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Globalization and American Cultural Imperialism in the Arab Gulf States

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Globalization and American Cultural Imperialism in the Arab Gulf States

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my investigation and that due reference or acknowledgment is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

I am duly informed that any person practicing plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary sanctions issued by the university authorities under the rules and regulations in force.

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Above all, I thank Allah, the Almighty for having given me the necessary courage and patience to undertake and complete this work. Glory and Praise be to Him.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my deceased parents and sister, to my brothers, my friends and to my work colleagues. I thank again all the persons who helped me.

ABSTRACT:

The present dissertation is about globalization and American cultural imperialism. It analyses the inter-link between the two concepts in the making of US foreign policy in the Gulf region. It examines US cultural policy after the end of the influence of the main rival, the USSR in the region. The Gulf societies are a good example for the rapid social and cultural transformation because of the influence of globalization and Americanization, and hence present a worthy case study.

The introduction examines related key concepts to the main topic of the dissertation -globalization and American cultural imperialism- during the Cold War era. How the US emerges powerfully after World War II, and starts to manufacture an overseas empire. Having an eye wide-open on the Arab Gulf region and the Middle East, the USA tries at its best to curb the power of the USSR and to devise a foreign policy towards the region in a way that serves and protects its vital interests there.

The 1990s witness the emergence of a new global order under the unipolar leadership of the USA and the triumph of capitalism. The latter starts to expand and impose its political, economic, and cultural values conceived as the best model to follow. The latter is examined in the Arab region whereby to succeed, the US grabs the first presented chance to impose hegemony through the 1991 war with Iraq in the name of protecting Kuwait. Hence, American cultural imperialism is maintained through cultural assaults, media outlets and military presence in the Arab Gulf region, which being overwhelmed by the coming of globalization, they emerge as modern cities following the American/Western model.

In the new millennium and the age of media and information technologies, the American cultural imperialism is reinforced and consolidated as a consequence of the 9/11 attacks through vilifying Arabs and Muslims alike and declaring a global war “War on Terrorism” and thereafter embarking on an agenda of promoting democracy and human rights in the region in a way that serves US interests and objectives. The US does that through invading Iraq in 2003 and eliminating it as it posits a threat to its vital interests and security. The US strategy succeeds to shape and transform the Arab Gulf cities socially and culturally, through embodying perfectly the US modern, consumerist, and liberal life style. The dissertation concludes that globalization is a suitable veil for American cultural imperialism that serves US objectives of dominating the world.

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List of Abbreviations

- **AGS:** Arab Gulf Societies
- **BC:** Before Christ
- **BMENA:** Broad Middle East North Africa Partnership Initiative.
- **Bpd:** Barrel per day
- **BP:** British Petroleum
- **BWA :**Bahrain Women Association
- **CAFTA:** China Asian Free Trade Agreements
- **CCD:** Coalition for Cultural Diversity
- **CIA:** Council of Intelligence Agency
- **CILS:** Center International Labor Solidarity
- **CIPE:** Center for International Private Enterprise
- **CNN:** Cable News Network
- **FDI:** Foreign Direct Investment
- **FTAA:** free trade of the Americas Act
- **GATT:** General Agreement on Trade and Traffic
- **GCC:** Gulf Cooperation Council
- **GME:** Greater Middle East
- **GMEI:** Greater Middle East Initiative
- **GNP:** Gross National Product
- **GWOT:** Global War on Terror
- **ICT:** Information and Communications Technology

- **IFES:** International Foundation for Election Systems
- **IMF:** International Monetary Fund
- **IRI:** International Republican Institute
- **KGB:** Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti which was the Committee for State Security of the USSR. The KGB ended in 1991 and was replaced by the FSB. Federalnaya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti = (Federal Security Service).
- **MBC:** Middle East Broadcasting Center.
- **MEFTA:** Middle East Free Trade Agreement
- **MEPI:** Middle East Partnership Initiative
- **MNCs:** Multinational Corporations
- **NAFTA:** North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement
- **NATO:** North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- **NDI:** National Democratic Institute
- **NED:** National Endowment Democracy
- **NGOs:** Non-Governmental Organizations
- **NSC:** National Security Council
- **NWO:** New World Order
- **NSS :**National Security Strategy
- **OECD:** Organization for Economic Co-operation and development
- **OPEC:** Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
- **OWO:** Old World Order
- **PNAC:** Project for the New American Century
- **RFE :**Radio Free Europe
- **TNC:** transnational corporations

- **“transnational”** means relations that are not controlled by states; things such as the flow of money, migration, smuggling, family links, the movement of ideas, and not dating since the internet and an advent of globalism that has been going on for hundreds of years.
- **UAE:** United Arab Emirates
- **UN:** United Nations
- **UNDP:** United Nations Development Program
- **UNESCO:** United Nations Educational Scientific and cultural Organization
- **USA:** United States of America
- **USAID:** US Agency for International Development
- **USSR:** Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
- **VOA :**Voice of America
- **WB:** World Bank
- **WMD:** weapons of mass destruction
- **WTO:** World Trade Organization

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold war and the fall of the Berlin Wall, the United States emerged as the world's superpower and thus the world entered a new phase of uni-polarity. To become and to remain the world's leading power, the USA had to work out an ideology and a strategy to preserve its position of leadership for long. The United States needed to manage a global order that could connect the world together culturally, economically and politically. This could not have been achieved without what is known as globalization; a disguise for cultural imperialism.

Cultural imperialism is the economic, technological and cultural hegemony of the industrialized nations, which determines the direction of both economic and social progress, defines the cultural values, and standardizes the civilization and cultural environment throughout the world. In fact, cultural imperialism refers to the historical fact of imperial expansion and cultural forces that have always played a significant role in influencing and shaping the subjugated peoples; for instance, Christian missionaries, the introduction of Western style school system, forms of colonial administration and the use of European languages in overseas colonies. Hence, cultural sources of power and influence are key elements in achieving the domination of one nation by another. This is the essence of cultural imperialism. Simply put, it is considered as a process of imperial control that operates through forms of culture and that is more effective than earlier forms of colonial domination through military occupation and economic dependency.¹

The cultural imperialism debate has gained momentum after decolonization led to the emergence of new independent states in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. The west has thus replaced colonialism with a new form of capitalist subjugation of the third world; that is neo-colonialism,² which is more economic than political, more ideological than military supported. As means of cultural imperialism, scholars have argued that neo-colonialist powers

¹C. Kaid, *Cultural Imperialism*, (Sage Pub, 2007) 151-153.

²Neo-colonialism is a new form of colonization that is more economically and culturally driven than political. Although the ex-colonized countries had achieved political independence, we notice that ex-colonial powers and the newly emerging superpowers such as the United States have continued to play a decisive role in their cultures and economies through new instruments of indirect control such as international monetary bodies, through the power of multinational corporations and cartels, and through a variety of other educational and cultural NGOs. Therefore, Neocolonialism is more dangerous and more difficult to detect and resist than the direct control exercised by classic colonialism.

have turned to symbolic means of control which are facilitated by the integration of global telecommunications systems and the proliferation of Television.

Moreover, theorists have maintained that the mass media, fitting in with the spread of global capitalism, push forward mainly American culture that promotes ideologies of consumption, Western values and individualism.³As a result of globalization and media proliferation, the whole world has become a cultural common market area in which the same kind of technical product development, the same kind of knowledge, fashion, music, and mass culture is manufactured, bought and sold.⁴

Among the theorists of the cultural imperialism thesis John Tomlinson (1997), who draws attention to how globalization challenges the concept of individual cultures through time-space compression, leading to global interconnectedness. For Tomlinson, the notion of cultural imperialism tries to absorb globalization and that the latter is the latest stage of western imperialism.⁵

The importance of studying US cultural imperialism lies in the fact that throughout history, it is noticed that imperialism did not end; on the contrary it lingers today where it has always been, in a kind of a general cultural sphere. In the past, the former was consolidated through cultural formations by means of education, literature, and arts.⁶ Today, US imperialism is being consolidated through modern information technology and communication cultural means such as the use of cinema, media and propaganda⁷ as ways of spreading western culture and western hegemony.⁸ Therefore, being bombarded by American democracy and freedom, weak societies are being gradually assimilated to American cultural standards and style of life.

³Lauren Movius, *Cultural Globalization and Challenges to Traditional Communication Theories*, (University of Southern California: USA, 2010) 10.

⁴Matti Sarmela, *What is Cultural Imperialism? Cultural Imperialism and Cultural Identity*, (Finnish Anthropological Society 2: Helsinki, 1977) 1.

⁵John Tomlinson, *Cultural Globalization and Cultural Imperialism*, (1997) 170-190.

⁶Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc: New York, 1993) 12-13

⁷Propaganda: information which is false or which emphasizes just one part of a situation, used by government or political group to make people agree with them (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Pearson Longman: England 2005)1314.

⁸ Hegemony: the position of being the strongest and most powerful and therefore controlling others (Cambridge International Dictionary of English, 1995) 660. As a concept, it was coined and popularized by Gramsci in the 1930s who argued that domination is achieved not by coercion but by consent; not by force but by persuasion.

Cultural imperialism has been dealt with thoroughly by scholars and theorists such as Edward Said, Herbert Schiller, and Michael Doyle, in their works Culture and Imperialism(1993),Communication and Cultural Domination(1976), and Empires,(1986) respectively. They all agree on the one fact that cultural imperialism implies domination or put simply colonization in a soft disguised face. Edward Said defines imperialism as the practice, the theory and the attitudes of dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory.⁹ For Herbert Schiller cultural imperialism is “the notion of dominance. It is a process of imperial control that operates through forms of culture that is more effective than earlier forms of colonial domination, through military occupation and economic dependency.”¹⁰ Michael Doyle on the same line defines Empire as a relationship formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society. The former can be achieved by force, by political collaboration, by economic, social, or cultural dependence.¹¹

Given the fact that the USA emerged economically and politically strong after the WWII, it has developed throughout the 20th and the 21st centuries an imperialistic attitude and policy to enhance its hegemony. The latter has been helped by a blending capitalist ideology, economic interest and the domination of the field of technology and telecommunications, which represent the tools of enhancing cultural values and thus cultural hegemony. The triumph of the USA technologically and in the field of telecommunications (TV and internet) has paved the way to America to spread its culture, dominate other cultures and mainly engender cultural emulation following the American model. The USA has created such a new system; “globalization”, so that the American hegemony could gain access to every aspect of peoples’ lives whereby individuals and communities are affected by US economic and cultural forces. Hence, the argument of Ashcroft that globalization “*stands... as a legacy of American imperialism.*”¹²

Cultural imperialism thus is the practice of promoting a more powerful nation’s culture over a weaker one. The United States’ attempt to sell their content to other countries is at the core of cultural imperialism, as it causes other cultures to abandon their uniqueness and

⁹Edward Said, op.cit. 9.

¹⁰Herbert I. Schiller, *Communication and Cultural Domination*, (International Arts and Sciences Press: New York, 1976), in *Cultural Imperialism*, (Sage pub, 2007)151.

¹¹Michael Doyle, *Empires*,(1986) 45, in Said,9.

¹²Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies*, (England: London, Routledge, 2000) 112.

conform to the American values which are reflected by America's media content. US culture is now penetrating every continent through the dramatic growth of mass communication technologies like television satellites and Internet. As a consequence, entertainment goes global due to the US domination. Music and Hollywood movies, for instance, dominate overseas and make money abroad more than domestically. This is what theorists and scholars call media imperialism.

Media imperialism is a subset of cultural imperialism. For instance, the world has been bounded by a matrix of complex media which allows more complex interconnections. The interest in media as a field of study can be traced back to the 1920s, when the relatively new mass communication technologies of newspapers, film, radio and later Television were attracting large audiences. With the evolution of technology, mass media have become an effective means of propaganda influencing political, social, economic and cultural spheres. Media technologies have become thus agents of cultural constructions of meanings and values. Being a pioneer in media technologies, the US has spent every single effort in order to propagate the American cultural values, to influence and shape conceptions, with the aim of achieving its interests, and hegemony over the world through the domination of one single cultural standard. Therefore, the advance of the US in the domain of communication is behind the spread of the American culture, and US cultural hegemony. On this fact, the French producer Karmitz says that "sound and pictures have always been used for propaganda, and the real battle at the moment is over who is going to be allowed to control the world's images, and to sell a certain lifestyle, a certain culture, certain product, and certain ideas."¹³ More importantly is that American media industry is comprised of 'myth-makers' who shape, control, restrict, and frame information which moves the public to win the latter's consent as it has happened after the 9/11 attacks, and the propaganda to launch war against Afghanistan and then Iraq in the name of fighting terrorism.

As mentioned above media imperialism is part of cultural imperialism in that they both serve the capitalist system to thrive and expand. Both cultural and media imperialism emphasize the division of the world system into dominating core and dominated peripheral countries. The former exercises pressure on modeling the media structures of other countries in ways which benefits the dominating core. There is an obvious imbalance of flows of

¹³Marin Karmitz, in Johanna Blackley, *Entertainment Goes Global: Mass Culture in a Transforming World*, (Normal Lear Center, 2001) 7.

mediaproducts between the North and the South; added to the threat posed to indigenous localcultures because of the relationship of dependency that exists between the core andthe periphery. Generally speaking, it can be argued that the age of imperialism is by no means over; it is only that the forms of imperialrelationships have changed. The dominated countries are no longer directly ruled byforeign powers via the direct use of military force or colonial measures of economicexploitation. Instead, they are ruled indirectly through neo-colonial methods ofeconomic and cultural domination. The exploitation of the resources of post-colonialcountries by multinational corporations counts as an example of such new forms ofdomination, together with the installation of Western-style commercial media systemsand Western media hardware in the periphery – or the export of media products fromthe core to the periphery. The latter case involves the export of Western consumeristand individualistic ideology which has harmful effects on the norms andvalues of local cultures. The question that imposes itself here is what impact does American imperialist attitude or policy have on other countries' cultures and what is the aim behind it?

Man as a social being cannot live outside society or survive without culture. The latter has countless definitions for it has been studied in various fields such as anthropology, sociology and psychology. According to Hofstede culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or society or category or nation from one another.¹⁴Sociologically speaking, culture gathers all aspects of lifeincluding beliefs, behavior, language, customs, artistic creations, heritage and cultural products and traditions that distinguish one community from another.

As such, each given culture is specific for, and intrinsic to a given community or nation as a whole through which the latter asserts itself, ensures its survival, security and continuity from one generation to another. It becomes clear that US cultural imperialism is a way of asserting the hegemony of its cultural standards and values over other cultures in the world and thus ensuring the survival and continuity of the former; as well as, ensuring other countries' loyalty to the USA.

Nowadays, all countries of the world know about the American culture based on the promotion of democracy and human rights.However, beneath the spread of the American culture and values, there is an imperialist ideology that is being spread and enhanced with the

¹⁴G Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences*, (International Differences in Work-Related Values, 1sted, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks: California, 1980) 25, in AbderrahmaneHassi and Giovanna Storti, *Globalization and Culture: The Three Scenarios*,(2012)5, (Accessed 9 July 2014).

birth of a new phenomenon known as globalization, through American institutions and organizations such as **(UN, WTO, IMF, World Bank)**.

Globalization has multiple definitions given the fact that it is multifaceted. It refers to the combined economic, socio-political and cultural changes of the 20th century. As a historical event, globalization is said to succeed the Cold War. As an economic phenomenon, it marks the triumph of capitalism through the liberalization and deregulation of markets, privatization, diffusion of technology and foreign direct investment (FDI) through capital markets. As a political system, it refers to the so-called ‘global governance’. As the hegemony of the American values, it is the triumph of modernization, a homogenization of values around the principles of capitalism and democracy. Moreover, trade expansion and capital mobility have been made much more accessible through the increase in the speed of communications and transportation -as important characteristics of globalization- that have literally shrunk the world. As a consequence of such time and space compression, different parts of the world have undergone profound changes at all levels, due to the impact on the economic, social, cultural and psychological aspects of human life. Among the latter, there is the issue of American cultural domination over the world through the production of knowledge and culture. Hence, economically developed nations set the standards against which the ‘rest’ of the world is evaluated, in order to incorporate it into a single world society where the USA is seeking economic gains, and cultural and political loyalty to America. According to Anthony McGrew globalization constitutes multiple linkages and interconnections that transcend the nation states. It is a process through which events, decisions and activities can affect and can have significant consequences on individuals and communities in all parts of the globe.¹⁵ McGrew argues that globalization is not a new phenomenon; it has always existed since the human started to travel and to trade.

Globalization has been examined by three different kinds of theorists. Among the latter there are those who consider it as a trend, those who are pro-globalization, and those who are anti-globalization. As a trend, Robert Gilpin considers that “globalization has been

¹⁵Anthony McGrew, *A global society* in Stuart Hall, David Hell, and Anthony McGrew, *Modernity and its Features*, (Cambridge: Polity Press,1990) 5.

taking place for centuries whenever improvements in transportation and communication have brought formerly separated peoples into contact with one another.”¹⁶

For the proponents of globalization, they proclaim that it has infinite potential for the development and welfare of mankind by the fact that it increases levels of interdependences economically, politically, and culturally. They argue that it is an inevitable and irreversible process which an outcome of the triumph of Capitalism over Communism. For them globalization marks the triumph of modernization theory; a homogenization of values around the principles of capitalism and democracy. As such, it represents the universalizing of American values built on liberal democracy and modernity. Thomas Friedman in The Lexus and the Olive Tree considers that free market-capitalism is the engine that drives globalization. According to him the latter means “the virtual spread of market capitalism to the world. The more the market forces rule, the more the economy is subject to free trade and competition, and thus the more efficient will it be.”¹⁷

The exponents of globalization see it as an ideological system; an absolute evil driving the poor countries back to their colonial days. For them it is “a new version of imperialism.”¹⁸Capitalism and free trade is provided by the US with a new legitimacy that furnished an ideological foundation for world domination in the name of globalization. Moreover, the globalization of culture has been treated by critics as an evil, while expressing their fears about the power and disloyalty of the multinational corporations (MNCs) and of the international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The USA thus emerged as the only superpower after the collapse of Communism, aspiring towards a global domination and the protection of its national security and interests by taking advantage from globalization to hide its imperialistic ambitions. Charles Krauthammer confirms that America dominates every field of human endeavor from fashion

¹⁶Robert Gilpin and M. Jean Gilpin, *Global Political Economy: Understanding the International Economic Order*, (Princeton University Press, 2001) in OzdemirErthan, *Globalization and its Impact on the Middle East*, (Naval Postgraduate School, 2008)4-5.

¹⁷Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1999) 9.

¹⁸Robert E. Looney, *The Arab World's Uncomfortable Experience with Globalization*, Review of John Fox, Nada M. Sabbah and Mohammad El Mutawa, *Globalization and the Gulf*, (London, UK: Routledge, 2006), in OzdemirErthan, op.cit. 5.

to film to finance. It rules the world culturally, economically, diplomatically, and militarily as no one has done since the Roman Empire.¹⁹

Theorists and scholars like Frank Furedi speak about the “new imperialism” arguing that it began with the demise of Communism and the first Gulf war in 1991 and that the invasion of Iraq opened up a new phase of direct US intervention and represented a shift of interest to the Middle East.²⁰ Moreover, the East-West relationship has undergone enormous change. Among the transformations that occurred, there are two globalizing ones: Free trade capitalism; and media and communication networks. Both elements have led the communist bloc of Eastern Europe to join the world market capitalism and thus the ideology of free market has reigned over a greater part of the world; as well as the former have created a new connected world of information defenseless of external cultural influences.

The relationship between globalization and cultural imperialism has attracted a number of scholars. Globalization has led nation-states to open their borders in efforts to be more globally competitive in international markets. Central to understanding globalization are the multinational companies (MNCs) that grow and multiply in record numbers, and that have the potential to integrate production on a global scale. In fact the MNCs have undermined imperialist relations by uniting local and corporate interests thus transcending national boundaries, and promoting a global culture of the transnational capitalist class. Accordingly, globalization is a universal order that has no boundaries and limits; a new imperial world order defined by the power of the MNCs. Due to the generalization of free trade, the market economy of the twentieth century has progressively spread at remarkable proportions around the world, carrying with it transnational flows of people, financial resources, goods, information and culture. This interconnectedness among nations has resulted in a cultural exchange which is heavily American due to the US emergence as the dominant power of the world; hence it is assumed that globalization favors the spread of US products and cultural contents. Globalization operates predominantly in American and wider Western capitalist interests; it is tantamount to Americanization of the world to profit US companies. This leads to say that globalization is a jacket for US cultural imperialism.

¹⁹Charles Krauthammer, “Who Needs Gold Medals?” (Washington Post: Feb 20,2002) in Robert J. Lieber, *The American Era: Power and Strategy for the 21st Century*, (Cambridge University Press, 2005)100.

²⁰Frank Furedi, *The New Ideology of Imperialism; Renewing the Moral Imperative*, (London: Pluto Press, 1995), in Barbara Bush, *Imperialism and Post-colonialism, History: Concepts, Theories and Practice*, (Pearson: Longman, 2006) 202- 203.

US cultural imperialism is related to the emergence of capitalism in the western world that is promoting western cultural values through enhancing a single way of production and consumption of goods and services. The coming of globalization has enhanced the spread of former as a system that in its turn has transformed the world into a borderless small village. Therefore, there is a promotion of American cultural exports to the rest of the world, especially after the WWII as the USA became an economic superpower.

Among those who referred to this fact Nederveen Pieterse in his book Globalization and Culture.²¹ For him, the growing global interconnectedness leads toward increasing cultural standardization and uniformization, as in the global sweep of consumerism. Culturally, globalization refers to the spreading of mass media, advertising, and consumption; for instance, McDonaldization, Disneyfication, and the CNN world. Hence, there is a rapid development of an integrated international economic system, accelerated by the information revolution that has brought the global diffusion of American movies, television, popular music, mass media, fast food, and trends in clothing, leisure, and life-style. As a result, people throughout the world have been massively exposed to both the material effects of globalization and the accompanying values they embody.

The material effects of globalization include the consumer economy, the information revolution, and the mass media. These are challenging the old structures and relationships. Western values, such as freedom of speech and inquiry, the rule of law, religious toleration, equal rights for women, and liberalized social and sexual mores, exert an even more profound impact on human identity and culture.

The American movies, TV programs, fast food, drinks and corporations are seen to disseminate cultural products which marginalize local products and values. Thus, Americanization has become a symbol of Western dominance (Westernization). More important is that there is no globalization without media and communications; they are part and parcel of capitalism as a system and an element in the former. Media and communication industries promote the values of capitalism and consumerism which are important tools in the system of globalization. The existence of a relationship between globalization and cultural imperialism lies in an emerging global culture which is heavily American in origin and

²¹Pieterse Jan Nederveen, *Globalization and Culture: a Global Mélange*, (2nd edition, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc: 2009).

content. Hence Pieterse draws a relationship between globalization and cultural homogenization in that they are synonyms to 'cultural imperialism', 'hegemony', 'dependence', 'modernization', and 'westernization'.²²

Why is it important to study US cultural imperialism in the Gulf region after 1990? The present work tries to study US cultural imperialism and examine its relation with globalization in the Gulf region after 1990. The latter has witnessed a heavy US presence due to its geographical importance, but more importantly for the region's wealth in terms of oil reserves upon which the heavy US economy and industry rest. The US national security and interests rely on securing the flow of oil to the west. That is why the US and right after the end of the WWII devised a foreign policy towards the region that could secure a long life to the American empire.

US policy thus will be examined throughout three important periods; the Cold War period, the period after the Cold War up to the 9/11 event; and the period after the 9/11 up to President Obama's election. The choice of this timing is very significant in order to understand the trajectory of US policy right from the end of WWII, its emergence as a world power, its defeat of Communism thus becoming the world leader, and its behavior and actions to maintain such a position. What are the tools, means, policies devised to reach this objective?

The choice of this topic has been done with the intention to explore whether there is an intertwined relationship between globalization and cultural imperialism; how is the latter achieved, secured, and what is its impact on the developing countries? In other words does globalization really intend to achieve one united, prosperous, peaceful world (the end of us and them), or is it imperialism dressed in new clothes, using new tools? Does America really want to expand its ideals and values of liberty and democracy, or is it longing to stretch its power and domination through globalization with the aim of establishing a new imperialism?

To answer these questionings, I intend to rely on a descriptive method of history, post-colonial studies, media and cultural studies. For this purpose, I have selected for a start some scholars and theorists who dealt thoroughly with American imperialism such as Edward Said, Herbert Schiller, Tomlinson and Chomsky, and also to examine the issue of globalization and its link with American cultural imperialism. For this to be done, I am going to focus on the

²²PieterseJan Nederveen, *Globalization as Hybridization*, 62, (Accessed 1/8/ 2014).

Arab Gulf region as affected by globalization and as a vivid case of American cultural imperialism.

To fulfill this aim, I intend to divide this work into three chapters. The first chapter deals with the historical background of cultural imperialism in which I have to refer to colonialism and the question of culture, along with the emergence of the US to the world domination just after the Second World War up to 1990. Grounds of Cold War time American cultural imperialism and its link to globalization will be dealt with, too.

The second chapter will explore the period going from 1990 to 2001. Here the Arab Gulf cities will be examined to analyze American cultural policy after the end of Communism. I will focus on US interests in that region, and the rise of the Arab Gulf tribes to cities of consumption, showing the role of media technologies in enhancing US cultural imperialism smoothly, along with tools and programs that America pursued, and the effects of such cultural policies on these states.

The third chapter examines the period going from 2001 up to 2009 which will focus on the impact of the 9/11 event and the changes that have taken place in the American cultural policy and interests in the Arab region. The study will try to shed light on the neoconservative agenda and the Bush doctrine of his so-called “War against Terrorism”. We will examine how the latter has actually been a veil for US foreign policy to maintain a stronghold in the Middle East/ Arab Gulf Region in order to protect its interests. Likewise, US cultural policy will be dealt with in the years following the 9/11 attacks through an examination of Bush’s democracy promotion; as well as, the impact of globalization and US cultural imperialism mainly on the Gulf States.

The chapter will end up with President Obama’s 2009 speech in Cairo whereby there is a feeling that the US has come to understand that the policies it has relied on in the Gulf region from 1990 onwards to ensure cultural and political loyalty to it have failed and that changing the former is necessary and inevitable.

Chapter one: Background to Globalization and American Cultural Imperialism before 1990

1.1 Introduction

This first part of the dissertation is an introductory chapter which deals with the historical background of both American cultural imperialism and globalization. It first starts with a definition of cultural imperialism, then moves to show how the American one was forged through time, mainly after the USA emerged as the most dominant power in the world, technologically, economically and culturally after the end of the Second World War. The chapter also discusses how the American imperial state managed in the Cold War era to reconstruct the world order in ways that were not only restricted to the “containment of Communism” but were also aiming through “informal imperial rule” to open the world not only in political and economic terms, but also culturally. At last, it examines the American cultural policy in the Arab Gulf region during the Cold War; the US interests and objectives in this region along with the cultural policy that the US has followed to preserve the former, on the eve of globalization.

1.2. Cultural Imperialism in Context

Cultural imperialism is the economic, technological and cultural hegemony of the industrialized nations; for instance the USA. Given the fact that the latter is a world power, it has become able to impose its hegemony on the other nations of the world through determining the direction of economic progress, defining cultural values, and standardizing the civilization and cultural environment throughout the world according to the American model. The whole world has become a cultural common market area in which the same kind of technical product, the same kind of knowledge, fashion, music and literature, the same kind of metropolitan mass culture is manufactured, bought and sold. The theorist Herbert Schiller (1976) defined cultural imperialism as “the notion of dominance. It is a process of imperial

control that operates through forms of culture that is more effective than earlier forms of colonial domination, through military occupation and economic dependency.”¹

Two main paradigms have been attributed to the explanation of American cultural imperialism: the “dependency paradigm” and the “free market paradigm”. The dependency paradigm argues that Western/ US cultural hegemony is a new form of colonialism which is bent on spreading capitalist values. The former theory considers that transnational media products are highly standardized goods. Being produced in a capitalist context, they have a significant influence on audiences that are considered passive consumers. Hence, transnational media and communication industries are the “ideologically supportive informational infrastructure” of global capitalism and agents for “the promotion, protection and extension of the modern world system” which “create...attachment to the way things are in the system overall”.²

American cultural imperialism lies in its cultural domination. Being a global power, the US mass culture exercises a magnetic appeal and attraction to its aesthetic values. Its attraction lies in the quality of the life style it projects, through which it influences and dominates mainly the youth. American popular music, American films, eating habits, and even clothing are increasingly imitated worldwide.³In addition to the fact that America has become a ‘Mecca’ for those seeking advanced education, with approximately half a million foreign students flocking to the United States, with many of the ablest never returning home. Moreover, American cultural imperialism lies in the pressure put on societies to adopt American values and lifestyle. This is helped along with the media that plays a central role in creating and transmitting the dominant culture to the developing societies.

The proponents of the free market paradigm argue that the US cultural hegemony is due to its outstanding economic position. This is due to the fact that the US maintains large production budgets and advanced technology and it also has a large and highly competitive home market. This theory works as follows: Developing economies are rendered subordinate to global capitalism and/or Western value systems. This subordination and domination is at the heart of cultural imperialism by the fact that the encounter between cultures are never one equal

¹Herbert I. Schiller, *Communication and Cultural Domination*, (International Arts and Sciences Press: New York, 1976), in Kaid C, *Cultural Imperialism*, (Sage Pub, 2007) 151.

²John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991)125, in Emilee Rauschenberger, *It's Only a Movie- Right? Deconstructing Cultural Imperialism: Examining the Mechanism Behind US Domination of Global Cultural Trade*, (2003) 8.

³Brzezinski Zbiginiew, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, (Washington DC: April 1997) 25.

terms. Some cultures and their value systems are privileged because of some historical circumstances. One of these is related to the processes of colonialism that enabled Western – historically speaking – cultures to impose their values on the conquered peoples of Asia, Africa, the Americas and many other parts of the world. Hence, the discourse of colonization was based upon the cultural superiority of the 'West over the Rest'. It seems appropriate here to give a glance at its historical backgrounds starting up from colonialism and British imperialism before dealing with the study of American cultural imperialism. This is due to the fact that cultural imperialism broadly speaking could be used to describe examples of the enforced adoption of the cultural habits and customs of actual imperial occupying powers from antiquity down to nineteenth and twentieth century European colonialism; a legacy which is still endured by sovereign nation-states from the mid twentieth century onwards.

➤ Colonialism and the Question of Culture

Colonialism is worth to be discussed here since cultural imperialism is part and parcel of it. For instance, there was always interplay of cultural forces once a country was colonized by another. The colonizer imposed certain cultural policies on the colonized through a set of activities, schooling system, laws and the use of the colonizer's language. Though in an informal way and a more modern one, these are also the tools through which US cultural imperialism is pursued; by way of a rapid spread of American values and style of life, the use of the English language as the common currency, and the imposition the liberal capitalist system all over the world.

Colonialism is the practice of domination which involves the subjugation of one people to another politically, economically but also culturally. The term colony comes from the Latin word *colonus*, meaning farmer. This reminds us that the practice of colonialism usually involved the transfer of population with a different culture to a new territory, where the arrivals lived as permanent settlers while maintaining political and cultural allegiance to their country of origin. According to the **OED**, colonialism is described as,

a settlement in a new country...a body of people who settle in a new locality, forming a community subject to or connected with parent state; the community so formed, consisting of the original settlers and their

descendants and successors, as long as the connection with the parent state is kept up.⁴

World history is full of examples of one society gradually expanding by incorporating adjacent territory and settling its people on newly conquered territories. Looking back into history, one finds that the ancient Greeks set up colonies as did the Romans, the Moors, the Ottomans and many others; and therefore colonialism is not restricted to a specific place or time. Nevertheless, in the sixteenth century, colonialism changed decisively because of technological developments in navigation which started to connect more remote parts of the world. Fast sailing ships made it possible to reach distant ports and to sustain close ties between the center and the colonies. Thus, the modern European project emerged when it became possible to move large numbers of people across the ocean and to maintain political sovereignty in spite of geographical dispersion. This led to political, economic, and cultural dependencies that are elements of cultural imperialism which in the 1990s came to be veiled under the new phenomenon known as globalization. The latter has known a flow of people, capital, and goods; that is economic and cultural exchanges as never before since the world has become a small, borderless village.

According to Marxist⁵ thinking, there is a crucial distinction between earlier and modern colonialisms: whereas earlier colonialisms were pre-capitalist, modern colonialism was established alongside capitalism in Western Europe.⁶ Meanwhile earlier colonialism was built on extracting material goods, taxes and fortunes from the countries that it conquered; modern one did restructure the economies of the latter by drawing them into a complex relationship based on the flow of human and natural resources between colonized and colonial countries. This flow worked in both directions: slaves, indentured servants and raw materials were transported to the metropolis; meanwhile the colonies were established as markets for European goods. Actually, these flows always went back and profited the so called 'mother country'. Therefore, colonialism did lock the newcomers and the original inhabitants into the most complex and traumatic relationships in human history that altered the globe forever. Indeed without colonial expansion, the transition to capitalism could not have taken place in Europe, given the fact that European colonialism comprised a variety of techniques

⁴Ania Loomba, *Colonialism and Post-Colonialism*, (London and New York: 1989-2000) 1.

⁵A social, political and economic theory which is based on the writings/ ideology of Karl Marx, Cambridge International Dictionary of English, (Cambridge University Press) 869.

⁶Bottomore, (1983) in Ania Loomba, *ibid.* 3.

and patterns of domination which were necessary for the growth of European capitalism and industry.

Hence, the idea of “cultural imperialism” is not new. It refers to the historical fact of imperial expansion whereby cultural forces have always played a significant role. This relates to the exercise of domination in cultural relationships in which the values, practices, and meanings of a powerful foreign culture are imposed upon one or more native cultures. For instance, cultural imperialism used to be associated with Christian missionary activities, the introduction of western school systems, forms of colonial administration, and the use of European languages in overseas colonies. These efforts of the missionaries can be regarded as imperialist in a number of ways. On the one hand, Christianization meant westernization which made the converts easier for the West to control. On the other hand, westernization was itself a form of imperialism, a way of dispossessing other peoples culturally. Missionaries disputed that they were dispossessing anybody. On the contrary, they believed they were bringing the light of truth, freedom, human rights, rationalism and modernity to the pagan.

In a similar vein, cultural imperialism is related to the emergence of capitalism in the western world that is promoting western cultural values through enhancing a single way of production and consumption of goods and services. The former has been promoted by the effects of American cultural exports to the rest of the world, in a globalizing era especially after the USA has become leader of the globe with an economic, political, cultural, technological, and military might.

Imperialism is compatible with colonialism and reducible to the word “empire”. The word imperialism dates from the end of the nineteenth century and minimally connotes the use of state power to secure economic monopolies for national companies. By definition imperialism comes from the Latin word *imperium*, meaning to command, and have the supreme power. Attention is drawn here to the fact of exercising power over another country, whether through settlement, sovereignty, or indirect control. Edward Said defines imperialism as “the practice, the theory and the attitudes of dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory.”⁷ On the same line, imperialism is defined by Michael Doyle as “a relationship formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another

⁷Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, op.cit.9.

political society. It can be achieved by force, by political collaboration, by economic, social, or cultural dependence.”⁸

According to these definitions both colonialism and imperialism can be used interchangeably. Both were forms of conquest and domination, direct or indirect rule that benefitted Europe economically and strategically. Both engendered the promotion and domination of a more powerful culture over least known cultures. This is due to the fact that the former belongs to a large, economically or militarily powerful nation (center) and the latter belongs to a smaller, less powerful one (periphery).

British Colonialism/ imperialism led to the spread of English as the language of the educated and political elite, and also of commerce. British colonies were regarded as part of a ‘greater Britain’, and settlers were the agents of British civilization who took with them British tastes and values. Ferro wrote “colonization was the ‘power’ of a people to ‘reproduce’ itself in different spaces.”⁹This reproduction entails with it a blending of cultures and often the triumph of the western over the indigenous.

To assert a cultural domination, colonialism provided a series of ‘constructions’ that portrayed the ‘truth’ of the colonized according to a European interpretation. In fact, the invention of these constructions was motivated by a desire to construct power positions over other peoples. When Europeans spoke of ‘natives’, it conjured up a range of other terms associated with that word: savage, tribal, irrational, criminal, filthy, amoral and so on. Thus, the colonial discourse when examined revealed a language of power that served imperialism, in which subject races were categorized, subjugated and their past was written for them by the Europeans. Moreover, the processes of colonialism enabled Western cultures to impose their values on the conquered peoples. The discourse of colonialism was based upon the cultural supremacy of the “West over the Rest”, along with the Western notions of economic progress and liberal democracy.

Along with that, E. Said showed that the European portrayal of the Orient was an invention which bore no resemblance to the real Middle East. According to the former the era of enlightenment occurred precisely at the moment of imperial expansion and served the imperial idea: for him enlightenment was the essential vehicle for oppression. Moreover, Said argued that, throughout Western history, Europe had portrayed the Oriental as the “Other”.

⁸Michael Doyle, *Empires*, (1986) 45 in *ibid.* 9.

⁹Marc Ferro, *Colonization: A Global History*, (London: 1997) 11.

For him, the supposedly abstract and apolitical intellectual pursuits of nineteenth-century scholars and novelists were actually complicit in the extension of colonial power. Their writings about the "Orient," he argued, constituted a discourse which conflated distinct societies and imputed to them a set of negative attributes contrasting the corresponding positive qualities attributed to the "West." This discourse thus constructed both "Self" and "Other" in ways that made the West's political dominance over the "Orient" seem both natural and inevitable.¹⁰

In developing his argument about Orientalism as a system of European/ Western knowledge about the Orient that facilitated cultural domination, Edward Said provided a powerful critique of western structures of knowledge and the way in which colonial discourse constructed the colonial subject. He defined Orientalism as : Western teaching, writing and research focused on the 'Orient'- that is, the academic definition; 'a style of thought based on an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and "the Occident" and a 'western style of dominating, restructuring and having authority over, the Orient- the discourse of power'. He conceptualized the Orient as the place of one of the west's 'deepest and most recurring images of the other'¹¹ that is the colonized / racially inferiorized subject against which the 'Self' is measured. As such the cultural assumptions that prevailed then were considering the Orient as 'backward' compared to the modernized and developed west. And thus, the latter defined itself as superior by referring to the others as inferior. Therefore, the ideology and practice of imperialism was the domain of powerful groups and vested interests for which empire brought tangible benefits. Material power was expressed through economic, military and technological superiority, but equally important was the cultural power of dominant discourses which represented colonial subjects in a way that reinforced their inferiority, justified imperial rule and secured legitimacy for imperialism in both colony and imperial heartland.

Cultural imperialism is thus premised on the relationship between knowledge productions, control and imperial power. Power is maintained through hegemonic ideologies (or discourse of power), the dominant or ruling set of ideas in a society, that worked in the interests of powerful groups in metropole and colony. The former involves a dominant power imposing aspects of its culture on a society which is 'weaker' or 'backward' in some military, economic or technological sense.

¹⁰Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Pantheon, 1978) in Ryan Dunch, *Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Cultural Theory, Christian Missions, and Global Modernity*, (Wesleyan University, 2002) 301-325.

¹¹Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (England: Penguin Books, 1978)1-3.

In fact, cultural transformations have characterized all empires, ancient and modern, but it was the modern empires that developed the most sophisticated ‘technologies of governance’ and/or ‘cultural technologies’¹²; a ‘scientific’ colonialism directed at transforming ‘traditional societies’ into modern productive colonies.¹³ In Orientalism (1978) and Culture and Imperialism (1993), Edward Said gave ample analysis and examples about the colonialist/ imperialist constructions on which imperial narrative about others / subjects were constructed and influenced culture in the imperial center.

Culture thus became central to the nature of colonial knowledge and the divide between colonizers and colonized. Therefore, empire was as much a cultural and intellectual as a political and economic phenomenon and colonial knowledge facilitated conquest and rule. Moreover, imperial administrations, civilizing missions and cultures of colonialism were characteristics of imperial rule and were shaped by the interactions between colonizers and colonized in diverse cultural, political and economic contexts. In fact, cultural oppression was the result of some cultural strategies that were used by European empires to denigrate the oppressed. According to Cohn¹⁴, the history of colonized peoples was shaped through cultural technologies of dominance.

According to Barbara Bush, colonial and imperial domination operated through mechanisms of cultural imperialism that resulted in cultural oppression, that is, a negation of the values of the colonized peoples that undermined their cultures. Thus, cultural imperialism was essential to legitimizing colonial rule.¹⁵ If we take for instance the US colonialist experience in the Philippines, we see that it can be read as imperialist, given that Roosevelt proclaimed “it is our duty toward the people living in barbarism to see that they are freed from their chains”.¹⁶The Filipinos were considered uncivilized and can’t govern themselves, that’s why bringing them to the light of civilization was Roosevelt’s justification for his imperialist conquest and domination.

¹²Nicholas Dirks, *Colonialism and Culture*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992) 3, in Barbara Bush, op.cit. 115.

¹³Barbara Bush, ibid. 115.

¹⁴Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*,(New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996)preface by Nicholas Dirks, in ibid. 122.

¹⁵Barbara Bush,ibid. 122-123.

¹⁶Franklin D. Roosevelt, in Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Empire*, (Harvard University Press: USA, 2000)175.

There is an existing link between culture and imperialism which leads to raise basic questions such as how power and knowledge operate in colonial societies, how the dominant power expands its values and culture at the expense of the dominated, which push the colonized subjects to become engaged in complex cultural choices and relations, and to interact with the dominant culture even if 'not in conditions of their own choosing.'¹⁷

Hence, from what has been said above, we come to understand that cultural imperialism is simply put as the cultural products of the first world that "invade" the third world and "conquer" local cultures. According to Thomas, "cultural imperialism operated through disrupting and changing the context within which people give meanings to their actions and experiences and make sense of their lives."¹⁸ This cultural hegemony implies a more conscious process of suppression of inferior cultures in which cultural strategies were more subtle than other forms of colonial control, such as policing and the law. This process succeeded in convincing and pushing the colonized to internalize inferiority. Put simply, cultural contact and cultural experiences through interaction between people led to the transmission of cultural traits, to assimilation and acculturation, which indirectly influence culture, religious and economic structure of local community or society.

The concept of cultural imperialism has gone through multiple facets using different tools to achieve its goal, that's why in modern times there is reference to media imperialism, electronic colonialism, cultural synchronization, and ideological and economic imperialism. These processes are at the core of the capitalist system and globalization through which capitalism has stretched the world over.

Capitalism has been a major influence in ordering, structuring and regulating cultural exchanges, especially between the economically developed 'first world' and the 'developing world'. The emergence of capitalism in the 'first world' has given the 'first world' considerable economic advantages. The latter have been achieved due to the capitalists who have been ceaselessly looking for new trading opportunities to expand their trade and profits. This fact has engendered a unified capitalist mode of production and a single way of producing commodities that promote the Western cultural values. At the heart of it lies US cultural imperialism due to the American cultural exports to the rest of the world, especially

¹⁷John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction*, (London: Pinter Publishers 1991) 3, in Barbara Bush, *ibid.* 123.

¹⁸Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994) 2-3, in *ibid.* 123.

after the Second World War as the USA became an economic superpower. Today, American movies, television programs, and corporations are seen to disseminate cultural products which marginalize local products and values. In particular, Americanization has become a symbol of Western dominance. A key vehicle for this is the transnational media and communications industries which are promoting capitalism and consumerism: "American capitalism has to persuade the people it dominates that the 'American way of life' is what they want. American superiority is natural and in everyone's best interest."¹⁹ This was clearly explained by Herbert Schiller:

The concept of cultural imperialism today best describes the sum of the processes by which a society is brought into the modern world system and how its dominating stratum is attracted, pressured, forced, and sometimes bribed into shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even promote the values and structures of the dominating center of the system. The public media are the foremost example of operating enterprises that are used in the penetrative process. For penetration on a significant scale the media themselves must be captured by the dominating/ penetrating power. This occurs largely through the commercialization of broadcasting.²⁰

1.3. Grounds of Post-War American Cultural Imperialism

Historical facts show that the U.S. has always masked its lust for territorial gains and occupations under the mask of universalizing its own values of freedom and democracy through fostering some cultural policies that could enable it to fulfill its objectives of rising to a global power after the WWII, and protecting its interests in order to preserve the position of a hegemon. Hence, the US fostering of its interests has been buried within a rhetoric culminated in what was to be known later as 'globalization'.

Theorists and critics argued that the former US actions were the roots of imperialist practices, especially the Monroe Doctrine through which the US assumed the role of a protector and proclaimed the right to intervene militarily whenever its "interests" and security deemed it necessary.²¹ This position denied the European powers any further expansion to, and interference in Latin America. That was the first American overseas commitment, which established the ideological basis for US hegemony in the Western hemisphere. This position

¹⁹M. Barker, *Comics: Ideology, Power and Critics*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989) 279.

²⁰Herbert I. Schiller, *Communication and Cultural Domination*, (International Arts and Sciences Press: New York, 1976) 9.

²¹ "The Making of the Monroe Doctrine" in Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, (Harvard University Press: USA, 2000) 177.

of force was made explicit much later with the Roosevelt corollary to the Doctrine, claiming for the United States the exercise of “an international police power.”²²

The British decline due to the loss of the Suez Canal and the forcible decolonization of former colonies and Roosevelt’s genius to grasp this fact led to the projection of American supremacy. Now the arena is set for the USA to take advantage from the weakness of the former and to emerge as a leader of the world. On this reality, Mead observes that “the Americans dismantled the British Empire without fighting a war against it, and in fact while defending it against other, much brutal enemies.”²³ Moreover, he adds that the fall of the British Empire was the most important event in international politics in the 20th century and in the whole history of American policy.²⁴ In the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, the US played the role of ‘protector’ of the ‘free world’ from communism and fascism. Eventually, to achieve this aim, the US established its political and economic hegemony over the world through the Bretton Woods institutions and the UN.

1.3.1. The Rise of the United States as a World Power

After the end of the Second World War, the USA emerged as the most dominant power. It dominated in technology and production and its military apparatus was far superior to any other, due to its unprecedented worldwide reach and grasp, as well as, the manner of its exercise in just one century. Similarly, the rapid industrialization of its economy set the basis for its expanding geopolitical ambitions²⁵. The only threat was the Soviet Union whose power was curbed and contained by the USA during the Cold War. This was done through the US presenting itself as chief defender of freedom; understood in terms of free markets and free trade.

The USA provided economic and military protection for propertied or political and military elites wherever they happened to be, who in turn centered a pro-American politics in whatever country they happened to be. The Americans learned from the British the

²²Franklin D. Roosevelt, in Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *ibid.* 177.

²³Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence*, (New York: Knopf, 2001) 129, in James Garrison, *America as Empire: Global Leader or Rogue Power?*(BK Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. San Francisco, 2004) 76.

²⁴*Ibid.* 76.

²⁵Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, (Washington DC, April 1997) 3-4.

importance of commerce over territory, direct political control and the importance of using military might to enforce commercial agreements. These principles were refined by the Americans and led to the success of the latter's foreign policy, due to the US being fundamentally motivated by resources and trade, not territory. It has been loss of trade rather than loss of territory that has most preoccupied the US during its rise to empire.

For instance, the demands for freedom of the seas, the promulgation of open-door policies, and more recently the negotiations for free trade zones have always been at the core of America's expansion around the world. It is thus understood that commercial motivation has made Americans so pragmatic and relentless and proved to be a crucial and critical advantage especially in the age of economic globalization. Money, not land, has always been at the core of American imperial designs. When the modern era of globalization began, it put the Americans at enormous strategic advantage because money moves, land does not.

Moreover, the construction of an open international order for trade (free trade), and economic development and rapid capital accumulation, required from the US the dismantling of the former nation-state based empires. The US largely modeled its relationships with the newly independent states after decolonization. The latter were required state-formation and self-governance across the globe. Privileged trade relations, clientelism, patronage, and covert coercion were the chief weapons of control which the US deployed bilaterally. Any threat of collective action against overwhelming US power could be countered by a divide-and-rule strategy making use of individual connections to limit collective autonomy.

That international order for trade and economic development was set up through the Bretton Woods agreement in 1944, which was designed to coordinate economic growth between the advanced capitalist powers as well as to expand the capitalist economic style to the rest of the non-communist world. This was pushed forward by Rostow's Theory of 'stages' of economic growth to promote the drive to mass consumption on a country-by-country basis in order to ward off the communist menace.²⁶ In fact, these institutions served as

²⁶Walt W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, (Cambridge University Press, 1966), in David Harvey, *The New Imperialism*, (Oxford University Press, 2003) 55.

the cornerstones of American- led power and fundamental in the development of US new imperialism.²⁷

It is important to note here that the expansion of trade, commercial interests and the commitment to democratic ideals have been helped along with an audacious, relentless application of military force; all of which have led America to rise to global dominance. To further its interests and economic gains, the US has been an indiscriminate military power, which has been applied as effectively as the pursuit of its commercial interests and as relentlessly as its democratic ideals.

The creation of NATO in 1949; for instance, was an initiative to link the two sides of the Atlantic militarily through which the U.S. brought Western Europe under the American nuclear umbrella by stationing American troops on European soil; in addition to, limiting the possibility of inter-capitalist wars and combating the influence of the Soviet Union and then China. To this end the former was prepared to support the overthrow of democratically elected governments and to engage directly or indirectly in tactics of liquidation of those considered in opposition to US interests. It did so in Iran, Guatemala, Brazil, the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Chile, and elsewhere. Moreover, it intervened electorally and covertly in dozens of other countries throughout the world. Thus after the end of the Second World War it became clear that economic and security interests were tightly linked.

It is clear that the latter are part of the US cultural imperialist policies, through which it sought to achieve the domination of the world and hence prevent any other nation from doing so. As it is clearly mentioned above, the US tried to fulfill its objectives and to protect its interests through whatever possible means; political, economic, cultural, or military.

Some facts about the US hegemony are necessary to include here such as having the largest economy in the world; the USA has by the 20th century influenced many states around the world to adopt the economic policies of the Washington Consensus,²⁸ though against the wishes of their populations. In fact, the Washington Consensus was the economic orthodoxy that guided the IMF and the World Bank, turning neo-liberalism into a global policy. Then,

²⁷G. Ikenberry, *Liberal Order and Imperial Ambition: Essays on American Power and World Politics*, (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2006) 5, in Robin Farwell: *To what Extent is Post 9/11 US Foreign Policy a Continuation of 'New Imperialist' Ambitions?* (University of Surrey, 2012) 1-23.

²⁸Washington Consensus: made in 1980 between the IMF, the World Bank and the US treasury about the 'right' policies for developing countries, in Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents*, (W.W Norton and Company: New York, London, 2002) 16.

the US dollar has been the dominant world reserve currency under the Bretton Woods system; rooted in capitalist economic theory. Moreover, the US has an advanced naval-based military with the highest military expenditure in the world. It consists of the largest number of aircraft carriers, and bases all over the world. It has had also the largest nuclear arsenal since the first half of the Cold War, and one of the largest armies in the world. It possesses also a powerful global network in the Central Intelligence Agency; in addition, to its cultural influence sweeping the whole world. The latter is a kind of hegemony exerted through the spread of the technological and scientific revolution in the fields of communication and media. This is what Brzezinski defines as “technetronic” revolution and argues that “the first global society in history would be the principal global dissemination of the technetronic revolution.”²⁹

1.3.2. The Cold War Era and US Cultural Dominance

The end of the World War II left the world arena with two superpowers that had to take into consideration the new balance of power. This is called world order. Defined simply, world order means the international system which is the set of relationships among the world’s states. The former is governed by competition between the internationally dominant powers that try to maintain the balance of power between states. The distribution of the latter provides the source of world order. Hence, any change in this distribution of power can lead to a change in world order. Ehteshami has argued that “world order is governed by the competition between hegemonic world powers through the balance of power”³⁰

The Cold War is known in history as the Old World Order. The latter was as Barrie Axford pointed out “constituted by the stable condition of bipolarity known as the Cold War.”³¹ The Cold War covers the period 1945- 1989 and was used to describe the nature of international relations that were characterized by ideological struggle in which the balance of power during the Cold War was thus distributed between the USA and the USSR. During the Cold War, the international relations of the Arab countries were determined largely by these superpowers’ struggle for power and domination. The impact of the latter on the Arab region

²⁹Brzezinski Zbigniew, *Between Two ages: America’s Role in the Technetronic era*, (New York: Viking Press, 1970) 10.

³⁰Ehteshami A, *The Changing Balance of Power in Asia*, (Abu Dhabi: Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 1998) in Elshelmani A. Saad, *The New World Order and its Impact on the Arab-Israeli Peace Process, 1991-1999*, (Center for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies: University of Durham, 2000) 18.

³¹Axford Barrie, *The Global System Economics, Politics and Culture*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), in *ibid.* 2-3.

was intense because of penetrating and shaping it more than other regions. As a result, the Arab countries were increasingly drawn into alliances with one of the two superpowers as client-states to serve their own interests.

The oldworld order thus is that pattern of relations or system that dominated international relations in the aftermath of the WWII. Axford described it as follows

“the ‘Old’ order was constituted by the stable condition of bipolarity known as the Cold War, when antagonism between the superpowers and their cohorts consisted of an “imaginary war” along the main frontiers which divided the hegemons in Europe and turned bloody only at the margins, in Asia and Africa. During this period of global order, colonialism virtually came to an end, partly as a consequence of the growth of nationalist movements nourished by superpower ambitions. Some Third World states even achieved a sort of power vis-a vis the superpowers, by playing one off against the other in multilateral institutions like the UN, which were otherwise impotent as a result of superpower rivalry.”³²

This competition or rivalry between the USA and the Soviet Union did not involve any direct fighting between Soviet and American troops, or the use of nuclear weapons, but did involve war between the former by all other means. It witnessed proxy war, with American troops fighting against the Soviet Union’s allies (Korea and Vietnam); countries supported by the USA fighting countries supported by the USSR as in the Middle East. It was also an economic and ideological war, with extensive use of propaganda and media and the secret service organizations such as the CIA and the KGB. In sum, it was a war on all fronts except a direct military clash. As such the key elements of the Cold War were the political and military (nuclear) rivalry and an ideological conflict between capitalism and communism.

During the Cold War era, the American imperial state managed to reconstruct the world order in ways that were not only restricted to the “containment of communism” but were also aiming through “informal imperial rule” to open the world not only in political and economic terms, but also culturally.³³

According to major theorists the motivation for US imperialism that is always strongly emphasized is to enhance **national security**; the interest of defending one’s territory

³²Axford, 182, in *ibid.* 24.

³³ George Stathakis, *Imperialism: Old and New Theories*, (International Journal of Economic Sciences and Applied Research 1 (1):University of Crete) 121, (Accessed 19 Dec 2014).

against possible threats. One vital element of US national security strategy is to make use of cultural diplomacy (cultural imperialism), as part of its foreign policies with the help of the CIA.³⁴ That's why American political leaders have not hesitated in the post-World War II era to brand the Soviet Union or China as an aggressive hostile power and to justify military interventions and military bases around the world to protect the US against enemy attack.³⁵ For instance, during Reagan's presidency, the US diplomacy expanded as a vital component of the national strategy which was used to contain and defeat the USSR.³⁶ The chief elements that led to rivalry between the USA and the USSR during the Cold War were the nuclear power and oil. Both superpowers were rivaling to gain control of oil-rich areas in the world. The US attempted at establishing hegemony over the Arab Gulf region establishing a close relationship with Saudi Arabia. Bacevich argues that a reading of "US grand strategy from the late 1940s through the 1980s as "containment"- with no purpose apart from resisting the spread of Soviet power- is incomplete". He continues that the USA has long sought to "open up the world politically, culturally, and above all economically" and as such, the USA has long been an empire.³⁷ Hence, part of the US cultural diplomacy is the US cultural interests in the Arab region that started in the 1950s with the manifestation of the US-Jewish Imperialist project in that region. These interests have become manifest later by the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries. This is due to Huntington's book about the Clash of Civilizations³⁸ and its impact on political decision makers in the USA.

Time and again part of US diplomacy is its use of a superior military power to protect client regimes throughout the world that were supportive of US interests. The overthrow of Mossadegh, who had nationalized the oil fields of Iran, and his replacement by the Shah in 1953, and the subsequent reliance upon him to look out for US interests in the Gulf region was typical of this approach.

³⁴Helenna K. Finn, *The Case for Cultural Diplomacy: Engaging Foreign Audiences*, (Foreign Affairs, vol. 82, no. 6 November-December 2003) 15-20, in Zaid Oubaidallah Mesbah, *Èssiyassa Thakafiya el Amrikiya Tidjah el Watan el Arabi: Dibloumassiya Thakafiya èm Imberyaliya Thakafiya*, (Al Moustakbal: Tarablus University, Libya) 99, (Accessed 8 June 2015).

³⁵Thomas Weisskopf, *Theories of American Imperialism: A Critical Evaluation*, 46, accessed 19 Dec 2014.

³⁶Lord Carnes, *What 'Strategic' Public Diplomacy is?* in Zaid Oubaidallah Mesbah, *ibid.* 102.

³⁷Andrew Bacevich, *American Empire. The Realities and Consequences of US Diplomacy*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002) 4, in Doug Stokes, *The Heart of Empire? Theorizing U.S. Empire in an Era of Transnational Capitalism*, (Third World Quarterly, Vol. 26, No. 2, Routledge, 217 – 236, 2005) 221.

³⁸Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations?* (Foreign Affairs 1993) and *the Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993-1996) in Zaid Oubaidallah Mesbah, *ibid.* 105.

Another instance of American imperialist motives was that of its intervention in Vietnam which was a global political strategy to defend the “free world” against the spread of communism. When in the 1960s the European colonial powers were losing crucial battles and control over their colonies, the USA stepped as the new champion and Americans acted in Vietnam with all the violence, brutality and barbarity.³⁹ History repeats itself; the same US imperialist scenario and motives have been enacted again in Iraq right after the end of the Cold War whereby the US declared itself responsible to exercise an international police power, in the name of establishing global right.⁴⁰

The purpose behind the deployment of US troops was done first to protect the geographical means that the US perceived to be economic and strategic interest. Second, it was to prepare for nuclear war. Third, it was to contain the peripherals of Communism in order to ensure that any type of invasion or attempted expansion would result in US military intervention. Fourth, it was to act as a symbol of US’s ability to project with hard power.⁴¹ The bipolarity of power during the Cold War allowed the US to portray the conflict as universal; thus demonizing the Soviet threat. As such, the US was able to convince the international community that the worldwide distribution of troops was required for maintaining global security. This is another aspect that highlights the US’s desire to pursue new imperialist ambitions during the Cold War through the global distribution of military bases.⁴²

It can be understood that the globally distributed military bases, combined with the establishment of US centric international institutions during the Cold War, enabled the US to assume the role of ‘international police’ in the wake of Soviet decline⁴³. Therefore, US imperialism is not new, since its fundamental base was built during the Cold War.

To achieve its goals the US has sought to found universalism and the individual rights. Therefore, pro-Americanism has to be cultivated and projected abroad, and so it has begun the huge cultural assault upon ‘decadent’ European values and the promotion of the

³⁹Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, op.cit. 178.

⁴⁰Ibid. 180.

⁴¹Chalmers Johnson, *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy and the End of the Republic*, (London: Verso, 2004), in Robert Gilpin, *The Rise of American Hegemony in Two Hegemonies: Britain 1846-1914 and the USA 1941-2001*, (edited by Patrick Karl O’Brien and Armand Clesse, Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd, 2002) 165-182.

⁴²Todd E, *After the Empire: the Breakdown of American Order*, (London, Constable Publishers, 2004) in Robin Farwell: *To What Extent is Post 9/11 US Foreign Policy a Continuation of ‘New Imperialist’ Ambitions?* (University of Surrey, 2012) 1-23.

⁴³ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, in *ibid.* 1-23.

superiority of American culture and of ‘American values’. Money power has been used to dominate cultural production and influence other cultures. Cultural imperialism has become an important weapon in the struggle to assertive overall hegemony. Hollywood, popular music, cultural forms, and even whole political movements, such as those of civil rights, have been mobilized to foster the desire to emulate the American way. The US has been constructed as a beacon of freedom that has the exclusive power to entrain the rest of the world into an enduring civilization characterized by peace and prosperity.

Armstrong concludes: “The Plan is for the United States to rule the world. The overt theme is unilateralism, but it is ultimately a story of domination. It calls for the United States to maintain its overwhelming military superiority and prevent new rivals from rising up to challenge it on the world stage. It calls for dominion over friends and enemies alike. It says not that the United States must be more powerful, or most powerful, but that it must be absolutely powerful.”⁴⁴

Likewise, Brzezinski explains that America stands as a global superpower as a result of its supremacy in the four decisive domains of global power; militarily, it has an unmatched global reach; economically, it remains the main locomotive of global growth; technologically, it retains the overall lead in cutting edge areas of innovation; and culturally, it enjoys an appeal that is unrivaled, especially among the world’s youth. It is the combination of that makes America the only global superpower.⁴⁵

1.4. American Policy in the Arab Gulf Region on the Eve of Globalization

The Arab Gulf region is a unique and vital geo-political phenomenon. Based on this, and since the Portuguese incursion into the region and the confrontation with the Omani naval power in 1507, the Arab Gulf region has enjoyed considerable importance on the international stage. It formed the vital passage-way to the Indian sub-continent and South East Asia for the colonial powers, starting with the Portuguese and ending with the British, who were aspiring to control Eurasia. The region became exceptionally important following the discovery of oil in the interwar period and during the Cold War when oil was

⁴⁴Armstrong D, ‘*Dick Cheney’s Song of American Drafting a Plan for Global Dominance,*’ (Harper’s Magazine, 305, Oct, 2002) 76-83, in David Harvey, *The New imperialism,* (Oxford University Press, 2003) 80.

⁴⁵Brzezinski Zbigniew, *The Grand Chessboard, American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives,* (Washington DC, April 1997) 24.

transformed from a mere commercial commodity into a strategic and political asset, especially after the 1973 Arab oil embargo.

Concerning the American-Arab relations, they were rooted in history given the fact that they underwent two periods. The first period started by the end of the 18th century with the emergence of the US as an independent country up to 1939. The second period went from the end of the WWII until now. During the first period the policy of the US was built upon isolationism and the protection of US commercial and cultural activities in the Arab countries. The first American presence in the Arab countries goes back to the end of the 19th century whereby America was seeking places /countries where to expand its hegemony claiming the security of the trading routes from the pirates. Moreover, the US used religion (Christianity) to reinforce its position in the Middle East, as in Basra, Muscat and Oman whereby it looked for investment in the Arab oil fields especially the Standard Oil that belonged to Rockefeller.

In order to establish itself in the Arab Gulf region, the US provided different services for the Arab peoples such as building schools, hospitals and churches. By the beginning of the 20th century, the US opened trading routes via the sea going to the Arab countries to be in charge of US imports up to WWI. This relationship was sometimes based on collective work, and sometimes on rupture up to the end of WWII.

America's involvement in the Arab Gulf region is not a recent phenomenon; it is long standing given its importance to the stability of the region. Securing stable access to regional oil supplies added to the US guarantees of security that underpinned this objective were the pillars that structured the international relations of the Gulf after 1945.⁴⁶

The former's commitment in the region was evident since 1943 when President Roosevelt declared the defense of Saudi Arabia; a vital interest of the US, and from early 1945 when he and King Bin Saud met to personify the two countries' special relationship which permanently linked the region's oil with American national security. In the following decades and as the influence of the former colonial powers (Britain and France) declined, the American presence in the Arab Gulf region became increasingly important. Pushed by the security of its national interests or regional stability, the US intervened whenever the formers were at stake.

⁴⁶Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, *The Gulf Goes Global: The Evolving Role of Gulf Countries in the Middle East and North Africa and Beyond*, (Fride and Hivos, 2013) 3.

As far as the Arab region (Middle East and Gulf States) is concerned, there is a consensus among scholars that agree upon the fact that the most important American interests in the former were threefold: containing the Soviet power and influence in the region; the free flow of oil and continuing access to oil resources at reasonable prices; and Israel. Regarding the first, minimizing the presence and influence of the USSR was an overriding priority for American policymakers. As far as the second is concerned, oil reserves present in the region assumed an increasingly critical role in the economies of the developed, industrialized states throughout the second half of the twentieth century. Finally, the intense American relationship with Israel also became increasingly important to American policymakers partly for its perceived strategic utility in the region and partly for reasons that had much to do with securing the flow of oil.

The Arab region was seen by American policymakers as an area of vital strategic interests to the national security of the United States, taking into account the presence of approximately 60% of the world's proven oil reserves in the area, which the US judged to be of inestimable strategic value in any confrontation with the Soviet Union.

American presidents managed thoroughly to curb any possible threats from ex-pro Soviet Union countries; the United States would prevent "the possible loss of the petroleum resources of the Middle East." Added to the Soviets', the real threat was indigenous nationalism, with its feared demonstration effects elsewhere. Egypt's president, Nasser, became an enemy for similar reasons; similar factors led to the CIA coup restoring the Shah in Iran in 1953; as well as, the Eisenhower administration pressured Britain and France to withdraw from the Suez Canal and Israel from Sinai in 1956. The major concern was (and remains) the incomparable energy reserves of the region. These were to be incorporated within the US-dominated system considering the Arab region as the most strategically important area in the world.

In addition, marines were sent to Lebanon in 1958 and again in 1982-83. US corporations gained the leading role in Middle East oil production. By the 1960s, the United States helped the Arab countries economically after the defeat of the latter in the 1967 war, for the sake of various interests that were political, strategic and economic, aiming at the expansion of US hegemony for commercial reasons first and then for economic and political ones. This was done through bilateral agreements between the US and the Arab leaders. These interests in the Arab Gulf region emerge from the fact that this area consists of two thirds of the world's petroleum reserves, added to the fact that it is near Russia and Russian oil. In fact, the discovery of oil in the 1950s, the British withdrawal in the late 1960s and the sharp rise of

oil prices in the 1970s led to the integration of the economies of the Arab Gulf States (AGS) into the world capitalist system in the 1980s.

Moreover, the US enhanced the Shah of Iran and supported him as a regional proxy in the 1970s; negotiated disengagement agreements after October 1973 Arab- Israeli war; established close political, military and economic relationships with the presidents of Egypt Sadat and Mubarak; negotiated the historic 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt. In accordance with the so-called “twin pillar policy,” the US relied on Iran and Saudi Arabia as allies.

To secure its interests in the region, the US relied on two extremely important countries Iran and Saudi Arabia. In fact, the US did not want to become entangled in regional conflicts, thus it supported and promoted friendly relations with regional regimes. As far as Iran was concerned the US -reluctant to fill the security vacuum directly- asked Iran to accept the role of protector of western interests in the region. According to Secretary of State Kissinger “...the Shah’s view of the realities of world politics paralleled our own. Iran’s influence was always on our side...”⁴⁷ It is understood that friendly Iranian hegemony became undeniable for the prevention of the Soviet domination in the region. To fulfill this objective, Iran was believed to be a good US ally that could provide regional stability to protect western oil and economic interests due to the Iranian military superiority. As a matter of fact, Iran was allowed access to some of the most US sophisticated military technology. In the meantime, there was another important US- Saudi Arabia cultivated relationship that had for an aim ensuring a continuous stable flow of oil, and which led to the establishment of military and economic arrangements. This strategy of using both countries allowed the US to maintain some physical distance from the region.

It is worth mentioning here that although the US central policy during the Cold War was that of encouraging the spread of freedom and democracy, it was not the case for the Arab region where the US was reluctant with the friendly conservative monarchies. This was due to the fact that a change of regime would entail destabilizing consequences that could harm the US interests in the region.

⁴⁷ Henry Kissinger, “*White House Years*”, (Little, Brown, and Company: Boston, 1979) 1262, in Agmon Marcy, *Post-Cold War US Security Strategies for the Persian Gulf*, (Rand Publications, 1993) 10.

After the 1979 revolution, as US-Iranian relations turned hostile and the Iran-Iraq war broke out, the US had to strengthen its own naval forces in the region.⁴⁸ Therefore, in the 1980s, it intervened and enhanced its naval presence in the Persian Gulf in order to contain both Iran and Iraq, during the last years of Iran-Iraq war.⁴⁹

Later, Khomeini was perceived as posing another such threat, leading the United States to support Iraq in the war. Saddam Hussein then took over the mantle, shifting status over-night from moderate friend to a new Hitler when he invaded Kuwait in 1991, displacing US-British clients. The primary fear through-out has been that nationalist forces not under US influence and control might come to have substantial influence over the oil-producing regions of the Arabian Peninsula. The US had to ensure the means to move forces "to reinforce our units forward deployed or to project power into areas where we have no permanent presence," particularly in the Arab region, where the "threats to our interests" require direct military engagement.⁵⁰ This explains the US maintenance of a permanent military presence in the region between 1945 and 1991, as well as relying extensively on regional allies to uphold the primacy of pro-western and anti- Soviet forces.

⁴⁸The elevated American military commitment to the security of oil supplies in the Persian Gulf was also known as the Carter Doctrine. According to this doctrine, the United States will use military force if necessary to prevent any outside or regional power from dominating this region.

⁴⁹Robert J. Lieber, *The American Era: Power and Strategy for the 21st Century*, (Cambridge University Press, 2005) 128-129.

⁵⁰Noam Chomsky, *After the Cold War: US Foreign Policy in the Middle East*, (Cultural Critique, No. 19, The Economies of War, University of Minnesota Press, Fall 1991) 19.

Chapter 2

End of the Cold War, Globalization and US Cultural Policy 1990-2001

2.1. Introduction

The end of the Cold War came to be real fact by the fall of the USSR which led to the emergence of the USA as the only superpower from then on. This new reality on the world's stage of history marked the end of the Old World Order, and the beginning of the New World Order. The latter gave the USA the role of the hegemon, for which it had to work out every means to become and remain the sole leader of the world. Hence, the US became able to use its political, economic, and military power, as well as its influence on international organizations. In fact, the US has for objective the reorganization of the world according to its strategic interests in a way that could ensure the submission of the world to US political, economic and cultural domination. Hegemony cannot be seen more clearly than in the Arab region. The importance of the region for American interests made it the focus of the US policy. That's why the US -right at the end of the Cold War- took advantage from the first presented chance to lay down a hand on the Gulf region through the 1991 war against Iraq, pretending the protection of Kuwait. From then on, the Gulf cities have always looked for US military protection, and the US sought its interests in the Gulf region due to its geo-strategic importance for the spread of US cultural policy. The latter has been pursued and pushed forward in the age of globalization, in a way that led the Gulf cities to change radically in a very short time from traditional, tribal countries to modern cities. This chapter will examine how at the end of the Cold War the USA established a New World Order policies and strategies, taking advantage from the globalization age to expand its cultural dominance in order to safe guard its interests. Emphasis will be laid on the policies pursued by the administrations of both Bush senior and Clinton in the Arab Gulf region, with the aim of examining the change that the Gulf cities have undergone culturally.

2.2. Globalization, the New World Order and Cultural Dominance

The Cold War ended with the fall of Communism which gave ample space for the US to become leader of the world and to triumph with the spread of its Capitalist system. The latter

had to be expanded to all the corners of the world in order to ensure its continuity, success, and dominance; therefore, globalization has been the engine that has fostered and expanded the Capitalist system. The former pushes towards global flows that make currently existing political borders and economic barriers irrelevant.

Globalization is hardly a new phenomenon; it is as old as recorded history itself. It is an objective, empirical process of increasing economic and political connectivity. Historically, about 420 BC, the philosopher Democritus of Abdera wrote “to the wise man, the whole earth is open; for the native land of a good soul is the whole earth.”¹ It can be understood that globalization is a long term historical process of growing worldwide interconnectedness that is related to such components as the ancient movements of populations across and between continents, earlier cross-cultural trade, the spread of world religions, the diffusion of agriculture, literacy, sciences and philosophy, and the development of new technologies due to intercultural contact.

Globalization typically refers to the process by which different economies and societies become more closely integrated, and concurrent with increasing worldwide globalization. Covering a wide range of distinct political, economic, and cultural trends, the term globalization has quickly become one of the most fashionable buzzwords of contemporary political and academic debate. The concept of globalization is often used to refer to at least one or more of the following four types of phenomena: the pursuit of liberal, free market policies in the world economy (global systems of market capitalism, transnational domination); the growing dominance of Western or American forms of political, economic, and cultural life (Westernization or Americanization), which push toward the spread of modernity, commercial culture and consumerism; the proliferation of new information technologies; as well as the notion that humanity stands at the threshold of realizing one single unified community in which major sources of social conflict have vanished through global integration.

The term globalization implies for some the promise of an international civil society, conducive to a new era of peace and democratization. For others it implies the threat of an American economic and political hegemony with its cultural consequence of homogenizing the world. As the chosen title suggests, the focus will be on the cultural dimension of the

¹Kathleen Freeman, ed. *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, (Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press, 1971, fragment 247) 113, in T. G Palmer, *Globalization and Culture: Homogeneity, Diversity, Identity, liberty* (The Liberal Institute of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, 2004) 4.

phenomenon; that is the relationship between globalization and cultural imperialism. Some scholars have focused on the cultural dimension of globalization. Al Khatib defines it as “domination over ideas, tastes, and arts in a way that doesn’t oppose the policy of the hegemon”.² Cultural globalization is therefore the globalizing of the capitalist values which is actually cultural imperialism. In a nutshell, globalization is multidimensional being a system through which the peoples of the world become linked culturally, economically, politically and socially. As a process, it refers to the growing worldwide interconnectedness.³ As a project, it refers to the multinational corporations.⁴

Indeed, there is an emerging global culture which is heavily American in origin and content being propagated by the English language-in its American rather than British form-which is a staple of a global culture. Millions of people in the world use English as their lingua franca for practical reasons. However, the use of a language is not innocent because every language carries with its cultural freight of beliefs and values and so does the American language through the American mass communication media.

Culturally, globalization is the spreading of mass media, advertising, and consumption; for instance, the expansion of transnational corporate chains of McDonalds, Burger king, KFCs, Coca Cola, and transnational brand images of CNN world and Disneyfication. Economically, it is defined as the “similarity of economic conditions and policies across national boundaries.”⁵ Oman sees it as an “accelerated movement across national and regional barriers of economic goods, i.e. people, products, capital, especially intangible forms of capital (technology, control of assets).”⁶ Politically, it refers to the 1980s emergence of the NGOs, loss of sovereignty, social movements, and global civil society. Socially, it refers to modernity, extravagant consumption, and individualism. For Robertson globalization “...refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole.”⁷ It is the increasing of international trade in terms of

²Houssam Al Khatib, in Amar Ben Soltan, *Al Thabit Wal Mutaghayir fi El Alakat Al Amirikiya El Arabiya :Dirassa Filkhtirak El AmirikililWatan El Arabi* (Taksidj .com Publications, Algiers, 2012) 183.

³Robertson Roland, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, (London: Sage, 1992) 8, in Nederveen, *Globalization and Culture: Global Mélange*, (2nded, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc, USA, 2009) 18.

⁴Ohmae Kenichi, *The Borderless World: Power and Strategy in the Global Market-Place*, (London, Harper Collins, 1992) in *ibid.* 18.

⁵Gray H. P, *Globalization versus Nationhood: Development and International Cooperation*, (9, n°.16, 1993) 38, in *ibid.* 17.

⁶Oman Charles, *Globalization and Regionalization: The Challenge for Developing Countries*, (Paris: OECD, 1994) 56, in *ibid.* 17.

⁷Robertson Roland, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, (London: Sage, 1992) 8, in *ibid.* 17.

cultural products and services such as movies, music and publications which are heavily American-content. The expansion of trade in cultural products is increasing the exposure of all societies to foreign cultures and foreign goods which frequently brings about changes in local cultures, values, and traditions; that's where the role of cultural imperialism lies.

There is a cross-cultural contact diffused by the global spread of mass media and advertising dominated by western images (music, movies, fashion, aesthetics...). Thus, there is a belief that this exposure can undermine one's own culture. In fact, the impact of globalization on culture can occur through: the development of a new culture of the globally connected professionals and especially business elites, the proliferation of pop culture which many critics complain is primarily American, the diffusion of beliefs and values about broader issues such as human rights and other social mores.⁸

Examining the present global economic and political system and the one that existed at the height of colonialism shows that there is little difference or none at all. Indeed, the only difference is that of appellation: "development" has been substituted for "colonialism". In fact, the push for deregulation and privatization of national markets together with structural adjustment policies is another way of colonizing the Third world and which are said to be done in the name of the latter's development. However, it actually benefits only the Western world because the bottom line of it all is to make a profit. The WTO, the World Bank, and the IMF form an "iron triangle" that "couldn't have done a more harmful job on people and the planet if they set out with those goals in mind."⁹

Barbara Bush¹⁰ dealt with globalization as a neo-liberal system that involved rolling back the state, reducing subsidies, promoting privatization and developing export sectors to integrate developing economies more fully into the global capitalist free market system. Aid to poorer countries was made contingent on 'good governance', democratization and improved human rights. Of course, it went hand in hand with the inclusion of the promotion of the universal 'superior' values of Western liberal democracy.

⁸ "Culture and Globalization", (a project of Sunny Levin Institute) 1-34. (Accessed 20/12/2014).

⁹ Jerry Mander, President of the International Forum on Globalization quoted from his introductory speech at the Globalization Teach-In, (14 April 2000), cited in Peter L. Berger and Samuel P. Huntington, *Many Globalizations: Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World*, Oxford University Press, (2000) 328.

¹⁰ Barbara Bush, *Imperialism and Post-Colonialism: History, Concepts, Theories and Practice*, (Pearson, Longman, 2006).

In addition to shrinking the world through markets and communication technologies, the transformation of the global political power is one of the consequences of globalization. The nation-state in particular is viewed as a weakening, even vanishing, institution. In this view national borders are increasingly transparent, porous and meaningless when it comes to flows of information and global capital; hence sovereignty is challenged from within and without.

Neo-liberal globalization is a term used to describe the world-wide spread of the American economic model emphasizing free markets and free trade. Two of the main embodiments of neoliberal principles have been “structural adjustment” policies and “free trade agreements”.

Structural adjustment policies have been implemented throughout most of the Third World as they have been required by the IMF and the World Bank in response to these countries’ accumulation of external debt. The former led to big economic adjustments which engendered indebtedness. These structural adjustments were strongly criticized by Asian bishops who asserted that the adjustments are “devoid of a human face and social concern.”¹¹ On the same line, Third World Roman Catholic bishops of eastern Africa stated that:

the structural adjustments that the IMF and the World Bank have imposed on our countries in various forms have in many instances resulted in rising poverty, food insecurity, massive job losses, rising cost of living, devaluation of local currencies and accelerated privatization that put the control of the economies in the hands of a small ruling class.¹²

Free trade agreements include global agreements such as the GATT which led to the creation of WTO, and regional agreements as NAFTA, and CAFTA and a variety of bilateral agreements. Among the features of these treaties is making sure the reduction or

¹¹Federation of Asian bishops’ conferences, “*A Renewed Church in Asia*”: *For all the Peoples of Asia*, (vol.3, documents from 1997-2001, ed. Frantz –JosefsEilers, Manila: Claretian, 2002), in John Sniegocki, *Neoliberal Globalization: Critiques and Alternatives*, (Journal: Theological Studies, Vol. 69, Issue2, Gale, Cengage Learning, 2008) 2.

¹²Association of member Episcopal conferences of Eastern Africa, quoted in “*SAP has resulted in increased poverty*,” (Post Lusaka, Zambia, August, 5, 2002), in *ibid.* 2.

elimination of tariffs and other “barriers” to trade, deregulation of investments and other capital flows, and increased protection of intellectual property rights.¹³

Effectively, since their creation the US dominated international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have been the cause of the Third World economic dependency and debt due to the restructuring of the world economy to guarantee a continuous flow of wealth to the West. Therefore, inequities between the rich West and poor non-Western world (North and South) widened especially with the collapse of communism and the destabilization of the balance of power. Thus, the Third World lost its battle to achieve a new international economic order and became increasingly marginalized, simply because free market policies promoted inequalities in the world.¹⁴

As Furedi observes, we may be in a post-colonial, but not a post-imperial era and thus imperialism as a concept remains relevant. Wider global struggles, centered on religious, political, economic and cultural problems rooted in the imperial era, have persisted.¹⁵ Hence, it seems that globalization is simply a new stage in Western imperialism -specifically the US’s- given the fact that echoes of empire still exist due to cultural oppression, economic exploitation, genocides, racial exclusions and inequalities. Indeed, Western imperialism needed establishing a new world order led by the USA, but most importantly needed the veil of globalization to expand the former in a swift unnoticed manner.

➤ **The New World Order in context**

The speech of the US President Bush senior to the Congress in 1991 has been seen by many as the real declaration of a New World Order, whereby the President stated that the world was entering a new era in which the principles of justice and fair play protect the weak against the strong. According to Joshua Goldstein, the N.W.O is a set of norms, proposed by President Bush for international behavior in the Post-Cold War era. Hence, the former explains how in the 1990s the rules have clearly changed.

¹³John Sniegocki, op.cit. 2.

¹⁴Anthony McGrew, ‘*The Third World in the New Global Order,*’ in Allen and Thomas, *Poverty and Development in the 1990s,* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992), Pilger John, ‘*Nam Now,*’ (The Guardian, London, Guardian Weekend, April 22, 1995), in Barbara Bush, op.cit. 189.

¹⁵Frank Furedi, *The New Ideology of Imperialism: Renewing the Moral Imperative,* (London, Pluto Press, 1995), in Barbara Bush, ibid. 189.

The 'New World Order' envisioned by US President Bush during the Iraq- Kuwait crisis included some principles that represent the interests of the U.S. and other great powers in a stable world order. The former included peaceful settlement of disputes, solidarity against aggression, reduced and controlled arsenals, and just treatment of all peoples.¹⁶

The New World Order became a commonplace term by the start of the 1990s, for which it is crucial to determine the nature of the new global balance of power and the criteria by which states in the international community identify themselves with, or accommodate themselves to, that balance of power. A unipolar system was installed as Goldstein pointed out, with a single center of power around which all others revolve. According to the former, this is called hegemony because the predominance of a single state tends to reduce the incidence of war; the hegemonic state performs some of the functions of a government, somewhat reducing anarchy in the international system;¹⁷ whereas, for Fukuyama, the unipolarity may be seen more in terms of the ultimate victory of capitalism, liberalism, individualism and the ideological components represented by the USA over their communist antithesis.¹⁸

Charles Krauthammer is supportive of the idea of unipolarity as the distinguishing feature of the post- Cold War era. In an article published in *Foreign Affairs*, entitled "The Unipolar Moment," he argued that:

the immediate post-Cold War world is not multipolar, it is unipolar. The center of the world is the unchallenged superpower the United States attended by its Western allies ... The most striking feature of post-Cold War era is its unipolarity.¹⁹

Indeed, the New World Order with the USA as a unipolar leader has been described by many theorists, scholars and writers alike as one of a global hegemon. Hegemony is defined by Gramsci as the most important face of power. It is the holding by one state of a preponderance of power in the international system, so that it can single- handedly dominate the rules and arrangements by which international political and economic relations are

¹⁶Joshua Goldstein, *International Relations*, (New York, Longman, 1999) 333, in Saad A. Elshelmani *The New World Order and its Impact on the Arab-Israeli Peace Process 1991-1999*, (Center for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Durham, 2000) 72.

¹⁷Goldstein, (1999)85, in Elshelmani A.Saad, *ibid.* 101.

¹⁸Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History*, (National Interests, 1989), in *ibid.* 102.

¹⁹Charles Krauthammer, *The Unipolar Moment*, (*Foreign Affairs*, vol. 70, n°1, 1991) 23, in *ibid.* 102.

conducted. Such state is called a hegemon.²⁰ For instance, the USA has attained an international pre-eminence beyond challenge. As the leader of the West during the years of confrontation with the Soviet bloc and, most recently, leader of the international stage in almost every field, the US has well defined its hegemonic potentiality as Goldstein argues

the USA is in extraordinary wealthy and powerful state. Its most unique strength may be in the area of international security- as the world's only superpower- but its economic strengths are also striking. It is not only the world's largest economy but also the most technologically advanced one in such growth sectors as computers, telecommunications, aviation and aerospace, and biotechnology. The US position in scientific research and higher education is unparalleled in the world.²¹

This shows that by establishing the New World Order with the US as the only international actor, it made the US able to act at all levels mainly on the political, economic, and cultural ones. Favorably, this was pushed forward thanks to globalization that was already reaching the extreme corners of the world. Global leadership was a foreign policy strategy that attempted to maintain the uni-polar world.

Among key post-colonial studies that helped to understand formulations of discourse of domination, subjugation of the other, ways of preserving leadership is Edward Said's Orientalism.²² The latter's importance lies in the geopolitical culture of the construction of threats to American national security. These threats are mapped, and structured strategically in a way that specifies important places and marginal ones; as well as, the justifications for certain kinds of military intervention that best suit dealing with dangers in these specific places. The Soviet threat was the dominant danger through the Cold War period, constructed on the Manichean cartography of hostile otherness.²³ By removing the dominant 'Other' in the American imaginary in the early 1990s, a plethora of arguments and suggestions as to how the world was to be specified in geopolitical terms was produced. In particular, Francis Fukuyama who suggested that the end of history had been reached with the triumph of liberalism, and consequently blocs were effectively over.²⁴ However, reality has shown that, the discourse of

²⁰Saad A. Elshelmani, op.cit. 103.

²¹Joshua Goldenstein, (1999), in *ibid.* 104- 105.

²²Said Edward, *Orientalism*, (New York, Vintage, 1979).

²³Simon Dalby, 'Geopolitical Discourse: The Soviet Union as Other,' (Alternatives: Social Transformation and Humane Governance, 1988) in Simon Dalby, *Imperialism, Domination, Culture: the Continued Relevance of Critical Geopolitics*, (Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group, 2008) 418.

²⁴Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, (New York, Free Press, 1992).

Orientalism persists significantly into the present, particularly in the West's relationship with 'Islam', following the 9/11 attacks, as is evidenced in its reporting in the media and its representation in general.

Superpower status and /or domination were defined in realist terms and specifically in terms of the American ability to intervene militarily in the Third World. Despite the rhetoric of United Nations' involvement, military power once again defined the US as the supreme actor in international affairs, "the world's policeman", the only superpower at a "unipolar moment."²⁵ The "New World Order" proclaimed in conjunction with the mobilization and deployment to the Gulf provided a unique opportunity for a show of force and international solidarity against a quickly branded "pariah" state, in a claim for protecting Kuwait. This commanding presence on the world stage should be maintained into the indefinite future so that never again could another state mount a threat to the United States on the order of the Soviet challenge. It was suggested that an American dominance in military affairs would act to deter other states from even trying, hence ensuring a Pax Americana based on military pre-eminence, into the distant future. Security was once again understood in terms of external threats issued from some place beyond the sphere of political action to which military or political management strategies should be applied to impose solutions. Thus, in the words of Rothkopf, the New World Order under US command is seen as "the best model for the future."²⁶

In 1992, Paul Wolfowitz; then assistant secretary of defense, established the post-World War cognizance of this for the George H. W. Bush administration: "Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival."²⁷ Hence, academics like Johnson

²⁵Charles Krauthammer, 'The Unipolar Moment' in G. Allison and G. F. Treverton (eds.), *Rethinking America's Security: Beyond the Cold War to a New World Order*, (New York: Norton, 1992) 295–306.

²⁶David Rothkopf, *In Praise of Cultural Imperialism*, (Foreign Policy, No. 107, 1997) 44.

²⁷ In 1992 Paul Wolfowitz, then assistant secretary of defense, set out the new post-cold war, post-Gulf War course of US foreign policy in a Defense Planning Guidance: "Our first objective is to prevent there-emergence of a new rival. This is a dominant consideration underlying the new regional defense strategy and requires that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power. These regions include Western Europe, East Asia, the territory of the former Soviet Union, and Southwest Asia." Consideration of the Guidance was complicated when portions of it were leaked in the New York Times in May 1992, but it was approved by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney in a revised form in January 1993. See the documentation in Public Broadcasting System, *Frontline: The War behind Closed Doors*, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/iraq/etc/wolf.html>, cited in Liam Kennedy and Scott Lucas. *Enduring Freedom: Public Diplomacy and US Foreign Policy*, (American Quarterly, College Park, Vol.57, Iss2, John Hopkins University, June 2005) 316.

(2002);²⁸Boggs (2005);²⁹Negri&Hardt (2000)³⁰ have asserted that when the US became the only power capable of managing ‘international justice’ in the post-Cold War era, the concept of ‘global security’ was established to enable the US to act internationally for its own imperialist interests.

The 1991 Gulf War was the first presented opportunity where the US could exercise a world power in its full form and to utilize its established role as ‘international police’ and exert military dominance.³¹ The conflict allowed the US to fully and ‘legitimately’ establish its focus on protecting its interests in the Gulf region; an operation of repression conducted for regional objectives including political ideologies. The ‘rogue states’ of Iraq and Iran were perceived as the next threat to US interests, thus maintaining a focus on the military might became a priority in the Middle East.³² The motivations behind the Gulf War were described as the US solely acting in ‘imperial interest,’ instead of the US acting in ‘imperialist interest’ but with a genuine belief that they are acting within the ‘global right’.³³ Therefore, the importance of the Gulf war derives from the fact that it presented the US as the only power able to manage international justice and the announcement of the birth of a new world order by Bush senior.

Although not an entirely erroneous assertion, the extent to which the Gulf War exemplified the US’s evident imperialist ambitions is notable. The region was selected because it had favorable results from a cost–benefit analysis point of view. There was clearly a motivational element of securing the regions in possession of the oil fields and reserves, while deterring opposition. Therefore, the ability to project ‘hard power’ became one of the fundamental elements of US foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. This goes along with Chomsky’s argument about US grand strategy after the end of the Cold War that aimed at maintaining a hold on political power and enhancing US control of the world’s primary energy sources; both of which are major steps toward the twin goals that were declared with considerable clarity: to institutionalize a radical restructuring of domestic society that will roll

²⁸Johnson Chalmers, ‘*Blowback*,’ (London, Time Warner Books, 2002) 6 in Robin Farwell, op.cit. 1-23.

²⁹C. Boggs, ‘*Imperial Delusion: American Militarism and the Endless War*,’ (Oxford, Roman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), in *ibid*.

³⁰Anthony Negri& Michael Hardt, ‘*Empire*,’ (Boston, USA, Harvard University Press, 2000), in *ibid*.

³¹A. Negri& M, Hardt, in *ibid*.

³²D. Little, ‘*American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945*,’ (North Carolina, USA, University of North Carolina Press, 2008), in *ibid*.

³³ A. Negri& M, Hardt ‘*Empire*,’ in *ibid*.

back the progressive reforms of a century, and to establish an imperial grand strategy of permanent world domination.³⁴

Chomsky's primary argument is that the US government has pursued an imperial grand strategy in order to maintain its status as the world's foremost superpower since at least the end of the Second World War, in which it considers the rule of force to be more important than the rule of law. He asserts that the purpose of this strategy is to prevent any challenge to the power, position and prestige of the United States. Thus, US foreign policy has focused on gaining and maintaining unrestricted access to markets, energy supplies, and strategic resources across the world including the Arab Gulf region. For him, the purpose of this doctrine is 'containing other centers of global power within the 'overall framework of order' managed by the US, maintaining control of the world's energy supplies; barring unacceptable forms of independent nationalism; and overcoming 'crisis of democracy' within domestic enemy territory.'³⁵The end of the Cold War was understood as a victory of and for "liberal democracy" so; the mission was that of integrating "other nations and governments into a democratic network consistent with US values and norms."³⁶

The spread of American values and culture is meant for the reign of American cultural dominance all over the world. Hence, American hegemonic culture is achieved because of the US economic, military might added to the power of its mass media. The latter in all its forms has become a central influence in shaping individual, community, and national identities, as well as reducing the world to a very small village. For instance, after the Soviet barriers were lifted, the world has witnessed an irresistible and irreversible globalization of economic and cultural exchanges. Therefore, a new global order has emerged along with a new logic and structure of rule. The US has taken advantage from the globalization age; as an age of information technology and mass media, to further enhance capitalism, liberal democracy, and cultural values. For this to succeed every organization and institution (WTO, IMF, WB, TNCs and MNCs...) have worked in a way or another to nurture and promote US cultural domination. In fact, the IMF and the WTO are considered to be the first and foremost instruments of U.S.'s drive to dominate the world and maximize its profits at the expense of

³⁴Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance*, (Metropolitan Books, New York, New York, 2003) 6-25.

³⁵Ibid. 6-25.

³⁶Pierre Pahlavi, "Cyber-Strategy: A New Strategy of Influence," (May 30, 2003, paper for the Canadian Political Science Association), <http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/paper-2003/pahlavi.pdf>, in Liam Kennedy and Scott Lucas, *Enduring Freedom: Public Diplomacy and US Foreign Policy*, op.cit.316.

the 'rest'; that's why both the IMF and the World Bank are criticized for being complicit in creating and maintaining a "hegemonic global economic order" that only serves the interests of powerful multinational corporations. One activist characterized the United States as the "belly of the beast."³⁷

The mission of US cultural domination has included incorporated information programs, educational exchanges, and international forums -all based on state-private networks- to promote political reform in other countries while providing strategic support for the expansion of the national economy. Cultural and information efforts have promoted core standards of free-market liberalization, increasing trade and freeing the flow of US goods, services, and capital. A "corporate-based" diplomacy would be developed throughout the 1990s, designed to reflect and exploit the effects of media globalization and electronic technologies, promoting "soft power" strategies to "virtualize" public diplomacy and take advantage of "America's information edge."³⁸

In a similar vein, globalization as a concept has come to replace the word hegemony and has been the engine for the expansion of American cultural domination. Therefore, the major players in "hegemonic" globalization include media, and international financial institutions which work for the imposition of the US values of popular culture including individualism, materialism, competition, rapid progress, profit, greed, and English language preference; the values and norms that seek to cultivate consumerism all over the globe. In fact, America has succeeded in projecting its culture to the world and making of its life style, its techniques, its cultural products, and its ways universal ones thanks to its far developed means of communication. Today's technology flings culture to every corner of the globe with blinding speed and, thus, in a far more efficient way. Therefore, the control of culture is seen as far more important than the control of political and geographic borders. Due to the perceived

³⁷Anuradha Mittal, Institute for Food and Development Policy, in Peter L. Berger, Samuel P. Huntington, *Many Globalizations Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World*, (Oxford University Press, 2000) 327.

³⁸Robert O. Keohane, and Joseph S. Jr. Nye, "Power and Interdependence in the Information Age," (Foreign Affairs 77, no. 5 September/October 1998) 19980901faessay1419/robert-o-keohane-joseph-s-nye-jr/power-and-interdependence-in-the-information-age.html. Retrenchment of public diplomacy within an enlarged State Department in 1998 included creation of the International Information Programs (IIP), which consolidated the use of new communications technologies in the dissemination of strategic public information to foreign audiences. This was supplemented in April 1999 by Bill Clinton's secret Presidential Decision Direction, PDD68, creating an International Public Information (IPI) office, initially to address the challenge of a propaganda war in support of the military mission in Kosovo. Presidential Decision Directive 68, "International Public Information (IPI)," April 30, 1999, <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd/pdd-68.htm>, in Liam Kennedy and Scott Lucas, op.cit. 316.

threat of Americanization and that of the transnational corporations, there are fears from a homogenization that will wipe out national distinctiveness. Hence, globalization is nothing more than the imposition of American culture on the entire world, and that Hollywood, McDonald's, Disney, and Coca-Cola corporations are considered as agents of cultural imperialism. The new face of "US Imperialism" has been described as follows:

US hegemony also embraces culture and ideology. Its mastery extends to the symbolic level; lending it a "charismatic domination". The American empire has become a master of symbols and seduction. Offering unlimited leisure and endless distraction, its hypnotic charm enters our minds and installs ideas that were not ours. America no longer seeks our submission by force, but by incantation. It has no need to issue orders, for we have given our consent. No need for threats, as it bets on our thirst for pleasure.³⁹

Hence, examining the objectives of globalization and its effects, we can deduce that globalization is intrinsic to American cultural domination and is a mask for cultural imperialism in that it generates a dependency culture between producer and consumer. Politically, globalization aims at exercising a political domination over the world, in terms of political decisions (loss of sovereignty) in a way that serves US interests. Economically, it aims at spreading economic capitalism and interfering in the economies of other countries through WTO, IMF, WB and the big companies, added to expanding the culture of consumerism whereby third world countries will become markets for the consumption of foreign goods. Socially, globalization has fostered limitless individual freedom, engendered poverty, joblessness and high rates of crime and trafficking. Culturally, it has engendered a global homogenized culture based on western norms and values. For instance, the former French President Chirac sees that globalization is dangerous in that it leads to social marginalization, global crime and threatens economic systems.⁴⁰

To answer the question above whether globalization is a blanket for cultural imperialism, that is old imperialism in new clothes, one can say that globalization shares the same constituents of US cultural imperialism. First, the spread of capitalism and its liberal values of free trade; economic and market expansionism; free movement of goods, capital and

³⁹Ignacio Ramonet, "The Control of Pleasure," (Le Monde Diplomatique, May 2000) 8-9, in WassimDaghrir, *Globalization as Americanization? Beyond the Conspiracy Theory*, (University of Sousse, Tunisia, IOSR Journal of Applied Physics, Volume 5, Issue 2 Nov. - Dec. 2013) 20.

⁴⁰ Jack Chirac, in "Le Monde", Paris, 14 July 2000, in Khalil Hussein, *the Origins of Globalization and its Effects* (University of Lebanon, 2008) 1-8.

networking. Second, US cultural imperialism is being spread through institutions and organizations that are part of the UN, mainly the WB, IMF, and WTO, which are the vehicles of globalization, too. Third, the use of democracy and human rights, and the UN laws to intervene in the domestic affairs and policies of the other countries. Fourth, the information revolution and communication technology are used to achieve the necessary changes in the world to globalize it. In fact, cultural globalization is considered as a big step in the history of mass media that promotes the domination of the center (USA) over the periphery (the rest of the world). The US domination in the field of culture is due to the fact that it produces and dominates 65% of the cultural programs, media advertisement and news. This domination is understood as being largely the outcome of fundamental historical inequalities which have resulted in the bulk of political and economic power being concentrated in the West and again especially in the USA. Along with that is the concept of language, which is not simply a means of communication but is rather the vehicle via which culture is transmitted. The US movie industry has a lot to do with the dissemination and spread of English language and American culture, as Hollywood products are exported or viewed by huge global audiences across the world.

"Pop culture" is in reality a form of Americanization given the fact that the United States is by far the biggest producer of popular culture products including movies, television programs, newspapers, and music. It also includes fast food and clothing, which are also part of entertainment and consumer items. Entertainment comprises the largest industry in the United States. The market size and wealth of the US movie industry has given movie producers, television program producers, and even popular journals, the opportunity to penetrate all countries and thus threaten their native cultures and support the proliferation of Americanization and consumerism globally. Television also fosters the spread of American culture as the hyper-consumerism and material wealth portrayed in many shows, creates the impression that all things American must be 'good' as they lead to personal wealth. In terms of the spread of American political agendas, networks such as CNN epitomize the global news network as it is viewed now in million households throughout the globe, and provides viewers with mainly American viewpoints on global issues. It is undeniable that American globalization is very evident in today's world. American movies, television, music and literature are not simply just another cultural product, they are indigenous cultural breakers. American movies promote the notion of premarital sex, unmarried couples and criminality, for instance. Globalization has empowered foreign companies to dispense

American cultural products, including movies, television shows, music and literature at will, to the detriment of indigenous cultural products. As foreign multi-national corporations earn greater profits by promoting and selling US products globally, Americanization is spread more and more. It is thus believed that cultural imperialism affects through the values embedded in cultural products, for instance, in Hollywood films which insinuate themselves into local and national cultures and effectively overpower them. The result is a global homogenization of culture built mostly around Western and American cultural forms.

In the words of NederveenPieterse, he argues that globalization is Americanization built on free enterprise and trade, individualism, hegemony of the military, and the American culture of consumerism. Stephen Ambrose stated that “Americans who wanted to bring the blessings of democracy, capitalism, and stability to everyone meant just what they said- The whole world, in their view, should be a reflection of the US.”⁴¹ Similarly, Waters sees that McDonald originates in the USA; its spread to other parts of the world constitutes homogenization and Americanization. The term globalization is therefore simply an ideological mask for Americanization or Westernization.⁴²

2.3. US interests in the Gulf Region at the End of the Cold War

The Gulf region stands out as a regional group within the Arab world for several reasons. First, there are parallels in political systems which tend to be monarchic. Second, religion and language are a common factor between the Gulf States and third, a large economic similarity exists between these entities as the majority of Arab Gulf countries depend on oil as a major source of national income. The region has also a strategic importance that makes it attractive to western powers especially the USA.

The protection of the US interests has always been at the core of its policies, that is why the Arab region is the place where the US has most clearly shown its preference for exerting its hegemony and enforcing its policy, not only because it is a strategically important region but because it has the largest oil reserves, and also to protect Israel and reorder the region in a way that can ensure the integration of Israel into it and eliminate any potential

⁴¹Stephen Ambrose, (1983) in Nederveen, *Globalization or Empire*, (Routledge, New York and London, 2004) 131.

⁴²Malcolm Waters, *Globalization*, (Routledge, 2nd ed. 2001) 223.

threat to the US existence and security. The fact that there is no other country that is able or willing to challenge the US, and the acceptance of most countries of that fact, is in itself, a license for the USA to behave accordingly. In the Middle East and in the Arab Gulf in particular, the USA was invited in and crowned as a hegemon even before it had proved itself to be so.

The US has always sought interests in the Arab region that push it to assume the role of the world policeman to protect and secure its power. These are oil, Israel and other interests that have become clearly demonstrated after the end of the Cold War. Among the latter are fighting Islamic fundamentalism, stopping the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, protecting the traditional ties with friendly Arab states, containing Iraq and Iran and confronting terrorism, can be seen as other American strategies or tactics to protect its interests. Some historical turning points have led the Arab Gulf region to become the arena for inevitable changes that have profoundly “turned the Arab Gulf States⁴³ once and for all away from tribalism to modern states.”⁴⁴ In order to serve its agenda, the US global strategy was implemented/ directed in this part of the world due to its strategic geographical position and its economic and political importance for US interests. The Arab Gulf region is considered as the heart of the world in terms of its natural and human potentials, dominating all the trading routes leading to the seas and oceans (the Mediterranean, the Arab Gulf, the Red Sea, and the Atlantic and Indian oceans), but more importantly because of the oil-rich reserves found in the region. For instance, earlier than the 1990s, President Carter made clear America’s willingness to use military force to protect the flow of oil and oil shipping from any threat:

Let our position be clear: an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the USA and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.⁴⁵

⁴³The AGS have many similarities. These common trends manifest themselves politically, economically, and socially. In terms of political structures, they are authoritarian monarchies. Economically, these countries have all pursued state-led growth strategies based on oil and natural gas exports. Fiscally, they are dependent on oil rents. Socially, these states offer a wide range of services to their citizens, such as free or heavily subsidized healthcare and education.

⁴⁴Redha, M. J, *Sera’ a al DawlawalQabeela fi al Khaleej al Arabi*, (Beirut, MarkazDerasat al Wehdael Arabia, 1992) 11, in Abdulkhaleq Abdulla, *Contemporary Political Issues of the Arab Gulf Moment*, (The Centers for the Study of Global Governance, n°11, Sept 2010) 14

⁴⁵Jimmy Carter:“*State of the Union Address*”,(Jan 23, 1980) in Craig Jones Toby,*America, Oil, and War in the Middle East*, (The Journal of American History, 2012) 1.

Much more earlier than that President Roosevelt told Britain's ambassador to the United States, Lord Halifax, while pointing at a map of the Middle East: "Persian oil is yours. We share the oil of Iraq and Kuwait. As for Saudi Arabian oil, it's ours."⁴⁶ And so began America's subsequently political involvement in that region.

The love story between the US and the Gulf States has started when the Gulf region's oil has enchanted global powers and global capital; an enchantment that turned later on into obsession. The US preoccupation has been focused on how to dominate the Arab Gulf region, how to transform it from a traditional trading route to the hub of financing and marketing US goods through oil wealth. The US three important interests in the region were: First, to dominate the region's sources of energy. Second, to transport and protect these sources from any possible threat. Third, to establish political and military alliances with the oil-rich Arab countries that could ensure a unipolar domination over these countries. That's why the US has always tried to intervene in the region and to have a word there in order to protect its interests from any threat. In fact, the region's security has been linked with the flow of oil, and thus the latter has always been at the core of any US political or military intervention in the region; the 1991 war to protect Kuwait from Iraqi invasion is an instance.

The Arab Gulf's strategic importance stems from its weight in the global energy market and its regional political influence. Oil exports have integrated the Gulf States firmly into the international economic system as Gulf oil became a motor of Western economic growth in the age of globalization, whereby the US policy was pushed forward in the AGS, more than at any time before. Economically, the region is extremely rich in terms of oil and gas reserves, a fact that catalyzes interest in its security and future. For the same reason, the major powers jostle for influence over the region, and are further spurred by their concern to secure the routes for transporting oil, particularly through the Strait of Hormuz, which carries great strategic importance. It is worth mentioning here that the US dominates 70% of Arab oil in that they import 49.1% and export to Western Europe 80% and to Japan 90% of their needs.⁴⁷ Statistically speaking, Saudi Arabia is considered as the first producer and exporter of

⁴⁶Peter Nolan, *Crossroads* (London, 2009), in Brzezinski, *Strategic vision: America and the crisis of global power*, (New York, Basic Books, A Member of the Perseus Books Group, 2012), 31.

⁴⁷H. Paul Sam, B. Hoffman, *Middle East Oil and the Arab World*, in Amar Ben Soltan, *Athabit wal Moutaghayir fi el Salakat el Amirikia- el Arabia: Dirassa filikhtirak el Amrikilil Watan el Arabi*, (Taksidj.com, 2012) 18.

oil with a capacity of 264.2 billion barrel, followed respectively by the UAE and Kuwait with a capacity of 97.8 billion barrel and 96.5 billion barrel each.⁴⁸

Part of US concerns with the protection and preservation of the Arab Gulf region for itself with no other rivalled it in 1991 to lead a coalition against Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, and defeat Saddam's forces. The US was afraid that the latter would put a firm hand on the Kuwaiti oil reserves and so would bring a change to the US balance of power there. With the defeat of Iraq and before it the USSR, America was left as the unchallenged external power in the Arab gulf region, assisted by its most important allies; Saudi Arabian elites who are considered appropriate partners, managing their resources in conformity to basic US interests and assisting US terror and subversion throughout the Third World. Growing more aware about the strategic importance of the Gulf countries, the US took advantage from the first presented chance to maintain a stronghold in the area; as well as to establish a new world order. To secure the latter, the US traced some objectives to achieve in the Arabian Gulf countries and to secure its interests there. As a result, the oil-producing Gulf States were boosted into the world economy in the accelerating age of economic globalization and global interconnections in the 1990s.⁴⁹

The processes of globalization in the 1990s and 2000s have accelerated in a way that gave rise to new forms of political economy, engendered new globalizing flows of capital and labor; as well as, shifts in geo-economic power and changing patterns of trade that have begun to rebalance power relations throughout the world. Therefore, Gulf communities became connected to leading conduits of 'global politics', with the aim of addressing a broad range of global challenges.⁵⁰

US commercial interests in the Arab Gulf countries are built upon concluding commercial and financial relations and opening the Arab markets for American goods (consumerism), due to the fact that they carry an equally significant financial weight. For instance, oil is the most important engine for industry in Saudi Arabia, having the world's largest proven reserves and is the largest producer in OPEC. It is no wonder, therefore, that

⁴⁸Arab Strategic Report 2004/2005 on <http://www.ahram.org.eg/as/ps/ahram/2001/1/arb76.htm>, in Salim Katee Ali, *Al Tawadjoud el Askari el Amriki fi el Khalidj el Arabi, el Dawafie el Raéssia*, (Dirassat Dowalia, n°45) 137.

⁴⁹Anoushri van Ehteshami, *Globalization and Geopolitics in the Middle East: Old Games, New Rules*, (London: Routledge, 2007) 110, in Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, *The Gulf Goes Global: The Evolving Role of Gulf Countries in the Middle East and North Africa and Beyond*, (Fride and Hivos, 2013) 3.

⁵⁰David Held and Anthony McGrew, 'Introduction,' in D. Held and A. McGrew (eds.), *Governing Globalization: Power, Autonomy and Global Governance*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002) 5 in *ibid.* 4.

the security of the Arab Gulf region's oil assets has remained prime preoccupations of US policy. The United States' approach to oil security in the region has three important components.

First, the United States has maintained a strong naval presence⁵¹ and military bases in the Persian Gulf in order to protect oil shipping routes. It has become more directly involved in the region by stationing troops in the wake of the liberation of Kuwait in 1990-91.

Second, the US oil policy in the region is based on close alliances with the oil monarchies of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman. These six oil-exporting countries which make up the GCC rely on the US -and to a lesser extent on the UK and France- for their external defense and domestic security assistance.

Third, the US oil policy has sought to maximize the participation of US oil companies in the production, refining, and transportation of oil and gas products in the region. Western oil companies such as Halliburton, ExxonMobil, Texaco, and British Petroleum (**BP**)-with a large American ownership- are actively involved in exploration, production, and refining activities in GCC countries. American oil firms have continued their involvement in the production and distribution of oil and gas in several Gulf countries; a cooperation that has mostly taken the form of service contracts for specific activities aiming at lucrative production.

The discovery of oil in the Arab Gulf region has changed the region for good. The Gulf States flourished economically as never before thanks to investments with the USA. Globalization has helped establishing trade corporations and business companies that are at the core of changing the Gulf region from a desert land to a modern metropolis with all the commodities of life, at a very high pace. Modernization features western civilization and cultural values that are based on free market capitalism and modern technology that breed consumerism and individualism. Modernization and market capitalism are at the core of Clinton's policies of promoting democracy.

⁵¹The elevated American military commitment to the security of oil supplies in the Persian Gulf was also known as the Carter Doctrine. According to this doctrine, the United States will use military force if necessary to prevent any outside or regional power from dominating this region.

2.4.The Impact of American Cultural Policy in the Gulf Region

The Gulf region has been the arena of rapid changes with the coming of globalization. The 1990s have seen an accelerated pace of modernization and urbanization that have been going hand in hand with the policies of market economy pursued in the Arab Gulf countries. In fact, the USA has found a fertile area where to sow its values and its consumerist culture. Real facts about the impact of the American cultural policy show that the massive scale in which US cultural products are being distributed and consumed with the spread of technology that has reached a level never achieved before. Theorists and scholars such as Brzezinski argue that cultural domination has been part of America's global power. US mass culture exercises a magnetic appeal on the world's youth. American music, TV programs and films are dominating the global market in addition to eating habits and clothing which are highly imitated⁵².

The Gulf cities have been transformed into poles for the consumerist culture that is the pillar on which free marketing is built. For instance, the American consumerist culture is related to the US dominance culturally affecting the values and cultures of other societies. The US domination has been helped by vehicles for the transmission of its values, norms and lifestyles through TV channels, media and internet. Therefore, the US has been charged of a new form of colonialism or 'cultural imperialism', which refers to the worldwide spread and dominance of American consumer culture and products that are having effects on local cultures.

2.4.1 Clinton's democracy promotion in the Gulf States

Promoting freedom, democracy and protecting human rights around the world have long been central components of US foreign policy. However, democracy promotion has been one of the justifications of US administrations for intervention abroad, and that is American foreign policy pattern. The Middle East and the Gulf region have been bombarded with the rhetoric of democracy promotion more than any other region. How far has US democracy promotion been true? Has American democracy in the former been promoted in the interests of the people of the region or US own interests and ambitions?

⁵²Zbiginiew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostategic Imperatives*, (Washington DC, April 1997) 25.

When President Clinton (1993-2001) assumed power, he articulated his vision of the post- Cold War unipolar international system in terms of ‘democratic enlargement.’⁵³ The latter meant the addition of new democracies to promote security because democracies tend not to wage war on each other or sponsor terrorism. His main theme or strategy seems to have been “engagement.” His national interests and national objectives were consistently three: enhancing security home and abroad, promoting prosperity, and promoting democracy and human rights.⁵⁴

The Clinton administration coined the term ‘market democracy’ emphasizing the relationship between free markets and democratic governments. His administration perceived that an intrinsic link between free market reforms and democratization exists, as Clinton states that

Ultimately, the best strategy to ensure our security and to build a durable peace is to support the advance of democracy elsewhere. Democracies don’t attack each other. They make better trading partners and partners in diplomacy.⁵⁵

During his era, the US’s approach to the Arab region has been based on the premise that democratization, accompanied by free market reforms, will usher in a new era of political, economic and social stability. This was manifested in an emphasis on promoting economic initiatives in the region. The policy was sought to facilitate the conditions for a gradual, incremental transition to democracy, through an emphasis on economic reform and strengthening civil society, as a precondition of political reform. Hence, the promotion of economic reform in the Arab region can therefore be seen as contributing to the strategy of democracy promotion and the pursuit of hegemony, which ultimately involves the internationalization of the promoted ideology, in this case a fusion of liberal democratic political norms and free market economic values.

⁵³Brinkly .D, *Democratic Enlargement: The Clinton Doctrine*, (Foreign Policy, N°.106, 1997)in Dionysius Markasis, *US Democracy Promotion in the Middle East: The Pursuit of Hegemony* (the London School of Economics and Political Science, London, 2012) 13.

⁵⁴William Clinton, *National Security Strategy of the United States: A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, (Washington D.C., The White House, July 1994), in Ronny Modigs, *United States Foreign Policy in the Middle East after the Cold War*, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 2003) 22-23.

⁵⁵Clinton. W. J, ‘state of the union address’, 25/1/1994, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/states/docs/sou94.htm>, in Markasis, op.cit. 9.

Clinton advocated democracy promotion in the region which had to be fostered due to the impact of the 1991 Gulf war. Hence, some GCC countries as Kuwait, Oman and Qatar introduced aspects of democracy and planned to expand it to include females; Qatar held elections in which women could vote in 1999. That is why he maintained a continuous military presence in the Gulf region to enhance regional stability and supported the efforts to bring Iraq into compliance with UN resolutions, due to the fact that Saddam Hussein was always considered as a threat to security and stability in the region, and most importantly to US interests. For instance, the greatest threat to US interests in the area is the spillover of regional conflict which could endanger American lives, threaten US interests in the area or interrupt the flow of oil, thereby requiring the commitment of US combat forces.⁵⁶ Moreover, during Clinton's administration the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) were encouraged to work closely and collectively on defense and security arrangements through maintaining bilateral defense agreements given the fact that maintaining ties with GCC countries was a first priority for the US. Different agreements were signed with Oman (1990), Bahrain (1990), Kuwait (1991), Qatar (1992), and the UAE (1994). They revolved around conditions granted to the US access to facilities, and their cost and maintenance. These agreements cemented the basis for security relationships and long term military-to-military relationships; as well as, joint exercises and provision of defense equipment between the US and the GCC.

As to promoting prosperity with GCC, the US had the following economic objectives in the region: to promote regional economic cooperation and development, and to ensure an unrestricted flow of oil from the region, to promote regional trade and cooperation, and to start programs for regional business arrangements. It is worth mentioning here that the GCC possess the majority of the oil resources in the region, have a strategic position in the containment of Iraq and Iran, and are a big trading partner in terms of oil and arms. Time and again the control of oil resources, the protection of Israel and achieving US hegemony in the region are part and parcel of every US administration.

Theorists have their opinion about Clinton's policy of democracy promotion, in that they argue that it was mainly concerned with promoting and enhancing free market economy; a pillar of the Capitalist system which in fact was a policy aiming at protecting US interests and working for propagating cultural imperialism. Among the former, Noam Chomsky asserted that the US promotes a special form of democracy whose main objective is to

⁵⁶Sami G. Hajjar, *U.S. Military Presence in the Gulf: Challenges and Prospects*, (Carlisle: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2002) 21, in Ronny Modigs, op.cit. 51.

preserve the economic status quo. Democracy then becomes less of a goal of foreign policy and more a tool of economic policy.⁵⁷As for Cox, he observed of Clinton's administration that geopolitics has been replaced by geo-economics in the US foreign policy. For him, the American aim for promoting democracy is not the expansion of the deep concepts of democracy but a form that serves its economic interests.⁵⁸

Based on the quotations above, it seems that security concerns have worked along with economic ones to maintain the status quo. In fact, US interests have always been attached to the promotion of its liberal values through democracy expansion. In other words US foreign policy is interest-oriented and it will pursue the promotion of democracy as long as it guarantees US economic interests. Whenever there is no clash with achieving its interests, the US will pursue -democracy for democracies never fight each other- which on its turn will lead to and facilitate the expansion of hegemonic culture.

Trying to assess U.S. policy under Clinton it seems the same as what it has been for decades, a semi-realist balancing between sometimes competing and sometimes complementary interests. Where democracy appears to fit in well with US security and economic interests, the United States promotes democracy. Where democracy clashes with other significant interests, it is downplayed or even ignored, and usually there is not any commitment to financial or human resources to the task. For instance, the spread of democracy was meant to advance U.S. security and economic interests, by reducing the chances of war and decreasing terrorism. Moreover, in Saudi Arabia, and other Middle Eastern countries, the administration has preserved close US ties with autocratic regimes that serve US interests in oil.⁵⁹

Therefore, examining the pillars of Clinton's policy, one notices the pursuit of cultural imperialism in that his policy emphasized economic market reforms (consumerism), the protection of US national security and interests, as well as, a continuous military presence in

⁵⁷Noam Chomsky, *Deterring Democracy*, (New York: Verso, 1992), in Mohammad A. Mousavi and Heydari, *The Nature of US Democracy Promotion Policy: Reality versus Illusion The Case of Iraq*, (International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Vol. 1 No. 20, December 2011) 113.

⁵⁸Michael Cox, *US Foreign Policy after the Cold War: Superpower without a Mission?* (London: Pinter/Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1995) in *ibid.* 114.

⁵⁹Thomas Carothers, *The Clinton Record on Democracy Promotion*, (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace n°16, September 2000) 3.

the region. It was argued that Clinton's policy of democratic enlargement was less about democracy promotion than American economic interests.⁶⁰

2.4.2. Modernization of the Gulf in the 1990s

US cultural policy in the Arab world generally and the Gulf States specifically has for objective the spread and the adoption of US cultural values; so that capitalism reigns. The former would be accepted as common values that could facilitate the acceptance of US politics and protect its interests through the exploitation of the rich resources of the region. How has America achieved its objectives, and through which means has it enhanced its cultural policy in the Arab Gulf region?

American cultural imperialism has for objectives securing US interests in the Arab Gulf region, ensuring economic gains along with ensuring these states' loyalty to America culturally and politically. This has been achieved through enhancing modernity and the culture of consumerism, thanks to the role of media and modern information technology.

Since the mid-twentieth century, the making of Arab Gulf societies in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE, and Oman has been associated primarily with the factor of oil. The export of this national treasure has brought about great prosperity, which in turn has generated similar transformations, development, and challenges. Yet, the oil economy has not only generated similar economic conditions and socio-cultural patterns in the Gulf; it also greatly integrated this region within the world economic order and its transnational global culture. In less than half a century, oil wealth brought somewhat uniformly broad transformations to the Arab Gulf's entire way of life.

The economic infrastructure has been transformed due to the integration of the Gulf States' economy into global capitalism. In the words of Al-Fahim, material life conditions in

⁶⁰Tony Smith, and John Ikenberry, *Introduction: in American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts*, Ed. by Michael Cox, G. John Ikenberry, and Takashi Inoguchi, (Oxford University Press, 2000), in Mohammad A. Mousavi and Heydari, op.cit. 113.

the Gulf region have gone from “rags to riches.”⁶¹ As a consequence, the face of the old tribal communities has been altered by modern urban life, and massive exposure to global forces and cultures. The latter have undermined local cultural life-ways. For instance, mud-walled seaports and villages have been replaced by modern large ones. The cities have been transformed into gleaming hubs of commerce and business at higher speed. This rapid shift has gone through two phases:

The first is when the Gulf States’ oil revenues led to the modernization of state and society, as evidenced by the building of modern infrastructure. Modernity has included the construction of houses, roads, hospitals, schools, markets, ports, airports, communication systems, mosques, universities, parks, and recreational facilities. Subsequently, commercial institutions, light industries and contracting companies have grown up, thus offering great employment opportunities for both nationals and expatriates. The second started in the late 1980s and is continuing to the present whereby the capital cities have been growing with an emphasis on quality instead of quantity. This phase has comprised the construction of large highways, the greening of the urban environment, building more specialized hospitals, universities, and technical colleges. Tourism has been flourishing with the aim of attracting companies and investors. International chain hotels decorate the shoreline of the Gulf cities; for example, Dubai alone boasts about forty-five star hotels and resorts, and large American-style shopping malls. Al Manama in Bahrain has three large malls while Dubai prides itself for having more than twenty such urban wonders. High prestigious towers, grand exhibition and conference centers, internet cities, media and knowledge cities, American and British universities, recreational theme parks, golf courses, and beautified seafronts are recent urban development projects common in the Gulf cities. Information technologies are widely implemented in institutions of higher education, schools, and homes.

Giving a glance at these modern states (UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait or Oman) manifests the existence of an American cultural imperialism. These cities are featured first by the immensity of their showrooms, the building of large American-style shopping malls, five-star hotels and resorts, prestigious residential and commercial towers, internet and media cities such as the establishment in Dubai of the Internet City, and the Media City.

⁶¹Mohammad Al-Fahim, *From Rags to Riches: The Story of Abu Dhabi*, (London: London Center for Arab Studies Ltd, 1996), in John W. Fox, Nada Mourtada-Sabbah and Mohammed al-Mutawa, *Globalization and the Gulf*, (Routledge, London and New York, 2006)246.

Second, American universities such as Georgetown's in Doha, Qatar, and George Mason's in Ras Al- Khaima, (UAE) fostering Western education and the use of English as a global language in workplaces and in social life. Third, high technology information is widely implemented in institutions of higher education. Dubai as a famous modern city in the Gulf region is a microcosm of globalization having numerous international business companies and corporations which were attracted by the establishment of the free trade zones, allowing favorable investment, economic opportunities and liberal lifestyles. Judith Caesar describes a shopping mall as an "American-style monument to consumerism... among the most cosmopolitan places...to purchase goods and services."⁶² Moreover, the malls display cultural and dance spectacles from the world creating the "dream images of the global economy that shape everyday people's imagination and discourse about globalization."⁶³ In addition to large highways, big luxurious cars, bars and discos all of which embody the goods and seduction of global capitalism.

This fact is confirmed by Klaus Lovgreen, who called Dubai the "mother of globalization."⁶⁴ He argues that examining the city shows, in fact, that it represents a microcosm of globalization. This is due to the existing numerous international businesses, which have been attracted by investment and economic opportunities and the relatively liberal lifestyles. As a consequence, multinational corporations and companies continue to move to and do business in Dubai and several international organizations have chosen Dubai as the host city for their annual meetings, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Dubai possesses information and it has accumulated knowledge that makes it the preferred place for many consulting and legal firms, news agencies, advertising houses, television networks, and international journalists covering events in the wider Gulf region. In fact, Dubai's embrace of western liberal economy and its commitment to global trade has extended to its own way of life. This is embodied in Sheikh Mohammed's observation that: "any country which isolates itself will never learn or benefit... We have a vision which we

⁶²Judith Caesar, *Writing of Beaten Track: Reflections of the Meaning of Travel and Culture in the Middle East*, (New York, Syracuse University Press, 2003) 9, in Nathan Al Khazraji, *the Culture of Commercialism: Globalization in the UAE*, (Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. July 16, 2009) 18.

⁶³Kanna, *Dream Images of the Global: Dubai as an Ethnographic Site in the Global Economy*, (Harvard Graduate School of Design, April 18-19, 2003) 9-10, in John Fox, Nada Mourtada-Sabbah and Mohammed al Mutawa, op.cit. 256.

⁶⁴Klaus Lovgreen, in Boryana Damyanova and Singer Thomas, *The Role of Multinational Companies in Dubai: Balancing Tradition and Modernization*, (NIMEP INSIGHTS)101.(Accessed 11/7/2014).

exert all efforts to realize, of Dubai as a major trade center for the East and the West and we believe that Dubai is well qualified to play this great role.”⁶⁵

Modernity and urbanization are sweeping traditional Gulf cities and having an impact on family relations, leading to more individualism, materialism and personal profit. For instance, there is a transition to the small size family and reliance on foreign babysitters (maids) in raising the children. The mother or grandmother is no longer the main agent of raising children. The result of the latter is a dysfunction in socialization for the children given the fact that maids lack the required characteristics to raise the children such as education, language and religion. The presence of foreign maids could encourage Gulf men to marry foreign women, thereby reduce chances for marriage of Gulf women. Moreover, means of communication such as the mobile phones and internet chats made it easy for youth of both sexes to contact outside family societal control, to date and to arrange external marriages compared to the traditional arranged marriages common in the past.

Since 1990, the AGS have been coping with increasing globalization. These states have gained enough experience to deal with internal and external challenges. They have naturally affirmed open markets, free trade, and the World Trade Organization, which promotes free trade and economic liberalization. They fully agree about the benefits of free trade and privatization. They were the most committed free marketers well before globalization. For instance, the UAE has done most in terms of building the infrastructure, allocating the necessary investment, promoting its potentialities, and taking serious initiatives in the e-commerce market. The UAE, which is already the Middle East hub for business, shopping, and tourism, has launched the Internet City, the Media City, the Incubator City, the Silicon Oasis, and the Internet University, which are part of a vision to establish the Dubai free zone for technology and media.

The age of globalization has favored the spread of US capitalist system and cultural values, thanks to the fast developing means of information and media. The world has been bound in a matrix of very complex media which allows ever more complex global interconnections. This dates back to the sixties when the first TV images of the whole earth,

⁶⁵“Middle East Magazine,” (Dec 18, 1991).
<http://www.sheikhmohammed.ae/english/quotes/quotes.asp>.(Accessed 11/7/2014).

seen from the moon were broadcasted all over the world, hence the expression of globalization became a powerful meaning of the dependence of humankind on American technology, the use of English language and a new world order dominated by the West, under the leadership of the USA that speaks and acts for humanity.

For instance, the structure and role of international mass media led to a charge that the U.S. and a few other first world nations dominated media to their advantage.⁶⁶ Several studies identified what was increasingly perceived as a one way flow of TV from countries of the first world to the rest of the world, as well as a similar one way flow of news controlled by the western news agencies. This fact engendered an adoption of foreign models and impact on cultures. As the world economy expands, becoming increasingly a world capitalist system there has been a consistent pressure toward the commercialization of media systems.⁶⁷ This pattern can be seen in the Arab Gulf countries that tend to follow US commercial models due to the extensive, dependent ties of trade and investment. These countries are responding to pressure in order to open up and standardize rules for advertising.

The era of globalization, has transformed the citizens of most developing countries into an increasingly supine consumers of media products ‘commodified’ and manufactured by giant international media conglomerates and news channels. Through certain business practices such as acquisitions and mergers, and as conditions attached to loans that Third World countries’ governments negotiate with the Bretton Woods institutions among other things, these western media companies get access to other countries. The ownership, structure, production and the distribution of media contents are in their hands, in one way or the other. Hence, they use these channels to propagate Western economic, socio-cultural and political ideologies around the world. It is thus clear that there is a uni-directional flow of media information and content from the dominant imperialist countries to the less developed ones, and never the reverse. This is what Boyd-Barrett, calls media imperialism which refers to the process whereby, the ownership, structure, distribution or content of the media in any one country are, singly or together, subject to substantial external pressures from the media

⁶⁶Lee C.C, *Media Imperialism Reconsidered*, (Beverly Hills, sage,1980) in Joseph Straubhaar: *Beyond Media Imperialism*,(Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 1991) 40.

⁶⁷Wallerstein, (1979)ibid. 42.

interests of any other country or countries, without proportionate reciprocation of influences by the country so affected.⁶⁸

That the media perform an ideological role on the global stage is beyond dispute. The ideological role performed by the Western media is a serious matter and it occurs overtly in the form of explicit propaganda channels; covertly through the expression of certain values in what otherwise appears to be neutral entertainment and informational fare. For instance, the issue of western media penetration requires analysis of a very wide range of variables or dimensions. Chin-Chuan Lee; for instance, and in relation to news agencies and TV channels, has redefined "media imperialism" in terms of four levels of generality: first, television program exportation to foreign countries; second, foreign ownership and control of media outlets; third, the transfer of the dominant broadcasting norms and media commercialism; and fourth, the invasion of capitalist world views and infringement upon indigenous ways of life in the adopting societies.⁶⁹

According to Schiller, "Media cultural imperialism is a subset of the general system of imperialism. It is not free standing; the media- cultural component in a developed, corporate economy supports the economic objectives of the decisive industrial finance sectors."⁷⁰ Facts show that the US has developed a genuinely control of the world. The nature of such imperialist control has rested on the power of its mass media. Schiller argues that there has been "the spread of the American system and the commercial model of communication to the international arena."⁷¹ For him, this model of the international commercialization of broadcasting was exported intentionally and that the success of the mission was essential to the future of capitalism.⁷² He further explains that without it there would be no outlets for advertising material and no markets to sell products.

⁶⁸Oliver Boyd-Barrett, (1977)117, in Richard A. Rogers, *From Cultural Exchange to Transculturation: a Review and Reconceptualization of Cultural Appropriation*, (School of Communication, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ86011, 2006) 481-482.

⁶⁹Chin-Chuan Lee, *Media Imperialism Reconsidered: The Homogenizing of Television Culture*, (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1980), in Oliver Boyd-Barrett. *Western News Agencies and the "Media Imperialism" Debate: What Kind of Data-Base? Toward a New World Information Order?*(Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 35, No. 2, Fall/Winter 1981/2) 248.

⁷⁰Herbert I. Schiller, *Communication and Cultural Domination*, (International Arts and Sciences Press:New York, 1976), in Emilee Rauschenberger, op.cit. 7.

⁷¹H. Schiller and J. Phillips, *Super State: readings in the military- industrial complex*, (Urbana, IL, University of Illinois Press, 1970) 93, in Colin Sparks, *Development Globalization and the Mass Media*, (Sage Publications,2007) 89.

⁷²Ibid. (1970) 89.

Without the former, the US industries would experience a crisis of over-production and the consequent depression and unemployment. Mass communication thus has become central to the survival of American capitalism which depended on the spread of the model of commercial communication around the world, and this is being seen and experienced in the Arab Gulf states. In fact, the US seeks to strengthen its economic position and to ensure that it remains in a position of a dominant hegemonic role in the future. Schiller explains that the media's vital contribution to monopoly capitalism is its tireless task of manufacturing consumers. In brief, the public, the audience, the viewer/listener is bought by advertisers after they have been processed by the total array of socializing forces that are the media industries.⁷³ In the end, the advertiser, as surrogate for the multinational corporations, buys what Dallas Smythe calls the audience commodity. The audience commodity's obligation is to learn to buy particular 'brands' of consumer goods and to spend its income accordingly. In short, audiences work to create the demand for advertised goods which is the purpose of the monopoly capitalist advertisers.⁷⁴

In sum, the media institutions perform the vital tasks of making consumers, advancing and reinforcing a certain universal ideology, and operating at the highest rate of profit obtainable. The transfer of these aims to the periphery occurs under the heading of development and/or modernization. The growth of local capitalism, alongside the powerful multinational corporations that have set up operations in the Third World, provides the differing national contexts in which the domination-dependency condition in the communications sector is exerted.⁷⁵

Famous of the tools of American cultural imperialism are TV programs with their visual, audio and motion capacities that have an impact on the viewers, achieved through programs like sports, drama, musicals and violent movies transmitted to third world countries, and the Gulf States in particular. For instance, these tools transmit values, lifestyles and ideologies that are corrosive to the recipient culture and youth is being mainly caught in the dilemma of foreign/western cultures in terms of dress codes, speech, and behavior. Television and internet transmit programs including: information, education, and entertainment. The

⁷³Herbert I. Schiller, *Media and Imperialism*, (Revue Française d'Etudes Américaines, No. 6, Mass Media et Idéologie aux États-Unis, October 1978) 274-275.

⁷⁴Dallas W. Smythe, *Communications: Blindspot of Western Marxism?*(Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory, Vol. 1, No. 3, Fall 1977) 4-6 in *ibid.* 275.

⁷⁵Herbert I. Schiller, *ibid.*275.

spread of American culture goes beyond popular consumption, raising questions such as what effects/ impact is the former having on the values of societies?

It is clear that American globalization has impacts on the cultural area through spreading the American culture and values at the expense of third world national cultures which are submitted to consumption, individualism and self-interest. This impact is considered as an intellectual and cultural invasion manifested in encouraging absurdity, passiveness and revolt against morals and norms. This fact leads to more dependency and weakness because of following or rather consuming a “one path” global culture and not producing any, and most importantly the growing rift between the haves and the have not. These effects are highly stated in the words of Dasgupta:

The widening gap between the rich and the poor and rampant commercialization and commodification of social life, undermine the social integration in the third world countries and also threaten the moral, ethical and economic identity and the weakening of ethnic and communal solidarity and social harmony.⁷⁶

It becomes clear that the gap between traditional values and modernity leads to shattered personalities and identities which are affected in terms of language, religion, historical features, traditions, living styles, habits and behavior.

As such the globe has become a small village where people seem to watch the same entertainment programs, listen to the same music, consume the same products and services and wear the same fashion clothes. Thus, spreading the American culture seems to have no frontiers in that it has reached every corner of the globe with the advent of internet in which the flow of information is for free. This reality is suggestive of the existence of one “global culture” that of America which is destructive of national and local cultures. The historian Joseph Ki Zerbo captures it well when he says that “Our cultures are being reduced little by little to nothing. These technologies have no passport and no visa, but they are affecting us and shaping us.”⁷⁷

The danger of adopting Western/ American values lies in the loss of national and cultural identity; as well as, the annihilation of the Arab/ Muslim culture and civilization. In fact, this is the aim of westernization and cultural imperialism. The latter engender cultural

⁷⁶Samir Dasgupta, *“The Changing Face of Globalization,”* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications,2004) 126.

⁷⁷Joseph Zerbo Ki, (A historian from Burkina Faso, West Africa), in Emilee Rauschenberger, op.cit. 2.

alienation and dependency, and the transformation of national culture into a product for consumption. Therefore, Arab/Muslim culture will always remain peripheral, dependent on the international imperialist culture of the center. This has for result the disappearance of cultural heritage, values, language, civilization and above all the national sovereignty, political independence, and ethnicity due to both cultural assimilation and linguistic imperialism.

In an increasingly globalized, borderless world due to developed means of communication, it seems difficult to preserve cultural diversity because the changes imposed by the former through the technological revolution on local and traditional cultures are destructive. Among the hindrances brought to culture, the loss of identity and assimilation. For instance, American globalization aims at ensuring the dependence of the periphery on the center, acculturation through the dissemination of American values and principles that would engender the triumph of the culture of the center (America) over the periphery (the rest), given the fact that the former has the right to be the supreme example to follow or rather to imitate. Unconsciously the Gulf countries are adopting the western values, ideology and ways of thinking without any reflection or criticism. As a result, local cultures would disappear gradually because the traditional cultural values are being wiped away; the world is increasingly stepping towards a common global culture based on the American cultural model. Mohammed Khatami; Iran's president labeled the latter as a form of "neocolonialism" when he says that

the new world order and globalization that certain powers are trying to make us accept, in which the culture of the entire world is ignored, looks like a kind of neocolonialism. This imperialism threatens mutual understanding between nations and communication dialogue between cultures.⁷⁸

The quotation shows an existing "cultural genocide" that is committed by American globalized economic and cultural hegemony. The pressures of globalization are handicap for achieving an independent economy and/or a political identity. That is why the term globalization has been associated with the role of the new US superpower whose expansionist policy is seen to constitute a new form of imperialism.

⁷⁸Mohammed Khatami, in Robert J. Lieber, *The American Era: Power and Strategy for the 21st Century*, (Cambridge University Press, 2005) 106-107.

Being under siege, traditional conservative societies are being transformed in the name of modernity and freedom. Social relations are being stretched, removing the relations which govern everyday lives from local to global ones. On the same line, culture and identity go hand in hand; the loss of one brings the loss of the other. Both are key elements for the survival of a group, a society, an ethnicity. This fact, (loss of identity) is helped by the technological revolution in which again the USA is the leader.

Linguistic imperialism is another major fact of cultural imperialism. The spread of the English language as an outcome of globalization and US leadership in terms of mass communication and information technologies engendered the backwardness of Arabic language. Language is the vehicle that transmits culture and identity from a generation to another and thus the expansion of civilizations. Nowadays, the rise of English as an international language of trade and politics (*lingua franca*) has been one of the strongest vehicles for the transmission of the American culture, which has been enhanced through media and internet. English has become a global language being spoken and taught as the first foreign language in many countries and in the Gulf States in particular. In addition to the fact that it is the medium used in schools, universities and at work. Walking the streets of Dubai, most visitors are struck by the fact that instead of Arabic, the most common language overheard is English.⁷⁹

Doubtless, globalization has affected certain values rooted in major religions and cultures of the world. Concepts of good and evil, right and wrong, individualism and pluralism, cultural invasion and cultural imperialism, social isolation and declining social solidarity, individual interaction with the society and the very meaning of life are all warped and corrupted by global capitalism, international markets, mass media and the promotion of excessive consumption. Becoming aware of the US/Western cultural assaults on the traditional Gulf societies, has led some to perceive of globalization as a cultural invasion that causes serious problems for some conservative states by virtue of the fact that the openness to foreign content can erode the traditional values and indigenous cultural identity, as well as; an ideological tool in the hands of the power centers of the industrialized world to gradually impose (under the disguise of economic liberalism) a global hegemony and a neocolonial order upon the rest of the world. Some situation has been thus simmering not in favor of the

⁷⁹Christopher DeNicola, *Dubai's Political and Economic Development: An Oasis in the Desert?* (Williamstown, Massachusetts, 2005) 1.

US that which will lead directly to the attacks on the Twin World Trade Centers; representatives of US Capitalist hegemony and cultural imperialism.

The next chapter will examine terrorism and the US cultural policy in the AGS after the 9/11 event. The aim will be to see whether the US holds on the same cultural strategy, or has it changed its ideology in pursuing its cultural imperialism.

Chapter3

Terrorism and US Cultural Imperialism in the Arab Gulf after the 9/11

3.1. Introduction

After 9/11 the World came face to face with terrorism unquestionably linked to Arabs and Muslims. The US was to move its concentration from 'world communism' to 'global terrorism' as a major threat of the 21st century to the United States' interests in the world. The permanent presence of an imaginary threat to US security has always been key to US foreign policy; hence, post 9/11 policy has targeted Arab-Muslim culture at its traditional headquarters through different means and under various alleged reasons. US cultural policy has been based on mass media, propaganda, and internet technologies that could influence and shape conceptions, as well as, cultural exchanges and educational programs targeting the Arab countries to achieve political aims.

In fact, the US cultural policy project in the Arab Gulf region in the end of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century came in the context of two major events. First, the publication of Samuel Huntington's book the Clash of Civilizations¹ in which he emphasizes the importance of the cultural element in the clash between nations after the end of the Cold War. He states that these clashes will be civilizational and cultural ones, focusing his theory on the clash between the Western culture and the Muslim one. Second, obviously the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington cities that have led the USA to accuse the Arabs of being responsible for this terrorist attack. The 9/11 attacks and the US reaction afterwards can be read as a fulfillment of Huntington's prophecy about the clash between the West and Islam.

US fear of Arab/ Muslim culture has pushed it to follow a new strategy based on: the publication of academic books and researches to know how to deal with the Arabs and Muslims in general, questioning the very essence of the Arab/ Muslim hatred of American

¹Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, Foreign Affairs (Summer 1993), and *The Clash of Civilizations and The Remarking of World Order*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996) in ZaidOubeidallahMesbahop.cit.105.

political positions towards the former; “Why do they hate us”² in addition to enhancing democracy through a multitude of tools. Major of these is media war and the war of ideas that goes with it, and that are able of influencing and shaping the peoples’ conceptions.

The 9/11 event was a turning point in US foreign policy, built upon the ideas and policies of the “new conservatives” who dominate and shape US public diplomacy: the division of the world into allies (good) versus foes (evil), and terrorism that has replaced communism which has opened a new gate for US imperialist ambitions. According to the new conservatives US history is exceptional and is persuaded that political, economic and cultural reforms must be made in the Arab region through the expansion of democracy and the values of freedom. For America, it is the only way to fight radical Islam that hates the West. The US strategy to put an end to radical Islamists is to engage the region into political changes that promote democracy; what Patrick Sail names ‘imperialist democracy’³ that goes hand in hand with economic changes through liberalizing Arabian economies, and integrating them into economic organizations and alliances.

3.2. World Terrorism and the Issue of Culture

September 11 undoubtedly marked a turning point in terrorist activities that have pushed terrorism to acquire an international dimension given the fact that it acts beyond national and regional boundaries, has a global impact and constitutes a direct threat to peace and security in the world. Terrorism has no individual, nationalistic, or state-sponsored characteristics; it occurs in many countries and is supported by a global network.

Without doubt also, the 9/11 was a day of unprecedented shock and tragedy in the history of the United States. The attacks are stunning in the array of actions and reactions that followed. It has become clear that the attacks on the American homeland and the responses to them have created new visions of global affairs, a tension between a state and a religion that plays out on an international level as never before. Relations between the USA and the Muslim

²John Waterbury, “*Hate Your Policies, Love Your Institutions*,” (Foreign Affairs, January- February, 2003) 58 in *ibid.*105.

³Patrick Sail, *JadwalA’amal el Bait el Abyadh el Mouadilil Arab* in Mohamed Soulayman Abu Roman, *Min al IhtiwaailaTaghyir al Anthéma: Assiyassiya al Amirikiya fi El Shèrq al Awsatbaa’da 11 Ayloul*, /research3.htm. (Accessed 30/8/2015).

World have worsened since then. Hence, global politics and US foreign policy have been shaped by a new dynamic; Islamophobia. The latter represents a new global construct of mutual insecurity. Subsequently, the global war against terrorism has created clear guidelines for US policy makers. Rather than being defensive, the American policy has been turned into a revolutionary direction, focusing on 'war' as the primary response to what have been understood as new 'global' dangers.

3.2.1 The Clash of Civilizations

After 9/11 the world climate changed dramatically, whereby the concept of the war on terror was most often associated with Huntington's essay entitled 'The Clash of Civilizations?'⁴ The latter concluded that in the immediate future 'a West at the peak of its power' would be confronted by the 'non-West that increasingly has the desire, the will and the resources to shape the world in non-Western ways'. Huntington also found that 'a central focus of conflict for the immediate future' would be between the West and Islam,⁵ whereby the interaction between the latter is unlikely to decline. He argued that world politics was entering a new phase, where the primary causes of conflict would no longer be ideological, political, or economic, but 'civilizational' and where the great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Hence, debate around the question of clash of civilizations has been intensified and many scholars have taken this attack to support their notion about the clash between the Muslim world and the West.

According to Huntington a clash of civilizations will occur because civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, tradition and most importantly religion. Then, with globalization, the world is becoming a smaller place where the interactions between peoples are increasing. Moreover, the processes of economic modernization and social change throughout the world are separating people from longstanding local identities; as well as weakening the nation state as a source of identity. In much of the world religious movements that are labeled "fundamentalist," have come to fill this gap. As such, the efforts of the West to promote its values of democracy and liberalism as

⁴Samuel P. Huntington, in Zaid Oubeidallah Mesbahop.cit.105.

⁵Samuel Huntington, (1996), in David Holloway, 9/11 and the War on Terror, (Edinburgh University Press, 2008) 7.

universal values, to maintain its military predominance and to advance its economic interests engender countering responses from other civilizations.

Related to this is the explanation that globalization is associated with western values and as such globalization is what terrorists dislike most because it is not only about exporting and importing prosperity, but also western/ American values. Some scholars interpret the link between globalization and terrorism as a cause-effect: globalization generates a backlash or resistance that can take the form of terrorist attacks done as a defensive, reactionary, solidaristic action against global forces of cultural and economic change. Indeed, these strikes against the USA and/or the West are a way to challenge the secular and commercial mores and symbols of globalization, western modernism, and western commercialization and its trappings. Accordingly, globalization is often seen as “a destructive flood threatening the social norms of people and the cultural points of reference which had given them direction in life. Globalization is moving too quickly for cultures to respond.”⁶

This is what Barber calls in his thesis a “defensive reaction to globalization and to forces of modernization and rapid social change that go with it.”⁷ Globalization has been blamed for its ambiguity that both brings people together and brings them into conflict, as well as relentlessly dividing the world into have and have-nots, promoting conflicts and competition, and fueling long simmering hatreds and grievances. As such, it has been argued that “the terrorist attacks on America were the Chernobyl of globalization.”⁸ That is why fear and rage in the face of threats seen as originating in globalization, and America’s liberal, consumerist culture are a large part of the dynamic driving Islamist fury today.

Time and again, the West willing to maintain western predominance, protect western interests and promote western political and economic values engenders a source of conflict between the West and other civilizations; given the fact that western culture has indeed permeated the rest of the world. At a more basic level, western concepts differ fundamentally from those prevalent in other civilizations. Western ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, and liberty, the rule of law, democracy, and free markets often have little resonance in Islamic cultures. Therefore, western efforts to propagate such ideas produce a reverse action.

⁶Russel Shaw, *The Catholic Response to Terrorism*, (30 September 2001), in Ana Serafim, *Terrorism- A Cultural Phenomenon?*(The Quarterly Journal, spring 2005)68.

⁷Albert J. Bergesen and Omar Lizardo,*International Terrorism and the World-System*, (Sociological Theory 22:1,University of Arizona, March 2004)43.

⁸Ulrich Beck, inNederveen Jan Pieterse, *Globalization or Empire*, (Routledge: New York and London, 2004)12.

This reality has been simmering for a long time and has in fact led to the 9/11 attacks. The latter have been explained as a blowback to US foreign policies in the Middle East. This reiterates how during the Cold War the US, Israel and Saudi Arabia struggled against communism. The US supported conservative religious organizations as a countervailing power in the fight against the former. The US supported the Mujahedeen during the Afghan war of 1979-89; when the Cold War ended, so did the alliance. However, the Afghan Mujahedeen established the Taliban regime, and later on Al Qaeda. Meanwhile, the Gulf war (1991) brought American military bases into Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the Gulf Emirates. Middle East policy is also part of the equation. For decades, the US relied on supplies from the Middle East/Arab Gulf region while sustaining oligarchies, pouring oil revenues into the region while politically alienating it, particularly through unconditional support of Israel. Thus American policies created the resources, capabilities, and motives for political antagonism in the region. The US has always ‘given aid to moderate - pro-Western Arab regimes- such as those in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Jordan, that was intended to keep the region in friendly hands, and to keep regional stability.’⁹

Blowback thus signifies the consequences of past security operations: the same organizations that the US promoted in the 1980s were declared the new enemy in the 1990s, renamed fundamentalist, with the clash of civilizations serving as the new enemy doctrine. In a nutshell, yesterday’s ally and freedom fighter has become today’s enemy and terrorist.

3.2.2. US Media Campaign against the World of Islam

Perceptions of the Orient and Islam as the “other” have come once again to the fore as a consequence of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on America. The growing U.S. fear from Arab/Muslim threat since then has turned into an Islamophobia. According to the critical race studies’ scholar Eric Love:

Islamophobia both results from and contributes to the racial ideology of the United States, an ideology based on socially constructed categories of phenotypical characteristics, on how individuals physically appear. In other words, wearing a hijab or a turban, having certain skin tones or

⁹Morgan Zekeh S. Gbotokuma, *Barackcracy: Obama’s Cultural DNA and Diplomacy in “A New Beginning,”* (State University, 2012) 8.

speaking with certain accents are all physical markers that are enough to create a vulnerability to Islamophobia in the United States.¹⁰

Since then the discourse of islamophobia has come to dominate all means of media through harsh criticism and depiction of Muslims and Arabs in a general way as villain, maddened terrorists, barbaric, intolerant, religious zealots and blood thirsty, since from the start Islamophobia is defined as the fear or dread of Islam or Muslims and their Islamic culture.¹¹ Widespread perception of American media bias against Islam and associations between the latter, terrorism, and the notion of a “Christian versus Islamic” conflict has come to further fuel anti-Islamic and anti-American sentiment. According to media coverage of the attacks, the terrorists wanted to destroy the “American way of life” defined in terms of freedom. As a consequence, Arabs and Muslims in general were demonized through images that were easily matched to the long established stereotypes that were seen as belonging to that anti-western world of the other described thoroughly in Said’s Orientalism.

Therefore, books and television programs about Islam, the Qur’an, jihad, international terrorism, international security, political Islam, radical Islam, and Islamic militancy have been widely published. Hence, the images of Muslims on television are known to be: irrational terrorists, airplane hijackers, and suicide bombers who wage war against “civilization” and “democracy” in the name of jihad (holy war) to establish the Islamic way of life against the “kafirun” who are unbelievers to be either converted or killed.

It is worth mentioning that right after the 9/11 attacks, both domestic and foreign policies in the US have changed significantly. At home, the civil and legal rights of Muslim immigrants were significantly curtailed and their lives placed under surveillance.¹² The media, in the US has pointed to the religion of Islam as a motive for terrorism. A reason for which Muslims in the USA have been treated as terrorists and have been attacked for the fact of their dressing: wearing the veil or being bearded, and some have been jailed. For instance, the CIA has been carrying out underground intelligence operations to scrutinize the

¹⁰Erik Love, *Confronting Islamophobia in the United States: Framing Civil Rights Activism Among Middle Eastern Americans*, (43 Patterns of Prejudice, 2009) 401-402, in Hilal Elver, *Racializing Islam before and after 9/11: Culturally From Melting Pot to IslamPhobia*, (Transnational Law and Contemporary Problems, Vol. 21:119, Spring 2012) 150-151.

¹¹John L. Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Akbar S. Ahmed, *Islam under Siege* (Cambridge: Polity, 2003) in Abdul Hamid AbuSulayman *Neo-Orientalism and Islamophobia: Post-9/11*, (Association of Muslim Social Scientists International Institute of Islamic Thought, Vol. 21 Summer 2004 N°3) 28.

¹²Hilal Elver, op.cit.139.

daily life of Muslims within the country. Indeed, many innocent Muslim Americans have been held in jail without trial.

Moreover, media have made a differentiation strategy between two types of Muslims: Fundamentalists (Muslim extremists, Islamists, Islamic radicals) versus moderate Muslims. While moderate Muslims were not considered a threat to American interests, fundamentalists/ extremists were considered enemies, and generally called “terrorists.” That’s why the media strategy has focused on how to denigrate the enemy, as embodied by Osama bin Laden and the Taliban, and at the same time to keep relations with moderate Muslim groups at home or with “Muslim allies” abroad, who were portrayed as American patriots if they were American residents or sympathizers with the 9/11 tragedy. These were “ambassadors of Islam” in the United States.¹³ On the other hand there were the radicals who for President Bush “are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them.”¹⁴ Hence, US foreign policy was based on waging war against Afghanistan taking into consideration radical Islam and the urge to eliminate those who harbor terrorism; as well as to bring civilization to the oppressed people, to emancipate them especially women, from the oppression of a medieval theocratic government. The same scenario would be replicated against Iraq in 2003 for having links with Al Qaeda and possessing WMD. To win the public’s consent about the war on terror, some books and studies were published as Soft power¹⁵ and Hearts and Minds on line¹⁶ that encourage the use of the cultural element as a means to achieve US foreign policy objectives in the Arab countries through invading and monopolizing the minds.

¹³Ayman Muhyedin, “Ambassadors of Islam: Muslims in US Try to Educate Skeptics of Religion’s Values,” <http://www.msnbc.com/news/660574.asp>, in Abdul Hamid AbuSulayman, op.cit., p. 47.

¹⁴George W. Bush <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>, Address to a joint session of Congress and the American people, ibid. 47.

¹⁵Joseph Nye, *Soft Power a means of success in international politics*, in Zaid Oubeidallah Mesbah, op.cit. 101.

¹⁶Stephens Hampton, *Hearts and Minds online: Internetting the Message in Infosphere*, in Waller, (ed), *Strategic Influence: Public Diplomacy, Counter Propaganda and Political Warfare*, 282-294, in ibid. 113.

3.3. Cultural Antagonism and US Aggressive Policy

American media have interpreted the 9/11 attacks through the lens of the “clash of civilization”; as if Huntington’s thesis was the prophecy and 9/11 was its fulfillment, which turned out to perfectly serve the purpose of a new post-war enemy doctrine and led to a violent reaction through aggressive policy. The Terrorist attacks kindled strong criticism in the United States of the Arab Gulf States, but mainly Saudi involvement in terrorism and its negligence in acting against terrorist groups. For instance, America’s leading media began to publish harsh editorials questioning the US-Saudi relationship; The New York Times and The Washington Post wrote editorials with the same title: “Reconsidering Saudi Arabia,” on November 11, 2001 and October 14, 2001, respectively.¹⁷ The attacks constituted the most serious challenge to US-Saudi relations given the fact that Bin Laden and 15 of the hijackers were Saudis. Some analysts have since contended that Al Qaeda planners may have chosen a large number of Saudi participants for the attacks in an attempt to damage US-Saudi relations. Some critical commentators have gone as far as to accuse Saudi government officials of being responsible for the September 11 attacks through design or negligence. Others have taken a longer-term view and argued that Saudi policy decisions over several decades directly or indirectly supported the development of certain types of religious extremism and international terrorism, which now threaten citizens of the United States, Saudi Arabia, and other countries. In particular, many critics of Saudi policies have cited reports that the Saudi government permitted or encouraged fund raising in Saudi Arabia by some charitable religious groups and foundations that espoused extremist ideologies or were linked to or exploited by Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups. There has been attention in the American press to alleged Saudi financial support for Al-Qaeda in conjunction with stories of Saudi sponsorship of religious extremism through the funding of madrassas in Pakistan and elsewhere preaching a “Wahhabi” fundamentalist version of Islam to receptive Muslim audiences around the world. Hence, Saudi financial support for the “madrassas” and the jihadists during the war in Afghanistan morphed into the Taliban, which eventually took over Afghanistan and provided Al-Qaeda with a geographic base to build an infrastructure to support terrorist operations around the world. Ariel Cohen, key analyst at the conservative Heritage Foundation, explicitly argued that access to oil revenues were a critical aspect of the export of radical Islam.

¹⁷“*Reconsidering Saudi Arabia*,” (The New York Times 11 November 2001: B06; The Washington Post 14 October 2001: 4-12.) in Kiyoshi Aihara, *Consequences of the 9/11 Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Middle East Policy*, (Harvard University, 2005) 32.

The oil bonanza funded the worldwide export of radical Wahhabi Islam, the ideological breeding ground of al Qaeda and the Taliban, over the last three decades. Government sponsored foundations, supervised by members of the Saudi royal family, fueled jihad ...by funding brainwashing for violence in Wahhabi academies (madrassas), and terrorism training under the guise of charity.¹⁸

Hence, in the backlash against Saudi Arabia and Wahhabism, the special US/ Saudi relationship was sharply criticized by the neoconservatives as Richard Perle who described Saudi Arabia as the “kernel of evil,”¹⁹ and Victor Davis Hanson went as far as to say “Our Enemies, The Saudis.”²⁰ Saudi Arabia was bombarded by media and was portrayed

as a sort of oily heart of darkness, the wellspring of a bleak, hostile value system that is the very antithesis of our own. America's seventy-year alliance with the kingdom has been reappraised as a ghastly mistake, a selling of the soul, a gas-addicted alliance with death.²¹

Some others have linked the terrorist acts to oil stating that Saudi oil revenues have been directed to finance and assist terrorist groups. A 34 page private study compiled at the end of 2002 at the request of the President of the United Nation’s Security Council concluded that Saudi-funded charities and businesses are still supporting Al-Qaeda terrorist networks. “Al-Qaeda was able to receive between \$300 million and \$500 million over the last 10 years from wealthy businessmen and bankers, whose fortunes represent about 20% of Saudi GNP, through a web of charities and companies acting as fronts.”²² On the same line, a Council on Foreign Relations Task Force on Terrorist Financing concluded similar findings, saying “For years, individuals and charities based in Saudi Arabia have been the most important sources

¹⁸Ariel Cohen, *Energy Security at Risk*, (May 23, 2003) available in the press room at www.heritage.org/press/commentary/ed052703a.cfm, in Amy Myers Jaffe, *United States and the Middle East: Policies and Dilemmas*, 14. (Accessed 11/3/2016).

¹⁹Thomas Ricks, *Briefing Depicted Saudis as Enemies: Ultimatum Urged To Pentagon Board*, (The Washington Post, August 6, 2002,) 1 in *ibid.* 13.

²⁰Victor Davis Hanson, *Our Enemies, the Saudis*, (Commentary Magazine, July-August, 2002) in *ibid.* 13.

²¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saudi_Arabia%E2%80%93United_States_relations. (Accessed 3/3/2016).

²²Jean-Charles Brisard, (the London Times) in Amy Myers Jaffe, *ibid.* 19.

of funds for Al-Qaeda; and for years, Saudi officials have turned a blind eye to this problem.”²³ On his part, Daniel Pipes commented that

Saudi Arabia is a special case, being the home of Osama bin Laden himself and fifteen of the nineteen suicide hijackers, the seedbed of the ideas that stand at the heart of the Taliban, and the source of much of the funding of Islamist networks around the world. Although Saudi authorities have managed a working relationship with the West for decades, they have also permitted the kingdom’s public discourse to be taken over by militant Islam, who is the Enemy.²⁴

The 9/11 terrorist attacks came from Saudi Arabia and Egypt, both of which were strong US allies. Consequently, the Bush administration reviewed its Middle East policy, having realized that authoritarian Arab regimes that had been supported by the United States were no longer a source of stability; instead, they were the primary threat.²⁵

It can be noticed that what has changed most dramatically since the attacks of 9/11 has been the American attitude toward Saudi Arabia. Both neoconservatives and the religious right had previously accepted the close American relationship with Riyadh on strategic grounds, even while opposing many aspects of Saudi politics and society, such as being undemocratic and not meeting American standards on human rights and women’s rights. They have now become vocal critics of the relationship. However, one cannot ignore the fact that the American attitude has been the outcome of consolidating US strategic and economic interests in the region.

3.3.1 Neo-Conservative Ideology and Military Intervention: the Greater Middle East Initiative

The concept of American empire has often occupied the center-ground in discussion about the causes and consequences of 9/11, and about the underlying motivations and historical drivers of the war on terror. One of the most startling developments has been the emergence of an affirmative discourse of American empire, in which Western historians and

²³“*Terrorist Financing*”, Report of an Independent Task Force sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations, Maurice Greenberg, Chair; William F. Wechsler and Lee S. Wolosky, project co-directors, (2002) available at <http://www.cfr.org>, in *ibid.* 20.

²⁴Daniel Pipes, “*Commentary*,” (January 2002) in *ibid.* 15. (Accessed 11/3/2016).

²⁵Kiyoshi Aihara, *Consequences of the 9/11 Terrorist Attacks on US Middle East Policy*, (Harvard University, 2005) 22.

other intellectuals sought to define US policy as imperialist and to defend American imperialism by theorizing it as a provider of global ‘public goods.’²⁶ An aggressive foreign policy, framed as the “war on terror,” was centered on invasion and occupation of Muslim lands without regard to the limits of international law and moral principles. According to Marina Ottaway and Paul Salem, the George W. Bush administration viewed the Middle East as the base camp of threats to the US national security; as well as, a fertile soil for terrorists to emerge and radicalism to thrive. Since every great power bases its foreign policy on what benefits its own national interest and security, the US had to develop a new foreign agenda regarding the Middle East. The neoconservative’s new agenda consisted of promoting unilateralism, preemptive intervention with the main focus on fighting Islamic terrorism in the area since it was the greatest threat to US national security.²⁷

Hence, an aggressive foreign policy toward the Middle East was displayed through a global war on terrorism launched by Bush against both Afghanistan and Iraq to fight radical Islam. Military intervention was exemplified by the invasion of Iraq unilaterally. An action that was believed to be an opportunity to transform not only the Iraqi state, but also the entire region to consolidate the US influence in the Middle East. It was believed that a liberated Iraq would serve the promotion of liberal democratic political values and free market economies in the region. Prior to the war, Bush argued that “a liberated Iraq can show the power of freedom to transform that vital region” and that “a new regime in Iraq would serve as a dramatic and inspiring example of freedom for other nations in the region”.²⁸ Later in 2003, he predicted that “Iraqi democracy . . . will send forth the news, from Damascus to Teheran—that freedom can be the future of every nation” and that “the establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be a watershed event in the global democratic revolution”.²⁹ In a nutshell, it is America’s ideology to facilitate the achievement of hegemony in the Arab region. Democratization was cited later as a justification when WMD were not found in Iraq,

²⁶David Holloway, *9/11 and the War on Terror*, (Edinburgh University Press, 2008) 13.

²⁷Marina, Ottaway (2008), *Democracy Promotion in the Middle East: Restoring Credibility*, (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Policy Brief) 60. Salem Paul, (2008), *The Middle East: Evolution of a Broken Regional Order*, (Carnegie Papers, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, No. 9) in RachaEl Daoui, *Democratization Process in the Middle East after 9/11: The Example of Lebanon*, (Jonkoping International Business School, Jonkoping University, November 2010) 25.

²⁸President Discusses the Future of Iraq, ‘Remarks to American Enterprise Institute’, 26 February 2003, in Bruce Gilley, *Did Bush Democratize the Middle East? The Effects of External–Internal Linkages*, (Academy of Political Science : Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 128, N°4, 2013–14) 662.

²⁹“Remarks by the President at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy,” 6 November 2003, in *ibid.* 662.

including democratizing the Arab region and the Muslims with the aim of implementing the Greater Middle East Initiative. In fact, both aggressive foreign policy and democratization of the region were part of US imperialist ambitions which have been sought long before the 9/11 attacks.

By attributing the 9/11 attacks to Islamic terrorism, the US government has launched the “War on Terror,” that aimed at containing the threat of the former. However, reality shows that the US has been conducting this war for far different objectives to consolidate its geopolitical, strategic and economic interests in the region, which are part of its imperial goals. Moreover, reasons behind the invasion included the rise of the neo-cons to positions of influence and/or links between Christian fundamentalism, the Bush administration’s support for Israel, and US desire to control oil resources; Hence, the 9/11 event presented a chance to the neo-conservatives to implement their plan towards a global hegemony of the world even with military intervention.

The US interests revolve around remaining the World’s superpower and preventing any other country from achieving such a position of domination. From containment to global leadership, the idea of preventing, even with the use of military force if necessary, the rise of any rival power, in addition to acceding to the rich parts of the globe in terms of resources situated in the Orient. The foreign policy analyst Robert W. Tucker advocated that the United States “take over the Middle Eastern oil fields militarily, because it is the Gulf that forms the indispensable key to the defense of the American global position.”³⁰ Many economic interests in the Central Asian region have soon created a pretext for the 2001 imperialist intervention with the aim of ruling the region informally and indirectly. The excuses provided for this were that the Taliban was “harboring Al-Qaeda” and “violating human rights” in Afghanistan, and that the subsequent war in Iraq was justified by the excuse of denying terrorist access to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). This region is not chosen at random. Actually, the US imperialist agenda seeks to undermine sovereign nation-states and transform countries into territories, especially when all is done for the sake of controlling the region and its access to the rich countries in terms of oil and gas such as Iraq, Iran and Pakistan. The latter alone holds huge gas reserves; whereas, Afghanistan is rich in terms of resources including deposits of iron, copper, cobalt, gold, and lithium, and is expected to hold one of the largest deposits of lithium in the world. This explains the choice of Afghanistan and Iraq to be invaded in the

³⁰Robert W. Tucker, (1980-81) in Morgan Zekeh S. Gbotokuma, *Barackcracy: Obama’s Cultural DNA and Diplomacy in “A New Beginning,”* (State University, 2012) 8.

name of fighting terrorism and establishing stability and security in the Middle East and, thus, in the world.

As such, The U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the American military occupation there was the outgrowth of several decades of strategic thinking and policy making about oil. It is true, of course, that terrorism and especially the attacks of September 11, 2001, helped accelerate the drive to war in 2003, but one cannot discount that oil has always been on top of list among other US interests in the region. Both Brzezinski and Chomsky share this view and explanation to US foreign policy and war on terror. Brzezinski argues that “strategically, the ‘war on terror’... reflected traditional imperial concerns over control of Persian Gulf resources.”³¹ As for Chomsky, “What [American policymakers] care about is running the world. You lose the major oil resources of the world, and it’s finished. And you’re not just losing them; you’re losing them to... rising, competing power[s].”³²

Both quotations reflect how US foreign policy is tied to strategic, economic assets in the Gulf region. It shows also how the invasion of Iraq was envisaged in order to protect US interests from a so called terrorists and WMDs. US foreign policy as a response to 9/11 was that of preventing the rise of a rival power able to compete with the US, but also a policy of preventing any terrorist threat from posing an obstacle to the US access to countries rich in energy sources, especially the Muslim world since the world’s vital energy resources lie in the Muslim world; that’s why it that has to be reshaped according to US vision and model.

Hence, the new US foreign policy as directed by the neo-conservatives, who were occupying key positions of power, would base the US foreign policy on preemption, unilateralism and hegemony as its three main pillars. As part of this new direction, the US would try to strengthen its global hegemony by firmly controlling, by military force if necessary, the Middle East, so that the US would ensure its place as the world’s sole superpower well in the 21st century. The war would also provide the fuel for the further consolidation of globalization given the fact that the attacks were presented as an assault on the Western civilization built on political democracy, free market system and western moral values. This gives the US the ability to define its preferred human rights, and to exclude the scope of the others (us and them), as well as it allows it to define the opponents of its version of human rights as enemies or supporters of global terrorism. The so-called global war on

³¹Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Second Chance*, 136. He added “as well as neo-conservative desires to enhance Israel’s security by eliminating Iraq as a threat”, in Ahmed Samir Sayed Mahdi, *US Foreign Policy and Energy Resources during the George W. Bush Administration*, (University of Birmingham June 2010) 140.

³²Noam Chomsky, *Perilous Power*, 59, in *ibid.* 140.

terror targets non-western countries mainly the Muslim ones which shows a deep cultural divide between the West and Islamic and Arab World. In his initial address to the nation, President Bush said, among other things:

... Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts ... These acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve. America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining...The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.³³

It is clear that the US has taken the attacks of 9/11 as evidence that “extremist political Islam” is a real threat to its national security; so a struggle has to be launched against the former through a redefinition of culture, political causes, religion and nationality. Hence the event is presented by American officials and media as an Islamic fanatical hatred for the West for being free, liberal, and peace-loving. The US sought that the only way to address this threat is military intervention to put an end to terrorist networks. This would be followed then by political reconstruction in which ‘moderate Islam’ would rule with more liberal, pro-western political states.

It is worth clarifying that 9/11 gave the neoconservatives the pretext on which to make their strategy of military primacy the operational code for the American state. They argued that the US, as the world’s leading power, needs to take the lead in extending “democracy” and “free trade” throughout the world. This has to be accomplished by the overthrow of “tyrannical” states through the imposition of tough sanctions, or through support for revolutionary political or “civil society” movements, or if necessary, by the use of direct military intervention. Therefore, the Bush administration issued a series of statements and speeches on what quickly became the ‘global war on terror’ (GWOT). The key elements in a new strategy were collected and issued as the ‘National Security Strategy (NSS) of the United States of America’ in September 2002, framed by the neoconservatives and the Think Tanks.

³³David Adams, *Culture of Peace as the Best Alternative to Terrorism*, (www.Culture-of-peace.Info terrorism: Alternative to Terrorism) 4. (Accessed 25/2/2016).

Known as the “Bush Doctrine,”³⁴ the document is rich in American rhetoric. The latter is pregnant with free trade, free markets, liberty and peace that are the supposed universals in the National Security Strategy document and America is situated alongside all states seeking such goals. It is clear that those who do not share these universals and fight terrorism are to be considered America’s enemies. Alongside the NSS there was the Project for the New American Century (PNAC),³⁵ which is pregnant with a language suggesting an imperial presence. Both documents were sufficient for the US to assume the role of a global constabulary to launch its global war on terror, acting unilaterally in a preventive war mode, and without sanction from the United Nations or any other organization.³⁶

To fulfill the US imperialistic ambitions and to guarantee the continuity of its interests in the Arab region, Bush expressed an interest in militarily engaging with Iraq long before the 9/11 attacks and the declaration of war on terror, stating in reference to the Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein

we will enforce a no – fly zone, both south and north. Our intention is to make sure that the world is as peaceful as possible. And we’re going to watch very carefully as to whether the former develops weapons of mass destruction, and if we catch him doing so we’ll take the appropriate action³⁷.

This means that ‘Iraq’ became synonymous with ‘rogue state’; a scapegoat to fulfill a long existing imperialist ambition in the Arab region. The latter has to be achieved through a military engagement that is inevitable against “some nation in the Arab region developing weapons of mass destruction and then threatening the United States.”³⁸ Therefore, claiming the sole reason to be the protection of national sovereignty,³⁹ the US embarked on a ‘preventative war’ for which there was no apparent legal justification. Another justification that was given to the war with Iraq is that a democratic Iraq would become a significant

³⁴Charles-Phillipe David and David Grondin, *Hegemony or Empire? The Redefinition of US Power under George W. Bush*, (University of Québec at Montréal, Canada and University of Ottawa, Canada respectively, 2006) 42.

³⁵PNAC: a geopolitical framework for a grand strategy based on military supremacy against any potential state rivals to American power. It is made by some American intellectuals and policy makers, most of them are neoconservatives and Jewish, to put in practice the American supremacy and hegemony

³⁶Charles-Phillipe David and David Grondin, *ibid.* 44.

³⁷ George W. Bush, Quoted from a Press Conference with Vicente Fox on 16th of February, 2001, in Robin Farwell, *op.cit.* 9.

³⁸ George W. Bush, Quoted from a Press Conference on 24th August, 2001, in *ibid.* 9.

³⁹Tickly L, “*Governmentality and the Study of Education Policy in South Africa*”, (Journal of Education Policy, Vol. 39) 161 – 174, Taylor and Francis Publishers, 2003) in *ibid.*

exemplar for the remaining authoritarian regimes in the Middle East; in addition to the fact that democracies never engage in conflicts. Hence, the US would never meet opposition to its imperialist ambitions and oil interests in the Gulf region from the part of a democratic country.

The invasion of Iraq in 2003 is a clear continuation of these ideals, offering justification for the intervention through the previously established role of ‘world police,’ which is linked to the paradigm of US security. The imperialism paradigm that the US operates in, dictates that international security must be maintained so that its imperialist ambitions are not undermined; hence the Iraqi invasion in 2003 became justifiable. This is clearly stated in “reviewing international policy towards rogue states” and “actions regarding the capture of new and existing oil and gas fields.”⁴⁰ As a result, after Afghanistan and Iraq, the uni-polar power structure enabled President George W. Bush the ability to deploy the use of offensive military methods, establish permanent bases in the region to pursue longstanding foreign policy objectives in the Middle East.⁴¹

In fact, the US’s hegemonic policy aimed at reordering the region in a way that can serve its interests. If reordering the regional system and redrawing the map is achieved by dividing Iraq for example, it should also be noted that the US uses other tactics to achieve its other aims such as imposing economic sanctions and an embargo against Arab and Islamic countries like Libya, Sudan, Iraq and Iran to contain these countries and prevent them from opposing the US’s plan for the region, and the American policy of integrating Israel into the region which stands as the supervisor of US interests,⁴² while it still occupies internationally recognized Arab territories. Therefore, successive American administrations were told of Israel’s strategic importance; first as an advanced base against hostile Arab nationalism and the spread of communism and, later, as an advanced base against Islamic fundamentalism.⁴³

Changing regimes in both Afghanistan and Iraq is tightly related to the US aims of redrawing the map of the Arab region into what is known as the ‘Greater Middle East

⁴⁰Safty A, “Oil and the Looming Threat to Iraq,” Online Article Accessed April 2012, http://www.democraticunderground.com/discuss/duboard.php?az=view_all&address=389×2678, 2008, in *ibid.*

⁴¹Brandon M. Ward, *The Shift in United States Foreign Policy in the Middle East since 1989*, (University of South Florida, 2006) 94.

⁴²Inass Chibani, *United States Foreign Policy Toward the Middle East During the Administrations of George Bush the Father and Son*, (Magister Thesis, University of Batna, 2010) 70.

⁴³Mansour, C. *Beyond Alliance, Israel in US Foreign Policy*, (New York, Columbia University Press, 1994) 193, in Elshelmani Saad. A, *op.cit.* 138.

Initiative' (GMEI).⁴⁴The latter is at the core of the US cultural policy toward the region by the fact that it has for objective changing the region geographically, politically, economically, socially and culturally; imposing norms for security and a common market. The aim behind the GMEI is transforming Middle Eastern and Arab markets in general into consumers of western products; hence, the growing dependency and more concessions from the part of the Arab and Muslim countries, since these countries will remain forever indebted to the IMF and to the World Bank. Unable to pay back their debts, the US and the western big companies will propose buying them and privatizing them under the excuse of economic rehabilitation. This is a related fact to emptying the citizens from their identity, nationality, and their religious and cultural values, while pursuing American and Israeli objectives and interests.

To fulfill the latter, the US project is based on two pillars: first, reforming the bad economic and political situation in the Arab countries. Second, the former is the cause of fundamentalism and international terrorism. The US thus has the obligation to change the situation and to fight the terrorists who stand against US interests and 'Israel'. On the surface, the initiative seems to revolve around the spread of democracy, human rights and women's freedom, as well as, funding literacy programs, training legislative representatives, and providing technical assistance in adopting more effective investment and trade policies.

The principal subject of Bush's speech November 5, 2003, was to democratize Islamic societies. After having affirmed that democracy and Islam are not incompatible, Bush blamed Western nations, including the United States, for having favored stability at the expense of freedom in the Middle East.⁴⁵This is known as the "Freedom Agenda" in which there is a clear indication that America would no longer remain indifferent to political development in the Arab and Islamic world.

⁴⁴"G-8 Greater Middle East Partnership", 13/2/2004, at [http:// www. Albab.com/arab/docs/international/gmep2004.htm](http://www.Albab.com/arab/docs/international/gmep2004.htm), in Dionysius Markasis, *US Democracy Promotion in the Middle East: The Pursuit of Hegemony?* (The London School of Economics and Political science, October 2012) 98-99.

⁴⁵'Sixty years of Western nations excusing and accommodating the lack of freedom in the Middle East did nothing to make us safe – because in the long run, stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty. As long as the Middle East remains a place where freedom does not flourish, it will remain a place of stagnation, resentment, and violence ready for export. And with the spread of weapons that can bring catastrophic harm to our country and to our friends, it would be reckless to accept the status quo.' George W. Bush, 'Freedom in Iraq and Middle East: Remarks by the President at the 20th Anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy', November 5, 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/11/20031106-2.html>, quoted from OnnigBeylerian, *In Search of a Policy Towards Islamism: The United States at War against Global Terror*, in Charles-Philippe David and David Grondin, op.cit.129.

However, details of the initiative were not published and most Arab governments were not consulted. It was an Arab journal, *Dar Al-Hayat*, published in London, which revealed some of its details in February 2004.⁴⁶ The initiative was rejected by Arab leaders because the concerned governments were not consulted. President Hosni Mubarak, who is one of the strongest pro-American allies in the region, said: “Whoever imagines that it is possible to impose solutions or reform from abroad on any society or region is delusional.”⁴⁷ He and Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah issued a joint statement rejecting the American proposal. The statement affirmed that “Arab states proceed on the path of development, modernization and reform in keeping with their people's interests and values,” and the two leaders declared that Arab states “do not accept that a particular pattern of reform be imposed on Arab and Islamic countries from outside.”⁴⁸ Given the early opposition and criticism towards the initiative, Washington quickly modified the scope of the initiative to win the approval of its partners at Sea Island who finally approved a far less ambitious program for reform.⁴⁹ The initiative was devoid of a security dimension, and focused on promoting democratic political processes; the development of secular laws not contradicting the principles of the Shari’a; and improvement of women’s participation in elections and their representation at all levels of governance.

Moreover, it included an economic dimension aiming essentially to improve conditions for investment in the Middle East by encouraging the repatriation of significant capital back to the region. To that end the initiative thought it would be well-advised to create a Middle Eastern development bank and promote micro financing programs. The initiative called upon Arab-Islamic states to liberalize their trade policies as a condition for the admission to the WTO.⁵⁰

The socio-cultural feature appeared the most problematic from the viewpoint of its implementation. For example, it aimed at promoting change in the societal attitude towards women in Islamic civil societies and included a literacy program especially for girls and younger women. In spite of its comprehensive nature, the initiative was silent about the

⁴⁶ Dar Al-Hayat, “*US Working Paper For G-8 Sherpas: G-8 Greater Middle East Partnership*” (February 13, 2003), <http://english.daralhayat.com/Spec/02-2004/Article-20040213-ac40b>, in *ibid.* 130.

⁴⁷ “*US Plan for Mideast Reform Draws Ire of Arab Leaders*,” (The New York Times, 27 February, 2004: A03) in Kiyoshi Aihara, *op.cit.* 25.

⁴⁸ Saudi, Egypt Reject US Democracy View,” (Al Jazeera net25 February 2004) <http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/EE547059-E358-47FF-A60A-DA10BA21753E.htm>, in *ibid.*, 25.

⁴⁹ Charles-Philippe David and David Grondin, *op.cit.* 130.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* 130

conflict with Israel and the emergence of totalitarian behavior and intolerance in Islamic societies.

Hence, the GMEI put more emphasis on first, fostering madrassas and reforming mosques to ensure that madrassas provide a broad, modern education and marketable skills, and that mosques do not serve as platforms for radical ideologies. The US considers that this reform is a key to breaking the cycle of radicalized madrassas producing radical and terrorist groups.⁵¹ Second, supporting efforts to develop “civil Islam” through education and cultural activities pursued by secular or moderate Muslim organizations.⁵² This is to ensure that mosques and the social services affiliated with them serve their communities and do not serve as platforms for the spread of radical ideologies. Third, offering educational programs by the American universities in the Gulf that have to play their role in popularizing democracy in the region. Students who go to the United States for education purposes get a taste of democratic culture and system. After getting back, they are more likely to behave in a democratic way compared to their compatriots. Many American educational institutions have established their campuses or launched degree and certificate programs in the Gulf region, as these institutions claim that the curricula and education standards they offer are same as or identical to those their head branches offer in the United States. The language of instruction is English and classes are co-educational. The values these American institutions espouse include liberalism and democracy promotion.⁵³ Fourth, strengthening media and promoting freedom of expression in the Gulf and Human Rights; the Arab world is undergoing a transition in the emergence of what have come to be known as the “new Arab media.” Therefore, there has been a significant democratization of information in the Middle East since the late 1990s.⁵⁴ Training workshops were organized and sponsored by the American nongovernmental sector. Media professionals from the United States took part along with online writers and journalists from the Gulf. The focus was on exploring the role of new forms of media influencing public debate. Case studies from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain were presented during the workshop and proved to be a fruitful opportunity for interaction between media professionals from the Gulf and the United States.⁵⁵ Fifth, emancipating women; an aim for which US organizations played a significant role and carried out a variety of programs for women

⁵¹ Angel M. Rabasa, et al, *The Muslim World after 9/11*, (Rand Corporation, 2004) 60-64.

⁵² “*US Strategy in the Muslim World after 9/11*”, (Rand Research Areas, Santa Monica, California, Rand, 2004) 3.

⁵³ Islam Nazrul M. and Muhammad Azam, *Democratization in the Gulf Monarchies and American Civil Society*, (Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations, Vol. 9, No. 3, Fall 2010) 18-19.

⁵⁴ Madeleine K. Albright, Vin Weber and Steven A. Cook, *Media in Support of Arab Democracy: Why and How?* (Report of an Independent Task Force: Council on Foreign Relations, USA, 2005) 28.

⁵⁵ Islam Nazrul M. and Muhammad Azam, op.cit. 20.

empowerment in the Gulf countries. Study and training programs were launched in the United States as well as in the Gulf countries and were spread over months. Focus group series were held to highlight the issues related to women empowerment. In 2008, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) provided a grant of 20,400 U.S. dollars to Bahrain Women Association for Human Development (BWA).⁵⁶ In Saudi Arabia, there were activities and facilities given to a group of women journalists to develop a network; they were also offered guidance on how to deal with challenges and how to benefit from rising opportunities in the newly introduced electoral politics in Kuwait, and to become more conscious about their voting rights. In 2004, NDI joined the campaign for women's political rights and universal suffrage in Kuwait; as well as, NDI organized its fourth Partners in Participation Regional Campaign School after Kuwait's official announcement of granting women the right to vote and run for office. The goal is to understand the role of women in democratic politics of Kuwait, and instilling a sense of empowerment in the female participants.⁵⁷

In essence the above constituted an attempt to foster civil society in the region, with the explicit belief that "genuine reform in the GME must be driven internally."⁵⁸ However, this policy was seen as the locus of US hegemony as Larbi Sadiki states the various training schemes targeting Arab civil societies were little more than an attempt to "hijack civil societies from their own states, leaving the central state... with little control over its constituents."⁵⁹ In fact, the core of the GMEI is to redraw the Middle East through dividing it into small units that would become easy to manage under US- Israeli hegemony, the exploitation of the region's rich resources in terms oil and gas, and changing it into a large economic market for US products. Thus it is an economic, social and cultural project that serves US-Israeli interests.

3.3.2. Ideology and neo-Conservative Economic/Strategic Agenda in the Region

As a consequence of the post 9/11 period, the Arab region and the Gulf States have witnessed ideological, strategic and economic agenda fostered by America through a number of initiatives revolving around economic opportunities, improving the social condition as well

⁵⁶Ibid. 21.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 21-22.

⁵⁸"G-8 Greater Middle East Partnership", in Dionysius Markasis, op.cit. 99.

⁵⁹Larbi Sadiki, *Rethinking Arab Democratization: Elections Without Democracy* (Oxford University Press, 2011) 172, in ibid.99.

as democratization. These in fact were to serve the US cultural imperialism, under the veil of political, economic, social, and cultural reforms.

The US believes that expanding economic opportunities and providing alternative social services in many places, might help to indirectly undercut the appeal of the extremists. In particular, focus must be on initiatives that improve the economic prospects of the young. Programs that promote economic expansion and self-sufficiency can help reduce the opportunities for extremists to exploit economic hardship as reason for extremism and terrorist acts. Hence, G.W. Bush proposed the creation of a Middle East free trade area, claiming that

across the globe, free markets and trade have helped defeat poverty, and taught men and women the habits of liberty. So I propose the establishment of a US Middle East Free Trade Area within a decade, to bring the Middle East into an expanding circle of opportunity to provide hope for the people who live in that region.⁶⁰

American organizations, institutions and companies have all contributed to introduce US democratic values and norms to the Gulf societies. The former during The Bush administration launched a host of initiatives in the Arab region such as the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the Broader Middle East North Africa (BMENA), as well as it concluded a host of free trade agreements with countries as Bahrain 2004, Oman in 2005, initiated negotiations with UAE in 2005, in an attempt to encourage the spread of economic liberalization in the region. The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were at the forefront, whereby the following table shows the American organizations that have contributed to democracy promotion in the Gulf States between 2001 and 2008.⁶¹

⁶⁰ George W. Bush, *Remarks by the President in Commencement Address at the University of South Carolina*, (9/5/2003, at <http://2001-2009.state.gov/p/nea/rm/20497.htm>) in Dionysius Markasis, *ibid.* 101

⁶¹ Islam M. Nazrul & Muhammad Azam, *op.cit.* 8-25

Establishment	Organization Year of
Democracy Coalition Project (DCP)	2001
Network of Arab American Professionals (NAAP)	2001
Center for Democracy and Election Management (CDEM)	2002
Saban Center for Middle East Policy	2002
U.S.-Saudi Arabian Strategic Dialogue (USSASD)	2003
Center for Democracy and Human Rights in Saudi Arabia (CDHR)	2004
Sultan Qaboos Cultural Center (SQCC)	2005
Carnegie Middle East Center	2006
Brookings Doha Center	2008

Moreover, the former organizations and institutions have launched at least thirteen programs and initiatives under the supervision of the Bush administration during 2001 and 2008, which have sought to bring about changes and reforms in educational school curricula, so that the latter will be devised to foster moderate or ‘civil Islam’, not only in the Arab region but in the Muslim world at large, given the fact that the latter is considered by the US as the cradle of terrorists. The following table shows these initiatives:⁶²

⁶²Muhammad Azam&Sagheer Ahmad Khan, *American Democracy Promotion In The Arabian Gulf: Alternatives*,(Turkish Journal of International Relations Vol. 11, No. 1, Spring 2012)90- 91.

Organizations, Projects and Initiatives Launched during 2000–2008	Year of Creation
The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)	2002
MEPI Alumni Network	2002
Radio Sawa	2002
Office of Global Communication	2002
Middle East Free Trade Area (MEFTA)	2003
American-Kuwaiti Alliance (AKA)	2003
Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA)	2004
Forum for the Future	2005
Foundation for the Future	2005
Fund for the Future	2005
US-SaudiArabianStrategic Dialogue	2005
Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Business women’s Network	2006
Bahrain Forum for Public-Private Partnership	2007

There are four important US NGOs that focus on democracy promotion in the Arab world, and they have been some of the most active organizations operating in the fields of democracy promotion, human rights, rule of law, and freedom of the press. For instance the NED is the overarching body of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republican Institute (IRI), the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), and the American Center for International Labor Solidarity (CILS). Moreover, these four institutions receive approximately half of all NED funds, as well as, funds from the State department, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), as well as funds from private donors and

foreign countries. The USAID has increased emphasis on democracy promotion since 2001, as a means of reducing poverty and enhancing US security.⁶³ But the main US step in this direction was the Middle East Partnership Initiative, the BMENA and the Middle East Free Trade Agreement (MEFTA) Initiatives. The latter have institutionalized Freedom Agenda. By 2005, the Freedom Agenda became the central organizing concept which focused on the linkage between a lack of political and economic freedom in the MENA and the rise of global terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda. The former outlined the broad aims of eradicating terrorism, promoting regional stability, promoting regional economic growth, and ending tyranny to create peace.

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the Broader Middle East North Africa (BMENA) Initiative were the most prominent. Both were formulated in response to regional deficits in 'democracy', 'freedom' and 'gender equality'. On the one hand, MEPI was launched in 2002 by US Secretary of State Colin Powell, and funded at 29 million dollars⁶⁴ with an intention to promote education, entrepreneurship and women's rights. The 2002 *Arab Human Development* identified three key deficits, in political freedom, women's empowerment and knowledge.⁶⁵ The MEPI was based on the fact that a transition to democracy requires not just a change in political institutions but also changes in cultural, economic and social sectors. Hence, the governments of the Arab region have to develop in four strategic fields: political, economic, educational, and women's emancipation. For instance, Elizabeth L. Cheney emphasized the importance of changing cultural and religious educational programs being the major cause of radicalism and terrorism in the Arab countries. She claimed "fighting terrorism through education."⁶⁶ For this objective the Bush administration requested in 2006, \$30 million for Middle East Programs to help change and improve the former. These aid programs were designed "to sustain democracy in all [its]

⁶³The 2002 USAID Report, Foreign aid in the national interest, at http://www.usaid.gov/fani/Full_Report—Foreign_Aid_in_the_National_Interest.pdf, in Katerina Dalacoura, *US Democracy Promotion in the Arab Middle East since 11 September 2001: A Critique*, (International Affairs 81, 5, 2005) 964.

⁶⁴Colin Powell, "The U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative: Building Hope for the Years Ahead," speech delivered at the Heritage Foundation, Washington, D.C., December 12, 2002; available at <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2002/15920.htm>, in Marina Ottaway, *Promoting Democracy in the Middle East: the Problem of US Credibility*, (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003) 11.

⁶⁵Arab Human Development Report 2002: *Creating opportunities for future generations*, (New York: United Nations Development Program, Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, Sept. 2002) in Katerina Dalacoura, op.cit. 964.

⁶⁶Elizabeth L. Cheney, says: "State's Educational Reform Key to Fighting Terrorism" Bush Administration "Requests \$30 Million for Middle East Programs" (IIP Digital, 19 April 2005) <<http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/texttrans/2005/04/20050419180704cpataruk0.3288385.html#axzz2apavwfmz>>, in Zaid Oubeidallah op.cit. 107.

dimensions,”⁶⁷ as well as a commitment to encourage the spread of democracy: “Every time that human rights and the rule of law are in danger, we will be there.”⁶⁸

On the other hand, the 2004 BMENA Partnership Initiative aimed at encouraging reform in the political, the social and cultural, and the economic areas. Both initiatives targeted countries beyond the Arab world (the Middle East, North Africa plus Pakistan and Afghanistan) but they are examined in this article only in so far as they impact on the core Arab area.

MEPI and the BMENA Partnership Initiative are two important policy initiatives that have been used to promote democracy and to boost trade in the Arab Middle East. On the basis of the assumption that economic liberalization will lead to democratization, free trade agreements were encouraged with Arab governments envisioning the creation of a Middle East free trade area by 2003. MEPI has sponsored over 100 initiatives in 14 countries, including programs on judicial reform and support and training for journalists; civic education and human rights awareness; training local and regional government officials in public administration; school curricula and educational exchanges; strengthening political party structures and parliamentary systems; training for NGOs; and support for women’s empowerment.⁶⁹

Democracy promotion has also become an integral part of an interventionist US foreign policy in the Arab region, epitomized in the invasion and occupation of Iraq. As previously done with Afghanistan, the 2003 Iraq war was justified on the grounds of (pre-emptive) self-defense against presumed weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation and terrorism. But democratization was also part of the rationale for military action because a democratic Iraq would be a natural American ally that would serve as an example to encourage political reform in the Arab world as a whole.

Since the 9/11 attacks, under the banner of the war on terror, Saudi Arabia definitely needed to be regarded as cooperative with US efforts. Additionally, Riyadh itself apparently came to realize, that the threat of extremists like Al Qaeda was reaching serious levels.

⁶⁷Council of the European Union, EU-U.S. Declaration on Working Together to Promote Democracy and Support Freedom, The Rule of Law and Human Rights Worldwide, (Washington, June 20, 2005, 10307/05) in Tamara Cofman Wittes & Richard Youngs, *Europe, the United States, and Middle Eastern Democracy: Repairing the Breach*, (The Saban Center at The Brookings Institution, Number 18, January 2009) 10.

⁶⁸Philippe Doust-Blazy, (statement, official trip to Washington, July 5-7, 2005). Available at <http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/actu/agorabb.asp?List=20050707.html>, in *ibid*.

⁶⁹United States Embassy, London, UK Fact Sheet, ‘State Department’s Mideast Partnership Funds over 100 programs’, 9 March 2005, at <http://www.usembassy.org.uk/mideast603.html>, in Katerina Dalacoura, *op.cit.* 965.

Therefore, the Saudi government undertook a series of measures to crack down on Islamic extremists. Aiming at drying up their financial resources, the Saudi government put severe controls on Saudi-supported charities and began to monitor financial transactions from the kingdom. In the arena of religious affairs, the Saudi government has strengthened its efforts to eliminate cells of the Al Qaeda network in the kingdom. In the light of President Bush's belief that democratization ensures security, his administration has urged the Saudi government to promote political and social reforms.

On the part of the Saudis, the country's effective ruler, Crown Prince Abdullah, has been spearheading political reforms. In June 2003, he launched unusual meetings of "National Dialogue," attended by clergy, academics, and elites. This series of forums tackled sensitive issues, such as school curriculum and the role of women, which are closely related to Islamic traditions. The most prominent Saudi step of all was that the government embarked on the first nationwide local elections in the kingdom's history on February 10, 2005, which was a major step for the conservative kingdom. In that same month, Egyptian President Mubarak also ordered a revision of the country's election laws to allow multiple candidates to run in the upcoming presidential election.

As an assessment to the US aims behind this strategy, it is clear that all is done to ensure the survival of the American culture in the Arab region that could permanently and incessantly influence the Arab public opinion in a way that goes with the US political interests in the Arab region. Moreover, to enhance the American cultural values and habits in the Arab region that could help accepting the American political stand in the region and thus ensure the future continuous protection of the US interests in the region. The question that imposes itself here is to what extent has US democracy promotion with all its reforms succeeded to change the face of the Arab region?

Actually, the promotion of democracy – similarly to the advocacy and imposition of neo-liberal economic reforms – is seen first as part of the hegemonic project of the West and a means to perpetuate its political, economic, military and cultural domination; that is a made-in-America democracy. According to LarbiSadiki:

Perhaps the most negative aspect of the American promotion of democracy and human rights lies in its veiled imperialist motivation, both in the past during the height of the ideological standoff between

communism and now as the United States further asserts its sole superpower status.⁷⁰

In fact, the announcement of US policies of democracy promotion following 9/11 was greeted with profound skepticism in the region. One response was that the United States was being hypocritical and that the rhetoric on democracy hid other motives and interests which would ultimately prevail and ensure continuous US support for Arab dictators. Second, there has been a response of resentment by the informed public and also regional governments at the US arrogance and its interference in the internal affairs of local states.⁷¹ The lack of US credibility, due to its long history of involvement in the region on the side of Israeli suppression of Palestinian rights and authoritarian Gulf States, came to haunt it in the post-9/11 period.⁷² Despite these developments, however, the overall effect of US democracy promotion policies on the politics of the Middle East region was shallow and superficial. For instance, elections in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Cooperation Council countries may have given the appearance of reform but were in fact extremely circumscribed events which barely touched authoritarian structures.⁷³

Despite the fact that democracy was being promoted in the world, mainly in the Arab/ Muslim countries with the belief of countering terrorism, US cultural imperialism was lingering there, too. Those who are pro- US imperialism consider that the twenty-first-century American empire is a vital phase in the globalization project, the coming to fruition of a second integrated liberal international economic order. Among the defenders of this reality are Niall Ferguson and Ignatieff.

According to Ferguson, ‘many parts of the world would benefit from a period of American rule’. Some countries, he observed, ‘will not correct themselves. They require the imposition of some kind of external authority.’ He argued that the pay-off to ‘rogue’ and ‘failed’ states for imperial intervention in their internal affairs, would include tangible public goods such as schools, hospitals, transport and communications infrastructures. More

⁷⁰LarbiSadiki, *The Search for Arab Democracy: Discourses and Counter-Discourses*, (London: Hurst, 2002) 341, in KaterinaDalacoura, *US Foreign policy and Democracy Promotion in the Middle East: Theoretical Perspectives and Policy Recommendations*, (OrtadoğuEtütleri, Vol. 2, No 3, July 2010) 64.

⁷¹KaterinaDalacoura, *ibid.* 65.

⁷²MoncefMarzouki, “*The US Project for Democracy in the Greater Middle East -Yes, But With Whom?*” (*Al-Hayat*, 23 February 2004), quoted in Gilbert Achcar, ‘*Fantasy of a Region that Does Not Exist: Greater Middle East: The US Plan*’, (*Monde Diplomatique*, April 2004), in KaterinaDalacoura, *ibid.* 65.

⁷³*Ibid.* 65-66.

important would be the intangible public goods of ‘order’ and ‘stability’ in global systems which he anticipated would flow from an appropriately administered American empire.⁷⁴

On the same path, Ignatieff described the empire lite as “a global hegemony whose grace notes are free markets, human rights and democracy, enforced by the most awesome military power the world has ever known.”⁷⁵ Empire lite also meant laying down the rules America wants. Most important, it meant the capacity to secure consent from others by the provision of public goods – policies and outcomes that followed American interests. This meant the US becoming the guarantor of “peace, stability, democratization and oil supplies in a combustible region of Islamic peoples stretching from Egypt to Afghanistan”⁷⁶ which meant reshaping the Middle East according to US interests, using both soft power and military violence. In fact, President Bush proclaimed goals are to democratize the Arab world and create a balance of power that favors human freedom. The United States needed to take the offensive and remake the world in America’s image.

By the end of the Bush administration, it became clear that the US imperialist project has always existed and fostered under the veil of fighting terrorism and promoting democracy for the welfare of the Arab countries. People were fed up with this grim reality of seeking and securing US interests. The US policies from the end of the WWII up to G.W. Bush were no more giving their fruit and proved to fail; especially when the terrorists and the WMD for which Iraq was devastated were not found there. The fact and matter is that Saddam in 2003 was in control of a country at the centre of the Gulf, a region that contained a quarter of the world oil production with 60% of the world’s reserves. The United States is known as the world’s largest net importer of oil; therefore by invading Iraq, it would take over the Iraqi oil fields. This control over Iraqi oil would in return increase security of supplies from the rich Gulf States to the US. The conflict between the desire of promoting democracy and the reality of national interests makes it clear that the national interests take precedence over promoting freedom and democracy.

⁷⁴Ferguson Niall, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire*, (2004: 24, 2) in David Holloway, *9/11 and the War on Terror*, (Edinburgh University Press, 2008) 13.

⁷⁵Ignatieff, *Empire Lite*, (2003) in *ibid.*15

⁷⁶*Ibid.*15

3.4. Post 9/11 US cultural policy in the Gulf

The globalization era and the post 9/11 effects on the US have led the latter to rethink its US cultural policy in the Arab region in a way that can solidify more US interests in the region chiefly in the Gulf States. The US administration sought to enhance the spread of its ideology mainly with Bush as president and the neoconservatives as his advisers. The US foreign policy has revolved around promoting democracy in the region in a way to ensure a peaceful atmosphere for the US to pursue its objectives. The USA has grown more aware that the lack of freedom, human rights and poverty in the region has led to the proliferation of terrorism. Hence, the US administration has devised multiple programs and initiatives (economic, social and cultural) that targeted youth and women, to help establish freedom and the rule of law in the Arab region, with the belief that US democracy promotion is a key tool in fighting tyranny and terrorism.

Time and again, since 2001 US democracy promotion in the Arab region has become a core objective of US policy in the region. One of the most important expressions of this policy was Bush's speech at the National Endowment of Democracy in November 2003, in which democratic change in the Middle East was a main focus.⁷⁷ Reform was a key goal of the US government which launched a handful of media outlets in the Middle East: the Arabic-language Radio Sawa which has been sending pop music and news into the Middle East since March 2002, the Persian-language Radio Farda which beams political and cultural news into Iran and Al Hurra, a satellite TV channel created in 2004. Modeled after Voice of America (VOA) and Radio Free Europe (RFE), these stations are designed to promote pro- American attitudes and democracy. These channels work as propagandists of US diplomacy in the Arab countries, targeting younger audiences in the Arab world with a view of initiating them into American culture and inculcating them the American values. This strategy is helped along with the means of communication and mass media that are the most effective weapons in the war of ideas that will result in the westernization of the Arabs and Muslims in general. In the words of Findi this strategy "targets the hearts and minds of the Arabs and Muslims alike."⁷⁸

Actually, with the help of media outlets in an age where internet and satellites dominate, the US encouraged democracy building and freedom of speech through launching

⁷⁷ George W. Bush, "President Bush discusses freedom in Iraq and Middle East: Remarks by the President at the 20th anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy", at <http://www.ned.org/events/anniversary/oct1603-Bush.html>, in Katerina Dalacoura, *US Democracy Promotion in the Arab Middle East since 11 September 2001: A critique*, (International Affairs 81, 5 2005) 964.

⁷⁸ Mamoun Findi, in Zaid Oubeidallah Mesbah, op.cit. 113.

several channels in the MENA region, whereby people have been influenced by the western mode of life, fashion and style. Media outlets have introduced the American/ western capitalist economy and liberal values of investment and the attraction of tourists and consumers. These have engendered the consumption culture among Arab population and a move away from traditional life towards a modern life that resembles the western one in terms of architecture, fashion, rampant expenditure, and the culture of owning big cars, organizing parties and festivities, and planning for holidays abroad; all of which represent a globalized world and the indirect acceptance of the US cultural imperialism.

3.4.1. Bush's Policy of Democracy Promotion

Most of the world's great civilizations have sought to spread their political systems and ideologies far beyond borders. The experience of the US on the international stage has been little different. Concomitant with its rise as a superpower, the US has sought to support the spread of its own worldview; an ideology comprising a synthesis of liberal democratic political values and free market economic principles. Over the course of the 20th century, the elemental features of the US ideology were gradually improved and deployed in the defense of US interests abroad. Therefore, the latter's focus has developed correspondingly from an early emphasis on 'civilizing' to the contemporary 'democratizing'. The events of September 11, 2001 demonstrated to the administration that ignoring political and economic freedom in the MENA region, in the pursuit of national security interests, was not without consequences. The policy of securing the status quo was, therefore, no longer seen as providing security for the US interests. Therefore, a strategy of freedom in the Middle East and the Gulf region had to be started because poverty, stagnation, and lack of women's rights there were considered not as failures of a culture or a religion, but of political and economic doctrines. For the Bush administration as long as the Middle East remains a place of tyranny, despair and anger, it will continue to produce men and movements that threaten the safety of America and its allies. It has become clear that 'the white man's burden' of civilizing the countries has become the 'western man's burden' of democratizing them. This fact is clearly stated by G.W. Bush as follows

we are led, by events and common sense, to one conclusion: the survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in the entire world.... So it is the policy of the

United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.⁷⁹

However, giving a glance at history and trying to examine the evolution of US democracy promotion, one sees that US foreign policy has followed a multipurpose tool to expand the former.⁸⁰ Contemporary modern means of spreading democracy show that American policymakers have changed their tactic of manifest destiny by military intervention for humanitarian purposes and human rights, in the name of promoting and defending democracy; a combination of the hard and soft power. Thus the United States no longer seeks to maintain control via other means such as conquering territory and imposing colonial rule, but through expanding its ideology of democracy and free market economy; that is it does not covet territory or resources, rather it covets ideas; that is what Churchill called ‘empire of the mind.’⁸¹ Over and over again, in the absence of Soviet Communist threat and after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, global democratization has become a central foreign policy goal and identified as a key element of US Presidents respectively. The latter have adopted the primacist vision of American grand strategy; that of maintaining the United States hegemony as far into the future as possible. So democracy promotion has been a multipurpose tool that has served Reagan administration for containing Communism, the elder Bush’s tool for the New World Order, Clinton’s for pursuing global economic interests, and Bush’s as a key element of war on terror.⁸²

It is defined as the widest range of actions that one country with all its actors can take to influence the political development of another towards greater democratization, a definition that reflects a broad consensus among academics and practitioners.⁸³ The American leaders have considered that the United States has a ‘mission’ to spread democratic values and a

⁷⁹George. W. Bush, ‘inaugural address’, 20/1/2005, at <http://npr.org/templates/story/story.php?StoryId=4460172>, in Markasis Dionysius, op.cit. 9.

⁸⁰Foreign policy was spread through hard power and soft power and the tools being Manifest Destiny and democracy promotion, respectively. Indeed, Manifest Destiny originally meant westward expansionism, but later evolved into a campaign bent on spreading democracy to foreign cultures. It worked as a justification for U.S. expansionist foreign policy including the conquest of northern Mexico and bringing Latin America into the U.S. sphere of influence, in Mohammad A. Mousavi and Heydari, *The Nature of US Democracy Promotion Policy: Reality versus Illusion The Case of Iraq*, (International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 1 No. 20, December 2011) 114.

⁸¹Christopher Layne and Bradley A. Thayer, *American Empire: A Debate*, (Taylor & Francis Group, 2007), in *ibid.* 115.

⁸²*Ibid.* 117.

⁸³Nicole BibbinsSedaca, Nicolas Bouchet, *Holding Steady? US Democracy Promotion in a Changing World*, (Chatham House, Americas, February 2014) 3.

liberal political model abroad; non-democratic regimes are a potential national security threat; democracies are more stable international actors, better trade and security partners, and more responsible members within international organizations; and democracy facilitates human rights, economic growth and development.⁸⁴

Democracy promotion in the Arab region has been related to fighting terrorism, but underneath it aimed at spreading globalization since it is seen as contributing to and resulting from market liberalization, free trade and open economies.⁸⁵In effect, the most important objectives of the strategy of democracy promotion target first, the maintenance of stability in the countries concerned because stability impacts the political, economic, military and other US interests in the region, as well as it is a requirement for the success of free market economies. Second, democracy promotion is a necessary means for the US to reach hegemony. By furnishing the necessary efforts to secure the conditions for promoting democracy and integrating it within a range of economic, social, and cultural policies, the US has sought to strategically “penetrate not just the state, but civil society...and from there exercise control.”⁸⁶

In the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001 up to the end of Bush’s presidency in 2008, democracy promotion became one of the most prominent features of US foreign policy, given the shock and the feeling of insecurity the former has produced in the Americans. The Bush administration saw democracy promotion as a key tool to bolster national security by countering radical-extremist ideologies deemed responsible for terrorism and other global problems. One of the fundamental elements of Bush’s foreign policy was based on the concept of preventive, or indeed pre-emptive, use of military force.⁸⁷ A notable element is the massive military expenditure that dominated the period. The US clearly expressed an interest in establishing a military that could not be rivaled, and its use regardless of political leaning.

One result was attention to countries that had up to then been excluded from American democracy promotion for strategic reasons (especially in the Middle East). Therefore, democracy promotion funding became increasingly focused on Iraq, Afghanistan, the MENA region, and a few other countries central to the ‘Global War on Terror’. There were

⁸⁴Ibid. 5.

⁸⁵Ibid. 6.

⁸⁶ William Robinson, *Globalization, the World System and Democracy Promotion in US Foreign Policy*, 643, in Markasis Dionysius, op.cit. 11-12.

⁸⁷Ikenberry, G. ‘*Liberal Order and Imperial Ambition: Essays on American Power and World Politics*,’ (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006), in Robin Farwell, op.cit.8.

also some new policy approaches targeting more explicitly the link between democracy and other goals, including poverty alleviation and national security.⁸⁸ But why was the Arab region excluded from the program of democracy promotion for so long?

Simply because in the course of fulfilling its objectives of securing its interests, the US administrations favored nurturing close alliances with the autocratic ruling families of the oil-producing Gulf states, especially with the House of Saud; as long as its interests were assured. Moreover, for Israel's security, a weak, divided, disorganized and undemocratic Middle East/ Arab region was favorable. To put it another way, Washington feared that democracy would empower anti-Israeli and anti-American voices that would pose a threat to the region's stability and US interests.

The Bush administration advocated political reform to unprecedented heights, situating it in the only Arab region. For instance, the former events precipitated a more aggressive military stance in the region, but one that drew heavily on the very same premises of political and economic reform. He did establish a significant precedent in US policy to the region with his explicit rejection of the prevailing notion of Middle Eastern exceptionalism. In a landmark speech at NED, Bush claimed that:

Our commitment to democracy is also tested in the Middle East, which is my focus today, and must be a focus of American policy for decades to come. In many nations of the Middle East- countries of great strategic importance- democracy has not yet taken root. And the questions arise: Are the peoples of the Middle -East somehow beyond the reach of liberty? Are millions of men and women and children condemned by history or culture to live in despotism? Are they alone never to know freedom, and never even to have a choice in the matter?⁸⁹

There was an urgent recognition that authoritarian systems of government could no longer ensure US interests in the Arab region. Accordingly, promoting democracy in the Arab region will help undercut the roots of terrorism because the lack of political freedom in the former fosters political radicalism and anti-Western terrorism. That is why democracy promotion is presented as an intrinsic, even central, element of the US war on terrorism.⁹⁰ This is clearly stated in his remarks that

⁸⁸Thomas Carothers, *US Democracy Promotion During and After Bush*, (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2007), in Nicole BibbinsSedaca, Nicolas Bouchet, op.cit. 6.

⁸⁹ George W. Bush, Remarks by the President at the 20th Anniversary of the NED, 6/11/2003, at <http://http://www.ned.org/george-w-bush/remarks-by-president-george-w-bushat-the-20th-anniversary>, in Dionysius Markasis, op.cit. 15-16.

⁹⁰ThomasCarothers,*U.S. Democracy Promotion During and After Bush*, (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2007) 4.

....stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty. As long as the Middle East remains a place where freedom does not flourish, it will remain a place of stagnation, resentment, and violence ready for export.⁹¹

Promoting democracy thus has become a top priority in US national security. Indeed, US foreign policy regarding the Arab world has changed noticeably since the attacks of 9/11. There were both ideological and practical reasons for this. The Bush administration has come to understand that fostering democracy is the key principle that would drain the pool from which terrorist organizations draw recruits in their 'global struggle' against the US. It would also contribute to the peaceful resolution of disputes in the region because 'democracies do not go to war with one another'.⁹²

The promotion of democracy in the Arab region has been pursued through a number of policy initiatives comprising clusters of projects to support civil society organizations and reform state institutions with a view of encouraging democratic change. Efforts have been underway in Arab countries that were carefully working towards promoting and establishing democratic governments. To achieve that goal and to transform the region had a significant effect on the financial support given to the NGO's focusing on the Arab region. The latter would receive increased funds for national security reasons, whereby the Bush administration made a concerted effort to rethink the historic US support of authoritarian states and to advance democratization efforts in the Arab world.

The Bush administration emphasized the founding of civil society programs in the Arab region through initiatives that have been devised with the intention of cultivating civil society in the region, in the belief that "reform in the Greater Middle East must be driven internally."⁹³ The latter was pursued through a range of political, economic, and military measures; all of which constitute public diplomacy, regional policy initiatives, economic engagement, and military intervention. Public diplomacy has been expressed by President Bush in his speech at the NED where he defined the US position.

Our commitment to democracy is also tested in the Middle East, which is my focus today, and must be a focus of American policy for decades to come. In many nations of the Middle East- countries of great

⁹¹George W. Bush, Remarks by the President at the 20th Anniversary of the NED, 6/11/2003, at <http://www.ned.org/george-w-bush/remarks-by-president-george-w-bush-at-the-20th-anniversary>, in Dionysius Markasis, op.cit.16.

⁹²The reference here is to the 'Democratic Peace Thesis', in Katerina Dalacoura, (2005) op.cit. 963- 979.

⁹³G-8 Greater Middle East Partnership, 13/2/2004, at <http://www.albab.com/arab/docs/international/gmep2004.htm>, in Dionysius Markasis, op.cit.39.

strategic importance- democracy has not yet taken root. As long as the Middle East remains a place where freedom does not flourish, it will remain a place of stagnation, resentment, and violence ready for export. And with the spread of weapons that can bring catastrophic harm to our country and to our friends, it would be reckless to accept the status quo.⁹⁴

3.4.2. Traditional Media and Social Media Policy

With the fast evolution of the information technology and internet, mass media have become effective means of propaganda, influencing and shaping the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. Media technologies thus are having their effects on mass audience, due to the fact that they have become agents of cultural constructions, meanings and values. According to Edward Said, America has made a giant leap in the reach of cultural authority, thanks in large measure to the unprecedented growth in the apparatus for the diffusion and control of information.⁹⁵ The spread of new technologies and the central role of mass media, the internet revolution, wireless communication networks and television with its audio, visual, and motion capacities have a great impact on nations and societies mainly in terms of cultural influence, and the imposition of new values and the shaping of identities. TV/satellite dishes are conduits of foreign culture, foreign values and foreign ideas. Thus, American cultural domination has been spread by such vehicles that transmit American values, lifestyles and ideologies, a fact that gave the US the role of a global hegemon in terms of the manipulation of the minds. In brief, it is imperialism dressed in new clothes as Anthony Smith expresses it:

The threat to independence in the late 20th century from the new electronics could be greater than was colonialism itself. We are beginning to learn that decolonization and the growth of supranationalism were not the termination of imperial relationships but merely the extending of a geo-political web which has been spinning since the Renaissance. The new media have the power to penetrate more deeply into a “receiving” culture than any previous manifestation of Western technology. The results could be immense havoc, an

⁹⁴ George W. Bush, Remarks by the President at the 20th Anniversary of the NED, 6/11/2003, at <http://www.ned.org/george-w-bush/remarks-by-president-george-w-bush-at-the-20th-anniversary>, in Dionysius Markasis, *ibid.* 96.

⁹⁵ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc., New York, 1993) 291.

intensification of the social contradictions within developing societies today.⁹⁶

What is at stake is that media imperialism push toward the ‘homogenization’ of cultures across the globe, and the spread of the culture of consumption as lifestyles; in brief, the former naturalize the Western way of life as the way the rest of the world should live. For instance, Hollywood has been able to invade third world cinema and TV through American films and products. So one sees the youth all over the world, sharing certain common values and aspirations, emulating what they watch on TV, such as wearing saggy jeans and Nike shoes; interested in Hip-hop music; eating fast food by McDonalds etc. We can also mention as an example the emancipation of women getting limitless rights and liberty. The American women’s way of living and reflection as seen in films and soaps have created more powerful images in other countries’ media as well. One cannot ignore the reality of the fact that women in the Arab countries have started to act like these Hollywood powerful, naked, sexy women, and they have created activist revolutions to become like them.

Moreover, part of the market economy women are being used for economic and profit interests, in that they are the object of propaganda and an attractive target for advertisers to sell commercial products such as sexy, nude clothes, under-wear, make-up and “beauty” products. Women have become tags for selling goods and thus guaranteeing the success for commercial firms; as well as attractiveness for touristic aims. In a word, they are objects of fashion and consumerism.

Once and again, there is an overall impact of American foreign programs on youth; the most vulnerable audience. The former are used to influence beliefs, norms, practices, and tastes of the viewers, who switch from local to foreign cultures and adopt western life styles. According to David Rothkopf:

The US dominates this global traffic in information and ideas. American music, American movies, American TV, and American software are so dominant, so sought after, and so visible that they are now virtually available literally everywhere on the earth. They influence the tastes, lives, and aspirations of virtually every nation.⁹⁷

⁹⁶Anthony Smith, *The Geopolitics of Information: How Western Culture Dominates the World*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1980) 176, in *ibid.* 291-292.

⁹⁷David Rothkopf, “*In Praise of Cultural Imperialism: Effects of Globalization on Culture*,” (Foreign Policy, 22 June, 1997), in Emilee Rauschenberger. *Op.cit.* 20.

These foreign programs are corrupting teenage boys through their violence, nudity, and suggestive actions. Movies are featuring gangsters, shooting, killing, and modes of dressing, speaking and walking. Teenage girls tend to appear naked, appealing to liberty and miming actresses and stars. According to UNESCO, 85 per cent of films shown worldwide are produced in Hollywood. Proof of these are the New Arab T.V channels which are instruments of American hegemony and a blatant form of cultural propaganda used to spread American ideals and values through the global TV which includes satellite transmission of programs of entertainment such as movies, soaps, news, adverts, musicals and sports that have emerged with globalization and have led to a significant switch from local to foreign cultures, through the flow of information in one direction from the new world to the third one. As an instance, the opening-up of more private channels and broadcast media stations as the Emarati Prince Talal's (MBC, Rotana, and Fox movies) which are 100% American content-based.

Hollywood films and movies are capturing 90% of the world audience, fostering the image of the white man as the hero and the leader who always triumphs at the end. 'El Djazeera' and 'El Arabia' channels in terms of news are American –directed in that they sided with the US when it invaded Iraq, showing the wrong side of reality. In the age of globalization programs like 'Arabs Got Talent', 'Arab Idol', 'The Voice', 'Star Academy' and the 'Voice Kids' are copying American/Western ones and aping their values under influence. These have the greatest impact mainly on youth in that they can directly and easily lead to alienation, cultural assimilation and gradually to a loss of identity.

Saudi Arabia among other Gulf societies imports a huge amount of foreign TV programs and movies, music and educational programs mainly from the USA. Culturally, it leads to the importation of American values, attitudes and beliefs inappropriate to the Arab-Muslim culture. Under the influence of Western TV programs and video sets as means of entertainment, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf societies have undergone changes affected by foreign cultures in terms of family ties and kinship, habits, friendship concepts⁹⁸ which are being replaced by exaggerated freedom, loneliness and a widening gap between parents and children. Actually, children and youth receive their values from television; internet and media that affect their life-styles, dressing and behavior; they are easily influenced because they lack maturity.

⁹⁸Hassan Omar Basfar, *The Impact of Foreign Cultures through the Video and Television on Saudi Society as Perceived by Saudi Undergraduate Students in Saudi Arabia*, (JKAU: Met, Arts and Humanities, Vol.15, N°1, 2007) 20.

The most important changes are being brought in the cultural and educational field. The US has for objective to support the secular elite and institutions among the Arab countries in order to find and work together with media and cultural institutions that can foster and spread the Western liberal culture. This is done through bringing about changes in programs of religious education that are based on teaching moderate Islam.

3.5.Cultural Setting in the Gulf Region in the New Millennium

Important and fast changes have taken place in the Arab Gulf region following the globalization trade but mainly the US growing influence through its products. For instance, during the 2002-8 oil price booms, a combination of oil reserves and capital accumulation have positioned the oil-rich Gulf States (notably Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and the UAE) as a strategic and commercial pivot around which shifts in the global balance of power were taking place.⁹⁹ As a matter of fact, The GCC states, culminating in Saudi Arabia, acceded in 2005 to the World Trade Organization and began to attract significantly greater flows of foreign direct investment (FDI). In addition, they promoted themselves as financial hubs.

As a result of globalization and the marketing strategies the Gulf States have come to be branded as global cities. Famous of these is Dubai named a “city corporation” or “Dubai Inc.”¹⁰⁰ The branding of these cities is part of marketing and consumerist cultures to attract investors and tourists alike. For instance, the skylines that make Dubai distinguishable are part of a business project that is meant for keeping both tourists and investors stimulated and interested in coming to Dubai. The latter has become one of the most important shopping centers in the world, and particularly in the Middle East. It is argued that the Gulf States people are following the latest, the newest, the most unique and the most exclusive trends and brands for their daily consumption; “Luxury is something that is able to transmit emotion and create a special moment or memory for life. It is about providing customers with products characterized by uniqueness, crafted with care and expertise with the best quality of

⁹⁹K. Coates Ulrichsen, ‘Rebalancing Global Governance: Gulf States’ Perspectives on the Governance of Globalization,’ (Global Policy 2(1), 2011) 65, in Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, *The Gulf Goes Global: the Evolving Role of Gulf Countries in the Middle East and North Africa and Beyond*, (Fride and Hivos, 2013) 4.

¹⁰⁰Monica Rodriguez Roldan, *A Mismatched Dubai: A Glamorous Globalizing City vs. a Contentious Local Identity*, (Trinity College, 2013) 6.

materials, offering them an exceptional experience.”¹⁰¹ The novelty factor is also part of attracting the GCC consumers to affluence and ultra-consumption. On average, 78% of the latter explain that they like to keep up with the latest trends, and 76% claim they like to have the latest in everything they own. The culture of shopping is then being driven by the ‘new arrivals’ and ‘every new fashion season.’¹⁰²

This is true of the Dubai Shopping Festival and the Dubai Summer Surprises that have had a tremendous success in attracting tourists to Dubai, reaching figures of 1.6 million visitors in the first year.¹⁰³ Vali Nasr argues that “The emirate seeks to set world standards for luxury and consumerism, to be the first in everything, especially the kinds of things the West appreciates”.¹⁰⁴

Time and again, the post 9/11 cultural setting in the Gulf States has been influenced by globalization due to the unprecedented age of consumerism that the Gulf States have experienced. Globalization has affected the traditional way of living of the Gulf States, in that changes have not only been massive but have occurred at a tremendous pace. For instance, largely traditional and conservative ways of life have been almost completely replaced by a more modern, urban and distinctly affluent society. Related to that is that oil expansion has seen also the emergence of a new middle class that is assigning more importance to individual liberties, considering religion less central, and holding more liberal social values.

Globalization has brought also the culture of Western schools and universities that have spread dramatically and which focus on teaching global languages at the expense of the Arabic language. In addition to that, they favor technical aspects over humanistic and national culture. They also foster individualism at the expense of loyalty to homeland, identity and community. The Gulf States have started to apply the same system in their schools and universities, resulting in the domination of global languages and decreasing public culture. The result is the emergence of a generation linguistically incapable of reading and understanding the religious and cultural heritage, a generation engrossed in consumptive and

¹⁰¹PietroBeccari – CEO FENDI, in Anthony Chalhoub, *Gulf Luxury Consumers: A World Apart*, (ChalhoubWhite Paper,2014) 4.

¹⁰²Anthony Chalhoub, *ibid.* 8.

¹⁰³ Syed Ali, *Dubai: Gilded Cage*, (New Haven Conn.: Yale UP, 2010, Print) in Monica Rodriguez Roldan, *op.cit.* 19.

¹⁰⁴Nasr, SeyyedVali Reza. *Forces of Fortune: The Rise of the New Muslim Middle Class and What it Will Mean for Our World*, (New York: Free, 2009, Print) in *ibid.* 19.

technological endeavors that feels loyalty towards the institution it works in rather than its community.

The most significant changes that have occurred is the emergence of the culture of consumerism which has been advanced through media outlets that have become agents for spreading American ideals and values. In fact, Media culture and consumer culture have become inseparable. For instance, one of the most powerful ways that constantly bombard consumers is advertising. A whole powerful industry and companies have grown around this area of consumerism, enticing consumers to spend on the products that are portrayed as attractive and desirable. The most powerful of these is Television which affects norms by giving us information about how other people live. Take as an instance, Hollywood movies or television shows, or other forms of entertainment, not only reflect but also promote the culture of consumption that prevails in western society. The US culture of consumption has invaded the Arab region but mainly the Gulf States as a consequence of globalization and market liberalization. The latter have engendered new habits of waste and spending especially around social celebrations and festivities.

3.5.1. Consumerism and City Culture in the Globalization Era

Globalization and the spread of rampant consumerism have transformed the Gulf States from traditional societies to modern ones following on the path of the western values. Commercial television and the internet, marketing strategies, manipulative advertising, urbanization, and proliferating shopping centers, are all components of globalization promoting the emulation of the Western consumerist lifestyle.

Globalization has brought the proliferation of new media and social networking sites, alongside international Western and Arabic TV channels. The latter have engendered individualistic consumerism, in that it is assumed that the media is not only a carrier of information and news, but also a carrier and maker of culture. The latter has not been familiar in the Gulf States' societies. Global TV channels in Arabic and English together with social media have created a virtual space; so that international brands are now known by many Arab populations who want to have the latest fashions, cars, accessories, and brands. The spread of American-style shopping malls matched this by providing physical spaces in which both domestic and international goods are available in abundance. It has increased

the understanding of consumer culture and the willingness to accept the self-gratifying idea of shopping, consumption, tourism, and leisure time.

Another major change that has been an outcome of globalization is the increased national income, emerging middle class, and liberal import policies due to the oil boom years between 2000 and 2008. These have increased female participation in family purchase decisions, have led to a burgeoning youth market, and have increased per capita income. All these facts have enabled a transformation of the Gulf States into consumer societies. The growing distribution and influence of western products and the rise of a worldwide popular media and electronic communication systems suggest that consumerism has spread beyond the shores of the US. It is evident also that Arab Gulf cities have gained entrance to consumerism via oil wealth. A high purchasing power, fuelling more consumption added to more choices, more alternatives, and more possibilities have become the labels of the Gulf States' city life and culture emulating the west.

Hence, features of American westernization in Saudi Arabia are manifest and embodied in the Burger King, KFC, and McDonald's restaurants that line the streets that lead to Mecca's Holy Ka'aba Square, which is another side of the Mecca Cola trend¹⁰⁵ that has been noted as part of the globalization phenomenon. Because of western supremacy at all levels, people around the world try to emulate the west striving for modernization. For instance, the Gulf cities are primarily "centers of consumption rather than centers of production."¹⁰⁶ Part of the impact of globalization on the Gulf cities and the lives of its people is their willing to look modern through high consumption and acquisition of western brands, goods and fashion. Besides, the Gulf capital cities such as Riyadh or Dubai are known for their immensity, big exhibition centers and outsized, ultra-modern malls that rank among the world's top ones, which actually epitomize the rapid Americanization of the Gulf States. Dubai city, for example, ranks third after the United States and Singapore.¹⁰⁷

Dubai looks like 'Las Vegas' or 'New York' with its skyscrapers, the highest 'Burj Khalifa', and the fascinating 'Burj Al Arab' which is called the "Shopping Capital of the Middle East." Dubai embodies the goods and seduction of global capitalism, with more than

¹⁰⁵Ram Uri, "Liquid Identities: Mecca Cola versus Coca Cola," (European Journal of Cultural Studies, 10 n°4, 2007) in Jan Nederveen Pieterse, *Globalization and Culture: Global Melange*, (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2009) 135.

¹⁰⁶Sulayman Khalaf, *The Evolution of the Gulf City Type, Oil, and Globalization*, in John W. Fox, Nada Mourtada-Sabbah and Mohammed al-Mutawa, op.cit.258.

¹⁰⁷"Gulf News," (August 15, 2003) 30, in ibid.256.

20 large, American-style, multi-storey shopping malls, endowed with the latest technological innovations and elegance. These cool structures with their arcades of elegant shops, shining marble floors, escalators, postmodern fantasia color schemes, water fountains, Mediterranean style cafés, international restaurants, food courts, soft music, and prestige German and Japanese cars as lottery prizes welcome thousand shoppers and spectators every day.

It is argued that the Gulf cities' high consumption is due to the high incomes and the revenues of the oil wealth which have permitted free services and provisions and a redirection toward greater consumption for the citizens. Definitely, the ruling elite perceive their new metropolises as monuments of modernity, progress, and national prestige. Each of these cities is repeatedly described as the "Pearl of the Gulf," "Diamond of the Gulf," and the "Bride of the Gulf."¹⁰⁸

Dubai is exclusively a center with the greatest connections to the operations and many transnational corporations which have also been assuming a global role. Fast food and beverage brands are highly obvious examples of existing cultural imperialism. Brands like McDonalds, Coca-Cola and Starbucks bring the "American way of living" and invade the Gulf cities' traditions. There is a western way of life that is imitated at the expense of traditional culture that is being sold for a new culture of luxury, extravagance, and festivities through travel and new dining experiences. It can be argued then that the US cultural imperialism has completed its mission.

3.5.2. Internalization of Festivities

The Gulf States after the 9/11 have come to embrace perfectly well the age of globalization. It is clearly manifested in the way these states have become commercial centers in the Arab region, through the expansion of commerce and the culture of consumerism. It is unmistakable that consumption has become the driving force of these societies and a social practice for their citizens. Indeed, commercialization and consumption are part of the system of globalization (neoliberal capitalism) which pushes toward modernity, acquisition, upward social mobility and individuality. These are also linked to the culture of festivities which have invaded these societies and have played an important role in enhancing the culture of consumerism.

¹⁰⁸SulaymanKhalaf, in *ibid.* 258.

Festivals in the Gulf States and mainly in the UAE are held around the year with the aim of encouraging consumerism to flourish, as well as advertising for the most important and famous brands in the world. Moreover, it plays a great role in boosting economy. Along with this there are entertainments including carnivals, cinema and musical shows that are organized to attract families and millions of tourists from all over the world for shopping and spending good times every year. Moreover, tourism has encouraged the adoption of western eating habits, drink, dress, and lifestyles. These changes have resulted from the sudden exposure to a globalized western commercial culture. The latter has an impact on the Gulf States and the Arab region as a whole in the economic and social transformation of these societies into western consumer societies. Part of attracting thousands of people to the festivals such as the famous Dubai's shopping festival engenders high levels of spending. The monthly average spending among affluent nationals on beauty, fashion and gifts is US\$2,400. On average 42% of GCC consumers spend on luxury clothes on a one to two month basis, 41% on luxury shoes and 37% on luxury bags every two to three months.¹⁰⁹

Among these festivals there are International film festival, Dubai Tennis Championship and Dubai World Cup, Dubai International Jazz Festival, Art Dubai, The Bride Show, Festival of Taste, Shrimp Festival, Emirates Dubai Rugby, UAE Desert Challenge, and racing tournaments (cars / motorbikes).¹¹⁰

3.6.Obama's Cultural Initiative in the Middle East

Time has come for a new beginning and people voted for an Afro-American democrat. President Barack Obama came into office in 2009 with a clear international priority: fixing America's faltering Middle East foreign policy. The Obama administration significantly altered the style, tone and attitude of its policy towards the Middle East in an effort to demonstrate to Middle Eastern leaders and the Arab street alike that Washington has greater sensitivity and willingness to engage and listen rather than to lecture. The first visible shift of the Obama presidency was in its rhetoric. His 2009 Speech in Cairo was named the 'New Beginning' which is another phrase for change. Change especially in the U.S.-Muslim world relations that have been torn; and also, to correct the image of

¹⁰⁹Anthony Chalhoub, op.cit. 8.

¹¹⁰Dubai's shopping festival is the most important propaganda for shopping tourism.<http://www.albawaba.com/ar>. (Accessed 19/3/2016).

America left by President Bush. It is clear that after 9/11, the US has become a nation at war and the Bush policies had negative consequences for the United States image in the world. Similarly, the war on terror with no clearly defined enemy led to a growing hostility toward America, which has become widely despised and feared.

Hence, the Cairo travel and speech can be read as for winning the hearts and minds of the Muslims and Arabs worldwide. Obama's speech sent a clear message, addressed critical challenges, and offered a new way forward for managing relations between the US and the Muslim world

I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect, and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive, and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles—principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings.¹¹¹

Determined to reach out and reengage with the Arab and Muslim world, Obama gave his first interview as president to 'Al-Arabiyya'; an Arab satellite station. In a revealing passage, he pointed out that part of his new job was to "communicate the fact that the United States has a stake in the well-being of the Muslim world that the language we use has to be a language of respect."¹¹² The President reiterated this message with even greater effect during his Cairo speech a few months later where he repeatedly quoted the Koran and called for a "new beginning between the United States and Muslims."¹¹³ Furthermore, forceful strategies of democracy promotion abroad were shelved. Rather than bullying Middle Eastern countries into democratic reform as Bush' did, Obama adopted a more hands-off approach. He clearly signaled a break with the past and rupture with Bush's policy in his Cairo speech: "No system of government can or should be imposed by one nation on any other"¹¹⁴as well as in the Moscow speech "America cannot and should not seek to impose any system of government on any other country, nor would we presume to choose which party or individual should run a country."¹¹⁵For Obama and his team, change is strategy because of its potential to improve

¹¹¹Obama's Speech, Cairo, April 2009,G:\obama\Text Obama's Speech in Cairo - The New York Times.mht, (Accessed 19/11/2015).

¹¹²Gregorio Bettiza and Christopher Phillips, *Obama's Middle East Policy: Time to Decide*,(London School of Economics and Political Science)11.

¹¹³Obama's Speech, Cairo, April 2009.

¹¹⁴ Ibid. Cairo, April 2009.

¹¹⁵Obama's Speech, Moscow, 2009.

American foreign policy in a positive way. As stated in Cairo, “9/11 trauma, led us to act contrary to our traditions and our ideals, we are taking concrete actions to change the course.”¹¹⁶

Obama admitted that there are tensions between the Muslim and the West which root in colonialism. He addressed that problem by acknowledging civilization's debt to Islam. For him, Islamic culture throughout history has demonstrated through words and deeds the possibilities of religious tolerance and racial equality. He stated that Islam preaches the same morals and ethics that were preached by both the Talmud and the Holy Bible. The Holy Koran tells us: “O mankind! We have created you male and a female; and we have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another”. The Talmud tells us: “The whole of the Torah is for the purpose of promoting peace.” The Holy Bible tells us: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”¹¹⁷

Moreover, he blamed “mistrust and misperceptions” for most problems between the United States and the Muslim world:

“in order to move forward, we must say openly to each other the things we hold in our hearts and that are too often said only behind closed doors. There must be a sustained effort to listen to each other; to learn from each other; to respect one another; and to seek common ground.”¹¹⁸

These steps are meant to demonstrate amove towards cooperation and partnership. The importance of partnership between the United States of America and Islam is one that must be based on what Islam is, not what it is not; one that is free from negative stereotypes on both sides recognizing and respecting common humanity.

Examining Obama’s speech in Cairo, one sees that it is highly promising but most importantly it is a complete rupture with the past policies and strategies. Obama believes and gives hope for the people of the world that they can live together in peace. That they have to assume their collective responsibilities to resolve international conflicts; seek a common ground as well as racial and gender equality; acknowledge their common humanity and treat all humans with dignity and respect; cooperate on mutual interests and a better future for all; join together as partners in building the world based on truth and faith. Furthermore, he

¹¹⁶Ibid. Cairo, April 2009.

¹¹⁷Zekeh S. Gbotokuma, op.cit.19.

¹¹⁸Obama’s Speech, Cairo, April 2009.

explains that Man's common aspirations of peace and security, family, love, community, and religion are relevant to common humanity; one that goes beyond the existing divide between the Self and the other.

In trying to heal the wounds of the past, Obama forged and based his agenda on the most critical issues of the time that are related to the Arab/ Muslim world in the globalization age; education, economic development, science and technology, and innovation through balancing tradition and technology.¹¹⁹ Obama planned to mend America's relationship with the Middle East and to be careful not to repeat Bush's mistake. Therefore, his policy concerning the Arab and Muslim world comprised seven pillars: democracy, economic development, women's rights, education, violent extremism, the Israeli- Palestinian conflict, and Nuclear weapon. Concerning democracy, Obama stated that, though

America does not presume to know what is best for everyone, I do have an unyielding belief that all people yearn for certain things: the ability to speak your mind and have a say in how you are governed; confidence in the rule of law and the equal administration of justice; government that is transparent and doesn't steal from the people; the freedom to live as you choose. He called such freedoms "human right."¹²⁰

On economic development, Obama addressed both the negative and positive aspects of globalization, for which new funds, scholarship programs and partnerships to support education, technological development and better health care in Muslim-majority countries should be encouraged. For the President, education should be expanded through exchanging programs, and increasing scholarships, and encouraging more Americans to study in Muslim communities.

As far as religious intolerance is concerned, it was addressed in an impartial and diplomatic way. He stated that Islam has a proud tradition of tolerance, that's why he consciously did not use the word "terrorism" or the "War on Terror" in his speech but rather religious extremism.¹²¹

¹¹⁹Zekeh S. Gbotokuma, op.cit. 18.

¹²⁰Obama's Speech, Cairo, April 2009.

¹²¹Fawaza A. Gerges, *The "Obama Doctrine" in the Middle East*, (Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, The Duke Islamic Studies Center, and ISLAMI Commentary, October 2012)1-12.

On women's rights, he announced the necessity for the United States and any Muslim country to partner in order to improve women's conditions. This is clearly stated in his speech when he declared

I reject the view of some in the West that a woman who chooses to cover her hair is somehow less equal, but I do believe that a woman who is denied an education is denied equality. And it is no coincidence that countries where women are well educated are far more likely to be prosperous...the United States will partner with any Muslim-majority country to support expanded literacy for girls, and to help young women pursue employment through micro-financing that helps people live their dreams.¹²²

Obama acknowledged that the western way is not the only way, and that gender equality and equal educational opportunity are requirements for our common prosperity.

¹²²Obama's op.cit.17.

Conclusion

This dissertation tries to examine the existing relationship between globalization and American cultural imperialism. The argument is built on the fact that since the US has become a world power with unprecedented might, reach and sway; it has managed to dominate the world through different tools and means; a combination of soft and hard power. Sometimes the US acted through waging wars and some other times through economic and cultural policies all of which have the aim of protecting its national security and interests. Hence, the dissertation argues that the globalization era is a phenomenon that consolidates the spread of the capitalist system founded on the US and western values. That is the impact of the global economy and global culture on local economies and cultures to the benefit of the West. Indeed globalization is a disguised face of US imperialism.

Throughout the dissertation there is an examination of the US foreign policy toward the Arab region from the end of the Second World War up to the years following the 9/11 attacks. A period of time which covers different administrations and the policy implemented by each: containment, securing interests, establishing a new world order, interfering in the domestic affairs of the Arab countries, waging war against two strategic countries in the name of fighting terrorism, and promoting democracy. All policies are in fact enhancing US capitalist system, interests in the region and its national security, in a way that establishes the USA as the world's hegemon.

For instance, the US has always masked its lust for territorial gains and occupations under the mask of universalizing its own values of freedom. The Monroe Doctrine was the first American overseas commitment, which established the ideological basis for US hegemony. Afterwards, Roosevelt claimed the exercise of "an international police power." In the aftermath of the Second World War, the US played the role of 'protector' of the 'free world' from Communism. It established its political and economic hegemony over the world through the Bretton Woods institutions; as well as, it dominated in technology and the military field.

The Soviet Union's collapse manifests the end of an era and the beginning of another in world history; the ideological and geopolitical conflict between the communist and the capitalist blocs. America as the unipolar leader of the world has since then pursued its interests in the world, so as to preserve and protect its national security. The gradual shift in focus of the US foreign policy has turned towards the Middle East, first because of oil, then

because of Israel. As a matter of fact the US has to find another alibi through which it could reach its objectives of world domination.

The Bush Senior administration proclaimed a 'new' world order based on the maintenance of the use of military power that was already a pillar of America's foreign policy. Hence, the intensity with which the Bush administration responded to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1991. The Clinton administration sought to pursue its foreign policy based on the spread of market economy (capitalist system) and democracy. The Bush Junior administration, under neoconservative pressure, opted for meeting terror with terror by declaring a Global War on Terrorism. That meant targeting what the US labeled 'rogue states' accused of supporting 'terrorism' and even, in the case of Iraq, possessing weapons of mass destruction.

The US as a unipolar power has managed to dominate the world and to devise every tool and means to achieve its objective. For this to succeed, the US needed to work out a system that could facilitate the road to hegemony; globalization has been the "perfect" system through which the US achieves its aims of cultural imperialism given the fact that the former is a thorough system that globalizes the world politically, economically, socially and culturally. The new system includes the spread of the capitalist system through institutions, organizations and NGOs, which have for objective enhancing liberal values and free trade in the world; as well as, promoting democracy according to the American model. Therefore, the US fostering of its interests has been buried within the rhetoric 'globalization.'

Globalization is a blanket for cultural imperialism that is old imperialism in new clothes. Politically, globalization aims at exercising a political domination over the world in terms of political decisions (loss of sovereignty) to serve US interests. Economically, it aims to spread economic capitalism and to interfere in the economies of other countries through WTO, IMF, WB and the big companies. Moreover, it aims to expand the culture of consumerism throughout third world countries that become markets for the consumption of foreign goods. Socially, globalization fosters limitless individual freedom, engenders poverty, joblessness and high rates of crime and trafficking. Culturally, it engenders a global homogenized culture based on western norms and values.

The US also dominates militarily to deter other states from even trying to threaten the US, hence ensuring a military pre-eminence prevents the re-emergence of a new rival. That's why the US -right at the end of the Cold War- took advantage from the first presented chance

to lay down a hand on the Gulf region, given the fact that the Arab Gulf region is considered by American policymakers as an area of vital strategic interests -for the oil reserves present in the region - to the national security of the United States.

The Gulf War (1991) was the first time when the US could exercise a world power. It presented the US as the only power able to manage international justice and the announcement of the birth of a new world order by Bush senior. The Gulf War exemplifies the evidence of US imperialist ambitions. The region was selected for securing the countries in possession of the oil and gas, while deterring opposition, maintaining a hold on political power and enhancing US control of the world's primary energy sources to establish an imperial grand strategy of permanent world domination; as well as, gaining unrestricted access to the region's markets, energy supplies, and strategic resources.

The protection of the US interests has always been at the core of its policies, that is why the Arab region is the place where the US has most clearly shown its preference for exerting its hegemony and enforcing its policy, not only because it is a strategically important region or only because it has the largest oil reserves, but also to protect Israel and reorder the region in a way that can ensure the integration of Israel into it and eliminate any potential threat to the United States' existence and security. Fighting Islamic fundamentalism, stopping the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, protecting the traditional ties with friendly Arab monarchies, containing Iraq and Iran and confronting terrorism, can be seen as other American strategies or tactics to protect its interests.

The US has always felt threatened, that's why politically speaking, and 'national security' behavior has always been enhanced and has gone hand in hand with US interests. For instance, the permanent presence of an imaginary threat to US security led the US policy to target Arab-Muslim culture through different means and under various alleged reasons. Islamophobia has pushed the US to follow a new strategy through media war and the war of ideas that are able of influencing and shaping the peoples' conceptions through harsh criticism and depiction of Muslims and Arabs in general as evil. Media have made a differentiation strategy between two types of Muslims: Fundamentalists (Muslim extremists, Islamists, Islamic radicals) versus moderate Muslims. It is worth mentioning that US reactions towards the Arabs and/or Muslims after the 9/11 recalls the existing binary logic of colonialism and/or imperialism. The prevalent divisions in the western thinking between "us, West, good, civilized" versus "them, Muslims, evil, terrorist" attest that realities have not

changed much and that the era of imperialism is not yet off. Moreover, the Bush's administration tendency to democratize the "other" Muslim world recalls again the "mission civilisatrice" of the imperialists. There has been an increasing fear from the Muslims which, added to the 9/11 attacks that have occurred as if to confirm Huntington's prophecy about a future clash between civilizations mainly the West and Islam.

Hence, for the second time the US was presented with a priceless opportunity to act militarily against Afghanistan and Iraq under the veil of fighting terrorism by the US declaring its responsibility to exercise an international police power. The deployment of US troops to protect the geographical means that the US perceived to be economic and strategic interests and to maintain global security highlights the US's desire to pursue new imperialist ambitions. The global war against terrorism has created clear guidelines for US policy makers to revert to preemptive/ preventive war.

Therefore, there was an unprecedented degree of military preeminence that meant to shape the global environment in accordance with US interests. There was also the advocacy of unilateralism and of preventive war to destroy threats to American 'security', with the goal of consolidating the American Empire. In fact, the 9/11 came as a golden opportunity for the US to unleash its aggressive predispositions on a region deemed a necessary phase for securing a global American empire by the force of arms; targeting whatever obstacle stands in the way of the US to achieve its objectives of domination.

The US led war against terrorism first in Afghanistan then in Iraq because George W. Bush administration viewed the Middle East/ Gulf region as the base camp of threats to the US national security and then proceeded to its agenda of democracy promotion. For America, Arab and/or Muslim countries are considered politically, economically, and culturally as failed states due to their lack of democracy and liberty. That is why Bush believed it was an opportunity to transform not only the Iraqi state but the entire region so as to consolidate the US influence in the Middle East/ Gulf region. A liberated Iraq would serve the promotion of liberal democratic political values and free market economies in the region; that is America's ideology to facilitate the achievement of hegemony in the Arab region.

However, it is worth mentioning that globalization is associated with western values and as such globalization is what terrorists dislike most because it is not only about exporting and importing prosperity, but also western and/or American values and America's liberal,

consumerist culture which are largely part of the dynamic driving Islamist fury today. Thus the link between globalization and terrorism is that of a cause-effect: globalization generates a backlash.

The years following the 9/11 showed the US focus on the Arab region (Middle East/ Gulf States) through its policy of promoting democracy along with the plan of carving or redrawing the former's map through the Greater Middle East Initiative along with a host of other economic and cultural initiatives that are in fact meant to reshape the region geographically, politically, economically, socially and culturally; imposing norms for security and a common market in order to subordinate the region to US domination. The aim behind the Greater Middle East Initiative is transforming Middle Eastern and Arab into markets for western products, and the thriving of consumerism; hence, the growing of dependency and more concessions from the part of the Arab and Muslim countries. The initiative revolves around the spread of democracy, human rights and women's freedom, as well as, funding literacy programs.

According to President Bush, it is the lack of political freedom in the Arab region that fosters political extremism and anti-Western terrorism, and that the entire the region represents a fertile soil for radical Islam to flourish. Accordingly, the neo- conservatives believed cultural change must be made in the Arab region through the expansion of democracy and the values of freedom. Promoting democracy in these places will therefore help undercut the roots of terrorism. As a consequence of the post 9/11 period, the Arab region and the Gulf States have known ideological, strategic and economic agenda fostered by America through a number of initiatives such as MEPI and BMENA revolving around economic opportunities, democratization, and improving the social conditions. The dissertation argues that it is nothing else than US cultural imperialism under the veil of political, economic, social, and cultural reforms. From then on the US cultural assault on the region has been pushed forward in the age of globalization. The Arab Gulf region has been transformed from tribal countries into modern cities. Globalization also has been the engine that has fostered and expanded the capitalist system through trade agreements and businesses among GCC countries.

Hence, globalization and /or cultural imperialism revolve around the spread of American values, pop culture, English language, mass media, consumerism and modernity. The expansion of trade in cultural products is increasing the exposure of the Gulf States to

foreign cultures and foreign goods which frequently brings about transformations in local cultures, values, and traditions; that's where the role of cultural imperialism lies. For instance, there is a noticeable change in the cultural setting in the Gulf Region during the globalization era; the Gulf States have come to be branded as global cities, which have gone from 'rags to riches'. The branding of these cities is part of the marketing and consumerist cultures to attract investors and tourists alike. Actually, globalization and the spread of rampant consumerism have transformed the Gulf States from traditional societies to a more modern, urban and distinctly affluent societies following on the path of the West. Commercial television and the internet, marketing strategies, manipulative advertising, urbanization, and proliferating shopping centers, are all components of globalization promoting the emulation of the Western consumerist lifestyle.

Modernity and urbanization are sweeping traditional Gulf cities and having an impact on family relations, leading to more individualism, materialism, personal profit, competition, rapid progress, and greed. Global TV channels together with social media have created a virtual space pushing towards more modernity and liberty so that international brands are now known by many Arab populations who want to have the latest fashions, cars, accessories, and brands which are found in the American-style shopping malls. Moreover, these modern states strikingly manifest the existence of an American cultural imperialism - that has spread thoroughly during the globalization era- through their post-modern architecture, shopping malls enticing consumption and extravagant spending, five-star hotels and resorts, American universities, and international business companies and corporations which allow favorable investment, economic opportunities and liberal lifestyles.

Linguistic imperialism is another major fact of US cultural imperialism. The spread of the English language is an outcome of globalization and US leadership in terms of mass communication and information technologies. Language is the vehicle that transmits culture, and the rise of English to an international language of trade and politics (lingua franca) has been one of the strongest vehicles for the transmission of the American culture, which has been enhanced through global media and internet outlets.

Media, television and internet transmit programs including information, education, and entertainment. These heavily western -content programs (sports, drama, musicals and violent movies) with their visual, audio and motion capacities have an impact on the viewers, mainly on youth. Popular culture is projecting the 'American dream' which is being emulated

by the Arab teenagers copying the American ways of clothing, behaving, habits of eating and drinking and moving towards more freedom in establishing pre-marital relations. Hence, such technologies and programs change work practices; transform social and gender relations and engender conflict with traditional belief systems and traditions.

American cultural imperialism has for objectives securing US interests in the Arab Gulf region, ensuring economic gains along with guaranteeing these states' loyalty to America culturally and politically. This is achieved through enhancing modernity and the culture of consumerism, thanks to the role of media and modern information technology.

Therefore, the US/Western model has triumphed: capitalism, individualism, enterprise, moral and political values, liberal democracy, Christianity, popular culture, and mass consumerism are all Western ideals of modernity, democracy and human rights which are presented to the non-West as universal values. The spread of American values and culture is meant for the reign of American cultural dominance all over the world. These make up globalization as a system and work for the unique American interests and objectives of a 'god' on earth. Actually, American hegemonic culture in the Arab Gulf region and the Middle East is achieved because of the US economic, military might added to the power of its mass media globalization of economic and cultural exchanges.

Up to now and following the US's foreign policy trajectory, the dissertation argues that globalization is intrinsic to American cultural domination and is a mask for cultural imperialism in that it generates a dependency culture between producer and consumer. Globalization is a veil for US imperialist motivations, given the fact that the processes of cultural imperialism are seen as having a functional role to play in the spread of capitalism as an economic system. The spread of capitalism implies the spread of a global culture which is focused in mass culture and consumerism, that is centered in the West and heavily American undermining all cultures and draws them into its sphere. This is helped by media outlets which are intrinsic to the spread of the former. As such media imperialism is relevant to the existence of a cultural domination since imported cultural goods have an evident cultural effect.

Moreover, media outlets with the latest technologies help to shape and convince the public opinion about the inevitability of the global war on terrorism. The latter is no more than a fiction constructed by the US just to strengthen its cultural and political domination, including its human rights around the globe and most importantly to maintain a stronghold in

the Middle East and the Arab region. The aim behind is the division of the region into small territories, to enhance imperialism, ensure dependency, protect interests and achieve a long sought American- Israeli dream.

Barack Obama came into office in 2009 with a clear international priority: fixing America's faltering Middle East foreign policy. He announced a 'new beginning' which is another phrase for change; change especially in the US-Muslim world relations that have been torn. He was thus determined to reach out and reengage with the Arab and Muslim world. There is a clear shift in US foreign policy through which he has planned to mend America's relationship with the Middle East and a clear rupture with the preceding administrations being careful not to repeat Bush's mistake. His policy is pregnant with promises and holds out a hand to the Arab and Muslim world; it comprised seven pillars: democracy, economic development, women's rights, education, violent extremism, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and Nuclear weapon.

Time will show how true Obama's intention has been and will confirm this new tendency or refute it!

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Annexes

Tradition vs Modernity



The changing Gulf societies from tribes to ...



...modern cities of skylines/ on the path of Las Vegas and New York.





Means of transportation: from Bedouins on camels and fishing boats...



...to luxurious cars





Women moving away from traditional veils and “Abaya” to embrace western fashion.



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ملخص:

تتناول المذكرة المطروحة أماننا لمناقشة رسالة الماجستير و التي يدور موضوعها حول العولمة و الامبريالية الثقافية الأمريكية. يقوم هذا العمل بدراسة العلاقة الوطيدة بين هدين المفهومين و تحديدا السياسة الخارجية الثقافية المنتهجة من قبل الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية في دول الخليج العربي بعد سقوط المعسكر الشيوعي. و الملاحظ أن أمريكا حاولت بسط نفوذها في المنطقة و تطبيق مشروعها الامبريالي. تعتبر دول الخليج مثالا جيدا للدراسة نظرا للتغيير الاجتماعي و الثقافي السريع الذي طرا عليها نتيجة العولمة و الأمركة.

تنقسم هذه الأطروحة إلى ثلاثة فصول. الفصل الأول عبارة عن تمهيد لتحديد مفهومي العولمة و كذا الامبريالية الثقافية. بالإضافة إلى بروز الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية كدولة قوية بعد الحرب العالمية الثانية و كيفية محاولتها احتواء الاتحاد السوفيتي و الإطاحة بالنظام الشيوعي خلال فترة ما يعرف بالحرب الباردة. و كذلك انتهاج سياسة خارجية تمكنها من الحفاظ على مصالحها في منطقة الخليج العربي و الشرق الأوسط عامة.

في الفصل الثاني نقوم بدراسة فترة التسعينات التي تعرف ظهور ما يسمى بالنظام العالمي الجديد بعد انتصار النظام الرأسمالي و انفراد الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية بقيادة العالم. خلال هذه الفترة الزمنية تقوم الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية بنشر و فرض نظامها السياسي و الاقتصادي و الثقافي، باعتباره نظاما مثاليا ينبغي أن يحتذى به. لأجل ذلك نلاحظ أن الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية تستغل أول فرصة تتاح لها لبسط نفوذها في منطقة الخليج، و ذلك من خلال حرب الخليج الأولى سنة 1991 باسم حماية الكويت. كما أنها دعمت و أسست لثقافتها الامبريالية عن طريق الغزو الثقافي بوسائل الإعلام

و التكنولوجيا الحديثة، و كذلك الهيمنة العسكرية في المنطقة. و تزامنا مع ولوج العولمة إلى هذه الدول، نلاحظ أنها تشرع في التغيير و التحول إلى عواصم حديثة و عصرية متبعة في ذلك النموذج الأمريكي الغربي.

في الفصل الثالث نحاول دراسة هذه الدول التي تعتبر مثالا حيا متعرضا للعولمة و كذا تأثير السياسة الثقافية الأمريكية عليها عن طريق وسائل الإعلام و التكنولوجيا المتطورة. في عصر الألفية الجديدة تقوم الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية بتدعيم الامبريالية الثقافية، و هذا كرد فعل لهجمات 11 سبتمبر 2001. و نلاحظ بعدها مباشرة أن تقوم الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية بتصنيف العرب و المسلمين كإرهابيين على حد السواء. و من ثم تشرع في تطبيق أجنحتها من خلال الحرب على الإرهاب ، و بعدها نشر الديمقراطية و حقوق الإنسان في المنطقة، مع ما يتلاءم و الحفاظ على مصالحها و أهدافها. و هكذا تقوم بشن الحرب على العراق في 2003 باعتبارها دولة تشكل خطورة على المصالح الاستراتيجية و الأمن الأمريكي. فعلا تنجح أمريكا في التأثير على دول الخليج حيث أن هذه الأخيرة تحولت إلى عواصم حضارية متبعة في ذلك الغرب و النظام الليبرالي المبني على الرأسمالية، الانفتاح على الأسواق العالمية و ثقافة الاستهلاك. و بذلك نخلص إلى أن العولمة عبارة عن نظاميخدم المصالح الأمريكية و الامبريالية الثقافية التي تود أمريكا من خلالها السيطرة على العالم.