



Middle East and the International Strategic Shifts

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Abstract

The region of the Middle East witnesses a state of nervousness dominated by sectarian conflicts and the spread of the dangers of extremism and terrorism in most Arab countries, as well as the escalation of political and military competition among the major regional powers in changing the strategic balance equations through direct clashes or acting wars. Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Israel are the key forces in the region, each seeking to be the only superpower in the region.

The Middle East may witness other, more surprising, strategic shifts that are contrary to all expectations and possible scenarios. Perhaps this was the first lesson we learned from the Arab Spring, which may have surprised the entire world in its unpredictability, as well as its consequences and its tracks.

Therefore, the political landscape in the region and the transformations of the scene carries many opportunities and challenges for the various parties, and no one enjoys sovereignty and control in general, and therefore the strategic horizon and strategic dimensions of the

scene is still trying to form levers, both according to position and in accordance to the region's strategy.

Key words: *National Strategy, National security, Middle East, Arab Spring.*

Introduction

The regional system in the Middle East witnesses unstable situation resulting from the lack of understanding and cooperation and the desire to change attitudes towards the objectives of strength of the regional system or its fragility towards the international system and the determined forces. Where in this context, the collapse or building of the regional stability is determined that conflicts with the goals and interests of the universal system.

For the first time in the history of the Arab nation, there is a state of chaos existing in various overlaps. This scene is represented in the Gulf, Syrian, Iraqi, Yemeni, Libyan, Palestinian, Algerian, Turkish and Iranian where the image of the situation is disgraceful, despite the forms of chaos experienced by continents and countries over the long history, but we see this chaos in this way for the first time, and therefore it is casual on our civilization, our values, and our political and social forces, as well as on the Palestinian issue that has become outside the Arab context for the first time as well, and thus are historical moments passing by time which may lead to a new state of political balance and stability and the decline of the thought of terrorism, extremism and chaos in favor of moderate Arab Islamic thought, and then will change the equations of regional and international policies in form and content.

The region of the Middle East witnesses a state of nervousness dominated by sectarian conflicts and the spread of the dangers of extremism and terrorism in most Arab countries, as well as the escalation of political and military competition among the major regional powers in changing the strategic balance equations through direct clashes or acting wars. Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Israel are the key forces in the region, each seeking to be the only superpower in the region.

The so-called Arab Spring, which broke out in 2011, is a strategic turning point in the history of the Middle East in the modern era. It has undergone major changes and transformations that are still unfolding in international and regional events. However, the liquidity situation that the region of The Middle East has witnessed since Six years, when the eruption of the Arab revolutions and then its decline and its transformation into a stormy autumn and a cold winter due to the counter-revolutions and subsequent changes in all the countries of the

region. This makes it difficult to resolve the problems of those changes or to assert that they will stabilize as in its situation now.

The Middle East may witness other, more surprising, strategic shifts that are contrary to all expectations and possible scenarios. Perhaps this was the first lesson we learned from the Arab Spring, which may have surprised the entire world in its unpredictability, as well as its consequences and its tracks.

It is worth noting that the Middle East has lived a strategic crisis for ten years with rapid and successive dramatic shifts that did not give the observers a chance to analyze their deep causes or predict their future paths. It is remarkable that influential actors in the region and the emergence of countries such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia that their roles have not been pivotal for example, to become influential players in the region, and the decline and even the end of the role of the most prominent countries of the opposition movement, which was previously pivotal countries such as Egypt, Syria and Iraq.

In addition , the emergence of new actors outside the framework of the regional state, such as the organization of Daesh and acquisition of most of the Syrian and Iraqi territories in a short period in a clear indicator of the collapse of the components of the regional state, and the decline of the largest Islamic movements in Egypt after the arrival of The leader of the coup Abdul Fattah All-Sisi and the use of power against the Islamic brotherhoods with the blessing and support of the regional and international system.

Then the most prominent event is the Gulf splitting by besieging the State of Qatar from three other Gulf States, namely Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the UAE, as well as the major countries in the region, Egypt. This was preceded by the formation of regional alliances claiming to be from Saudi Arabia at times to confront the Houthis in the stormy crisis in Yemen during their takeover of power in Yemen , then the establishment of an international coalition of about 35 Arab and Islamic countries to fight terrorism.

The whole Arab world is under the pressure of these strategic transformations by the great powers of the world and the conflict of international interests on the Arab arena. The current changes and their multiple effects are in many of the crises that have emerged more widely in the conflict with Iran on the one hand and the Arab Spring crisis and terrorism on the other hand , in addition to many other transformations in the Arab arena. Thus, the Palestinian cause is in a state of stalemate under an Israeli government that does not believe in peace with the Palestinians and does not even believe in the implementation of what is expected of

it. The Arab world is divided intellectually, politically and economically against those who want to get rid of the Palestinian issue and those who believe that a Palestinian state must be established and that Israel withdraws in many ways.

In light of this scene, the Gulf crisis broke out which provided an opportunity to invest in favor of two basic programs: The first is to empower the regional and major powers to bring about a change in the map of the political forces in the region; and second, to enable Israel to achieve the strategic position of integration in the region and to reduce the importance of the Palestinian cause and its role.

Therefore, the political landscape in the region and the transformations of the scene carries many opportunities and challenges for the various parties, and no one enjoys sovereignty and control in general, and therefore the strategic horizon and strategic dimensions of the scene is still trying to form levers, both according to position and in accordance to the region's strategy.

The trend towards the continuation of the strategy of the conflict in the East is a betting on changing alliances, diminishing parties and exhausting parties to achieve the greatest gains when reaching the dialogue table, as in the Gulf crisis, Libya, Palestine, Yemen, Syria, Egypt and Iran are one of the most prominent trends of the political scene with its military, security, economic and political tools, in addition to the direction of regional interventions that share the roles and interests to achieve the greatest interests of each and provide a new regional environment that may be nominated and operated by Turkey and Iran.

This is in addition to the outbreak of internal wars and international conflicts as a result of the revolutions of the Arab Spring and the reactions of the counter-revolutions that led to the international poles, Russia and the United States, towards indirect confrontation in the Middle East region.

The Concept of Strategic Balance

The concept of strategic balance in the political science is defined as the situation in which the structural, behavioral and values of a single state or a group of allied states compete with other competing political units so as to ensure that the state or group of allied states deter or to face the threats against it from one or more other States, and to enable it to move quickly and freely in all areas to return to this situation when it is disturbed to achieve stability.

Many experts believe that balance means is a state of stability or equality in terms of measuring the overall capabilities of states, i.e., military, economic and political. They also believe that the strategy is the science and art of using the comprehensive capabilities of a state or group of states to achieve the maximum possible goals. To be taken by those States, both in time of war and in peacetime, and consider that the strategic balance accordingly is the situation in which the political, military and economic capacities of a State or group of States combined by one framework with another are balanced to ensure the face of threats that can be exposed either singly or in combination, as well as deterring risks and the ability to move quickly to restore stability and balance when it is violated to achieve stability.

We can say that the concept of strategic balance as previously means equal variables that contribute to achieving stability in the region and describe situation with a stable strategic balance if the change or the imbalance or equivalence situation becomes strategic balance THAT is unstable or there is lack of strategic balance in general. The strategic balance here, as experts see, has three basic dimensions:

First: Equivalence and equality between the political, economic and military capabilities of a state or group of states or the overall power of the forces in a region or territory.

Second: The flexibility and effectiveness of the actors in this region and their ability to deal with attempts to violate this balance.

Third: The satisfaction or rejection of other regional or international powers to the strategic equilibrium situation prevailing in the region

On the other hand, achieving the strategic balance in its dimensions and previous characteristics, the equivalent of the capabilities associated with the overall strength of the state or the group of countries in the region and the flexibility and effectiveness of the movement of those countries and the positions of the international and regional forces with influence is based primarily on the strength and influence of that group of countries concerned to achieve strategic balance in confronting other competing parties and their ability to mobilize the necessary alliances to support such stability. The strength of these countries is measured by the strength of other countries or parties. By force, we mean the will and the desire to achieve strategic balance, regardless of the size of the state or its overall power. The overall criterion here is its ability to produce power and exert influence.

Historically, States exercised their power to achieve strategic balance with their rival States through two main instruments: war and diplomacy. States decide when to take or threaten to

use either or both of these instruments and if the tools are means of achieving power, the mere threat of them becomes a mean of deterrent. Means of influence to achieve strategic balance through the economic, media and psychological tools have been multiplied the tools of States to achieve strategic balance accordingly.

The recent period has witnessed an Iranian escalation to impose hegemony over the region. The nuclear agreement between Iran and the Western countries has provided some kind of international legitimacy to Iran, which is seeking to employ it to implement its political project. Although this agreement may defuse tension between Iran and the United States in particular, it has increased the size of Iran. And the imposition of the need to move to control the Iranian regional movement so as not to disturb the strategic balance either on the banks of the Gulf or the neighborhood of strategic direct influence.

Balance: Although the term balance is one of the most widespread and used expressions over successive eras due to the difference of thought and development in each era, but this expression is still vague as there is no agreement on the concept of balance and there is no unified definition of scientists and intellectuals of linking the concept of balance in the scientific aspect of the science of chemistry and nature (atomic theory) and some of them linked to the balance of economy and trade and the stability of markets (supply and demand) and some of the connection to the universe and harmony and consistency (gravity) and a general concept of balance is defined as a state of stability or equivalent of any material, or anybody whether in the case of sleep or movement and be able to return to its natural state without being influenced by any variables and what concerns us in this research in the concept of balance is a state of stability if it provides security (military force) and economic and political power.

Strategy: The term strategy is widely used with many meanings, whether military, political or economic. Without a clear definition of its meaning, we find that the development of the concept of strategy was the result of the difference and development of military technologies and the existence of different military schools. The Americans presented a definition for the term strategy as : (The art and science of the use of the armed forces of a state for the purpose of achieving the objectives of national politics through force or threat of use), while we find that the concept of strategy is used in several areas, we find that geopolitical scientists used this expression .It is clear that the strategy is general and includes branches that are also a strategy for a particular pattern and its application varies from era to era and is influenced by

time, space, international situations and technical level. Economic, political, geographic and historical resources, the nature of the enemy, its idea, its potential and its plans. The strategy is linked to the sum of the tactics and the partial processes necessary to implement the strategic plans. Among top leaders in any country, strategy has been defined as (science and art use of political, economic, military and psychological capabilities of a State or group of States to achieve the maximum possible support for the policies taken in time of peace and war).

In terms of comparison between balance and strategic, strategic equilibrium means that the political, behavioral or moral values of a state or group of states allied with other political units are balanced, so as to ensure that they deter or counter threats directed against it from its own States or other States and also enabling it to move quickly and freely in all areas to return to this situation when it is compromised to achieve stability.

Characteristics of the Strategy

Accordingly, the concept of strategic balance as defined by the scientists is characterized by three specific characteristics:

- Equivalence and equality of a range of variables that may lead to the achievement of the state of stability and thus describe this situation stable strategic balance but If the situation of equivalence between these variables change negatively or positively, the state of strategic balance in this case is unstable.
- The possibility of achieving a unilateral mode in which states independently rely on their own resources for the capabilities of their national forces to achieve a state of equality and equivalence and with the magnitude of the threats against them from another hostile country or more, which can be achieved through alliance with another country or countries in which the mobilization and use the strengths of the allied countries to counter threats from another country or counter-alliances.
- It has three basic dimensions.
 - The structural dimension and the equivalence between the key variables, which are the political, economic, military and social capabilities of a state or group of countries or the comprehensive powers of the actual forces in a particular regional region, both inside and outside.

- Behavioral dimension. Is the extent of flexibility and mobility of international interactions between the powers of the region, whether external, represented by major powers or regional powers from within the region (interdependence or interdependence).
- Regional dimension. Is to recognize the state of strategic balance that may arise in the region and the satisfaction or rejection of the actors.

Elements and components

After defining the concept of strategic balance and the characteristics on which this concept is based, we find that this phenomenon has multiple and overlapping dimensions that interact with each other in the sense that any change in the transfer of one of its dimensions must result in similar changes in the transfer of other dimensions. (Structural, Behavioral and Values) dimensions will be addressed in some detail.

- **The structural dimension** is the political units of the state and its political, economic, military and civilization strength, as well as its moral strength, in addition to the geopolitical importance of the state, especially in terms of its human strength and geographical location. Experts carry all these forces in what is called the "comprehensive powers of the state". In order to appreciate the comprehensive powers of the state or the so-called national power of the state, it is necessary to analyze its concept into its comprehensive elements so that its nature can be clarified or that can be provided from external sources and its ally is also considered the national will of the state one of the elements of its power sources. The interaction of these elements with each other and overlap between them make them fused in a form that expresses the overall strength of the state and then it is a dynamic nature of the dynamic state of permanent movement and the amount of change that may occur in one of the elements or some impact on the overall strength negatively or positively.
- **Geopolitical element.** It refers to all the natural factors and resources of the State. We will examine this element through the geographical location of the State, its area, its political boundaries, its form, the resources of its economic wealth and its human strength, as follows:

A.Geographical location. Geographical location is among the most important factors affecting the country, which revolves around four main factors:

First: Astronomical location. For latitude and longitude and its effect on the climate of the state, which in turn affects human activity, it is noted that developed countries fall within the latitudes of the temperate and cold regions away from polar and tropical regions

- Location of the State for the seas and oceans which affects the strategy and nature of its national interests because of the fact that the coasts of the State on the seas and oceans are able to establish a continuous maritime transport links with the various countries of the world. It is therefore noted that all the great powers throughout history were and still are maritime states (Greeks, Romans, Britain, France and the former Soviet Union) and the United States).

- **Strategic location.** It is of particular importance to the state, where the strategically located countries control the international transport routes and the international trade movement through their control of the lanes, islands and straits.

- Location for neighboring countries. It plays a vital role in determining the state's policy and strategy. The more the state is trapped, the more threatened it is by the surrounding countries, and the more defensive it is, and the more balanced the state takes to maintain its relations with it. Threatening the internal state that is bound to aggression against its neighbors in order to open its own ports (as happened in the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq, which has long coasts on the Arabian Gulf.

Second: The area of the state. Which plays a prominent role in the calculations of the national power of the state, the more the country's space increases the strength and resources of natural wealth, the small country is often characterized by the small population and the lack of natural resources and thus remain to be neutral, such as Switzerland or take balanced policies in international relations (Finland) , or depending on regional or super power countries as the case of (Israel) while countries that have large areas of land usually depend on their the strategic depth to deploy their strategic objectives with full efficiency, thus adopting the policy of the length of mind (Russia), unlike the small countries that adopt the strategy of blitzkrieg or lightning war and then to move the war out of country and out of its territory (Israel).

Third: The political boundaries of the state. They affect their relations with neighboring or surrounding countries and thus affect the political power in terms of the ratio between the

length of land and sea borders and political boundaries are divided according to their geography to natural borders or artificial borders.

- **Natural limits.** They are based on natural phenomena such as mountains as the case of (Sweden, Norway, Germany, France and Spain), but the sharing of the peaks of the mountain ranges to achieve control over the adjacent plains is often a source of inter-state disputes (for example, the Syrian border with Turkey, The Syrian political border passes through the southern slopes of these mountains, giving Turkey the advantage of strategic control over the border.

- **Artificial borders.** Which in the case of the economy to normal limits and according to which the limits of the industry according to the agreement of the parties concerned may be human limits where the language and religion are the most important factors to demarcate the border before the situation in India and Pakistan may resort to countries to exchange minorities so as not to break part of its territory as an event between Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria. The border may be geometrically and electronically based on latitude and longitude, such as the situation between Egypt and Libya, separated by a 5 m long east line and between Egypt and Sudan, separated by latitude 22.

Fourth: The shape of the state. The rectangular shape of the ring is the optimal shape, followed by square shape such as Switzerland, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and France. There are rectangular countries with a length of six widths, which are either coastal, such as Chile, Norway, Argentina, Vietnam or rectangular interiors such as Laos and Austria and Czechoslovakia, where the nature of the mountain barrier to movement and communication between the parts of their people, which led to the subsequent division between Check and Slovakia, where the elongation of the state and the existence of mountain barriers to the lack of integration between them may be the form of the state fragmented, Japan, Indonesia and New Zealand.

Fifth: Location of the capital. It is also an influential factor, which is often located in the central region of the countries or the heart and the areas of the parties to the capital of almost equal, which increases and facilitates the control of the entire region of the state and thus the most important areas and most vital so it is preferred that the capital is to be located on a river Such as Cairo, Madrid, Zanzara, Vienna and Paris. The protection of the capital and its protection from external aggression is one of the most important factors in choosing its location. Turkey moved its capital from Istanbul to Ankara after the collapse of the Ottoman

Empire, as did Brazil, which moved the capital Rio de Janeiro to Brasilia so as to be away from its borders.

Sixth: Availability of means of transportation. The means of transport of all types (land, air and sea) are prominent factors in estimating the strength of the state. The country can transfer its resources, vitality, population and needs from one place to another easily and also able to transfer their raw materials to industrial centers or ports and airports , export to foreign markets, defending the state at a time of crisis and war, where the means of transportation help to mobilize the armies quickly to the threatened areas and continue to run the war no matter how long . The importance of the human resources in the country is of great importance because it is the basis of progress achieved, backwardness, strength or weakness. With human strength, the military and economic forces are built and the state can achieve remarkable progress even if it does not have some natural resources. For example, Japan, is one of the biggest industrial countries.

The human element is studied in two ways:

Ethnic. In terms of the race and ethnic composition of the peoples that are involved in building the nation and the language they are talking to and the religion they believe.

- **Population.** It is a study based on statistical data that reflect the population data, the proportion of males and females, their distribution in terms of age, and the proportion of young people who can bear arms among themselves.
- **Economic strength.** Which is the value of the resources of the economic wealth of the state and the extent of interaction of human resources with these resources and how to exploit them in the interest of the national interest of the State has become more important?economic strength makes the policy but in the past policy made the economy was the economy .the resources of economic wealth are divided into four types of resources:

A.Resources available immediately. These are the strategic resources that cannot be replaced in different industries and are actually produced by the state, such as cotton and minerals extracted from state mines such as chrome, iron and nickel. The existing factories in the state, the army, the weapons, and the equipment are immediately available.

B. Resources that can be available after a specific time. The production is usually saved .This type of resource includes factories, production lines that are not working at full capacity and spare parts for repair. Reserve forces that can be called during half an hour to three

weeks .periods are also considered according to the general mobilization plans as well as weapons Equipment and ammunition that can be decommissioned during this period for resources of this type.

C. Resources that can be obtained after modifying the original product. Which are made of the former two types and can be modified according to the need of the state and take the required amendment for a period of longer than 3 weeks, such as the modification of civilian factories to become military production and modification of aircraft and modern ships to become military and mobilize students of universities and young people in the civil sector to train and convert them to military and conversion State facilities and means of production to serve the war effort.

D. The resources of the last type that are expected to be obtained. Which require certain studies and technical research to produce a particular weapon or those that are in the initial stages of their experience or are likely to be obtained from other countries and therefore are not available but possible resources that cannot be planned for use in economic policies or rely on when adopting important political decisions especially during the period of preparation or administration of war.

Balance and Major Strategic Shifts in the Middle East

The strategic balance of the Middle East is one of the most important topics that has attracted the interest of researchers and thinkers, given the region's potential and capabilities that have a great influence on international strategic interests and hence the international and regional balances. The Middle East has witnessed many balance forms each one and expression of the circumstances and variables that prevailed at each stage. During the Cold War, the strategic balance in the region was a reflection of the nature of the international balance that existed between the superpowers (the United States and the former Soviet Union) The end of the Cold War and the emergence of the United States of America as a dominant power over all regional affairs, including the Middle East, the strategic balance at this stage was greatly affected by the nature of the new American strategy in the region, especially after the Second Gulf War (1991) Which was reflected directly on the regional balances in the region. After the US occupation of Iraq in 2003, the Middle East witnessed major political and military changes, accompanied by new projects and arrangements that the United States attempted to bring into the region to adapt to the strategy. US-based domination and influence, which have had serious implications, were reflected directly on the strategic balance in the region.

In which States, especially super power countries, are generally regarded in particular in a constant endeavor to improve their international standing and maximize their influence in order to promote and protect their interests. The resources of excellence and superiority of one state over the other available economic, military, technological, political, and other capabilities, and the ability to employ these possibilities in an optimal manner, especially in terms of setting goals and stages of achievement, priorities and importance and appropriate to their potentials and capabilities. The ability of the state to use its power resources in the regions in general, and in particular to expand its influence and promote its interests, is one of the points of excellence that enables it to achieve gains at the international level.

The effect of a force on achieving a strategic balance at the international level depends largely on its ability to shape international policy interactions, influence regional balances, and be able to define and control its own tracks to the best of its interests. Rather, regional interactions and the mobility of countries to deal with them and the positions they take towards regional issues are mostly a reflection of the interests of the super powers, to the extent that in many of them they define their paths and determine how to deal with them. This is what drives the super powers to be present on the issues of the region. They are constantly developing their policies so that they can control the regional balances, ensure their influence and promote their interests, and use them for their benefit in the field of international competition. Therefore, the policies of the great and grand powers that aim at maintaining or changing the balance of power in the region are determined by the interests of each of these forces. Which requires each of them to have a presence in the issues of the region, and the ability to initiate and impose initiatives at other times, and to suit their interests and enhance their influence?

The transformation of the international system from a bipolar system to a unipolar system at the end of the Cold War was accompanied by a regional event represented by the Second Gulf War in January 1991, meaning that the region was the scene of a major shift in the international system. As well as after the events of September 2001 in the United States of America, as the American response was in the arena of the Middle East. In the first, the initiative of the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference was put forward; the second was the road map initiative, and many political, security and military crises such as the Qatari-Gulf crisis, the Yemeni crisis, the Syrian crisis and terrorism. The Middle East is a vital area of interest for the United States, especially since the essence of these interests is to secure access to oil

and to ensure Israel's security remains a top priority in US foreign policy since the end of the Second World War.

One of the most important scenes and transformations in the map of strategic changes is found in the Middle East. The most important are in the following points in order to shed light on its features and main lines to try to understand the nature, impact and implications of current and future.

- The Middle East has become the nucleus of strategic attraction for international conflicts. The international conflict between the East and the West is raging, with the renewed US-Russian conflict, which is the top international competition for influence and wealth in the world.
- The collapse of the national security system of some countries in the region, which has negatively affected the stability of these countries internally and external strength, where most of the countries of the Middle East suffer from large security loopholes as a result of penetrations of foreign intelligence services, which made it an easy hunt for international forces that rely on hitting the internal security system under the cover of terrorism.
- The outbreak of internal wars and international conflicts as a result of the Arab Spring revolutions and the reactions of the counter-revolutions that led to the international poles, Russia and the United States, towards indirect confrontation in the region.
- Entering the region in the quagmire of the Agency's wars and alliances that were not studied because of the collapse of the regional balance system, which led some small countries to play a large geostrategic role at the expense of the strategic depth, which negatively affected the stability of regional security equation and the collapse of major regional systems such as the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council because of Their ineffectiveness in the exercise of their previous role in the region.
- A frenzied conflict between regional forces that play a suspicious and unprecedented regional role aspires to leadership and influence at the expense of other regional powers (the UAE as a model). In addition to internal transformations in most countries in the region, particularly Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Syria, Which have been witnessed by these States as a result of internal and external interference from neighboring States.
- The fall of the regionalstate, the disintegration of its components and the weakness of its sovereignty over its borders and components. The regional conflict between the rival regional

powers led to the dismantling of social cohesion and the weakening of the national unity of the components of most countries in the region. .

- The fall of the borders and the administrative divisions of some countries. The international and regional conflicts in the Middle East led to the loss of control over some regions of the regional state after the control of most of the Iraqi and Syrian territories and the establishment of states within the same state. The Kurdistan region of Iraq model), as well as Syria, Yemen, Libya and Turkey, in addition to some of the candidate countries for this situation.
- The rise of the phenomenon of international migrations and the resulting demographic changes, which resulted conflicts and internal wars in the region and Millions of migrants who have gone to the regional and western countries, especially Turkey and Europe, and who have caused confusion in these countries and their inability to absorb migrants and take measures contrary to international rules and laws relating to asylum and migration.
- The falloff oil prices and the conflict over energy supply sources. Most of the Middle East countries suffer from economic crises and the ongoing deficit in public budgets due to the direct link of their economies to oil and gas, and the collapse of oil prices in late 2014, which led to sudden economic crises on the energy transmission lines, where the region is already plagued by wars and conflicts of these international conflicts.
- The pace of strategic shifts in the region, where there is a state of liquidity and the speed of change in political positions and the collapse of alliances, there is almost no state of continuity or stability, but the sudden change and frequent turns, for example Gulf-Gulf relations with the State of Qatar, Even at the Allied level, such as the change in the theater of war with the Houthis.
- Finally, it is possible to say that the Middle East is still undergoing a period of transition due to the strategic changes resulting from the Arab Spring and the subsequent events that have had serious consequences for the wars and conflicts that have colored the maps of the region, changed some regimes and created new actors and players on the scene. With the expected changes that we witness every day, which requires all efforts to ensure that the regimes do not lose control, which makes it difficult to remedy this collapse and rapid collapse or exit from this dark tunnel and the imminent big explosion.

The Strategy of Regional Powers in the Middle East: Restructuring after the Arab Revolutions

The emergence of a group of influential forces in the region and their impact on the recent changes of the Arab Spring revolutions, by studying the issue from the perspective of the five countries that retain the title of "regional power": Iran, Egypt, Turkey, Israel and Saudi Arabia.

It should be noted that the concept of force - especially regional power - has been repeatedly discussed within international political circles: how can this force be acquired? What does it mean to acquire it? And how can this responsibility or opportunity be used - if so to speak - optimally? This is what we are trying to explain through this part of the research.

Martin Beck, professor of contemporary Middle Eastern studies at the University of Hamburg, Germany, said in the introduction of his book: The Middle East has not produced free regional forces. These forces have emerged as a result of overlapping and complex effects of internal and external factors. The strongest political players in the Middle East are not those who see it as their home, but those behind the Atlantic in the United States, and before those colonial powers like France and Britain during World War II.

The emergence of oil in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf region has put forward a new equation that increased foreign ambitions in that region and try to contain them politically and economically. The United States is controlled by two main goals in the Middle East: ensuring Israel's security and protecting the oil sources; in the region has always addressed the issues of Arab wealth and the issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"The Arab spring protests have given Iran an opportunity to expand its influence throughout the region," said Heiner Fortig, director of the Center for Middle East Studies at the German Institute for International and Regional Studies and professor of history at the University of Hamburg, Germany. The claims described by Fortig as "out of reach" due to the time lag between the two events, as well as the great difference between the Shiite thinking of Iran on the one hand and the ideology of Arab unity prevailing in Egypt and Iraq on the other.

In addition to the soft powers of understanding Iran's influence, Professor Arshin Adib Magdem, professor of thought and philosophy at the London School of Economics and head of the Middle East Institute for Iranian Studies, tried to find the best picture of Iran within the "community of nations" Its attempts to establish its image in the world order as the people of the Persian "Aryan", and then rely on its Islamic ideology in an

attempt to determine its position in the world and the proportion of some credit to it, and help the identity policies to understand the vision of each nation for itself; but Iran's perception of the high international status overwhelmed the reality of forces The real State and influence. However, Iran's high military capabilities, combined with the ability of its allies to shape the future of the region and the international community, did not take into account of the authors Fortig and Majdim.

On the other hand, Iran is one of the countries with regional powers as one of the most troubling countries. There is always a debate about its nuclear potential (more than ever before, as its negotiations with the 5 + 1 group of finalists approach) There is also controversy over the extent of the influence it has gained since the Islamic Revolution as a result of the uprisings that have swept the region over the past decade, extending its influence to Lebanon, Baghdad, Damascus and finally Sana'a.

It also claims that the strengthening of its power came to a hostile position of the current international order.

This was confirmed by many observers, including the Egyptian thinker and diplomat Dr. Mustafa al-Faki in an article in Al-Hayat, September 11, 2012. He pointed out that the Iranian revolution introduced a new dimension from a regional strategic perspective that had international dimensions affecting the policies and the Iranian nuclear issue played a role in the regional and international confrontations in the last two decades, which resulted in regional policies based on polarization and the division of the Middle East.

"The role of Egypt as a regional power has declined since the 1970s," said Elizabeth Munier, a researcher at the Center for Globalization and Regional Studies at the University of Warwick, UK, and Annette Ranko, researcher at the German Institute for International and Regional Studies and professor of Islamic studies at Hamburg University. , Not only because of its alliance with the United States, but also because of its new alliance with Israel, which ended the conflict, which was well received and popular in the Arab world, as claimed by the two researchers contrary to the truth. The researchers consider that the Islamists are among the opponents of the policies of "Mubarak", which was described in light of his alliance with Israel that "protects Egypt and the Arab nation."

On the prospects of Turkey's return to the Middle East, Melissa Pinalia Al Touneshek, a professor of international relations at the Middle East Technical University in Turkey, said that "Turkey's economic and political transformation as well as the concepts and policies to

build a clear regional power," said MelihiaPinnalia, a professor at the Department of International Relations at the Middle East Technical University in Turkey. , Making it expect to be treated as a regional power in the wake of the Arab uprisings. However, it has failed to take full advantage of the opportunities it has had, and although the increasing conflict in the region has been a limiting factor for its movement, it has maintained its reliance on "soft power" to reach its goal and has not resorted to reliance on force. In his assessment of this point, we could suggested that Turkey was trying to restore the Ottoman Empire and that this dream, which had come out of its place with the Erdogan regime, Which the Turks still consider to be a Ottoman heritage, and that the only difference between the old Ottomans and the Ottomans is that the first Arab invasion of the Arab armies of the "Anacharism", while the new Ottomans want to enter the theater economically or security.

Since Israel was created as a Jewish state, Robert Kappel, a researcher at the German Institute for International and Regional Studies in Hamburg, Germany, noted in the first topic of Chapter 4, "Israel: Hidden Opportunities," that Israel's situation in the region is not similar to that of the states and the conflict with the Palestinians continues to hinder the establishment of good relations with its neighbors in the region, and that its huge military capacity in addition to its strong relations with the international system, and if not given the ability to formulate the reality as you wish, it gives it the "power of prevention" of its wording according to what it does not want.

Moreover, its power in the region is greatly reduced; its status as a democratic state enables it to become a tool of soft power in the region, yet it has failed to play this role, given the inability of other democracies in the region to play a similar role. Moreover, most of the Arab countries view Israel as a threat to them, which weakens its ability to influence the current events. Israel will need to reduce its adherence to Jewish statehood and activate the peace process with the Palestinians to break the barriers and play a greater role in the region.

Moreover, many Arab politicians attributed the cause of the crisis in this region to the existence of Israel as a threat to the security and peace of the region. Although this conflict occurs in a relatively small geographic area, it has considerable international political and media attention because it is linked to problematic issues centered around The right of the Zionist movement to seize the land of Palestine and establish a Jewish nation-state on its territory after the expulsion of its indigenous people, that is, the nature of the conflict focused on the "Palestinian issue."

Thomas Ritschner, a researcher at the Institute for Middle East Studies at the German Institute for International and Regional Studies, in his study entitled "Saudi Arabia: What is more than oil dollars" explains that the new activity of the Saudi leadership after the Arab Spring was remarkable, Of the various security threats. However, the Kingdom failed to provide a comprehensive new vision to counter threats in the Middle East.

Saud Al-Tamimi, an assistant professor at the Political Science Department at King Saud University in Riyadh, referred to Saudi Arabia's approach to the uprisings of the Arab countries, pointing out that its reaction to the Arab Spring was very complex and determined its need to maintain the status quo on some issues, or change the situation in other cases.

HainerFortige, asserted that Saudi Arabia has always been a major competitor as a leader of the region because of its religious authority and its control over oil, but it has failed to play this role and was not affected by the uprisings in Arab countries to a large extent, The other Gulf Cooperation Council wanted to join Jordan and Morocco to the Gulf system, in an effort to strengthen the kingdoms of the region to confront the uprisings.

"We do not deny - and no one can - that the Middle East is now undergoing a period of revolutionary change that is effectively defying the foreign policies of the United States and all regional countries," said Andrew Terrell, a researcher at the Institute of Strategic Studies at the American War College. In this new environment, challenges have been imposed on a number of regional and other States to protect their national interests and to try to marginalize their competitors' attempts in the same direction.

The rivalry between these two countries is old, but it has gained great importance at the moment, especially with Iran's attempts to impose itself as a regional power in the region at the expense of Saudi Arabia.

In any event, the scenarios of the rise or fall of a regional power in its region are due to a set of elements (elements and constraints) that determine the chances of each state, namely, the ability of the state to assume leadership from the elements of power it possesses geographically, The Palestinian issue, the regional resistance movements, the Iranian nuclear file, the Arab Spring, and the extent of regional acceptance of the leading role of each country, and the political and security stability of the country, and finally its relations with some Emerging international powers such as Russia and China.

Iran, for example, was strained by confrontation with Iraq in an eight-year war. Today, it is considered a regional power that is not comparable to its neighbors. "The Turkish state,

which has been preoccupied for decades with internal construction, has been very open to the Middle East, especially in the last decade, and wants to restore the glory of the Ottoman Empire, but the membership of the " Atlantic " "and an alliance with Washington and to keep the balance with the relationship with "Israel".

While Saudi Arabia has recently emerged as a pivotal and active force in the Arab region, especially after the Arab revolutions, Israel has been transformed from a country that no one criticizes it to a major focus of criticism from countries and international organizations in recent times. Journalist George Friedman said direct competition between Tehran and Riyadh posed a major threat to the region's security and stability, requiring a greater Turkish role in the region.

If there are no stable balances of forces in the Middle East, they are variable according to overlaps with major powers and the region's association with external entities with a clear impact on the region. If we are currently monitoring regional power balances, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Israel are the pillars of influential political, economic, and military forces. The geographical regions and strategic regions accept change from time to time; we must bear in mind that the Middle East is an area of the world's middle, characterized by many sensitivities and ancient heritage, the home of the heavenly religions, the cradle of spiritual messages and the origin of civilizations, as well as external influences. The most important being the birth of the State of Israel, which was the most prominent mark in the composition of the Middle East since the end of the Second World War and until now.

To Conclude: the most likely pattern of leadership in the region is characterized by the difficulty of the emergence of a single country dominating the Middle East because most of the components of power are not available in a particular country.

"A study in Arab political relations" issued by the Center for Arab Unity Studies stated that, apart from the unwillingness of each country to raise another country to lead the region, the obstacles to reality prevent a single country from taking over the role of leadership. In addition to this American role, which prevents any independent ambition, it is not in the interest of the United States to show a strategic independent force in the Middle East.

The Middle East's position is incredibly complex, as it contains the world's largest oil and gas reserves, as well as its political and historical overlaps, making it all the attention of the international powers.

Scenarios on the Strategy Future of Balance of Power in the Middle East

More than any other region in the world, the Middle East is strategically defined not only by trade relations, by diplomatic interaction, or by regional organizations, but by strong force and military capability. This has been the case in the modern history of the region, and will remain so for the foreseeable future. However, since the fall of the Ottoman Empire a century ago, the Middle East has not experienced regional turbulence, conflict and internal strife as it witnesses now.

In the midst of this fragmentation in the regional system, there is ongoing civil wars, especially in Syria and Yemen, as well as in Libya and Iraq, which seems intractable issues. Regional conflicts over influence, such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, are widely seen as complicating factors. While these competitions are already significant, the broader dynamics have prolonged these conflicts and made them more spectacular.

There is a rapid change in the indicators of international balances. Whether it is through the increasing fluctuations in the movement of entry and exit in the balance of power in qualitative terms, or through the rise of the range of the members of the international system of various sizes for the acquisition of power, it is one of the most prominent indicators of what is called the fragmentation of structures of the existing global order today which we note is moving to new distributions of power and its divisions on the international chessboard on the one hand, and different applications of balance-of-power policies on the other.

In addition, these are clear indications of the growing fears of many countries of the global regime's disintegration at one time, which led to chaos and geopolitical vacuum, chaos and decline in stability and global security. The beginning of this decline began with the events of September 11, 2001 - with fear of violating the sovereignty of many countries that do not have a future map of how to deal with these situations and recent changes. Both for the weakness of their political systems or for their lack of future vision which in turn leads to their inability to adapt or access the paths through high-intensity and density of change paths.

On the other hand, it will lead to the emergence of new regional powers and a further decline, and the consequent change of conflicts, violations, privileges and transformations affecting the strength of nations, their influence and their international geopolitical status. Through the tools of a policy will prevail in the form of steel and military. The follower of these indicators during the second decade of the 21st century finds a clear concentration in the distributions and applications of that acceleration in the balance of international balance in

the Middle East specifically. Through the scenarios of change and geopolitical impact led by some international powers, continental and regional since the passage of the international system, the "unipolar" system, which has been dominated by the United States since the beginning of 1990 absolute zero point until 2019, specifically the US-Iran crisis in the Persian Gulf.

The balance of power in the Middle East is witnessing storms of change in the midst of power struggles between the major poles, arms races among regional powers, and the growth of non-state entities and their growing presence and influence. At the international level, the US-Russian rivalry is evident, as the region is of strategic importance to both players. The Middle East is of great geopolitical importance to Washington for several reasons, most notably its wealth of energy resources, its control of many land and sea crossings linking the three continents, its religious and historical value in the Zionist-American lobby, and its connection to Israeli security.

While Moscow seeks to have a foothold in the region because it links it with warm water through the Black Sea, and owns the only naval base outside its borders in Tartus, on the other hand, Russia believes that America bless the overthrow of the allied regimes of the Kremlin in Libya and Assad in Syria Last but not least, while Putin's administration seeks to restore Russia to power as a superpower, competition for the Middle East is an ideal place to highlight Russian power.

While these forces are poles of tension and attraction in the region, the Middle East is heading towards a closed cycle of conflict, which will continue between nations unless the regional powers of the Middle East create a new balance.

The Balance of Power theory offers four possible options:

Option 1: Inner Balance.

Namely, that countries increase their internal strength so that they become equivalent in weight, through modernization of the institutional system and system of government, and the enhancement of military and economic capabilities. However, in the case of the Middle East, there are some obstacles. The current challenges are greater than the level of the regional countries. It is impossible for any country in the Middle East, no matter how much it grows, to become an equivalent player for America or Russia.

Option 2: Alliance with one of the military camps Bandwagon

In which the smaller countries tend to protect themselves in alliance with one of the major threats, especially when the conflict is imminent. However, this measure proved disastrous through the division that ravaged the Middle East during the Cold War. In the current situation, countries that prefer to take refuge with the great powers will become the arena for its operations and entering the war as an agent.

Option 3: Passing the conflict to other parties Buck-passing

The Middle East countries support and strengthen the parties, whether States or entities of the state to fight the conflict on its behalf, a solution proved to fail in Syria by the inability of the opposition-backed Sunni forces in the region to overthrow the Assad regime, and proved its limited effectiveness in Yemen through Support the Arab coalition of the Hadi government, making it imperative for the strongest regional powers in the Middle East to redouble their presence in existing conflicts.

Option 4: External Balance

In which the smaller forces in the system increase their strength through the alliance among themselves to form a counterweight to the major poles, preserving their regional security and reducing the global conflict by breaking the polarity. While the regional forces in the Middle East are determined according to multiple force criteria that take into consideration the human, geographic, cultural and economic elements, the forces that can move the rest of the region are four countries: Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Iran. While Iran cannot be considered an ally, the Turkish, Egyptian, and Saudi trio becomes the most viable solution.

However, like any other option, the alliance between the forces of the region faces a range of challenges and dilemmas. On the one hand, the differences between the forces on many issues highlight many questions about the role that Egypt is currently playing, which keeps Saudi Arabia and Turkey in the balance. Nor can we neglect of the fact that the major powers will try hard to prevent any rapprochement between the countries of the Middle East, which would pose a threat to its effectiveness in the region and a challenge to the balance of power that is keen to preserve it.

Alternative Option:

The nature of the complex and multi-level challenges requires unusual measures to deal with them. The behavior of one of the four previous routes will not be enough to lift the Middle East out of chaos, which means creating a new course that allows the regional powers to create balance amidst the many variables. Across three sequential stages. At the first level, regional forces must create an internal balance - the first option - through a comprehensive development process. Turkey has largely succeeded in doing so over the past decade, and Saudi Arabia is moving to it through the vision of Prince Mohammed bin Salman 2030.

In the second stage, the process of integration between the regional powers in the Middle East - the fourth option - is difficult, but from the structural realism, the size of the threat that threatens the countries of the region to disappear may be a catalyst in urging countries to ally and meet in Midway, and consider the public interest as a means of preserving the private interest, which happened historically in the alliance of Britain and America with the Soviet Union during World War II to confront the Nazi threat.

Certainly, this alliance if it is achieved it will not liking the great powers, especially the conflict of interests and visions between them, and here comes the role of the third phase is the alliance with major forces outside the Fund of the conflict exists and perhaps China is the best option. The Middle East's link to a network of interests with a permanent Security Council member with veto power is crucial to easing the crisis. However, this alliance must be limited to the economic side for two reasons. In the first place, China will not be willing to enter as a military power within a distant geographical region while its front yard is in competition with the United States over the sovereignty of the China Sea. Second, if we assume that China has entered for one reason or another within the security equation and the military accounts of the Middle East, this will deepen the crisis and intensify the conflict while the region needs an ally that absorbs the intensity of competition.

Therefore, the rapprochement with China should be within the economic profile through four channels: the exploitation of Arab capital to invest in China, the opening of markets in the Middle East for Chinese products, exploitation of the geographical location of the region by giving China the concession of manufacturing and export through free zones and ports in the east Middle East, and fourth comes oil, which has become China's largest consumer of the world and still needs it is growing continuously. By raising the level of interdependence

between China and the Middle East, the region will be included in the national security accounts of Beijing.

Although it is difficult to be resolved in its operational framework and amid the complexities of the overall climate, there is a historic opportunity to achieve it, as the size of the growing threat and the failure of individual solutions is pushing countries strongly towards the alliance. On the other hand, the Anglo-American axis, which is the historical antagonist of alliances in the Middle East, suffers from internal issues that limit its external presence. Britain is still trying to adjust to the results of its exit vote from the European Union and deal with the consequences of its economy. In contrast, the United States seems preoccupied with preparation to presidential elections and the Republican / Democratic conflict.

Conclusion

Finally, we would like to refer to several issues related to the first-grade classes in the School of International Relations. It is said that the countries in their foreign policy follow one of three great strategies: First, self-reliance, big powers do not need other countries in defending their security or basic needs, and has the capacity to move the breadth of the universe, and has the capacity of production, which makes them do not need a party or other parties, and if needed for some reason, it has the money and economic means to get what it wants or grab it in force or other means. The second is to seek to create a state of regional or international balance so as to eliminate the other single capable forces. It will also compete to attract the smaller forces to their side so that the balance is in their favor. The third is to catch up with the strongest and most powerful forces in the world and to gain the benefits of providing security at lower cost and high economic benefits for reasonable services.

The idea of Arab nationalism and the Arab unity in its essence was an attempt to adopt the first strategy on the basis that the Arab countries that are combined could achieve an international force with the resources to be self-reliant. But when it appeared that this goal is difficult to achieve for reasons that are not mentioned here, the second and third strategies are the two favorite to form the foreign policy of the Arab countries.

The Cold War - 1947-1989 - was the period of prosperity for the balance strategy between the Soviet and American giants and the alliances around them. Many major Arab states have found that pursuing policies of "positive neutrality", "non-alignment", diversifying weapons sources and the economy is an effective means of gaining international prestige and maximizing the interests of each country. The Arab-Israeli conflict played a role in this

strategy, as the US-Western alliance with Israel led to the Soviet Union and its socialist bloc seeking arms and factories. This was quite the opposite of the strategies adopted by countries such as Pakistan, South Korea, Turkey, Cuba and others that did not play the balance between the two camps, but chose to catch up with one of the two camps to achieve their interests.

In practice, of course, countries do not take any of these strategies at all times, and are likely to use a mixture of mixes ranging from time to time. But the Arab states in general tended to a world in which there was more than a camp, more than a balance, and the most disturbing one was when there was only one force to lead the world as the United States did after the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union.

Returning to the issue of strategic balance itself, this issue can be seen as the most central dilemma in the space of regional security of the countries of the region. The regional system had witnessed what could be cautiously defined as a form of unstable balance of power, in which the clear concepts of deterrence were absent, despite the feverish arms race that characterized it. The result was that the region slipped into two devastating wars within a decade as well as the Arab Spring revolutions, and the US invasion of Iraq found one of its early backgrounds in the second Gulf War itself. This war results are still present in the overall security and political movement of the region.

The other is the Russian intervention in Syria, and the scholars of international relations have divided on the validity of the balance of power as a security arrangement in order to crystallize three basic trends: the first, which believes in its effectiveness in preventing international wars. War according to this logic occurs when power relations radically change in favor of one party, prompting it to change the status quo by force. The second trend, represented by Frederick Schumann, is that instead of implementing the system of balance of power to exclude the possibility of war, it will become its last instrument in maintaining equilibrium within the international system. Hans Morgenthau has elevated this type of war to preventive wars. The third trend is represented by Organsky, who believes that the periods of equilibrium in international relations are the same as the periods of war, while the periods of supremacy that some parties of the international system have achieved at the expense of others are periods of peace and stability. The equivalence increases the likelihood of war by increasing the temptation in this situation. It is possible to win the opponent, but with superiority, the weak parties do not have the ability to gamble with war, while the powerful

parties do not need it for their ability to resolve positions in ways that promote their interests and goals. This view is consistent with the concept of Hegemonic Stability, which states that the large disparity in the distribution of power elements among the international powers in a way that allows talking of dominant forces is the best guarantor of security, especially if the dominant is not to harm the interests of other powers, At least the least, or else those forces found justification for their movement aimed at overthrowing the dominant forces.

Indeed, none of these three trends can be adopted without regard to the requirements of reality, in which the balance of power is to be applied as a security arrangement. The military power of the forces, the associated military doctrine, the level of armament and progress Military technology. If the gap between the forces is large, with an offensive military doctrine, those forces slip into an arms race, which usually leads to war. It is also necessary to assess the nature of the threat perceived by these forces and the extent of the existence of a common perception and how to deal with it, which is affected in large part by the psychological environment of the decision-maker, and previous experience, and assess the structure of the international system opportunities and restrictions on the movement of forces, then to apply it at the sub-international level.

In general, a significant imbalance can be observed in the relative distribution of power among the countries of the regional system of the Middle East, which leads to an unrealistic or unstable balance of power. There are two dimensions to this dilemma: The first dimension is material, linked to the nature of the physical, geographic, demographic and financial components. The second dimension is significant, related to the levels of scientific research and technical skills, especially security and military research, combat experience, military manufacturing and material resources. The relative distribution of the size of the population among the countries of the GCC regional system is a central dimension of the balance of power in this system. Despite the slight changes that have occurred in the past two decades in the map of the relative distribution of the demographic bloc among the countries of the region, the scarcity of population has remained a characteristic of the countries of the interior in this region, i.e. the GCC countries, while Iran and Iraq maintained their relative superiority, Iran is even more rapid in its demographic growth.

While 5% of the total military forces available at the level of the Arab world, and the number of these forces is of great importance in seeking to know the defense capabilities of the countries concerned, through which the ability to determine the country can be absorbed by

the weapons available to them humanly, and gross national product and the average Per capita income, total population and debt size determine their ability to support local military manufacturing and the extent to which it can be marketed domestically. What is to be said in the last analysis is that the GCC countries store uneven and inconsistent levels of physical and moral strength, and the chances of building a strategic balance in the region do not seem to be available in the classic sense of the term, On the demographic gap by the advanced settlement of military technology, building national expertise in defense, and broadening the base of basic and applied research. These are fundamental steps in the development of a new concept of balance in the regional system in the Middle East.

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