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## Conditions for State-Building from the American Perspective

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*Revised: 12 September*

*Accepted: 06 October*

*Received: 04 August 2023*

### KEYWORDS

State building, reconstruction, context, liberal model, contemporary, political theory

### ABSTRACT:

The change in the concept of state building was associated with the shifting of contexts, which in turn imposed critical revision. Hence the theoretical and methodological development of studying this phenomenon, which made the specialists of geographers and comparative politics in a continuous follow-up of the developments taking place, especially the challenges posed by globalization as a decisive historical moment. Hence, an urgent need arose to reconsider the foundations and characteristics of state building, and the levels of its analysis. On the other hand, this remained only a theoretical ambition. Supporters of contemporary political theory put the procedural approach in studying this phenomenon, with the aim of answering the questions of the present and rebuilding the model state according to the criterion of responding to the needs of the individual and society.

### Introduction

The issue of state-building in the Arab world has become one of the fundamental axes that the most of region has experienced in recent years, due to " revolutions and the resulting political upheavals that have strained the relationships between governing authorities and their people. Therefore, it is essential to address the strategic, economic, and security issues that garner global attention, especially in the Middle Eastern countries, and utilize the outcomes to support efforts for regional and international security and development. Since the end of 2010 and in the subsequent years, significant transformations have taken place in the political, security, economic, social, and cultural structures of the Arab countries undergoing change. Some Middle Eastern countries have witnessed internal conflicts and devastating wars, leading to the influx of millions of refugees and internally displaced persons.

The process of state-building, after the end of conflicts, requires the establishment of lasting peace and the laying of necessary foundations through integrated and coordinated measures aimed at addressing the underlying causes of violence, whether they are political, legal, institutional, military, humanitarian, or environmental

and demographic causes. The state-building process, in light of the consequences of internal conflicts, is subject to a set of criteria, including enhancing social stability by restoring the capacity of state institutions to maintain public order, establishing security, promoting the rule of law, respecting human rights, supporting the return of legitimate political institutions in the state, and then laying the necessary foundations for launching the development process.

The United States' choice of the Middle East as a region to implement such a project was not a random or coincidental choice, but rather driven by various short-term and long-term goals, including protecting the interests of the United States in the region, which necessitates gaining control over the entire region and protecting Israel, to which the United States has committed to ensuring its security and safety. The United States' initiative in this regard is largely motivated by political and economic factors, particularly in relation to oil and energy.

The conditions for state-building from the American perspective are considered a long process in which the political authority of the state enhances capacities to enable the continuity of the national state. This is



achieved through mechanisms of political consensus to build legitimate political institutions. The efforts of donors converge in the field to support authority and capacities, with the necessity of a multi-level diagnosis of the reasons for the failure of state-building as entry points relied upon in supporting the mechanisms of re-establishing state authority (Bryant, 2008, p.27). Development agencies have established institutions of collapsed states through international efforts in institutional design by reforming governance, restoring security, and expanding patterns of participation and inclusiveness. In addition to constitutional reform and the rule of law, it is necessary to design successful institutions. Thus, the essence of the process revolves around restoring the legitimacy of fragile states (Graham, 2012, p.1-2).

The role of actors in state-building lies in seeking ways to build capacities at the national level, establish external development, not just development within the state. Western thought, which is adopted based on economic subordination and in perceived or ineffective sectors, allows its companies to operate. It adopts the idea of the private sector, which is intended to transition to liberalism, the mechanism of the capitalist market, and international organizations, especially the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (dependent economy). This approach is not based on a national foundation that achieves the desire to build a modern state. Donors frame the rebuilding process within the limitations of internal operations by transferring institutional models based on their ideal qualities and good performance. This is the endeavor promoted by the international community and encompasses three key pillars: supporting legitimacy, democratic accountability, and capacity building as a strategic framework to achieve stability and state rebuilding by prioritizing the means to overcome the failure predicament (Nazemrouya, 2008, p.13).

To clarify the vision, it emphasizes the necessity of making projects to rebuild failed institutions through localized policies with ambitious strategic dimensions. This involves implementing stages of re-establishing state structures that align with the circumstances and requirements of the donor, taking into account a more realistic time frame. The objective is to improve

continuity and transfer knowledge and technical skills in transforming failed national institutions into more flexible and effective institutions, with Western-based reference standards that allow framing the processes of building fragile states according to donor-specific criteria.

(Allen&Nicole, 2005, p229-230): In this context, three fundamental conditions were proposed. The first condition is the connection of military invasion with a political and economic project for state rebuilding. This objective distinguishes this pattern of occupation from traditional colonialism, which seeks to achieve direct economic interests of the colonizer. Despite the existence of interests and goals behind this occupation, it does not negate the presence of interests and motives behind this hostility. It includes a set of priorities, the most important of which are:

Establishing authorities to manage the post-failure phase by creating security institutions to enhance political stability.

Financing and assisting institutional restructuring programs through the use of supplementary funds to support fragile states. In this context, the United States has sought to transform weak states into effective states by providing security support to protect them from internal and external threats, ensure the principle of regional sovereignty, and eliminate rebel groups that cause security gaps and negative repercussions on the development side. This has led the US administrations to adopt a comprehensive approach to prevent waves of violence and social unrest. The Americans use the term "state-building" to establish a new political system in a geographic area that lacks social roots and ignores values and traditions. This considers these operations as the establishment of conservative American settlements that preserve US geopolitical and economic interests at the expense of local population interests. Therefore, the United States has created a project called "reconstruction" as a fundamental means to eliminate terrorism and impose the Western democratic project on the entire world in order to rebuild states in the Middle East according to its image (Iyad Salah, 2019, p60).

Hence, the United States established the US Agency for International Development (USAID), which focused its



efforts on preventing further state failures by addressing the root causes of weakness. In 2003, the agency established an office to mitigate conflicts and manage cases of political instability in failed states. It has been concerned with supporting economic stability and delivering humanitarian aid to manage the post-failure phase. The United States has taken on the mission of enhancing capacities in the security sector (supporting the army and police) to surpass the narrow logic of traditional peacekeeping operations (Sherif and Lazhar, 2020, p506).

Additionally, encouraging democracy helps the system mitigate destabilizing conflicts and address terrorism. Thus, the process of state-building becomes specifically directed towards democracy, as evident in the post-intervention policies pursued by the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan, which are considered the most stable democracies in facing growing contemporary challenges (Mohammed Riad, 1974, p19). Person argues that any attempt to build a state outside the framework of enhancing democracy and popular governance remains a transitional process rather than an imperialist aspiration. Building a state through democracy is considered one of the components of national power that is equally important to the ability to use military force to maintain the world order. Based on the aforementioned, the researcher believes that the United States has made the project of state-building in failed states based on democracy, starting from the idea that weak states are influenced by major powers (the United States) and thus tend to emulate their way of life and political system in a manner that makes the democratic pattern dominant in those countries, serving American interests (Fukuyama, 2007, p204).

The establishment of the countries in the Middle East according to the American vision involves restructuring this region on new foundations, which means establishing a system of political, economic, social, and cultural interactions based on considerations of geographic proximity and common cooperation on various levels. The American interest aims to confront the potential independent Arab civilization project and weaken the political, social, and cultural pillars of the Arab system by canceling the boycott of the Hebrew state, strengthening its political and military capabilities, opening the doors to the Western capitalist model with

its ideas and values, and reorganizing the regional balances in the region to ensure the integration of the Zionist entity and the establishment of Arab-Israeli relations within the framework of joint Middle Eastern projects. This is a deep-rooted American doctrine (Ahmed Ali, 2019, p. 148). The American reform initiative did not aim to serve the mid country as much as it served its own interests and the interests of the Hebrew state. Achieving these interests requires restructuring and rebuilding the region according to a strategic vision. This plan necessitates a process of dismantling and then reassembling, while ensuring the absence of tension and future explosions. This process requires careful consideration of the points presented by the project, as they are the starting points exploited by the "Deal of the Century" announced by President Donald Trump (Dauter, 2018, p. 117). The American position regarding supporting democratic transformation in Arab countries is driven by its short-term and long-term interests. In the long term, democratic transformation is considered an American interest because it achieves stability, reduces conflicts, as democratic countries are less inclined to engage in conflicts with neighboring countries and are more ready for peace. In the short term, democratic transformation is detrimental to American interests, increases internal instability in mid countries, threatens regional stability, intensifies hostile feelings towards the United States, may allow anti-American groups to come to power, negatively affects the willingness of governments to cooperate on security with the United States, and may have negative implications for American interests in the region, including the interests of the Hebrew state in peace (Rabie Mohamed, 2019, p. 267). After the indicators pointed to the necessity and inevitability of change, it became imperative for the US administration to control its course before it occurs. Hence, the project of "Greater Middle East" comes within a new framework on political, ideological, and geographical levels to ensure the survival or accession of ruling elites that are aligned with American interests and more flexible with normalization. Therefore, among the consequences of the administration of former President George W. Bush and his wars in the Middle East is the dispersion and loss of American leadership roles and sometimes its non-acceptance in the international community, which has had multiple effects. The most important of which is diverting attention from serious



global issues that can affect the entire world (Ali Hussein, 2021, p. 89).

The United States could have played a leading and pivotal role in which acceptable issues included climate change and the resulting environmental disasters affecting most countries around the world. Also, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, represented by North Korea and the alleged Iranian efforts in this direction, as well as other global issues such as ethnic genocides, international crises (in Africa), and deepening the gap between North and South countries. These reasons, along with other internal factors, primarily the financial crisis, increasing debt, resulting unemployment, bankruptcy of major banks and corporations, and the growing internal terrorism as expressed in the 2010 National Security Strategy document, indicate a genuine need to correct the course of American strategy in multiple areas.

It is clear that the most discussed topics in the fifty-two pages of that document are the American relationship with world, especially the peoples and countries of the Middle East, and some other major issues. Therefore, it becomes necessary for the new administration to reveal and rectify many of the mistakes made by the previous administration, particularly those committed in the most vital areas for American interests, specifically the Middle East. In this region, steps towards change can be taken to push American-Middle Eastern relations into a broader space than they are today, especially if it is accompanied by a sincere intention free from the practices of the previous administration.

The United States has adopted a clear and consistent policy during successive administrations, represented by supporting and guaranteeing the security of Israel materially and morally. This was achieved by deliberately ensuring Israel's military superiority over the Arab countries as a whole and enabling it to maintain nuclear weapons in the region. Additionally, the United States committed to supporting Israel in international forums and preventing any resolution against it by the United Nations Security Council for its continuous violation of international law. This has undermined the credibility of the United States in the Arab region, particularly regarding its position on the Arab-Israeli conflict. It requires a settlement and the restoration of trust in the United States as a friend and ally in the Arab region.

Therefore, the American administration, through the Greater Middle East Project, aimed to integrate Israel into the Arab system. They presented a set of ideas to the US Congress under the title "Regional Cooperation in the Middle East," based on the inclusion of Israel in the vital sphere of Middle East policy and creating an atmosphere for comprehensive Arab recognition of it as an integral part of the region's heritage. This would be achieved by developing channels of cooperation in scientific and technological fields, establishing a network of modern communication and regional connectivity for the countries of the region.

Hence, after the end of the Cold War, the United States took an interest in settling the Arab-Israeli conflict to ensure Israel's control over the region and its integration into the Arab system. This was also emphasized by European strategy, which indicated that resolving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is a strategic priority for Europe. Without such a solution, there will be no opportunity to settle other problems in the Middle East. For this reason, it is necessary to reintroduce the peace approach in the Middle East. During this period, the United States attempted to reintroduce American values in the region. It intervened to protect democratic elections in Lebanon in 1958 and 1983, liberated Kuwait in 1991, and launched numerous peace initiatives between Arabs and Israel.

The story of Washington's post-Cold War intervention in the Middle East represents a struggle to reconcile its status as a superpower and its role as a champion of national and individual rights. In rethinking its future in the Middle East, America must rely on realistic goals, maintain its primacy in the region, and find a settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Khaled Ali, 2011).

The post-Cold War era placed the American decision-maker in a new phase. With the disintegration of the Soviet enemy, the American political mind found an opportunity to dominate the world order. The end of the Cold War led to a shift in the global strategic balance, where the United States became the sole superpower in the world. However, this transformation did not affect the structures of the international system or its institutions. Instead, the United States became the most powerful, influential, and impactful actor on the international stage. This was one of the influential international variables affecting Arab collective action. The end of the Cold War, along with the collapse of the



Soviet Union and the Gulf War against the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, presented numerous opportunities for the United States to advance its renewed project for the Middle East. This period is referred to as the "Fourth Era" of the Middle East by Richard Haass, which we have mentioned three of its aspects and how those eras were undermined (Awad Mohsen, 2019, p. 68).

The fourth era that followed the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union allowed the Americans unprecedented influence and freedom of movement. Their victory in the liberation of Kuwait and their long-term military presence on land and in the air in the Arabian Peninsula, along with their leadership in diplomatic efforts to find a comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, solidified their position. Some refer to this period as the "Ancient Middle East," where Iraq emerged as an adversarial but weak regime, Iran as a conservative but divided and relatively weak state, and Israel as the sole nuclear power in the region, becoming the strongest regional player at a time when the region witnessed various manifestations, most notably fluctuations in oil prices and the continued existence of oppressive Arab regimes and the difficulty of coexistence between Israel, Palestinians, and the rest of the Arabs, in the face of American dominance (Mohamed Tawfiq, 2011, p. 63).

The end of the Cold War led to the disappearance of the strategic maneuvering space between the Eastern and Western blocs. The winds of democratic change blew, causing the collapse of various systems that were under the influence of the Soviet Union. Democracy and human rights became global issues. The factors that led to the end of this era, in less than two decades, are both structural and self-generated. The invasion of Iraq in 2003 played a role (Abdul Razzaq Abbas Hussein, 1976, pp. 83-84). The conflict shifted from Arab-Israeli to intra-Arab, and Sunni-Shia conflict emerged. Terrorists found bases in Iraq, developed their techniques, and exported them. The issue of democracy became linked to the loss of security and the end of Sunni dominance. On the other hand, the invasion of Iraq reduced US influence in the world due to the growing anti-American sentiment. It is ironic that the first Gulf War, which was considered a necessary war, marked the beginning of the American era in the Middle East, while the second Gulf War,

considered an optional war, marked the end of that era. Other factors contributed to Washington's loss of influence in the region, including the peace process, as a result of the failure of the Camp David negotiations in 2002, the weakness of Yasser Arafat, the rise of Hamas and Israeli unilateralism, and the inability of the Bush administration to continue diplomatic efforts. Thus, the United States lost a unique role, through which it was able to engage both Arabs and Israelis (Ghazi Mohsen, 2017, p. 44).

And there is another factor that led to the end of the American era, which is the failure of traditional systems to confront the growing fundamentalism. Americans waited until the September 11, 2001 attacks to confirm that closed societies had become the breeding ground for extremism. Globalization also contributed to changing the region, making it easier for extremists to obtain funding, weapons, volunteers, and ideas. The new media, especially satellite channels, transformed the Arab world into a manipulated regional village, broadcasting scenes of violence and destruction in Iraq, which increased the distance between the people of the region and the United States. As a result, governments in the region faced difficulties in cooperating with the diminishing influence of the United States, and trust in the United States' ability to sow democracy in the region diminished. Perhaps we are now witnessing the formation of the fifth and sixth eras of U.S. influence in the region, especially after the Arab Spring and the significant changes in governments and the emergence of what is known as the abnormally in the region.

The events of September 11, 2001, are considered one of the most significant motivations that led the United States to formulate and launch the Greater Middle East Project. We can trace back to the pre-events period, which is a pivotal moment in Washington's orientation toward the region. The U.S. administration believed in its interests based on two main factors: first, the existence of what can be called close friends of the United States in the region, and second, the U.S. administration itself penetrating under the pretext of cooperation and assistance to Arab societies in their development and progress through programs like American aid and other forms of specialized intervention in the region. However, after the events of September 11 and the belief that Arabs





and Muslims were behind these events, it can be said that Washington no longer trusted the ability of the official Arab system to protect its interests. The external security measures alone were no longer effective after the attacks that took place in September within the United States (Mohammed Sulaiman Adel, 2002, p. 155).

Here, the American mindset envisions that the strategy of American national security must be based on bringing about a radical change in systems, and that friendship alone is not enough to fill the American void left by the Soviet Union through a new enemy that struck America in its own backyard. Terrorism has become the central enemy, and this realization has solidified in American political circles and been accepted by the American administration, declaring the axis of its vision for the Middle East. This realization is based on the belief that Al-Qaeda is a product of internal Arab crises (Karbi Idris, 2003, p. 60). It is seen as the burning ball thrown by Arab governments in the face of the Western world, specifically the United States. The most successful weapon in confronting terrorism is seen as throwing the ball back to the Arab people and exerting real pressure to bring about change. Reforming the Arab world is a weapon against terrorism, disregarding the fact that America played a bigger role than Saudi Arabia in relation to the political fundamentalism of Osama bin Laden and his terrifying organization. The efforts made by the United States to mobilize politically moderate Muslim activists worldwide in the name of jihad against communist infidels in Afghanistan were a fundamental factor in the remarkable success of these groups that eventually contributed to the formation of Al-Qaeda. Even the role played by countries like Saudi Arabia and Egypt in assisting in the recruitment of such individuals was a response to the desires of the United States, to a large extent (Mustafa Ali, 2017, p. 118).

These events burdened Arab regimes with additional responsibilities as they were accused by American circles of being responsible for a cultural, social, and political climate that served as a breeding ground for terrorist ideas and their production, which still persists. Arab political systems are seen as incubators for extremists, even if these extremists receive organized international support. The major responsibility lies with those regimes in the spread of extremism in the region (Colin Grabow,

2017, p. 111). The events of September 11 added new dimensions to the negative perception of Arabs and Muslims in the Western mind, including the notion that they engage in terrorism due to their backward beliefs and cultural lag. American foreign policy has witnessed a dramatic change, adopting a policy of war on terrorism. The United States now views the domestic situations in several Middle Eastern countries as a threat to American national security, based on the belief that these situations are fertile ground for the growth of terrorism and extremism. Bush declared a war on terrorism in all its forms and launched his doctrine of striking terrorism (Qais Mohammed, 2001, p. 59).

"And it led to a change in the strategic thinking of the United States. The United States, that power which began dealing with the Arab and other region since the 19th century, witnessed significant cultural relations with the region in the 20th century, especially with the transformation of the United States into a global power, then into one of the two superpowers, and then into the sole pole in world politics. This gave rise to initiatives in the Middle East within a conceptual framework that took shape after those events (Mohammed Amer, 2004, p. 69).

The features of this conceptual framework appeared in the political discourse of President George W. Bush. President Bush delivered the State of the Union address on January 29, 2002, in which he spoke about the axis of evil consisting of Iran, North Korea, and Iraq. The US President reiterated the necessity of preemptive wars against them, which was translated on the ground through the war on Iraq. It was widely observed after the September events that the Bush administration exploited the words "terrorism" and the "axis of evil" to tighten the doors for intelligent discussions regarding American strategy. The Bush administration crafted verbal spells derived from the fundamental factors of American ideological consensus, which propelled the US President into the war on Iraq in 2003 (Alawi Mustafa, 2003, p. 69).

Prior to this date, Bush's policy towards Iraq was based on smart sanctions aimed at containing the Iraqi regime, not overthrowing it. However, the perspective changed after the September 11 events. It became convinced that the United States could not wait for another strike. These convictions caused a shift in his policy and altered the



priorities of American foreign policy. Security issues became the declared concern of American domestic and foreign policies. Consequently, the theory of deterrence based on the balance of power was replaced by the theory of preemptive war against potential enemies. Thus, the commitment of the ideas and perspectives of the new conservatives to unilateral expansion was decided, and the war on terrorism was declared (Abdul Khaliq Abdullah, 2019, p. 70).

The strategy of the new conservatives, who seized political decision-making in the United States after the September 11th events, aims to reshape and change the Middle East to fit the 21st century, which they consider as an opportunity to redefine the Middle East. They package it with ideological claims related to democracy, market economy, dictatorships, and rogue regimes, presenting these events as a real opportunity for them to promote the idea of the war on Iraq, as it represents a fundamental factor in winning the war on terrorism (Rafat Rostom, 2012, p. 113)."

Their insistence on changing the governance systems in the Middle East, by reviving old patterns of American beliefs and behavior, and integrating selective use of democracy with strategies formed on fascist realistic foundations, is the central approach in the new conservative approach. This political trend began during the early stages of the Cold War, and it contains a lot of arrogance, lies, and hypocrisy in the project of democracy. This failure and hypocrisy were reflected on the ground after the invasion of Iraq and the failure to find the promised weapons of mass destruction. Afterward, the motivations shifted towards democracy and human rights, becoming the central pretext for war. The United States aimed to democratize the entire Middle East, moving towards a grand Middle East democracy policy, but with other broader implications. One of these implications may lie in oil and the continued flow of oil to the United States. The American justification for a permanent military presence in the Middle East was approved before September 11th as an important milestone in the history of international relations. The only disagreement may lie in describing the nature of the moment when the attacks on New York and Washington occurred on that day. There are two perspectives on this matter (Saad Haqi Tawfiq, 2003, p. 101):

The first view sees it as a pivotal moment that led to the formation of a new American foreign policy with different characteristics than before.

The second view asserts that it was a revealing moment, meaning that American foreign policy after the events was not new; the foundations of this policy already existed, and all those events did was expose that deception and present it to the world in its true form, free from false attempts at beautification. The policy aimed to forcefully achieve dominance over the resources of the post-Cold War world. Apart from that disagreement, those events led to what is known as the theory of the "American exception." They resulted in a real change in American foreign policy (Sadeep Gabor, 2017, p. 79). This change has two aspects: firstly, it is related to the concept of national security, which became unable to protect the American homeland. This led to the radicalization of American policy and the control of the new conservatives over American decision-making. They sought to deepen global dominance and dry up the sources of international terrorism to secure the American homeland. Secondly, the American administration interpreted those events in a way that suggests that they occurred due to the absence of democracy in the Middle East countries. From there, the administration became convinced of the necessity to change the non-democratic political systems in these countries, which was manifested in the Greater Middle East project (Rifaat Said, 2007, p. 153). Thus, the Greater Middle East project and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were reactions to those events, justifying the war on terror, the spread of democracy, human rights, and weapons of mass destruction. Those events changed the American strategic thinking for decades to come, and the philosophy of the war on terror and its vocabulary seeped into the fabric of American policy. This American philosophy resulted in a Middle Eastern democratic project aimed at reforming Middle Eastern societies and their dictatorial political systems (Mohsen Al-Rashidi, 2006, p. 48).

The importance of the geopolitical situation in the Middle East can be attributed to several factors, including its strategic significance. These factors include its massive oil reserves, control over major international



shipping routes, the impact of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the persistent conflict in the Gulf on the interests of international parties, and its geographic proximity to Europe. Additionally, the region has become a source of threats to the security of many other countries due to the historical phase it is going through. The problems and conflicts in the Middle East are not solely the result of local factors, but primarily the outcome of external international interventions that have laid the groundwork for establishing a regional system. This is reflected in their identity, which reflects their interests and has become associated with justifying their external intervention.

Based on this, American interest in the Middle East began in the early 20th century, leading to a change in the geopolitical value of the region. It became an area of competition and conflict between regional and international powers, particularly after the end of World War II.

In light of the above, it can be said that four main schools of thought have influenced the orientations of US foreign policy and the formulation of its principles throughout history: Hamiltonian, Wilsonian, Jacksonian, and Jeffersonian. These schools may provide an explanation for the transformations witnessed in American foreign policy. Without a doubt, this calls for a shift in tasks in many aspects. Through this, it can be observed that the Biden administration, with an explicit awareness that reflects a departure from excessive Wilsonianism, is balancing its foreign policy by considering the proposals put forth by these schools to preserve the positive "Wilsonian" legacy deeply rooted in the American political culture (Likhah Makki, 2012, p. 80).

Generally speaking, the change in US policy towards the Yemeni crisis is part of broader changes being made by the new US administration in its own strategy towards the Middle East. Logically, this means that the United States does not deal with the Yemeni crisis in isolation from the Iranian file, and that the resolution of the crisis in Yemen is linked to the involved parties, including Iran, due to fundamental differences in the perceptions of the crisis. The United States, along with its allies, is trying to strategically constrain Iran in the region and deter it from taking further escalatory steps in Yemen. This can be

inferred from the events, developments, and their resulting outcomes.

From this perspective, US movements in the Middle East region focus on creating variables through which new foundations of interactions can be built that align with its agendas in the region, under the slogan of preserving democratic values. Additionally, it aims to undermine the fragile balances in the short term. On the other hand, the US desire and practices towards performance-based approaches are embodied in reshaping a regional environment conducive to initiatives and political settlements. Based on this, researchers believe that the strategic perception of the US administration has become evident in formulating a realistic vision based on what can be called the elements of stability in foreign policy to absorb tensions and disturbances in the Middle East region. This includes their engagement with strategic allies, which has become an area of interest for the new US administration. All of these efforts aim to protect and enhance the strategic interests of the United States, in addition to sending a deterrent message to opposing forces in the geopolitical arenas in the region (such as the Iraqi and Syrian arenas). This is achieved through emphasizing the language of political and media discourse on democracy, human rights, soft power, and strengthening diplomatic tools. It is important as it signifies the significance sought by the United States in its foreign policy, and in this manner, the United States seeks to connect some regional crises in the Middle East to each other, especially those that witness US military intervention on the stage of events, while keeping the door open for diplomacy. At the same time, clear Iranian involvement can be seen, such as in the Iraq and Syria files, within the context of exerting more pressure on Tehran to encourage it to adopt a more flexible approach regarding the conditions for the US's return to compliance with the nuclear agreement. Iran believes that such a return should not be conditional and that it should be preceded by a complete lifting of the imposed sanctions. Therefore, the new orientations of US foreign policy frame the pathways towards reshaping foreign priorities in light of a strategic vision that reflects its rhythms from the perspective of preserving its strategic interests as a geopolitical objective. On the other hand, it aims to enhance regional cooperation by affirming its





commitments to strategic allies in the Middle East region (Menashri, 2021, p. 57).

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