

The End of American Hegemony and the Rise of the Geopolitical Vacuum in the Middle East. A Study of the Global Transformation from the “American Middle East Model” to a Post-Unipolar World

(Translated)

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Introduction: The Era of Decline

Since the end of the Cold War, it appeared that the United States had reached the pinnacle of its control over the world.

The Soviet Union disintegrated, socialist systems collapsed, and “the end of history” was proclaimed as Fukuyama had heralded, making the American liberal system the only possible framework for organizing the world. However, the Middle East, the region upon which the pillars of that hegemony were built, is the very one that today reveals the cracking of this structure.

The last two decades of the twenty-first century reveal a radical transformation: an accelerating American withdrawal and the disintegration of the regional order upon which Western dominance had rested for seventy years. This is what this book describes as “the rise of the geopolitical vacuum in the Middle East,” a vacuum that does not mean the absence of power, but rather the absence of the ability to control, and the shaking of the system of influence that seemed firmly established.

From Rise to Decline

In the 1990s, Washington acted as the sole ruler of the international system. It was the one that decided war and peace, imposed sanctions, toppled regimes, and rebuilt states. However, the wars it later fought, from Afghanistan to Iraq to the “War on Terror,” transformed from tools of hegemony into factories of crisis.

America emerged from them exhausted, unable to impose order, lacking confidence, and burdened by economic and moral costs.

The author states in his analysis that “the end of empires does not begin from the outside, but from the moment of addiction to power.” Washington was afflicted with this disease when it thought that control could be eternal, and that money, media, and weapons were sufficient to freeze history.

But events, from the collapse of Kabul to the breaking of American influence in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen, showed that power, when used without a moral project, turns into a burden on who owns it.

The Fall of the “American Middle East Model”

The book shows that the central pillar of American hegemony was what is known as the “Middle East (4+2) Model,” meaning the management of the region through four regional powers, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the Jewish entity, under the

supervision of two international powers, the United States and Russia. This equation ensured Washington's control over energy routes, prevented any cross-alliances, and kept conflict within a "controllable limit."

However, this equation began to collapse from within:

- Turkey gradually slipped from the Atlantic axis, to an independent axis oscillating between Moscow and Beijing.
- Iran withstood the siege and expanded its influence in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen.
- Saudi Arabia began diversifying its alliances after losing confidence in the American security guarantee.
- The Jewish entity sank into its domestic contradictions and into open confrontations in Gaza, Lebanon, and the West Bank, which revealed the limits of its military superiority.

As for Russia, after its military intervention in Syria in 2015, it no longer remained the "secondary guarantor," but became Washington's political and military peer in the heart of the region. Thus, the foundations of the American system eroded from within, until Washington became incapable of imposing its will on its allies before its adversaries.

The Geopolitical Vacuum: When the Controlling Hand Disappears

What the author calls the "geopolitical vacuum" is not a vacuum in the material existence of powers, but in the ability to control their balances. American power remains enormous, but it has become unable to determine the direction of events. Washington has lost its most important element: Narrative Supremacy (hegemony).

In the past, every crisis was understood through the American narrative, from the Gulf Wars to what was called the Arab Spring. Today, the media and narrative monopoly has disintegrated; people now have their own platforms, and the world watches images of war in Gaza, Ukraine, or Sudan from multiple angles, not solely through the lens of the White House.

This vacuum is not necessarily filled by a new power, but may transform the region into an open arena of competition among multiple powers: Russia and China on one side, Iran and Turkey on another, and non-state actors on yet another.

The author sees in it a rare historical opportunity, because the withdrawal of American hegemony opens the door to redefining the regional order on new foundations.

The Middle East in a Changing World

In a post-polar world, the Middle East has transformed from being merely a side arena to a pivotal field for reshaping the international order. For wars over energy, sea passages, technology, and infrastructure all pass through here.

The difference is that regional states, after decades of dependency, have begun to acquire geopolitical awareness and seek independence in decision-making.

The author, **Fukuyama**, analyzes that “the new generation of leaders in the region no longer sees Washington as the sole reference for security, but as one of the sources of danger.”

Hence arises the phenomenon of flexible alliances:

- Saudi-Iranian rapprochement under Chinese sponsorship.
- Gradual Turkish-Egyptian opening.
- The entry of India, China, the Emirates, and Russia into new economic blocs, such as BRICS.

All of this redraws the mental map of the region; for “loyalties” no longer remain fixed, nor “axes” remained closed. The Middle East has begun, for the first time in a century, to think outside the Sykes-Picot map and to seek balances that it generates itself.

Illusions of Power: When the Empire Cannot Retreat

The paradox that the author insightfully captures is that the **US** recognizes its decline, but does not know how to retreat. Great empires do not die when defeated, but when they insist on remaining as they were.

Hence Washington's erratic policies:

- Withdrawal from Afghanistan without a strategy.
- Repeated sanctions that lose their effectiveness.
- Unconditional support for ‘**Israel**’ despite its moral and political cost.
- Attempts to regain influence through short-term interest-based alliances.

These policies no longer produce hegemony, but rather deepen the global feeling of the need for an alternative, and thus, every defensive step by America becomes an additional step toward undermining its influence.

The Rise of the Vacuum or the Beginnings of a New Order?

The author poses an essential question: Are we truly facing a geopolitical vacuum, or the labor pains of the birth of a new multi-centered order?

In his view, the vacuum is not always a danger; it may be a moment of new founding. American hegemony had frozen history in the region and kept balances artificial. Today, its shaking allows the return of nations' self-action and opens the door to a more natural regional order based on multiplicity of powers rather than their dependency.

This possibility, as the writer explains, remains conditional on the peoples' ability to produce their independent civilizational project, not merely identifying with new poles. For if the Middle East shifts from dependency on Washington to dependency on Beijing or Moscow, the vacuum will not be filled, but only change its form.

Political Islam and the Return to the Self

Amid this transformation, the author sees that the greatest vacuum is not in politics, but in the thought. The absence of American hegemony has made room for regional powers, but it has not yet produced a coherent civilizational project.

Hence, the old question returns in a new form: Can the Islamic Ummah present its authentic vision to the world?

Islamic movements, despite the marginalization, repression, and distortion they have faced, still represent the moral and spiritual reservoir that can fill this vacuum. However, the author warns that returning to self-sufficiency does not mean isolation or historical romanticism, but rather transforming the Islamic thought into a contemporary political project capable of international competition, what he calls the 1+0 model: a system of self-unity that needs no foreign guarantor.

The End of Hegemony and the Beginning of New History

In the book's conclusion, the author presents an intellectual summary that transcends the Middle East to the entire global order: "The era of empires that manage the world from a single center has ended. The world is now entering the stage of non-unipolarity, where balances are made through interaction, not imposition."

This moment, the moment of the fall of American hegemony, is not merely a political event, but a civilizational turning point that redefines power and meaning. For when Washington withdraws, the question no longer remains: Who will fill the vacuum? However: Which idea will lead the world after the decline of the Western liberal idea?

In this question, as the author sees it, lies the historical opportunity of the Islamic Ummah to present to the world an alternative model that balances spirit, justice, and reason, and rescues humanity from the spiral of consumption and disintegration produced by the civilization of utility.

Conclusion: The Vacuum Is Not the End

American hegemony resembled a low ceiling over the peoples of the region: it protected them from the storm, but prevented them from rising. However, today, despite the chaos and blood, this ceiling has begun to crack.

Its fall, despite the danger, may be the beginning of the region's true history. For the vacuum, as the author writes, "is not an end to time, but an end to stagnation." Unless this space is filled with a just self-project, others will fill it with their projects. The current moment grants the Middle East, for the first time in a century, the opportunity to shape its balance itself, not to be reshaped from outside.

Hence, the end of American hegemony is not a tragedy for the world, but the beginning of a new history... A history that the East may write this time, not merely be written in.