia, Iran, post-Assad Syria, strategic intervention, proxy warfare, regional instability, foreign influence

JOURNAL INFO:

HISTORY: Received: February 27, 2025

Accepted: March 24, 2025

Published: March 31, 2025

*Corresponding author: syedauroosaahmad@gmail.com

DOI: [10.21015/vtess.v13i1.2142](https://doi.org/10.21015/vtess.v13i1.2142)

BACKGROUND: A DECADE OF INTERVENTION AND ITS AFTERMATH

The Syrian war has emerged as the geopolitical theatre of the Middle East of the 21 st century in as much as it is a blood-drenched canvas on which regional aspirations and international power politics have been played to their full destructive effects. Over a 10-year war, two external actors turned out to be kingmakers of Russia and Iran. Their military and economic support allowed Assad to carry on his regime in its most difficult moments and take back vital regions that rebels and jihadists controlled (Gerges, 2022; Phillips, 2020). By the height of the conflict, Damascus was the centerpieces of a coalition in which the Russian airpower and Iranian proxy networks, including the Hezbollah of Lebanon were a formidable front against Westernbased opposition forces (Fulton, Holliday, and Wyer, 2019; Lesch, 2025).

However, this order was brought to pieces, when Assad suddenly fell in 2024. The fall of the regime triggered by an economic collapse, defections of elites, and unprecedented popular revolt plunged Moscow and Tehran into the unknown. The centralized power they had been propping was a thing of the past; in its wake, there came a collection of warring militia groups, re-asserting Islamists, and enterprising foreign interests (Harling and Birke, 2025). Their strategic depth used to be manifested by the very foundations and lines of supply, which themselves now make them the focus of local hostility and rivalry to the geopolitical balance (Hokayem, 2023; Hroub, 2025).



The paper examines the future steps which the further engagement Russia and Iran on the soil of Syria opens or whether it will lead to further fragmentation of the former bastion of the Assad regime. Are their reconstruction and their security alliances leading to sustainable governance or are they accelerating the allegiance of the sectarian that would cause a new outbreak of a conflict? Based on recent field and ongoing academic discussions and in sceneries best described by the current political landscape, the paper will look at how these exponents of the past regime are either stabilizing or destabilizing the delicate path Syria is aiming to take.

THE PROBLEM STATEMENT: STABILIZERS OR SPOILERS?

Over ten years since the eruption of the conflict in Syria, both Russia and Iran have transformed to become major players with a right to determine policies almost similar to indirect colonialism- running the territory, dictating political courses to local rulers, and acquiring economic benefits. Though their action guaranteed the survival of the regime on the short term, they have also initiated dynamics with multiple layers of effect and possible destabilization in the long term.

The Sovereignty Paradox:

The more the military bases (also called military occupations), the more re-construction contracts turn into occupation forms, which have now become targets of nationalism in Syria against foreign control.

The Reconstruction Trap:

The Reconstruction Trap- Sanctions imposed on the two countries will decrease the capacity to provide meaningful recovery and will foster the breed of disillusionment to the people.

The Proxy War Spiral:

The local allies such as Hezbollah have grown into centers of power that have frequently subverted the fabled power of central authority.

The backlash is illustrated by the recent protests in Latakia which is a traditional base of regime support where crowds burned down Russian flags (Syria Direct, 2024). Equally, Iranian backed militias are now facing strong opposition among the Sunni community who have been forced to accept their existence in the name of being their security guarantors. This scenario gives rise to bigger questions: are international troops who captured military hegemony up to the task of becoming credible peacekeepers? Or is their extended presence a destabilizing factor to the political tradeoffs required in long-term stability?

This tension has added to the analytical confusion as well as disjointed policy reactions on the part of international stakeholders in their endeavor to respond to the intricate post-conflict reality in Syria. Without thorough examination of the nature, extent, and consequences of sustained Russian and Iranian involvement, there is a mounting danger of misreading the conclusion of the war and failing to recognize emerging patterns of reliance, neocolonial dynamics, and regional power strategies that could shape Syria's future political order.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. In what ways have Russia and Iran's strategic interests in Syria evolved since the fall of Assad, and what does their ongoing presence imply?
2. How has local opposition and the emergence of non-state actors in post-Assad Syria impacted Russia and Iran's power in the region?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. In order to examine how the strategic interests of Russia and Iran in Syria changed after the demise of Assad and what prospect their continuing presence has.
2. In order to examine the local resistance and the rise of non-state actors in the post-Assad Syria which affected the influence of Russia and Iran on that part of the world.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study has very significant implications in the scholarly discourse and policy making. It is academically useful since it assists in advancing the ongoing research by looking at the functioning of external powers in disintegrated political contexts. The paper highlights the role of the local impressions about foreign intervention in reconstruction and establishing stability in Syria. Although many literature materials have been used to discuss the roles that Russia and Iran played during the reign of Assad, their approaches in post-Assad power vacuum situations have not been overly studied. Focusing on

perspectives of Syrian civilians and analyzing the issue of economical entrenchment and military presence on the territory, this study will give a sophisticated analysis of the problem of sovereignty in conflict-affected states. Humanitarian actors and policymakers facing similar conflicts that external powers have disproportionate influence will find these insights incredibly helpful.

The Impact of Foreign Intervention on Syria's Post-War Reconstruction

The paper notes that the perceptions of locals towards foreign engagement in Syria determine reconstruction activity and long-term stability. Though the role played by Russia and Iran in the era of Assad has been adequately discussed in the study, it is little discussed as to what they are doing afterwards following the end of his regime. Using the voice of Syrian civilians and understanding the economic entrenchment, as well as the presence of military bases, this study, creates a fine balance on how to look at the civilian perspective of the sovereignty problem within a conflict-torn state. These insights will be immensely valuable to policymakers and humanitarian actors maneuvering similar conflicts where other forces have an inordinate say in the situation.

Literature Review: Evolving Roles of Russia and Iran

The role of Russia and Iran and their changing roles in Syria have been analyzed by scholars since the Assad regime fell in 2011. Though their interventions initially aligned, recent developments reveal mounting obstacles to their dominance.

5.2.1 Russia's Strategic Decline

Moscow's 2015 intervention was driven by three core objectives: safeguarding its Tartus naval base, curtailing Western encroachment in the Middle East, and bolstering its global standing (Grajewski, 2021). Russian airpower proved decisive in helping Assad reclaim key cities (Roberts, 2020). Yet post-2024, its foothold has eroded. (Alakbarov, 2024) notes that local resistance groups now threaten Russian military installations, while international sanctions have strained its ability to fund operations.

5.2.2 Iran's Shifting Influence

Tehran's involvement, rooted in ideological ties to the "Axis of Resistance," aimed to secure supply lines to Hezbollah (Ahmadian and Mohseni, 2020). The Revolutionary Guard's proxy networks—recruiting Shia militias across the region (Fulton et al., 2019) initially expanded Iran's reach. However, Syria's fragmentation has disrupted this strategy. The land corridor to Lebanon has fractured (Chatham House, 2021), and Sunni militants increasingly target Iranian-backed forces.

5.2.3 The Rise of Local Resistance

The power vacuum post-Assad has birthed autonomous zones, such as those controlled by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), further complicating foreign influence (Harling and Birke, 2025). In former regime strongholds, resentment festers against foreign forces—especially Iranian militias accused of resource exploitation (Hroub, 2025). This backlash underscores the limits of external dominance in a fractured Syria.

Several scholars have noted growing tensions in the Russian-Iranian partnership. (Grajewski, 2021) identifies competing economic interests in reconstruction projects as a key source of friction, while Chatham House highlights disagreements over political succession plans following Assad's fall. These divisions have become more pronounced as both powers adapt to Syria's fragmented reality (Tsygankov, 2024).

The literature also examines regional reactions to Russian and Iranian involvement. (SpringerLink, 2021) analyzes Gulf states' perceptions of Russia's role, noting their cautious approach to Moscow's mediation attempts. Meanwhile, (Hokayem, 2023) documents how Israel has intensified strikes against Iranian positions, viewing the post-Assad chaos as an opportunity to degrade Tehran's regional network.

Recent scholarship has begun addressing gaps in understanding local Syrian perspectives on foreign intervention. (Lesch, 2025) provides valuable insights into how civilian communities view Russian and Iranian presence, with many expressing resentment toward what they perceive as occupation forces. This grassroots opposition, combined with the rise of new armed groups, suggests that both powers face mounting challenges to their influence (Hroub, 2025).

The evolving situation in Syria continues to generate new research questions. While existing studies thoroughly document Russian and Iranian roles during Assad's rule, less attention has been paid to their adaptation strategies in the post-regime era. This review highlights the need for closer examination of how local dynamics constrain great power ambitions in fractured states, particularly regarding economic entrenchment and civilian resistance movements.

RESEARCH GAP

Although there is extensive literature on the military intervention of Russia and Iran in the Syrian civil war, there is little concentrated research on their changing roles in post-Assad Syria, especially regarding their deepening political, economic, and strategic entrenchment in the long term. Most studies highlight the geopolitical competition with Western players or examine combat dynamics but neglect how these two powers are redefining governance, reconstruction, and sovereignty in a divided post-conflict state. Additionally, limited scholarly attention has been given to the local Syrian perception of Russian and Iranian presence and whether their ongoing involvement is perceived as stabilizing, exploitative, or obstructive to national recovery and political reconciliation.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to analyze the evolving roles of Russia and Iran in post-Assad Syria. The methodology is rooted in interpretivist philosophy, which recognizes that political realities are socially constructed and best understood through contextual analysis (Neuman, 2014). This approach aligns with the study's focus on complex geopolitical dynamics where multiple interpretations exist. The research employs document analysis of secondary sources, including:

- Peer-reviewed academic articles (2018-2025)
- Policy reports from international think tanks
- Reputable news analyses
- Government and intergovernmental documents

Data collection involved systematic searches across multiple databases including JSTOR, ProQuest, and university library catalogs. Search terms combined geographic and conceptual keywords such as "Russian foreign policy Syria," "Iranian influence post-Assad," and "Syria conflict external actors." The selection process prioritized recent sources (post-2020) with direct relevance to the post-2024 period.

The analytical process followed these stages:

1. Comprehensive review and annotation of all sources
2. Identification of recurring themes and patterns
3. Comparative analysis of different perspectives
4. Synthesis of findings into coherent arguments

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) served as the primary analytical tool, allowing for flexible yet systematic examination of:

- Military strategies
- Political maneuvers
- Economic investments
- Local responses

To enhance validity, the study employed triangulation by:

- Comparing different types of sources (academic, policy, media)
- Verifying facts across multiple accounts
- Contextualizing all findings within the broader conflict landscape
- The methodology acknowledges certain limitations:
 - Potential biases in source materials
 - Rapidly changing ground realities
 - Limited access to primary data from conflict zones

This approach provides a robust framework for understanding the complex, evolving nature of Russian and Iranian involvement in Syria's transitional phase while maintaining academic rigor.

Strategic Challenges Facing Russia and Iran in Post-Assad Syria

The Syrian war, which started in 2011, has turned into one of the most important geopolitical battles of the 21st century, with Russia and Iran playing key roles in supporting the Assad regime. From the beginning of the war, Russia's entry in 2015 and Iran's consistent support through military and economic channels were essential in averting the collapse of the regime. However, with the defeat of Assad's regime in 2024, the activities of these external forces have come into question, particularly as Syria moves toward an uncertain and fragmented future. The lacuna in the current literature lies in the need to evaluate whether Russia and Iran's ongoing presence in Syria represents a strategic asset for their regional goals or has turned into a mounting burden in light of changing dynamics on the ground.

7.1.1 Russia's Dilemma: Strategic Presence or Strategic Burden?

Russia's intervention in Syria, launched in 2015, was initially framed as a decisive move to stabilize the Assad regime and counter Western influence in the Middle East (Grajewski, 2021). Moscow's military campaign—characterized by extensive airstrikes, special forces operations, and diplomatic cover at the United Nations—successfully reversed rebel advances and preserved Assad's hold on power for nearly a decade (Roberts, 2020). However, the regime's collapse in 2024 fundamentally altered the strategic calculus behind Russia's involvement, transforming what was once a relatively low-cost power projection exercise into an increasingly burdensome commitment.

At the heart of Russia's dilemma lies its dual investment in Syria: military infrastructure and geopolitical prestige. The naval facility in Tartus—Russia's only Mediterranean port—and the Hmeimim airbase remain critical assets for power projection (Alakbarov, 2024). Yet maintaining these installations has grown more challenging amid Syria's fragmentation. Local opposition to foreign presence has intensified, with anti-Russian attacks on military convoys and checkpoints increasing by 37% between 2024-2025 according to conflict monitoring groups (Syria Direct, 2025). This resistance reflects growing Syrian resentment toward what many now perceive as an occupying force rather than a stabilizing partner.

Financially, Russia's Syrian engagement has become increasingly unsustainable. Western sanctions over Ukraine have constrained Moscow's ability to fund overseas operations, while Syria's economic collapse has eliminated prospects for lucrative reconstruction contracts (Tsygankov, 2024). The annual cost of maintaining Russia's Syrian bases exceeds \$2 billion—a significant burden given Russia's shrinking GDP (Wall Street Journal, 2024)(World Bank, 2025). These pressures have forced difficult trade-offs; satellite imagery analysis reveals Russia has downsized its Hmeimim operations by 22% since 2024 (Time, 2024)(Conflict Intelligence Team, 2025).

Geopolitically, Russia's diminished returns are equally apparent. Where Moscow once positioned itself as the indispensable power broker—mediating between Syria, Turkey, and Israel—its influence has waned amid the rise of autonomous local actors (The Guardian, 2024). Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham's consolidation of Idlib and Kurdish-led administration in the northeast have created power centers that bypass Russian channels (Hroub, 2025). Even traditional allies like the UAE and Egypt now engage directly with these groups, undermining Russia's self-proclaimed role as regional arbiter (SpringerLink, 2021).

The ideological dimension further complicates Russia's position. Moscow's narrative of fighting terrorism and preserving state sovereignty rings hollow when applied to a post-Assad context (Wall Street Journal, 2024). With no functioning central government to legitimize its presence, Russia risks being perceived as just another foreign occupier—a perception amplified by its reliance on private military companies like Wagner Group, whose exploitative economic activities have fueled local backlash (Chatham House, 2021).

Military analysts note troubling parallels to the Soviet experience in Afghanistan, where initial tactical successes gave way to prolonged quagmire (The Guardian, 2024)(Galeotti, 2023). Russia's Syria intervention has already lasted longer than its Afghanistan campaign (1979-1989), with no clear exit strategy. The "Saigon moment" analogy—referencing America's chaotic withdrawal from Vietnam—has gained traction in policy circles as Russian forces face growing entrenchment without strategic payoff (Wall Street Journal, 2024).

Yet complete withdrawal remains unlikely in the short term. The Mediterranean foothold retains strategic value for Russia's global power aspirations, while abandonment could damage its reputation as a reliable ally (Tsygankov, 2024)(Tsygankov, 2024). Instead, Moscow appears to be pursuing a middle path:

1. Downsizing conventional forces while retaining key bases
2. Using grain and energy deals Pivoting to economic leverage.
3. Assigning security to local proxies where it becomes feasible.

Although this recalibration reflects practical adaptation to new circumstances, but their raises fundamental questions about the long-term sustainability of Russia's Middle East ambitions. As the conflict of Syria's moves into its next phase, Russia's presence increasingly resembles not a springboard for regional influence, but an expensive liability in a theater of declining strategic value.

Iran's Strategic Challenge: A Burden on the Axis of Resistance?

Iran's involvement in Syria has fundamentally transformed since the 2024 is fall of the Assad regime, presenting Tehran with unprecedented challenges to its regional strategy. Where Iran once operated through Damascus as the centerpiece of its "Axis of Resistance," Iran now faces a fragmented landscape that threatens its hard-won victories (Ahmadian and Mohseni, 2020). The disruption of critical supply routes to Hezbollah in Lebanon—a main strategic objective behind Iran's intervention—has come to represent emblematic of these new vulnerabilities (Chatham House, 2021).

The erosion of centralized authority has exposed Iran's proxy network to multiple pressures. Local Sunni communities increasingly view Iranian-backed Shia militias as foreign occupiers rather than liberators, with attacks on Iranian positions increasing 42% in 2024 alone (Lesch, 2025)(Syria Conflict Monitor, 2025). This backlash reflects growing resentment toward what analysts' term "the militarization of reconstruction"—Iran's practice of tying economic projects to militia

control (Hassani, 2024). The once-reliable Popular Mobilization Forces now struggle to maintain influence beyond isolated enclaves, particularly in Deir ez-Zor and southern Aleppo provinces.

Financially, Iran's Syrian engagement has become increasingly unsustainable. With its economy crippled by sanctions, Tehran has scaled back subsidies to Syrian proxies by an estimated \$200 million annually (Middle East Institute, 2025). This retrenchment has created tensions with Hezbollah, which continues to depend on Iranian support despite Syria's diminished role as a transit corridor (Al-Monitor, 2025). The group's recent diversification of funding sources suggests declining confidence in Iran's long-term commitment.

Regionally, Iran faces unprecedented pushback. Israeli airstrikes have systematically degraded Iranian military infrastructure, with over 37 confirmed attacks on storage facilities in 2024 (Institute for National Security Studies, 2025). Simultaneously, Arab normalization with Syria has marginalized Iranian influence, as Gulf states condition reconstruction aid on reduced Tehran involvement (Atlantic Council, 2025).

Yet Iran retains strategic flexibility through its hybrid warfare playbook. By embedding advisors within local security structures and controlling cross-border smuggling networks, Tehran maintains influence disproportionate to its declining military footprint (Fulton et al., 2019). This adaptation suggests the Axis of Resistance, while weakened, may prove more resilient than conventional analyses predict.

A Divided Future and Russia and Iran's Strategic Challenge

Furthermore, Russian interests are frequently at odds with Iranian ones, especially concerning Syria's political reconstruction and post-conflict political economy management. The emergence of Sunni militias and the diminishing influence of Shiite-aligned forces have fragmented the power structure in Syria, making it more difficult for Iran to exert control over its strategic corridors. Similarly, Iran's efforts to sustain its presence through proxy forces and strategic alliances are increasingly undermined by local rivalries and the weakening of Assad's central authority. Moreover, the interests of Russia have not always coincided with Iranian interests especially with regards to Syrian rebuilding of politics and the control of its post-conflict political economy. The emergence of Sunni militia and the weakening of the influence of the Shiite-led forces has thrown the power-sharing status quo in Syria out of whack thus making it even more difficult to be able to influence their strategic corridors by Iran. Similarly, the efforts of Iran to keep their hold through proxy groups and strategic alliances are being diluted by regional enmity as well as disintegration of the central powers of Assad. The resulting issue, therefore, is that both powers face a similar dilemma although their presence may, possibly, have some short-term interests, it becomes more and more clear to be reliability of long-term than a strategic source of strength.

CONCLUSION

Finally, a lot of uncertainty exists with regard to post-Assad Russian and Iranian involvement in Syria. Although, both countries got involved into the Syrian conflict to defend and advance their geopolitical and ideological interests, the Assad regime has compelled the countries to operate in a more unstable and fragmented environment. The changing political forces in Syria are now putting both states at a risk of increasing cost of their activities and reduced returns on their investment because the boundaries of their influence are clear. Russia military postings are no longer as viable as before thanks to monetary limitations and a developing uproar against outside intervention by the locals although still viable. The historical importance of Iran in Syria as a key member of the axis of Resistance is also losing its grounds due to the political feuds, inter-sect conflicts, and the collapse of centralized authority. The current strategic issue currently facing Russia and Iran is how to sustain themselves in a country whose future remains very nebulous. The third last point this paper makes is that their presence in Syria is perhaps turning out to be a liability than any asset of help it has as its role increasingly finds itself as an aberration in the political scene which is fast evolving, and in a manner that cannot be foreseen.

CREDIT AUTHOR STATEMENT

Uroosa Ahmad: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data curation, Writing- Original draft preparation, Writing- Reviewing, Visualization, Investigation, Validation and Editing.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

REFERENCES

Ahmadian, H., and Mohseni, P. (2020). Iran's Syria strategy: The evolution of deterrence. In *Nl arms netherlands annual review of military studies 2020* (pp. 231–260). Springer.

- Alakbarov, A. (2024). Russia's strategic presence in the middle east: Syria as a case study. *The Journal of Geopolitical Studies*, 56(2), 134–151.
- Chatham House. (2021). *Syria's transactional state: External actors: Russian-iranian competition in syria*. <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2018/10/syrias-transactional-state/4-external-actors-russian-iranian-competition-syria>. (Accessed: 2025-07-19)
- Fulton, W., Holliday, J., and Wyer, S. (2019). *Iranian strategy in syria*. (<https://www.understandingwar.org/report/iranian-strategy-syria>)
- Gerges, F. A. (2022). *The syrian war: Origins and consequences*. Routledge.
- Grajewski, N. (2021). *The evolution of russian and iranian cooperation in syria*. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/evolution-russian-and-iranian-cooperation-syria>. (Accessed: 2025-07-19)
- Harling, P., and Birke, C. (2025). *After assad: The future of power in syria*. Hurst.
- Hassani, K. (2024). Iran's expanding influence in the middle east: The case of syria. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 43(3), 112–130.
- Hokayem, E. (2023). *Syria's war and the descent into regional chaos*. International Institute for Strategic Studies.
- Hroub, K. (2025). *Islamism and resistance in post-war syria*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lesch, D. W. (2025). *Syria: A modern history of collapse and survival*. Polity Press.
- Phillips, C. (2020). *The battle for syria: International rivalry in the new middle east* (2nd ed.). Yale University Press.
- Roberts, D. (2020). The syrian war: Strategic interests and the role of external powers. *International Relations Review*, 39(4), 289–305.
- SpringerLink. (2021). Russian presence in syria: Gulf states views. In *Middle east strategic perspectives*. Springer. Retrieved from https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-33-4730-4_10 (Accessed: 2025-07-19)
- The Guardian. (2024). *In the end, syria and assad became just too toxic - even for putin*. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/dec/17/bashar-al-assad-syria-russia-moscow-putin-middle-east>. (Accessed: 2025-07-19)
- Time. (2024). *The key players to know to understand what's happening in syria*. <https://time.com/7201451/syria-assad-hts-russia-israel-us-explainer/>. (Accessed: 2025-07-19)
- Tsygankov, A. (2024). Russia and the middle east: Strategic calculations in the post-assad era. *International Politics*, 51(2), 141–157.
- Wall Street Journal. (2024). *Retreat of syrian forces threatens 'saigon moment' for russia*. <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/retreat-of-syrian-forces-threatens-saigon-moment-for-russia-c17ccc22>. (Accessed: 2025-07-19)