

Doctoral (PhD) Dissertation

Regional states and the international system

**The Role of Palestinian - Israeli Conflict in Power Hierarchy in
the Middle East Region**

by

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Abbreviations

AIPAC	–	American Israeli Public Relations Committee
CEPS	–	Centre for European Policy Studies
EC	–	European Community
EEC	–	European Economic Community
EMP	–	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
ENP	–	European Neighborhood Policy
EU	–	European Union
IMCI	–	Immaterial Capacities Index
IEA	–	International Energy Agency
JCPOA	–	Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action
MCI	–	Material Capacities Index
MENA	–	Middle East and North Africa
P.A.	–	Palestinian Authority
P.L.O.	–	Palestinian Liberation Organization
SMCI	–	Semi-Material Capacities Index
SPSS	–	Statistical program for Social Sciences
U.A.E	–	United Arab Emirates
UAR	–	United Arab Republic
UfM	–	Union for the Mediterranean -
UNRWA	–	UN Relief and Works Agency
UN	–	United Nation
U.S.	–	United States
WPI	–	World Power Index
WWII	–	World War II
WWI	–	World War I

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I. Introduction

The geopolitical shift has a significant impact on international politics. Two major trends dominated international politics in the post-Cold War era: the spread and transfer of power.¹ The international system has moved from a unipolar system to a form of system that observers have formulated as a system that is not clear-cut and characterized by a kind of liquidity. It may sometimes be described as multipolar, but the consensus is that power has become increasingly decentralized. Conflict and order became more regional, and regional interactions between states became more critical to world politics.²

The growth of regional autonomy in Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia and the waning influence of former colonial powers in most non-Western regions have allowed solid sovereign countries in the region to play an increasingly important role in economic integration, security dynamics in the region and the regulation of political relations.³ This gave importance to studying regional powers and their impact on the international system.

Many studies examined regional power definition (D. Nolt 2010, S Yilmaz 2017, Buzan, Barry, and Ole Waver 2003, M. Beck, 2014, M. Ponizilova 2016). However, there is still no consensus on the definition and precise meaning of regional power or even the way to measure it because it is combined with two elements, Power and Region.

Power measuring through state capabilities, including demographic, economic, and military, are essential for studying power and knowing the behavior of states, but material resources alone may not reflect the power of states to influence others. The ownership of considerable material resources alone does not always guarantee that the state will be able to achieve all its goals so that it becomes a regional power, but the most important thing is to exercise the influence of this power on others.⁴ Measuring regional power in its material resources, geography, economy, and military power is an easy process, but what

¹ EBERT, H. - FLEMES, D, 2018. p. 7.

² EBERT, H. - FLEMES, D, 2018. p. 8.

³ PONIZILOVA, M., 2016. p. 158.

⁴ PONIZILOVA, M., 2016. p. 159.

matters the most is the impact of this power in the region until it becomes regional. Its influence lies in its ability to lead and to influence.

On the other hand, the fact that the Middle East is a region by definition is also a dilemma. Does it constitute a region, what countries belong to it, and how is it defined politically or geographically? This is also has been discussed by the thesis in order to achieve a logical analysis of the Middle East as a region and the powers it contains.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian issue occupies an important place in the politics of the Middle East, on the minds of many local and international politicians. It is considered one of the political dilemmas of the protracted conflict first and second because it lacks visions of logical solutions. The thesis deals with two critical axes, the first is the regional power, and the second is the use of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as a tool for measuring power through the analysis of the region's power influence in this conflict. The thesis will be concerned with developing a set of several scenarios for resolving this conflict by knowing what has been analyzed from the outside and analyzing that from the inside.

The importance of this thesis and its originality stems from the fact that it combines all the relevant actors in the region and compares what is written in the theoretical works of scholars what has been written and analyzed – outsider approach – and provides the results of the ground-based empirical research the insider approach.

The thesis highlights the repercussions of the existence of a Regional Power for conflict resolution and regional institutionalization. It focuses on the tools and strategies of how the regional powers mechanize their interests and hegemony, and it also predicts the practical strategies used to gain that position – regional power – through conflict resolution.

The Ph.D. work aims to collect all the region's main influential actors and conduct an in-depth analysis of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The success of creating a regional order means solving or at least stabilizing the region's conflict.

The thesis analyzes the region's leading actors, Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, policies and strategies in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict to know their visions and perceptions of the region to measure the power hierarchy and their influence in the region. In parallel, it analyses mainly the U.S. policy towards the region and other world powers.

Concerning the region's future, it is appropriate to assess who will determine the ruling power in the region and the expected forms of alliances.

The thesis will explore the region, set up a particular definition for the Middle East, and analyze the role of regional powers. This complexity needs to connect the internal actors in the region with the external actors and world powers, mainly the role played by the U.S. in the region.

The thesis aims to understand the role of the regional actors in the Middle East, whether they are considered a dominant regional power or influential secondary power, in order to classify them. Classifying powers in the region can determine their political features and the forms of internal relations. In parallel, the thesis examines the process of regional cooperation through the Palestinian-Israeli conflict by analyzing key actors' policies, strategies, and alliances.

Understanding the contemporary Middle East could not be done without connecting it to the historical background of the main stages that passed since the collapse of the Ottomans Empire. This requires delving into history, reading the finer details, showing the reality, and getting guidance to know whether this contemporary Middle East controls itself or has been controlled from outside the colonial legacy.

The Middle East is considered an arena for international-external and regional-internal competition at the level of the region's countries. In most cases, internal competition is a proxy reflection of external competition. What distinguishes the Middle East is its dynamism and rapid change, of course, as the events of the 2011 Arab Spring revolutions constituted a new crossroads for changing the entire political map of the Middle East.

The thesis depended on the World power Index⁵ to classify the candidate powers for measuring their influence on the conflict; the author chose it because it collects all

⁵ The World Power Index (WPI) is resulting from the addition of 18 indicators, which are themselves organized through three composite indexes: Material Capacities Index (MCI) the MCI is a composite index that seeks to reflect more broadly the economic-military power of states from considering six essential variables: national production, total surface area, defense, international commerce, finances and research & development, Semi-Material Capacities Index (SMCI) the SMCI is a composite index that seeks to refer the socio-institutional power of a State from considering six fundamental variables: production per capita, population, consumption: Household final consumption expenditure per capita, energy, education and health, and Immaterial Capacities Index (IMCI) the IMCI is made from six variables that are intended to reflect more broadly cultural-communicative power of a State from: government expenditure, tourism

indicators to measure the power and influence of states. The author set up a table⁶ based on the data received from the World power index, which provides data until the year 2017, and chose the highest countries within this classification, which were, as we indicated previously, Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Israel in addition to Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E) and Egypt, where these countries were discussed and urged in the context of the coming chapters.

I.1. Background of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict

The Arab-Israeli conflict arose at the end of World War I (1914-1918) after the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the start of the British-French mandate over the region after the Sykes-Picot Agreement, publicly known in 1917. The Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917, known as the promise of the British kingdom to establish a national home for the Jews in Palestine, and considered the cornerstone of the official start of the conflict between Israel and the Arabs in the Middle East.

The Israelis claim that they have a historical right to exist in the land of Palestine, and on the other hand, the Palestinians believe that this is their homeland and their state. Politics overlaps with religion In this conflict, the Israelis merge their claim to Palestine from a religious perspective and that it was their land since the days of Prophet Solomon, and the Muslims living in the region also say that it is an Islamic endowment land that all Muslims own. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 resulted in no fewer than five wars between Israel and the surrounding Arab countries and two major Palestinian uprisings.

The Sykes-Picot Agreement, which included portions of Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt, recognized the State of Israel's geographic location on the territory of the State of Palestine. Resolution 18, also known as Partition Plan⁷, was adopted by the United

appeal, international aid, telephone lines, academic influence and cosmopolitanism. Resulting in a tool that measures national power in a complex, multidimensional and dynamic way from 1975 to 2017.

Morales Ruvalcaba, Daniel. *World Power Index Database*. 2022. Available at:

<https://www.worldpowerindex.com/data-wpi/> [Last accessed: 20.02.2022]

⁶ The table can be found in Appendixes

⁷ In UN Resolution 181, the General Assembly of the United Nations voted to approve the partition plan November 29, 1947 by a vote of 33 to 13, with 10 abstentions. Following the British announcement that it would end its authority over Palestine, the question of sovereignty was considered by the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP). The UNSCOP report recommended the division of the British

Nations in 1947 and aimed to create separate Arab and Jewish states within the boundaries of the British Mandate of Palestine. The State of Israel, the West Bank (west of the Jordan River), and the Gaza Strip were each given a portion of the area.

Starting with Egypt, Israel concluded the first peace agreement in the region, 'Camp David,' ending a conflict with Egypt that lasted more than 30 years. In 1987, confrontations broke out in the West Bank and Gaza with the Israelis resulting in the first Palestinian intifada, as the 'stone uprising' broke out.

In the year 1991, Israel concluded the Oslo Accords peace agreement with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (P.L.O.), the 'Declaration of Principles Agreement,' which included a Palestinian presence in both Gaza and the city of Jericho first and then waiting for five years until the negotiations started on the final stage for the final demarcation of the borders, as well as agreeing on core issues, including water and capital, the supposed capital of the State of Palestine, which was agreed to be East Jerusalem.

Both sides agreed that a Palestinian Authority (P.A.) would be established and assume governing responsibilities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip over five years. Then, permanent status talks on the issues of borders, refugees, and Jerusalem would be held.

Jerusalem is divided into two parts, eastern and western, and this dates to the day of the State of Israel establishment announcement soon after the 1948 war, following up its occupation of western Jerusalem and a completed occupation of the rest of the city of Jerusalem in the 1967 war.

The Israeli-Palestinian agreement at the time was linked to United Nations Resolution 242 and Resolution 338. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 (S/RES/242) was adopted unanimously by the UN Security Council on November 22, 1967, in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. It was adopted under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. The resolution was sponsored by British Ambassador Lord Caradon and was one of five drafts

Mandate-controlled area of Palestine into two states, one Arab and one Jewish, with Jerusalem to be an “international” city. According to the plan, the two states, roughly equal in size and natural resources, would cooperate on major economic issues, sharing their currency, roads, and government services over the territory. The Zionist leadership reluctantly accepted the partition plan, as it offered at least two of their requirements — sovereignty and control over immigration. The Palestinian Arabs and the surrounding Arab nations rejected it outright, refusing to accept the establishment of a Jewish state in the region. Available at : <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/038/88/PDF/NR003888.pdf?OpenElement> [Last accessed: 20.01.2023]

under consideration. The Preamble refers to the “inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in the Middle East in which every State in the area can live in security”.

Operative Paragraph One affirms that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

- (i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;
- (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.

The three-line United Nations Security Council Resolution 338, adopted on October 22, 1973, called for a cease-fire in the six-day war in accordance with a joint proposal by the United States and the Soviet Union. The resolution stipulated a cease-fire to take effect within 12 hours of the adoption of the resolution. The ‘appropriate auspices’ was interpreted to mean American or Soviet rather than UN auspices. This third clause helped to establish the framework for the Geneva Conference (1973), held in December 1973.

The resolution was passed at the 1747th UN Security Council meeting by 14 votes to none, with one member, the People's Republic of China, not participating in the vote. The fighting continued despite the terms called for by the resolution, brought Resolution 339 which resulted in a cease-fire.

The resolution states: The Security Council, calls upon all parties to present fighting to cease all firing and terminate all military activity immediately, no later than 12 hours after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions they now occupy;

Calls upon all parties concerned to start immediately after the cease-fire the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 (1967) in all of its parts; Decides that, immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire, negotiations start between the parties

concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

On a global scale, the Oslo Accord was seen as a turning point in the conflict because it marked the first time that, on the one hand, the Palestine Liberation Organization acknowledged Israel as a 'state' and, on the other, Israel acknowledged the P.L.O. as the lone and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The Oslo II Accords, added in 1995, enlarged the original accord by requiring Israel to withdraw entirely from six cities and 450 communities in the West Bank.

Palestinians began the second intifada in 2000, which would last until 2005. It was partly sparked by Palestinian complaints about Israel's control over the West Bank, a stalled peace process, and former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's visit to al-Aqsa mosque—the third holiest site in Islam. In response, the Israeli government authorized building a wall enclosing the West Bank in 2002, in defiance of the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

The United States tried to restart the West Bank peace negotiations between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority in 2013. However, the 2014 formation of a unity government between Fatah, the Palestinian Authority's official party, and Hamas, a breakaway faction, halted peace negotiations. One of the two main Palestinian political parties, Hamas, was established in 1987 after the first intifada and is a breakaway from Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. In 1997, the U.S. designated Hamas as a foreign terrorist organization.

The Israeli military and Hamas engaged in a military conflict in the summer of 2014 due to hostilities in the Palestinian territories. Hamas launched approximately 3,000 rockets at Israel, and Israel responded by launching a significant attack in Gaza. Late in August 2014, Egypt arranged a cease-fire agreement that stopped the fighting, but not before 73 Israelis and 2,251 Palestinians had died. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas declared that Palestinians would no longer be constrained by the territorial divides established by the Oslo Accords following a spate of violence between Israelis and Palestinians in 2015. Palestinians in the Gaza Strip staged weekly protests near the border with Israel between March and May of 2018.

In May 2018, fighting broke out between Hamas and the Israeli military in the worst period of violence since 2014. Before reaching a cease-fire, militants in Gaza fired over one hundred rockets into Israel; Israel responded with strikes on more than fifty targets in Gaza during the twenty-four-hour flare-up.

The administration of Donald J. Trump agreed with Israel and the Palestinians a top goal in its foreign policy. In 2018, the Trump administration reversed a long-standing U.S. policy and cut off financing on the U.N. Relief and Works Agency, which aids Palestinian refugees. It also moved the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Israeli government applauded the decision to move the American embassy, but other Middle Eastern and European governments and Palestinian officials denounced it. East Jerusalem is the claimed capital of a future Palestinian state, whereas Israel claims the 'whole and unified Jerusalem' as its capital. The long-awaited 'Peace to Prosperity' plan from the Trump administration was unveiled in January 2020, but Palestinians rejected it because it backed potential Israeli annexation of settlements in the West Bank and ruled over an 'undivided' Jerusalem. Following Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) and Bahrain agreed to normalize relations with Israel in August and September of 2020, becoming the third and fourth nations in the region to do so. The agreements, known as the Abraham Accords, occurred more than 18 months after the United States hosted Israel and several Arab nations for ministerial discussions on the future of Middle Eastern peace in Warsaw/Poland. Hamas and the Palestinian Authority's leader Mahmoud Abbas both rejected the agreements.

The conflict between Israel and Palestine is intricate, and its roots are in regional, national, political, cultural, and religious aspects. The land is what both Israelis and Palestinians desire. The extent to which the region's powers have demonstrated their contribution to resolving this conflict will be understood during the thesis work to gauge their regional stature and develop scenarios for potential conflict resolutions.

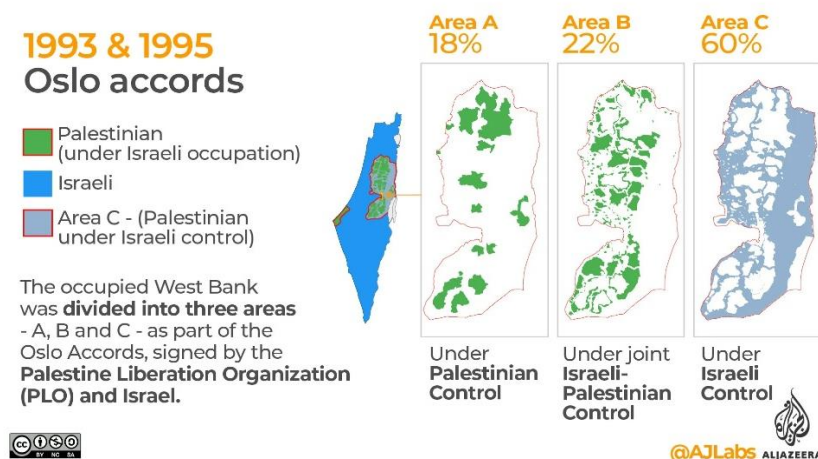
Statuesque of Palestine: The Palestinian issue has deeper dimensions than the issue of the Palestinians alone, as it is linked to the Arab-Islamic heritage, specifically the city of Jerusalem.

The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip Oslo II, signed on September 28, 1995, as a transitional period of five years dividing the

Palestinian territories into three distinct areas in the West Bank, namely areas A, B, and (C) Each of them has different security and administrative arrangements and authorities, as follows:

- Areas (A): entirely under Palestinian control, mainly urban areas, cities, and towns, such as Hebron, Ramallah, Nablus, Tulkarm, and Qalqilya: with authority to maintain internal security and the deployment of Palestinian Authority police patrols in the streets.
- Areas (B): subject to Palestinian civil and Israeli security control, villages adjacent to the cities in Areas (A).
- Areas classified (C): the entire presence of the Israeli army and under Israeli control; It includes settlements, roads, strategic areas, and areas adjacent to the borders of "Israel"! Area C is home to (150,000) Palestinians in more than (500) civil society and about (325,000) Israeli settlers in more than (200) settlements and outposts. It contains 63% of the most fertile land and is rich in natural resources in the West Bank, most of the area of the Jordan Valley, which contains the largest (uninhabited) land reserve in the West Bank and a large part of its natural resources.⁸

Figure 1: The divisions of areas in the West Bank according to the Oslo accords⁹



⁸ Palestinian academic society for the study of international affairs. p.151. Available at: <http://www.passia.org/maps/view/> [Last accessed: 15.01.2023]

⁹ Palestine and Israel: Mapping an annexation, Aljazeera. Available at: <https://2u.pw/ebgH8b> [Last accessed: 20.01.2023]

The Oslo Accords aim to transfer Areas (B) gradually and Areas (C), sometimes known as the West Bank and Gaza Strip, to Palestinian rule (A). However, none of the lands in Areas (C) were given to the Palestinian Authority and the West Bank as a whole, as well as Areas (A) (17.2% of the West Bank) and Areas (B) (23.8%), which are made up of 227 non-contiguous settlements and are cut off from one another and their lands and other resources, remained an occupied territory. Area C contains about 40% of privately owned Palestinian property where illegal settlements have been erected.¹⁰

I. 2. Theoretical framework

When searching for theories to explain relations between countries (Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Iran), each theory has found an approach and factors for interpreting these relationships. There is no single comprehensive theory of understanding the complexity of the Middle East. For the thesis purposes, the author divided the theoretical framework into the following parts:

As for the theoretical approach, the research will discuss theories directly related to research questions. One of the most important is the dependency theory, which discusses U.S. policy towards the region after the Cold War, and the other is the theory of hegemony.

The author will also discuss the balance of power theory, which is about the threat and security dilemma in the region, to find out the region's complexities in terms of power and the arrangement of actors.

The U.S. policies in the Middle East, in general, and to Palestine-Israel conflict, are explored in three approaches: the dependency theory and its evaluations divide the world's countries into three groups "Core, Peripheral, Semi-Peripheral." The second approach is the theory of hegemony and imperialism.

Hegemony would be the complete military domination of the region. This means complete safety from military invasion or defeat by any of your neighboring powers. In history, only the United States has been an undisputed hegemon.

¹⁰ Palestinian academic society for the study of international affairs. p. 151. Available at: <http://www.passia.org/maps/view/> [Last accessed: 15.01.2023]

Imperialism means the extension of a nation's influence, whether culturally, economically, or militarily. It is by its very nature invasive, while hegemony after the conflict needed to establish the initial position quickly becomes passive and even beneficial.

There is a specific theoretical framework that Mearsheimer and Walt (2006) applied to the special relationship between the U.S. and Israel. The researchers found that the U.S. supported Israel, working against its interests in the region from a strategic point of view. They discussed Israeli influence on U.S. decisions, particularly the role of the Israeli lobby. The researchers developed a theory that a country could work against its interests in the region, meanwhile supporting ethnic and religious groups or minorities in the same region.

We note that the realist school focused on the concept of power, while the liberal theory focused on the concept of economics and saw the world as an extension of the market. Neither theory proposed the idea of Semi-Peripheral states (presented by the dependency theory in its divisions of states).

The dependency theory explains what is going on in the region through the concepts of hegemony and dependency, the exploitation of the region's resources, and the relationship of the U.S. with it.

I.2.1. Dependency theory

Dependency theory was developed in the late 1950s under the guidance of the Director of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America. Raul Prebisch¹¹ and his colleagues were troubled by the fact that economic growth in the advanced industrialized

¹¹ Raúl Prebisch was born in San Miguel de Tucumán, a city in the interior of Argentina, in April 1901. He studied economics at the University of Buenos Aires from 1918 to 1922. In 1923 he started to teach as Professor of Political Economics at the Faculty of Economic Sciences in Buenos' Aires National University, a post he held until 1948.

From 1930 to 1943 he worked as a public servant, in the Banco Nación and then the Ministry of Finance. In 1935 he was one of the founders and first Governor of the Central Bank of Argentina, a post he held until 1943.

From May 1950 to July 1963 Mr. Prebisch was Executive Secretary of the United Nation's Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Later he became Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). In 1984 he returned to Argentina to work with the democratic government that took over in 1983.

He died in Santiago, Chile, April 1986.

He wrote many works, including *Hacia una dinámica del desarrollo latinoamericano* (1963 ECLAC Report); *La crisis del desarrollo argentino*; and *The Economic Development of Latin American and its Principal Problems* (1949). This last work, known as the 'Manifiesto', took him into the position of ECLAC Executive Secretary. Available at: <https://www.cepal.org/en/staff/raul-prebisch> [Last accessed: 15.02.2023]

countries did not necessarily lead to growth in the poorer countries. Indeed, their studies suggested that economic activity in richer countries often led to serious economic problems in poorer countries.

There are other sources attributed to the dependency theory by Paul Baran (1957). The developing countries specialize in producing one type of export, the primary sources of which are controlled by the local elite and the global economy.

The relationship of the United States with the region from a strategic point of view, specifically through its relationship with the oil-exporting countries, underpinned that the U.S. wants to control the region. Through this, the U.S. formulates its policy in the region as well as with other countries in the region.

One of the pioneers of the dependence theory, Dos Santos (1971), divided the world into two parts, the peripheral states (third-world countries) and the Core countries (the developed capitalist countries).

Immanuel Wallerstein (1976) was the first to implement the idea of semi-peripheral states in the new world order, and he believes these countries play an independent role in the global and capitalist economies. The global economy consists of two classes; bourgeois and workers – and labor is divided between the core and the Peripheral. The semi-peripheral countries take the role of the core towards the peripheral states, and the peripheral states take the role of the core.

He adds that if core countries weaken or fall, this will benefit the semi-peripheral countries, but a small number of semi-peripheral countries can do so – to be core – unless they change their economic situation. The semi-peripheral can also rise when the power of other semi-peripherals ends. The semi-peripheral includes economically stable countries with political backgrounds, such as Brazil, Mexico, Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, India, Iran, Turkey, Canada, and Indonesia.

Analyzing the developments explains the relationship between the U.S. and the Middle East, the changes taking place in the region, the imbalance of power, and the internal competition between the powers of the region.

In order to explain the puzzle rivalry in the region, the author will use the Balance of Power theory and the security dilemma. H. Morgenthau (1967) defines the balance of power theory as 'the balance of power refers to an actual state of affairs in which power is distributed among several nations with approximate equality. It is natural for a state to primarily seek to protect itself and its legitimacy and be aware of what is happening in its neighboring countries, and it is also vital to build balanced relations with other countries to ensure its survival, existence, and even control.

According to M. Sheehan (1996), the mechanism of the balance of power is that states must have specific political objectives, which may conflict with the political objectives of other countries. The great importance of the state is to guarantee its continuity and ensure its independence. This is supported by the diplomacy within military powers – primarily on their own but supplemented by that of allies if necessary.

After the exit of many countries from the balance of power, the Middle East scene, especially after the U.S. occupation of Iraq (2003) and the Arab spring (2011), resulted in the absence of Egypt, Libya, and Syria on the balance of power scene. The challenge for the region is restructuring itself according to the balance of power mechanism. States must protect themselves and gain more power for the new situation.

The goal of the balance of power is to maintain the state's credibility and existence to preserve its security in a time of rivalry, which creates a security dilemma between the countries. When a country adopts a policy and aims at improving its security by arming itself after recognizing a threat from another country and the other country also adopts a policy of improving security, that leads to a security dilemma. The security dilemma becomes another dynamic that means the balance of power, and the security dilemma fuels competition.¹²

Moreover, the security dilemma binds countries to the dynamics of action. Because no country can feel total security in a world of competing units, competition for power and a vicious cycle of accumulation of security and power will arise.¹³

¹³ TANG, S., 2009. pp. 590-591

EKŞİ, M., 2017. pp. 135-137.¹²

Furthermore, the balance of power theory predicts that the pursuit of security by a nation tends to result in the creation of a balance of power on a systemic level. This is often accompanied by the prediction that war is less likely when power is balanced because no nation can be confident of winning a war, and thus, no nation is tempted to initiate one.¹⁴

Iraq emerged from the region after its occupation in 2003 and with the sequence of events in the Middle East. Especially the Arab spring (2011) that led to a 'collective' out of the balance of power in the region for many countries, which was headed by Egypt, a country that might have been a future regional power. So the imbalance case created a new situation on the inside, at the state level and outside, to seek and guarantee the state's position in the balance of power in the region.

According to both theories, the balance of power and the security dilemma in the Middle East, there are results of mobility from several countries to take a 'new' position in the region and start arrangements to ensure security and continuation in local and international status.

Most factors are linked to the changes in the U.S. policy towards the Middle East. These factors include the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the U.S., the United States invasion of Iraq (2003) and Afghanistan (2001), the rise of non-state actors, the Arab spring (2011), and the fall of authoritarian rules.

The changes in the Middle East created a regional system that the world powers cannot easily bypass, particularly by the U.S. In addition, there is an emergence of competition among states over the Regional Leadership, which also has repercussions on internal alliances and wars by proxy. Among these events, the Palestinian issue, a factor of instability in the Middle East, is still one of the region's key drivers.

The Middle East is currently considered as a multipolar region. The complexity of the scene in the Middle East between local actors and world powers makes it difficult for any country to establish hegemony over the entire region, but it is not impossible.

Among other factors, the emergence of small countries also contributes to complications. Both geographically and demographically, they are significant actors with a strong

¹⁴ SHIMKO, K. L., 2005.p. 125.

influence on the region's policies and alliances, direct or material, e.g., Qatar or the United Arab Emirates.

Furthermore, the events in the region raise the aspirations of its actors. The geopolitical interest conflict definitely impacted the system of alliances and alignments. The intense competition between the powers intensified the division of the spheres of influence in the Arab region, particularly Syria.

Saudi Arabia and Iran are working to maintain the situation and change the region in their favor. As for Turkey, it seeks to secure its regional position by working to secure its borders and its interferences in Syrian affairs, while Israel and Egypt have kept their influential powers.

In this confusing arena in the Middle East, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict remains an 'unclosed window' for instability in the region. What strategies were characteristic of the behavior of regional actors before the 2011 Arab spring, and how did it change toward the conflict afterward? The emergence of regional actors, such as Israel, which is part of the Palestinian cause, made it difficult for Israel to be more deeply integrated into the region without solving the conflict with the Palestinians.

I. 3. Hypotheses

The thesis will specifically deal with the status of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as a tool to measure competition in the region between the main actors, given that a solution to the conflict will lead to stability in the region. The intervention of the actors in this regard shows the extent of their potency and influence.

Hypothesis 1. The thesis assumes no regional powers in the Middle East currently or will be in the future, and the existing powers are middle or secondary.

Hypothesis 2. The powers of the Middle East are not interested in any regional cooperation but seek to preserve themselves and achieve their interests; at the same time, these powers are managed and influenced by the outside 'sub-regional power.'

Hypothesis 3. The thesis assumes that solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will contribute to taking the region to a new stability phase. Considering this hypothesis, the main actors in the region: Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, are considered semi-

peripheral states, which means that they will maintain to be part of the core countries and they will continue to play their role between semi-peripheral or peripheral powers.

I. 4. Expected results

The results show the extent to which the theoretical analysis is decisive in the study of the area, regardless of the distant factual factor. At the same time, they highlight that the practical results of field research can influence the actual results of academic research and take them in a new direction through new theoretical conclusions.

Despite the apparent lack of clarity surrounding the definition of the Middle East, there is a clear definition of the Middle East region from the political and geographical point of view, and the Middle East region is approaching the definition from the geographical point of view used by world powers to indicate a place.

The Middle East is a failed model in regional cooperation (regionalism), as it contains a group of countries of varying strength seeking to secure self-protection for themselves, and this is due to several reasons represented in the weakness of the countries in the region caused by colonialism, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the interference of world powers.

The lack of cooperation and the inability to resolve the existing conflicts in the Middle East, especially the Arab-Israeli conflict, confirms that there is no dominant regional power but rather the presence of influential powers in the region's politics. The U.S. prevents this by weakening these powers and not allowing them to interfere absolutely, as well as the continuous play in the balance of power to ensure instability and fuel competition, but this is reaching a dead-end outcome.

This means no sign of a single power from the dominant region with complete control. Although the concept of regional power is not consistent across the region, the regional actors have influential power in shaping the regional order.

The intervention of world powers is an obstacle to any successful regional cooperation in the Middle East, and the intervention of the U.S. as a dominant power is a significant failure factor of the successful model of regional cooperation in the region, with a clear biased of the U.S. policy toward Israel. The U.S. will continue to support relatively small

countries like Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, keeping the internal competition between the region's actors active.

The rapid events that happened in the Middle East changing its geopolitical map, would help to find a fair solution to the Palestinian–Israeli conflict

A solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will be one of the best strategic options for the region's countries, specifically for Israel. Israel cannot, in any way, integrate the region and its problems and impose more control and even alliances without setting satisfactory solutions to this conflict.

What imposes the form of alliances in the region is the common interests driven by external powers; in this case, it is the U.S. that controls the game of alliances.

The shape of the expected future alliances – Turkey-Israel, Saudi Arabia-Turkey, Saudi Arabia-Israel – is theoretically tricky in the current period, even the Iran and Turkey alliance is not excluded– not to forget to mention that each one of these alliances have its positive and negative effects(results) over the region.

I. 5. Methodology and approach

The thesis uses a comprehensive approach based on the qualitative analytical approach, which will clarify those factors that led to the rise of regional actors in the Middle East through the analysis of the primary sources, e.g., stats and figures, documents, and data. Furthermore, to understand the changing relationship between the regional actors and the United States, secondary sources, books, and articles have been studied.

The author comes from the Middle East region, from Palestine. The Palestinian people still suffer from the Israeli occupation and are looking forward to a solution to their issue. The rapid events in the Middle East, changing its geopolitical map, would help find a fair resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Although Israel has become an influential power in the region, it cannot make any direct alliance without bringing a reasonable solution to the Palestinian people.

The author has the advantage of researching because he is a native Arabic speaker, which will help him explore Palestine's and Saudi Arabia's policies and the other Arabic countries' positions on the examined topic.

The author is well-connected in the region, especially with Palestinian diplomats in the Middle East, which has granted him a privilege and already established access to the necessary information and communication with the key figures needed for the thesis.

Because of the complexity of the situation in the Middle East, in terms of internal powers' region' and external powers' world' and the different approaches for the thesis theoretical framework, U.S. policy towards the region, power hierarchy in the region towards the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the thesis methodology graded according to the purposes of the research and the divisions of its parts.

As such, the thesis relies on the comparative analysis by comparing the policies of the region's key actors and measuring their leadership strategies before the 'Arab spring' in 2011 and beyond. This period was chosen for its importance and significant indications of regional changes.

The empirical research focused on understanding the policies of the actors concerned through their view of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and to what extent it has defined their strategic and political agenda. It should be noted that the power struggle in the region focuses on personal protection, identifying areas of influence and control depending on their interest in the region. The thesis also aims to compare what has been written and analyzed theoretically 'outside' with the current reality 'inside.'

For the thesis purposes, after comparing the leadership rivalry in the Middle East, Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Iran through their strategies and alliance in general and regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in particular, choosing the Arab uprising in 2011, the author's aims at identifying what is changing and for what reason. The author chooses the Arab spring (2011) time to measure before and after because this event has affected the balance of power in the region significantly.

The author will use two empirical research tools: interviews and surveys. The interviews were done with different Representatives of the Palestinian Authority and with different foreign representatives in the Palestinian territories.

1. Assistant of Palestinian Foreign Minister for EU Affairs.
2. Secretary General of the Christian Islamic Organization in support of Jerusalem.

3. Palestinian Authority's diplomats and ambassadors.
4. Different Palestinian political parties.
5. Palestinian Social Activist in a non-governmental organization.
6. Palestinian Governors.
7. The Slovenian Representative to Palestine.
8. British Consulate General in Jerusalem.
9. Turkey –Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency 'TIKA,' Turkish Cultural Center in Palestine.

The author's idea behind the interviews was to enrich the text and to get to know the issue closely through the field experiences and knowledge of the interviewees because practical experiences are always different from written or applied policies.

Regarding the second tool, it is a survey that aims at seeking the opinion of some research centers and academics in the countries of Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, and Palestine and collect their point of view about the region and the strategies of these countries regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the importance of the Middle East.

The questionnaire was designed in four different languages Arabic, Turkish, English, and Iranian, as it is being approved for distribution by the doctoral school.

The study community consisted of academics in a group of people from the countries of "Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel, and Palestine" in the second semester of the academic year 2021-2022.

The questionnaire was built to collect data from the study sample, which included (42) questions divided into (8) dimensions. The dimensions include the definition and the importance of the Middle East, regional power in the Middle East, the Significance of the Palestinian – Israeli conflict in the region, world powers, conflict effect, expected Alliances, internal Palestinian situation, and the future of the region.

The author's idea behind choosing this tool with these dimensions is that it covers the various dimensions of the study, which the author discussed in the study chapters, and his

desire to compare what was written about these dimensions in theory and how the respondents in the questionnaire in the selected countries view them in practice.

The process of collecting information was not easy, as it was a great challenge, as the number of questions is large, and it is not easy to fill except by specialized people close enough to the study and has sufficient knowledge, in addition to the close follow-up by the author with the respondents in order to fill it out and complete it as required.

After completing the questionnaire, the author was interested in analyzing the results and preparing summaries for each axis to have appropriate information for the completion of the interviews, make comparisons, and draw final results.

The dissertation contains of the following chapters:

Chapter I. beside the introduction, this chapter contains comprehensive background of the Palestinian –Israeli Conflict, as well as the theoretical framework, hypothesis, expected results and methodology and approach.

Chapter II. Include the regional power definition approach conceptualizing the regional power in the Middle East. Moreover, the subchapter discusses the main factors that led to the rise of vital regional actors and points at the processes of each of them in light of the todays international system.

The third chapter discusses the Middle East's status as a region to find a suitable definition without losing sight of its background roots and colonial legacy. The chapter's main goals are to find a conceptual framework for the Middle East for better understanding of current statues of the region.

Chapter IV. Comprehensively focuses on the U.S. policy's role in the region. This chapter will clear the scene, factors, and the potential future outcome of the U.S. policy in the region. Analyzing U.S. strategies and policies towards the region will clarify its status in the Middle East and predict its future position.

In the next chapter, I write about the role of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the European Union's Strategy towards the Middle East, the role of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the Russian strategy towards the Middle East, the role of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the Chinese strategy towards the Middle East. This part of the thesis reveals the

central world powers' primary strategy towards the conflict, which will clear the scene and expectations.

Chapter VI. Reveals the relationship between the United States and its main ally in the region-Israel. Tracing the U.S. policy toward the Middle East in general and toward the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, in particular, will be considered as the main factor in reviving a region. Focusing on U.S. policy to its main ally, Israel will be considered as the main part of U.S. policy.

Chapter VII. Concerns other influential powers in the Middle East "Egypt, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates." The Middle East is a place full of competition, in addition to studying the powers that the study considered essential and qualified to be regional powers, namely Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Israel. This chapter seeks not to overlook other influential powers in the region and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Chapter VIII. Includes the author's empirical research and results. The author's empirical research will be based on interviews with stakeholders. The survey will also seek the opinion of research centers and academics of each analyzed country; Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Palestine, and Egypt, about the position of these countries in the region, their hopes for the future, and their vision about the strategic importance of the Middle East.

The final chapter concludes the main findings of the thesis. The four Scenarios are based on the empirical research. The importance of this chapter stems from the fact that it will be a practical result from the 'inside' of the reality of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Those under its direct influence also experience it. I live every paragraph in it in my capacity. I was born and raised in Palestine and still living there. I saw the entry of the first Palestinian forces into my city in 1994 when the implementation of the Oslo peace agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis began. It affected my everyday life. Since I was experiencing the external interventions of world powers daily, for example, in the form of subsidies, aid, or the impact of their interventionist policies. At the same time, what is happening between the Palestinian and Israeli official levels is directly reflected in us, whether calm or escalated. We are the ones who pay the price for that. Everything is directly related to us, the two people; the Palestinians and Israelis.

Furthermore, from my work site in the municipality of my city, we are building institutions and trying to develop through some Palestinian procedures and policies to reach a level we call the 'supposed state,' which should have existed according to the Oslo peace agreement.

Our daily talks about possible prospects for the future of this conflict in a way that guarantees a decent life for the Palestinian people, who live under the last direct occupation in the world.

No matter how biased the talk is towards the Palestinian people, we are talking about occupied people who do not have life necessities versus a state with the necessities of everything.

It is also natural that my perspective differs from the West in particular. What is written and analyzed abroad does not have to reflect reality. There are hidden details between the lines known only to those who live through them, which I have tried to show professionally and objectively.

The thesis highlights the means of the regional actors in the Middle East, differentiating which states are the candidates for a leadership position and which ones post their hegemony. What are their strategies to prove their leadership position?

What is the expected alliance, will more than one country dominate the region as a regional power? The thesis focuses on the main processes that led to the rise of the regional powers in the Middle East because of the changes in U.S. foreign policy towards the region after the end of the Cold War.

II. Regional Powers in the Middle East

In order to move forward in analyzing the political reality of the Middle East, and the regional status of the powers, it is necessary to find an appropriate definition of the regional power.

There is no unified definition of regional power because it is not measured only in terms of military, physical capabilities, and geographical position only, as other dimensions, must be considered when analyzing.

Finding an appropriate definition will help us understand the reality of regional power in the Middle East so that this definition and its theories will be applied to the current reality in the region.

The regional power consists of two parts the power and the region, then the dilemma of power will be analyzed, while the Middle East as a region is another dilemma that will be discussed in later chapters.

This chapter aims to adopt an appropriate definition of regional power as a measuring tool for regional powers in the Middle East.

II. 1. The Middle East as a region

The Middle East is considered a vital area, and this is due to its geopolitical, economic, and strategic position. Therefore, it has always been on the scoop of the world powers. The area witnessed many changes after the end of the cold war (1947-1990), which directly affected the system of international relations. Moreover, a new regional order was established with the rising of the Regional Powers in the Middle East in parallel with the United States' decline of its foreign policy towards the region.

The absence of a clear definition of regional power, in general, makes it difficult at times to analyze. Perhaps the difficulty of defining the Middle East as a region also increases.

This chapter aims to find a definition of regional power in a more precise way that facilitates the measurement and analysis of regional powers in the Middle East.

Regional power combines power and region, and each word has a meaning; on the one hand, power is a thing measured as a whole; it cannot be measured only through hard power or military capabilities. Power is also influence, ability, and possibility, meaning other tools exist to measure power.

On the other hand, the region is a harmonious geographic area with identity, language, culture, etc. However, it is not enough to define each part of the term separately to know

the meaning of regional power as a single term, and this is what the chapter aims to explore and adopt a meaning that will be used later for measurement.

II. 2. Conceptualizing the regional power in the Middle East

Defining the term regional power and placing it in the broader context requires finding a definition of the region in the first place and searching whether the Middle East is considered a region or not.

The region as definitions, usually based on geographical proximity, social and cultural cohesion, political institutions and economic interdependence, geographical convergence, common historical, cultural, and linguistic bonds, and international interactions, should be considered necessary to define the region.¹⁵

However, which of these common characteristics applies to the Middle East? With a quick answer, not all of them, but some of them may apply to the Middle East, and is it possible for it to be a region in the complete sense or not, the subject will be discussed in the next chapter in detail.

Middle East as most social scientists working in the Middle East agree that it is a region composed of Arab states and Iran, Israel, and Turkey.¹⁶

Furthermore, the approach of regional power is a major seed of theoretical concepts of regionalism. The concepts of regionalism have helped to rediscover the role of regional actors whose relative independence has sometimes been neglected when regional affairs are examined only through the lens of the cold war.¹⁷

In his theoretical analysis approach D. Nolte (2010) defined a regional power as: *“a state which articulates the pretension ‘self-conception’ of a leading position in a region that is geographically, economically and political-ideationally delimited; which displays the material ‘military, economic, demographic,’ organizational ‘political’ and ideological*

¹⁵ SEVER. A, 2018. p.18.

¹⁶ BECK. M, 2014. p. 3.

¹⁷ BECK, M., 2014. pp. 1-2.

*resources for regional power projection; which truly has great influence in regional affairs 'activities and results.'*¹⁸

Miriam Prys (2010; 2013) identifies four dimensions of regional power: self-perception of the regional role, the perception by other states in the region that the regional power has a unique role, the provision of public goods, and the influence of preferences and values of other states in the region. Collectively these variables yield three types of regional powers: the detached power, the regional hegemon, and the regional dominator.¹⁹

The traditional approach to defining regional power depends on the military capabilities of the State, economic power, and strategic geographical location. The other critical approach is to assess the country's leadership capacity, influence, and legitimacy on the international scene.

Practically, regional power must fulfill at least three conditions: leading regional position, displaying material and ideological resources for regional power protection, and exercising actual influence in regional affairs.²⁰

Summarizing the recent scene of the Middle East, which is frequent competitive behavior rather than cooperative behavior and hard power rather than soft power; driving low global energy capabilities, non-use of resources for regional development by regional actors; and the distinct role of the U.S. as a sub-regional power.²¹

The Middle East has not been a successful example of regional cooperation or integration.²² This is evident in the region's political scene, and there is no lasting stability and chaos.

So, if the concept of regional power is based on the principle of leadership as defined, in addition to the other components, no regional powers will meet the region's requirements.²³

¹⁸ NOLTE, D., 2010. p. 893.

¹⁹ DAVID, M., 2016. p. 12.

²⁰ NOLTE, D., 2010. p. 894.

²¹ BECK, M., 2014. p. 5.

²² SEVER, A.: Globalism, Regionalism and the Middle East', in Stivachtis, Y.A. (ed.): *Conflict and Diplomacy in the Middle East: External Actors and Regional Rivalries*. 2018. Bristol, England, p.18

²³ BECK, M., 2014. pp. 4-5.

Indeed, what is going on in the Middle East is attempts by the countries qualified to be future regional powers to be effective in the Middle East and the world. Apart from theory, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, and Israel are candidates to be regional powers in the Middle East, noticing that not considering them as regional powers is not incompatible with the reality of their power and influence in the region.

On the other hand, political leadership in the Middle East focuses on the Religious dimension in the first place, sure beside the other factors, military and economic ones, religion is a standard feature among the Arab countries, Iran and Turkey. So if we assume that the rivalry will be between Saudi Arabia and Iran or Saudi Arabia and Turkey, who will lead the Islamic world? In return for the first assumption of Saudi Arabia and Iran, the rivalry will be on the leadership, from a religious perspective, and a direct sectarian perspective, Sunnis versus Shiites.²⁴

On the ground, there is a rivalry between these powers on leadership and gain more alliances, and an explicit scene of rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran, for example, is the proxy war statutes in the Yemen conflict; Saudi Arabia supports the Yemeni government against the Houthi group (Shiiti) which supported by Iran.

III. The theory of Balance of Power

The balance of power theory, defined by H. Morgenthau, is ‘the balance of power refers to an actual state of affairs in which power is distributed among several nations with approximate equality.’²⁵

It is natural for a state to primarily seek to protect itself and its legitimacy and be aware of what is happening in its neighboring countries. Building balanced relations with other countries ensures their survival, existence, and control.

According to M. Sheehan (1996), the mechanism of the balance of power is that states must have specific political objectives, which may conflict with the political objectives of

²⁴ Sunnis: Muslims of the branch of Islam that adheres to the orthodox tradition and acknowledges the first four caliphs as rightful successors of prophet Muhammad.

Shiites: are members of a branch of the Islamic religion which regards Mohammed's cousin Ali and his successors, rather than Mohammed himself, as the final authority on religious matters.

²⁵ SHEEHAN, M., 1996. p. 3.

other countries. The great importance of the state is to guarantee its continuity and ensure its independence. This is supported by the diplomacy within military powers – primarily their own, but supplemented by that of allies if necessary.²⁶

The goal of the balance of power is to maintain the state's credibility and existence to preserve its security in times of rivalry, creating security dilemmas between the countries. When a country adopts a policy and aims at improving its security by arming itself after recognizing a threat from another country, and the other country also adopts a policy of improving security that leads to the security dilemma, the security dilemma becomes another dynamic that means the balance of power and the security dilemma fuel competition.²⁷

III. 1. The theory of Security Dilemma

To some extent, the theory of the security dilemma is similar to the theory of the balance of power, but the difference is that the acceleration in the possession of results in a reaction. One party strengthens military capabilities or uses certain weapons or even alliances, increasing tensions that may lead to conflict.

In order to understand what is happening in the Middle East in particular, and in light of a competitive and unstable environment, the states seek to fortify themselves by increasing their military capabilities or alliances to ensure their survival and the continuation of their influence.

The principle of fear leads countries that have entered into civil wars, Yemen and Syria, for example, and countries that have become the scene of international and global rivalries, such as Libya. It is natural for the region to enter the spiral of the security dilemma to preserve survival.

John Hez coined the term security dilemma as follows:

“Groups and individuals live side by side without organizing into a higher unit. It must be concerned with their security from being attacked, subjugated, controlled, or exterminated by groups and other individuals. To seek security from such attacks, they

²⁶SHEEHAN, M., 1996. p. 11.

²⁷EKŞİ, M., 2017. p.5.

are driven to gain more and more power in order to escape the effects of the power of others.’²⁸

Moreover, the security dilemma binds countries to the dynamics of action. Because no country can feel total security in a world of competing units, competition for power and a vicious cycle of accumulation of security and power will arise.²⁹

Furthermore, the balance of power theory predicts that the pursuit of security by a nation tends to result in the creation of a balance of power on a systemic level. This is often accompanied by the prediction that war is less likely when power is balanced because no nation can be confident of winning a war, and thus, no nation is tempted to initiate one.³⁰

The situation in the Middle East after the exit of several countries from the balance of power, specifically after the United States' occupation of Iraq (2003) and the Arab Spring (2011), resulted in the absence of Egypt, Libya, and Syria on the balance of power scene. The challenge for the region is restructuring itself according to the balance of power mechanism, and States must protect themselves and gain more power for the new situation.

Iraq emerged from the region after its occupation in 2003 and with the sequence of events in the Middle East. Especially the Arab Spring (2011) led to a ‘collective’ balance of power in the region for many countries, headed by Egypt, one of the countries that might have been a future regional power. So the imbalance case created a new situation inside, at the state level, and outside to seek and guarantee the state’s position in the balance of power in the region.

According to both theories, the balance of power and the security dilemma in the Middle East, there are results of mobility from several countries to take a ‘new’ position in the region and start arrangements to ensure security and continuation in local and international status.³¹

Interestingly, the main feature of the international relations system is anarchy and instability, so the security dimension of states ensures their survival and stability. This is

²⁸ TANG, S., 2009. p. 590.

²⁹ TANG, S., 2009. pp. 591-593.

³⁰ SHIMKO, K. L., 2005. p. 125.

³¹ SOÓS, E., 2015. p. 43.

the reason behind the arms race, keeping pace with technology and alliances. What happened in the Middle East from the state of vacuum or the gap in the region's balance of power due to several events naturally led to a change in those balances that led to the emergence of new powers, and others are absent.

Iraq emerged from the circle after its occupation in 2003, and the sequence of events in the Middle East, especially the Arab Spring 2011, led to a 'collective' out of the balance of power in the region for many countries, which was headed by Egypt, one of the countries that might have been a future regional power. So the imbalance case creates a new rivalry on both sides, internal and external, internal means to save the state's stability and enhance its external positions in the balance of power.

It is important to note that, given the international system's characterization today, namely, the emergence of non-state actors, the struggle of states will not be limited to armaments but will support such efforts. For example, Iranian support for the Houthi group in Yemen is offset by Saudi support for the regime there, to direct intervention by Saudi Arabia.

This can also be seen in the direct Saudi intervention in the attempts to overthrow the regime in the movement during the Arab Spring in Bahrain in 2013, while there was talk about Iranian support for the Shiites there, and the Saudi intervention was direct. This event highlights the religious dimension of the conflict. Finally, their neighbor's and allies' safety ensures the states' security.

IV. The rise of the regional power in the Middle East

After the U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2003, the balance of power in the Middle East started to change. The other event that turned the whole scene upside down was the 'Arab Spring'³² in 2011. Libya, Egypt, and Syria are no longer in the balance of power in the Middle East and create a significant power gap in the region. Moreover, the strategy of

³² The Arab Spring was a series of anti-government protests, uprisings and armed rebellions that spread across the Middle East in early 2011. But their purpose, relative success, and outcome remain hotly disputed in Arab countries among foreign observers, and between world powers looking to cash in on the changing map of the Middle East.

the US to shift its power from the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific resulted in a new rivalry for hegemonic power in the Middle East.

Most factors and drivers are linked to the changes in U.S. policy towards the Middle East. Several events can also view the drivers of change in the Middle East: the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, the U.S. invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, the rise of non-state actors, the Arab Spring 2010, and the fall of authoritarian rules.

The changes in the Middle East created the so-called regional system and power and at least cannot be bypassed easily by the world powers, particularly the US. In addition, there is an emergence of competition among states over the Regional Leadership, which also has repercussions on internal alliances and wars by proxy.

This chapter aims to highlight the main factors which led to the rise of the role of the Regional Powers in the Middle East. It also discusses and focuses on two main factors: the occupation of Iraq (2003) and the Arab Spring (2011), which trace the changes in U.S. foreign policy towards the region after the end of the Cold War. The chapter's main objective is to find a clear definition of regional power, which will be adopted for analysis and measurement of the study, as well as standing on the most important events that led to the rise of regional power in the Middle East.

IV. 1. Today's International System and the Middle East

The nature of the current international system is anarchy and unstable. It does not resemble the multi-power system before World War II; it is not based on two powers as it was in a bipolar era or only on one dominant power, as was the case after the end of the Cold War. However, the current international system is characterized by a group of centers of power with different distributions leading it. No one of these powers can control the international system.³³

³³ HAASS, R. N.: *Age of Nonpolarity*. 2008. pp. 1-3.

In addition, the power is no longer monopolized by the nation-state but has become the power of many non-state actors, such as international and regional organizations, militias, and non-governmental organizations.³⁴

At the regional level, the polarization system has created great importance for the role of regional states such as Iran and Saudi Arabia and the presence of organizations at the region's level, such as the Gulf Cooperation Organization. Functional organizations include the International Energy Agency (IEA), OPEC, multinational corporations, financial or commercial and media organizations such as al-Jazeera, and armed militias such as the Mehdi Army in Iraq. The power is no longer concentrated but has become distributed among these groups.³⁵

Perhaps the emergence of regional systems considered as second most important change after the changing nature of international actors; even though there is no opponent to the United States globally, there are competitors and opponents at the level of each region 'Territory' for example; China cannot be bypassed in East Asia, as well as Brazil and in Latin America, Iran, Saudi Arabia in the Middle East, and Russia in its region.³⁶

Middle East view is full of competition between regional powers rather than outside powers. As regional powers become more active, outside powers decrease their actions.³⁷ Regarding the Middle East and based on the theory of the balance of power, the natural state of the imbalance of power is that countries' powers are declining due to reasons and other countries are showing their place, along with the security dilemma this made new region order and rivalry between those powers shaping the new region relations with the U.S. in particular and the world powers in general.

In order to analyze the factors that led to the rise of the Regional Powers in the Middle East, the theoretical approach will be based on regional power definition and balance of power and security theory.

³⁴ HAAS, R. N., 2008. pp.1-3.

³⁵ HAASS. R.N., 2008. p. 3.

³⁶ AZEM, A., 2018. p. 4.

³⁷ LIANGXIANG, J: *The Rise of Regional Powers and the Future Middle East Order*. Available at : <https://www.chinausfocus.com/foreign-policy/the-rise-of-regional-powers-and-the-future-middle-east-order> [Last accessed: 04.10.2018]

Several factors have led to the imbalance of power in the Middle East and the beginning form of Regional Powers in the region. These presumed regional powers, which may not be regional powers with whole meaning, are qualified for many reasons and will be influential in regional and international affairs.

The U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2003 is considered one of the beginning factors of change in the region. Iraq was considered an influential regional power, and its emergence from competition led to power imbalance in the Middle East and the Gulf region.

The occupation of Iraq in 2003 is the actual assertion of the U.S. complete control over the Middle East and practical and direct change in US policy toward the region, on the one hand, and on the other hand, U.S. fear of the influence of its allies, so its start to guarantee Saudi Arabia and its strategic interests in the region.

“The Iraq War was not supposed to be a costly debacle; rather, it was intended as the first step in a larger plan to reorder the Middle East.”³⁸ Going back a little, the direct U.S. intervention has also been since Iraq occupied Kuwait in 1990.

The U.S. policy has always been in the Middle East to benefit from rivalries and competition between the region's powers.³⁹ The U.S. supported Iraq in its war against Iran in 1979, and it is the same who declared war in 1990 and 2003, fully occupied when its direct interests and allies were in danger.

We can say that Saudi Arabia then began to play a more significant role in the region, precisely after Iran's control – to some extent – on the Iraqi scene and strengthened its presence and, more importantly, to strengthen Iran's Shiite presence or rule in Iraq.

The other and could be the most influential factor is the Arab Spring 2011, which resulted in the exit of Egypt, Libya, and Syria, respectively, left a gap in the balance of power in the region and allowed the emergence of a more significant role for the powers and other countries: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Israel, and Turkey.

The Arab Spring holds the potential for a new round of conflicts at the regional leadership level.⁴⁰ What happened in Bahrain in 2011 and Yemen in 2014 can indicate the state of

³⁸ MEARSHEIMER, J. – WALTZ, S., 2006. p. 58.

³⁹ BECK. M.: *The Concept of Regional Powers Applied to the Middle East*. 2014. pp. 9-10.

⁴⁰ BECK. M., 2014. p. 5.

conflict and Saudi-Iranian competition for leadership in the region and achieving the vision of regional power and control. It seems that further weakening of the Arab state system has led to the emergence of cross-border identities such as tribalism, sectarianism, and ethnicity – rather than regional unity.⁴¹

Political uncertainty derived from the Arab Spring and changes in the balance of power unleashed by the invasion of Iraq in 2003 was reinforced. While Egypt remained entangled in its contradictions and polarizations and Iraq and Syria sank into chaos, Iran raised its image to the discontent of the Gulf States, particularly Saudi Arabia.⁴²

Saudi Arabia watched the Arab uprising as a challenge to regional stability. The kingdom pressed the United States to protect its Egyptian ally and was angered by Qatar's apparent support for Egyptian protesters and, later, the Muslim Brotherhood. It was clear that the Saudis felt weak. This has shifted from its traditionally cautious and traditional foreign and regional policy towards a more evident emphasis on regime survival, regional stability, and keeping Iran in trouble.⁴³

We can consider the occupation of Iraq in 2003 and the Arab Spring as factors that helped start the competition for new powers in the region to lead and impose regional control. In contrast, excluding some countries, such as Egypt, from the game of competition may be temporary, and therefore Egypt may enter again. Incomplete in all its aspects.

In addition, the Middle East, as mentioned above, is not considered a single, integrated, and harmonious region, and it is an Arab country in addition to Iran, Turkey, and Israel. These factors can be an engine that needs time to see its impact until one of the countries can prove its competence in leadership and the various requirements of regional power.

IV. 2. Iran and Saudi Arabia

The Middle East includes Arab countries, Iran, Turkey, and Israel. The Islamic religion is the common factor among these countries – except Israel. Islam is divided between

⁴¹ SEVER, A., 2018. p.1.

⁴² KHADER, B.: *Shifting geopolitics in the Arab World 1945-2017*. 2018. pp. 47-4. Available at: https://www.um.edu.mt/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/349200/MedAgenda-BicharaKhader-2018.pdf. [Last accessed: 04.01.2019]

⁴³ KHADER, B., 2018. pp. 34-35.

Sunnis and Shiites, and the first thing that comes to mind in leadership is who leads the Islamic world. The debate over who leads the Islamic world in the Middle East has come to the fore, and the answer here is about Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

Iraq is considered a power that had significant influence in the Middle East; Gregory F. Gause mentions that “The transformation of Iraq from a player into a playing field has indeed been the main prerequisite of Iran's rise to greater regional ambition.”⁴⁴

After the regime's fall in 2003, the country entered into chaos and civil war, and as a natural state, as we mentioned in the balance of power, an alternative power must be replaced and take leadership. In other words, the Sunni world leadership. With the sequence of events leading up to the Arab Spring 2011, Iran's control of Iraq to a certain extent, and its continued support for Bashar Assad's strategic ally, Saudi Arabia has to play a bigger and bigger role as the Arab regimes around fall one after the other.

In the Iraqi civil war context, a conflict torn by sectarian divisions highlighted the centuries-old divisions between Islam, Shiites, and Sunnis. The regional rise of Iran as the leading Shiite power in the region and a country with a political system based on religious legitimacy has, in the words of Jordan's King Abdullah II, defied the ‘Shiite crescent’ stretching from Iran to Lebanon.⁴⁵

However, on the ground, if we want to talk about the Shiite crescent against the Sunnis, only about 10 to 15 percent of all Muslims in the world are Shiites, and in the Middle East, the twelfth Iranian form of Shia Islam is only different in Iraq (about 60 percent) and Bahrain (about 70 percent). While in some other countries, it is a minority.⁴⁶

Therefore, the task of controlling Iran will not be easy. We can talk about the forces that Iran supports, Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza-Palestine. However, the influence of these non-state actors is mainly seeking gains for themselves and their regions. For Iran, they are a foothold as a geographical distance first and secondly to remain in the form of sensitive events and conflicts in the region.

⁴⁴POPP, R., 2011. p. 47.

⁴⁵ POPP, R.: *Regional dynamics in the New Middle East*. In Möckli, D. (ed.) *Strategic trends*, 2011. pp. 39-40.

⁴⁶ POPP, R., 2011. pp. 47-49.

Arab Spring and its impact on the region may be considered weakly mechanized, and most analyses revolve around the issue of the security dilemma of remaining countries in peace.

Important factors that may affect the security landscape in the region include the survival of Assad's regime, Iran's use of the Arab revolutions to strengthen its influence in the region, including its confrontation with Western governments; the nature of Egypt's orientation towards Israel and Iran; Saudi Arabia's position on events in the region (e. g. Yemen); Turkey's involvement in the Middle East unrest; Between Israel and the Palestinian people.⁴⁷

The Iranian role, whose importance lies in the traditional role of both Israel and Saudi Arabia in opposing Iran's ambitions, especially in the potential nuclear capability of Iran. This gives it greater importance. Pressure on Iran comes from inside and outside, including the United States, the European Union, and the United Nations.⁴⁸

To clear the scene, both factors, the Iraq invasion, and Arab Spring, in parallel with the U.S. policy towards the Middle East, made a new foreign policy status for Saudi Arabia and Iran according to new changes.

Tehran is looking for existence, and so is Riyadh in light of this new situation imposed by the Arab Spring revolutions in 2011 of the fall of regimes and a change in the map of the entire region, and the regional competition has become more evident than before, between these two parties.

Saudi Arabia wanted to establish the Gulf region in the beginning for it (just as it did not allow Tehran to interfere in the events of the revolutions inside Bahrain), and Tehran wanted to extend more influence through the role it played in Iraq.

⁴⁷ ERIKSSON, M.: *Re-Orient? An overview of the Arab Revolutions and the Balance of Power in the Middle East* .2012. pp. 8-9FOI-R 3526 SE[Online]. <https://www.foi.se/en/foi/research/security-policy/studies-on-peace-support-operations/publications.html>. [Last accessed: 20.01.2023]

⁴⁸ ERIKSSON, M., 2012. p. 69.

IV. 2. 1. Iran

After the 1979 revolution, Iran began, through religious discourse, to build Shiite political geography to expand its influence on the Shiites and aspire to Foreign policy to make these people the strategic tools of Iranian propaganda policy.⁴⁹

The policy of Iran to create a Shia Crescent was defined by the neighboring Sunni countries as a source of threat and a security problem. Iran intrinsically follows a pragmatic foreign policy with the ambition of becoming a regional leader. Therefore, Iran chose public diplomacy, which takes place from the state towards the people, instead of classical diplomacy from state to state.⁵⁰

Iran's growing influence after the U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2003, Iraq was considered a real threat to the Iranian dream, taking into account that Iraq has about 60 % of its population is Shiites. On the other hand, Iran considered the Arab Spring 2011 an Islamic awakening movement and was required to lead this movement.⁵¹ The military intervention in Bahrain to abort the popular movement against the government, which Saudi Arabia decided to Iranian intervention in Gulf affairs, is a strong indicator of Saudi-Iranian competition and Iran's exploitation of the Arab Spring to try to expand its influence.

IV. 2. 2. Saudi Arabia: the petro-dollar policy

Although Saudi Arabia is ambitious to lead the Islamic world as a central state, Muslims are drawn to it because of the holiest places. It is considered a great religious value to Muslims, a cradle of the holy places (Mecca and Medina), and a religious and spiritual destination, annually visited by millions of Muslims worldwide.

Saudi foreign policy was built on the objective of the leadership of the Muslim world, mainly including the regime's security at the same time.⁵²Iran and Saudi Arabia have started building more roles in the region since the occupation of Iraq in 2003, with solid sub-regional alliance U.S.

⁴⁹ EKSI, M., 2017. p. 141.

⁵⁰ EKSI, M., 2017. pp. 142-143.

⁵¹ EKSI, M., 2017. p. 143

⁵² EKSI, M., 2017. p. 142.

Saudi Arabia follows the current status quo; the balance of power exists internally and externally along with the axis security system; Saudi Arabia considered what was happening in the Middle East during the Arab spring process as threats to itself and the regional situation it tried to protect.⁵³

Because of the present situation, Saudi Arabia relied on three political dynamics of its foreign policy, the first with the Arab Spring and the emergence of a set of regimes from regional competition; this gave Saudi Arabia a more significant role in regional action. Secondly, Iran is a rival in the religious leadership (Sunnis and Shiites) and considers it a threat that must contain. Thirdly strengthening the Saudi role of the U.S. as a solid strategic ally in addition to Israel in the Middle East.⁵⁴

Saudi Arabia, instead of Iraq, became an anti-hegemonic force against Iran in the Middle East. Thus, the historical rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia escalated after the Arab Spring. There have been proxy wars between these countries, in the Gulf States, Iraq, Yemen, and Syria.

However, in the competition in the Middle East for leadership, entitled to religious aspects, both countries, Iran and Saudi Arabia, were aspiring to lead the Islamic world and therefore formulated a foreign policy on that basis.

According to Table 1, from the military point of view, it is clear that Iran ranks 17th in the world and surpasses Saudi Arabia in manpower and navy. In comparison, Saudi Arabia excels in the economic weakness of oil reserves, in addition to nearly ten times the military budget, which may give the advantage of Saudi Arabia the development of technical and military technology and the purchase of more military equipment.

Under the basic assumption of the balance of power theory, which considers the international system anarchic, states resort, in case of danger, to increase their capabilities relative to each other, either through internal efforts to strengthen themselves or external

⁵³ EKSI, M., 2017. p. 143.

⁵⁴ EKSI, M., 2017. p. 144.

efforts to harmonize and reorganize with other countries.⁵⁵ Thus, without a doubt, Saudi Arabia needs a strong ally to ensure a balance of power with Iran.

Table 1: Iran – Saudi rivalry hard power – Military excludes the nuclear

Military	Iran	Saudi Arabia
GFP ⁵⁶ Ranks	17 of 145	22 of 145
Total population (Million)	86.758.304	35.354.770
Squared Land Area (km)	1.648.195	2.149.690
Manpower available	48.584.650	18.384.278
Tanks Strength (Combat)	4.071	1.273
Total Aircraft	541	897
Submarines	19	0
Proven Oil Reserves	158.400.000.000(bbl)	266.500.000.000 (bbl)
Defense Budget	\$ 5.550.000.000	\$ 46.725.000.000

Source: Data extracted from the Global Fire Power index⁵⁷

IV. 3. Seeking a new balance for U.S. policy in the Middle East

The United States' ability to influence the regions has become much less; it can no longer do it alone; it needs to cooperate with other countries, as in the case of Iran's nuclear program and the involvement of countries such as Russia and China, given the emergence of significant powers, as in the case of North Korea, China's ability to influence them is more remarkable than Unites states.⁵⁸

U.S. Foreign Policy towards the Middle East since the Iraq invasion of Kuwait in 1990 is different from what it is now, after 30 years of U.S. involvement in Middle East policy

⁵⁵ SUN, MEICEN: *Balance of Power Theory in Today's International System*. 2014. p. 1. E-international Relation. Available at: <https://www.e-ir.info/2014/02/12/balance-of-power-theory-in-todays-international-system/> [Last accessed: 27.02.2023]

⁵⁶ Global Firepower (GFP) has provided a unique analytical display of data concerning 145 modern military powers. The GFP ranking is based on each nation's potential war-making capability across land, sea, and air fought by conventional means. The results incorporate values related to manpower, equipment, natural resources, finances, and geography represented by 60+ individual factors used in formulating the finalized GFP ranks - which provide an interesting glimpse into an increasingly volatile global landscape where war where war seems all but inevitability.

⁵⁷ Global Firepower index. Available at :<https://www.globalfirepower.com> [Last accessed: 27.02.2023]

⁵⁸ HAASS, R. N., 2008. p. 16.

that has weakened its regional standing.⁵⁹ It became clear that the capabilities of the U.S. are limited, and searching for alternatives, including the concept of regional power, appears to be exhaustive in the momentum of regions and actors in it.⁶⁰

The United States implemented a double containment policy for Iran and Iraq in 1993 by strengthening the role of its allies Turkey, Israel, and Saudi Arabia. Except for direct presence through its bases in Bahrain, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. After the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001, the United States changed its Middle East policy again and occupied Iraq in 2003 by preemptive strikes under the Bush Doctrine. With the U.S. failure to manage the conflict in Iraq and turn Iraq into an international playing field, Iran's role in the region has been strengthened rather than reduced.

During the Obama administration, foreign policy was reorganized to turn the U.S. power into the Asia-Pacific region against China; accordingly, the Obama administration withdrew its military presence in the region by shifting to the leadership policy of the rear. It could be true that the U.S. administration implemented a strategy of maintaining its influence in the Middle East through its allies. Accordingly, the U.S. shifted its power to China, a superpower candidate, and left the Middle East to its allies: Israel and Saudi Arabia.⁶¹

The U.S. has long believed it has a fundamental interest in a stable international economy, which depends on a secure and free oil flow globally. This is how the bargain with Saudi Arabia originally arose.⁶² The story is that the U.S. try to Gain less cost in its domination in the Middle East in favor of supporting establishing a regional power in the Middle East, a true one to be like a continuous alliance for the US to save its interest in the Middle East in general.⁶³

There is a significant gap in many areas and the strength (hard and soft) between the U.S. and the following powers, the United States is still the world's superpower, so the American-Russian situation is outside the debate. Russian annual national income does not exceed 8 % of the US national income; that is, the U.S. economy is close to 13 times

⁵⁹ CRISTOL, J.: *United States Foreign Policy in the Middle East after the Cold War*, in Stivachtis, Y.A. (ed.) *Conflict and Diplomacy in the Middle East: External Actors and Regional Rivalries*. 2018. pp. 48-64.

⁶⁰ BECK, M., 2014. pp. 4-5.

⁶¹ EKSI, M.: *Regional Hegemony Quests in the Middle East*. 2017. p. 141.

⁶² JUNEAU, T.: *U.S. Power in the Middle East not declining*. 2014. Vol. XXI, No. 2. p. 141.

⁶³ JUNEAU, T., 2014. p.142.

the Russian economy; according to International Monetary Fund figures, Russian national income fell by 24 % between 2012 and 2017.⁶⁴

We are not discussing U.S. power but analyzing the changing roles and types of political analysis based on developments. The question is not whether there is a decline in U.S. policy toward the Middle East or the U.S. can no longer take complete control of the region, as some say on a (5 + 1) committee on Iran's nuclear file. Alternatively, is there a change in the forms and instruments of control and give the allies a more significant role and opportunity while ensuring the results 'for the U.S. is to ensure control of the region'.

The withdrawal of the U.S. from the Middle East since the Obama administration left a tremendous vacuum for other players to fill. Iran could influence the Iraqi government because of the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq.

On the other hand, regional actors have felt the need to play more prominent roles to safeguard their interests and protect their security. For instance, Saudi Arabia's active involvement in Bahrain, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, and even Iraq can be attributed to its concern about Iran's expansion in the U.S. absence. Saudi Arabia used to depend on the U.S. for protection, but those days are gone.⁶⁵

There is a fundamental change in U.S. policy in the Middle East. This does not mean weakness but a rearrangement of the region. There will be a more significant role for the traditional allies and ensuring US interests in the region regarding the continued flow of oil to world markets and protecting its strategic ally Israel.

IV. 4. A preliminary picture. The expected alliances in the Middle East

There is no doubt about the U.S.'s unique powers, but it is simultaneously a political, economic, and military burden. If we discussed Russia or aspiring nations such as Iran and Venezuela to be a pole or part of International polarization, and the unwillingness or inability of China, at least for the time being, to become a pole of political and military expansion globally, does not mean the establishment of monotheism and polarization, but

⁶⁴ AZEM, A., 2018. p. 2.

⁶⁵ LIANGXIANG, J., 2018. p. 3.

a system called polarization, mentioned by Richard Haas and changing forms of competition and the distribution of power and the emergence of non-state actors.⁶⁶

Russia lost much of its military power in the region after the Cold War. Its only remaining military installation is a secondary naval facility in Tartous, Syria. Its only regional partners, Iran and Syria, are isolated and weak. Russia cannot offer force to maintain military deployment in the region. China, for its part, does not have and is unlikely to gain military capability and ambition in the Middle East for many years. Thus, it is not a factor in the regional balance of military power.⁶⁷

The West believes Russia has been very aggressive on Syria, but Russia was defending its last ally in the Middle East. The survival of Bashar Assad's government is vital for Russia, and Russia will lose its strategic influence in the Middle East and the Mediterranean region without Syria.⁶⁸

However, it was soon apparent in a short period of 6 years which was from 2011 to 2016, that Saudi Arabia was not able to establish regional hegemony in the Middle East despite the support of the Gulf countries as well as the support of the United States Saudi Arabia was neither able to outclass Iran nor fill the gap left by the United States.

However, despite its immense financial and oil power, Saudi Arabia was never a military power capable of establishing a regional hegemony. On the other hand, historically, no regional power alone was able to establish regional hegemony in the Middle East. Throughout history, there was always a multipolar balance of power system that dominated Middle East politics, and it was evident that Saudi Arabia could not become regional power or regional leader on its own.⁶⁹

Therefore, it is expected to have close alliances, specifically to besiege Iran, and in turn, Saudi Arabia will lead it through a Saudi-Turkish alliance or a Saudi-Israeli alliance.

In the case of the Middle East, the Saudi-Turkish alliance may be more acceptable. However, according to the difficult economic conditions that Turkey is experiencing now and the events that happened between Saudi Arabia and Turkey, after the story of

⁶⁶ AZEM, A., 2018, p. 3.

⁶⁷ JUNEAU, T., 2014. p. 142.

⁶⁸ LIANGXIANG, J., 2018. p. 3.

⁶⁹ EKSI, M., 2017. p. 149.

journalist Jamal Khashoggi⁷⁰ in 2018 at the Embassy in Turkey, the role played by Turkey is different. In the leaking of records about this, the alliance may be hampered on the one hand, and on the other hand, the implicit competition between Saudi Arabia and Turkey over the leadership of the Muslim world, in general, may also prevent that alliance.

Now, regarding the Saudi-Israeli Alliance, it is out of the question because of the position of the Arab states against Israel and the rejection of direct normalization because the status of the Palestinian issue is stalled, and solutions are looming. It may therefore be difficult for King Salman to decide on a direct alliance with Israel. The magic solution would be to create a tripartite or quadruple alliance through Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt as a front. Moreover, possible to add other countries to mobilize and focus work, as Israel seeks primarily to make the issue and the Iranian threat a priority of the agenda of the Middle East and ignore the Palestinian cause as much as possible.

Conclusion

Developments in the Middle East since the occupation of Iraq in 2003 and the Arab Spring in 2011, in parallel with the decline of the US towards the region, have led to the rise of new regional order in the Middle East.

The events of the Middle East emphasize its importance and dynamism for the world powers, whether in terms of ensuring the flow of oil or the continuity in the form of what is happening in the region, such as Russia.

There is no confirmed Regional Power in the Middle East. Due to the attempts within the framework of the balance of power in the region, the Middle East region is still directly a subject of the US policy besides the international actors such as Russia, China, and the European Union.

⁷⁰ A prominent Saudi journalist, he was close to the Saudi royal palace before the authorities took revenge on him and prevented him from writing. He chose to settle in the United States of America in 2017, and on October 2, 2018, he was brutally killed inside his country's consulate in Istanbul. His killing on Turkish soil sparked a state of instability in Turkish-Saudi relations, as the Turkish government publicly accuses the Saudi government of holding it responsible for his killing and considers it a clear violation of its territory and relations between the two sides. More Details visit the website: <https://2u.pw/nVDPdG>

The Middle East is not considered a single, integrated, and harmonious region, and it covers Arabic countries, Iran, Turkey, and Israel. These factors can be an engine until one of the countries can prove its leadership competence and fulfill the Regional Power requirements.

Competing leadership in the Middle East will ignite the rivalry between the remaining power countries, such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Israel, and predictable alliances will undermine Iranian expansion in the region.

Despite the multiplicity of events in the Middle East, which cast a shadow over the Palestinian issue, the Palestinian issue will remain the main engine in the Middle East as long as it remains without solutions.

V. Understanding Contemporary Middle East

What we see today of modern nation-states in the Middle East, especially in the Arab world, where many artificial states are products of imperialism and power-sharing conflicts between the states that existed in the 19th century and the colonial greed that took no particularities of the region into account. Around a century ago, many Arabic regions were part of the Ottoman Empire. Many historical and political events led to the end of the Ottoman Empire (formally 1924) and the emergence of the newly bordered states across the Middle East. The role directly played by the British was far higher than any imperial state. Three separate events resulted in existing political turmoil.

There is a strong connection between the imperial legacy and the contemporary Middle East scene. The chapter focuses on the colonial era's historical background and colonialism's legacy in the Middle East and the postcolonial Middle East.

The area is a site of permanent conflicts, and perhaps the most significant tension in the Middle East is the Arab-Israeli conflict. Therefore, the rivalry in the Middle East, whether at the level of states or in the composition of countries, or the continuity of survival, remains determining factor.

V. 1. Origins of the term 'Middle East.' Why is called the Middle East?

Thinking of the origins of the word 'Middle East' takes us straight into the early 20th-century British colonial geopolitics. Great Britain's colonies in South Asia made the Middle East a region of strategic importance and the crux of the journey to the east to India; hence the phrase 'the Middle East' was coined. This British mark refers to a mysterious region in Asia between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean from its inception, i.e., the Middle East is the region between the 'Far East' and the 'Near East.'⁷¹

Karen Culcas (2010), in her analysis of constructing and naturalizing the Middle East, tested every possible document, statement, paper, new, and even map mentioning the Middle East. As a result, she found that no specific area could identify the Middle East as a region, according to the documents she examined (from the 19th to the 20th century).⁷²

This, in turn, reinforces our view that the Middle East is only a term of geographical definition of the place but not for the borders or countries. Who determines the colonial powers' point of view and how they see the region depends on the interests and benefits they will gain.

The end of the World War I (1914-1918) and its aftermaths are not the exclusive grounds for the contemporary Middle East but also undermining the Ottoman Empire, a systematic process. It started in Algeria, occupied by the French in 1835, then in Egypt in 1888, occupied by the British, and continued by Italy's occupation of Libya in 1912.

By the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire was derisively called the 'sick man of Europe' because of its shrinking territories, economic decline, and growing reliance on the rest of Europe.⁷³

The decision of the Ottomans to align with the Central Powers Germany, Austria-Hungary against the 'Allied' side Britain, France, and Russia in October 1914 motivated the British to make plans to eliminate the Ottoman Empire and expand their territory in the Middle East. They controlled Egypt since 1888 and India since 1857. The Ottoman

⁷¹ CULCASI, K.: *Constructing and Naturalizing the Middle East*. 2010. p. 585.

⁷² CULCASI, K., 2010. pp. 590-592.

⁷³ BLAKEMORE, E.: *Why the Ottoman Empire rise and fall*. 2019. p. 3.

Empire was between these two important colonies, and the British were determined to invalidate it as part of World War.⁷⁴

The three main events that genuinely shaped the Middle East are the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence, the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and the Balfour Declaration.⁷⁵

Between July 1915 and January 1916, Sharif Hussein bin Ali, the 'Amir' governor of Makkah, communicated with the British High Commissioner in Egypt, Sir Henry McMahon, about the revolt against the Ottoman Empire for promises of supporting an independent state and creation of kingdom.

This communication is later known as the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence. Roger Spooner (2015) pointed out that two important deals are emphasized in the correspondence. First is initiating an independent Muslim state in Arabia, and second is whether Palestine is included in this treaty.⁷⁶ Whatever the correspondences included, the British did not implement any.

In the Sykes-Picot Agreement, publicly known in 1917, when the Russian Bolshevik government exposed it, the British and French agreed to divide the Arab world between them.⁷⁷

On a symbolic level, the Sykes-Picot Agreement is associated with a powerful idea in the collective memory of the region's people; it was an insult. We face different problems after decades, but their roots are found somewhere in the Sykes-Picot Agreement.⁷⁸

The Sykes-Picot Agreement transformed the region into colonial spheres of influence, dividing it between the mandate and protectorate and demarcating the borders to serve the interests of the British and French. The Agreement is, until today, considered a classic mark of imperial dishonesty and betrayal.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ HINGORANI, A.: *Unravelling Kashmir Kont*. 2017. pp. 94-95.

⁷⁵ HINGORANI, A., 2017. pp. 95-97.

⁷⁶ SPOONER, R.: *The McMahon promise to Hussein*. 2015. pp. 1-3.

⁷⁷ GRAHAM, D. A.: *How Did the 'Secret' Sykes-Picot Agreement Become Public?* pp. 3-4. Available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/05/sykes-picot-centennial/482904/> [Last accessed: 03.01.2020]

⁷⁸ ABDALHAKIM, A.: *103 years after its contract, Sykes-Picot, a permanent conspirator*. 2019. pp.3-5.

⁷⁹ LOEVY, K.: *The Sykes-Picot Agreement's Regional Moment: Drawing Lines of Development in a New and Open Space*. 2017. p. 123.

In the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917,⁸⁰ Arthur Balfour, the Foreign Secretary of Britain, sent a letter to Baron Rothschild, a leader of the Zionist community. The letter declared the British government's support for the Zionist movement's goals to establish a Jewish state in Palestine.

The Balfour Declaration was the most dangerous shift in the region, not only geographically or demographically, but rather in a qualitative addition, by creating a new state that had never existed before. In the following years, Britain played a unique role in bringing fundamental changes to the region. The creation of Israel was also a critical factor in the agreements on the division of the region, which have changed the region's shape forever.

Firas Alkhateeb (2016) describes this situation as “the quagmire that the British created would dominate Middle Eastern politics throughout the twentieth century.”⁸¹

Fundamental and radical changes took place in the Middle East, changing the region's features to the present day. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and the events and agreements that followed between the victorious powers in World War I, established a region filled with endless conflicts. The contradictory agreements the British did, in secret agenda, aimed at Sharing the Ottoman legacy, ensuring control of the region, and taking advantage of available resources. Neither Britain nor France, in its division of the region, did take any religious, ethnic, or cultural considerations. Instead, the goal of the division was to ensure their control.

V. 2. Colonial legacy and the Contemporary Middle East

After the end of World War I, Yemen became a British colony, while the French ruled Algeria, and Libya was under Italian rule. However, the rest of the region, with the exceptions of Turkey, Iran, and Arabia, was under the control of imperial powers exercised in various forms and under different names, including ‘Mandates’ and ‘Protectorates.’

⁸⁰ Israel Ministry of Foreign affairs, *MFA*, p.1 Available at : <https://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/the%20balfour%20declaration.aspx> [Last accessed: 05.01.2020]

⁸¹ ALKHATEEB, F.: *Lost Islamic History*. 2016. p. 158.

The effects of the Sykes-Picot Agreement on the region could be explained by the fact that it was hidden without any knowledge of the Arabs and canceled Britain's central promise to the Arabs to gain independence if they rebelled against the Ottomans.

When this independence was not achieved after World War I, the Arab political orientation – in North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean – gradually shifted to Nationalism, whose main objective was eliminating the colonialists.⁸²

‘A nation-state’ is a set of changing rhetorical and institutional practices consisting of citizens with an emotional commitment and imagination of identity. The nation has a state that governs a specific territory and seeks to impose a collective identity on all citizens through state education, usually focusing on linguistic unity; it represents a political, diplomatic, and economic unit with its sovereignty in all these areas.⁸³

The nationalism, in turn, created another struggle for identity among Arabs, who also failed to address this dilemma.⁸⁴ Even if states gain their independence, it is illusory because these countries' fate depended on imperialist policies and foreign interference in various life forms.

Nevertheless, what did the colonial powers do? Did they create an entire nation-state? None at all because the Middle East is a geopolitical system that cannot be established, and it has been developed and naturalized as a specific geographical location through the development of the term ‘Middle’ East, the unclear but continued meaning of its geographical location.⁸⁵

Imad El-Anis (2011) argues that there is a clear distinction between the current system and the previous regimes that existed in the Middle East. The system that preceded the state system between the 15th and early 20th centuries was characterized by a regional empire with a few internal borders and a claim of sovereignty. This observation is important when considering the argument that borders, sovereignty, and multiple ‘ways’

⁸² OSMAN, T.: *Why border lines drawn with a ruler in WW1 still rock the Middle East*. 2013. pp. 1-5.

⁸³ COLE, JUAN R. I. - KANDIYOTI, D.: *Nationalism and the Colonial Legacy in the Middle East and Central Asia: Introduction*. 2002. p. 190.

⁸⁴ OSMAN, T., 2013. pp. 1-5.

⁸⁵ CULCASI, K., 2010. pp. 594-597.

of organizing people in groups help define international relations, and such factors will cause the region to be less stable.⁸⁶

From then on, the Middle East, particularly the Arab states began, entered a new phase, in fact, different in form and substance than in the past. This has left a massive impact on the present-day division of states, the establishment of the national dimension, and ethnic and religious conflicts, which were contrary to what was later stated by Colonial powers. Their behavior and actions suggested that their mission in the region is humanitarian, and they are promoting the people of the region to liberation.

In order to maintain control over these emerging countries, ensure the existence of these colonial states, and exploit the wealth of these countries, these powers divided the Middle East. Furthermore, to guarantee the hegemony of the colonial power, there should be some ideological changes.

Usually the feeling of cultural superiority accompanies military and financial superiority, and the colonial powers, Europe first and then the United States of America have always been destroying native culture in their way in destroying local governments and their trade at the same time. This, of course, is what characterizes imperialism.⁸⁷

Due to the subjection of these areas to European control, the region's situation was that many centers that were once considered centers of social and political life for Muslims – Cairo, Damascus, and Baghdad – were transformed into places to converge new ideas, such secularism, and nationalism.⁸⁸

Edward Said (2006) argues that the European position of supremacy over the region and its people contributed further to the unequal nature of the relationship with Europe, which he called ‘Orientalism.’⁸⁹ The Middle East was a British-French cultural project until the end of World War II, and the rise of the United States' role in its control of the region is part of Western civilization extending since ancient times.⁹⁰ Edward Said viewed Orientalism as an authoritative use of knowledge of the East, after ‘Sharqana’ and domesticating it in preparation for colonization and control.

⁸⁶ EL-ANIS, I.: *(Dis) Integration and the Emergence of the State System in the Middle East*. 2011. p.13.

⁸⁷ GAY, FEDERICO F., *Cultural Colonialism*. 1974. p.154

⁸⁸ ALKHATEEB, F., 2016. pp. 153-154.

⁸⁹ SAID, E.: *Orientalism; Western Conception of the Orient*. 2006. pp. 25-30.

⁹⁰ SAID, E., 2006. p. 27.

As mentioned earlier, the tutelage imposed by the European powers on the countries of the region and their support to reach stable nation-states was through the imposition of new forms of ideology that fit into Western norms, which in turn, created a state of contradiction in the Middle East societies, mainly Islamic Arabs. Accordingly, cultural alienation and the emergence of resistance movements to western cultural influence created a new phase in the region.

Furthermore, state-building in the Middle East was full of difficulties. Colonial rule challenged the foundation of Middle Eastern societies. Under Ottoman rule, despite its shortcomings, the region had a particular cohesive culture and politically, while the idea of a nation-state was new and strange for the Islamic Arab societies.

Meanwhile, when European powers declared their arrival in the region a 'civilized mission,' the colonial powers did little to educate the people. They have educated small collaborating elite (benefit group). When the British left Egypt, 77 % of the population was illiterate, per capita income was £ 42 per year, and the average life expectancy of an Egyptian man was 36 years.⁹¹

In sum, the legacy of colonial divisions has created lasting seeds of conflict in the region. The Middle East today is a permanent imbalance of powers, a place of religious, ethnic and existential conflicts, not least the cradle of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Subsequently, the area was divided, and the people have separated into more than one country Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, etc. This is still the cause of many rebellions and warfare today.

V. 3. The United States in the Middle East

The colonial era in many Middle Eastern and Central Asian countries can be split into several periods: informal Imperialism, formal colonial domination, and neo-colonialism. The collapse of neo-colonialism in recent decades led to a postcolonial era in which the United States and the former Soviet Union (Russia) are unable to enforce their will on countries like Iran, Afghanistan, and Iraq, given the region's history of hegemony and the ongoing competition between the major powers of the Cold War.⁹²

⁹¹ HARDY, R.: *Western involvement in the Middle East, A rotten Legacy*. 2016. p. 2.

⁹² COLE, JUAN R. I. - KANDIYOTI, D., 2002. pp.190-191.

The United States' ability to influence the region has become considerably less. It could not do it alone; therefore, it cooperated with other countries, as in the case of Iran's nuclear program (committee P5+1)⁹³ and the involvement of countries such as Russia and China.⁹⁴

United States Foreign Policy towards the Middle East since the Iraq invasion of Kuwait in 1990 differs from the present U.S. administration policy. The U.S. involvement in the Middle East policy has weakened its regional standing.⁹⁵

The real change in U.S. policy in the Middle East has helped to raise the formation and rivalry for regional power and a new regional order in the Middle East. U.S. decline also would lead to filling the vacuum policy, which means giving more space and chances for world powers to start their polarization and find new foot on the ground. This can be seen as unobstructed in the role of Russia in Syria. Russia interfered directly in the Syrian war, under the eyes of the U.S. administration, established military bases, and participated directly in fighting alongside the regular Syrian forces of President Bashar al-Assad.

V. 4. World Powers and the Middle East

After the end of World War II. (1939-1945), the international scene turned into a bipolar between the United States and the former Soviet Union. The situation remained bipolar, to some extent, until the end of the Cold War, when the world transformed into unipolar with the U.S. at the head of power.

As mentioned previously, the United States became not the sole player in the political landscape in the Middle East because of several changes in the nature of international relations and the emergence of the rising powers. We could see some measures about the U.S. policy decline, such as the Russian intervention and Syrian events since 2011.

Regarding the European Union (EU), it dealt with the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) according to many policies, including encouraging political and economic

⁹³ The P5+1 refers to the UN Security Council's five permanent members (the P5); namely China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States; plus Germany.

⁹⁴ HAASS, R. N, 2008. pp. 1-3.

⁹⁵ CRISTOL, J.: *United States Foreign Policy in the Middle East after the Cold War*. 2018. pp. 48-50.

reform, which is due to respect for its specific features and regional cooperation among the countries of the region themselves and with the EU.⁹⁶

The central policy is the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), in the framework of which the EU worked with its Southern and Eastern Neighbors to foster stabilization, security, and prosperity, in line with the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy which is a vital part of EU foreign policy.⁹⁷

On the one hand, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) has emerged as a compromise between EU member states concerning the Union's interests towards its Eastern and Southern neighbors with central values such as democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and social cohesion.⁹⁸

On the other hand, most Europeans agree that the United States is the only powerful actor capable of changing the strategic role of regional actors and pushing them to resolve their disputes and bring progress to the Middle East. For example, the Israeli-Arab conflict will depend on regional ownership and total U.S. commitment.

Regarding Russia and China, they are traditionally united in their opposition to 'destructive foreign interference' in regional affairs. China is engaged with all major regional powers in complex military, technological, and political fields. Because they have their interests everywhere, they cannot stand in the various ongoing rivalries.⁹⁹

In the Middle East regional order, Russia and China view the region from the convergence of interests; they would not interfere profoundly in the region's affairs.

Like Beijing's plans, Moscow's strategy for the Middle East relies on maintaining good relations with all countries in the region and focuses on increasing opportunities with minimal commitment or the possibility of losses.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶European External Action Service (EEAS). Middle East and North Africa (MENA), §1.

⁹⁷ European External Action Service (EEAS), § 2.

⁹⁸ Soós, E.: *Challenges of interregional cooperation in the Eastern partnership countries*. 2016. p. 52.

⁹⁹ SUCHKOV, M.: *Can Russia and China cooperate on the Middle East*. 2018. p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ WORMUTH, C.: *Russia and China in the Middle East Implications for the United States in an Era of Strategic Competition*. 2018. p. 2.

All the world powers agree that the Middle East is a region of conflict of interests, which means ensuring the stability of the countries of the Middle East guarantees the flow and benefit from the region.

Conclusion

The role played by the British was far higher than any player in the region in shaping the contemporary Middle East. The Sykes-Picot Agreement is, until today, considered a classic mark of imperial dishonesty and betrayal.

Beyond the current situation in the Middle East, colonial ambitions cannot understand what is happening in the Middle East today without linking it to the beginning of a purely colonial point of view, which aims at sharing wealth and taking control of natural resources. This will keep the primary motivation for world powers' policies towards the region.

After European powers participated in the region, the area started to enter into new multi phases of new norms and lifestyles, which were among the main reasons for Arabic Nationalism, Islamism, and also terrorism.

The Middle East is a region of crucial permanent regional conflict for world powers; it is considered the place to measure power and influence and exercise them simultaneously. Some world powers – Russia and China – view the region from the convergence of their interests, not to interfere profoundly in the region's affairs.

A new regional order was established with the rising of the Regional Powers in the Middle East in parallel with the U.S. decline of its foreign policy towards the region after the end of the cold war (1947-1990).

The region will remain uncertain as long as no viable solutions are taken on the ground, which takes into account the complexity of the religious and ethnic issues and the solution of intractable problems, especially the Arab-Israeli conflict.

VI. The role of the United States's policy towards the Middle East

The United States is considered the superpower in the world, and the Middle East region enjoys a clear interest in the policies of the United States due to the presence of Israel, its strategic ally in the first place, and the geopolitical importance of the region and its energy resources.

However, it is necessary to analyze the reality of the U.S. policy towards the region to understand its intersection with the study's general objective, which is the policy of the United States as a sup-regional power in the region.

Analyzing the relationship between the United States and the Middle East takes us directly to the dependency theory framework, explaining this relationship.

We will analyze the two dimensions, power and economy. Realist scholars focus on the concept of power, while liberal theorists focus on economics. However, neither of these approaches investigates semi-peripheral states presented by the dependency theory in its states' divisions.

Raul Prebisch, the United Nations economic commission director for Latin America, proposed the dependence theory (1950s). Prebisch and his colleagues were puzzled that economic prosperity in advanced countries does not lead to growth in poorer countries. Indeed, their research has shown that economic growth in wealthy countries has always contributed to severe economic problems in developing countries.¹⁰¹

There are other sources for this dilemma. For instance, Paul Baran claims that the tendency of developing countries to specialize in producing one type of export has led these products to be controlled by the local elites and the global economy.¹⁰²

One of the pioneers of the dependence theory, Dos Santos, divided the world into two parts, the states of the peripheral (third-world countries) and the Core countries (the developed capitalist countries).¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ FERRARO, V., 2008. p. 1.

¹⁰² BARAN, P., 1957. p. 2.

¹⁰³ SANTOS, D., 1971. p. 226.

Immanuel Wallerstein (1976) was the first to implement the concept of semi-peripheral states in the new world order. He believed these countries play an independent role in the global and capitalist economies. The semi-peripheral countries take the role of the core towards the peripheral states, and the peripheral states take the role of the core.¹⁰⁴

He adds that if core countries weaken or fall, this will benefit the semi-peripheral countries, but a small number of semi-peripheral countries can do so to be core unless they change their economic situation. The semi-peripheral can also rise when the power of other semi-peripheral countries ends. The semi-peripheral includes economically stable countries and countries with political backgrounds, such as Brazil, Mexico, Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, India, Iran, Turkey, Canada, and Indonesia.¹⁰⁵

According to the dependency theory's main principles, the relationship between the U.S. and the Middle Eastern Countries is strategic, especially with its relation with the oil-exporting countries. The U.S. formulates its policy to control the region's oil sources.

Regarding external influences, dependency can characterize economic, political, and cultural development policies. Dependence is an essential dimension of the 'Third-World Countries' political culture, and these countries' reliance on rich Western countries profoundly influences their economy and politics.¹⁰⁶

The concept of dependency focuses on the unequal relationships and links between states, small groups, and social classes within the third world and the relationship between the third world and those in the western world.¹⁰⁷

The dependency theory focuses on the relationship between capitalist and third-world countries. Capitalist countries depend on establishing relationships with elites and influential groups in those countries to ensure their control over those countries.

The concept of dependency focuses on control to a great extent, and this is reflected in the nature of the relations between the countries. This chapter will analyze U.S. policies towards Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey to achieve the dependency theory.

¹⁰⁴ WALLERSTEIN, I., 1976. p. 462-463.

¹⁰⁵ WALLERSTEIN, I., 1975. p. 466-468.

¹⁰⁶ H. ATES & OTHERS, 2005. pp. 248-252.

¹⁰⁷ H. ATES & OTHERS, 2005. pp. 248-252.

VI. 1. The Middle East and Dependency theory

The dependency theory may fit into a comparative study if we use the distinctive notions and roles defining the dependency school. The Arab world's development studies have been dominated by the viewpoint of modernization, which is a Western self-serving commodity.¹⁰⁸

The way the Middle East countries rely on the community of advanced Western countries could be noted in many areas. Their intertwined history of domination and repression is centuries-long, beginning with Napoleons Egypt's conquest in 1798 and continuing to today's new capitalist world. Aspects of reliance can be found in various fields, such as the export of petrochemicals, food imports, and household necessities.¹⁰⁹

Suppose we consider the paradigm of dependence as closely related to the theory of imperialism and economic imperialism, which is still the main feature of imperialism. We can see that the Western power control of Arabic culture, communication, and education is almost infinite.¹¹⁰

Historically, U.S. hegemony in the Middle East and North Africa has been expressed by its ability to turn or generate major geopolitical crises, shape regional states' actions, and reconfigure the domestic balance of power between local governments and communities when required.¹¹¹

The countries of the Middle East are linked to the Western world with a colonial history. Most of the countries in this region arose due to treaties between western countries during the end of the First World War and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Some of these countries belonged to Great Britain, and others to the French Republic. They were divided into provisions and mandates. The situation remained unchanged until the end of WW2 in 1945, when the role of these forces declined, and the United States emerged as a dominant and controlling power in the region.

¹⁰⁸ H. ATEs & OTHERS, 2005. pp. 248-252.

¹⁰⁹ H. ATEs & OTHERS, 2005. pp. 248-252.

¹¹⁰ ATEs, H. & OTHERS, 2005. pp. 248-252.

¹¹¹ YOM, S., 2020. p. 2.

Edward Said (2006) argues that the European position of supremacy over the region and its people contributed further to the unequal relationship with Europe, which he called 'Orientalism.'

The Middle East was a British-French cultural project until the end of World War II, and the rise of the United States' role in controlling the region is not different from what Western civilization has tried to expand since ancient times.¹¹²

Edward Said viewed Orientalism as an authoritative use of knowledge of the East to domesticate it in preparation for colonization and control.

Today's modern nation-states in the Middle East, especially in the Arab world, are many artificial states, which are products of imperialism and power-sharing conflicts between the states that existed in the 19th century and the colonial greed that took no particularities of the region into account. Around a century ago, many Arabic regions were part of the Ottoman Empire. Many historical and political events led to the end of the Ottoman Empire (formally 1924) and the emergence of the newly bordered states across the Middle East.

VI.2. The United States and Saudi Arabia

In the thirties of the twentieth century, the U.S. formally built a robust economic and strategic cooperation model with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia because of the presence of oil. U.S. policy was able to consolidate its influence in the Kingdom so that the Kingdom became its most important strategic ally in the world. Throughout the century, the Kingdom has become closer to being one of the tools for implementing the U.S. global and regional strategy rather than an ally who could contradict his ally if this alliance conflicts with his strategic interests.¹¹³

The U.S. adopted a precautionary policy against the Kingdom. This policy was based on measuring the level of quantitative accumulation of the Islamic dimension in Saudi politics in the future and the extent of its ability to influence the position of the U.S. in the Arab and Islamic spheres. From there, it began to lay the foundations and sources of

¹¹² SAID, E., 2006. p. 31.

¹¹³ ABDESHAFI, I, 2018. pp. 1-3.

tension that can be moved within the Kingdom itself or its geographic territory; the U.S. can use it when necessary.¹¹⁴

The main interests of the United States in the region are oil supplies. However, friendly regimes' security is not essential when other resources to obtain oil are available. For example, the internal conflict in Yemen is the most critical priority for Saudi Arabia nowadays, as it was in the 1960s. However, the U.S. administration focuses on oil fields and its transportation routes (the Strait of Hormuz) and remains silent concerning the ballistic missiles that fall the Saudi territory. On the other hand, the U.S. show the most severe reactions to deter attacks targeting oil tankers. This is one of the most critical results when relations are based on interests, not shared values.¹¹⁵

The Kingdom was a tool used by the U.S. to balance the Iranian role in Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine. It was also a tool to settle the situation in Iraq and disputes between the Palestinian factions so Iran would not contain them. Saudi Arabia was also a tool in the sectarian conflicts provoked by the U.S. in the region within the religious and sectarian fragmentation policy that the U.S. adopted between the region's countries. It was a tool to fuel the sectarian conflict between Iran on the one hand and the Arab countries on the other side, and between Sunnis and Shiites within many Arab countries, such as Iraq and Lebanon, and even within the Kingdom itself as a deferred tool that can be used when the U.S. wants.¹¹⁶

On the other hand, U.S.-Saudi relations are strategic and cannot be summed up with an issue, such as the Iranian nuclear file. The Kingdom is important in the American and Chinese balance in the Middle East and North Africa.¹¹⁷

U.S. President Trump 2017 strengthened Saudi Arabia's regional position and weight through partnerships, agreements, and arms sales contracts. Despite Trump's unclear and noisy policy, he attempted to change the international system's rules by requesting the

¹¹⁴ ABDESHAFI, I., 2018. pp.1-3.

¹¹⁵ AJUZ, Z. - DEKMAK, H., 2019. p. 3.

¹¹⁶ ABDESHAFI, I., 2018. pp. 3-5.

¹¹⁷ ABDULLAH, Z., 2019. pp. 154-155.

states to pay for their protection, and this is what happened with the Kingdom, for example. However, a close relationship continued between the two sides.¹¹⁸

Directly, U.S.-Saudi relations are petro-dollar relations based on the economy and security, the state of change in the Middle East, and the rise and fall of other countries strengthened Saudi Arabia's position regionally. They allowed it to lead the region and play a more significant role in its conflicts, but this could only be done with American support.

VI.3. The United States and Iran

Since the end of WWII (1948), the U.S. has sought to extend its influence in Iran for economic ambitions. In (1953), British and American intelligence assisted in toppling the government of the elected Prime Minister Muhammad Mosaddeq to control Iranian oil, which they successfully achieved until the Islamic Revolution in 1979.¹¹⁹

Bill. A.J. (2003) says that the U.S. practices the policy of containment and control over all countries that threaten their regional interests and can confront their desires using complex diplomacy 'sanctions.' The use of regional allies in the Middle East, the Arab Gulf, and Israel to confront this power and limit its control or relatively independent decisions.¹²⁰

He adds that the U.S. was quick to condemn regional powers because they did not comply with the wishes of the U.S., describing them as 'rogue,' 'rebellious' or "outlaw" states. For example, in 1985, President Ronald Reagan stubbornly identified these independent actors when he referred to a federation of outlaw states – Cuba, Iran, Libya, Nicaragua, and North Korea'.

In short, the United States seeks to prevent the rise of independent-minded regional hegemony. The more independent their behavior, the more pressure the United States will put on them. The more significant the difference in global views of global and regional dominance, the greater the political tension between them.

¹¹⁸ ABDULLAH, Z., 2019. pp. 154-155.

¹¹⁹ BBC, US-Iran relations: A brief history. 6 January 2020 available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-24316661> pp. 1-3 [Last accessed: 22. 10.2020]

¹²⁰ BILL, A. J.: *The politics of hegemony. United States and Iran.* 2001. pp. 1-3

Iran has since wavered its overt or hidden subordination to the West. After the Islamic revolution, its relations with the Soviet Union were regularized. After that, diplomatic crises, hostility, and sanctions emerged until Iran was declared in 2003 by President W. Bush an axe of evil alongside Iraq and North Korea.

After Iran developed its nuclear program, tensions increased between the two sides. In 2015, US-Iran agreed with former President Obama to limit and stop the Iranian program in return for easing sanctions on Iran. Trump administration came in 2018 and withdrew from this agreement, which increased the tension between the two countries and returned matters to their first square. This emphasis on solid policy with Iran and an extension of the U.S. policy to dominate the region.

Recently, the current scene in the Middle East, the state of chaos in the region, the absence of regimes that are considered controlling powers in Iraq and countries in a state of civil war, Syria, Yemen and the retreat in American policy in the region forced the United States tends to support its allies (Saudi Arabia and Israel) and using them to limit Iran's interference in the region. The aim of the U.S. policy and its support for allies (Saudi Arabia and Israel) is to contain Iran and achieve stability in the region in a way that guarantees its interests.¹²¹

The civil war in Yemen is considered an arena of Saudi-Iranian conflict and a proxy war, just like the Cold War. Both Iran and Saudi Arabia strive to be semi-peripheral states.

VI.4. The United States and Turkey

The U.S. established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Turkey in 1927. Both sides signed a 1947 agreement on economic and technical cooperation. U.S. considers Turkey a major NATO ally and an important regional partner.¹²²

Also, Turkey's geographical advantage has earned its strength in the intersection of its security interests with the United States.

¹²¹ The Middle East: Intensifying Competition for Hegemony over a New Regional Order. Strategic Annual Report.2019. pp.1-3. Available at: https://www.jiia.or.jp/en/strategic_comment/2019/12/column-38.html [Last accessed: 25. 10.2020]

¹²² U.S. Department of state. p.1. Available at: <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-turkey/> [Last accessed: 25.10.2020]

From this perspective, the U.S. and Turkey's relationship differs from other Middle Eastern countries. According to the dependency theory, Turkey is considered a semi-peripheral state, but to what limit does the U.S. agree or disagree to give the Turkish this privilege?

In their congressional research service report, J. Zanotti and C. Thomas (2020) estimated that the United States-Turkish relations would depend on several factors:

“whether Turkey makes its Russian S-400 system fully operational¹²³; how various regional crises (Syria, Libya, Nagorno-Karabakh, Eastern Mediterranean disputes with Greece and Cyprus) unfold and influence Turkey's relationships with key actors (including the United States, Russia, China, the European Union, Israel, Iran, and Sunni Arab states); whether Turkey can project power and create its sphere of influence using military and economic cooperation including defense exports; and whether President Erdogan can maintain broad control over the country given its economic problems and human rights concerns”.¹²⁴

Over the past ten years, the Turkish president has demanded in his speeches before the United Nations General Assembly to change the rules of the international system and the Security Council in particular.

In practice, Turkey has begun to take a more significant role in its surroundings - its interference in the Syrian issue – under the pretext of securing its borders – as it has sent military forces to Libya, and this indicates the extent of cooperation and the U.S. green light for these moves. In return, Turkey entered into an economic crisis; the decline in which the Turkish lira is suffering these days is unprecedented since Erdogan pulled out of the theory of zero problems he was adopting.

After the missile defense system agreement that Turkey bought from Russia came into effect, the U.S. president publicly threatened to impose sanctions on Turkey.

Another perspective of the scene in the Middle East is the leadership of the Islamic world; the three countries where examined, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey, want to lead within

¹²³ Missile defense system.

¹²⁴ ZANOTTI, J. - THOMAS, C., 2020. p. 18.

the religion, and that is what the U.S. tried when the administration of former President Obama tried to market Turkey as a moderate Islamic model.

Conclusion

What is happening in the Middle East is a struggle between the semi-peripheral states covered by the sub-regional power of the U.S.

Each country tries to prove its position, and the U.S. plays a prominent role through its regional policies in supporting a state and giving it a more significant role than guarantees its interests.

According to the dependency theory, the core State seeks to control the behavior of the semi-peripheral states in a manner consistent with the desires of the core State and safeguards its interests, and this is what the U.S. relies on through its policies towards Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey. It is trying to give a more significant role to its main ally, Israel.

The Middle East is dynamic, as the international relations; Wallerstein argued that the new core state must replace another core state to weaken or fall.¹²⁵ However, this does not apply; for example, Canada in the 1970s classified it as a semi-peripheral state; today, it is a core state, and the U.S. is also a core.

The economic situation: Saudi Arabia has a vast stockpile of oil and a vast military arsenal, but it cannot be classified as a semi-peripheral state, as it is fragile from the inside and still depends on the U.S. for most things economically and militarily.

The development of the dependency theory perspective and the access of states to the ranks of a semi-peripheral state can be achieved through the cooperation of two or more states and the formation of alliances at the level of regional security.

Iran is trying to approach the status of the semi-peripheral state to be in control of its region, but U.S. policies towards it prevent it from doing so.

¹²⁵ WALLERSTEIN, I., 1976. pp. 466-468.

Turkey today lives in an unstable political and economic situation due to its direct military intervention in the affairs of the region – Syria, Libya, Azerbaijan – also the U.S. policies against it, which prevent it from getting more role in the region.

VII. The role of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the European Union's Strategy towards the Middle East

The European Union has been involved in resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict through its various foreign policies, developed continuously in proportion to the general political reality.

EU's vision of conflict resolution harmonized with its core values, such as justice, democracy, good governance, and the rule of law in any current or future solution to the conflict. The EU's position on the conflict consists of three central positions; its position in the peace process, political support, and practical and financial support.

As stated in the European Security Strategy, “The Resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict is a strategic priority for Europe. Without this, there will be little chance of dealing with other problems in the Middle East”.¹²⁶ It stresses that the European Union has been “central to efforts towards a settlement in the Middle East, through its role in the Quartet, co-operation with Israel and the Palestinian Authority, with the Arab League and other regional partners.”¹²⁷ Within the framework of an international partner as part of the ‘Quartet,’ the European Union is engaged with the United States, Russia, and the United Nations in the peace process.

¹²⁶ European Security Strategy .2003. p. 36. Available at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/documents-publications/publications/european-security-strategy-secure-europe-better-world/> [Last accessed: 16.07.2019]

¹²⁷ European Security Strategy. 2003. p. 18.

Strong political and economic relations have been established between the European Union - Israel, and European Union and the Palestinian Authority through 'Association Agreements and European Neighborhood Policy Action Plans.'¹²⁸

The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) has emerged as a compromise between EU member states concerning the EU's interests towards its eastern and southern neighbors. The ENP is a vital part of EU foreign policy with the central values of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and social cohesion.¹²⁹ The revised Policy aims to build more effective partnerships between the EU and its neighbors toward a more stable EU Neighborhood in political, socioeconomic, and security terms.

The ENP of the European Union sets ambitious objectives based on commitments to shared values and effective implementation of political, economic, social, and institutional reforms. Moreover, it is part of the European Union's response to the Palestinian Authority's political and economic reform agenda. This Reform has been developed to consolidate democracy, accountability, transparency, and justice in the West Bank and Gaza.¹³⁰

Palestinians became part of the ENP as the EU-PA Action Plan was signed in 2004. The action plan aims at maintaining and ensuring the political and economic existence of a future Palestinian state and therefore calls on the Palestinian Authority to continue to work on reforms to promote respect for democracy, human rights, and financial accountability.¹³¹

The EU-Palestinian Territory Action Plan is a political document laying out the strategic objectives of the cooperation between the Palestinian Authority and the EU, with its implementation aimed at encouraging and supporting the Palestinian Authority's national reform objectives and further integration into European economic and social structures. The action plan, adopted in May 2005 and covering a five-year timeframe, targets the

¹²⁸ European External Action Service (a), para 1. *The EU and the Middle East Process*. Available at: http://eeas.europa.eu/mepp/index_en.htm [Last accessed:15.07.2019]

¹²⁹ SOÓS, E., 2016. p. 52.

¹³⁰ Action Plan: *EU/Palestinian Authority Action Plan*. 2004. p. 1. Available at: <https://library.euneighbours.eu/content/eu-palestinian-territories-enp-action-plan> [Last accessed: 20.07.2019]

¹³¹ BENLI, M., 2008. p. 113.

approximation of the Palestinian Authority legislation, norms, and standards to those of the European Union.¹³²

Deeply the EU is fully engaged in the Annapolis Process towards a two-state solution and is contributing sustained financial and budgetary support to the Palestinian Authority and capacity building, including by deploying judicial, police, and border management experts on the ground.¹³³

Furthermore, the EU enhances its regional presence by providing ‘Border Assistance through EUBAM Rafah.’ The EU strongly supports civil society activities that aim to promote peace, tolerance, and non-violence in the Middle East.¹³⁴

In the first section, the chapter will show the position of the EU in support of Palestine; in the second section, the chapter will discuss the EU-Israeli ties; in the third section, the chapter will discuss in brief the EU joint strategy in support of Palestine, in the fourth section the chapter will analyze the Regional approaches to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the role of EU. Finally, the chapter will trace the official Palestinian point of view about the EU's role in support of Palestine.

The chapter concludes that, as a result, the EU plays a vital role in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and is considered the ‘most reliable’ partner for the Palestinians. Furthermore, the EU could gain many benefits through its contribution to the resolution of the conflict, namely, the reduction of the Palestinian Authority's annual financial dependence and expenditures, as well as the creation of a robust international personality and its ability to resolve conflicts and create a new reality of the balance of power and the U.S. control of the region.

VII.1. The European Union’s position in support of Palestine

The European Union has gone through several stages in supporting the Palestinians. European Economic Community EEC recognized the existence and legitimate rights of

¹³² Action Plan: *EU/Palestinian Authority Action Plan*. 2004. p. 1.

¹³³ European Security Strategy, 2009. p. 18.

¹³⁴ European External Action Service, 2016. pp. 4-5.

the Palestinian people through a joint statement issued by the nine EEC Governments in 1973.

In the Brussels Declaration of November 1973, the European Community (EC) went even further than the UN Resolution in stressing the ‘legitimate rights’ of the Palestinians.¹³⁵ The Venice declaration in 1980 recognized the right to security and existence for all states in the region, including Israel, and the need to fulfill the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.¹³⁶ The EEC agreed in this declaration on supporting the right of self-determination of the Palestinians, which was considered an important step that implicitly implies the possibility of a future state for the Palestinians as occupied people.¹³⁷

The Declaration set the standards in many respects but was somehow far from the position of the UN General Assembly, which in the same year affirmed Palestine's right to establish its independent state.¹³⁸

At the same time, the Venice Declaration is vital because it stressed the illegality of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories and the non-acceptance of any unilateral initiative aimed at changing the status of Jerusalem.¹³⁹

After the end of the Cold War 1989-1990, with the fact that the United States became the superpower in the world and its vision of the new Middle East, the 1991 Madrid peace process¹⁴⁰ began to move forward with solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

¹³⁵ BENLI, M., 2008. p. 106.

¹³⁶ European External Action Service. 2016. p. 1.

¹³⁷ BADARNA, M., 2019. p. 2.

¹³⁸ BOURIS, D. - HUBER, D., 2017. p. 1.

¹³⁹ BENLI, M., 2008.p. 106.

¹⁴⁰ On March 6, 1991, President George H. W. Bush told Congress, “The time has come to put an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict.” Bush’s declaration was followed by eight months of intensive shuttle diplomacy by Secretary of State James Baker, culminating in the Madrid Peace Conference in October 1991. The Conference, co-chaired by Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, was attended by Israeli, Egyptian, Syrian, and Lebanese delegations, as well as a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. For the first time, all of the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict had gathered to hold direct negotiations—a historically unprecedented event. The Madrid Conference opened October 30, 1991, and ended on November 4. Though the parties largely stuck to their traditional positions and did not negotiate seriously with each other, they nevertheless agreed to remain in dialogue. Bilateral talks between Israeli officials and their Arab counterparts would begin in Washington in December 1991, while multilateral negotiations began in Moscow in January 1992. From the beginning, the bilateral talks were generally regarded as the more significant of the two tracks. While these talks acquired greater momentum following the election of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in June 1992, they failed to yield results before the Clinton administration took office. Ultimately, the Israeli-Jordanian and Israeli-Palestinian tracks established at Madrid would be

The U.S. considered the EU's role in financing the peace process as a model for regional economic cooperation but has not been seen as a critical player in developing solutions or apolitical actors.¹⁴¹

The EU co-sponsored the road map for peace in June 2002, stressing the need to build Palestinian institutions and economic recovery to strengthen and viability of a future Palestinian state and statehood and calling for the immediate freezing of settlement activity and the proactive dismantling of settlement sites as stipulated in the road map.¹⁴²

Finally, it seems that the position of the European Union was more apparent than ever before, supporting the option of a Palestinian state in the Berlin Declaration¹⁴³. Middle East peace process of the agenda of the European Council meeting in Berlin on March 24, 1999. The part contained the following statement: The Heads of State or Government of the European Union reaffirm its support for a negotiated settlement in the Middle East, to reflect the principles of "land for peace" and ensure the security of both collective and individual Israeli and Palestinian peoples. In this context, the European Union welcomes the decision by the Palestinian National Council and associated bodies to reaffirm the nullification of the provisions in the Palestinian National Charter which called for the destruction of Israel and to reaffirm their commitment to recognize and live in peace with Israel. However, the European Union remains concerned at the current deadlock in the peace process and calls upon the parties to implement fully and immediately the Wye River Memorandum. The European Union also calls upon the parties to reaffirm their commitments to the basic principles established within the framework of Madrid, Oslo and subsequent agreements, in accordance with UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338. It urges the parties to agree on an extension of the transitional period established by the Oslo

circumvented by the parties themselves. Frustrated by the Palestinian delegation's inability to move forward without Arafat's approval, the Israelis decided to negotiate directly with the PLO, culminating in the signing of the Declaration of Principles on September 13, 1993. King Hussein and the Israelis likewise decided to move forward independently of the Madrid framework, holding direct talks which produced a peace treaty by October 1994. More details visit: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1989-1992/madrid-conference>

¹⁴¹ BENLI, M., 2008. p. 107.

¹⁴² European External Action Service. 2016. p. 1.

¹⁴³ Presidency Conclusions. Berlin European Council. 25-25 March 1999 .The Berlin Declaration, Part IV: Other Declarations. The European Union also calls for an early resumption of negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of the Middle East Peace Process, leading to the implementation of UNSCRs 242, 338 and 425. For more details visit:

https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/acfb2.html [Last accessed: 12..03.2023]

agreements. Then supported Jerusalem as the capital of both Palestine and Israel in the conclusions of the 2009 Council.¹⁴⁴

Since 2009, the EU has supported US administration initiatives that encourage both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to resume bilateral negotiations leading to a two-state solution while at the same time continuing to support the building of a Palestinian state.¹⁴⁵

In the context of the final status agreement, the EU foreign ministers in 2013 expressed their full support for the sustainability of the peace process and the enhancement of cooperation between them and the Palestinians and Israelis working in tripartite groups to face any future challenges.¹⁴⁶

VII.2. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the EU-Israeli relations

As it is internationally known and due to the historical past between Europe and the injustice treatment the Jews living in the heart of Europe were suffering from, the EU is highly sensitive towards any action against Israel and does not want to be accused of anti-Semitism. That is why the EU is adopting a policy of separating the economy from politics and being bilateral when dealing with Israel.

The 1995 Association Agreement in 2000 established the main legal relations between Israel and the European Union, which included free trade arrangements for industrial goods and concessional arrangements for trade in agricultural products, and the opening of greater prospects for trade in agricultural services 2005. Relations between the two sides are framed within the ENP, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), and the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).¹⁴⁷

Israel has also become part of various EU programs, such as scientific and technical cooperation, youth programs, and business dialogue. Israel has also become part of the ENP, and the EU-Israel Action Plan was signed in 2004.

¹⁴⁴ BADARNA, M., 2019. p. 2.

¹⁴⁵ European External Action Service. 2016. p. 2.

¹⁴⁶ European External Action Service. 2016. p. 2.

¹⁴⁷ PACE, M., 2016. pp. 405-406.

According to the Action Plan, Israel is also eligible to receive funds from the new ENPI financial instrument, and since 2007, two million euros has been allocated annually to implement the Action Plan.¹⁴⁸

At the bilateral level, Israel benefited from a high level of integration into the European market and was the first non-EU country to participate in EU programs, including the EU Research and Development Program.¹⁴⁹ The EU's bilateral relationship with Israel, especially after the collapse of the Oslo peace process in 2000, sought to achieve two goals: the two-state solution in Israel and Palestine and the deepening of cooperation between the EU and Israel.¹⁵⁰

At the same time, an analysis of EU policies reveals that EU actors prioritize cooperation on a two-state solution.¹⁵¹ For example, within the ENP, preconditions are rarely used, sometimes deepening cooperation between the EU and Israel, specifically when the conflict deteriorates. However, postponing the 'upgrade' with Israel could be considered a precondition, restoring some credibility to EU policies in the post-Cast Lead region. Nevertheless, the European Union said it was not meant to 'punish' Israel. Despite the formal postponement, cooperation between the EU and Israel has been in practice and is deepening unhindered.

VII. 3. The European joint strategy in support of Palestine

According to the EU, Palestine is a sui generis case for aid delivery and cooperation with the Union's political objective of achieving the two-state solution. Under these constraining conditions, much of the support provided by the EU has focused on offering protection, improving the livelihoods of Palestinians, and preparing their institutions for statehood".¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ BENLI, M., 2008. p. 113.

¹⁴⁹ HUBER, D., 2018. p. 357.

¹⁵⁰ TOCCI, N., 2010. p. 55.

¹⁵¹ TOCCI, N., 2010. pp. 61-63.

¹⁵² European External Action Service, *European Joint strategy in support of Palestine (2017-2022)*. p.9 Available at: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/final_-_european_joint_strategy_english.pdf [Last accessed: 16.07.2019]

As the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) emphasized, motivated by the dual aims of strengthening the Middle East Peace Process and contributing to Palestinian state-building, the EU and its member states have been the most prominent donors of financial assistance to the Palestinians. However, these efforts have not achieved the desired change, as the EU failed to develop a coherent strategy to address Israel's violations of international humanitarian law and has accepted practices that undermine its political objectives.¹⁵³ Despite the national positions of the member states, the Office of the Representative of the EU and the member states have worked for a joint European Union program in Palestine since 2011.¹⁵⁴

EU Joint Programming combines political and development dimensions and has been understood in Palestine in its two dimensions: (i) aid effectiveness and (ii) political dimension. It comprises five pillars; Governance Reform, Fiscal Consolidation and Policy, Rule of Law, Citizen Safety and Human Rights, Sustainable Service Delivery Access to Self-Sufficient Water and Energy Services, and Sustainable Economic Development.¹⁵⁵

Since 2015, the EU member state and the Palestinian Authority have worked closely on relevant and highly interrelated planning processes, i.e., the Palestinian National Policy Agenda 2017-2022 and the European Common Strategy 2017-2020.¹⁵⁶

Implementing the Joint European Strategy is crucial, and a good balance between ambition and realism must be ensured. No political solution can be achieved except by lifting the occupation, bearing in mind that the EU member state domestic agendas and internal political cycles.¹⁵⁷

In time EU considers Palestine as one unit, despite the Oslo accords divisions (it is currently divided into the following areas: East Jerusalem, Gaza, and the West Bank with

¹⁵³ European External Action Service, *European Joint strategy in support of Palestine (2017-2022)*. p. 9.

¹⁵⁴ European External Action Service, *European Joint strategy in support of Palestine (2017-2022)*. p. 9.

¹⁵⁵ European External Action Service, *European Joint strategy in support of Palestine (2017-2022)*. pp. 10-12.

¹⁵⁶ European External Action Service, *European Joint strategy in support of Palestine (2017-2022)*. p. 11

¹⁵⁷ European External Action Service, *European Joint strategy in support of Palestine (2017-2022)*. p. 12.

its regional divisions of A, B, and C territories according to Oslo Accords,¹⁵⁸ with increased economic opportunities in areas C to enable Palestinian institutions and to promote stability and security for both Palestinians and Israelis.¹⁵⁹

The EU considers the Palestinian Authority one of the drivers of development; at times, the Israeli occupation is the primary driver of poverty in Palestine, without political progress (ease of restrictions, lifting of the blockade on the Gaza Strip, a permanent peace agreement). The Palestinian economy will continue to perform without its potential and will not be able to experience sustainable growth and development.

Trade between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has virtually disappeared today, boosting Palestinian economic dependence on Israel. The Palestinian Authority is the largest employer in the West Bank. Current revenue collection model retrogressive: 92% of tax revenue is from consumption and only 8% from income tax; according to estimates, Palestinians spend 94% of their disposable income.¹⁶⁰

Despite the European Union's commitment to the Middle East peace process, European development expertise capable of contributing effectively to the two-state solution and building sustainable livelihoods for all Palestinian's attempts to achieve a long-term political solution have failed. New realities on the ground are constantly hampering the realization of the two-state solution; these include illegal demolitions and settlement expansion.

The report of the Middle East Quartet of 1 July 2016 raises legitimate questions about Israel's long-term intentions, compounded by the statements of some Israeli ministers that

¹⁵⁸ The Oslo Accords, under which the PA was created in 1994, were intended to lead to a final negotiated settlement between the parties. These Accords led to several administrative and security arrangements for different parts of the West Bank (divided in Areas A, B and C) The Oslo Accords, under which the Palestinian Authority was established in 1994, were aimed at reaching a final negotiated settlement between the parties for an interim period of five years and pending a final settlement.

Negotiations between the Government of Israel and representatives of the Palestinian people would begin by the third year of this interim period. More than 20 years after the Oslo Accords, the Palestinian Authority, with limited jurisdiction since its establishment, has full civilian and security authority only in Area A (18% of the West Bank), while only the President of the Palestine Liberation Organization has access to East Jerusalem.

¹⁵⁹ European External Action Service, *European Joint strategy in support of Palestine (2017-2022)*. pp. 12-13.

¹⁶⁰ European External Action Service, *European Joint strategy in support of Palestine (2017-2022)*. pp. 20-28.

there must never be a Palestinian state. Thus, the most innovative approach and development tools will not be sufficient to give meaning to the two-state solution and rebuild confidence among all parties.¹⁶¹

European aid represents about two-thirds of donor funding, most bilateral development partners in Palestine, and seeks to protect the viability of a two-state solution for an independent, democratic, contiguous, and viable Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with the State of Israel. For over 20 years, the EU has supported the Palestinians and their quest for self-determination to support this vision. Since 2007, the European Union, Member States, Norway, and Switzerland have disbursed U.S. \$ 1.2 billion annually as development assistance to Palestine.¹⁶²

VII.4. Regional approaches to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the role of the European Union

Most Europeans agree that the United States is the only powerful actor enough to change the strategic role of regional actors and push them to resolve their disputes, and thus any progress in the Israeli-Arab conflict will depend on regional ownership and total U.S. commitment.¹⁶³

This resulted from the diplomatic absence of the U.S. in the escalating Israeli-Palestinian conflict or the U.S. refusal to diplomatically engage with Iran during the presidency of George W. Bush, whereby it sought a military solution to regional problems, most notably with the 2003 invasion of Iraq.¹⁶⁴

Turkey has sought to play a regional role in the Middle East, such as its participation in initiatives to meet other regional challenges, such as the conflict between Lebanon and Syria and the stability of Iraq and Lebanon. Moreover, after the election of President

¹⁶¹ European External Action Service, *European Joint strategy in support of Palestine (2017-2022)*. pp. 46-47.

¹⁶² European External Action Service, *European Joint strategy in support of Palestine (2017-2022)*. pp. 29-32.

¹⁶³ BAUER, M.- HANELT, 2010. p. 110.

¹⁶⁴ BAUER, M.- HANELT, 2010. p. 110.

Barack Obama, Turkey also proposed mediation between Iran and the United States in cooperation with Brazil; it tried to mediate a compromise on Iran's nuclear program.

Saudi Arabia and Egypt have taken the regional initiative to mediate the conflict between Hamas and Fatah because they assume that reconciliation between the two factions is a precondition for the sustainability of any agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. The mediation efforts of Saudi Arabia in 2007 resulted in the Mecca Agreement¹⁶⁵ and the formation of a government of national unity. The agreement lacked United States support to breach the border between Gaza and Egypt in January 2008, which prompted Egypt to proactively seek to mediate a reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas and mediate a truce; compared to the high expectations of the initiatives mentioned above often, they show mixed results only in terms of sustainability and success.¹⁶⁶

This is partly because entrepreneurs often lack the resources to follow through with their initiative and insist on agreements being reached. However, the failure of these initiatives should not be unfairly attributed to the initiators alone but also the lack of clear international support.¹⁶⁷

Moreover, political uncertainty was derived from the Arab Spring. Changes in the balance of power unleashed by the invasion of Iraq in 2003 were reinforced, while Egypt remained entangled in its contradictions and polarizations. Iraq and Syria sank into chaos, and Iran raised its image to the discontent of the Gulf states, particularly Saudi Arabia.¹⁶⁸

Regarding the scene in the Middle East, there is a consensus that the Middle East has not been a successful example of regional cooperation or regional integration over the years.¹⁶⁹ The landscape of the Middle East shows that it is a competitive behavior rather

¹⁶⁵ Mecca Agreement: an agreement between Hamas, represented by Political Bureau Chief Khaled Mashal, and Fatah, represented by PNA President Mahmoud Abbas, signed in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, on 8 February 2007. The purpose of the agreement, sponsored by Saudi King Abdullah, was to end clashes between the two organizations in the Gaza Strip, the result of tensions following Hamas' victory in the controversial 2006 elections, and to form a national unity government under incumbent Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh. The agreement collapsed in May 2007, and the resulting clashes ended with Hamas in control of the Strip. More details visit: https://ecf.org.il/media_items/1197

¹⁶⁶ BAUER, M. - HANELT, P., 2010. p. 111.

¹⁶⁷ BAUER, M. - HANELT, P., 2010. pp. 115-117.

¹⁶⁸ KHADER, B., 2018. pp. 47-49.

¹⁶⁹ SEVER, A., 2018. pp. 33-32.

than cooperative behavior, and this is evident in the Saudi-Iranian rivalry, which is understood as a hard power rather than soft power.

Security is a prerequisite for economic development. Launch of the ENP review in parallel with work on the EU's Global Strategy, which also aims to stabilize the EU neighborhood.¹⁷⁰

The U.S.'s ability to influence the region has become much less. It can no longer do it alone; it needs to cooperate with other countries, as in the case of Iran's nuclear program with the committee (P5+1)¹⁷¹ and the involvement of countries such as Russia and China.¹⁷²

All these regional and sub-regional factors gave the EU an excellent opportunity to get involved in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and make a big difference. Nevertheless, the United States keeps the EU as a second key player, limiting its capabilities and policy instruments.¹⁷³

The Europeans' position towards the Palestinians has been expressed gradually over the decades. Despite the support of the European Council for Palestinian self-determination in the Venice Declaration of 1980, it was only until the end of the Oslo process in 1999 that the Union shyly supported a Palestinian state. With the outbreak of the second intifada in 2000 and the United States backing away from Middle East diplomacy under Bush's first administration, the EU felt bold to express its vision of peace Area.¹⁷⁴

Most EU declarations on the conflict since the 1970s have condemned Palestinian violence and terrorism; the EU also condemned the Israeli illegal settlements in which construction contradicts the Fourth Geneva Convention on the Laws of Occupation.

With the collapse of the Oslo process (1993) and the outbreak of the second intifada in September 2000, the EU Intensified its calls to stop and reverse the settlement construction and condemned all range of violations of human rights and humanitarian law

¹⁷⁰ EEAS, ENP

¹⁷¹ The P5+1 refers to the UN Security Council's five permanent members (the P5); namely China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States; plus Germany.

¹⁷² HASS, R. N., 2008. pp. 1-2.

¹⁷³ TOCCI, N., 2009. p. 383.

¹⁷⁴ TOCCI, N., 2009. p. 389.

committed by the two parties, ranging from Palestinian suicide bombings to Israeli incursions, extrajudicial killings, and forms collective punishment.

Also, the construction of the Israeli wall in the West Bank has repeatedly stressed that Israeli security and Palestinian self-determination should be pursued exclusively within the limits of international law. In 2001-2006, the EU focused mainly on issues related to democracy and governance in the Palestinian Authority.

Finally, since the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in August 2005 and the political separation between Hamas – Gaza Strip – and the West Bank, which Fatah controls In June 2007, two other issues prominently were featured in the EU's standard declarations on the conflict: convictions of Israeli military incursions and blockade of the Gaza Strip as well as the condemnations of indiscriminate rocket attacks from Gaza on Israeli cities.¹⁷⁵

The embargo on Hamas was seen not only as a demonstration of double standards by the EU but also as a sign that the EU was following the steps of the United States regarding its policy towards the conflict. This has led to a new problem of credibility for the EU as far as the Arabs are concerned. Finally, the embargo led to further radicalization.¹⁷⁶

The vote was clear and closer to the truth of the EU's regional role. During the Palestinian Authority's failed efforts to obtain the State's recognition by the Security Council in 2011 and the subsequent UN General Assembly in resolution 2012 to promote Palestine as a 'non-member observer state.'¹⁷⁷ A split in the tripartite vote among the member states

¹⁷⁵ TOCCI, N., 2009. p. 390.

¹⁷⁶ BENLI, M., 2008. p. 115.

¹⁷⁷ Non-member observer State status in the United Nations General Assembly resolution 67/19. In that resolution, the Assembly accorded to Palestine non-member observer State status in the United Nations, without prejudice to the acquired rights, privileges and role of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the United Nations as the representative of the Palestinian people, in accordance with the relevant resolutions and practice. It also reaffirmed the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and expressed hope that the Security Council would consider favorably the application submitted on 23 September 2011 by the State of Palestine for admission to full membership in the United Nations. The Assembly also affirmed its determination to contribute to the attainment of a peaceful settlement in the Middle East that ends the occupation that began in 1967 and fulfills the vision of two States: an independent, sovereign, democratic, contiguous and viable State of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security with Israel on the basis of the pre-1967 borders. It expressed the urgent need for the resumption and acceleration of negotiations within the Middle East peace process, and urged all States and the specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to continue to support and assist the Palestinian people in the early realization of their right to self-determination, independence and freedom. This present report provides information on the steps taken regarding the change of Palestine's status in the United Nations, which does not apply to organizations and bodies outside of the United Nations, as well as the progress made, or lack thereof, in

European Union, where the Czech Republic was the only EU country to vote against promotion along with the other eight: Canada, Israel, the United States, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, and Panama.¹⁷⁸

VII. 5. How did the Palestinians realize the European Union's support

The EU has several issues to discuss in light of the changing on the ground in the Middle East and the world in general, noting the important change taking place within the EU at the political level is the rise of the currents of illiberal democracies in the EU and the Member States countries, which is consistent with the US policy in the region and the possibility to act in bias towards Israel at the expense of the Palestinian cause.¹⁷⁹

Since Two years and a half, no official statement was issued by the European Council of Ministers on the Palestinian issue deafening their ears and blinding their eyes against the many actions and violations occurring in the region. In a time when Palestinians consider the EU a vital key player in both economic and political factors.

The EU has always worked to unify the member states' stances and take a united position on international issues, namely the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The Union has no one vote but the vote of individual states, but the rise of some European countries with direct interests in Israel, specifically economic ones, sometimes precludes it.¹⁸⁰

Since its inception, the European Union has significantly contributed to the Palestinians through its various policies and direct relationship with the Palestinian Authority. It is considered the most reliable partner by the Palestinians and committed to its agreements with the Palestinian Authority, especially the financial ones. Moreover, to consolidate the principles of international legitimacy and work to achieve a two-state solution, and to condemn all forms of violence in the region, as well as the establishment of Israeli

resuming the Middle East peace process. The Permanent Mission of Israel and the Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations have been consulted in the preparation of the present report. For more details visit: <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-182149/>

¹⁷⁸ BOURIS, D. - HUBER, D., 2017. p. 3.

¹⁷⁹ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in July 29- 2019 with Dr. Amal Jadou, Assistant of Palestinian Foreign Minister for EU Affairs.

¹⁸⁰ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in July 29- 2019 with Dr. Amal Jadou, Assistant of Palestinian Foreign Minister for EU Affairs.

settlements within the borders of the fourth of June, 1967. As a result, their actions have included marking the products of the illegal settlements not to be dealt with in the European market under the partnership agreements with Israel.¹⁸¹

What is currently happening on the international scene and the escalation of the crisis between the two sides are attributed to the policy of U.S. President Donald Trump in the region and his ideological bias, which is in Israel`s favor. The dire situation touches the basic constants and international legitimacy in every sense.

At the Palestinian political level, we are working to gain more support and recognition from the world's countries in our Palestinian state to strengthen its legal and international character and create new facts on the ground that no one can overcome.

The Unions are trying to play a balanced role in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, resulting in statements and condemnations. From a Palestinian point of view, this is inadequate, as the Palestinian facts on the ground and Israel's daily violations against the Palestinian people are apparent and escalating.¹⁸²

The EU's support for a Palestinian state on the ground with full sovereignty under the resolutions of international legitimacy adopted by the EU will create an environment for resolving the conflicts in the Middle East. The EU will undoubtedly demonstrate the ability to solve problems and conflicts; on the one hand, and the other hand, the Palestinian state will work on forging partnerships and signing economic agreements. The Palestinian people are renowned for their human element and ability to overcome difficulties and the impossible. We mainly depend on our vital element, human resources, as it is considered one of our valuable investments, which will gradually reduce our financial dependence on the EU.¹⁸³

The issue of Jerusalem is one of the most sensitive issues in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, along with the issue of refugees, water, and borders. We appreciate the role of

¹⁸¹ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in July 29- 2019 with Dr. Amal Jadou, Assistant of Palestinian Foreign Minister for EU Affairs.

¹⁸² This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in July 29- 2019 with Dr. Amal Jadou, Assistant of Palestinian Foreign Minister for EU Affairs.

¹⁸³ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in July 29-2019 with Dr. Amal Jadou, Assistant of Palestinian Foreign Minister for EU Affairs.

the European Union in supporting the rights of the Palestinian people, especially the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state.¹⁸⁴

The European Union depends on the resolutions of international legitimacy, 242/1967 and 338/1973, which provide for establishing a Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel while preserving the security and safety of all parties in the region.¹⁸⁵

The EU supports Palestine in building the institutions of their state and provides all the necessary funds; and also supports the refugee issue through the financial support of the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).¹⁸⁶

The EU is the mediator and consistently condemns Israel's demolition of homes, settlements, and human rights violations in the West Bank – the 1967 borders.

Jerusalem has a special status and it is the capital of two states, and this is a stable European position in this area. The European Union rejected the U.S. administration's intention to transfer embassies to Jerusalem, the recognition by U.S. President D. Trump that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel on 6/12/2017, and the confirmation that it is the capital of two states.

The EU is required to play a more significant role in influencing U.S. policies in the Middle East, specifically in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and Europe can develop if it wants to do so through its power as a Union or the initiatives of its states.¹⁸⁷

Conclusion

¹⁸⁴ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in July 29-2019 with Mr. Hanna Essa, Secretary General of the Christian Islamic Organization in support of Jerusalem.

¹⁸⁵ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in July 29-2019 with Mr. Hanna Essa, Secretary General of the Christian Islamic Organization in support of Jerusalem.

¹⁸⁶ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in July 29-2019 with Mr. Hanna Essa, Secretary General of the Christian Islamic Organization in support of Jerusalem.

¹⁸⁷ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in July 29-2019 with Mr. Hanna Essa, Secretary General of the Christian Islamic Organization in support of Jerusalem.

In the context of the EU foreign policy, the EU has used soft policy tools through its diplomacy channels; individual member states' initiatives on behalf of the EU, and its direct bilateral relations with Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

The EU was keen to strengthen its bilateral relationship with both sides of the conflict, but its relationship with the Israeli side was much more robust, separating the economy from politics, which has many implications and strengthens the idea of soft tools and that the conflict cannot be resolved by these tools only. It is undeniable that the direction of Israel and its repeated human rights violence against the Palestinians and their land are escalating, and at the same time, the EU is changing nothing on the ground. The Israeli violations, which received direct U.S. support under President Trump's administration, are a severe and threatening idea of the two-state solution, especially after giving President Trump's last promise – Jerusalem as the capital of the state of Israel.

The idea of the EU and its adoption of the resolutions of international legitimacy and the rule of law, which is consistent with its fundamental principles, contradicts the practice of the current US administration and weakens its positions and works to build the institution of the future Palestinian state.

Establishing an independent and sovereign Palestinian state would greatly benefit the European Union politically and economically through the sovereignty of a Palestinian state that could sign agreements and cooperate, thereby strengthening its economy and reducing its dependence on the Union's financial support.

On the other hand, resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will strengthen the EU's status as a determined force rather than an influential one and create a state of international stalemate in US power and exclusivity in the Middle East because it is in full conformity with the principles of the Union in the rule of law and the promotion of democracy.

As time passes and the facts on the ground change, the issue of resolving the two states becomes difficult and even impossible. It is time for the European Union to present a new model as a new Venice Declaration in which the Union and its member states join most countries and recognize Palestine as a sovereign state on its territory.

As a result, the EU plays a vital role in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and is considered the most reliable partner for the Palestinians. Moreover, the EU could gain many benefits through its contribution to the resolution of the conflict, namely, the reduction of the Palestinian Authority's annual financial dependence and expenditures, as well as the creation of a robust international personality and its ability to resolve conflicts and create a new reality of the balance of power and U.S. control of the region.

VIII. The role of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the Russian Strategy towards the Middle East

The recent Russian intervention in the Syrian crisis in 2011, during the outbreak of the revolution and the disruption of the regime of President Bashar al-Assad, is the most evident in direct Russian intervention in the Middle East. This was reflected in the growing Russian role in the balance of power in the region and the course of its thorny issues.

The U.S. is no longer the only dominant power in the Middle East. Reducing its role in the region has led to the emergence of other regional powers such as Iran, Turkey, and Russia, and in one form or another, Saudi Arabia and Israel, in addition to economic moves on the part of China. In light of the profound transformation underway in the Middle East, China, Russia, and the U.S. each have different goals and capabilities, each according to its policies towards the region.

This chapter identifies Russia's policy toward the Middle East and Russia's policy toward the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in particular.

VIII.1. Russia's Middle East Policy

According to the foreign policy Concept of the Russian Federation on November 30, 2016, which provides a systemic vision of the basic principles, priority areas, goals, and objectives of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation. The Middle East is mentioned

in the Concept in four different articles, which gives a perception of the nature of Russian foreign policy towards the Middle East.¹⁸⁸

The Concept in Article 14 indicated that the Middle East region is considered one of the regions in which extremist ideology and the activities of terrorist groups are spread, linked to the growing threat of international terrorism, which constitutes the most dangerous facts in the world today, and this is due to two main reasons: globalization and external interference, which has been exacerbated through ideological values and instructions imposed to modernize its systems which come with a negative response.

Article 27, paragraph (i) supports the Russian establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons and mass destruction, especially in the Middle East.¹⁸⁹ The most direct is article 94, which was as follows: *“Russia will continue making a meaningful contribution to stabilizing the situation in the Middle East and North Africa, supporting collective efforts aimed at neutralizing threats that emanate from international terrorist groups, consistently promotes political and diplomatic settlement of conflicts in regional States while respecting their sovereignty and territorial integrity and the right to self-determination without outside interference.”*¹⁹⁰ As a permanent member of the UN Security Council and member of the Middle East Quartet of international mediators, Russia will strive to achieve a comprehensive, fair, and lasting resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in all its aspects consistent with international law.¹⁹¹

Meanwhile, article 95 pointed out that Russia intends to expand bilateral relations with the Middle East and North African countries by relying on the ministerial meeting of the Russian-Arab Cooperation Forum and to continue the strategic dialogue with the Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf States.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸ Foreign policy concept of the Russian federation, Ministry of foreign affairs .2016. pp.3-18 Available at :https://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/fundamental_documents/1538901/ [Last accessed: 15.11.2022]

¹⁸⁹ Foreign policy concept of the Russian federation. 2016. p. 5.

¹⁹⁰The Quartet: Established in 2002, the Quartet consists of the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and Russia. Its mandate is to help mediate Middle East peace negotiations and to support Palestinian economic development and institution building. More details visit: <http://www.quartetoffice.org/page.php?id=4e3e7y320487Y4e3e7> [Last accessed: 12. 12. 2022]

¹⁹¹ Foreign policy Concept of the Russian Federation. 2016. p. 18.

¹⁹² Foreign policy Concept of the Russian Federation. 2016. p. 18.

Russia's recent intervention in the Middle East aims to restore Russia to the highest level in global and Middle Eastern politics, and it is an opportunity that it does not want to miss. The Russians realize that the Palestinian cause is always of concern to Muslims, and Russia can take advantage of its presence in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation as an observer member to develop relations with Islamic countries.¹⁹³

Therefore, Russia's ambitious vision in the Middle East is summed up in its fight against terrorism, which it considers a threat to world peace. It considers the Middle East region a focus for it, and this is what gives it cover for its intervention in the region as a permanent member of the Security Council, as well as working to strengthen its relations with the countries of the region, specifically Gulf oil states, and direct interference in the region's nuclear affairs, specifically the Iranian nuclear file. The document also referred to the Russian point of view in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and its role through the Quartet, to the need to find a comprehensive and urgent solution to the issue to guarantee the rights of minorities and ethnic groups wherever they are and by international legitimacy.

In addition, Putin's overall goal in the Middle East is to solidify Russia's position and role as a significant external power in one of the world's hottest regions and achieve economic gains by bringing investments to Russia from the rich countries in the Persian Gulf and benefiting from the energy, gas, oil, food and other markets. Supporting and maintaining energy prices through coordination with the region's leading oil and gas producers is also vital.¹⁹⁴

VIII. 2. The Russian-Israeli Relationship

Despite the initial unclear features of the nature of Russian-Israeli relations in terms of the fact that Israel and Russia are allies of enemy countries, Israel is a U.S. ally, the greatest Russia's adversary, and Russia is an ally of Iran which Israeli considers as a threat of the

¹⁹³ Russia's effort to play a greater role in Palestinian cause. Strategic council on foreign relations. Islamic Republic of Iran (online).p.1 Available at : <https://www.scfr.ir/en/politics/133233/russias-effort-to-play-a-greater-role-in-palestinian-cause/> [Last accessed: 20.11.2022]

¹⁹⁴ TRENIN, D: *Russia in the Middle East: Moscow's objectives, priorities, and policy drivers*.2016. p.1 Available at: https://carnegieendowment.org/files/03-25-16_Trenin_Middle_East_Moscow_clean.pdf [Last accessed: 20.9.2022]

Jews state. The relations between the two sides are close and solid and have common factors and fears. There are more than a million Israelis of Russian origin in Israel, and more than half a million Russian tourists visit it annually, in addition to the cooperation between the two sides in the military, technological, and other fields.¹⁹⁵

In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Russia has attempted to mediate to advance both parties' interests in achieving a lasting peace. The apparent collaboration between Russia and Israel in the Syrian war is arguably the most significant factor. Iran and Bashar al-Assad troops have objected, but Russia keeps Syrian airspace open for Israeli attacks. Putin was the first head of state from Russia to travel to Israel. Putin has since described Israel as a 'special state' founded on common goals and a long history of cooperation. The 'boxing strategy' enables Israel and Russia to put their differences aside, keep their alliance distinct from other strategic alliances, and concentrate on finding points of agreement.¹⁹⁶

Russia and Israel hold divergent opinions about how much U.S. involvement in the Middle East is beneficial. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action "JCPOA"¹⁹⁷ is supported by Russia's cooperation with Iran in Syria, which includes the provision of weapons. In contrast, Israel views Tehran as the main danger and has launched a political-military campaign against it. Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, Russia believes that Israel can scuttle the Middle East strategic plan envisioned by Moscow, mainly

¹⁹⁵ KATZ, M.N.: *Russia and Israel: an improbable friendship*. 2016. pp. 103-104
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep21138.15.pdf> [Last accessed: 09.07.2022]

¹⁹⁶ БИЖАН'С, А.: *Russia's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with emphasis on the "Deal of the Century"*. 2020. p.2. Russian International Affairs Council. Available at:
<https://russiancouncil.ru/en/blogs/abijan/russias-approach-to-the-israelipalestinian-conflict-with-emphasis-on-t/3> [Last accessed: 08.01.2023]

¹⁹⁷ On July 14, 2015, the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), the European Union (EU), and Iran reached a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to ensure that Iran's nuclear program will be exclusively peaceful. October 18, 2015 marked Adoption Day of the JCPOA, the date on which the JCPOA came into effect and participants began taking steps necessary to implement their JCPOA commitments. January 16, 2016, marks Implementation Day of the JCPOA. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has verified that Iran has implemented its key nuclear-related measures described in the JCPOA, and the Secretary State has confirmed the IAEA's verification. As a result of Iran verifiably meeting its nuclear commitments, the United States and the EU have lifted nuclear-related sanctions on Iran, as described in the JCPOA. For more details visit: <https://2009-2017.state.gov/e/eb/tfs/spi/iran/jcpoa/index.htm> [Last accessed: 08.01.2023]

through military action and influence in Washington. Israel is also viewed by Moscow as a potential communication route with the United States at the same time.¹⁹⁸

However, despite the Russian rapprochement with Israel, it is still about a strategic partnership based on shared goals and mutual trust. The relationship between the two countries is highly pragmatic, driven by interests, and characterized by selective cooperation. The current cooperation in the Syrian file is temporary, and conditions may change anytime. In the event of a security conflict – for example, over Syria or Iran – Russia and Israel may be unable to prevent the deterioration of relations. The limits of Russia's overture to Israel lie in the unexpected dynamics of the conflict in Syria and the divergent interests regarding the role of Iran and the United States in the region.¹⁹⁹

VIII. 3. Russia's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Russia is strengthening its relations with the Palestinian Authority leadership and Hamas in Gaza Strip. It is part of Russia's consistent strategy towards the Middle East to build a network of influence among regional actors and boost its image as an attractive political partner. In developing relations with the Palestinians, Russia exploits Israel's sensitivity to Russian activity in Syria, poor relations between Palestine and the U.S., and the deadlock in the peace process.²⁰⁰

Russia is one of the most critical political patrons of the Palestinians among the global powers. The close relations established by the USSR survived the end of the Cold War and deepened with Fatah, which controls the leading Palestinian institutions – the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Palestinian Authority (PA). Enhanced cooperation with Palestine in recent years has originated in the intensification of Russian foreign policy towards the Middle East, visible since the intervention in the Syrian civil war in 2015. However, Russia's actions with the Palestinians mainly focus on diplomacy,

¹⁹⁸ BIAN'S, A.: *Russia's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with emphasis on the "Deal of the Century"*. 2020. p.3.

¹⁹⁹ AVERBUKH, L., & KLEIN, M.: *Russia-Israel relationship transformed by Syria conflict: political interests overshadow social and economic ties*. 2018. p.7 (SWP Comment, 37/2018). Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik -SWP- Deutsches Institut für Internationale Politik und Sicherheit. Available at: <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-59408-2> [Last accessed: 08.01.2023]

²⁰⁰ WOJNAROWICZ, M.: *Palestine in Russia's Foreign Policy*. 2020. p.1. Available at: https://pism.pl/publications/Palestine_in_Russias_Foreign_Policy [Last accessed: 25.1.2023]

as it exploits stagnation in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and the collapse of PA-U.S. relations under President Donald Trump. At the same time, these actions are part of Russia's broader strategy of strengthening ties with a wide range of entities and participating in the most important political processes in the Middle East, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The specificity of the Russian approach is to hold a permanent political dialogue (at the foreign ministry level) with the PA leadership and other Palestinian groups, primarily with Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip. Unlike the U.S. and EU, Russia does not recognize Hamas as a terrorist organization, which allows the group to break international isolation and strengthen its position in the intra-Palestinian rivalry with Fatah. There have been seven official meetings between Hamas delegations and Russian ministers since 2015 (not counting other consultation forms). In March, the head of the Hamas Politburo, Ismail Haniyeh, met in Moscow with Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov. Russia also has provided humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip after major escalations between Israel and Hamas, e.g., in 2014.²⁰¹

Russia actively participates in regional political processes and has backed efforts at intra-Palestinian reconciliation. Moscow was the venue for discussions between Fatah and Hamas in 2017 and 2019. The most recent increase in the political dialogue with various Palestinian groups suggests that plans are being made for a new initiative in this area. The role that Russia plays in Syria recently, has been important in the Palestinian developments, as it has become possible to restore relations between Hamas and the Assad government, which were severed in 2012 due to the state of civil war, and the opportunity for their return may be possible by Russia's support for Syria.

Conclusion

The Russians developed a new strategy to increase their security as well as the ability to establish a balance on both levels. Building a network of influence among regional actors and strengthening its image as an attractive political partner is part of Russia's consistent

²⁰¹ WOJNAROWICZ, M., 2020. p. 3.

strategy toward the Middle East. In developing relations with the Palestinians, Russia is taking advantage of Israel's sensitivity to Russian activity in Syria, the weak relations between Palestine and the United States, and the impasse in the peace process.

Russia's actions with the Palestinians are mainly focused on diplomacy. The peculiarity of the Russian approach is to conduct a permanent political dialogue (at the level of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) not only with the leadership of the Palestinian Authority but also with other Palestinian groups, primarily with Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip. Russia also acts as a mediator between the Palestinian parties and the countries of the Middle East, primarily Syria.

At the same time, despite all this beauty and hierarchy in Russian foreign policy, it has not and will not exceed the U.S. will in the region, even with Israel; from the researcher's point of view, Russia as a state and as an international power that plays a functional role under the eyes and approval of the U.S. administration.

IX. The role of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the Chinese Strategy towards the Middle East

With its national strength, China is one of the most critical emerging international powers, as it is the largest in the world in terms of population and has the fastest growth rate in the world, at a rate of more than (8.38%) annually. China is one of the most prominent international players in the industrial sector, and it has become capable of producing everything at the lowest prices and has been nicknamed the world's factory. It has also become one of the most significant trading power in the world.²⁰²

These indicators enabled China to occupy second place as the most significant global economy, bypassing the industrialized countries that occupied this position for decades, especially Japan and Germany. Suppose China is compared to the United States in

²⁰² MUNTASIR, RIFAEE.: *The impact of the rise of China on the future of American hegemony*. 2017. BISAN publishing, pp. 1-3

economic terms. In that case, China has been able to achieve economic growth Steady in recent years, to the extent that the size of the Chinese economy, which did not exceed (6.7%) of the size of the American economy when the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early nineties of the last century, reached more than half the size of the American economy.²⁰³

Several observers believe that if the growth rates in the two countries continue at their current pace, China is likely to remove the United States from the top of the international economic system within two decades, according to many economists.

So, China's policy towards the world is essential, and it has rooted relations with many regions in the world, one of them being the Middle East which is considered one of the essential regions for China, the keywords of the Energy sources.

IX. 1. Chine's Middle East Policy

The roots of the strong relationship between China and the countries of the Middle East in particular, and the Arab countries generally, back to the ancient Silk Road, which linked China to Arab countries for trade exchanges.²⁰⁴

The relationship between China and the Middle East has been peaceful, based on economic interest and trade exchange in the first place. It is based on several constants: The economic focus is investment and trade exchange, China is one of the largest exporting countries to the Middle East, and the volume of trade exchange between china and the Arab countries is 239.8 billion US dollars by the end of 2020.²⁰⁵

Cooperation in the field of production capacity: the Middle East region represents a source of sustainable energy that China needs in large quantities, and at the same time, the countries of the Middle East region represent a broad market for Chinese products, especially the markets of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

²⁰³ MUNTASIR, RIFAEI, 2017, pp. 1-3.

²⁰⁴ KARKOURI, H.: *Determinants of Chinese foreign policy towards the Palestinian cause in peacemaking world peace*. 2017. p. 134. The Arab Democratic Center for Strategic Political and Economic Studies, Berlin Germany.

²⁰⁵ Arabic.News.Cn: *The trade volume between China and the Arab countries is 239.8 billion US dollars in 2020*.p.1. Available at: http://arabic.news.cn/2021-06/21/c_1310019399.htm [Last accessed: 02.02.2023]

Arab-Chinese cooperation in the field of mutual relations: Arab-Chinese relations witnessed a remarkable development after establishing the Arab-Chinese Cooperation Forum (2014) with the aim of civilized and cultural engagement and increasing rapprochement between the two sides.

China's influence in the Middle East has been increasing for years, primarily through the 'Belt and Road'²⁰⁶ initiative, a massive global infrastructure and economic development project launched by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013, whose goal appears to be building an economic network and infrastructure linking Asia with Europe and Africa.

Energy and the Belt and Road Initiative are central to China's relationship with the Middle East, launched in 2013. In 2015, China officially became the world's largest importer of crude oil, with nearly half of its supplies coming from the Middle East. The Middle East is considered strategically crucial for trade routes and sea lanes linking Asia with Europe and Africa, and China's relationship with the region focuses on the Gulf states, given its dominant role in energy markets.²⁰⁷

China seems to have a vision of a multipolar order in the Middle East based on non-interference in, and partnerships with, other states – one in which the country will promote stability through 'developmental peace' rather than the Western notion of 'democratic peace.'²⁰⁸

China has adapted its policy towards the Middle East the Arab world in particular – in a way that aligns with China's hypothetical position, which is mainly pro-Arab in light of its energy interests and its traditional political and ideological interests in third-world countries. Some even say that China's geopolitical power will increasingly depend on access to the vast oil supplies in the Middle East.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), sometimes referred to as the New Silk Road, is one of the most ambitious infrastructure projects ever conceived. Launched in 2013 by President Xi Jinping, the vast collection of development and investment initiatives was originally devised to link East Asia and Europe through physical infrastructure. In the decade since, the project has expanded to Africa, Oceania, and Latin America, significantly broadening China's economic and political influence. More details visit: <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative>

²⁰⁷ LONS, C. FULTON, J. DEGANG, S. AL-TAMIMI, N.: *China's great game in the Middle East*. 2019. p.1 European Council on foreign relations. (ecfr.eu). Available at: https://ecfr.eu/wp-content/uploads/china_great_game_middle_east.pdf [Last accessed: 03.01.2023]

²⁰⁸ LONS, C. FULTON, J. DEGANG, S. AL-TAMIMI, N.: *China's great game in the Middle East*. 2019. p. 2.

²⁰⁹ SHAI, A.: *Sino-Israeli Relations: Current Reality and Future Prospects*. 2011. p. 36.

Despite China's attempts to consolidate its presence in the Middle East scene, the United States and the Quartet remain the leading diplomatic players in the Middle East scene.

IX. 2. The China-Israeli Relationship

China and Israel have established official diplomatic relations since 1992, and in the same year, a trade agreement was signed between the two governments. In 1993, the two countries also signed an agricultural agreement and extensive cooperation in the same field, in addition to signing an agreement for cultural exchange, extending that to include the education sector and other fields.²¹⁰

China's relationship with Israel is distinguished and linked to mutual partnership relations, meaning that Israel depends on China in some sectors and industries, and China depends on and benefits from Israel in several sectors. Israel was considered the second largest supplier of weapons to China after Russia in terms of technological and advanced weapons. Israel aimed to generate income and ensure that its military technological sales would not sell China certain weapons to Israel's enemies in the Middle East.²¹¹

Israel has been interested in establishing strong relations with China, a rising and accelerating economic power simultaneously. The roots of relations go back to before the nineties of the last century, specifically after the United States opened up to China in the seventies of the last century and a political measure in first place to limit and influence.

However, the conditions were not available for those relations to be public. China pursues a clear policy of non-interference in the political affairs of countries and calls for peaceful interaction and renunciation of violence and to stay away as much as possible from political quarrels harmful to its national interests. War bells are ringing everywhere, and China is not interested in tilting one side at the expense of the other in the Middle East.

Relations between the two sides began with freedom in the early nineties of the last century, after the peace process in the Middle East between the Palestinian and Israeli sides and the beginning of mutual recognition between them.

²¹⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Peoples Republic of China, pp.1-2. Available at: <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/ceil/eng/zygx/t159775.htm> [Last accessed: 05.01.2023]

²¹¹ SHAI, A., 2011. p. 12.

The period 1989-1991 witnessed great strides forward in Sino-Israeli relations. The collapse of the Soviet Union, the myth of the American Jewish lobby, and the 1991 Gulf War pushed China to modernize, as well as the realization of China, as a member of the Security Council, that it cannot participate in the peace process as a legitimate power without diplomatic relations with Israel.²¹²

IX. 3. China's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

The Chinese policy towards the Middle East and Palestine is distinguished during its development through stages. The historical development is proportional to the changes taking place in the international arena and its objectives in the world

Achieving national security and world peace by adopting a policy of joint international action to support its external policy and economic strength.

The continuation of the Chinese policy by maintaining the principles and foundations of Chinese relations - the East and the Middle East, and their stability in supporting the Palestinian cause and calling for the settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict by adopting peaceful methods and avoiding military and armed struggle.

The interest of the Chinese is in developing and maintaining Sino-Arab relations in the economic, political, and commercial fields and the field of oil and energy production to achieve expected gains.

Moreover, work to develop the cultural dimension by increasing the exchange level through the Maritime Silk Road, a communication bridge between the two civilizations.²¹³

Despite China's shift toward more significant support for the Palestinian cause and harsher criticism of Israel's actions in the Palestinian territories, especially after the outbreak of the 2000 uprising, Beijing is aware of its issues toward its Uyghur population, i.e., the Muslim population of Xinjiang. Likewise, suppose China continues to criticize Israel and defend the strict right to self-determination for the Palestinians. In that case, its campaign may backfire because if China criticizes Israel for opposing the right to self-

²¹² SHAI, A., 2011. p. 25.

²¹³ KARKOURI, H.: *Determinants of Chinese foreign policy towards the Palestinian cause in peacemaking world peace*. 2017. p. 157.

determination, what prevents foreign states and institutions from supporting China's Muslim and Tibetan minorities if they demand reciprocity?²¹⁴

Accordingly, despite its positions, China is utterly cautious about it, meaning that its mere statements and condemnations, and no sanctions or changes in dealing with the Israeli side, for example, are based on it.

Conclusion

China's interest in the Middle East comes primarily from its need for the essential resources available in the region, especially oil and other raw materials. China plays a vital and active role, but it is far from directly influencing the thorny issues of the Middle East.

Its policy was (dissociation) and an attempt to practice a policy of moderation between the parties so that it does not satisfy one party at the expense of the other and in a way that guarantees its interests strategically.

China threatens the active powers in the Middle East, specifically the United States. China still enjoys a good reputation and is the first trading partner among the region's countries. Its interests with countries are intertwined and in continuous growth, and the United States will not be able to dissuade any of its allies from not dealing with China or reducing its commercial influence; the balance is tilted to China if the matter is calculated from a practical and profitable point of view.

China has distinguished relations with Israel on several levels, and China needs Israel as much as Israel needs China in commercial and technological issues.

In its policy towards the thorny issues of the region, specifically the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, China practices a peaceful policy and condemns violence. However, it did not link its positions to sanctions, for example, to discourage a party to the conflict or force it to stop doing something that harms one of its partners. The goal is to preserve China's interests effectively guaranteed.

²¹⁴ SHAI, A., 2011. p. 32.

China, if it continues on this political approach, cannot be considered an active party in resolving the region's conflicts as a regional power or an alternative to the United States of America in the Middle East, and the matter is nothing more than a sharing of interests and external competition between international parties in the region.

X. The role of the Israeli lobby in the United States. How is the U.S. working against its interest?

According to Robert Dahl, interest groups are “a group of people who work together to pursue or protect shared objectives and interests in a broader context.”²¹⁵ Lobbies and Pressure groups are distinct phenomena of the American political system, and these organizations are critical in shaping and exerting pressure on Washington's decision-making centers. This pressure is the product of certain advantages of power that allow this political or economic community to operate there, as well as political knowledge of rules, constitutions, and democracy.²¹⁶ In 2010, for example, the US Supreme Court ruled that lobbyists can engage in electoral campaigns up to 60 days before the election, strengthening interest groups' role in the political realm.²¹⁷

As described by Mearsheimer and Walt (2006), the Israeli lobby in the United States is a loose alliance of individuals and organizations actively working to shape American foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction.²¹⁸ They also point out that the U.S. Zionist lobby has a broad and powerful presence in the United States-Middle East foreign policy, as U.S. support for Israel has threatened its strategic interests.

This chapter aims to highlight and evaluate the most significant results from the study conducted by Mearsheimer and Walt (2006). It also examines the roots of the Zionist lobby's influence in the United States. The chapter's main aim is to demonstrate that U.S. support for Israel is not against the country's national interests, nor is it against the

²¹⁵ DAHL, A. R.: *Democracy in the United States Promise and Performance*. 1981. p. 235.

²¹⁶ MOHTASIB, N: *The influence of the Zionist lobby on the American foreign policy towards the Palestinian issue*. 2006. pp. 24-26.

²¹⁷ NOGRIS, T.: *Lobbying: the political influence in USA*. 2016. pp. 1-3.

²¹⁸ Mearsheimer, J. & Walt, S.: *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*. 2006. pp.6-8.

extension of its regional dominance, which prevents potential legitimate resolutions to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

X.1. The Israeli lobby power resource

Israel and the United States have strong ties. U.S. support has been crucial in Israel's militarization since its establishment in 1948. Furthermore, it is the primary funding source for the Israeli army. According to a study released by the congressional research center, U.S. assistance to Israel surpassed 121 billion dollars in December 2016, growing from 3 billion dollars in October 1973.²¹⁹

The Zionist lobby in the United States employed two basic strategies: exerting pressure on congress and the executive branch to support Israel, persuading others to support Israel's side, and pushing public discourse to portray Israel positively by spreading lies about it as a target by neighbors who threaten its existence.

In specific, the Zionist lobby employs two distinct tactics. First, gaining influence in Congress, where the Zionist lobby's weight is centralized in the American Israeli Public Relations Committee 'AIPAC,' which comprises approximately 4,500 senior Jewish representatives in American society. Second, the presidential election campaign control. The strength of Jewish voters' influence in presidential races gives them leverage over the executive branch. Despite their small number, only about 3% of the population, they fund roughly 60% of the electoral campaign costs for both candidates. The media's dominance and the involvement of studies and research institutions also play a significant role in shaping public opinion and imposing pressure on the US administration.²²⁰

The Israeli lobby's impact has grown significantly as a consequence of a variety of circumstances and factors. First, the position of the organizations and the people who make up this lobby. Second, the officially implemented US policy.²²¹ In a nutshell, wealth, the ability to manipulate decision-making centers (the presidency and the

²¹⁹ SHARBINI, S.: *The influence of the Zionist lobby in the United States and its reflection on the American policy towards the Palestinian-Israeli conflict*. 2018. pp.1-4. Available at: <http://www.acrseg.org/40970> [Last accessed: 12. 03.2021]

²²⁰ SHARBINI, 2018. pp. 1-4.

²²¹ MEARSHEIMER, J. & WALT, S.: *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*.2006.,Vol. 28. No. 6. pp. 1-12.

Congress), and the ability to manipulate public opinion (the media and research centers) are the sources of power that the Israeli lobby possesses in the United States.

X.2. Mearsheimer and Walt's (2006) findings

One of the most controversial studies in recent years is "The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy 2006," written by John Mearsheimer of the University of Chicago and Stephen Walt M. of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. This article, first published in the London Review of Books in March 2006, sparked outrage and appreciation for raising a historically taboo topic in the United States: the impact of the Israeli lobby on American foreign policy. Both the University of Chicago and Harvard University disclaimed responsibility for the study's content and findings, stressing that it does not reflect anything besides the authors' point of view. Several researchers said the study authors received a flood of harsh criticism.²²²

The Middle East was selected as the most critical area for the study because of the massive impact of U.S. foreign policy and the current state of instability in the region. The study's fundamental hypothesis is that 'the primary objective of U.S. foreign policy should be its national interest first and foremost,' but 'the priority of U.S. policy in the Middle East over the past several decades has been its alliance with Israel, especially after the 1967 Six-Days War.'²²³ Mearsheimer and Walt (2006) add that 'Such situation is unprecedented in American political history' and that 'shared strategic interests or compelling moral imperatives do not justify the extraordinary amount of financial and diplomatic support offered by the U.S. to Israel.'²²⁴

Furthermore, Mearsheimer and Walt also attributed the USA domestic policy and the role of the Israeli lobby's efforts in persuading Americans that America's and Israel's interests are essentially the same. However, they point out that the strategic importance of Israel should not be exaggerated. For example, they assert that during the Cold War and when the Islamic revolution in Iran arose, Israel could not protect American interests there, as widely believed. Therefore, the USA had to establish alliances and form a quick

²²² John J. Mearsheimer (M) of the University of Chicago and Stephen M. Walt (W) of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Originally published in the London Review of Books in March 2006.

²²³ MEARSHEIMER, J. - WALT, S., 2006. pp. 3-4

²²⁴ MEARSHEIMER, J. - WALT, S., 2006. pp. 4-5.

intervention force to protect its regional interests. The study also demonstrates that the shared terrorist threat toward Israel and the United States has an inverse causal link rather than the other way around; the United States is experiencing a terrorist crisis in part due to its strong links with Israel.

The researchers also reported that Israel cannot be an entirely trustworthy partner for several factors. Most notably, Israeli officials' persistent ignorance of U.S. demands and violations of promises made to senior American leaders, such as vows not to create settlements or massacre Palestinians, as well as hacking and leaking sensitive technical knowledge to potential competitors such as China.²²⁵

According to the report, the Zionist lobby is no different from other lobbies in the United States, except that it is the most powerful and has unparalleled influence. The study also reveals that the lobby's position is enhanced as a result of two dimensions: the connections and capacities that these lobbies have, which Arab and non-Arab groups lack, and the Zionist lobby's political and economic capabilities, which it employs in both official and unofficial operations, as well as its perpetual reliance on the Jewish voice and resources, provide it with this foothold. The study also reports that fanatical Christians such as Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson are said to be among the lobby's founders.

According to the report, special interest groups attempted to manipulate foreign policy. However, none of them got to the point where they were willing to replace US national interests with other state interests, just like what the Zionist lobby does. As a result, as long as the Zionist lobby's impact on foreign policy regarding the Palestinian issue persists, the USA cannot perform an honest role that leads to a just and permanent solution.

Finally, Mearsheimer and Walt (2006) argued that there are many reasons for US leaders to separate themselves from the lobby and pursue a Middle East strategy more aligned with broader American interests. The use of American influence to create a just peace between Israel and the Palestinians, in particular, will contribute to the larger objectives of fighting terrorism and fostering stability in the Middle East.²²⁶

²²⁵ MEARSHEIMER, J.- WALT, S., 2006. pp. 11-12.

²²⁶ MEARSHEIMER, J. -WALT, S., 2006. pp. 39-40.

X.3. The Middle East as a Project

The findings of both researchers are abstract facts based on the assumption that the United States should be a leader and a fair state, but the reality is slightly different. The United States has a different perspective on the Middle East, and its role in the region and internationally is consistent with its role in the region by supporting Israel and does not contradict its overall strategy.

Historically, the United States' hegemony in the Middle East and North Africa has been illustrated by its ability to transform or create major regional crises, shaping regional states' actions, and reconfiguring the domestic balance of power between local government communities when required.²²⁷

Middle Eastern countries have a colonial legacy that binds them to the Western world. Most of the countries in this area emerged due to treaties signed by western countries after World War I ended and the Ottoman Empire collapsed. Some countries were part of the United Kingdom, while others were part of the French Republic. They were split into two categories: provisions and mandates. The situation remained unchanged until 1945, when the role of these powers started to upswing, and the United States emerged as the region's dominant and controlling power.

Edward Said argues that European supremacy over the region and its people contributed further to the unequal relationship with Europe, which he called 'Orientalism.'²²⁸ The Middle East was a British-French cultural project until the end of World War II, and the rise of the United States' role in controlling the region is not different from Western civilization's tries to expand since ancient times.²²⁹ Edward Said viewed Orientalism as an authoritative use of knowledge of the East to domesticate it in preparation for colonization and control.²³⁰

The United States' supremacy continues to be unchallenged. The US demonstrates unwavering support for Israel to allow Israel to strike a balance against the Arabs and regional forces, and it becomes clear that there will be no reconciliation or mediation

²²⁷ YOM, S.: *US Foreign Policy in the Middle East: The Logic of Hegemonic Retreat*. 2020. pp. 1-5. Available at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1758-5899.12777> [Last accessed: 12.03.2021]

²²⁸ SAID, E.: *Orientalism; Western conception of the Orient*.2006. pp. 25-31.

²²⁹ SAID, E., 2006. pp. 25-31.

²³⁰ SAID, E., 2006. pp. 25-31.

between Israel and the Palestinians. It could be claimed that the US' Middle East foreign policy seeks to retain US control over the global economy. However, the United States' Middle East foreign policy strategies have damaged the country's reputation and status as a powerful global force.²³¹ As a result, the U.S.'s role in the region is to sustain the supply of raw materials from the region to the rest of the world, and the U.S. will go to any length to guarantee that this continues. Perhaps the researchers' 'e. g. Mearsheimer and Walt's point of view on the goal's peace and stability was on Israel's side. While this appears to be the case, fact suggests otherwise.

Conclusion

The chapter aimed to discuss the influence of the Israeli lobby in the United States and to go over the results of the Mearsheimer and Walt report from 2006. The two researchers (Mearsheimer and Walt 2006) looked at the United States' strategic interests and how they intersected with long-term Israeli interests at a level that does not endanger the United States' interests and ensures its legitimacy as a global superpower. The researchers assumed an idealized picture of the United States of America "or what it should be as a world leader and pioneer," but the facts say otherwise. The United States' efforts in the Middle East since taking over as the world's leading in 1948, following the end of WWII, have been to maintain influence and expand its power in the area for its gain. Israel benefited from the United States' policy in the region, which was reinforced by the active Israeli lobby.

Even though both researchers are intellectual members of the realist class, they attempted to correct the direction of U.S. policy, which is in total conflict with the realist school. However, the U.S. policies essentially do not care about the form of ruling regimes "whether democratic or not" in their collaboration with them, but instead focus on interest, which is the main engine of international relations. This study also concludes that there will be no prospects for a resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict or future

²³¹ RATHNAYAKE, R. M. S. S.: *Hegemony of the United States and the Middle East*. Felicitation. 2016. p. 261.

regional stabilization if the U.S. policy remains unchanged and the lobby's preservation with impact on foreign policy.

XI. The role of other influential powers in the region: Egypt, Qatar, United Arab Emirates

The Middle East is an arena full of rivalries, and this is an integral part of its composition, or as it is intended for it. In addition to the influential powers in the region's politics, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, and Israel also influence powers Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar.

Egypt is the largest Arab country in terms of population and strongly influences the region's policies. It is a border country with Israel, Palestine, and Jordan, the focus of the ongoing conflict. Egypt plays a pivotal role in mediating between the Israeli and Palestinian sides regarding the Gaza Strip, bordering Egypt through the Sinai desert; in the sixties of the last century, the administrative authority of the Strip was administered by Egypt.

As for the U.A.E and Qatar in particular, they are two small countries in terms of area and population, but they constitute an influential economic weight in the region's policies and the various mediation roles in the conflict directly and in the region's policies in general.

This subchapter aims to research the policies of the mentioned countries and their impact on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as an influential power in the region. The chapter also aims to show the interest of the external world powers in supporting the trends of these countries and their influence on the policies of the region and to play a more significant role in order to keep the competition between the countries of the region and to reach a state in which no power dominates the region in general.

XI. 1. Egypt

The population of Egypt is one hundred and four million people, according to the Egyptian Central Statistics Authority.²³² It is the largest country by population in the region, Egypt is located in the northeastern corner of the continent of Africa, and it has an Asian extension represented in the Sinai Peninsula, bordered in the north by the Mediterranean Sea, in the south by Sudan, in the east by the Red Sea, in the west by Libya. The area of the Arab Republic of Egypt is about 1,002,000 square kilometers. The inhabited area is 78,990 square kilometers, 7.8% of the total area.²³³ Egypt's geographical location and large population gave it weight in the region.

The Egyptian role has declined a lot from what it was in the past since the Arab spring revolutions that broke out in Egypt in the year 2011; Egypt has lost its position as a mediator and sponsor of the peace process proportionally because it is preoccupied with her internal affairs and its pivotal role in the region. The state of political instability and the noticeable decline in Egypt's ranking in global competitiveness, economically and locally, made it a latent power that does not know when it will rise again.

According to the World Powers Index 'WPI'²³⁴ classification, Egypt occupies the seventh place in the region, preceded in order by Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey, Iran, the U.A.E, and Qatar.

Egypt has only limited natural resources of oil and natural gas, and the ongoing demographic pressure is a particular problem. One of Egypt's regional strengths is the size of its market and the number of cheap workers who supplement labor shortages in other Arab countries. Its economic power is relatively weak compared to other powers in the Middle East.²³⁵

²³² Egypt Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAMPS). p.1 Available at: <https://www.capmas.gov.eg/> [Last accessed: 02.01.2023]

²³³ Republic of Egypt, Presidency. p.1. Available at: <https://www.presidency.eg/ar> [Last accessed: 03.01.2023]

²³⁴ The World Power Index (WPI) is resulting from the addition of 18 indicators, which are themselves organized through three composite indexes: Material Capacities Index (MCI), Semi-Material Capacities Index (SMCI). Immaterial Capacities Index (IMCI) *World Power Index Database*. 2022. Available at: <https://www.worldpowerindex.com/data-wpi/> [Last accessed: 20.02.2022]

²³⁵ PONÍŽILOVÁ, M.: *Stability of Regional Orders in Contemporary International System: a framework for analysis*. 2017. p. 171.

Egypt was described as “the richest, best-educated, and only industrialized Arab country in the late 1960s.” Egypt enjoyed the regional military and economic power status after the Suez Crisis (1956). Also was the leading military power in the Arab world from the 1950s to the 1970s, which provided a counterweight to the power of the Jewish state. Egypt has been involved in armed conflicts against Israel in 1956, 1967, and 1973 In the Twentieth Century.²³⁶

Its active foreign policy and use of the strategic location in the region's center since the early 1980s helped it compensate for its weak economic strength. In the 20th and 21st centuries, Egypt had one of the largest standing armies in the region.

Cairo built its leadership role by promoting unity and solidarity among all Arabs, Arab nationalism, anti-imperialism, socialism, etc. – called the principle of positive neutrality (the neutral position in the Cold War). Egypt's position and power in the region have been strengthened by establishing and strengthening its relations with Arab and Islamic countries and third-world countries, as well as its hostile relations with the West and Israel. Egyptian diplomacy's most tremendous success in Arab unity was the establishment of the United Arab Republic (UAR) and the union of Egypt and Syria in 1958. In the United Arab Republic, Nasserism is attributed to the ideology that the Egyptian president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, was dealing with at the time.²³⁷

Egypt has become a significant influence on the region's security, economy, and culture, on the political development of some countries in the Middle East, and the agenda of regional organizations, while many Arab countries were calling for Egypt to be the leading country in them. Egypt's strong position in the Middle East has been recognized even by the major players in the world. Abdel Nasser's successor Anwar Sadat in office (1970-1981), signed a peace treaty with Israel in the late 1970s, which was strongly criticized by other Arab countries. What brought it into a state of isolation and hatred.²³⁸

It was only during the new Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak (1981-2011) era that Egypt could break the isolation and start promoting itself as a regional power again. This relates to both the economic importance of Egypt and its military power, as it was considered

²³⁶ PONÍŽILOVÁ, M., 2017. pp. 171-172.

²³⁷ PONÍŽILOVÁ, M., 2016. pp. 171-172.

²³⁸ PONÍŽILOVÁ, M., 2016. pp. 171-172.

"the main actor to bring about peace or wage war in the Arab-Israeli conflict." Egypt had a strong diplomatic position and great military power; therefore, it had great potential for organizing and resolving disputes and regional conflicts. This is why the Mubarak government linked Egypt's standing in the region to its efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East. Cairo became a crucial player in the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, an active mediator in local disputes, and a frequent participant in many regional peace initiatives. One of the most important actors in the Arab-Israeli peace process in the 1990s.

For this reason, many believed at this time that "the maintenance of a meaningful peace throughout the region ... would depend greatly on Egyptian goodwill." Under Nasser, since the late 1980s, Mubarak has at least managed to improve the country. Egypt's importance to regional politics was represented in its role as a peacemaker and its ability to solve the problems that the Middle East faced.²³⁹

Now Egypt ranked behind many countries in the Middle East and North Africa region and ranked last in terms of the quality of basic education. The report on business performance data for 2014, issued by the International Finance Corporation, ranked Egypt 128th out of 189 countries concerning the ease of doing business and completing it.²⁴⁰

About the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in particular, Egypt still has an important political role, as it is the border country with Gaza, and there is contact with the Hamas movement that runs the Strip and cooperates in managing international crossings such as the Rafah crossing.

Egypt would like to regain its role as a significant regional actor and as a primary negotiator between Israel and Hamas, a role that came back to prominence when Cairo helped negotiate a cease-fire during the Israeli-Palestinian clashes in Gaza in May 2021.²⁴¹

Egypt's restoration of its role as an actor in the diplomatic negotiations between Israel and Palestine is noteworthy. Egypt was considered the main mediator between the two parties

²³⁹ PONÍŽILOVÁ, M., 2016. pp. 172-173.

²⁴⁰ The American University in Cairo: *Low Egypt Rankings Due to Frail Economy, Poor Administrative System*. Online. pp.1-2. Available at: <https://www.aucegypt.edu/news/stories/low-egypt-rankings-due-frail-economy-poor-administrative-system> [Last accessed: 02.02.2023]

²⁴¹ AZIZ, R.: *Egypt, Israel, and Hamas: Opportunities for Progress in Gaza*. 2022. the Washington institute for Near East policy. p.1. Available at: <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/egypt-israel-and-hamas-opportunities-progress-gaza> [Last accessed: 08.01.2023]

for decades, but its influence and position in the region declined due to the economic and political difficulties that followed the 'Arab Spring' revolution in 2011. Cairo was particularly wary of expanding Hamas' relations with Iran, Qatar, and Turkey. It is also concerned that Israel's recent wave of normalization with various Arab countries will reduce the peace gains that Egypt has obtained from Washington since the signing of the 'Camp David'²⁴² accords.²⁴³

For Cairo to dispel these fears and achieve its regional goals, it must show a certain degree of influence over Hamas and take real diplomatic action.

Egypt as a country has its importance in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict due to many of the factors above, and it will remain, but as an influential power at the time of the emergence of other powers that have strengthened its relations with Israel recently, its role will be greatly difficult for it.

XI. 2. Qatar

Qatar is a peninsula in the middle of the western coast of the Arabian Gulf, with an area of 11,521 square kilometers and a population of about 2.6 million. It gained independence from Britain in 1971, and Qatar has emerged as one of the world's most important oil and gas producers.²⁴⁴

In 1939 Oil was discovered in Qatar, but its exploitation was delayed due to the outbreak of World War II. Oil takes the place of fishing and pearling as the primary source of income. In August 1990, Iraq occupies Kuwait, and Qatar allows foreign forces to use its territory. Later, the Qatari forces participate in the liberation of Kuwait.

²⁴² The Camp David Accords, signed by President Jimmy Carter, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in September 1978, established a framework for a historic peace treaty concluded between Israel and Egypt in March 1979. President Carter and the U.S. Government played leading roles in creating the opportunity for this agreement to occur. From the start of his administration, Carter and his Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, pursued intensive negotiations with Arab and Israeli leaders, hoping to reconvene the Geneva Conference, which had been established in December 1973 to seek an end to the Arab-Israeli dispute. For more details visit: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1977-1980/camp-david> [Last accessed: 16.01.2023]

²⁴³ AZIZ, R., 2022. p. 2.

²⁴⁴ Qatar Electronic Government .p.1. Available at: [https://hukoomi.gov.qa/ar/about-qatar/about-qatar b](https://hukoomi.gov.qa/ar/about-qatar/about-qatar-b) [Last accessed: 02.02.2023]

Al-Jazeera channel, owned by the Qatari state – with its Arab and international branches – would have raised Qatar's status in the media environment.

The State of Qatar uses the income it receives from its large gas reserves to finance its regional and global ambitions. It has participated in attempts to reach a peace agreement in Afghanistan and has won the honor of hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup.²⁴⁵

For more than a decade, Qatar has been mediating various conflicts and disputes in the Middle East, and its efforts have achieved mixed results, ranging from relative success to abject failure. Among the most prominent files mediated by Doha: The release of Bulgarian nurses in Libya in 2007, The Doha agreement between the Lebanese parties in 2008, Mediation between the Yemeni government and the Houthis to stop the fighting in 2008, The truce between Hamas and Israel in the years 2009, 2012, 2014 and 2021, The Darfur Peace Document in 2011, Reconciliation between Djibouti and Eritrea 2011, Reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah 2012, The 2013 Darfur Agreement, the release of nuns detained in northern Syria 2014, the prisoner exchange between the Taliban and the United States 2014, the release of Lebanese soldiers held captive by the Syrian Al-Nusra Front 2015, the Tabu and Tuareg agreement in Libya 2015, the 2015 negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban movement, the 2015 agreement between the Government of Sudan and the “Sudan Liberation Army” movement The Second Revolution” 2017, U.S. talks with the Taliban to get out of Afghanistan 2019.²⁴⁶

So we are talking about the most significant problems facing the region and its most difficult files, all of which were given to the Qatari side to intervene in to show its political and regional presence as an influential power.

The name of the influential powers in the region has always been associated with its possession of the geographical position and the large population represented by Egypt, Iraq, and Syria. Possession of competing for military forces and equipment, Qatar, according to the classification of the World Powers Index ‘WBI’ of the powers of the Middle East region, Qatar is ranked sixth and precedes in ranking Saudi Arabia, Israel, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and Iran.

²⁴⁵ BBC NEWS: *Facts about Qatar*. 2022. pp.1-3. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-39114086> [Last accessed: 02.02.2023]

²⁴⁶ BBC NEWS: *Qatar mediation: aims, objectives, and costs*. 2022. pp.1-2. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-62022664> [Last accessed: 02.02.2023]

During the 2010 Arab Spring, Qatar moved away from its traditional foreign policy role as a diplomatic mediator to embrace change in the Middle East and North Africa and support countries in transition. Qatar's political stability and economic wealth are linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, and its international reputation as a mediator gave it the confidence to play an interventionist role during the Arab Spring.

The leadership endorsed rising Islamist political power in countries in transition and led regional responses to the unrest in Libya and Syria under the banner of seeking Arab solutions to Arab problems.

Qatar's comparative advantage in mediation is its ability to mediate indirect negotiations and back-channel communications between sworn enemies and to balance relations between groups of mutually hostile adversaries.

Qatar can play a prominent role as a back channel mediating between groups that U.S. officials may not be able to reach directly, but its participation in political processes is effective.²⁴⁷

An American United World International Center study stated that the State of Qatar plays a vital role in the region, manifested in resolving conflicts and converging views on several international crises and issues, especially in the recent escalation between the United States and Iran. Doha occupies advanced ranks in economic resilience and is distinguished by its effective policies in economy, politics, diplomacy, and culture; its partnerships align with its strategic plans.²⁴⁸

Qatar also hosts the 'Al-Udeid' base, the most extensive military base for the United States in the Middle East. Doha and Washington also have significant economic, security, and political relations, as Washington attaches great importance to stability in the Gulf region.

Its gross domestic product has reached more than \$170 billion thanks to gas exports. Its wealth allowed it to pump considerable investments in many countries, beginning with Britain, Germany, and America, and even to islands in the far Pacific Ocean. This

²⁴⁷ ULLERKSEN, C.C.: *Qatar and the Arab Spring: Political Drivers and Regional Implications*. 2014. Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center. pp.1-3 Available at: <https://carnegie-mec.org/2014/09/24/ar-pub-56730> [Last accessed: 05.02.2023]

²⁴⁸ Khaliji online: Qatar is the pillar of stability in the Middle East. 2020. pp.1-2. Available at: <http://khaleej.online/K8dAVB> [Last accessed: 05.02.2023]

tremendous financial power was reflected in the role of Qatar and its foreign policy in the region, especially after the decline of the role of traditional powers following the ‘Arab Spring revolutions.’ Here we are talking about the Egyptian and Saudi roles and, to a lesser extent, the Syrian role.²⁴⁹

There are several possible explanations for Qatar's role in the region. The author believes that the role played by Qatar is to be a substitute for the traditional powers in the region in a way that achieves and preserves U.S. interests and keeps the arena of competition burning between the forces of the region in a way that ensures that there is no power controlling it and achieves interests. External powers are more entitled to the interests of the region's countries.

Qatar plays a vital role in the region through money and the media. On the level of the Palestinian issue, Qatar is working to stabilize the Gaza Strip through its relationship with Hamas, sending money to it and mediating economic files and crossings. While Qatar's role in the sector remains limited, as Egypt plays a vital direct role, and Qatar alone cannot guarantee its stability without future Egyptian-Qatari cooperation.

Qatar's pivotal role in the region is summed up in the sustainability of money in its diplomacy, which will not be sufficient to ensure the longevity of its power and influence.

XI. 3. United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) is located east of the Arabian Peninsula. It is bordered north and northwest by the Arabian Gulf, south and west by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and southeast by the Sultanate of Oman. The U.A.E has a coastline on the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. The country extends over an area of approximately 71,023.6 square kilometers of land. This area includes a group of islands in the Arabian Gulf. The area of the territorial sea is approximately 27,624.9 square kilometers. According to the U.A.E Federal Center for Competitiveness and Statistics, the total

²⁴⁹ BUFJLIN, Y.: *Qatar puzzle - what role does it play in the region?* 2014. pp.1-2. Available at: <https://p.dw.com/p/1CyNw> [Last accessed: 07.02.2023]

number of residents of the country of U.A.E citizens and expatriates was 9,282,410 people in 2020.²⁵⁰

The U.A.E is a federal state consisting of seven emirates, and the federation was established on the second of December 1971. In the past, the region's economy relied heavily on agriculture in oases, fishing, and trade in dates and pearls. However, after the discovery of oil in the 1950s, a radical change occurred in the structure of economic life.

The shift at the level of the generation that took the reins of leadership and held Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum in Dubai and Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi in the years 1990 and 2004, respectively, is one of the most important reasons for the rise of the U.A.E as a significant player in regional and even international affairs until before the outbreak of the Arab Spring 2010.²⁵¹

Mohammed bin Rashid and Mohammed bin Zayed were considered modernizing and ambitious figures. In the context of his approach to the turmoil in the region in 2011, Mohammed bin Zayed reconciled Emirati relations with Saudi Arabia. The UAE participated alongside U.S. and NATO forces in the Balkans in the 1990s and Afghanistan in the 2000s. However, the difference factor after 2011 is the scope and strength of Emirati policies and the Emiratis' willingness to act unilaterally to secure their interests.

The United Arab Emirates views political Islam as a threat, in the sense that it does not agree with the Muslim Brotherhood, and this is what justified the U.A.E's subsequent intervention in supporting the government of Muhammad al-Sisi 2013 at the expense of overthrowing the government of Muhammad Morsi, which was elected after the Egyptian revolution of 2011, as well as the U.A.E's opposition to the Muslim Brotherhood in Tunisia as well. The Emirati intervention in the region after the Arab Spring revolutions represented support for establishing alternative (non-Islamic) regimes, for example, Sisi in Egypt and Khalifa Haftar in Libya, supporting the opposition in Syria against the Alasad regime. Some analysis goes beyond that its intervention is to end Turkish interference in the region.

²⁵⁰ The United Arab Emirates Government Portal. pp.1-2. Available at: <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/fact-sheet> [Last accessed: 10.02.2023]

²⁵¹ YOUNG, M.: *Punching Above Its Weight*. 2020. p.1. Available at: <https://carnegie-mec.org/diwan/82200> [Last accessed: 05.02.2023]

The U.A.E directly intervened in the Yemeni civil war during the revolution, in parallel with Saudi Arabia; the Saudi-Emirati Coordination Council is a testament to the consideration of bilateral relations between Abu Dhabi and Riyadh as a new axis of Gulf politics. It is a bilateral initiative initially launched in 2016 and revived in 2018.

The United Arab Emirates supported the Southern Transitional Council, whose leadership is still based in Abu Dhabi. In contrast, Saudi Arabia supported the Yemeni government headed by Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, based in Saudi Arabia, where disputes and clashes occurred between the two groups over influence.²⁵²

The aim of the war in Yemen, which is considered a proxy war, was between the disgraced Emirati and Saudi regime and the Iranian-backed Houthi group.

In contrast to the Qatari, the Emirati policy has created direct enemies for its behavior and interference in wars and conflicts. The picture appears in the Arab reality after the Arab revolutions, as if the roles were distributed among the Gulf countries specifically through money influencing the balances of states and regimes. The Emirates played a role as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, and each country was adopting a policy that complemented the other in it, apparently due to the imbalance of power in the region and the search for local, regional alternatives. With the power of money alone, the U.A.E and even Qatar will not succeed in achieving this, but they will remain influential powers temporarily until the rise of other powers that possess the military and geographical status that both countries lack.

Through its direct interventionist policy, the UAE aimed to dispel its fears of the rise of Islamic currents in countries whose regimes collapsed due to internal revolutions.

Regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the time of the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain was lost at the end of 2020 on the Abraham Accord, with U.S. auspices, to normalize relations with Israel, establish diplomatic channels, and cooperate in many economic and security fields. This agreement removed the UAE from a Palestinian point of view from the circle of countries that support the rights of the people. The Palestinian has lost hope for her potential role in the conflict.

²⁵² Young, M., 2020. pp. 2-3.

Identifying one enemy, Iran, Israel sought, through the normalization of its relations with the Gulf states, to marginalize the Palestinian cause first and to place the Iranian file – which threatens the security of the Gulf – on the list of priorities in the Middle East.

XI. 4. Conclusion

The Egyptian role has declined significantly from what it was in the past; since the Arab Spring revolutions that broke out in Egypt in 2011, Egypt has lost its position as a mediator and sponsor of the peace process proportionately due to its preoccupation with peace. Its internal affairs and its pivotal role in the region. The state of political instability and the noticeable decline in Egypt's ranking in global competitiveness, economically and locally, made it a latent force that does not know when it will rise again.

Qatar plays the role of diplomatic mediator with a policy somewhat similar to the policy of containing the problems the region suffers from. Qatar plays an unclear role and to what extent it will help it gain a stable regional position, as it relies primarily on money and the media to promote its policies, while in reality, it is a country Small area and population.

The United Arab Emirates tried to enter directly, not as a mediator in the region's politics, but rather as a party, and this was evident in its intervention in the Syrian revolution and its support for the opposition and in Libya as well Yemen. Undoubtedly, the UAE is Bigger in size and population than the State of Qatar. However, it remains a small country compared to countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and even Libya and Yemen, but the strength of its economy and its extensive relations locally and globally have earned it an advanced position in competition with the Saudi role. It also pursues an extremist policy towards Islamic movements led by the Muslim Brotherhood.

It remains for us to say what is new is the entry of the Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain, into diplomatic relations and formal agreements with Israel, through the Abraham Accord. This is a new shift in the course of the conflict. After the Palestinian cause lost its Arab depth after the Arab Spring revolutions, it began to lose its Gulf depth through this agreement.

XII. Survey on ‘The influence of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the region's Major powers politics.’

One of the empirical thesis tools is a questionnaire to know the opinions of academics and research centers in the targeted countries about their countries' policies and their future moves toward the Middle East in general and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in particular.

The questionnaire focuses on researching the role of the regional powers (Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel) in addition to Palestine and their level of intervention in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and at the same time, researching the nature of the Middle East in general, and whether academics from these countries consider it a region in the true sense of the word, or is it just a political term only.

The questionnaire consisted of eight dimensions and a set of questions in each dimension. The questionnaire dealt with the first dimension of defining the Middle East, which is a geographical or political definition and knowing the extent to which the targeted countries belong to it (geographically or politically) and what is its significance in addition to addressing the success or failure of the Middle East in regional cooperation as a model. This dimension aims to know how the academics in the targeted countries in this study view the Middle East geographically or politically, and this, of course, leads us to know the trends and interests of countries in the Middle East, which enables us to conclude later.

The second dimension discussed the regional powers and how the respondents consider and classify their countries regarding power, control, and influence. The third dimension dealt with the extent of the impact of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the targeted countries of the study and how it affected their policies, and the extent of their interference in the conflict

The fourth dimension deals with the role of world powers (the United States, the European Union, China, Russia) in the Middle East and, the level of their intervention, and knowing the extent of their role in the success of internal regional cooperation or their bias towards one of the parties to the conflict.

The fifth dimension was about the impact of the conflict on the powers of the region and their policies and their importance as a priority in the region. The sixth dimension dealt with the expected alliances and the possibility of their occurrence from the respondents' point of view. The seventh dimension was about the internal Palestinian situation and the state of division and its impact on the regional states' policies. The eighth and final dimension talked about the future of the Region.

XII. 1. Method and Procedure

This section will include the study community and sample distribution according to Sex, Age, Educational qualification, and Location variables.

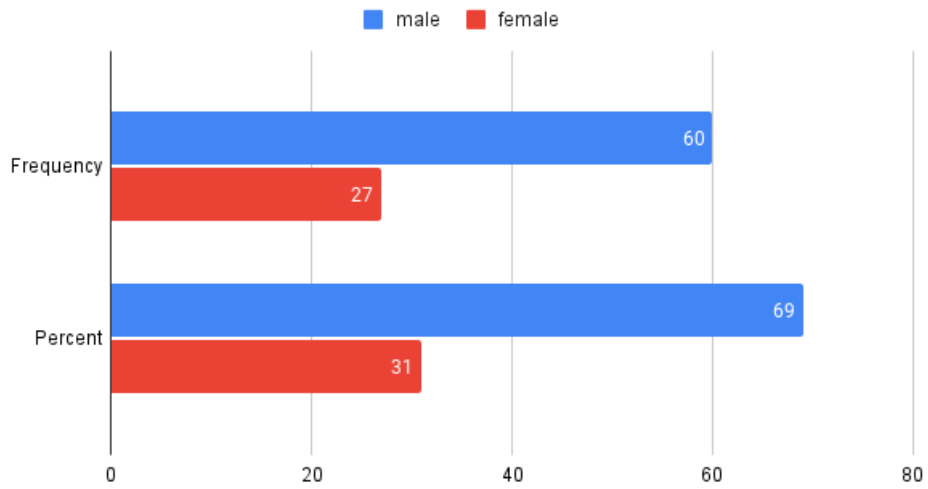
XII. 1.1 Study community

The study community consisted of academics in a group of countries (Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel, and Palestine) in the second semester of the academic year 2021-2022.

XII.1. 2 The study sample

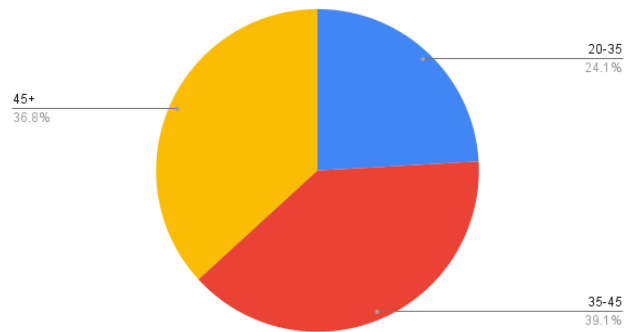
The study was conducted on a sample of (100) received (87) academics in a group of countries in the second semester of the academic year 2021-2022; they were chosen randomly. Diagrams of the following Figures 2 to 5, distribute the study sample according to its independent variables.

Figure 2: Distribution of the study sample according to the sex variable



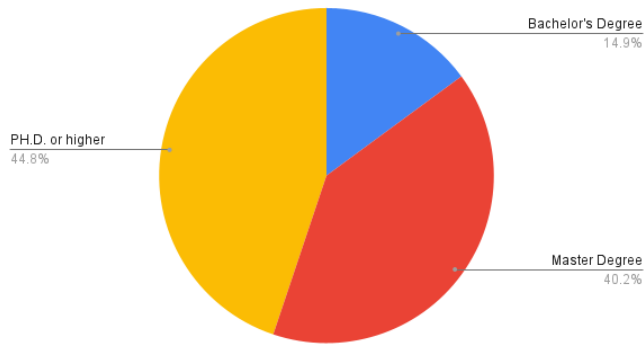
Source: compiled by the author

Figure 3: Distribution of the study sample according to the age variable



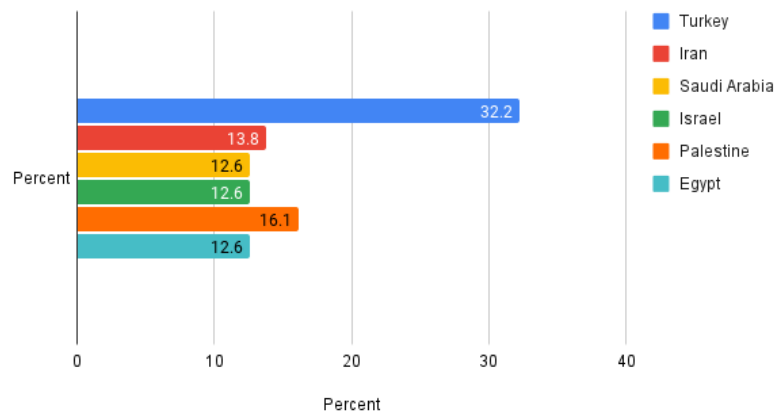
Source: compiled by the author

Figure 4: Distribution of the study sample according to the educational qualification variable



Source: compiled by the author

Figure 5: Distribution of the study sample according to the location variable



Source: compiled by the author

XII. 1. 3. The Study Approach

In this study, the descriptive approach was followed due to its relevance to its nature. This approach collects data, and statistical analysis is performed to extract the required results.

XII. 1. 4. The Study Tool

Depending on the research literature, previous studies, and expert consultation, a questionnaire was built to collect data from the study sample, which included (42) questions divided into (8) dimensions.

XII. 1. 5. Validity of the tool

Honesty means that the scale used in the research measures what should be measured, as the information collected matches the objective facts. The paragraphs constituting the questionnaire and their relevance to the study's objectives and variables indicated some appropriate modifications to become distributed to the study sample in its final form.

XII. 1. 6. Statistical processing

After data collection, its data was entered into the computer to be processed by the statistical program for social sciences (spss). Percentages, weighted arithmetic averages, t-tests, and one-way analysis of variance were used.

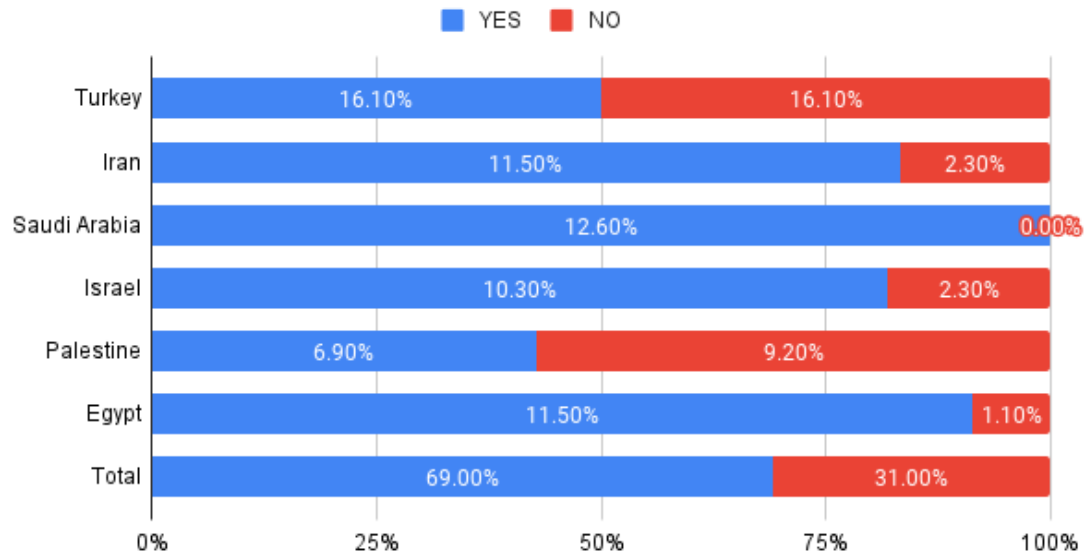
XII. 1. 7. Results

1. Results related to “The definition and the Importance of the Middle East”

In order to answer the questions of this dimension, cross tables were used to determine the frequencies and percentages of each response according to the place variable.

1.1 Results related to the first question: Do you think there is a clear definition of what is called the Middle East?

Figure 6



Source: compiled by the author

Figure 6 shows that Turkey is where most believe there is a clear definition of the so-called Middle East, where the percentage of those whose responses were 'Yes' (16.1%). At the same time, Palestine got a minor response, as its percentage was (6.9%), and the response of the sample in Iran (11.5%), while the response of the sample members in Saudi Arabia reached (12.6%), and in Israel (10.3%), and in Egypt, the response of the sample members reached (11.5%), and the total degree of the sample members who believe that there is a clear definition of what is called the Middle East (69.0%).

As for the response of the sample members with 'No,' it was the highest response among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage reached (16.1%); that is, half of the sample members in Turkey believe that there is a clear definition of the so-called Middle East, while the other half of the sample not believe. The lowest response was 'No' among members of the sample in Saudi Arabia, which amounted to (0.0%), and the response of the sample members in Iran and Israel was 'No' (2.3%), and the response of the sample

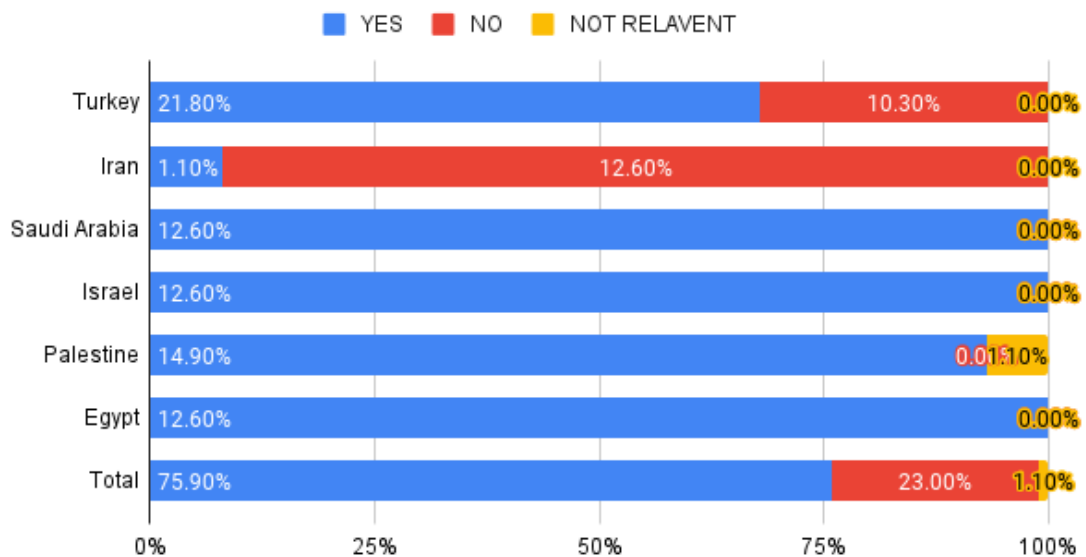
members in Palestine was (9.2%), and the percentage of response to the sample members in Egypt (1.1%)

The results also show that 69.0% of the study sample believes there is a clear definition of the so-called Middle East. While (31.0%) do not believe there is a clear definition of the Middle East.

We believe that the most significant percentage was heading for the fact that there is a clear definition of the Middle East, and this will also depend on the rest of the questions in the same dimension, and that Turkey had the largest share of affirmation that there is a clear definition of the Middle East, which means that it has clarity in its vision for the region.

1.2 Results related to the second question: Do you believe that your country is considered geographically part of the Middle East?

Figure 7



Source: compiled by the author

Turkey is the country that most believe that its country belongs to the Middle East geographically, with a percentage of 21.8%, while Iran was the least responsive, with a percentage of 1.1%, and the response of the sample members in Saudi Arabia, Israel, and

Egypt reached (12.6%), while the response of the sample members in Palestine was (14.9%).

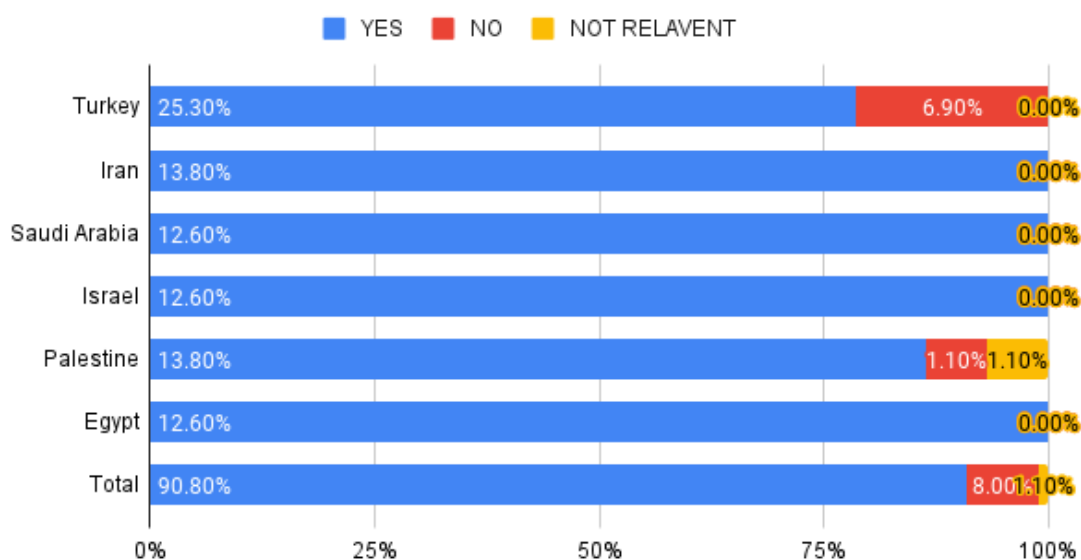
The lowest response to 'No' was in the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage reached (10.3%), and the highest response was in Iran, where the response of the sample members reached (12.6%). In contrast, the response of the sample members in Saudi Arabia, Israel, Egypt, and Palestine was (0.0%), for the response of the sample members to (not relevant), was the highest response among the sample members in Palestine, where the percentage amounted to (1.1%), and it reached to the rest of the sample members in the rest of the countries (0.0%).

The total results of the figure show that 75.9% of the respondents believe that their country belongs to the Middle East geographically, while (23.0%) believe they do not, and (1.1%) see no relationship.

We can note from the results that Iran is the most country that does not believe it belongs to the Middle East geographically, while the rest of the countries have the highest percentages tending towards that they belong to the Middle East geographically. However, the paradox of Turkey's results is that it has always preferred treating it as a European country rather than a Middle Eastern one.

1.3 Results related to the third question: Do you believe your country is politically part of the Middle East?

Figure 8



Source: compiled by the author

It is clear from the previous results that Turkey is the country that most believe that their country belongs to the Middle East politically, as the response rate of those who answered ‘Yes’ reached 25.3%, while Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Egypt were the tiniest countries in which the sample response was 12.6%, and the response of the three countries reached 12.6%. The sample members in Iran and Palestine (13.8%) and the response of the sample members as a whole reached the total score (90.8%).

The response of the sample members to ‘No’ was the highest response among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage reached (6.9%), and the lowest response among the sample members was in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Egypt, where the percentage was (0.0%). Palestine (1.1%) and the total score for the sample as a whole reached (8.0%)

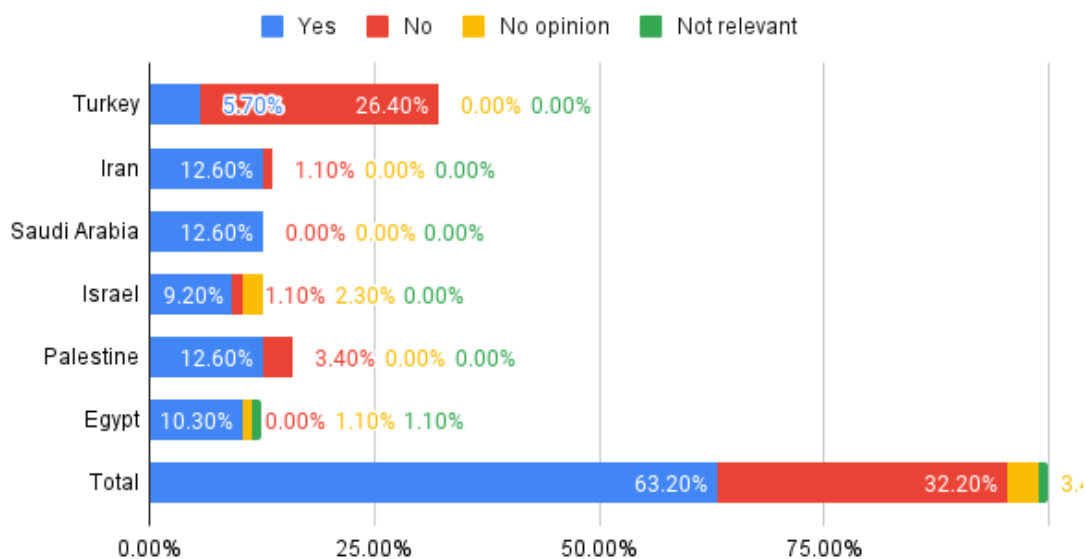
Concerning the response of the sample members to ‘Not Relevant,’ the response of Palestine was (1.1%), and the response of the rest of the sample members in the rest of the countries was (0.0%).

The results indicators in this question clearly show that all the targeted countries in this study believe they belong politically to the Middle East.

The result is, of course, inevitable, as well as another confirmation of the policies of Iran and Turkey and their sense of political belonging to the region.

1.4 Results related to the fourth question: Do you believe the term ‘Middle East’ exclusively has a geographical connotation, regardless of the number of nations it refers to?

Figure 9



Source: compiled by the author

The sample in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Palestine had the most respondents who believed that the term Middle East had a geographical connotation exclusively, regardless of the number of countries it referred to, where the percentage reached (12.6%). In contrast, the response of the sample in Turkey was less responsive, reaching (5.7%), and it was among the sample members in Israel (9.2%), and it was among the sample members in Egypt (10.3%), and the response of the sample members as a whole reached the total score (63.2%).

We note that the highest response to ‘no’ was among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage reached (26.4%), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, where the percentage reached (0.0%). The response

of the sample members in Palestine was (3.4 %), the percentage of respondents in Iran and Israel reached (1.1%), and the total score for all members of the total sample reached (32.2%).

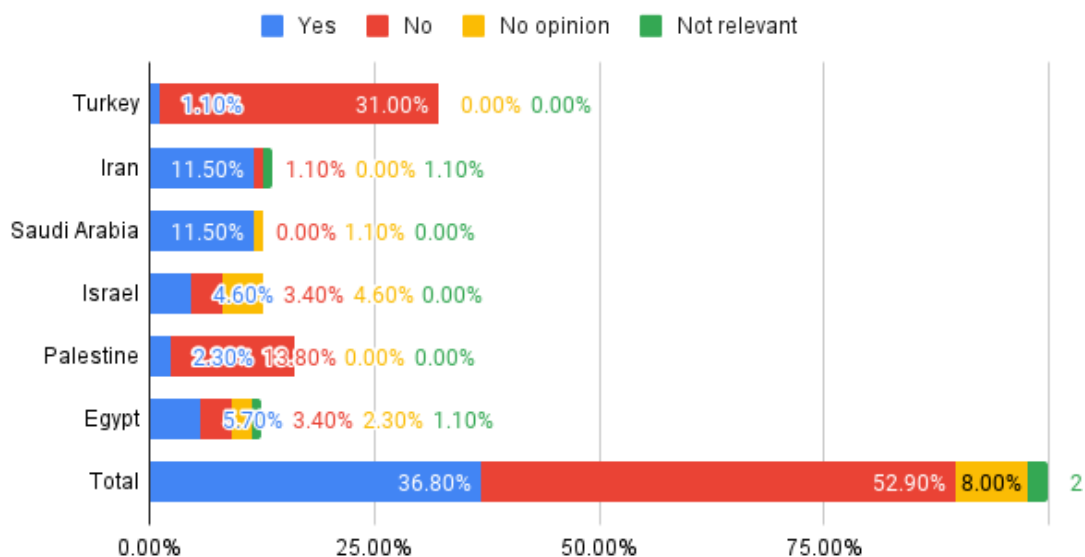
The highest response to ‘no opinion’ was in Israel, where the percentage reached (2.3%), while the lowest response was among the sample members in Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Palestine (0.0%), and the percentage among sample members in Egypt was (1.1%). Moreover, the total score on ‘No opinion’ was 3.4%.

The highest response of the sample members to ‘not relevant’ was in Egypt, where the percentage reached (1.1%), and it was among the rest of the sample members in the rest of the countries (0.0%), and the total degree of the sample members reached (1.1%).

The sample members in Turkey believe that the Middle East does not have a geographical significance exclusively but goes beyond that, while the rest of the sample members in ‘Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, and Israel’ believe so.

1.5 Results related to the fifth question: Do you think the Middle East is a successful model of regional cooperation?

Figure 10



Source: compiled by the author

Figure 10 shows that Iranians and Saudis responded most to the fact that the Middle East is a successful model for regional cooperation, where the percentage of those who answered 'yes' was 11.5% for each country. The response of the sample members in Turkey was (1.1%), and it was among the sample members in Israel (4.6%), Palestine (2.3%), and Egypt (5.7%), the total response of all sample members from all countries was 36.8% who answered 'yes,' meaning that the Middle East is a successful model for regional cooperation.

As for the highest response to 'no,' it was among the respondents in Turkey, where the percentage reached (31.0%), while the lowest response was among the sample members in Saudi Arabia (0.0%), and the percentage among the sample members in Iran was (1.1%), and it reached among the members of the sample in Iran (1.1%). The total score in Israel and Egypt was (3.4%), and in Palestine (13.8%), the total score of 'No' (52.9%).

The highest response to 'no opinion' was in Israel, where the percentage reached (4.6%), while the lowest response was among the sample members in Turkey, Iran, and Palestine (0.0%), and the percentage among the sample members in Egypt was (2.3%) and The total score on 'No opinion' was (8.0%).

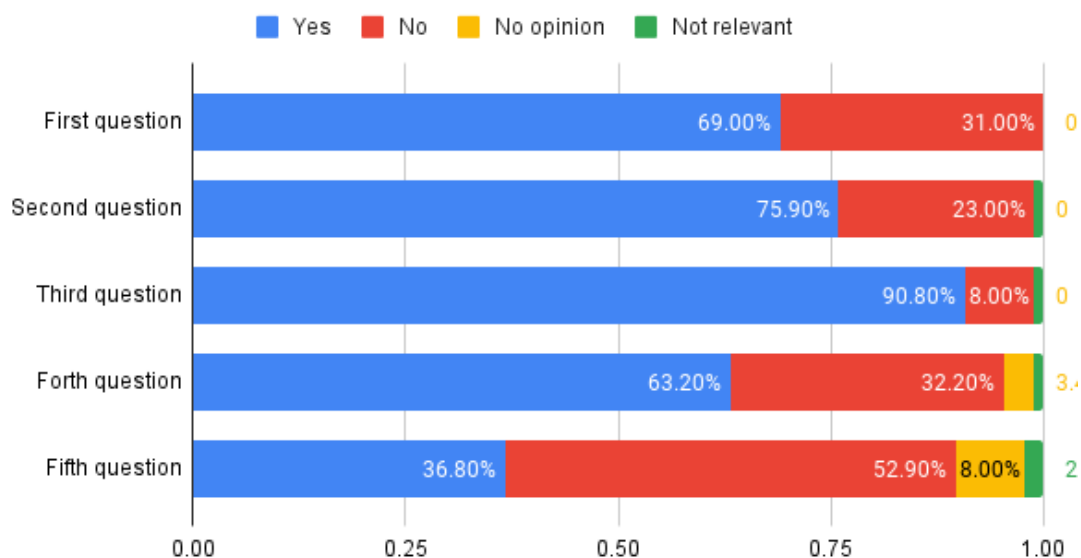
The highest response of the sample members to 'not relevant' was in Iran and Egypt, where the percentage amounted to (1.1%), and it was among the rest of the sample members in the rest of the countries (0.0%), and the total percentage of all sample members reached (1.1%).

It is evident from the results that both Iran and Saudi Arabia were the highest in considering that the Middle East is a successful model for regional cooperation. In contrast, the rest of the countries, led by Turkey, considered that the Middle East is not a successful model for regional cooperation and the fact that the results of Saudi Arabia and Iran, in particular, are different from what the literature has dealt with. The fact is that the Middle East is a failed model of international cooperation. The author may attribute these results to the fact that the question did not specify the areas of cooperation and the respondents' belief in both countries "cooperation, for example, at the level of the Council of the Union of Gulf States" is considered cooperation and a model of regional

cooperation, knowing that what is meant by the question is that “the Middle East as one unit” with all its geographically affiliated countries)is distinguished by its cooperation on the level of regional issues.

1.6 Summary of the results of the first dimension: The definition and the Importance of the Middle East.

Figure 11



Source: compiled by the author

The first question results show that 69.0% of the respondents answered ‘yes,’ meaning there is a clear definition of the so-called Middle East, and 31.0% answered ‘no.’

As for the second question, 75.9% of respondents answered ‘yes’ to the question “ Do you believe that your country is considered geographically part of the Middle East?” and 23.0% answered ‘no,’ while 1.1% answered not relevant.

The third question was, “Do you believe your country is politically part of the Middle East?” The percentage of those who answered ‘yes’ was 90.8%, 8.0% answered ‘no,’ and 1.1% answered ‘Not relevant.’

As for the fourth question, “Do you believe that the term ‘Middle East’ exclusively has a geographical connotation, regardless of the number of nations it refers to?” the results show that 63.2% of the respondents answered ‘yes,’ and 32.2% answered ‘no’ and 3.4% had ‘no opinion’ and 1.1 % answered ‘not relevant,’ it is clear that the answer close to assuring that the Middle East is a geographical connotation exclusively.

For the fifth question, “Do you think that the Middle East is a successful model of regional cooperation?” The results show that 36.8% of the respondents answered ‘yes,’ 52.9% answered ‘no’ and 8.0% answered ‘no opinion’ while 2.3% answered ‘not relevant,’ It is clear that most respondents are close to ensuring that the Middle East is not a successful model of regional.

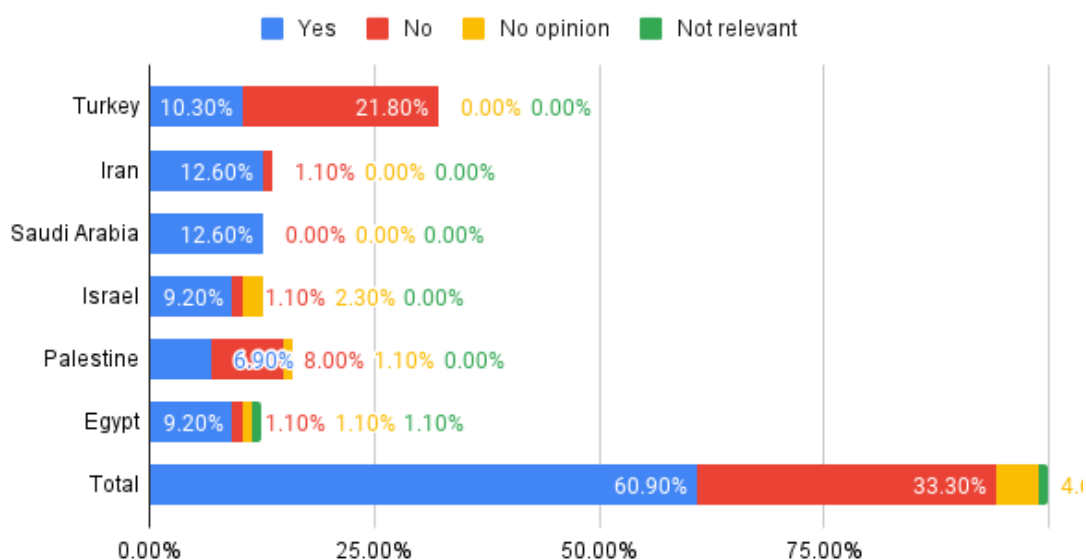
The overall result of this dimension is the author’s opinion that most of the answers tend to indicate that the Middle East is an exclusively geographical indication, Iran is the only one that does not consider itself geographically part of the Middle East, and this is not new, but what is new is that the respondents in Turkey answered that Turkey Part of the Middle East. All countries in which this survey was conducted consider themselves politically part of the Middle East. According to the answers, the Middle East is not a successful model for regional cooperation, and this is a fact.

2. Results related to the ‘Regional Power.’

In order to answer the questions of this dimension, cross tables were used to determine the frequencies and percentages of each response according to the place variable.

2.1 results related to the first question: Do you think there is a Dominant regional power in the Middle East?

Figure 12



Source: compiled by the author

The highest response to the question “Do you think that there is a Dominant regional power in the Middle East?” was among the sample members in Iran and Saudi Arabia, where the response of each of them to ‘yes’ was 12.6% while the lowest response among the sample members was in Palestine, where the percentage of those who answered yes was 6.9%. The percentage among the sample members in Turkey was (10.3%), and in Israel and Egypt is (9.2%). The total score of all sample members from all countries who answered ‘yes’ was (60.9%).

The highest response to ‘no’ is in Turkey, where the percentage reached (21.8%), while the lowest response was among the sample members in Saudi Arabia (0.0%), and the percentage among the sample members in Iran, Israel, and Egypt was (1.1%), and it was Palestine (8.0%) has a total score of ‘no’ (52.9%). The total score of the sample as a whole who answered ‘no’ was (33.3%),

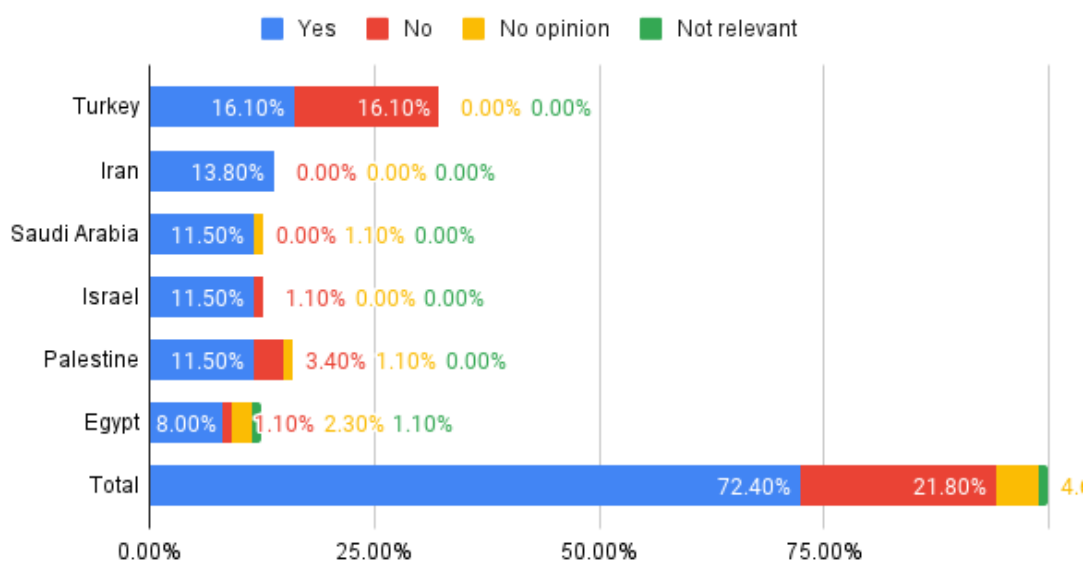
The highest response to ‘no opinion’ was in Israel, where the percentage reached (2.3%), while the lowest response was among the sample members in Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia, where the percentage reached (0.0%), and the percentage among the sample members in Palestine and Egypt (1.1%), and the total score was ‘No opinion’ (4.6%).

The highest response of the sample members to ‘no relevant’ was in Egypt, where the percentage reached (1.1%), and it was among the rest of the sample members (0.0%), and the total degree of the sample members reached (1.1%).

Based on the analysis, the author sees that both Iran and Saudi Arabia are closer to the presence of a dominant regional power in the Middle East. At the same time, the indicators are low in the rest of the countries in which the study was conducted, and we see that the answers may have had some ambition from the sample members in both countries mentioned Iran and Saudi Arabia, or so they think or desire.

2.2 Results related to the second question: Do you think there is an Influential regional power in the Middle East?

Figure 13



Source: compiled by the author

We can note from the results that the highest percentage on the question “Do you think that there is an Influential regional power in the Middle East?” with ‘yes’ was among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage amounted to (16.1%), and the lowest response among the sample members was in Egypt, where the percentage reached (8.0%). The response of the sample members in Iran reached (13.8%), and the response of the

sample members in Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Palestine (11.5%), and the response of the sample members reached a total degree (72.4%).

As for the highest response to 'no,' it was among the respondents in Turkey, where the percentage reached (16.1%), while the lowest response was among the sample members in Iran and Saudi Arabia (0.0%), and the percentage among the sample members in Israel and Egypt was (1.1%), and it was in Palestine (3.4%), the total score of the sample as a whole who answered 'No' was (21.8%),

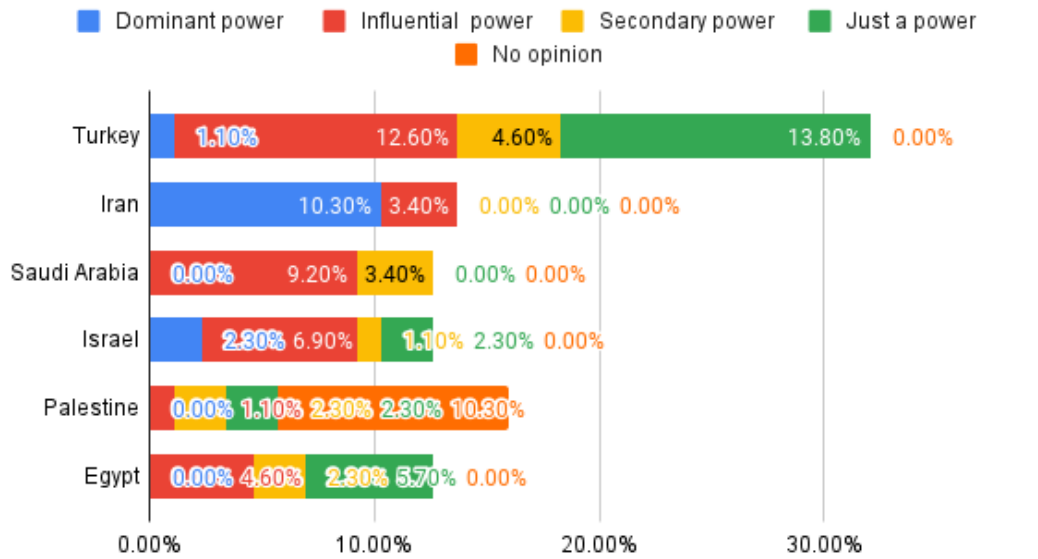
The highest response to 'no opinion' was in Egypt, where the percentage reached (2.3%), while the lowest response was among the sample members in Turkey, Iran, and Israel, where the percentage reached (0.0%), and the percentage among the sample members in Palestine and Saudi Arabia (1.1%), and the total score was 'No opinion' (4.6%).

The highest response of the sample members to 'not relevant' was in Egypt, where the percentage reached (1.1%), and it was among the rest of the sample members in the rest of the countries (0.0%), and the total degree of the sample members reached (1.1%).

As the results came, the total sum of the sample members who agree that there is an influential regional power in the Middle East is high, while it is noted that the sample members in Turkey are divided equally between 'yes' and 'no,' and this may be an indication for their believes that there is no adequate power in all fields.

2.3. Result related to the third question: In what way would you describe your country's 'classification'?

Figure 14



Source: compiled by the author

It is clear from Figure 14 that the highest response to the question “In what way would you describe your country's ‘classification?’” as ‘a dominant power’ was the highest response among the sample members in Iran, where the percentage reached (10.3%). The lowest responses were for each of the sample members in Saudi Arabia, Palestine, and Egypt, where the response rate for each of them was (0.0%); for Israel, the response rate was (2.3%), while the response of the sample members in Turkey was (1.1%). The percentage of the total score was (13.8%).

The highest response to ‘influential power’ was reached among the sample members in Turkey (12.6%), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Palestine, where the percentage reached (1.1%), while the sample members in Iran reached a percentage (3.4%). While the percentage of the sample members in Saudi Arabia reached (9.2%), the percentage of the sample members in Israel reached (6.9%), and the percentage among the sample members in Egypt was (4.6%), and it is noted that the response of the total sample members to this question is (an influential force). It reached (37.9%).

As for the highest response for those who believe that their country is a ‘secondary power,’ it was the highest response among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage reached (4.6%), while the lowest response among the sample members was in Iran, where the percentage amounted to (0.0%). The response of the sample members in Israel reached (1.1%), and the percentage reached, and the percentage of the sample members in Saudi Arabia reached “3.4%”, the percentage of the sample members in Palestine and Egypt reached (2.3%), and we note that the percentage of the response of the total sample members was (13.8%).

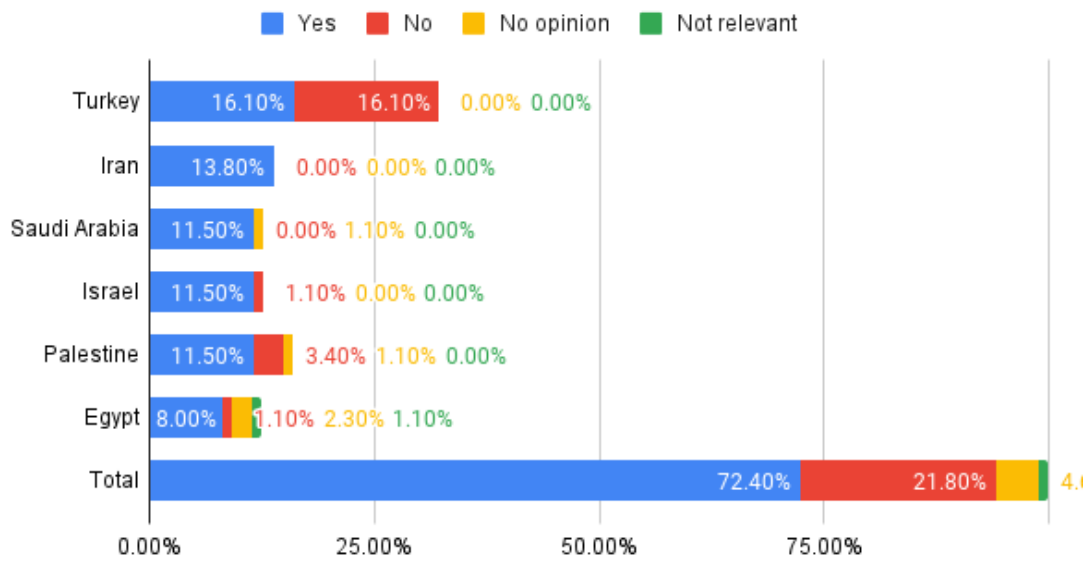
We also note that the highest response to ‘just a power’ was the highest response among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage reached (13.8%), while the lowest response among the sample members was in Iran and Saudi Arabia, where the percentage reached (0.0%). The percentage reached The percentage among the sample members in Israel and Palestine was (2.3%), the response among the sample members in Egypt was (5.7%), and the percentage on the total degree of the total sample was (24.1%).

The results also show that the highest response to ‘no opinion’ was among the sample members in Palestine, where the percentage reached (10.3%), while the response of the sample members to the rest of the countries was (0.0%), and (10.3%) of the response of the sample members reached ‘No opinion.’

The answers of the sample members in Turkey focused on considering their country as an influential power and just a power, which are logical answers that simulate the current reality of the Turkish state, while the answers of the sample members in Iran regarded their state as a dominant power. The author believes these answers are emotional and do not reflect the current reality of the Iranian state, which is closer because it is an influential power and a driver of the region’s policies. The rest of the answers of the sample members in the rest of the countries, “Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Palestine, and Israel,” were closer to an accurate description of their current reality.

2.4 Results related to the fourth question: In your opinion, do you think your country has the ability to be a regional power: (leadership, ability to resolve conflicts and intervention, presence of regional institutions)?

Figure 15



Source: compiled by the author

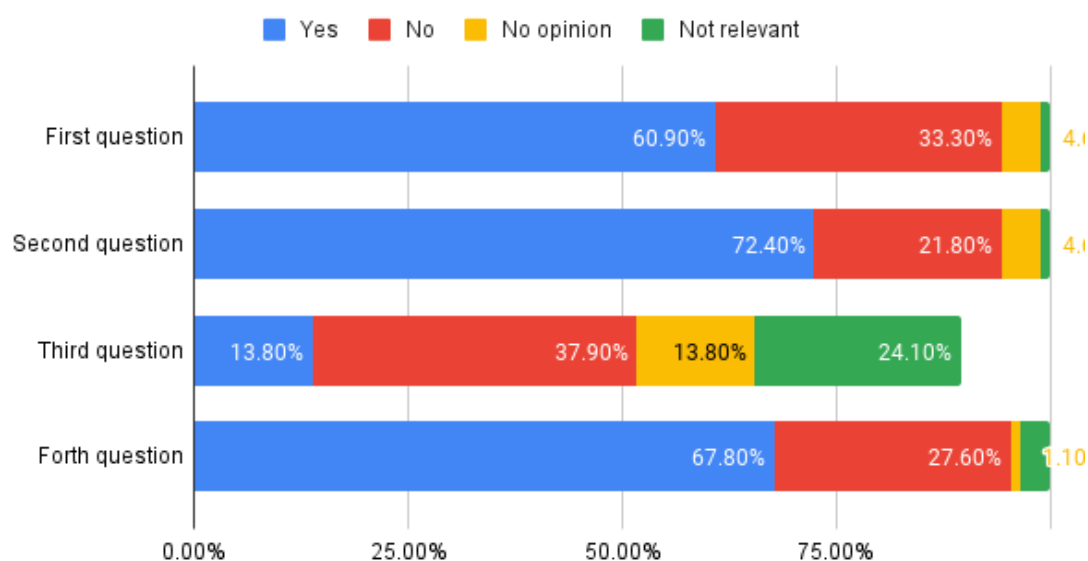
The highest response of the sample members for ‘yes’ was among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage reached (16.1%), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Palestine, where the percentage was (0.0%), while it reached sample members in Iran (13.8%), and it reached the sample members in Saudi Arabia and Egypt (12.6%), and the total score of the total sample members reached ‘yes’ (72.40%). We note that the highest response to ‘no’ was among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage reached (14.9%), and it was The lowest response rate for each of the sample members was in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Egypt, where the percentage reached (0.0%), and the response of the sample members in Palestine reached (12.6%), and the total score for all members of the total sample reached of ‘no’ (21.80%).

As for the highest response to ‘no opinion,’ it was among the respondents in Egypt, where the percentage reached (2.3%), while it was (1.1%) among the sample members in Iran and Palestine while in rest was (0.0%). Therefore, the total score on ‘no opinion’ was (4.3%). The response of the sample members to ‘Not relevant’ for all sample members was (0.0%).

Through the analysis results, it is clear that all countries – except for Palestine – strongly aspire to become a regional power or that it could be through the response of the sample members in the targeted countries.

2.5. Summary of the results of the second dimension: Regional Power

Figure 16



Source: compiled by the author

The summary of ‘Regional Power’ shows that the response of the sample members to the first question ‘yes’ was (60.9%), while the response of the total sample to the same question with ‘no,’ the percentage reached (33.3%), and the percentage of the sample members on the total score ‘No opinion’ is (4.6%), and the percentage of ‘Not relevant’ is (1.1%).

About the second question, the percentage of ‘yes’ reached (72.4%), the percentage of ‘no’ reached (21.8%), and the percentage of respondents to ‘no opinion’ reached (4.6%), and the percentage of respondents to ‘No opinion’ reached (4.6%). Moreover, the percentage of ‘not relevant’ is (1.1%).

The third question with 'yes' reached a percentage of (13.8%), while the percentage of 'no' reached (37.9%), and the percentage of 'no opinion' reached (13.8) %, while the response to 'not relevant' is (24.1%).

Concerning the fourth question, the response of the sample members reached 'yes' (67.8%), and with 'no' reached (27.6%), and their responses were to 'no opinion' (1.1%), and the percentage reached 'not relevant' (3.4%).

It is evident from the analysis that the response to the first question that there is a dominant power was the highest in Iran and Saudi Arabia, followed by Turkey, then Egypt and Israel. This may be an indication of the respondents' believes that their countries are dominant or will be, or perhaps they do not know precisely what it means "it is capable of solving the region's problems and has regional institutions and constitutes a regional power in every sense of the word," and this in the current reality of the Middle East does not exist.

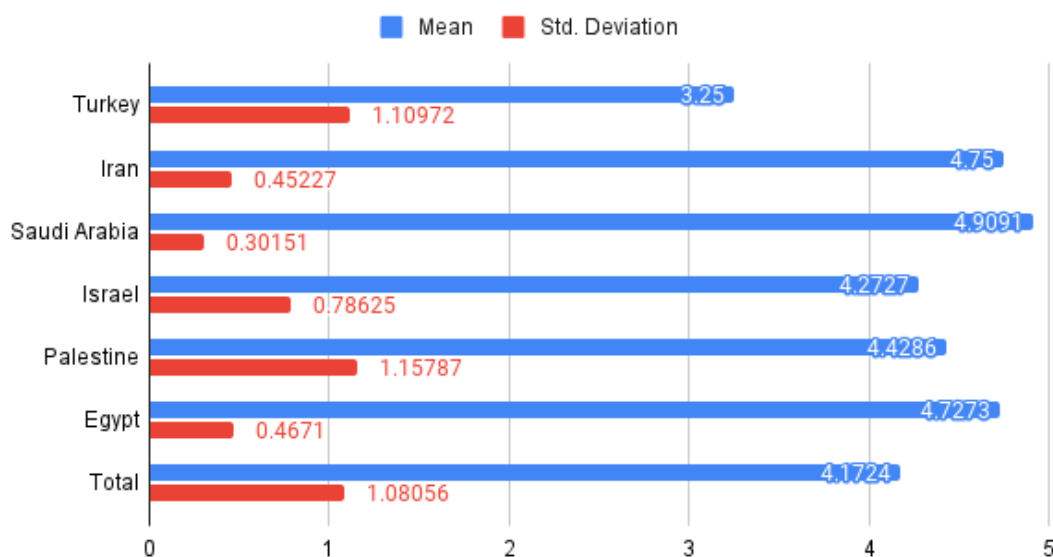
As for the influential regional power, the subject of the second question, the response index was high for all countries – in the answer yes, there is an influential power – and this reflects the current reality of the Middle East region with the presence of an influential internal power in region policies from the total of the countries targeted in this survey. About the third question, the responses of the targets countries in the survey, Turkey was classified as an influential power, while Iran was classified as a dominant power, and this, the author's view, may be an ambition rather than a reality, as the Iranians may see their country as a dominant power.

Moreover, the last question regarding the regional power was the future of the region as follows in terms of the presence of regional power in order Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Egypt, and this reflects the ambition of these countries and their work through their policies in the region and their constant search for a foothold in the region's problems and interference in and influences its policies.

3. Results related to “The Significance of the Palestinian – Israeli Conflict in the region”

In order to answer the questions of this dimension, the arithmetic averages and standard deviations were extracted, bearing in mind that the scale used in this dimension is the five-point Likert scale. Paragraphs with positive content were given (5) degrees for each answer ‘Strongly agree,’ (4) degrees for each answer ‘Agree,’ (3) degrees for each answer ‘Neither agree nor disagree,’ (2) points for each answer ‘disagree,’ and (1) degree for each answer ‘strongly disagree,’ which mean the highest response is (5), so the arithmetic mean here is from (5). The following figure shows the results.

Figure 17

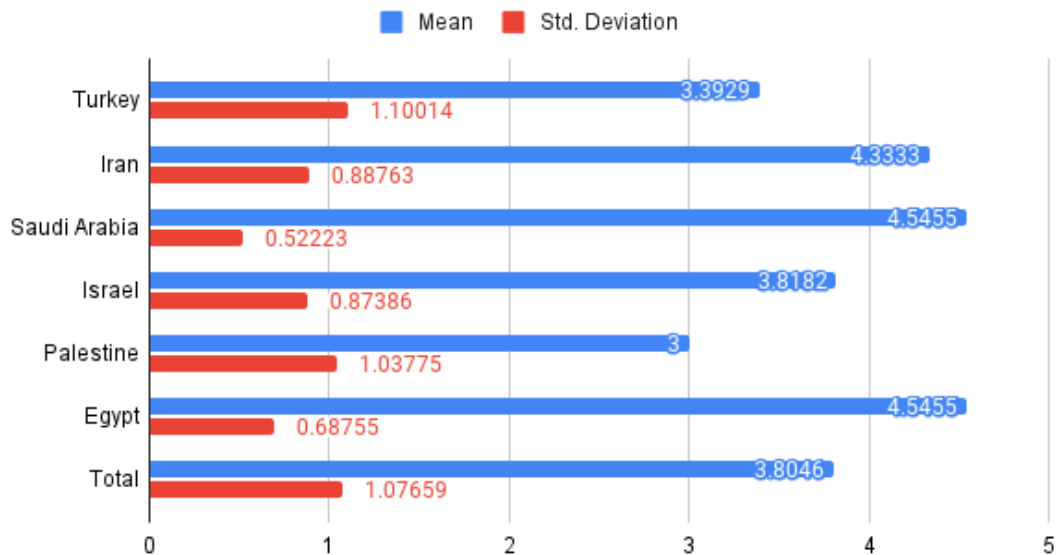


Source: compiled by the author

Figure 17 shows that the highest response to the first question, which states: “There is a direct impact of the conflict on your country,” was among the sample members in Saudi Arabia, where the arithmetic mean was (4.9091), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Turkey, where the arithmetic mean reached (3.2500), in Iran was (4.7500), in Israel was (4.2727), in Palestine was (4.4286), in Egypt was (4.7273), and the total score for the sample as a whole was (4.1724).

The author agreed with these results as Saudi Arabia is trying to get more involved in the general conflict and Palestinian internal division in particular.

Figure 18

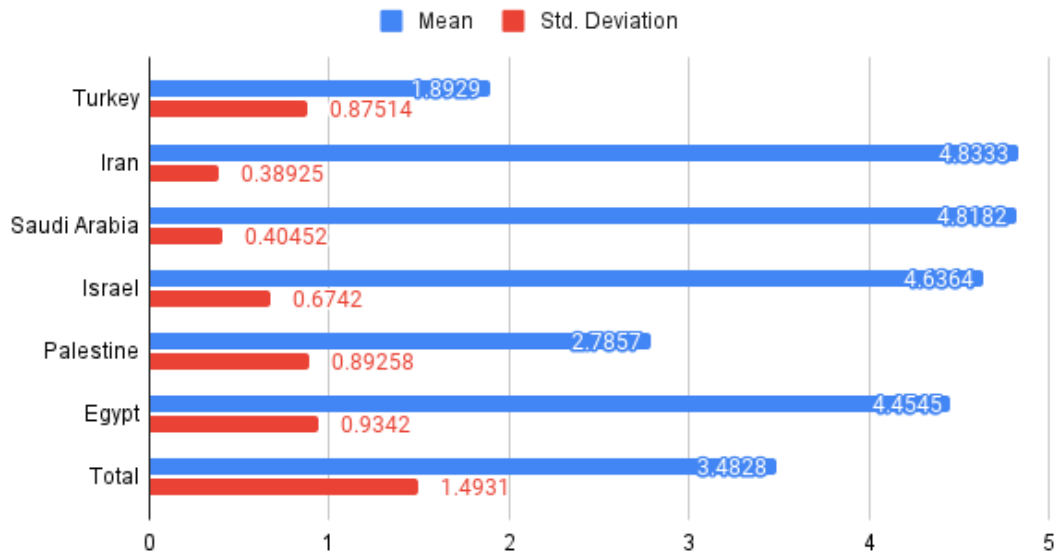


Source: compiled by the author

As for the second question, which states: “Is your country interfering in the conflict in order to resolve it?” the highest response was among the sample members in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, where the arithmetic mean reached (4.5455), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Palestine, where the arithmetic mean was (3.0000). While Turkey reached (3.3929), Iran was (4.0000), Israel reached (3.8182), Egypt was (4.7273), and the total score of the sample as a whole was (3.8046).

The author sees that this answer is also compatible with the Saudi role in the region, and with the conflict, they tried to, with Saudi initiatives which were more on the level of ending the internal Palestinian division than on the level of ending the conflict itself with Israel.

Figure 19

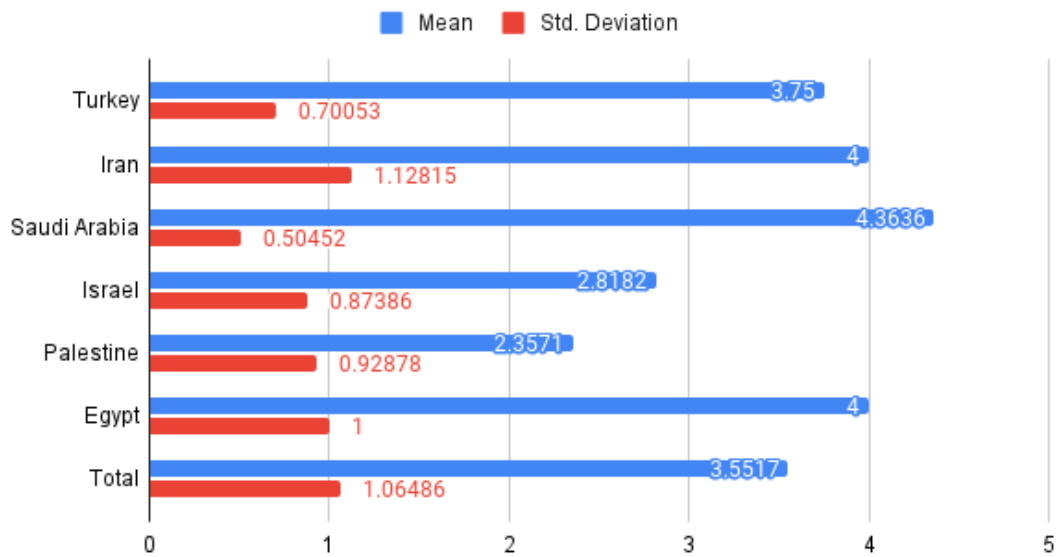


Source: compiled by the author

As for the third question, which states: “Does your country’s intervention in resolving the conflict aims at gaining its regional status?” it was found that the highest response was among the sample members in Iran, where the arithmetic mean reached (4.8333), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Turkey, where the mean was Arithmetic (1.8929), in Saudi Arabia reached (4.8182), in Israel reached (4.6364), and in Palestine was (2.7857), while in Egypt was (4.4545), the total score of the sample as a whole was (3.4828).

This question attempts to measure the importance of the intervention in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict by the powers of the region in order to prove its leadership, personality, and influence in the region. Accordingly, the answers indicate that Iran is in its intervention in the conflict – as the results showed that it is the most involved in gaining regional status rather than resolving the conflict itself.

Figure 20

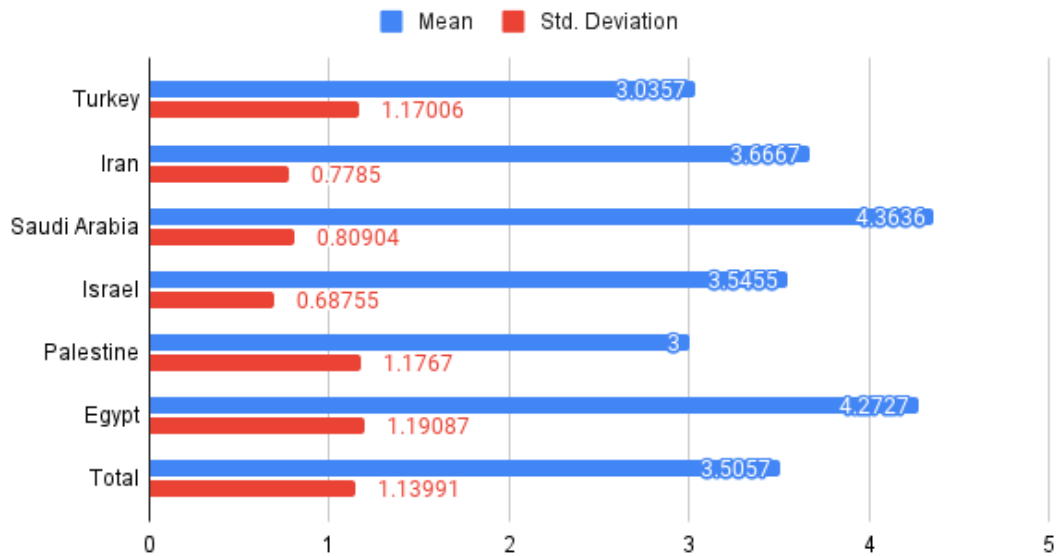


Source: compiled by the author

As for the fourth question, which states: “Do you think that your country's policy is sufficient towards resolving the conflict?” the highest response was among the sample members in Saudi Arabia, with (4.3636), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Turkey with (2.3571). While Turkey was (3.7500), Iran was (4.0000), Israel was (2.8182), and Palestine was (2.3571). Finally, Egypt was (4.0000), and the total score for the sample as a whole was (3.5517).

The results show that the indicators in Turkey express their dissatisfaction with the level of Turkey's intervention in resolving the conflict and that the policies pursued by Turkey are insufficient, while Saudi Arabia believes that it is the same; the author believes that these results reflect the reality in terms of the inadequacy of Turkish policies towards the conflict to solve it. Moreover, dissatisfaction with the political level offered by Saudi Arabia or as desired by the Palestinians from both sides.

Figure 21

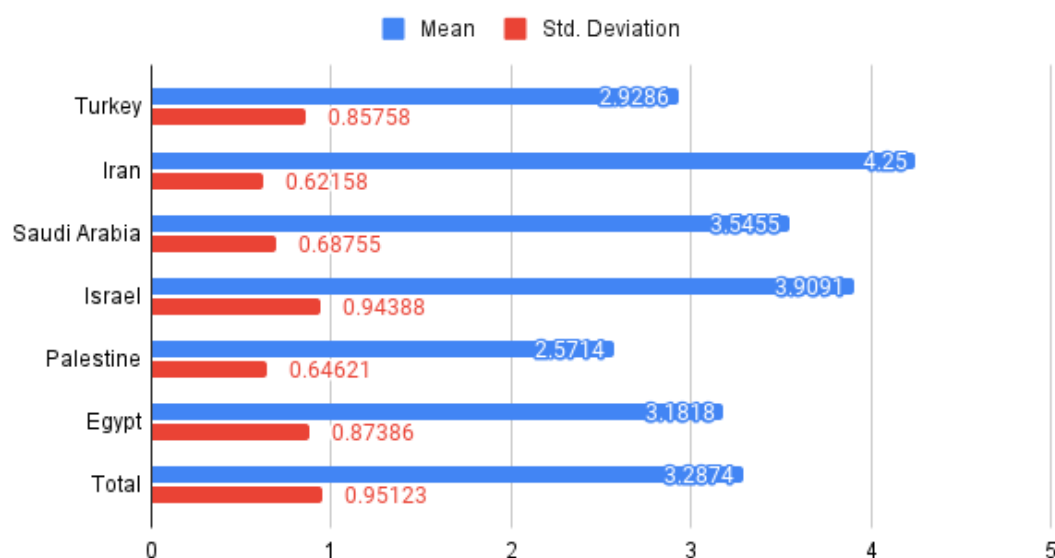


Source: compiled by the author

As for the fifth question, which states: “There is a change in your country's policy towards the conflict after the events of the Arab uprising of 2011,” it was found that the highest response was among the sample members in Saudi Arabia, with (4.3636), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Palestine, with (3.0000). While Turkey reached (3.0357), Iran reached (3.6667), Israel reached (3.5455), and Egypt was (4.2727), the total score for the sample as a whole was (3.5057).

In sum, there has been a change in the policies of the countries of the Middle East after the Arab uprising of 2011; what the author sees is consistent with the outcome of this question, as Saudi Arabia is now playing a more significant role in the region, as well as Turkey and Egypt, in search of a new place in the regional balance of power, so what happened motivated these countries.

Figure 22



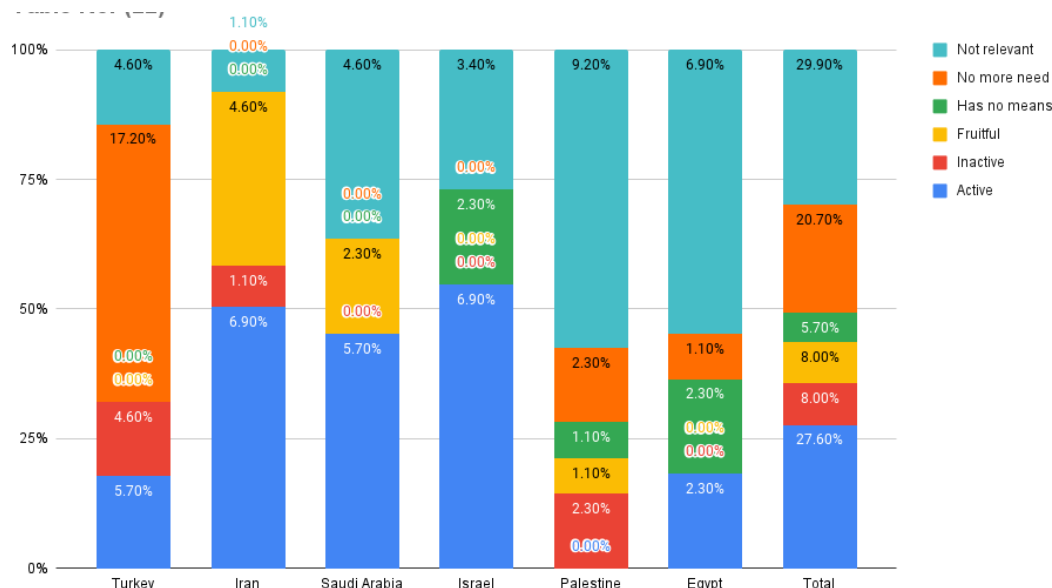
Source: compiled by the author

As for the sixth question, which states: “An internal coalition has been formed between your country and the parties involved in this conflict,” it was found that the highest response was among the sample members in Iran, where the arithmetic mean reached (4.2500), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Palestine, with (2.5714). Moreover, in Turkey was (2.9286); in Saudi Arabia was (3.5455). While in Israel was (3.9091), and in Egypt was (3.1818) the total score of the sample members as a whole was (3.2874).

The indicators reflect, to some extent, the nature of the existing alliances on the Palestinian side. There is an implicit alliance between Iran and the Islamic Jihad movement in Gaza; before that, it was with the Hamas movement. However, with the decline of polarity and even ideology in general in international relations and the severe restrictions imposed by Israel on the movement of money and weapons into Palestine in the two parts of the West Bank and Gaza, the alliance is without actual meaning on the ground apart from strengthening the status of the state itself and Iran as a model.

The results related to the seventh question, which states: “How do you consider this coalition, if any,” which is a continuation of the previous question, as cross tables were used to determine the frequencies and percentages of each response according to the place variable.

Figure 23



Source: compiled by the author

Figure 23 shows that the highest response of the sample members to ‘active’ was among the sample members in Israel, where the percentage reached (6.9%), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Palestine, where the percentage reached (0.0%). The sample in Turkey and Saudi Arabia reached (5.7%), and it reached among the sample members in Egypt (2.3%), and the total percentage of all members reached ‘active’ (27.6%).

We note that the highest response to ‘inactive’ was among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage reached (4.6%), and the lowest response was for each of the sample members in Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Egypt, where the percentage reached (0.0%), and the response of the sample members. In Iran reached (1.1%), and the sample members in Palestine reached (2.3%), the score for the total sample members reached (8.0%).

The highest response to 'fruitful' was among the sample members in Iran, where the percentage reached (4.6%), while the lowest response was among the sample members in Turkey, Israel, and Egypt, where the percentage reached (0.0%), and the percentage reached in Saudi Arabia (2.3%), while in Palestine (1.1%). The total score of 'Fruitful' was (8.0%).

The results show that the highest response to 'has no means' was among the sample members in Israel and Egypt, where the percentage reached (2.3%), while the lowest response was among the sample members in Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia, where the percentage was (0.0%), and the percentage reached Among the sample members in Palestine (1.1%), the total score was of 'Has no mean' (5.7%).

We note from the results that the highest response of 'no more need' was among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage amounted to (17.2%). The lowest response was among the sample members in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Israel, where the percentage reached (0.0%), while the response of the sample members in Palestine, the percentage reached (2.3%), and the percentage among the sample members in Egypt was (1.1%), and the total score of 'No more need' reached (20.7%).

The results show that the highest response of 'not relevant' was among the sample members in Palestine, where the percentage reached (9.2%), while the lowest response was among the sample members in Iran, where the percentage reached (1.1%). The percentage reached among the sample members in Turkey and Saudi Arabia (4.6%), the percentage of Israel was (3.4%), and the percentage of the total score was (29.9%).

It can be noted from the analysis that the direct impact of the conflict on the countries targeted in this research was the highest responses in Saudi Arabia, and this is, in fact, yes, the conflict has a direct impact on it because of the religious position represented by Saudi Arabia, as well as the Saudi ambition to intervene in the issues of the region. In contrast, the responses in Turkey reflect that the 'conflict has no direct impact,' and this meets the reality of Turkish interference in the conflict. On the contrary, it has no effect, as evidenced by the strength of Turkish-Israeli relations in several areas.

As for the indicator of intervention in order to resolve the conflict, the highest responses were in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. This reflects the reality of the situation and the mediation practiced by both countries in the conflict, directly and indirectly, specifically Egypt.

As for the indicator of intervention to gain a regional position, it was the highest response among the sample members in Iran and the lowest in Turkey, which is also consistent with the current Iranian ambition.

As the indicator of whether the country's policies were sufficient to resolve the conflict, the responses were the highest in Saudi Arabia and the lowest in Turkey. This is evidence that is consistent with Saudi policies on the ground and their level of intervention in the conflict, and another indicator, where the lowest responses were on the Turkish side, which reflects the desire to increase and raise the level of Turkish policies in intervening in the conflict, which is in fact at its lowest level.

Concerning the indicator of changing the country's policies after the Arab Spring of 2011, the highest responses were in Saudi Arabia, and this is a natural indicator, specifically after Saudi Arabia became preoccupied with the current conflict in Yemen and its support for the Yemeni regime against the Houthi group there, who are affiliated with the Shiite movement.

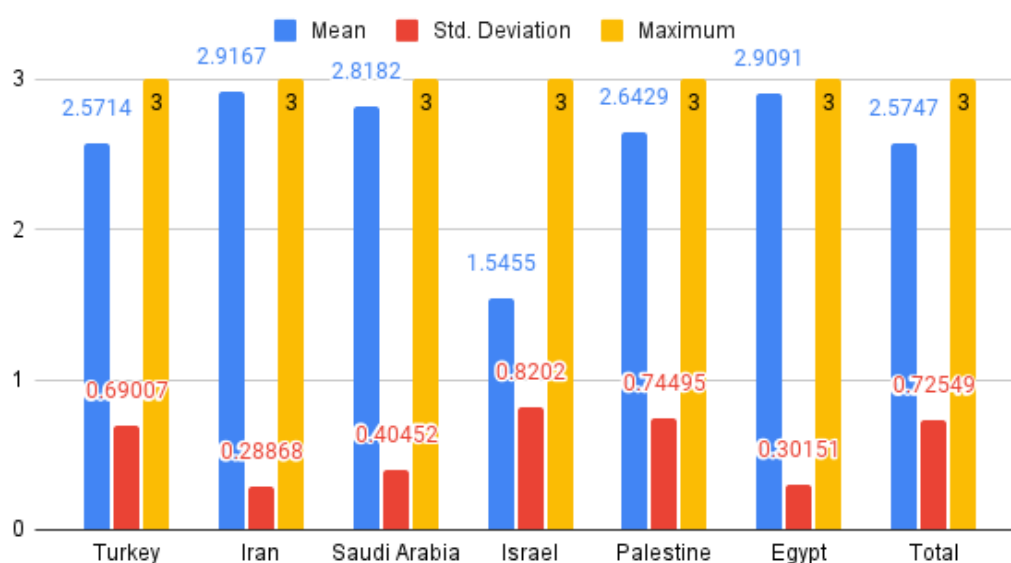
Regarding the indicator of the formation of an internal coalition between the parties of the conflict, the highest responses were in Iran, and this reflects the reality of the situation, as Iran has an implicit alliance with the Islamic Jihad organization in Gaza and the West Bank, and previously with Hamas which controls the Gaza Strip, finally, in the indicator of how you consider this coalition, 'Active' the highest in Israel, bearing in mind that in the question that preceded it, it was not evident in the responses that there was an alliance. The 'Inactive' was the highest in the responses in Turkey, a 'fruitful.' It was the highest in Iran, or so they look at it, and it is worrying for Israel and the local power such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Regard 'has no means,' the highest response was in Israel and Egypt, and 'no more need' was the highest in Turkey.

Regarding the last question, the author sees a conflict in the answers in the classification of the coalition and a convergence only about Iran, specifically regarding its position on its coalition with the Palestinian parties.

4. Results related to the “World Powers”

In order to answer the questions of this dimension, the arithmetic averages and standard deviations were extracted, noting that the scale used in this dimension is the triple Likert scale. The response is (3), so the arithmetic mean here is from (3), and the following figures show the results:

Figure 24



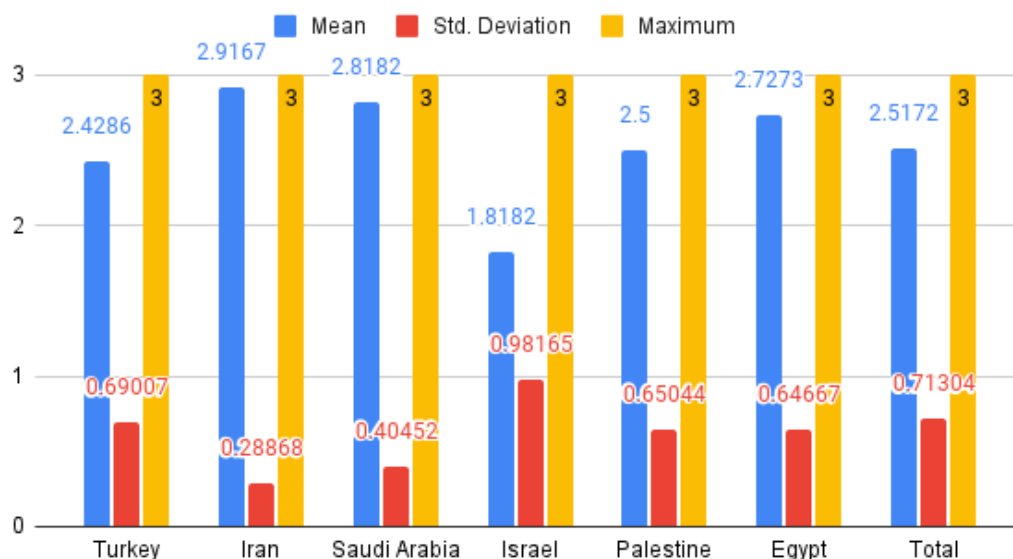
Source: compiled by the author

Figure 24 shows the highest response to the first question: “The intervention of external powers ‘world power’ is an obstacle to successful regional cooperation in the Middle East?” Was among the sample members in Egypt, where the arithmetic mean reached (2.9091), and the lowest response among the sample members reached In Israel, with (1.5455), and in Turkey reached (2.5714), in Iran reached (2.9167), and the arithmetic mean of the sample members in Saudi Arabia reached (2.8182), and in Palestine (2.6429), and the total score for the sample as a whole was (2.5747).

The author agrees with this result, as most countries, led by Egypt, consider external interference as a reason for the lack of a successful regional model in the region, while the

lowest responses were in Israel, and this justifies its need for the intervention of external powers in its favor.

Figure 25

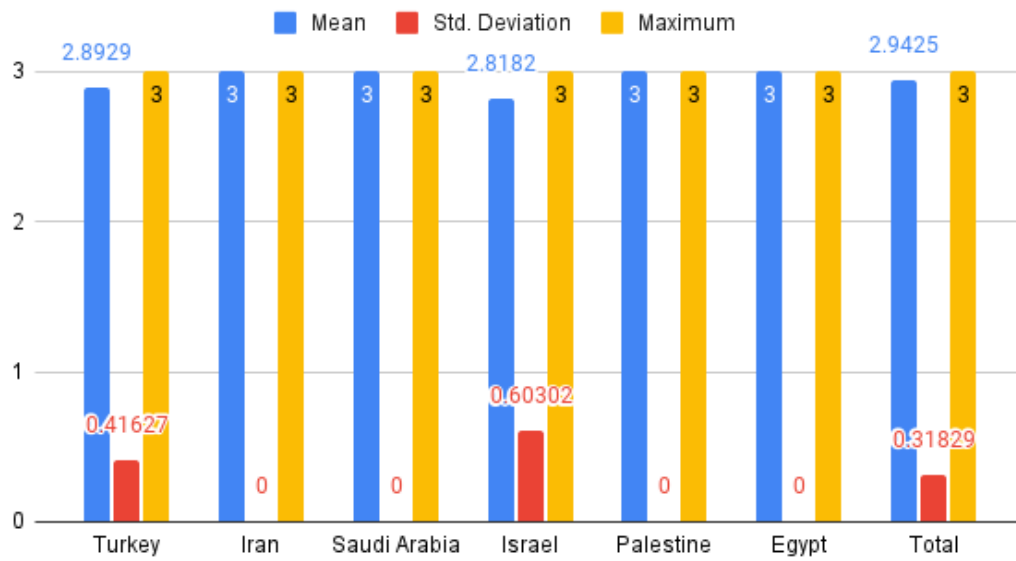


Source: compiled by the author

The highest response to the second question, which states: “The United States of America’s (U.S.) position as a dominant power in the Middle East is the main cause of the failure of a regional model for cooperation,” was among the sample members in Iran, with (2.9167), and the lowest response was among the sample in Israel, where the score reached (1.8182), and in Turkey reached (2.4286), in Saudi Arabia reached (2.8182), while the arithmetic mean of the sample members in Palestine reached (2.5000). Moreover, in Egypt (2.7273), the total score for the sample as a whole was (2.5172).

The United States is considered a supra-regional power in the Middle East, and this is absolute control, and it does not want successful regional cooperation that might affect its interests or its strategic ally Israel. The writer agrees with the conclusion that Iran sees the American intervention as the biggest failure to achieve successful regional growth. This is out of enmity with America itself, but at the same time, Iran does not agree with more than one country, such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

Figure 26

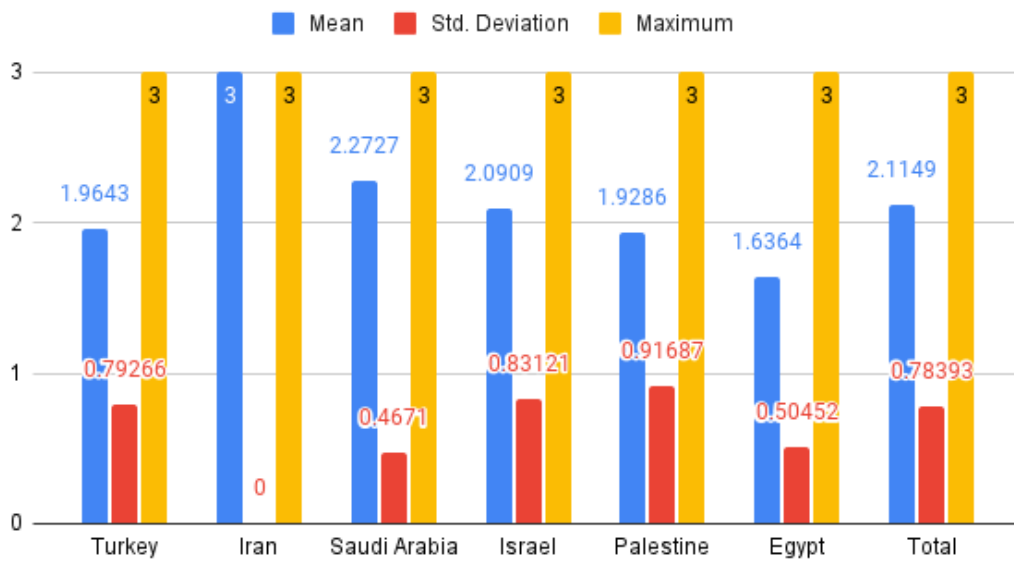


Source: compiled by the author

The results related to the third question, which states: “The United States is biased in its policy toward Israel,” indicate that the highest response was among the sample members in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, and Egypt, with (3.0000), and the arithmetic mean of the sample members in Turkey reached (2.8929), While in Israel reached (2.8182), the total score for the sample as a whole was (2.9425).

The results of this question are typical, as all countries agree that the U.S. is biased towards Israel, implicitly and publicly.

Figure 27



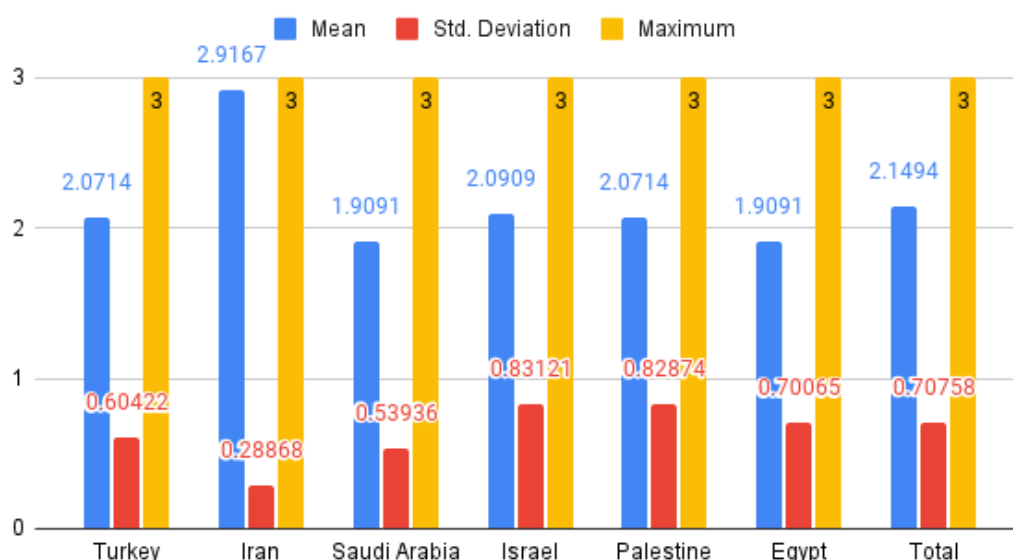
Source: compiled by the author

The highest response to the fourth question, “The United States' policy toward the Middle East is in decline,” was among the sample members in Iran, where the arithmetic mean was (3.0000). The lowest response was among the sample members in Egypt, with (1.6364), and in Turkey, reached (1.9643); in Saudi Arabia, was (2.2727); in Israel (2.0909); and in Palestine reached (1.9286), the total score for the sample as a whole reached (2.1149).

Iran believes that U.S. policy is declining, as the results indicate, while Egypt does not see this, with the rest of the results being equal between those who support this decline and believe that it is not declining.

Iran sees a decline in the United States’s role in the region and even wants it, while Egypt strategically does not want that because of U.S. support.

Figure 28



Source: compiled by the author

Concerning the fifth question, which states: “The U.S. Hegemony in the Middle East is declining but not falling,” It was found that the highest response among the sample members was Iran (2.9167), and the lowest response among the sample members in Saudi Arabia and Egypt was (1.9091). The arithmetic mean of the sample members in Turkey was (2.0714), the arithmetic mean of the sample members in Israel reached (2.0909), the arithmetic mean of the sample members in Palestine was (2.0714), the total score of the sample as a whole reached (2.1494).

The results of this question are similar in terms of content to the previous question. The decline in the role of the United States – as Iran desires – does not mean its complete downfall, but rather that there is a rearrangement of the region with its components and powers.

Regarding the ranking of countries according to the strength of each country’s intervention in the Middle East, it was the highest response to the sample members who believe that the U.S is the most interfering country in the Middle East, the sample members in Iran and Turkey, with (3.0000). The lowest response was among the sample

members in Egypt, with (2.1071); in Saudi Arabia, was (2.8182); in Israel, was (2.9091); and in Palestine, was (2.7857); the total score for the sample as a whole reached (2.6437).

As for the European Union, it reached the highest response among the sample members in Egypt, where the arithmetic mean reached (2.8182), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Palestine, with (1.7143), in Turkey reached (2.4643), in Iran reached (2.1667), in Saudi Arabia reached (2.7273), and in Israel reached (2.1818), the total score for the sample as a whole reached (2.3448).

Regard to Russia reached the highest response among the sample members in Iran, with (2.9167), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Palestine, reaching (1.7143), and Turkey (1.8571), Saudi Arabia was (2.3636), and Israel reached (2.7273), was in Egypt (2.7273). The total score for the sample as a whole reached (2.2644).

As for China, it reached the highest response among the sample members in Turkey, where the arithmetic mean was (2.2143), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Palestine, with (1.5714), and in Iran reached (1.9167), in Saudi Arabia reached (2.0000), and in Israel reached (2.0909), in Egypt reached (1.8182), the total score of the sample as a whole reached (1.9770).

Through the total score (average calculation) of the sample members in all the countries targeted in this study, the author sees that the indicators are high in terms of considering that the intervention of world powers is an obstacle to any successful regional cooperation in the Middle East and that the intervention of the U.S. as a dominant power is a major failure factor of the successful model of regional cooperation in the region, with a clear biased of the U.S. policy toward Israel.

It is also clear that Iran is the highest country that sees that U.S. policies are in decline, unlike Egypt, which sees the opposite, as is evident from the respondents' answers.

Likewise, concerning the hegemony of the United States, it is declining but will not end. The highest responses were in Iran and the lowest in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Here, the author believes these answers are directly related to the nature of the hostile relations that the U.S. has with Iran and its compatible relationship with Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

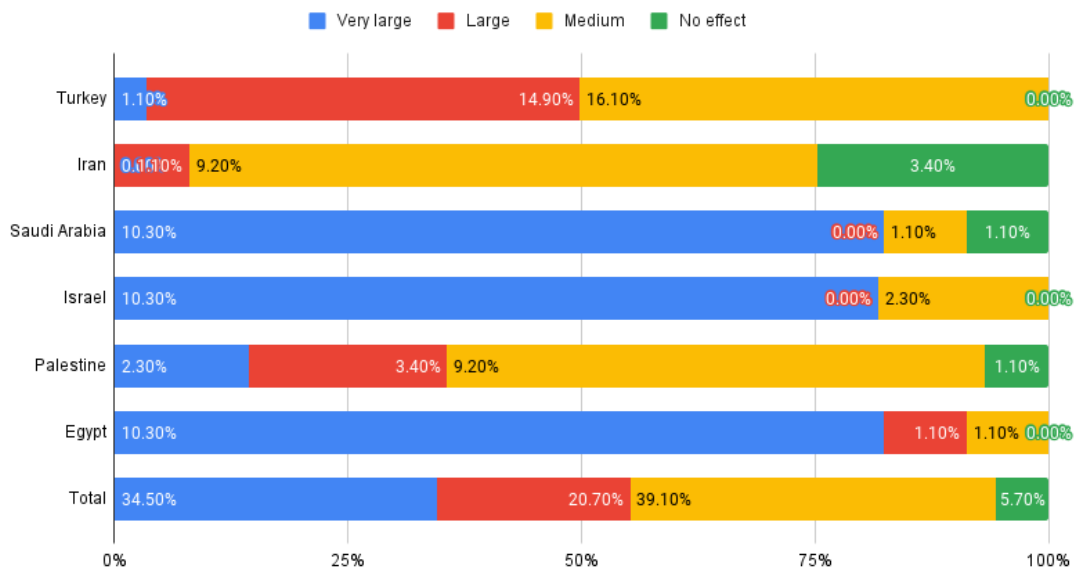
Regarding the ranking of countries in terms of the strength of their intervention in the region, the results were in order: United States, then the European Union, then Russia, and China.

5. Results related to the “Conflict Effect”

To answer the questions of this dimension, cross tables were used to determine the frequencies and percentages of each response according to the place variable.

5.1. Result related to the first question: “The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is still a top priority for the Middle East?”

Figure 29



Source: compiled by the author

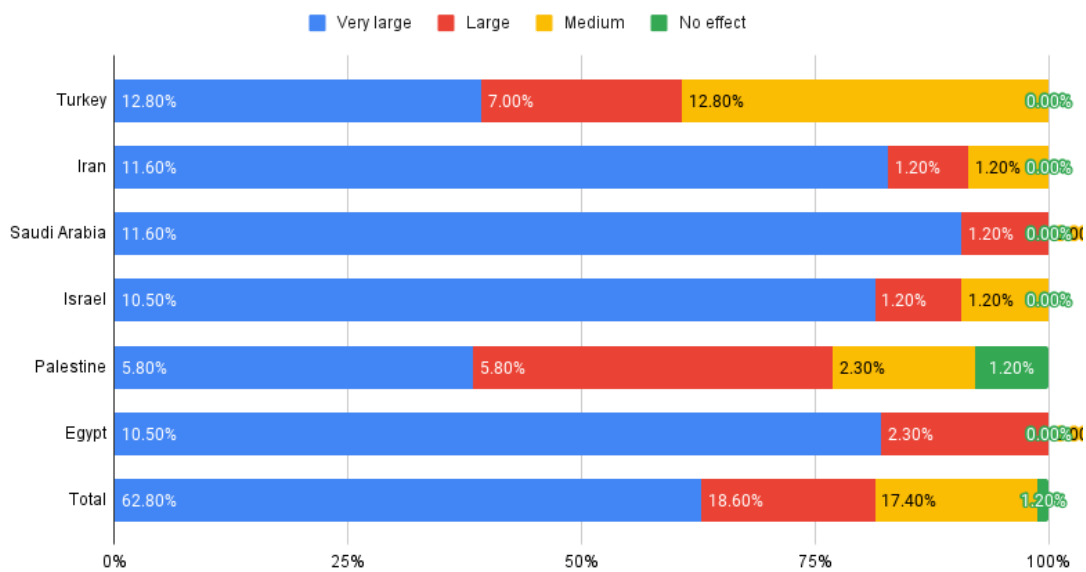
The results show that the ‘Medium’ obtained the highest percentage in the average responses among the targeted countries in this research.

The author believes that this result is expected. After the Arab uprising, the countries’ policies changed, and the balance of power also changed; the dispute became rife with

armed conflicts and instability. Many countries, such as Iraq, Syria, Libya, and Yemen, the countries of the region became preoccupied with themselves more than their interest in the problems of neighboring countries; it is natural that the priority of the conflict reaches medium, may be lower than that of some countries in practice.

5.2. Result related to the second question: “Do you think there is a direct impact of the conflict on the Middle East stability?”

Figure 30

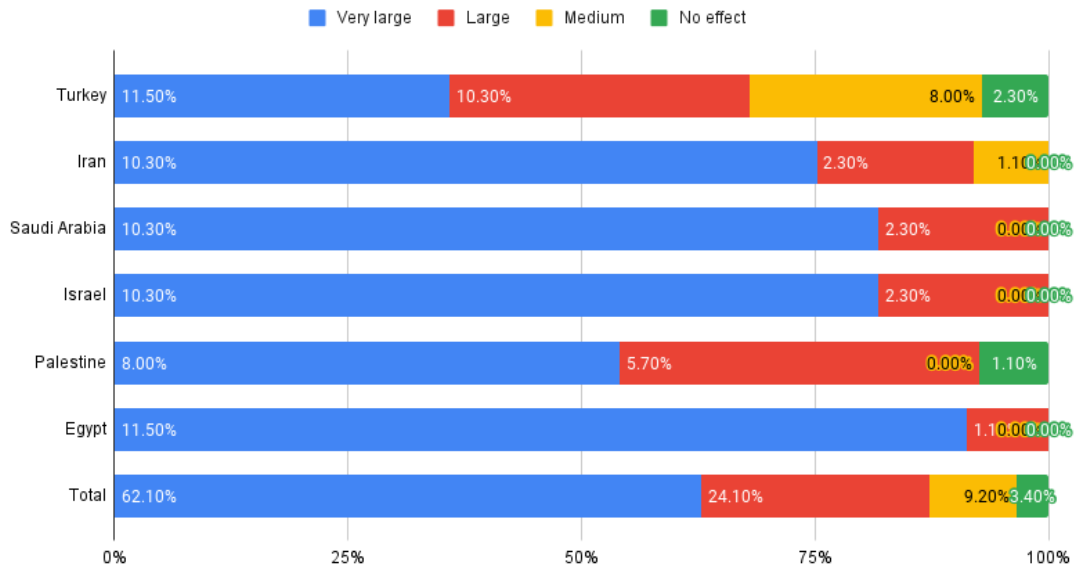


Source: compiled by the author

The results show that ‘very large’ obtained the highest percentage in the average of responses among the targeted countries in this research regarding how the Palestinian-Israeli conflict affects the stability of the Middle East. This result is natural and meets the current reality, and this conflict has always existed; without future and radical solutions, the region will not feel any stability and security.

5.3. Results related to the third question: “Do you believe that solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will have a positive impact on solving the problems of the Middle East?”

Figure 31

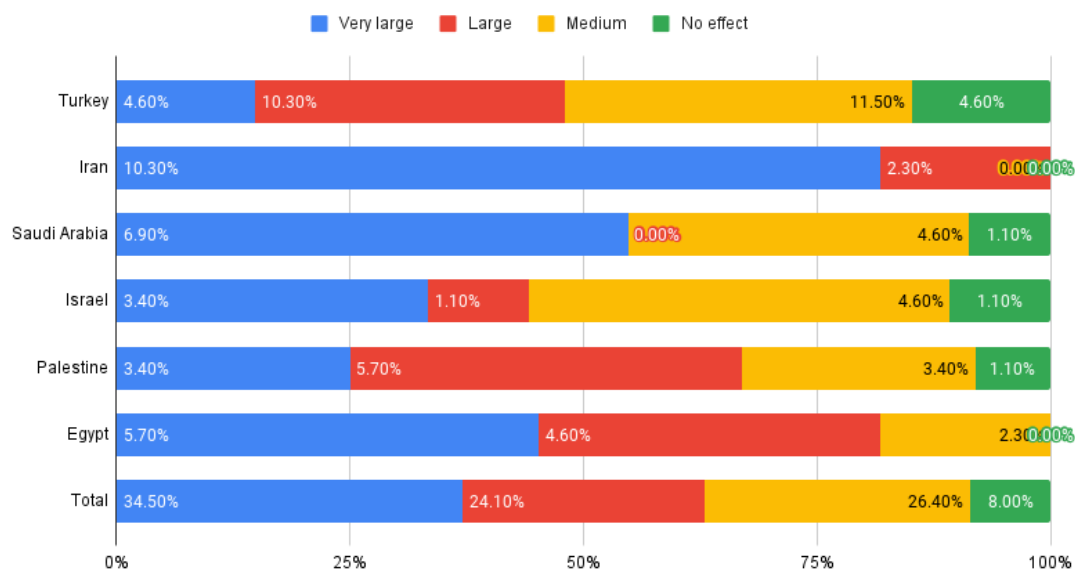


Source: compiled by the author

The results show that ‘very large’ obtained the highest percentage that solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will positively affect the solutions to the region's problems. The author believes that this is the only conflict in the region that, if resolving it in a just and fair manner, will move the region towards stability because other conflicts in the region differ from the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in terms of type and content and it is possible to put an end to them.

5.4. Result related to the forth question: “Do you think that the Arab uprising of 2011 has changed the priorities and policies of your country in particular?”

Figure 32

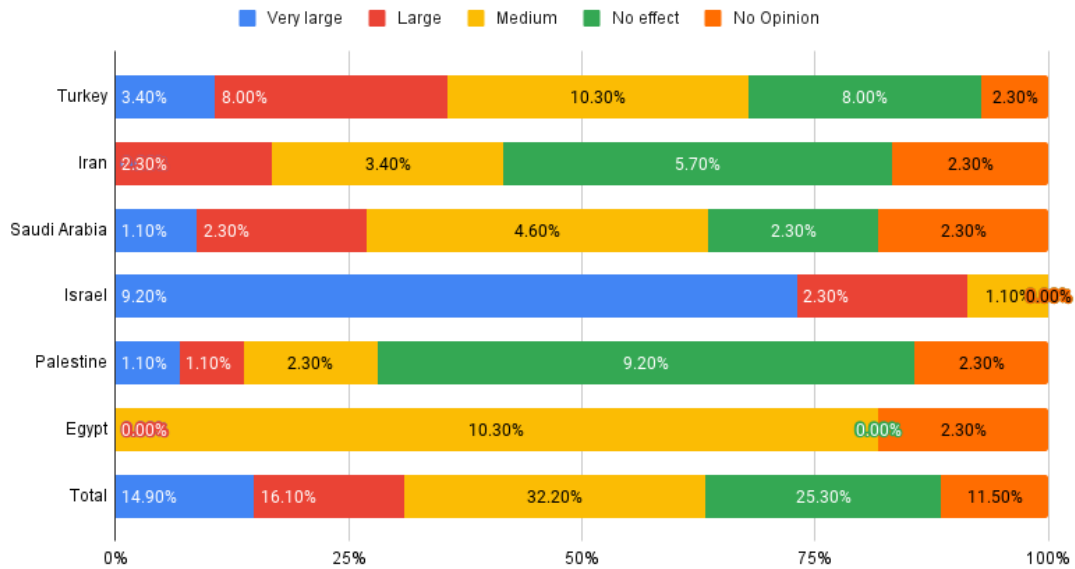


Source: compiled by the author

The highest degree of change was in Iran, Saudi Arabia, then Egypt in a very large and medium way in Turkey, then Israel, and large in Palestine concerning the change in the priorities and policies of these countries after the Arab uprising of 2011. The indicator ‘very large’ obtained the highest percentage, and the author’s opinion is that this result is natural; after the Arab uprising in 2011, countries have become more involved in their policies “concerning internal affairs and ensuring their stability” than their interference in the affairs of the region.

5.5. Results related to the fifth question: “Israel’s position as a strong country in the region is considered a success factor in resolving the conflict.”

Figure 33

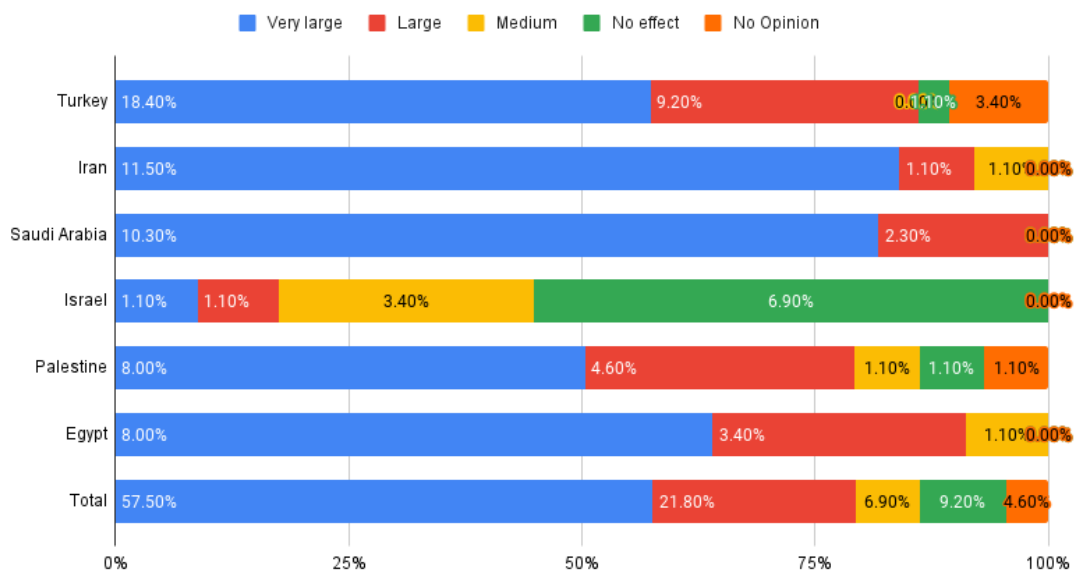


Source: compiled by the author

Israel’s position as a strong country is considered a success factor in resolving the conflict; the results fluctuated between medium and no effect. The author attributes the reason behind this result to the fact that it is assumed that Israel’s power is a factor in resolving the conflict in terms of the ability to take action. The decision or the imposition of specific directions to resolve the conflict, but so far this has not happened, and accordingly, these responses were made by the respondents not to consider its power as a positive factor enhancing the solution to the conflict

5.6. Result related to the sixth question: “Israel’s position as a strong country in the region is considered a failure factor in resolving the conflict.”

Figure 34



Source: compiled by the author

It is evident from the indicator ‘very large’ that Israel’s position as a strong country is considered a failure factor to resolve the conflict. This indicator, according to the author’s opinion, is what reflects the current reality of the situation in the Middle East, specifically on the issue of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, as Israel’s power and position in the region push it towards ignoring the Palestinian issue and the conflict and its attempt to impose a reality on the ground in proportion to Israel’s interests without taking into account the priorities of the Palestinian situation or even taking its options and needs seriously. This is based on the power of Israel and the weakness of the Palestinians and is in line with the reality of the situation in the Middle East as a region.

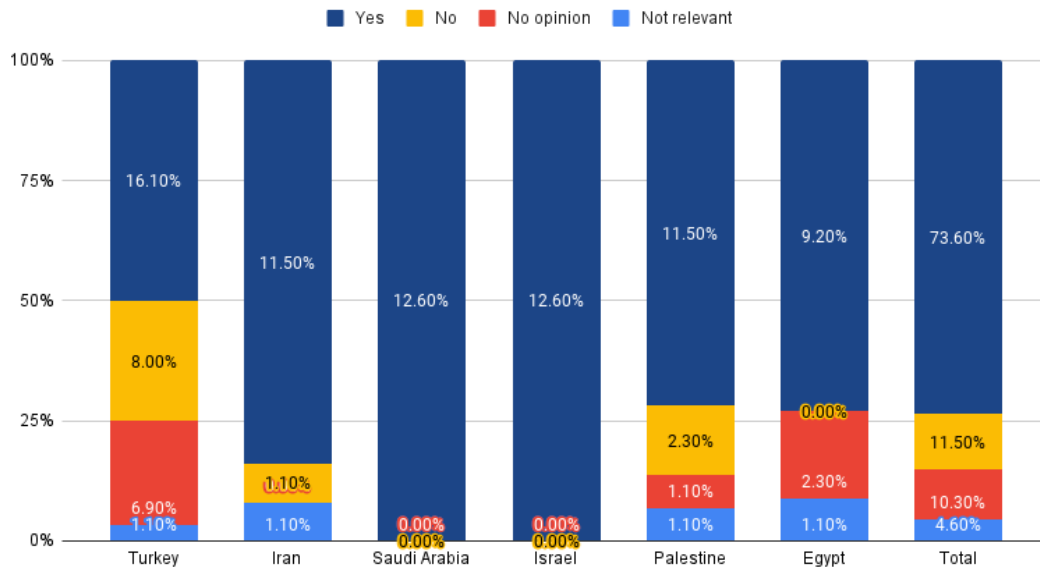
6. Results related to the “Expected Alliances”

To answer the questions of this dimension, cross tables were used to determine the frequencies and percentages of each response according to the place variable.

6.1. Result related to the first question: “What are your thoughts on forming a regional power through the alliance and cooperation of more than one country.”

Figure 35

Table No. (34)

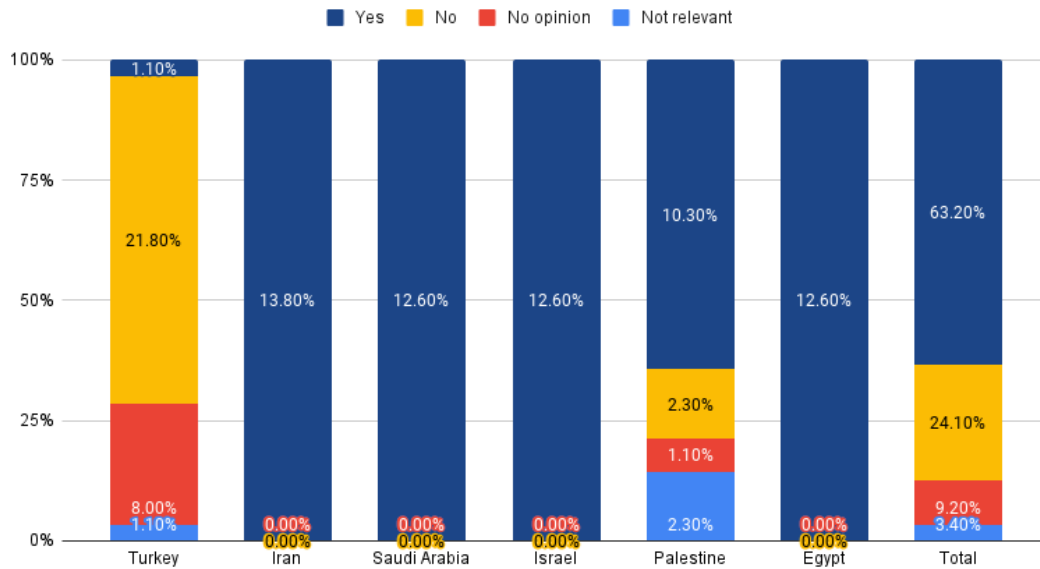


Source: compiled by the author

It seems that the answer ‘yes’ was the highest among the total results about the possibility of forming a regional power through the alliance of more than one country in the Middle East. The author chose this question with the intention that the Middle East region is difficult to have a single dominant regional power, and the possibility of the region's future will be through an alliance of more than one power to control the course of the region's policies.

6.2. Result related to the second question: “Do you consider the Saudi-Israeli alliance possible?”

Figure 36

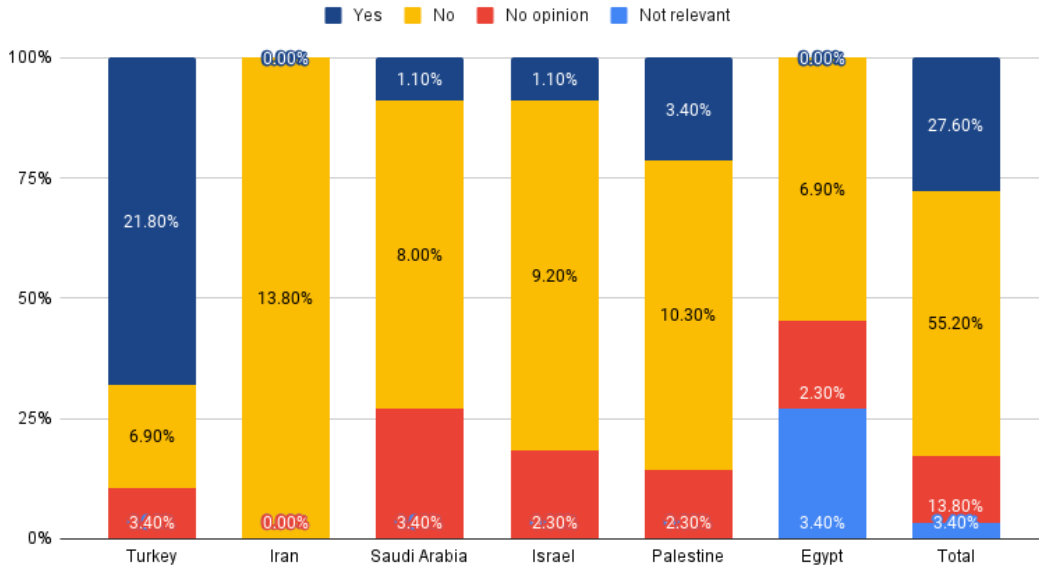


Source: compiled by the author

Figure 36 shows the highest total response rate of ‘yes’ possibility of the Saudi-Israeli alliance. The respondents in Turkey were higher in the direction of answering ‘no.’ Practically on the ground, the author believes that the result of this question is natural and possible at this time when the Israeli openness to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states is in full swing in the security aspects, while before the Arab Spring 2011 in particular, it was not even possible to think about it.

6.3. Result related to the third question: “Do you consider the Iranian-Israeli alliance possible?”

Figure 37

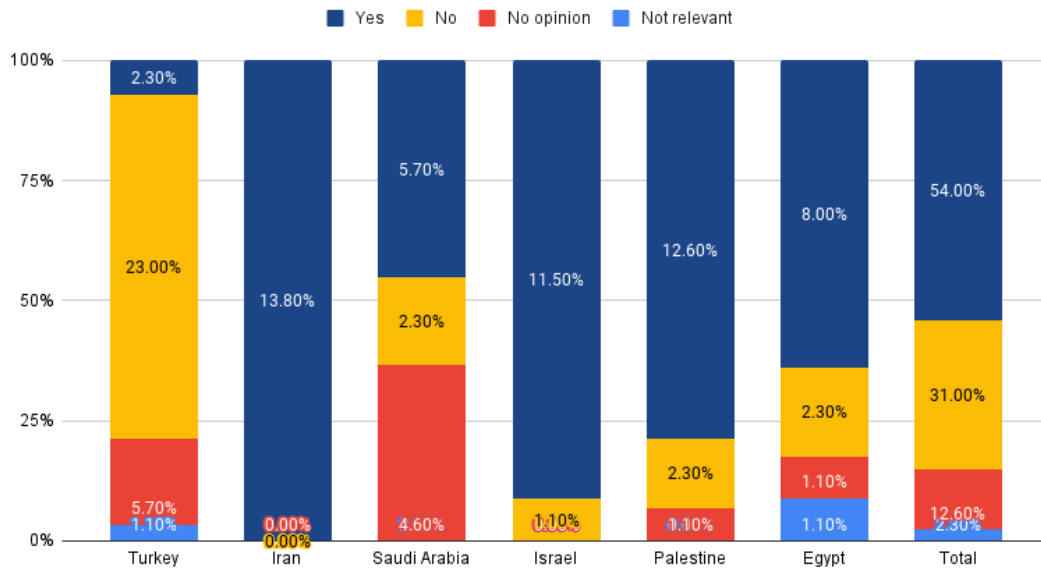


Source: compiled by the author

The highest total response rate of ‘no’ to the possibility of an Israeli-Iranian alliance, while the paradox was found by the respondents in Turkey, where the response ‘yes’ was highest than ‘no.’ The result is natural that it is not possible to establish an Israeli-Iranian alliance, while the author attributes the responses in Turkey to uncertainty in politics in general and that anything is possible.

6.4. Result related to the fourth question, "Do you consider the Turkish-Israeli alliance possible?"

Figure 38



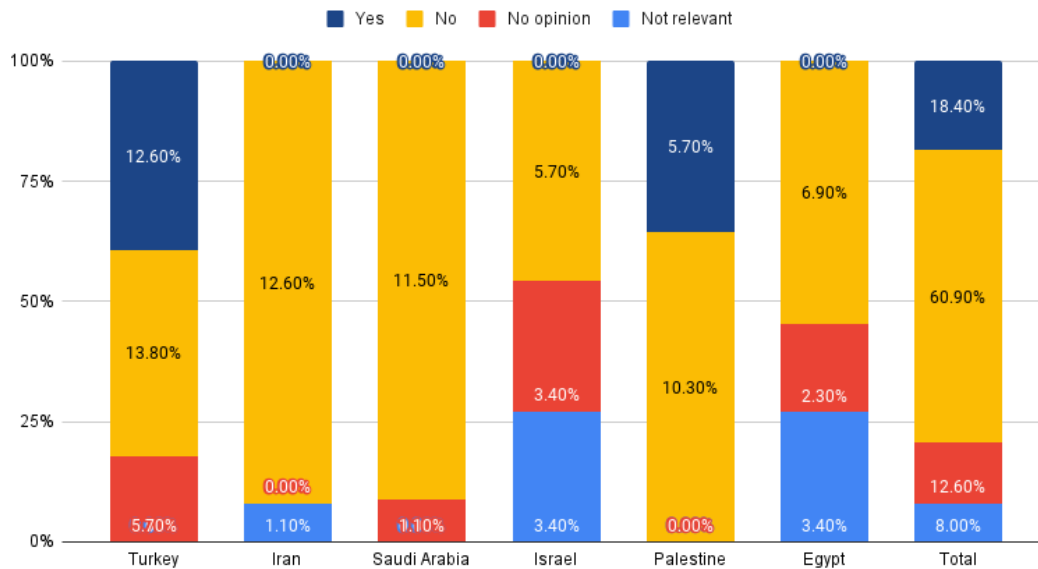
Source: compiled by the author

The highest total response rate of ‘yes’ to the possibility of a Turkish-Israeli alliance, the highest rate of ‘yes’ response among the countries was in Iran, and the lowest rate of ‘yes’ was in Turkey, where in Turkey the majority tended to answer with ‘no.’

The author sees how the Iranian view Turkey as “the possibility of an alliance with Israel,” which may be considered a kind of political downfall, and that the respondents in Turkey do not see this alliance as possible. While the reality of cooperation between the Turkish and Israeli sides exists on the economic and security levels on the ground, the author of the dissertation agrees with the result of this question that this alliance is possible.

6.5. Result related to the fifth question: “Do you consider the Saudi-Iranian alliance possible?”

Figure 39



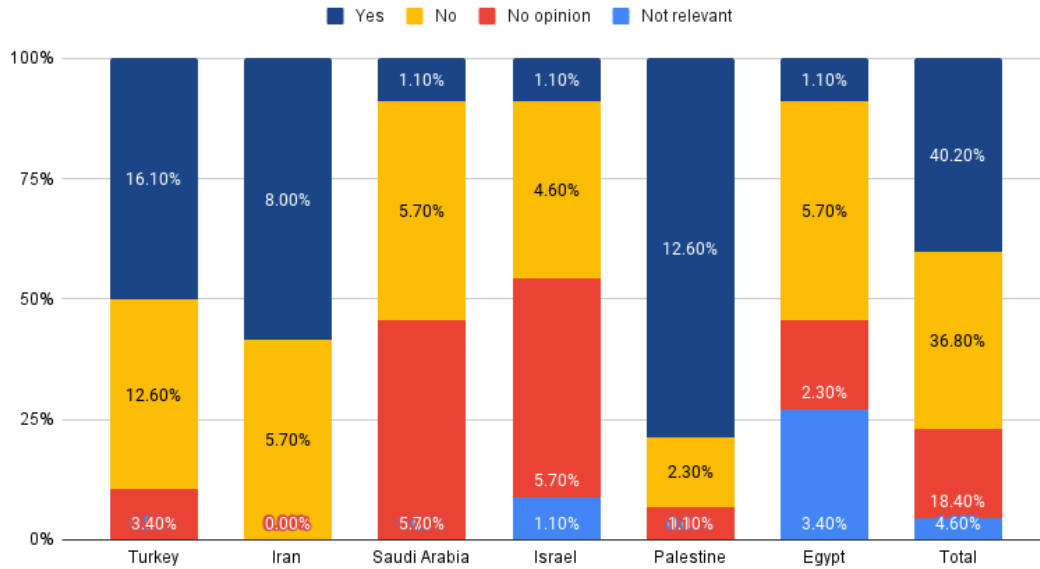
Source: compiled by the author

Figure 39 shows the highest total response rate, ‘no,’ to the possibility of the Saudi-Iranian alliance, while the respondents in Turkey were almost equally divided between ‘yes’ and ‘no.’

The author agrees with the result of this question, as it is impossible for a Saudi-Iranian alliance or even cooperation in the affairs of the Middle East, and the lack of clarity in the answers of the respondents in Turkey refers to the Turkish political uncertainty in both Iran and Saudi Arabia “the mistrust.”

6.6. Result related to the sixth question: “Do you consider the Turkish-Iranian alliance possible?”

Figure 40



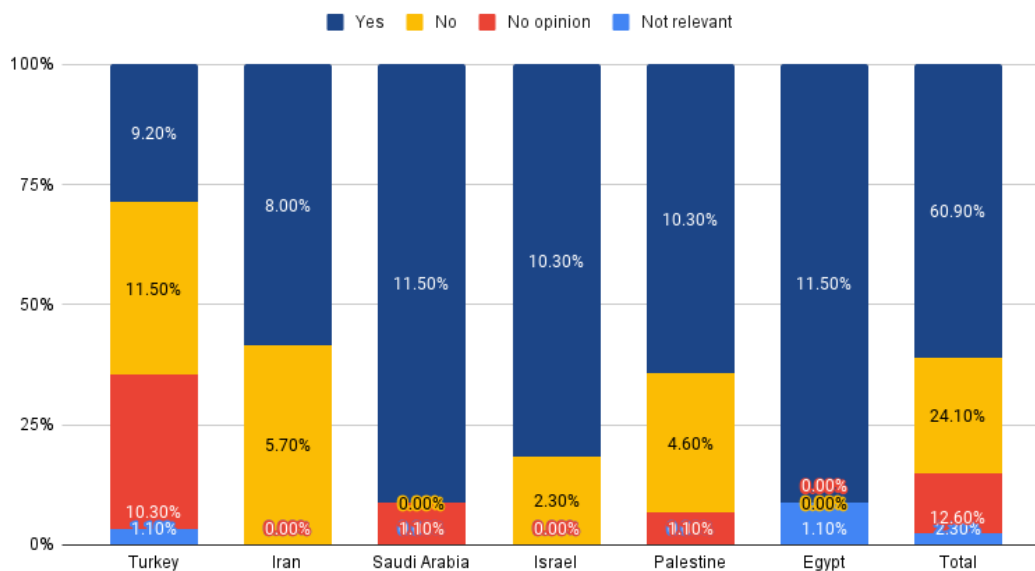
Source: compiled by the author

The highest total response rate was ‘yes’ to the possibility of a Turkish-Iranian alliance. In both countries, Turkey and Iran, the respondents’ answers were ‘yes’ more than they answered ‘no,’ and this is close to congruence in the view to some extent, knowing that the answers of the two countries in the possibility of an alliance with Israel in the questions it showed as if each side “Turkish and Iranian” was suspicious of the other.

In politics, everything is possible, and within the framework of the realist theory, interests always meet, even if the principles differ.

6.7. Result related to the seventh question: “Do you consider the Turkish-Saudi alliance possible?”

Figure 41



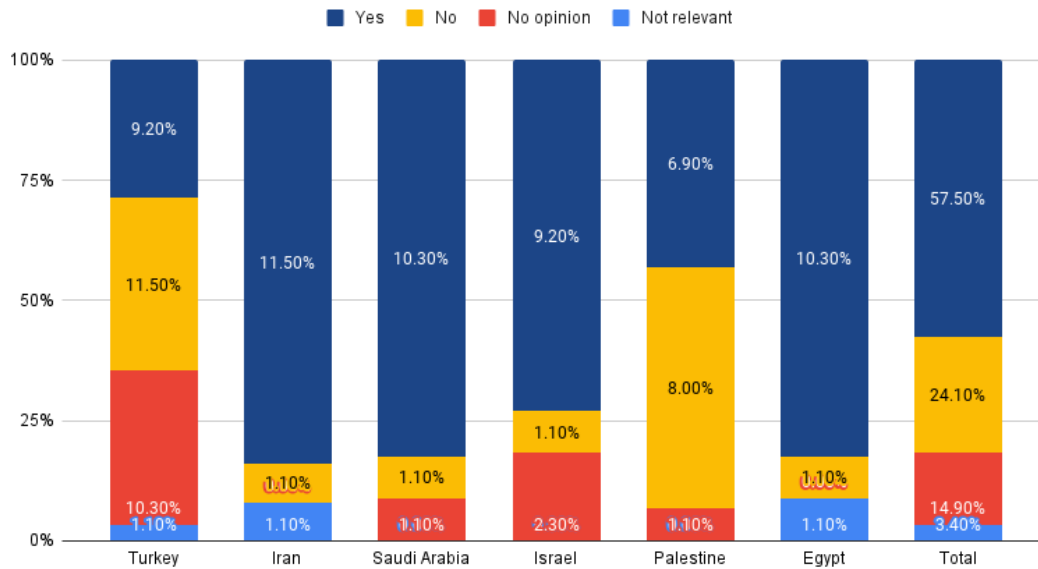
Source: compiled by the author

Figure 41 shows the highest total response rate, ‘yes’ to the possibility of the Turkish-Saudi alliance, and that the ‘yes’ response index in all countries is higher than its counterpart in the ‘no’ response.

The author considers the result of this question to be different from what exists in the practical reality in the Middle East. There is an invisible conflict between Turkey and Saudi Arabia in the religious field. Both parties see themselves as a leader of the Sunni Muslim world, and Turkey considers itself a model, as well as Saudi Arabia, and the policies of both parties reflect this trend. For example, sponsoring and building mosques worldwide was under the Saudi umbrella and is now under the Turkish umbrella. This alliance might have been impossible, but the change in the map of the region and its contraventions after the Arab Spring 2011 is moving towards making everything possible.

6.8. Result related to the eighth question: “In your opinion, do you believe that the United States is interested in supporting a new regional power in the Middle East in the near future?”

Figure 42



Source: compiled by the author

Figure 42 shows the highest overall response rate, ‘yes’ that the U.S. is interested in supporting a new regional power in the region in the near future.

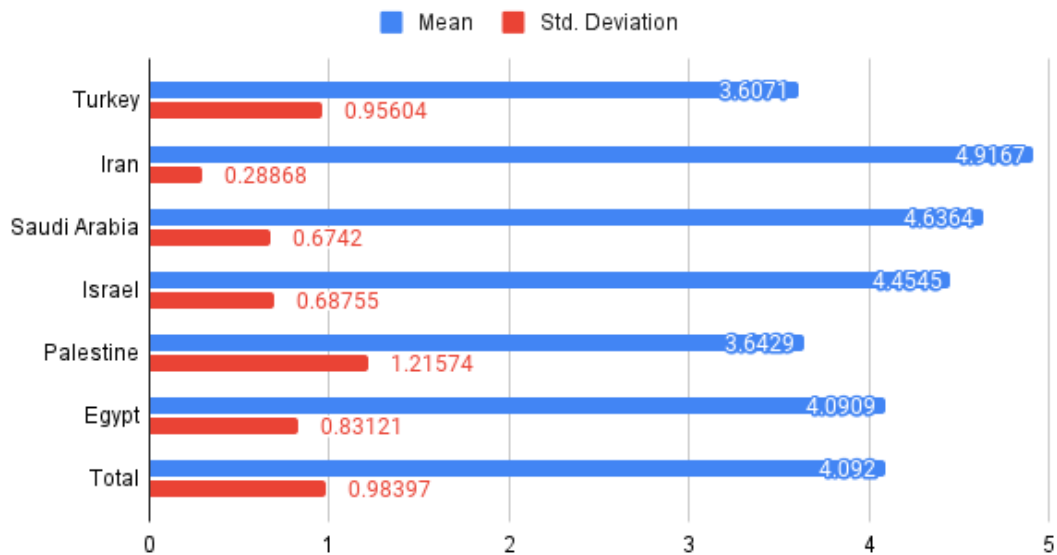
The author believes that the results of this question are close to the results reached in previous chapters of the thesis, the policy of the U.S. is in decline in the region at the expense of supporting a regional power in the region to replace it and reducing the burdens of the U.S. expansion abroad while preserving its interests.

7. Result related to the “Palestinian Internal Situation.”

In order to answer the questions of this dimension, the arithmetic averages and standard deviations were extracted, bearing in mind that the scale used in this dimension is the

five-point Likert scale. Paragraphs with positive content were given (5) degrees for each answer ‘very agree,’ (4) degrees for each answer ‘agree,’ (3) points for each answer ‘neutral,’ (2) degrees for each answer ‘disagree,’ and (1) degree for each answer ‘very disagree,’ the highest response is (5). The following figures show the results:

Figure 43

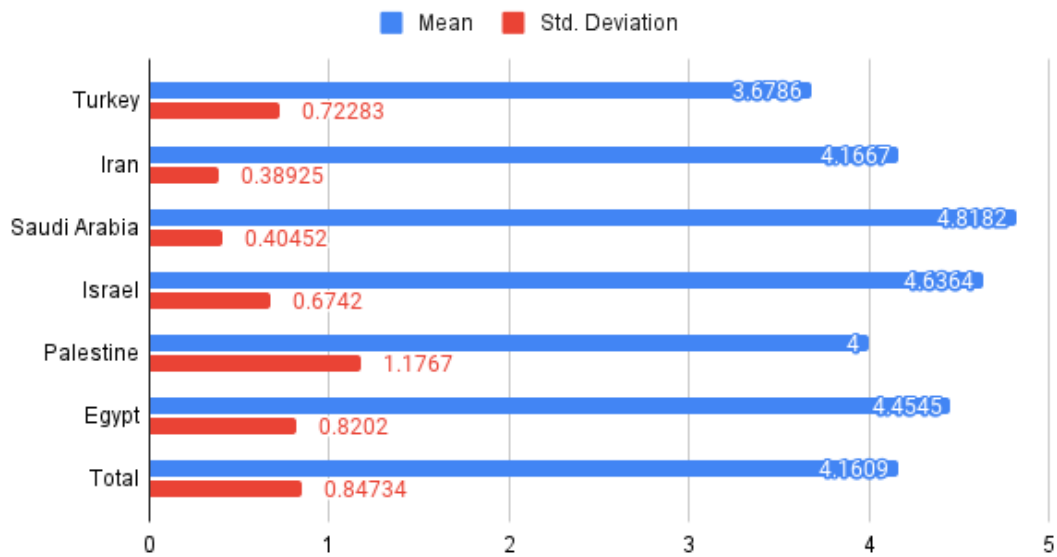


Source: compiled by the author

Table 43 shows that the highest response to the first question, which states: “There is a direct impact of the internal Palestinian division on the nature of alliances in the region,” in Iran with (4.9167), and the lowest response in Turkey with (3.6071), and the in Saudi Arabia reached (4.6364), in Israel reached (4.4545), and in Palestine reached (3.6429), and with Egypt (4.0909), the total score for the sample as a whole reached (4.0920).

The author disagrees with the results of this question, and Iran does not care about the agreement of the Palestinian side as much as it cares about its protection in the region. The author agrees with the Turkish state's third arrangement in the division's impact on their policy, as Turkey played a supportive role for the Gaza Strip more than for the West Bank.

Figure 44

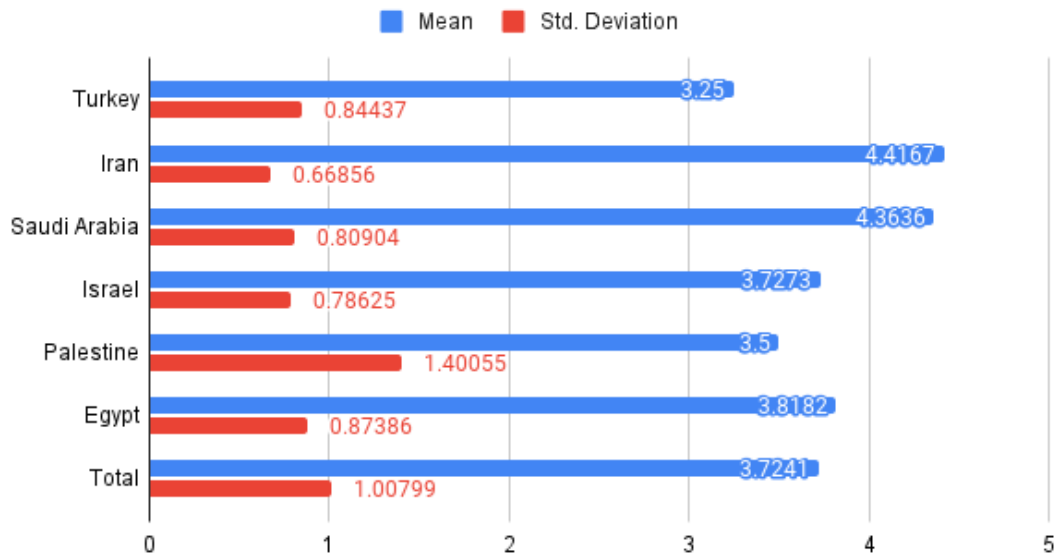


Source: compiled by the author

The highest response to the second question, which states: “There is a direct impact of the internal Palestinian division on resolving the conflict in general,” was among the sample members in Saudi Arabia, with (4.8182), and the lowest response was reached among the sample members in Turkey, with (3.6786), and in Iran reached (4.1667), in Israel reached (4.6364), and for Palestine reached (4.0000), and in Egypt (4.4545), the total score for the sample as a whole (4.1609).

In general, there is a direct impact of the Palestinian internal division on resolving the conflict. There has been a state of fragmentation and even contradiction in alliances between Gaza and the West Bank. The author agrees with the results of this question, as Saudi Arabia played a significant role in trying to achieve reconciliation between the two parties in more than one initiative, but it did not succeed.

Figure 45

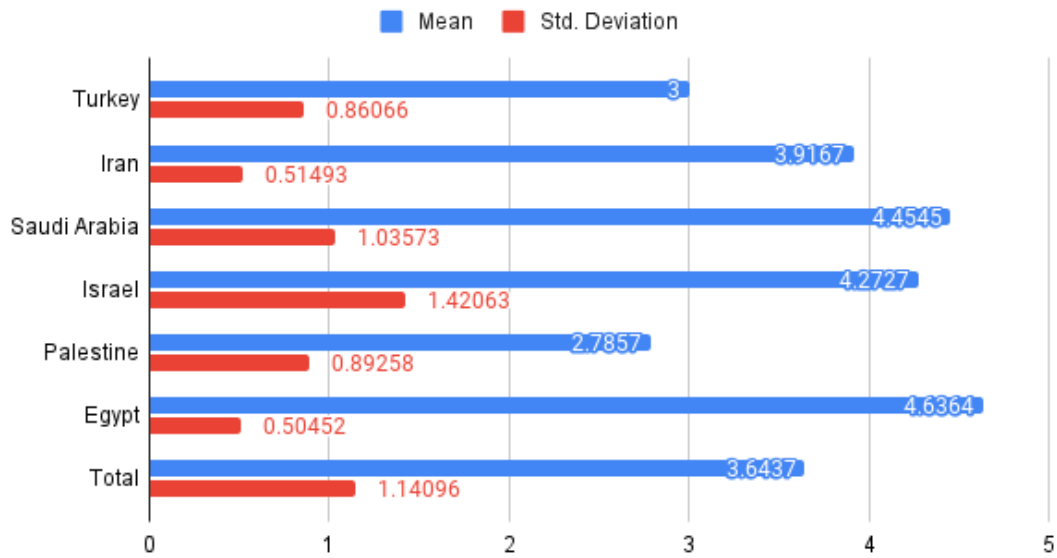


Source: compiled by the author

Figure 45 shows that the highest response to the third question, which states: “The Arab Uprising of 2011 has had a direct impact on the growth of the Palestinian schism ‘division’ the mediation countries are preoccupied with themselves”, in Saudi Arabia, with (4.3636). The lowest response reached among the sample members in Turkey, with an average of (3.2500), and in Iran reached (4.1667), and in Israel reached (3.7273), Palestine reached (3.5000), meanwhile in Egypt (3.8182), the total score of the sample as a whole (3.7241).

The author believes that the Arab uprising in 2011 directly affected a change in the policies of the region's countries, which became more preoccupied with their internal affairs than with the problems of the region itself. It also played a role in strengthening the state of division.

Figure 46

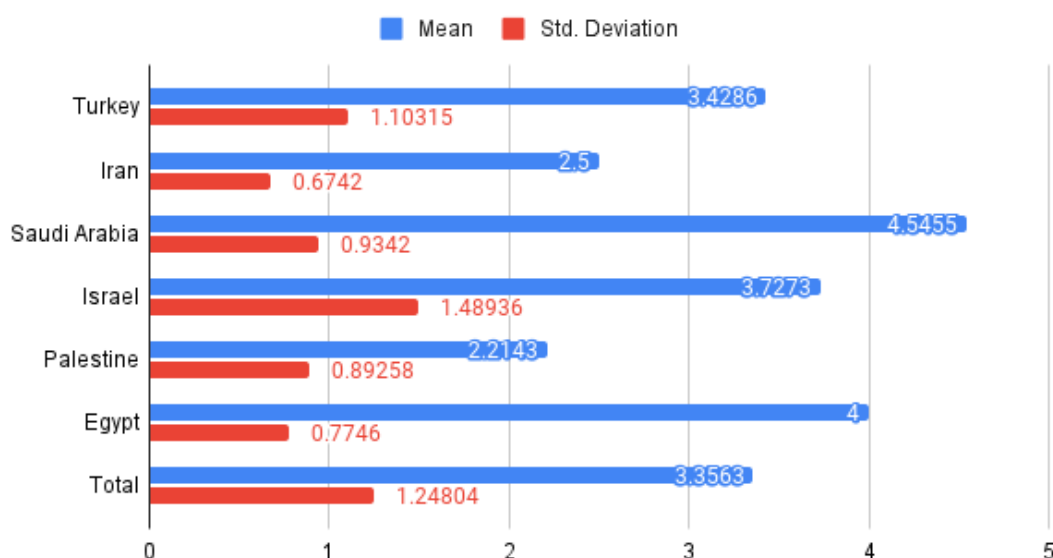


Source: compiled by the author

The highest response to the fourth question, which states: “Your country intervenes to end the Palestinian schism,” was among the sample members in Egypt, with (4.6364), and the lowest response among the sample members in Palestine, with an average of (2.7857). The average in Iran reached (3.9167), Saudi Arabia reached (4.4545), Israel reached (4.2727), and Turkey reached (3.0000), the total score for the sample as a whole (3.6437).

The author agrees with the results, as Egypt is one of the most interfering mediating countries in the conflict, and also agrees with the order of countries' intervention, as Turkey plays a marginal role in it.

Figure 47



Source: compiled by the author

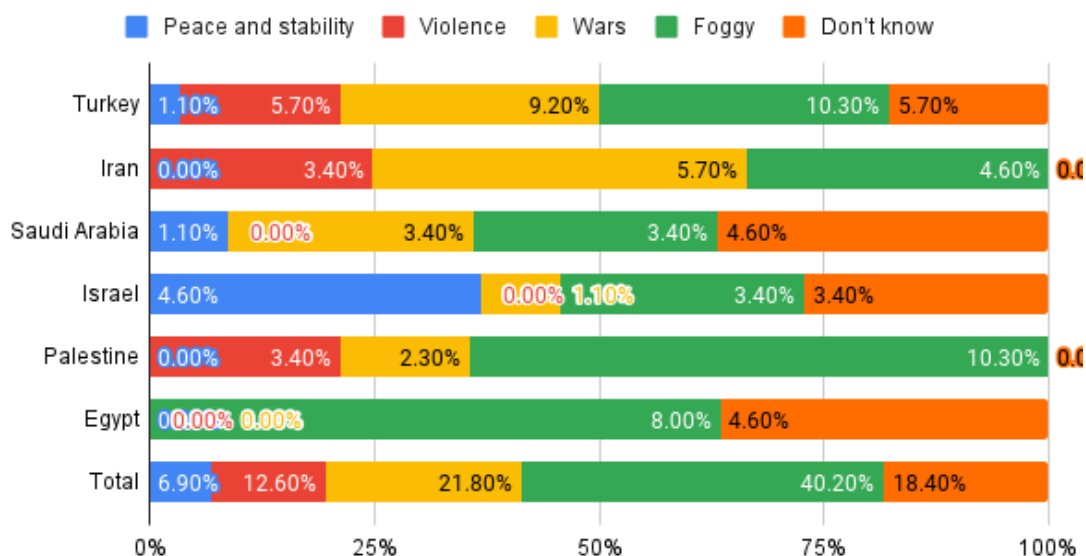
Figure 47 shows that the highest response to the fifth question, which states: “Are you satisfied with your country’s policy to end the Palestinian schism” was among the sample members in Saudi Arabia with (4.5455), and the lowest response reached among the sample members in Palestine with (2.2143), in Turkey reached (3.4286), and in Iran reached (2.5000), in Israel reached (3.7273), as for Egypt reached (4.0000), the total score of the sample as a whole (3.3563).

The author agrees with the results of this question, as the mediating countries are satisfied with what they are offering to end this division, which none of them could do. The author attributes this to more than one reason, on top of which, as previously mentioned, the preoccupation of the mediation countries with their internal affairs after the events of the Arab uprising, their intervention to gain regional status and not to resolve the conflict, their interference imposed by their political and Islamic reality – sowing ashes in the eyes to satisfy their people.

8. Results related to the future of the region

The eighth dimension was with one question: “Do you think that the region will enjoy “peace and stability, violence, wars, foggy, don’t know” in the next five years. The results are as follows:

Figure 48



Source: compiled by the author

The highest response of ‘peace and stability’ among the sample members was in Israel, where the percentage reached (4.6%), and the lowest response among the sample members was in Iran, Palestine, and Egypt (0.0%), and the percentage among the sample members in Turkey and Saudi Arabia (1.1%), the total degree of ‘peace and stability’ (6.9%).

The highest response of ‘violence’ was among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage reached (5.7%), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Egypt (0.0%), and the percentage of the sample members in Iran and Palestine (3.4%), the total degree of ‘violence’ (12.6%).

The highest response of 'wars' was among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage amounted to (9.2%), and the lowest response among the sample members was in Egypt (0.0%), and the percentage of the sample members in Iran was (5.7 %). It reached among the sample members in Saudi Arabia (3.4%), and it was among the sample members in Israel (1.1%), and it reached among the sample members in Palestine (2.3%), the total degree of 'wars' reached (21.8%).

It is evident that the highest response of 'foggy' was among the sample members in Turkey and Palestine, where the percentage reached (10.3%), and the lowest response among the sample members was in Saudi Arabia and Israel (3.4%), and the percentage among the sample members in Egypt (8.0%), the percentage among the sample members in Iran (4.6%), the total degree of 'foggy' (40.2%).

The figure shows that the highest response of the sample members of 'don't know' was among the sample members in Turkey, where the percentage reached (5.7%), and the lowest response was among the sample members in Iran and Palestine (0.0%), and the percentage of the sample members was in Saudi Arabia and Egypt (4.6%), and the sample members in Israel (3.4%), the total score of 'don't know' (18.4%).

The figure shows that the indicator of 'foggy' obtained the highest overall score among the sample members at a rate of 40.2% regarding the region's future. Paradoxically, the sample members in Israel had the highest response toward peace and stability, which may be ambitious. The sample members in Turkey are divided between wars and foggy, while the sample in Iran is divided between foggy and more about wars. The author believes that this result reflects the reality of the situation in the region.

XII. 1. 8. Conclusion of a survey

The survey dealt with eight dimensions; each dimension had a set of questions for measurement and analysis; some answers simulated the region's reality, and others were new and different. The general objective of the survey was to know the clarity of the name of the 'Middle East' and its meaning to the respondents, as well as its strategic importance as determinants of the foreign policy of the target countries.

The survey also dealt with the extent to which Israel, as a strong state, is reflected as an influential factor in resolving the conflict or as a failed one. At the same time, the survey focused on the extent of the intervention of the world powers and the order of their intervention, in addition to the fact that the U.S. role has declined and its support for a new regional power to replace it or implement its policies.

Within the framework of the work, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was included to know its place and rank in the priorities of the targeted countries' policies, in addition to the extent of the internal Palestinian division's reflection on the policies of the target countries. The survey concluded with a future and a vision for the region, at least for the next five years.

1. The definition and Importance of the Middle East

The results showed that 69.0% of the study sample believes there is a clear definition of the so-called Middle East. While (31.0%) do not believe there is a clear definition of the Middle East. We believe that the most significant percentage was heading for the fact that there is a clear definition of the Middle East and that Turkey had the largest share of affirmation that there is a clear definition of the Middle East.

The results show that 75.9% of the correspondents believe that their country belongs to the Middle East geographically, while (23.0%) don't, and (1.1%) see 'no relationship.' Meanwhile, Iran is a country that does not believe it belongs to the Middle East geographically.

The results indicate that 90.8% of the study sample show that all the targeted countries in this study believe that they belong to the Middle East politically; 8.0% answered 'no,' 1.1% answered 'not relevant.' The result is a specific, confirmed sense of political belonging to the region.

Regarding the geographical significance of the Middle East, the results show that 63.2% of the respondents answered 'yes,' 32.2% answered 'no,' 3.4% answered 'no opinion,' and 1.1 % answered 'not relevant.' The answers are close to assure that the Middle East is a geographical connotation exclusively. Meanwhile, the sample members in Turkey believe that the Middle East does not have a geographical significance exclusively but

goes beyond that, while the rest of the sample members in “Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, and Israel” believe so.

The majority of the samples were close to ensuring that the Middle East is not a successful model of regional cooperation, with 36.8% of the respondents answering ‘yes,’ 52.9% answering ‘no’ and 8.0% answering ‘no opinion’ and 2.3% answering ‘not relevant.’ Meanwhile, Iran and Saudi Arabia were the highest in considering that the Middle East is a successful model for regional cooperation. In contrast, the rest of the countries, led by Turkey, considered that the Middle East is not a successful model for regional cooperation and the fact that the results of Saudi Arabia and Iran, in particular, are different from what the literature has dealt with it in general that the Middle East is a failed model of international cooperation.

Finally, despite the apparent lack of clarity surrounding the definition of the Middle East, there is a clear definition of the Middle East region from the political and geographical point of view, and the Middle East region is approaching the definition from the geographical point of view used by world powers to indicate a place. Meanwhile, the Middle East is a failed model in regional cooperation regionalism, as it contains a group of countries of varying strength seeking to secure self-protection for them.

2. Regional power

The summary of regional power showed that the response of the sample members tends to agree that there is a dominant power in the Middle East with 60.9%, with 33.3% disagreed. Both Iran and Saudi Arabia are closer to the presence of a dominant regional power in the Middle East, while the indicators are low in the rest of the countries in which the study was conducted, and we see that the answers may have had some ambition from the sample members in both countries mentioned Iran and Saudi Arabia or so they think or desire.

The percentage reached (72.4%) agreed that there is an influential power in the Middle East, with (21.8%) disagreeing; as the results came, the total sum of the sample members who agreed that there is an influential regional power in the Middle East is high, while it

is noted that the sample members in Turkey are divided equally between ‘yes’ and ‘no,’ and this may be an indication of their belief that there is no effective power in all fields.

Regarding the classification of the country’s power, the answers of the sample members in Turkey focused on considering their country as an ‘influential power’ and ‘just a power,’ which are logical answers that simulate the current reality of the Turkish state. In contrast, the answers of the sample members in Iran regarded their state as a ‘dominant power.’ Perhaps these answers are emotional and do not reflect the current reality of the Iranian state, which is closer to being an influential power and a driver of the region’s policies, and the rest of the answers of the sample members “Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Palestine, and Israel” were closer to an accurate description of their current reality.

Strangely, the summary of regional power in the survey showed that high responses tend to agree that there is a dominant power in the Middle East. All countries - except for Palestine - in the region strongly aspire to become a regional power, and none of the countries in the region possesses the fundamental components of a dominant regional power. Instead, it is influential, aims to become a regional leader and a relative preponderance of material resources, and seeks to gain recognition of its status by at least some countries in the region and, if necessary, by world powers.

If we consider that the order represents the conditions in which the units of the international system or individual regional systems operate.²⁵³ There is no separate, clear-cut order for the Middle East. On the other hand, the region does not live in chaos due to the absence of the supreme regional authority. Instead, this chaos creates order for the Middle East as a region, as a mixture between order and chaos. Since the world powers represent this supreme authority and not the region's internal powers, no particular order distinguishes the region.

²⁵³ PONÍŽILOVÁ, M.: *Stability of Regional Orders in Contemporary International System: a framework for analysis*. 2017. Faculty of International Relations, University of Economics in Bratislava 2017, Volume XV., Issue 2. p. 185.

3. The Significance of the Palestinian – Israeli Conflict in the region

It is noted from the previous analysis that the direct impact of the conflict on the countries targeted in this research was the highest responses in Saudi Arabia, and this is, in fact, yes, the conflict has a direct impact on it, and this is represented in the mediating role that Saudi Arabia plays in intervening in this conflict, or in the packages of financial support it provides to the Palestinian Authority.

As for the indicator of intervention in order to resolve the conflict, the highest responses were in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. This reflects the reality of the situation and the mediation practiced by both countries in the conflict, directly and indirectly, specifically Egypt.

As for the indicator of intervention to gain a regional position, it was the highest response among the sample members in Iran and the lowest in Turkey, which is also consistent with the current Iranian ambition.

Concerning whether the country's policies were sufficient to resolve the conflict, the responses were the highest in Saudi Arabia and the lowest in Turkey. This is another piece of evidence that is consistent with Saudi policies on the ground and their level of intervention in the conflict, and another indicator, where the lowest responses were on the Turkish side, which reflects the desire to increase and raise the level of Turkish policies in intervening in the conflict, which is in fact at its lowest level.

Regarding the indicator of changing the country's policies after the Arab Spring of 2011, the highest responses were in Saudi Arabia, and this is a natural indicator, specifically after Saudi Arabia is preoccupied with the current conflict in Yemen and its support for the Yemeni regime against the Houthi group there, who are affiliated with the 'Shiite' movement.

Regarding the indicator of forming an internal alliance between the parties of the conflict, Iran was the highest, and this is evident by its relation with the Islamic Jihad organization in Gaza and the West Bank.

International alliances with the parties of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and with the Palestinian factions, in particular, are unavailable, as they were in the past during the polarization of Palestinian parties and neighboring countries or even world powers.

The issue of alliance and polarization at the time was a source of strength for the Palestinian factions, such as the alliance between the Palestinian and Russian socialist parties or the alliances of Palestinian factions with Arab regimes, such as the alliance of the Palestinian 'Baath Party' with the Iraqi regime during the era of Saddam Hussein.

These alliances were considered sources of strength for the two parties, the Palestinian in obtaining financial or military support, and the other party benefit proving strength and interference in the region's affairs.

Currently, the State of Qatar has entered the system of alliances with Palestinian parties, as is the case now with the Qatari alliance with Hamas in the Gaza Strip. However, it differs notably: with Israeli approval, in exchange for security guarantees, while Hamas receives monthly funds from the State of Qatar.

Undoubtedly, all the countries targeted in this questionnaire intervened in the conflict to solve it or gain regional status through their intervention. The questionnaire results may have arranged this intervention in terms of the most involved to the least involved, and so on. The most crucial thing in this dimension is to show the extent to which the policies of these countries have changed after the Arab Spring 2011, which left apparent effects on the change in the policies of the countries, which were distracted from the conflict by arranging their internal conditions, or the beginning of arranging their regional conditions in the balances of power in the region. In both cases, the Palestinian- Israeli conflict has become marginal, not any more top priority.

4. World Powers

The indicators are high in terms of considering the intervention of world powers as an obstacle to any successful regional cooperation in the Middle East, and the intervention of the U.S. as a dominant power is a major failure factor of a successful model of regional cooperation in the region, with a clear biased of the U.S. policy toward Israel.

It is also clear that Iran is the highest country that sees that U.S. policies are in decline, unlike Egypt, which sees the opposite.

Likewise, concerning the hegemony of the United States, it is declining but will not end. The highest responses were in Iran and the lowest in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Here, these answers are directly related to the nature of the hostile relations the U.S. has with Iran and its compatible relationship with Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Regarding the ranking of countries in terms of the strength of their intervention in the region, the results were in order, the United States, the European Union, and Russia, then China. Moreover, this arrangement is as it is in reality. The United States is still holding all the strings, although it is pushing the global and local powers to intervene more effectively, allowing Russia and Turkey to interfere in Syrian affairs.

The results of this dimension are consistent with what was discussed in the previous chapters of the thesis, as the Middle East has never been a successful model in regional cooperation, and the presence of external interference is one of the most significant obstacles to achieving any success. The United States is still the supra-regional power dominating the region with other roles for the global powers, the European Union, Russia, and China, but it is still subject to the U.S. will and desire, absolutely and has no freedom of action or influence but instead plays a functional role. Perhaps the United States wants to reduce the burden of its global expansion, and in the Middle East region as well, by giving more space to global powers to intervene, as it did with Russia, allowing it to interfere in Syrian affairs, as well as its continuous demands for China to play a more significant role than just a trading partner in the region.

5. Conflict Effect

The results show that the 'Medium' level obtained the highest percentage because the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is still a top priority. The results show 'very large' to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict affects the stability of the Middle East. This result is natural and meets the current reality. Without future and radical solutions to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the region will not feel any stability and security.

Also, the result (very large) obtained the highest percentage to the fact that solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will positively affect the solution to the region's problems. The author agrees that this is the only conflict in the region that, if resolving it in a just and

fair manner, will move the region towards stability because the other conflicts in the region differ in form and content from the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and it is possible to put an end to them.

It is clear that the highest degree of change was in order in Iran, Saudi Arabia, then Egypt, in a very large and medium way, in Turkey, then Israel, and large in Palestine about the change in the priorities and policies of these countries after the Arab uprising of 2011. Also, the indicator 'very large' obtained the highest percentage. The author sees this result as natural since, after the Arab uprising in 2011, countries have become more involved in their policies "concerning internal affairs and ensuring their stability" than their interference in the region's affairs.

The results fluctuated between medium and no effect to the indicator that 'Israel's position as a strong country is considered a success factor in resolving the conflict.' The author attributes the reason behind this result to the fact that; Israel's power is a factor in resolving the conflict regarding the ability to take action. However, so far, this has not happened, and accordingly, these responses were made by the respondents not to consider its power as a positive factor enhancing the solution to the conflict, indeed to consider it as a negative factor.

An inevitable result (very large) to consider 'Israel's position as a strong country a factor in the failure to resolve the conflict. This indicator reflects the current reality of the situation in the Middle East, specifically on the issue of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, as Israel's power and position in the region push it towards ignoring the Palestinian issue and the conflict and its attempt to impose a reality on the ground in proportion to Israel's interests without taking into account the priorities of the Palestinian situation or even taking its options and needs seriously. This is based on the power of Israel and the weakness of the Palestinians and is in line with the reality of the situation in the Middle East as a region.

In summary, The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is no longer a top priority in the region; it has fallen to the middle rank. This decline did not affect the fact that the conflict-affected the region's stability. The rise of Israel significantly and its ability to intervene in the region's affairs more clearly, increased the complexities of the conflict, while the other powers of the region were preoccupied with their internal affairs and the balances of power. The

results of this axis reinforce the author's point of view that Israel seeks to turn its back on the conflict, neglect it, and direct the region towards other common security problems, such as the Iranian issue.

6. Expected Alliances

It seems clear that the answer 'yes' was the highest among the total results about the possibility of forming a regional power through the alliance of more than one country in the Middle East. The author chose this question with the intention that the Middle East region is difficult to have a single dominant regional power, and the possibility of the region's future will be through an alliance of more than one power to control the course of the region's policies.

The Saudi-Israeli alliance practically and on the ground, and the result of this question is natural and possible, with 63.2% of the total response agreeing with this formation at this time when the Israeli openness to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states is in full swing in the security aspects. At the same time, before the Arab Spring 2011 in particular, it was impossible to think about it.

The highest total response rate of 'no' with 55.2% to the possibility of an Israeli-Iranian alliance, while the paradox was found by the respondents in Turkey, where the response 'yes' was the highest with 21.8%. This result is natural in that it is impossible to establish an Israeli-Iranian alliance, while the author attributes the responses in Turkey to uncertainty in politics in general and that anything is possible.

The highest total response rate of yes was 54% to the possibility of a Turkish-Israeli alliance, the highest rate of 'yes' response among the countries was in Iran, and the lowest rate of 'yes' was in Turkey, where in Turkey, the majority tended to answer with 'no.' How the Iranian view of Turkey (the possibility of an alliance with Israel), which may be considered a kind of political downfall, and that the respondents in Turkey do not see that this alliance is possible. At the same time, the reality of cooperation between the Turkish and Israeli sides exists on the ground's economic and security levels. The author agrees with the result of this question that this alliance is very possible.

The highest total response rate was “no” with 60.9% to the possibility of the Saudi-Iranian alliance, while the respondents in Turkey were almost equally divided between the “yes” response and the “no” response. The author agrees with the result of this question, as there cannot be a Saudi-Iranian alliance or even cooperation in the affairs of the Middle East, and the lack of clarity in the answers of the respondents in Turkey refers to the Turkish political uncertainty in both Iran and Saudi Arabia meaning mistrust.

The highest total response rate was “yes,” with 40.2% to 36.8 “no” to the possibility of a Turkish-Iranian alliance. In both countries, Turkey and Iran, the respondents’ answers were “yes” more than they answered “no,” and this is close to congruence in the view to some extent, knowing that the answers of the two countries in the possibility of an alliance with Israel in the questions It showed as if each side (Turkish and Iranian) was suspicious of the other. In politics, everything is possible, and within the framework of realist theory, interests always meet, even if the principles differ.

The highest total response rate was “yes,” with 60.9% to the possibility of the Turkish-Saudi alliance, and the “yes” response index in all countries is higher than its counterpart in the “no” response.

The author considers that the result of this question is different from what exists in the practical reality in the Middle East. There is an invisible conflict between Turkey and Saudi Arabia in the religious field. Both parties see themselves as a leader of the Sunni Muslim world, and Turkey considers itself a model, as well as Saudi Arabia, and the policies of both parties reflect this trend. For example, sponsoring and building mosques worldwide was under the Saudi umbrella and is now under the Turkish umbrella. This alliance might have been impossible, but the change in the map of the region and its contraventions after the 2011 Arab Spring is moving towards making everything possible.

The highest overall response rate, which was yes, is that the U.S. is interested in supporting a new regional power in the region in the near future, with a total response of 57.5%. The results of this question are close to the results reached by the author in previous chapters of this study that the policy of the U.S. is in decline in the region at the expense of supporting a regional power in the region to replace it and reduce the burdens of the U.S. expansion abroad while preserving its interests.

This dimension is concerned with showing how difficult to have a single dominant regional power in the region. The authors attribute this to sup-regional external powers that interfere in regional affairs, led by the United States. However, security alliances can occur between more than one power aiming to control the region.

The dimension discusses the expected alliances from the point of view of the respondents. The author discusses how they see their countries' readiness from an academic perspective, most of which were acceptable, except for the Turkish-Saudi alliance, with a high indicator of its occurrence, so it is difficult in theory. However, it is expected that the author believes Interests determine the priorities of states' policies, not principles.

7. Palestinian Internal Situation

The highest response was in Iran that there is a direct impact of the internal Palestinian division on the nature of alliances in the region; meanwhile, the lowest response was in Turkey. This is actually what is on the ground, as Iran has allied with the Islamic Jihad movement instead of an alliance with Hamas in the Gaza Strip. At the same time, Turkey has become closer to the Hamas movement due to its political proximity to the State of Qatar, which is active as a mediator and financially supports Hamas.

Regarding the direct impact of the internal Palestinian division on resolving the conflict in general, the highest support response was in Saudi Arabia, and the lowest was in Turkey. Saudi Arabia interferes, fluctuates with the Palestinian Authority between ebbs and flows, and rejects a relationship with Gaza ruled by Hamas because of its refusal to deal with the Muslim Brotherhood, as Hamas is considered an extension of it.

Recently, Turkey has become more evident in its relationship and alliances with the region. It has clarified its vision of achieving its strategic interests first, away from its slogans of supporting the people of Palestine. It tried more than once to mobilize the international community to lift the blockade on Gaza and gain that in the media, but its steps did not last long after strengthening strategic relations with Israel and building them in other locations such as Syria and Libya.

The Palestinian division left apparent effects on the nature of alliances in the region. The political reality in Palestine was divided into two parts, the West Bank, which is

controlled by the Palestinian Authority, and the Gaza Strip, which Hamas controls. There are ideological differences between the two parties, reflected in the nature of alliances and the regional extension of the regional powers and even world powers.

In the same issue, and as is the case with the Palestinian division reflecting on the nature of alliances, the Arab Spring 2011 revolutions also reflected in strengthening the division on the one hand and forgetting the Palestinian issue on the other hand, as the countries of the region and mediation, in particular, are preoccupied with themselves, such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The highest response was among the sample members in Saudi Arabia; the lowest response was in Turkey.

Regarding the intervention of countries to solve the Palestinian division, the highest responses were in Egypt, then Saudi Arabia, followed by Israel, then Iran, and the lowest in Palestine, while Turkey was almost in the middle position. This indicator reflects some extent, the nature of the current reality, as Egypt and Saudi Arabia are mediating countries to end the Palestinian division. However, all negotiations failed because the Palestinian side – Palestinian Authority or the Hamas movement – was the reason, and the mediator did not make any actual efforts or pressure to make it work. Thus, all mediation sessions for reconciliation end with nothing.

As for the satisfaction with the state's policies towards resolving the Palestinian division, the highest indicator was in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel, and Turkey, and the lowest was in Palestine, then Iran.

From the author's point of view, this indicator reflects the reality of the situation in the region. The results show these countries' highest level of intervention in resolving the Palestinian division as if they were saying: This is what we can do. The mediating countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and even Turkey, did not exert any pressure on any side to force it to accept the reconciliation agreement because, in the end, it meant the unification of the Palestinian voice and its return unified. However, it seems that the division serves these countries' interests and even brings them closer to Israel more and more.

The Palestinian division has left its precise effects on the form of alliances in the region and the conflict itself. The Palestinians were divided between the West Bank, which the

Palestinian Authority governs, and the Gaza Strip, which is controlled by Hamas. Both sides have different policies and agendas in terms of the way to deal with the conflict politically. And international alliances, as well

The other factor that strengthened and prolonged the scene of the division was the Arab Spring revolutions of 2011. The region's countries kept preoccupying themselves and attempts to heal the Palestinian rift through reconciliation failed. This directly affected the conflict and exacerbated its difficulty, even temporarily.

8. The Future of the Region

As for the region's future, the arrangement was as follows, according to the highest indicators in the countries included in the questionnaire. Foggy got the highest percentage, then wars, followed by violence, then I do not know, and the least of them is peace and stability. The region lives in a state of uncertainty and is far from peace and stability in the near future.

The author entirely agrees with the results of this dimension, as foggy got the highest percentage of the region's future in the next five years, while peace and stability were minor indicators.

Defining the Middle East in an absolute way is not clear – and the fact that it represents a region is also not absolute, i.e., it represents a geographical, political, or geopolitical area, and this is consistent with the foggy, as there is no dominant power in it that can at a minimum, control its affairs and resolve its disputes, in a way that serves its interests collectively.

The option of war is possible at any moment, as the region is still experiencing ongoing competition between the powers of the region, and the balance of power continues, and alliances continue as well.

Because the state of foggy also reflected the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which began with the internal division in 2006 and met with the Arab Spring revolutions of 2011 and continued for the time being in a state of foggy and lack of clarity of visions for any horizon for its solution, which represents one of the pillars of stability for the region if a

just and fair solution is found for the Palestinians. The author also agrees with the conclusion that the region will be far from peace and stability as long as this conflict is unresolved, just, and comprehensive.

Perhaps this dimension aims at limiting the options that can occur or predict them, i.e., the current reality of the Middle East with its current components of states and other nuclei, but no one knows absolutely what will happen next, in such a case as the Middle East and its mixing of cards states, changes may occur in the nature of states. It may be that new states are being born due to the wars now taking place in Syria, Libya, Yemen, and others. This, too, would add uncertainty to the Middle Eastern scene.

To an extent, the results of this dimension were consistent and even reinforced the current reality in the Middle East in general and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in particular.

XIII. Conclusions

The focus of the thesis is to know the extent of the influence of the regional powers in the Middle East region, as part of the international system, on the assumption that the international system is composed of several regional systems, which have become a state of the current international system cannot be bypassed. In addition, knowing its ability to resolve regional conflicts, the focus is on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

The thesis dealt with the status of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as a tool to measure competition in the region between the main actors, given that a solution to the conflict will lead the region to stability. The intervention of the actors in this regard shows the extent of their potency and influence.

Meanwhile, the existence of a regional power does not necessarily mean finding a just solution to any conflict taking place in the region. However, the dominant power in the system may lead to its stability within a specific geographical framework. In order to achieve the interests of the dominant regional powers, these powers seek to ensure permanent or temporary stability in the region, controlling conflicts in order to achieve the security and safety of the region in its geographic unity and ensuring a fair and balanced relationship with the world powers in the international system.

In order to prove or deny the hypotheses of the study, it was necessary to proceed according to a logical sequence, beginning with agreeing on a definition of regional power and then determining what the region is, whether it is considered geographically well-defined or not.

The author prepared a table of powers based on the World power Index (WPI) in order to classify the candidate powers to be regional powers in the region, then based on the definition of power; as the ability to influence, the impact of each power was measured on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

The conclusion will be divided into four parts and presented in a gradation, based on the results of the empirical research, in line with the conclusion on the hypotheses that is set forth:

–The thesis assumes that there are no regional powers in the Middle East currently or in the future, and the existing powers are middle or secondary.

– The powers of the Middle East are not interested in regional cooperation but seek to preserve themselves and achieve their interests; simultaneously, they are managed and influenced by the outside' sub-regional power.'

– The thesis assumes that solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict will contribute to taking the region to a new stability phase. In light of this hypothesis, the main actors in the region, Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, are considered semi-peripheral states, which means that they will maintain to be part of the countries of the core and they will continue to play their role between semi-peripheral or peripheral powers.

The first part of the conclusion will deal with the central hypothesis; the second part will discuss the expected scenarios of the Palestinian –Israeli conflict based on the research finding.

The research on the powers of the region, and their influence in the region itself and on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in particular, through their policies, the results of the research showed that the imbalance of power began in the Middle East after the occupation of Iraq in 2003; new players began trying to take a position in the region, most notably Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Israel, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, and Qatar.

Many countries, led by Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Israel, are trying to work independently through fluctuating their relations with external powers and international competition. For example, Turkey could exploit its position as a member of NATO to implement several policies on the ground, such as securing its borders with Syria, in anticipation of the expansion of Kurdish groups and working in coordination with the United States on several internal fronts in Syria. At the same time, it cannot act alone but rather in coordination with external powers that have influence there.

There is no dominant regional power in the Middle East, and the Middle East is not regionally homogeneous in every sense of the word but rather a geographical meaning that changes according to the resources and interests of external powers. Meanwhile, the Middle East is managed from the outside through the control of world powers, most notably the U.S. and the region's countries are distributed around its axis despite the entry of the EU, China, and Russia.

All the countries targeted in the research consider themselves part of the Middle East region politically, and some do not agree to be part of the Middle East geographically, such as Iran and Turkey. The region's geographical unity defines its features as independent of others and the Middle East as a geographically changing region; therefore, no particular order distinguishes the region.

The connection of the region's countries with external powers refers to the origins of its artificial state and its connection to colonial ambitions, which aim to share wealth and control natural resources. Most of the countries in the region did not exist as they are now; instead, they emerged due to sharing the inheritance of the Ottoman Empire following the Sykes-Picot Agreement (1917).

The region's countries compete with each other, with the support of external powers, mainly the United States, and there is no successful regional cooperation between them, and they do not even seek to do so but seek to preserve themselves and their interests on their own.

The other important factor, the continuation of the state of competition, was the Arab Spring uprising in 2011, which resulted in the exit of several countries due to their

internal crises, such as Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and other countries that have become a war arena in which the powers of the region compete either directly or through war by proxy.

The powers of the region compete for leadership, which drives their passion, the main engine of competition for the countries of the region is leadership, and it is summarized in the leadership of the Islamic world, and this applies to Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey, as each country views itself as the leader of the Islamic world.

On the level of the Palestinian – Israeli conflict, the targeted countries in the thesis aim to intervene in the conflict to achieve two goals, the first is to gain a leading regional position the second is to search for permanent or temporary solutions. What is essential is not the search for solutions but their ability to implement any proposals or solutions or even sponsor agreements and ensure their full implementation by the participating parties.

In reality, the intervention of the main countries is to sponsor a temporary solution, whether on the level of calm or temporary reconciliation. No country that was a party to sponsoring the agreements imposed any sanctions on a party in case of breach of any part of the agreement. The sponsorship of these countries is minimal, and the main reason is the role played by the United States in the region.

The dependency theory explains the state of the Middle East and the behavior of its states in terms of the divisions it adopted - the core, the semi-peripheral, and the periphery states, mainly the struggle between the semi-peripheral states covered by the sub-regional power of the U.S.

Each country tries to prove its position, and the U.S. plays a prominent role through its policies in the region in supporting a state and giving it a more significant role; the core State seeks to control the behavior of the semi-peripheral states in a manner consistent with the desires of the core State and safeguards its interests, and this is what the U.S. relies on through its policies towards Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey, It is trying to give a more significant role to its main ally, Israel.

Iran is trying to approach the status of the semi-peripheral state to be in control, but U.S. policies towards it prevent it from doing so. Turkey today lives in an unstable political and economic situation due to its direct military intervention in the region's affairs –

Syria, Libya, and Azerbaijan – and the U.S. policies against it prevent it from getting more roles in the region.

At the same time, the region's countries are no longer interested in regional cooperation rather than preserving their positions and countries. The events in the region and the dynamics of change are also reflected in the order of priorities.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is no longer on the list of the region's priorities but occupies a second and perhaps a late rank for some countries. The region's countries are preoccupied with themselves, as well as the policies of Israel and the orientations of the United States, considering that the greatest priority for the region is Iran and limiting its expansionist programs.

Like neighboring countries, Palestine is also preoccupied with itself. The internal Palestinian division between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip since 2006 left apparent effects on the map of alliances in the region and progress in any future solutions with Israel. The other negative factor is Israel's substantial rise and ability to intervene in the region's conflicts and influence them, as is the case in Syria, militarily and politically. The decline of the region's powers benefited Israel and eventually led to a decline in the status of the Palestinian cause.

Regarding the role of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the European Union's Strategy towards the Middle East. In the context of the EU foreign policy, the EU has used soft policy tools through its channels of diplomacy, the initiatives of individual member states on behalf of the EU and its direct bilateral relations with Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

The EU was keen to strengthen its bilateral relations with both sides of the conflict, but their relationship with the Israeli side was much more potent, separating the economy from politics, which has many implications and strengthens the idea of soft tools and that the conflict cannot be resolved by these tools only. Establishing an independent and sovereign Palestinian state would benefit the EU politically and economically through the sovereignty of a Palestinian state that could sign agreements and cooperate, strengthening its economy and reducing its dependence on the Union's financial support.

For the role of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the Russian strategy towards the Middle East, Russia's foreign policy relied on the policy of cooperation with the two parties to the conflict and the call for the implementation of international legitimacy decisions and the two-state solution, it did not exert any pressure on the Israeli side to implement any of this, and this is also due to the U.S. hegemony in the region and not giving any outside party the freedom to act this file. What distinguishes the Russian strategy is that it has open lines even to movements that the U.S. considers terrorist, such as Hamas, which gives it more power to influence if it has the opportunity in the future.

On the level of the role of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the Chinese strategy towards the Middle East, its policy was (dissociation) and an attempt to practice a policy of moderation between the parties so that it does not satisfy one party at the expense of the other and in a way that guarantees its interests strategically. China poses a threat to the active powers in the Middle East. Specifically, the U.S. China still enjoys a good reputation among the region's countries and is a first trading partner, and its interests with countries are intertwined and in continuous growth. The U.S. will not be able to dissuade any of its allies from not dealing with China or reducing its commercial influence; the balance is tilted to China if the matter is calculated from a practical and profitable point of view.

China has distinguished relations with Israel on several levels, and China needs Israel as much as Israel needs China in commercial and technological issues.

In its policy towards the thorny issues of the region, specifically the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, China practices a peaceful policy and condemns violence. However, it did not link its positions to sanctions, for example, to discourage a party to the conflict or force it to stop doing something that harms one of its partners. The goal is to preserve China's interests effectively guaranteed.

In terms of U.S.-Israeli relations, the link is organic from the inside. Israel is not an external ally but rather a deciding party in U.S. foreign policy from the inside by its infiltration through the lobbies. The U.S. efforts in the Middle East since taking over as the world's leading power in 1948, following the end of WWII, have been to maintain influence and expand its power in the area for its gain. Israel benefited from the U.S.

policy in the region, which was reinforced by the active Israeli lobby. Furthermore, there will be no prospects for a resolution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict or future regional stabilization if the U.S. policy remains unchanged and the lobby preservation in its impact on foreign policy and Zionist lobbies preserve their impact on the U.S. foreign policy.

This regional rivalry – internal – can be seen as a reflection of the rivalry of the world's powers – external. The change in the U.S. foreign policy and the evident decline in the U.S. global hegemony prompted powers such as China and Russia to enter as new competitors in the region. Perhaps the clear U.S. policy is to manipulate the balance of the regional powers to ensure that no dominant powers in the regions keep their hegemony.

The U.S. became not the sole player in the political landscape in the Middle East because of several changes in the nature of international relations and the emergence of rising powers. We could see some indicators of the U.S. policy decline, such as the Russian intervention in Syrian events since 2011. As a result, this opened the door wide for new world powers to intervene in the region's affairs.

After the Arab Spring 2011, the features and roles of the region's countries have changed politically, Turkey has become closer, but it has no role in influencing the conflict to solve it. Saudi Arabia is preoccupied with limiting Iranian influence in the Gulf. The Yemen war is direct evidence of that; Iran has become more restrictive after tightening the screws it was imposed on it by the United U.S., as well as the Qatari intervention – under U.S. auspices – in the Gaza Strip, which reduced its influence in its relations with the Islamic Jihad movement in the Strip.

The Egyptian role has receded a lot from what it was in the past. Since the Arab Spring revolutions that broke out in Egypt in 2011, Egypt has lost its position and declined in its interest in its internal affairs.

Qatar has a diplomatic mediating role with a policy somewhat similar to the policy of containing the problems plaguing the region, particularly the control of Islamic movements – Hamas, for example, in the Gaza Strip. It relies mainly on money and the media to advance its policies.

The UAE tried to enter directly, not as a mediator in the region's politics, but rather as a party, and this was evident in its intervention in the Syrian revolution and Yemen.

So, we see that each country is in a functional role that aims first to protect itself and its interests and preserve U.S. interests after its limited retreat from the region. So, the countries of the region are managed from abroad.

Despite the positive developments in relations between some Arab countries and Israel, the failure to reach a radical solution to the Palestinian issue, which is the core of the conflict, makes any attempts at cooperation or even mere rapprochement temporary and unviable.

It may seem easy to separate the issue of the occupation of Palestinian lands from the interactions between Israel and the rest of the Arab states. Nevertheless, the overlapping dimensions, including religious dimensions such as the status of Jerusalem, demographic such as the right of return of refugees, geographic such as settlement construction, and political/legal such as borders and sovereignty, have extensions and repercussions outside the geographical scope of the Palestinian territories themselves, making the issue, in the last analysis, not Palestinian only but Arabs and Muslims everywhere.

Therefore, it is difficult to be sure that establishing, developing, or announcing relations with Israel means the end of this issue. It is inconceivable that these relations have the elements of success and survival while the Palestinian issue continues with its interlocking dimensions referred to without a radical, just, and comprehensive solution.

Accordingly, as long as there is no just solution to the Palestinian issue, the region will not enter into a state of stability. It is already so; despite Israel entering into new and declared relations and normalization with the surrounding countries and establishing economic and security partnerships, the state of instability and security will remain the master of the situation because what is happening in Palestine from escalation and internal conflict with the Israelis will impose itself on the Arab arena, as the issue of Palestine is not linked to their geographical location only, but rather to its religious and ideological status and concerns the matter of every Muslim wherever he is.

XIII.1. Expected scenarios for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in light of the current reality in the Middle East

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict has reached in light of the current reality in the Middle East region and the state of blockage on the horizon. The Middle East lives without a dominant power that would solve the region's conflicts and intervene in them. The existence of dominant power does not necessarily mean finding solutions to the region's conflicts, but it is an essential and auxiliary factor.

The Middle East region is managed by external world powers, in the legacy of the artificial states made by the colonial powers, headed by the U.S., the strategic ally of Israel. Throughout the history of the conflict, no deterrent international sanctions were taken against Israel to discourage it from its crimes against the Palestinian people or even force it to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy.

In light of a changing Middle East and changes in its entities, alliances, and interests, the Palestinian issue remains the focus of instability, despite its declining rank from priority to medium and even low levels in some countries. Several studies presented alternative options and a set of forward-looking scenarios for these complex situations for this conflict.

The study from the Rand Institute estimates the net costs and benefits over the next ten years of five alternative trajectories, a two-state solution, coordinated unilateral withdrawal, uncoordinated unilateral withdrawal, nonviolent resistance, and violent uprising.²⁵⁴ Another study focused on the costs and future scenarios of the Palestinian resistance factions and identified the options with three options; the survival of the status quo, the quasi-state being less than a state and more than self-rule, and national liberation and salvation.²⁵⁵

In recent years, the Israelis have discussed possible models for resolving the conflict with the Palestinians, the most important of which are: a unified state that covers the entire geographical territory without internal borders, self-rule with a state on independent

²⁵⁴ ROSS, A., C. – EGEL, D. AND OTHERS: *The Costs of the Israeli- Palestinian conflict*. 2015. RAND Corporation, June 2015.

²⁵⁵ RAHHAL, OMAR.: *The future of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the possible scenarios facing the resistance factions 2021-2023*. Available at: <https://www.amad.ps/ar/post/468462/> [Last Accessed at: 2.10.2022]

Palestinian land, and a single federal state divided into two provinces, Jewish and Palestinian, with broad powers, or confederation, which is a model in which there is a division into two states: Palestinian and Jewish with defined open borders between them, while a government is established at the confederal level, combining Israeli and Palestinian elements, and making decisions in specific areas such as security and trade.²⁵⁶

The scenarios we will clarify will be from a regional perspective, as the study concluded that there is no dominant regional power in the region when the strength of the Israeli state and its network of relations with the Arab world is growing. Under these circumstances, the scenarios for solutions are limited and complex at the same time.

XIII.1. 1. Scenario 1. Two state solution

The option of the two-state solution is considered a carrot that is being brandished by the local and even international parties in this conflict, and it is the option upon which the Oslo Peace Accords of 1993 were signed and supported by international legitimacy, starting with Partition Resolution 149 and Resolutions 242 and 338 of the United Nations.

At the regional level, this option is no longer available, as the features of the Middle East have changed in terms of the rise of Israeli power, the decline of the Arab role preoccupied with its local issues, and in addition to that, the expansion of the circle of Israeli-Arab relations through its signing of cooperation agreements with Gulf states and other country headed by Morocco. In addition, the most crucial factor is the absolute U.S. bias towards Israel and the non-exercise of any other world powers to put pressure on any side, the most important of which is Israel, to implement the terms of this agreement in a specific way.

At the local level, this option is no longer available in an absolute manner²⁵⁷. As settlement expansion continues, and the bypass roads of the settlements cut off the cities

²⁵⁶ABU AMER, A.: *Alternatives to the "two-state solution" present costly scenarios for the occupation.*2022. Available at: <https://felesteen.news/post/110023/> [Last Accessed at October. 2022]

²⁵⁷Confidence is sinking to new lows, with support for a two-state solution between Palestinians and Israelis dropping to just a third on each side, and opposition to the detailed provisions of a permanent peace agreement to implement the two-state solution growing. The number of Israeli Jews who support one unequal state under Israeli rule is only slightly higher of support for the two-state solution, but both peoples still prefer two states over any other democratic framework for conflict resolution. A Joint Poll conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR) in Ramallah and the International Program

of the West Bank, the cities of the West Bank live in a state of isolation, as every city is besieged and at any time can be closed by the Israeli army.²⁵⁸

The Oslo framework was envisioned as a two-state solution predicated on the separation paradigm 'some called it divorce' in which the Palestinian state would be established on 22% of the land and Israel on the remaining 78%. Because of the Israeli settlements, for that to happen, Israel would have to annex at least 5% of the West Bank and make a territorial swap on a 1:1 basis of land inside the green line. While that annexation and territorial swap might place about 75-80% of the Israeli settlers under Israeli sovereignty, the remaining 70,000-100,000 settlers would be left behind, meaning they would either have to move back to Israel correctly or to the annexed area.²⁵⁹

The expansion of the Israeli settlements and Israeli control of land and infrastructure in the West Bank, along with the fact that those settlers in the hinterland are the most ideological and extreme, makes this option unlikely and unfeasible. Coupled with the objection of most young Palestinians and a majority of Israelis to this option, the Oslo two-state solution model seems completely unviable.²⁶⁰

On the internal Palestinian level, the situation is getting more difficult with the days; the status of the Palestinian cause is declining on the Arab and international levels, in addition to the division that the Palestinian people have experienced since 2006 between the West Bank and Gaza, which since then has not succeeded in any initiatives to end it, or even a future vision for that. The Palestinian people were divided internally between a Palestinian authority that manages the affairs of the West Bank with Israeli hegemony and arbitrariness through its intransigence and adherence to not allowing the Authority to freely administer Area (C) according to the Oslo agreement, which constitutes about 60% of the West Bank; also it is the only connected area compared to areas (A) and (B) which led to a state of instability and uncertainty in dealing with daily life and the life of the

in Conflict Resolution and Mediation at Tel Aviv University with funding from the Netherlands Representative Office in Ramallah and the Representative Office of Japan to Palestine through UNDP/PAPP. The joint poll was conducted during December 2022. More details see: https://pcpsr.org/sites/default/files/Press%20Release_Eng%20_Joint%20Poll%2024JAN2023.pdf

²⁵⁸ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in January 25- 2022 with Mr. Marwan Zaid, Fatah Party Activist.

²⁵⁹ BASKIN, GERSHON: *The solution to Israel-Palestine*, Insight.2023. p.1. Available at: <http://gershombaskin.com/> [Last accessed at 28.01.2023]

²⁶⁰ BASKIN, GERSHON, *The solution to Israel-Palestine*, Insight.2023.p.1. Available at: <http://gershombaskin.com/> [Last accessed at 28.01.2023]

Palestinian population in terms of freedom of movement, construction, and investment.²⁶¹ Moreover, we see what is happening in the Gaza Strip after Hamas took control of it and administered it separately from the case in the West Bank. Even the map of alliances has begun to impose itself. The Gaza Strip has an Islamic identity, and this justifies its proximity to Qatar or Iran - depending on the situation and the local and international political mood and between a West Bank that dominates. The Palestinian Authority controls it through the largest faction - the Fatah movement - which is the most open and sometimes described as secular.

The international circumstances at the signing of the Oslo Accords are different from the reality now. The Middle East is living in a state of changing dynamism. There is a state of the rise of the right in all parts of the world, accompanied by the rise of right-wing governments in Israel in light of the continued weaknesses of the Palestinian Authority and the loss of its Arab and international depth, and thus What will force Israel to accept this option, given that none of the world powers exert any pressure on it to implement its

²⁶¹ Under the 1993 Oslo Accords, the West Bank was split into three administrative divisions, with Area A controlled by the Palestinian Authority, Area B under split control, and Area C fully under Israeli control. Area C, the only contiguous section of the West Bank and contains the most fertile land and valuable natural resources, was supposed to be gradually transferred to Palestinian jurisdiction, according to the accords, but that has not happened. Instead, Area C is today home to around 650,000 settlers, with 70% of the land under their control and off-limits for Palestinian development. Meanwhile, Palestinian access to Area C (30%) remains heavily restricted. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said in report titled “Economic costs of the Israeli occupation for the Palestinian people: The toll of the additional restrictions in Area C, 2000–2020”, that:

1. Israel includes 70% of the area called (C) within the borders of the settlement regional councils, and this means that the exploitation of these areas is impossible even for agriculture or harvesting crops.
2. The Palestinian economy loses 25% of the gross domestic product of the West Bank due to restrictions on Area C.
3. The total of this loss for the period 2000 “the expiry of the Oslo Accords” and until 2020 amounted to 50 billion dollars.
4. The West Bank and Jerusalem settlements contribute a total of \$30 billion annually to the Israeli economy, which is about double the annual Palestinian GDP.
5. All areas (A) and (B) in the West Bank are isolated, unconnected islands, numbering 166 islands while areas (C) are a connected area.
6. The number of settlers increased from about 200,000 in the year 2000 to 650,000 now.
7. There are 150 illegal settlement outposts in the West Bank in addition to the legal settlements from the Israeli perspective.
8. According to a study by UNCTAD, the total cost of the blockade on the Gaza Strip amounted to 16.7 billion dollars until 2018. If it did not exist, the poverty rate would have become 15% instead of 56% now.
9. New farmers in the settlements receive subsidies amounting to 307 thousand dollars per farmer and the tax exemption rate reaches 70% compared to other regions.
10. The settlement economy in the West Bank and Jerusalem constitutes 12.4% of the Israeli economy. For More details see: <https://unctad.org/press-material/publication-palestine-report-united-nations-general-assembly>.

obligations? We live in light of a complicated reality and a reality without a future horizon, but merely the conduct of daily business and nothing more.²⁶²

XIII.1. 2. Scenario 2. One state Model, single bi-national state Model

What applies to the two-state solution also applies to the one-state Model, a single bi-national state model. After U.S. President Trump announced his endorsement of the Jewishness of the Israeli state, the ideas became utterly unworkable in the national sense.

The escalation of feelings of hatred between Palestinians and Israelis, and the rise of right-wing governments, will leave a tangible impact on the state of mistrust between the two sides and make it difficult to think about a state of stability, peace, and realistic solutions to this conflict. Both sides, in the end, want the land.²⁶³

The one bi-national state is unacceptable for Israeli policy because Palestinians would be the majority decision makers, more or less unviable. Ethnical cleansing of occupied Palestinian territory 'not realistic' Continuation of occupation, deteriorating of situation, expanding and deepening the conflict, until the final solution of two states.²⁶⁴

The estimated number of Palestinians at the end of 2022 was about 14.3 million Palestinians; 5.4 million in the State of Palestine, more than a third of whom reside in the Gaza Strip, and about 1.7 million Palestinians in the 1948 lands, and about 6.4 million in Arab countries and about 761 thousand in foreign countries. It is expected that the number of Jews will reach 7.1 million by the end of 2022. Thus, the number of Palestinians and Jews in historical Palestine will be equal by the end of this year, when the number of Palestinians and Jews will be about 7.1 million each.²⁶⁵

²⁶² This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in January 25- 2022 with Mr. Marwan Zaid, Fatah Party Activist.

²⁶³ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in January 25- 2022 with Mr. Marwan Zaid, Fatah Party Activist.

²⁶⁴ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in March 25- 2022 with Mr. V. Kuzma, Head of the Representative Office of the Republic of Slovenia in Palestine.

²⁶⁵ H.E. Dr. Ola Awad, President of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) presents a brief on the status of the Palestinian people at the end of 2022, Available at : <https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=4397> [Last accessed at 27-02-2023]

The demographic conflict is the most prominent feature of the conflict in the coming years, and therefore no solution other than the two-state solution will have any future or success, as no party can accept that it is a majority at the expense of another party.²⁶⁶

In their study by Ladadweh, W & Shikaki, K (2022) on the importance of the numerical dimension as a weapon for the struggle of the Palestinians to obtain their rights, the researchers presented an analysis that the demographic factor may decide the fate of the Palestinians and Jews people. However, the Palestinians must adopt a strategy of exploiting the numerical importance. This success depends on the internal Palestinian situation and overcoming its obstacles in ending the split and restoring the consideration of the political system, which suffers from weakness in confidence, economic decline, and instability in both the west bank and Gaza, which help to encourage emigration abroad. Finally, the institutional weakness in the Palestinian Authority, in addition to the tragic effects of the occupation, is reflected in widening the gap between the qualitative competition between the Palestinian and Israeli sides regarding knowledge, technology, and the economy.²⁶⁷

This Model attempts to deal with the realities on the land of the settlers, where the Israeli settlers can remain where they are as citizens of Israel but as residents of Palestine. Returning Palestinian refugees may be Palestinian citizens but are residents of Israel. Perhaps the fastest Model to gain support among Palestinians and foreigners is this Model that focuses on citizens' rights and less on national self-determination. Theorists of this Model assume that the two-state solution is dead and that the option of dividing the land is rejected by Israeli decisions to continue building settlements all over the land. It is also rejected by the Palestinians, who see Palestine as more than the West Bank and Gaza.²⁶⁸

The one-state solution model, with full equal rights to citizenship regardless of race, color, and religion, suffers from a fundamental problem that threatens the concept of a Jewish state. The second Model is a single bi-national state that recognizes individual and collective rights through a multicultural approach. Both communities would share the

²⁶⁶ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in January 06- 2022 with Ms. Daisy Organ, Head of the political Team in British Consulate General –Jerusalem

²⁶⁷ LADADWEH, W-SHIKAKI, K, *can the demographic advantage be an effective weapon in the struggle to achieve Palestinian rights?* Palestinian center for policy and survey research. No. 3/2022. pp. 9-10.

²⁶⁸ BASKIN, GERSHON, *The solution to Israel-Palestine*. Insight. 2023. p. 2. Available at: <http://gershonbaskin.com/> [Last accessed at 28.01.2023]

same land but remain separate nationally. However, the reality on the ground reflects the ambition of a colonial settlement movement that promotes the values of apartheid and building the separation wall as its most prominent features, as well as the Israeli apartheid policies that will further reinforce the trend towards the concept of one state.²⁶⁹

XIII.1. 3. Scenario 3. Maintaining the status quo "frozen conflict."

A 'Frozen conflict' is a situation in which active armed conflict has ended, although it might quickly become a 'hot' one once again. The term 'frozen conflict' is mainly applied to Post-Soviet conflicts, not merely to territorial disputes of those regions. They typically occur in areas of a country that are no longer under the central government's control. While disputes are doomed to stay unsolved, the lack of nonviolent remedies to the problem does not lead to greater armed activities. This situation weakens the central government's position and incites other states that support the separatists to intervene in their affairs, either directly or indirectly.²⁷⁰

This option is closely related to the regional situation in the Middle East and the actual situation that the Palestinian people live in under a national authority that has lost its internal depth due to the division between the West Bank and Gaza. The internal affairs of countries after the Arab Spring revolutions of 2011 and the state of internal competition between the remaining countries that survived "Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Egypt, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates" and their struggle for the balance of power in the region.

In terms of concept, the frozen conflict applies to the case of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, but in terms of application, there is some difference. The Palestinian issue is part of the Arab-Israeli conflict, despite Israel's openness to normalizing its relations with several Arab countries, "the Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco," and creating partnerships at the security level to fight Iran and consider it the first regional threat to the region. However, the Palestinian issue does not concern only the Palestinians

²⁶⁹ HASSASSIAN, M.: *A Paradigm Shift from Two-State to One-State Solution*.2019. Palestine- Israel journal of politics, economic and culture, VOL. 24. NO.1. p. 2.

²⁷⁰ CANDIAGO, L.: *Russia's approach to Frozen Conflicts, studying the past to prevent the future*.2022. the Centre for International Relations and Sustainable Development (CIRSD), p. 1.
<https://www.cirsd.org/en/young-contributors/russias-approach-to-frozen-conflicts-studying-the-past-to-prevent-the-future> [Last accessed: 04.01.2023]

themselves; it extends to the religious and Islamic depth, considering the land of Palestine as the land of an Islamic endowment. All Muslims everywhere are required to defend it and consider it their cause.

On the same level, the Israelis consider the land of Palestine to be the Promised Land, as mentioned in their book the Torah and thus its connection with the religious concept.

Since 1967, Israel and U.S. have monopolized their efforts to find a solution to the Palestinian issue, and the two countries have decided that any proposal to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict must gain the approval of both countries. The two countries have no objection to discussing the margins of the Palestinian issue in international corridors, and there is no objection to the involvement of other countries in the diplomacy of the search for peace, provided that the core of the conflict remains under the U.S. umbrella. It is not binding on Israel and is not a cause for concern, but the U.S. is ready to use the right of veto if the issue is raised in the Security Council. The two countries have no objection to allowing European diplomatic activity in the region, provided that it remains subservient and not original and is supported by pressure measures on Israel. Another example is the role given to Egypt and the Egyptian regime, and to show it as a key player in organizing matters and situations in the region.²⁷¹

The Israelis have been trying, through their various policies, to work towards one concept, which is to 'twist' the Palestinian will to accept any form of solution through the concept of 'economic peace' since the 1990s, the last of which was U.S. President Donald Trump's initiative – peace for prosperity²⁷².

In order to implement to 'twist,' over the years of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, they created a close link between it and the Palestinians through the idea of the (i) 'clean security past' meaning a clean security record allow person obtaining free travel, movement, and work facilities (ii) complete dependency on Israel economy and primary services, electricity, cities master plans, etc.(iii) the policy of collective punishment. At a

²⁷¹ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in March 03- 2023 with Mr. Rami Sublaban, Project Manager, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination 'TIKA' in Palestine, Ramallah, State of Palestine.

²⁷² According to the White House: this vision is the most realistic solution to a problem that has plagued the region for far too long. It creates a path to prosperity, security, and dignity for all involved. If the parties can agree on this framework as a basis for negotiations, the potential for both the Israelis and the Palestinians and the region is unlimited. More details please visit:
<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/peacetoprosperty/>

time when the Palestinian National Authority has not been able, since its establishment, to create a suitable living environment for the Palestinians, and part of that is due to the cumulative Israeli policies that limit its work, as well as the shortcomings of the Authority in general in building the state of institutions as it should be. Consequently, the Palestinian are forced to look for other places to achieve abundant sources of income that Israel provides by allowing facilities, the most important of which is that his security file is clean. The policy of collective punishment against violators of this system puts pressure on them to limit their activity against the occupation to search for a source of livelihood.

The close connection between the occupation and the occupied people made the concept of economic peace and facilities in return for welfare a profitable pressure card to some extent at the expense of the Palestinian will.

With an extreme right-wing government in Israel, there is a lack of any political horizon, and reading the future is complex. There are many options before the Palestinian people, including continuing to join international institutions, submitting the files of the occupation's crimes to the International Criminal Court, placing the international community before its responsibilities, and putting pressure on the occupation through (i) Recognition of the State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital (ii) Taking practical measures against settlements and settlers, and boycotting settlement products (iii) International missions as observers of the behavior of the occupation, and forcing to stop all Israeli measures to implement these measures, the Palestinian people are required to unifying the internal front with true national unity, end division file agreeing on a comprehensive national program, and restore the Palestine Liberation Organization. Strengthening the Palestinian steadfastness can be with a return of interest in the land, 'reclamation and cultivation.' Also, Self-reliance in developing the Palestinian economy and attracting foreign investments in developing Palestinian production and industry. Meanwhile, consolidating the national culture by paying attention to identity, heritage, and history and expanding the principle of social solidarity. The result is the disengagement principle from the occupation in all dimensions, economic, social, production, water, and energy.²⁷³

²⁷³ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in February 25- 2023 with Mr. Rafi' Rawajbah, Governor of Qalqilia City, State of Palestine.

There are no immediate solutions; the situation will remain as it is; instead, it will become more complicated because of the Israeli intransigence, the tendency towards right-wing extremism, the weakness of the Arab, the failure to punish the occupation for its crimes, and the pursuit of normalization with Arab countries in an attempt to end the Palestinian cause. It is difficult for the internal Palestinian situation to strengthen itself due to the blockade imposed on the Palestinian Authority and the failure of successive Israeli governments to adhere to any agreements. The scarcity of conditional European support, an economic system that shackles the Authority, prevents any opportunity for development or self-reliance. Also, the Authority lacks a comprehensive national vision to strengthen the nation's economy and advance the foundations of Palestinian society.²⁷⁴

The solution lies only in the implementation by the Israeli side of the decisions of international legitimacy, including withdrawal from the Palestinian lands occupied in 67, dismantling settlements, and establishing an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its legitimate capital.²⁷⁵

The problem lies in Israel's unilateral actions, commitment to UN resolutions, non-denial of Palestinian rights, and stopping all forms of occupation terrorism against the Palestinian people.²⁷⁶

The Palestinian government is working to deal with the events that are taking place in a realistic and balanced way through a deliberate program, which is one of the top priorities of the efforts to strengthen foreign relations and confront Israeli lies and propaganda, as well as to ensure balanced relations with the various powers and countries of the world. The Middle East is unstable and foggy, and the struggle of the Palestinian people continues on the ground through official and diplomatic channels. Although the U.S. remains the world's superpower in theory, the presence of other competitors such as Russia, China, and the European Union predicts a change in the global balance of power; I hope it will be in the interest of our cause and our people.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁴ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in February 25- 2023 with Mrs. Mona Afanah, City Council of Qalqilia City and social activist, State of Palestine.

²⁷⁵ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in February 28- 2023 with Mr. Reha Ermumcu, Head of Turkish Cultural Center in Palestine.

²⁷⁶ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in February 28- 2023 with Mr. Hilal Mustafa, Head of Turkish Passport Office in Palestine.

²⁷⁷ This argument is based on the interview made by researcher in February 2019 with Dr. Manuel Hassassian, Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Hungary.

The systematic weakening of the National Authority and the blockage of the horizon for negotiations since the year 2000, and the encroachment of the Palestinian lands that the Authority controls by carrying out repeated invasions and arrests of its areas of influence, weakened the Authority in the eyes of the citizens, as they "the ruler and the ruled" are under the same occupation and its practices, therefore Israel seeks through these policies on both sides "the ruling Palestinian Authority - the occupied people" to exhaust it and end it so that it accepts what is available, and we have become closer to the idea of ending the conflict, dissolving it and forgetting it. Without regard to resolving it, the point of view is closer to the fact that it is not a conflict that needs to be resolved but to dissolve and forget. Currently, no force corresponding to the Israeli will discourage it from its actions locally and regionally.

XIII.2. Practical remarks

- The U.S. political decline may provide opportunities for new powers to intervene more in the region's conflicts, such as China, Russia, and the European Union. Study the positive effects and develop a solution to this conflict, which has positive repercussions locally and internationally and economic effects that benefit all parties.
 - Israel must return to international legitimacy and abide by the UN resolutions to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region.
 - Ending the internal Palestinian division, returning to the unity of the Palestinian decision, and uniting the two parts of the homeland, the West Bank and Gaza
 - Solving the Palestinian issue justly is an essential step for Israel to enable its expansion in the Arab and Islamic regions.
 - The Palestinians, as a government, must restructure their national institutions, build bridges of constructive international relations, and address the world with the language of reason and international law.
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- After the narrowing of spaces and the receding of the local and regional horizons, the return to the Palestinian self-factor is the basis for survival and adherence to the legitimate and historical rights of the Palestinian people.

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APPENDICES

I. List of Interviews

Interviews made by the author

1. Name of the person: Dr. Manuel Hassassian, Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Hungary.

Date of the interview: 14. 02. 2019.

Place of the interview: Embassy of State of Palestine to Hungary, Budapest

Questions:

1. How would you describe the role of the EU in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?
2. What can the Palestinian Authority do in advance to gain more to achieve its objectives?

2. Name of the person: Dr. Amal Jadou, Assistant of Palestinian Foreign Minister for EU Affairs

Date of the interview: 29. 07.2019

Place of the interview: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ramallah, State of Palestine.

Questions:

1. How do you evaluate the EU support to Palestiense?
2. What can the Palestinain Authority do in advance to achive thier objectvies?

3. Name of the person: Mr. Hanna Essa, Secretary General of the Christian Islamic Organization in support of Jerusalem

Date of the interview: 29. 07.2019

Place of the interview: Christian Islamic Organization headquarter, Ramallah, State of Palestine

Questions:

1. How would you describe the role of the EU in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?
2. What is the importance of Jerusalem in the conflict?

4. Name of the person: Ms. Daisy Organ, Head of the Political Team in British Consulate General – Jerusalem

Date of the interview: 06. 01. 2022.

Place of the interview: Microsoft teams meeting

Questions:

- 1 How would you describe the role of the British government in the Conflict?
- 2 The future perspective of the conflict resolution (the possible scenarios)?

5. Name of the person: Mr. V. Kuzma, Head of the Representative Office of Slovenia in Palestine

Date of the interview: 25.03.2022

Place of the interview: Via e-mail

Questions:

1. How would you describe the role of the EU in the Palestinian - Israeli Conflict? What could the EU do in advance?
2. How do you see "estimate" the future of the region and the conflict solution?

6. Name of the person: Mrs. Mona Afanah, Palestinian Social Activist and Qalqilia City Council

Date of the interview: 25.02.2023

Place of the interview: Via e-mail

Questions:

1. In light of the current situation, what is the horizon of possible solutions to the Palestinian conflict (for example, the two-state solution, there are no solutions, and so on)? means, what is the vision for the fair solutions?
2. Strengthening the internal Palestinian steadfastness in light of Palestinian isolation, how can this be self-fulfilling?

7. Name of the person: Mr. Marwan Zaid, Fatah Party Activist

Date of the interview: 25.01.2023

Place of the interview: Qalqilia City, State of Palestine.

Questions:

1. In light of the current situation, can the two-state solution option be implemented?
2. What are the other possible options for resolving this conflict?

8. Name of the person: Mr. Rafi' Rawajbih, City Governor - Qalqilia

Date of the interview: 25. 02. 2023.

Place of the interview: Email

Questions:

1. What is the possible solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?
2. How important is the internal Palestinian factor in this conflict?

9. Name of the person: Mrs. Mona Afanah, Qalqilia City Council, social activist

Date of the interview: 25. 02. 2023.

Place of the interview: Via e-mail

Questions:

1. What is a possible solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?
2. How can the Palestinian remain steadfast in achieving their goals?

10. Name of the person: Mr. Reha Ermumcu, Head of Turkish Cultural Center in Palestine

Date of the interview: 28. 02. 2023.

Place of the interview: Via e-mail

Questions:

1. In your perspective what is the possible solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the current reality of the region's affairs?

11. Name of the person: Mr. Hilal Mustafa, Head of Turkish Passport Office in Palestine

Date of the interview: 28. 02. 2023.

Place of the interview: Via e-mail

Questions:

1. In your perspective what is the possible solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the current reality of the region's affairs?

12. Name of the person: Mr. Rami Sublaban, Project Manager, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency 'TIKA' in Palestine

Date of the interview: 03. 03. 2023.

Place of the interview: Via e-mail

Questions:

1. In your perspective what is the possible solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the current reality of the region's affairs?
2. What could Turkey Government do more for the conflict?

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
S.Arabia	0.652	0.645	0.643	0.636	0.641	0.637	0.641	0.637	0.633	0.642	0.648	0.665	0.676	0.679	0.691	0.695	0.7	0.706	0.707	0.717	0.725	0.734	0.746	0.747	0.744	0.736	0.733
Israel	0.666	0.669	0.671	0.672	0.676	0.683	0.688	0.684	0.682	0.686	0.683	0.676	0.672	0.67	0.669	0.668	0.669	0.676	0.677	0.682	0.684	0.684	0.686	0.688	0.688	0.69	0.692
Turkey	0.627	0.641	0.647	0.632	0.636	0.641	0.659	0.662	0.667	0.666	0.653	0.655	0.663	0.675	0.685	0.687	0.695	0.697	0.692	0.698	0.695	0.695	0.694	0.692	0.688	0.693	0.691
U. A .E	0.631	0.633	0.633	0.631	0.633	0.634	0.638	0.634	0.637	0.646	0.635	0.634	0.636	0.639	0.644	0.648	0.653	0.655	0.657	0.654	0.656	0.658	0.663	0.666	0.669	0.665	0.665
Iran	0.56	0.558	0.552	0.555	0.556	0.568	0.572	0.578	0.579	0.586	0.595	0.596	0.603	0.607	0.618	0.625	0.636	0.646	0.648	0.652	0.667	0.662	0.65	0.65	0.639	0.642	0.642
Qatar	0.48	0.482	0.498	0.501	0.504	0.505	0.515	0.506	0.512	0.527	0.526	0.526	0.537	0.543	0.559	0.576	0.583	0.597	0.601	0.607	0.616	0.628	0.633	0.636	0.633	0.625	0.619
Egypt	0.513	0.517	0.522	0.53	0.537	0.542	0.55	0.553	0.558	0.565	0.565	0.558	0.552	0.544	0.545	0.548	0.554	0.563	0.573	0.581	0.581	0.578	0.577	0.579	0.586	0.585	0.569

Table 2: The order of the regions powers

Source: compiled by the author, the data taken from World Power Index (WPI)