

"George W. Bush and Barack Obama's Policies Towards the 'New Middle East':
Promoting Democracy or Destroying Social Peace? " Amira Baghiani, Nadir Kaouli

George W. Bush and Barack Obama's Policies Towards the 'New Middle East': Promoting Democracy or Destroying Social Peace?



Amira Baghiani

University of Mustapha Benboulaïd, Batna 2, Algeria, bagmira90@gmail.com

Nadir Kaouli

University of Mustapha Benboulaïd, Batna 2, Algeria, n.kaouli@univ-batna2.dz

Received date: 11/01/2021 **Revised date:** 05/06/2021 **Accepted date:** 10/07/2021

Abstract:

The strategy that came to be largely associated with the invasion of Iraq, by overthrowing Saddam's regime would precipitate domino democratization throughout the Middle East, has been plagued into a disaster of destruction. This article aims to analyze Bush's policy with regard to state-building efforts in the region, and the extent to which his administration is committed itself to promote democracy or destroy social peace of the Arab nations. The study also brings into focus Obama's policy to a set of challenges following the emergence of ISIS and the Arab uprisings. It is concluded that Bush's neoconservative government and Obama's administration have failed at promoting democracy in the Middle East.

Keywords: George Bush; Barack Obama; U.S-Mideast Policy; Democracy Promotion

* Corresponding author: Baghiani Amira, bagmira90@gmail.com

Introduction:

Since the Cold War, the Middle East has been part of U.S-Soviet chessboard. The root causes of the ongoing turmoil in the Arab states can be attributed to the Western actors of Great Britain, United States and France by expanding their hegemonic influence in the post-war years. The most important conflicts dated back to the imposition of arbitrary borders and disintegration of the Ottoman Empire prior to the old British-French plan of World War I that helped create the modern-day Middle East; and to eventually inherit Kings, emirs, and sheikhs the dominant power in the region, which led imminently to the exploitation of the countries' rich resources by the imperialistic powers. This colonial mindset still influences American political attitude towards the Middle East (Mousavian & Saberi, 2015).

The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 on the United States brought democracy promotion into the forefront of US policy towards the Middle East (Dalacoura, 2010). The Bush administration has begun an idealist mission to reshape a new Middle East. With the intervention in Iraq, the U.S. argued that the transformation would serve as a watershed event for other countries and set off a 'tsunami' of regime change towards democracy in the whole region (Dalacoura, 2010). Yet by the end of Bush's 'mission accomplished', the United States faced a cruel paradox in fighting other war against ISIL.

All through history, it is no wonder that the U.S. attempted to export democracy in foreign countries through military intervention. Indeed, the Middle East of 2008 is to a very great extent different from that of 2001, and the invasion of Iraq is the center of this transformation (Ottaway et al., 2008). However, the result is not what the Bush administration conceived and the rhetoric that surrounded his policy of by promoting democracy, the United States would protect itself through preemptive military strikes against countries known to be harboring terrorists.

Instead, It seems that the democratic openings supported by the United States in Iraq evoked instability, and violence. Thereby, Bush's legacy has been criticized for spurring the rise of ISIS which is according to him is the only regret for the 2003 Iraq invasion. And then, just as US-led troops withdrew from Iraq, the so-called Arab uprisings shook the foundations of regional orders, toppling longstanding US allies in Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen and bringing the outbreak of two civil wars in Libya and Syria (Byman & Moller, 2016). Although, Obama's policy has been to differentiate itself from the former president's policy, under which Bush entangled America in militaristic operations characterized by the so-called 'war on terror' in the region (Alessandri et al., 2015). Obama remained a top target for criticism over the destruction caused by the ISIS in the region. These events

posed daunting challenges for president Obama to reconsider the way his policy generated disarray and anarchy.

Hence two broad questions will be raised here, the first, is whether President Bush wanted to promote democracy or destroy the integrity and social peace of the Arab nations? Second, how high did the Middle East stand on Obama's agenda following the Arab uprisings, and what are the consequences of his doctrine, and whether it marked a fundamental shift from Bush's Middle East policy?

The present article aims at analyzing Bush's foreign policy in the Middle East with regard to stability, security and democracy promotion, and how the 9/11 events have caused changes in the region. It also sheds light on how Obama's promised 'new hope' ended up with U.S. engagement in Arab countries and how his administration is confronted with the challenge of the popular Arab Spring.

1. Toward a Master Plan for a 'New Middle East':

In its modern history, the Middle East encompassed many conflicts, religious violence and wars that have been a hallmark of the region over the decades. Western European states have been one of the competed imperialists to conquer and gain territories in the Middle East as an attempt to control over its natural resources, most importantly oil, and to occupy its vital geostrategic areas (Rashed, 2019). Vigorously, the Western forces of U.S. and Britain continued to impose their own political agendas and to pursue their policies on the Middle Eastern people to further destabilize the region (Rahman, 2008).

Another unique geographical characteristic of the Middle East is its landmass extending from the Caspian Sea to the Arabian/ Persian Gulf, all of which are strategically important for regional and external powers that have historically sought to maintain full control and influence over them due to geopolitical and economic considerations (Cohen, 2015). Because of the first major crisis of the post-Cold War era that took place in the Middle East, Gulf Crisis 1990-1991, the region created periodic challenges for U.S. role to articulate a new vision for international order and hence the Middle East became the testing ground for competing purposes using different tactics from Bush 41's 'New World Order' to Bush 43's 'Global War On Terror', to realign the Greater Middle East (Pagliarulo, 2016).

The American project for the New Middle East was first coined to the world on June 2006, from Tel Aviv by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice as an altered version of the older and more imposing term, the Greater Middle East (Yahya, 2016).

This project, which prepared the region for a new time direction, has been in the primer stages of the U.S. regional policy keen on creating more chaos,

"George W. Bush and Barack Obama's Policies Towards the 'New Middle East':

Promoting Democracy or Destroying Social Peace? " Amira Baghiani, Nadir Kaouli

instability and violence that swept from Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria to Iraq, the Persian Gulf, Iran, and reached to some extent the southern tier of central Asia (Nazemroaya, 2020). Hence, the latest design version of the new Middle East map presents the state of the region that Western powers planned to form as a more like a 21st century version of Sykes-Picot secret treaty which intended to define their spheres of influence in an eventual partition of the Ottoman lands (Yahya, 2016).

The launching project of the New Middle East with the aim that the Israeli siege of Lebanon, would be the turning point for reforming the whole Middle East released the forces of 'constructive chaos'. The latter created conditions of violence and warfare throughout the region and could be used in order that the tripartite of the U.S., Britain, and Israel reconsider the map of the Middle East in line with their geo-strategic needs (Nazemroaya, 2020).

In this context, President George W. Bush described the Israeli-Hizbullah conflict as "a moment of opportunity" (Bush, 2006, as cited in Herd, 2006, p. 1). Condoleezza Rice expressed her willingness in seeking major changes in the Middle East by stating that "...What we are seeing here, in a sense, is the growing – the birth pangs of a new Middle East and, whatever we do, we have to be certain that we're pushing forward to the new Middle East, not going back to the old one" (Rice, 2006, as cited in Herd, 2006, p. 1).

For her statement of the 'New Middle East', Rice prepared the region for a new Arab geopolitical landscape, consisting of Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia instead of the 'old Arab centre' of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. This formulation of New Arab Sunni feared of Shia dominance and radicalism that is exemplified by Iranian backed Hizbullah (Herd, 2006). Rice, however, faced a thankless in her revolutionary ambitions that rationalize violence and suffering of victims and civilian casualties being bombed indiscriminately by the Israeli Air Strikes (Nazemroaya, 2020).

According to Professor Mark Levine (2011), "The Bush Administration, and proponents of globalization more broadly, latched onto creative destruction as a way of describing the process by which they hoped to create their new world orders" (Levine, 2011, para. 4). According to neocon philosopher and Bush advisor Michael Ledeen, the United States is "'an awesome revolutionary force" for whom creative destruction is "our middle name"' (as cited in Levine, 2011, para. 5). With similar Israeli role crafted by the same idea of Shimon Peres in which Israel would be the sole cultural and economic engine in the Middle East (Levine, 2011).

2. U.S-Middle East Policy: Bush and Obama in Perspectives:

After the notorious 9/11 attacks, the U.S. changed its foreign policy towards the Middle East. President Bush adopted instead a policy with unforeseen

"George W. Bush and Barack Obama's Policies Towards the 'New Middle East':

Promoting Democracy or Destroying Social Peace? " Amira Baghiani, Nadir Kaouli

strategy objectives for the post-war world order in line with American ideology based on unilateral action. The first was 'the war on terrorism' pursued against Al Qaeda and the Taliban government in Afghanistan. The second was associated with the rogue states that seek to acquire weapons of mass destructions (WMD). Bush referred to Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as states hostile to America and members of 'an axis of evil' that pose real threat to America's national security, starting from Iraq. The third was the installation of democratic systems in the Middle East region (Al-Qahtani, 2019).

Combating terrorism and fighting states that harbor it were America's first mission, after the events of September which came to be known as the 'Bush Doctrine' or 'friends versus foes lines' Bush categorically announced that "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them" (Nuruzzaman, 2019, p. 173).

Bush announced his 'Freedom Agenda' for the Middle East prior to the 2001 terrorist attacks and he made the point in his State of the Union address in 2002 that the United States would support democracy all throughout the world, especially in the Islamic world (Gilley, 2013). He stated that "the peoples of the Islamic nations want and deserve the same freedoms and opportunities as people in every nation" (Bush, 2002, as cited in Gilley, 2013, pp. 658-659). The neoconservative government deeply believed that the lack of political and economic freedom in the Middle East was the reason behind the attacks of 9/11, and the terrorist organizations (Alessandri et al., 2015).

Initially, Bush's administration used rhetoric prior to his 2003 invasion of Iraq as "a liberated Iraq can show the power of freedom to transform that vital region" (Bush, 2003, "President Discusses the Future of Iraq", para. 9). And "a new regime in Iraq would serve as a dramatic and inspiring example of freedom for other nations in the region" (Bush, 2003, "President Discusses the Future of Iraq", para. 18). The strategic objectives for the neocons administration was to "liberate the Iraqi people from tyranny and assist them in creating a society based on modernation, pluralism, and democracy (Bush, 2003, as cited in Gilley, 2013, p. 662).

However, once the premise to find bogus links between Al Qaeda, WMD and Iraq proved untrue, the Bush administration used democracy rationale and liberty for the Iraqi people as a reason for justifying the invasion of Iraq and the toppling of Saddam Hussein regime. Yet the rise of sectarian tensions between Sunnis and Shiites, the socio-political conflict in Iraq, and the controversial presence of American forces on Iraqi soil discredited Bush's democracy and freedom agenda, given the consequences of the war and the Iraqi opposition to the invasion, Bush later on described it as 'a catastrophic success' (Nuruzzaman, 2015).

"George W. Bush and Barack Obama's Policies Towards the 'New Middle East':

Promoting Democracy or Destroying Social Peace? " Amira Baghiani, Nadir Kaouli

Unlike Bush's policy, president Obama laid out a bold vision of U.S. approach with his arrival to office in 2009 seeking to change U.S. diplomacy towards the Middle East that ultimately dominated the neo-conservatives. More broadly, president Obama attempted to turn U.S policy more flexible in dealing with emerging developments of the region's affairs and rid the hard power of intense involvement through military force. That refocus also implied a balance between the hard and soft power strategies, especially diplomacy (Krieg, 2016).

Although, president Obama referred implicitly to the new strategy in his 2009 Cairo speech as, "we also know that military power alone is not going to solve the problems in Afghanistan and Pakistan" (Obama, 2009, "Remarks by the President on a New Beginning", para. 19).

His administration used lofty rhetoric of diplomacy flexibility in U.S. foreign policy. Hence, he came to the conclusion that military intervention is restricted only to problems like terrorism, and multilateral cooperation with partners which are deemed necessary to American security and interests (Krieg, 2016). Obama also focused on the fact that "all nations – strong and weak alike – must adhere to standards that govern the use of force. I – like any head of state – reserve the right to act unilaterally if necessary to defend my nation" (Obama, 2009, "Nobel Lecture", para. 22).

However, using forces was still the favored option for toppling the Gaddafi regime in 2011 when popular revolt against his government turned to violence. Obama's policies reaffirmed American long standing global leadership role, but favored not to alienate America's allies (Nuruzzaman, 2015).

The Obama administration focused more on the issue of terrorism especially the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and intended to abandon U.S. involvement in the long and costly ground war in Iraq and Afghanistan in which the U.S. and particularly its military bore a heavy and a huge financial burdens. Instead, the U.S. set forth a new approach that gives priority to counter-terrorism objectives with practical cooperative measures of reliable partnership (Al-Qahtani, 2019).

The Smart Power approach did not do enough to resolve the most complex challenges under the new administration as he inherited two simultaneous wars of Iraq and Afghanistan from the Bush administration which the latter attempted to change by military force under the name of democratization, Iran's and North Korea's defiant positions on the nuclear question, and the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations all of which put his Smart power approach at stake. In retrospect, Obama's diplomatic efforts did not take hold with Muslims. That calls into question his own foreign policy commitments on the Middle East which did little to resume the long and uncompromising problems (Nuruzzaman, 2015).

3. The Hoax of the 'Freedom and Democracy Agenda':

Although, Bush openly repudiated his rhetoric policy as overthrowing Saddam's regime and implanting democracy in Iraq would be the first move towards a democratic Middle East, however, it was not the way the neoconservative government expected (Larison, 2013).

Yet, even though the previous Iraqi's regime was overthrown, his strategy failed. Given the various explanations of U.S invasion of Iraq which turned the country into a destructive civil war, in addition to the rise of Shia-Sunni sectarian violence, the number of Iraqi refugees to neighboring countries, and the enormous negative socioeconomic costs to say nothing compared to the costs of the other side (Carothers, 2007).

Furthermore, the hope for moving forward with democratic agenda in the region has been undermined by the Iraq war. Authoritarian regimes in the Arab nations used the war as a legitimate pretext to consolidate the status quo and to make people fear of the rapid democratic transitions and political openings (Carothers, 2007).

The collapse of the freedom agenda fostered in the Middle East crisis and deeply stuck in nondemocratic politics. It is wracked by a civil war in Iraq, gripped by rising Shia-Sunni tensions; the elections of 2006 in Palestine witnessed another civil war between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas (Beauchamp, 2015). Not least the rising tensions in Lebanon between Hizbullah and Israel, and in Palestine with Israel, as well as the growing influence of Iran that hit the region (Carothers, 2007). Also the growing tribal conflict in Yemen, the civil war in Libya, the Saudi-Iranian competition for regional influence all of which are gripped by rising Shia-Sunni tensions, revealed the thorough break-down of the socio-political order of the Middle East (Beauchamp, 2015).

ISIS is the most obvious strategy of U.S. democracy agenda and the outcome of Iraq war. ISIS's move into Syria helped disintegrate the state and radicalize the Syrian civil war by strengthening jihadist groups at the expense of the moderate opposition, while sponsoring ISIS with the experience and resources necessary that will be needed to acquire territories and move back into Iraq in a big way (Beauchamp, 2015).

4. ISIS: A Planned Decision:

The terrorist organization Islamic State under the name of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) grew out of the convulsions of the 2003 Iraq war and resulted in toppling Saddam's regime and an unending aggression and violence the country witnessed since then. The creation of this organization was highly reformed by Al Qaeda's affiliate in Iraq under the leadership of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi. Ultimately, the ISIL also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

captured significant strategic territories in both Iraq and neighboring Syria, by taking advantage of the marginalization of Sunnis against Shiite government in Iraq as a sectarian violence reason for IS victory and proclaimed a self-styled Islamic caliphate under the leadership of Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi (Khattak et al., 2015).

Due to the Islamic State's latest terror campaign in Iraq that hit the headlines in recent years, the U.S. has launched airstrikes against ISIS in the North of the country. Although, the Islamic State has been linked in the American mainstream media to several atrocities and crimes throughout the Middle East, however, it ignored the ultimate link between U.S. intelligence agencies and IS for U.S. sponsoring the organization for several years (MacMillan, 2014, p. 1).

In 2012, the World Net Daily received leaks by Jordanian officials who released that ISIS was trained by the U.S. military in Jordan, before preparing the militias to move into Syria. Vigorously, Francis Boyle, a *Law professor at the University of Illinois*, described ISIS as "covert US intelligence operation" whose objective is to "destroy Iraq as a state" (Boyle, 2014, as cited in MacMillan, 2014, p. 1).

An award-winning geopolitical analyst and strategic risk consultant, also wrote about ISIS creation and claimed that:

Details leaking out suggest that ISIL and the major military 'surge' in Iraq - and less so in neighboring Syria- is being shaped and controlled out of Langley, Virginia, and other CIA and Pentagon outposts as the next stage in spreading chaos in the world's second-largest oil state, Iraq, as well as weakening the recent Syrian stabilization efforts. (Engdahl, 2014, "ISIS in Iraq Stinks of CIA/NATO 'Dirty War' Op", para. 3)

Also, in an interview with the Time magazine, Abdullah Ganji, a *director of an Iranian newspaper*, claimed that: "We believe that the West has been influential in the creation of ISIS for a number of reasons. First to engage Muslims against each other, to waste their energy and in this way Israel's security would be guaranteed or at least enhanced" (Ganji, 2015, as cited in "West Created IS to Undermine Muslim World", 2015, para. 2) "Secondly, an ugly, violent and homicidal face of Islam is presented to the world. And third, to create an inconvenience for Iran" (Ganji, 2015, as cited in "West Created IS to Undermine Muslim World", 2015, para. 3).

He also added that "much of IS-its propaganda, structure, and weapons were all the work of the West" ("West Created IS to Undermine Muslim World", 2015, para. 4).

With the Western Strategy in the Middle East, the U.S. and its allies have worked to create firm conditions of instability and disarray. Starting from Iraq

where the main objective is to split the country into religious and interethnic states of Sunni Iraq in the west, Arab Shia in the east and free Kurdistan in the north, in order to safeguard the interests of Israel (MacMillan, 2014). As Oded Yinon, *an Israeli journalist*, has explained that,

Iraq, rich in oil on the one hand and internally torn on the other, is guaranteed as a candidate for Israel's targets. Its dissolution is even more important for us than that of Syria. Iraq is stronger than Syria. In the Short run it is Iraqi power which constitutes the greatest threat to Israel.....The dissolution of Syria and Iraq later on into ethnically or religiously unique areas such as in Lebanon, is Israel's primary target on the Eastern front in the long run, while the dissolution of the military power of those states serves as the primary short term target. (Yinon, 2010, p. 7)

5. The Missing Peace:

According to John McMurty, *a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada*, prior to 9/11 events, the U.S and its Arab allies in the Middle East materially supported and sponsored Jihadists to "take down any remaining social state while also justifying their oil for weapons empires producing no life good but only death and destitution" (McMurty, 2015, "Planning Chaos in the Middle East: Destruction of Societies for Foreign Money Control", para. 3).

The disarray and violence, sectarianism, and the massive repression unleashed by the U.S. invasion in Iraq would continue to reverberate throughout the region. The country devastated by years of war helped in pushing the country towards greater civil war in Iraq and later on in Syria contributed in the largest refugee crisis that the region witnessed and culminating in the emergence of ISIS (Melhem, 2016).

These forces of ISIS were reinforced after toppling the regime of Gaddafi in Libya with the help of the Obama administration and its Western allies. The social unrest in Libya is allegedly welcomed by the U.S. to maintain access to facilities in the region (Kishore, 2015).

Shortly after the death of Gaddafi, Libya became headquarters for ISIL operations, as Joseph Kishore reported for the world socialist Website "Since then, Libya has collapsed into an ever-bloodier civil war between various Islamist factions and rival militias vying for state power. The country has also served as a training ground for CIA-backed Islamist forces preparing to fight the Syrian regime of President Bashar al-Assad" (Kishore, 2015, "US Imperialism and the Catastrophe in Libya", para. 8).

The imperative rhetoric of implanting democracy in the Middle East through U.S. military presence is one of the U.S. contradictions, as Chas W. Freeman Jr. argued in his book *America's Misadventures in the Middle East*, "How

**"George W. Bush and Barack Obama's Policies Towards the 'New Middle East':
Promoting Democracy or Destroying Social Peace?" Amira Baghiani, Nadir Kaouli**

do we propose to manage the contradiction between our desire to assure the stability of the Persian Gulf and the fact that our presence in it is inherently destabilizing?" (Freeman, 2010, as cited in Mousavian & Saberi, 2015, p. 56).

This fact can be understood by Ahmed, *the Yemeni-based political analyst*, who argued that U.S policy towards the Middle East can be understood from the capitalist point of view, not from the political one. The U.S. has waged wars in the Middle East in order to wield influence in the region and to control the region's natural resources (Shakdam, 2015). This competition over energy resources was crucial in increasing its mediation effort crises from Libya, to Syria, Bahrain and Yemen, and it's always been for power, control, and also for the value of oil and gas resources (Shakdam, 2015).

6. Obama's Great Challenge: Arab Uprisings and their Discontent:

Similarly to Bush's neoconservative government, Obama showed no signs of progress to settle the conflicts that spawned by the Arab Spring for democratic transitions, hence, Obama was hesitant to move forward with the Arab people in favor of the transition from dictatorship to democracy, mainly for two reasons. First, Obama was skeptical that the new democratic regimes like their authoritarian counterparts, would maintain a close relationship with U.S. and Israel. The second reason is to prevent Iran from further increasing regional influence (Nuruzzaman, 2015).

As a response to the 2011 revolutions onwards, Obama's administration was marked by two features: the first is the growing tensions between pro-democracy versus pro-autocracy policy preferences, and the second is his cautious approach to use force to promote democracy in the Arab world. In his inaugural address, he advanced America's core democratic norms meant to support democracy and ensure peace, yet the ramifications to protect America's national interests in the Middle East must be preserved (Nuruzzaman, 2015).

Obama's reaction to the Arab spring was on the basis that toppling the long dictatorial rules was beneficial to the aspirations of the people involved. At first that seemed to be true in Tunisia, but the administration quietly embraced pro-American autocratic rulers has in effect retraced US from supporting the pro-democratic protesters and accepted the military coup in Egypt (Nuruzzaman, 2015).

In retrospect, the authoritarian regimes in both Bahrain and Yemen were still supported by the Obama administration, when the U.S. held its silence in Bahrain, Obama neither changed his position on the violence used against peaceful protestors nor did he prevent Saudi military intervention to protect the authoritarian Al-Khalifa rulers (Rozoff, 2011). Yet in Yemen, the Obama administration threw its weight behind Ali Abdullah Saleh, who has been US ally in

"George W. Bush and Barack Obama's Policies Towards the 'New Middle East':

Promoting Democracy or Destroying Social Peace? " Amira Baghiani, Nadir Kaouli

the fight against al-Qaeda terrorism in the Arabian Peninsula, to immediately stop the ceasefire ("U.S Urges Yemen's Saleh to Step Down", 2011).

However, the Obama administration's reaction to the pro-democracy movements in both Libya and Syria had witnessed a return to Bush's policy of military intervention for promoting democracy, under the rhetorical and humanitarian commitments and the international coalition to protect civilians from Gaddafi's atrocities. In Syria, the U.S preferred to isolate Russia and Iran to get involved in a new military confrontation in the Middle East (Nuruzzaman, 2015).

Conclusion:

The image that has been crafted in Bush's administration ideological imagination for democracy in the Middle East was basically flawed and has undermined its attempts to fulfill a regional reform agenda in the region. Let alone the complicated internal religious conflicts and the civil strife that Iraq went through in addition to sectarian and ethnic divisions which have exacerbated the turbulence in the Arab democratic transition. After the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq after seven years of war, the U.S.-led regime change brought the Shia to Power and locked in a regional struggle with the Iraq's Sunni Arab minority.

Given the rhetoric paradox of exporting democracy in the Middle East through U.S. military presence, the two presidents Bush and Obama alike sought to misdiagnose root causes of instability in the region, laying the ground for the survival of ISIS in the Middle East that hijacked the reins of power the U.S. used as a tool for its long legitimate presence in the Islamic countries. Hence, what succeeded those presidents in doing, is to transform the Arab states into failed nations enabling power vacuums to emerge and the project of the new Middle East has turned into a new creative destruction under the premise of fostering democracy. In the process, with the profound nature of the Arab Spring, which is radically transforming the region, it is problematic that there has not been a profound shift in America's democracy promotion policy. Obama had not pursued a transformational foreign policy in regard to the regional status quo. Overall, his policy reflects more continuity with his predecessor rather than real change.

Bibliography:

1. Alessandri, E, Hassan, O & Reinert, T. (2015). *US Democracy Promotion from Bush to Obama*. EUSpring. <<https://bit.ly/2KNChEK>>
2. Al-Qahtani, F. (2019). Continuity and Change in United States' Foreign Policy towards Gulf Region after the Events of September 11th, 2001: A Comparative Vision between the Bush and Obama Administrations." *Review of Economics and Political Science*, 4 (1), 2-19. <<https://bit.ly/3huoQoW>>
3. Beauchamp, Z. (2015). *Yes, Bush Helped Create ISIS and Set up the Middle East for a generation of Chaos*. Vox.com. <<https://bit.ly/2WZ7442>>

4. Bush, G.W. (2003, February, 26). *President Discusses the Future of Iraq*. The White House. <<https://bit.ly/3pCrnN2>>
5. Byman, D & Moller, S., B. (2016). The United States and the Middle East: Interests, Risks, and Costs. In J. Suri & B. Valentino (Eds.), *Sustainable Security: Rethinking American National Security Strategy*. (pp. 1-45). Oxford University Press.
6. Carothers, T. (2007). *U.S. Democracy Promotion during and after Bush*. Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment. <<https://bit.ly/2WVgGwm>>
7. Cohen, S., B. (2015). *Geopolitics: The Geography of International Relations*. (3rd ed). Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.
8. Dalacoura, K. (2010). U.S. Foreign Policy and Democracy Promotion in the Middle East: Theoretical Perspectives and Policy Recommendations. *Ortadogu Etutleri*. 2(3), 57-76.
9. Engdahl, W. (2014). ISIS in Iraq Stinks of CIA/NATO 'Dirty War' Op. RT Question More. <<https://bit.ly/2MlplGB>>
10. Gilley, B. (2013). Did Bush Democratize the Middle East? The Effects of External Linkages. *Political Science Quarterly*, 128 (4), 653-85. <<https://bit.ly/3puUMfM>>
11. Herd, G.P. (2006). *The Birth Pangs of the Middle East?* Conflict Studies Research Centre. <<https://bit.ly/2WTHPzU>>
12. Khattak, M., U. R., Afridi, M., K., & Amin, H. (2015). The Emergence of Islamic State: Implications for Pakistan and Afghanistan. *Institute of Regional Studies Islamabad*. 10, 1-25. <<https://bit.ly/3o35Wlj>>
13. Kishore, J. (2015). *U.S. Imperialism and the Catastrophe in Libya*. World Socialist Web Site. <<https://bit.ly/37Z17dn>>
14. Krieg, A. (2016). Externalizing the Burden of War: The Obama Doctrine and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East. *Internal Affairs*. 92 (1), 97-113. <<https://bit.ly/3o1ldcT>>
15. Larison, D. (2013, March. 6) Iraq and the Failure of the 'Freedom Agenda'. *The American Conservative*. <<https://bit.ly/3aV4IRl>>
16. Levine, M. (2011). *The New Creative Destruction*. HuffPost. <<https://bit.ly/3n0iMG5>>
17. MacMillan, S. (2014). Order out of Chaos: The Global Elites Plan for a "Middle Eastern Union." *New Eastern Outlook*. <<https://bit.ly/38QbwHx>>
18. McMurty, J. (2015, April, 27). Planning Chaos in the Middle East: Destruction of Societies for Foreign Money Control. *Global Research*. <<https://bit.ly/3pBelxz>>
19. Melhem, H. (2016). Obama's Tarnished Legacy in the Middle East. *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs*, 20, 97-107. <<https://bit.ly/2JAouRo>>
20. Nazemroaya, M., D. (2020). Plans for Redrawing the Middle East: The Project for a "New Middle East". *Global Research*. <<https://bit.ly/2KHswli>>
21. Mousavian, S.,H. & Saberi, M. (2015). America's Middle East challenge. *Cairo Review of Global Affairs*. <<https://bit.ly/2KNEznk>>
22. Nuruzzaman, M. (2015). President Obama's Middle East Policy, 2009-2013. *Insight Turkey*. 17(1), 171-190.

23. Obama, B. H., (2009, April, 4). *Remarks by the President on a New Beginning*. The White House, Office of the Press Secretary (Cairo, Egypt). <<https://bit.ly/3rJu3Or>>
24. Obama, B., H. (2009, December, 10). *Nobel Lecture*. The Noble Prize. <<https://bit.ly/3pEP3nA>>
25. Ottaway, M., Brown, N., J., Hamzawy, A., Sadjadpour, K., & Salem, P. (2008). *The New Middle East. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. <<https://bit.ly/3pCpJPf>>
26. Rashed, D. (2019). Geography, Resources, and Geopolitics of Middle East Conflicts. In Bettina, K & Yannis A., S., B (Ed.), *Regional Security in the Middle East: Sectors, Variables, and Issues* (pp. 131- 45). Bristol: E-International Relations Publishing. <<https://bit.ly/3pCtsfS>>
27. Pagliarulo, D. (2016). *The Middle East, Obama, and America's Quest for a New Grand Strategy*. E-International Relations. <<https://bit.ly/37Yqz2l>>
28. Rahman, K. (2008). Internal Factors Affecting the Middle East: Trends and Implications. *Policy Perspectives*. 5(1), 1-22.
29. Rozoff, R. (2011). *Bahrain: U.S. Backs Saudi Military Intervention, Conflict with Iran*. Global Research. <<https://bit.ly/2L4WCft>>
30. Shakdam, C. (2015). *Is the United States Exporting Democracy or Asserting Corporate Imperialism?* Desert Herald. <<https://bit.ly/3807ehK>>
31. *U.S Urges Yemen's Saleh to Step Down*. (2011, May 23). Al Jazeera, News Agencies. <<https://bit.ly/3pGrWt7>>
32. *West Created IS to Undermine Muslim World*. (2015). *Financial Tribune*. <<https://bit.ly/2LagK8R>>
33. Yahya, H. (January, 2016). *Why Plans for Redrawing the Middle East will Fail*. *Gulf Times*. <<https://bit.ly/3n2Ppmk>>
34. Yinon, O. (2010). *A Strategy for Israel in the Nineteen Eighties*. *Voltairenet.org*. <<https://bit.ly/34Z2hnr>>