Emerging Middle East: Interplay of the New Power Centers

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Abstract

Relations among the regional powers in the Middle East continue to dominate global concerns about security. A power transition amongst the regional players is now under way from which new power centers are emerging. These emerging powers are testing regional geo-political realities to assert themselves in the region. In this regard, this study attempts to assess the geopolitical effects of the "Arab Spring" upheavals on the region; to delineate the impact of rise of Islamists on the regional policies of Egypt, Turkey and Iran; and to evaluate the consequences of a possible Israel-Iranian war on the regional balance of power and geo-strategic developments. The study, while applying the power transition theory, qualitatively analyzes the interplay of four major Middle Eastern powers namely: Iran, Turkey, Egypt and Israel. Considering the significance of religious, strategic, political and economic ties of Pakistan and Middle East, the study also discusses the impacts of power transition in Middle East on Pakistan.

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Introduction

After the recent convulsion at social and political level, the “Middle East”1 once again has found itself at the cusp of present uncertainties and future possibilities. The nomenclature “Middle East” has been a political expression rather than geographical one; however, discussion in this study relates to the region from Indus to Nile that is significant for its conflict-prone and energy-rich characteristics.2 While it is still premature to completely assess the outcomes and impacts of the so called ‘Arab Spring’ uprisings and upheavals on the emerging geo-strategic outlook in the Middle Eastern arena. Nevertheless, after the two and a half year since the upsurge started, it is useful to tentatively delineate and scrutinize the unfolding maturations in the region. Only by studying the upheavals and their possible repercussions on the geo-strategic environment, future developments can be forecasted. Considering the significance of religious, strategic, political and economic ties of Pakistan and Middle East the study also discusses the impacts of power transition in Middle East on Pakistan.

Given the rapid changes, demands for popular participation and success of Islamist movements sweeping the Middle Eastern political realm, this study applies the power transition theory on the interplay of four countries of Middle East namely; Iran, Turkey, Egypt and Israel. It also addresses the pressing questions that relate to the interplay of these countries. For example, will Israel be more isolated than before in the region, and if so, why? How strong is the Iran’s influence in the region, and have Iranian ideological, political and economic tools been dwindled? Will the containing and balancing efforts of US and its allies in the region going to keep Iran lonely? How does Turkey and Egypt both non-Arab states, factor in
to this equation? And, how the interplay of these players affects the region?

The main argument of this study is that the interplay between Iran, Turkey, Israel and Egypt is transforming the region. All of these Middle Eastern players carry important strategic assets in the interplay: Iran, an energy rich Gulf power has nuclear card in hand; Turkey is a rising Euro-Asian power with NATO membership and has booming economy; Egypt is considered a trend setter and leader in Arab World, plus its demographic and geographic disposition makes it significant; Israel is militarily strong, is the only nuclear power of the region and European and American interests also converge in the country.

**Power Transition and Middle East**

In the paradigm of realism, there are many approaches to assess the shift in the realm of international relations. However, this paper applies “power Transition” theory to study the interplay of power centers in the Middle East. Power transition theory is a structural and dynamic approach to world politics. According to A.F.K. Organski, “international systems are frequently dominated by a single powerful state that uses its strength to create a set of political and economic structures and norms of behavior that enhance both the security of the lead state and the stability of the system as a whole.” The maintenance of the status quo is determinant on satisfaction. A state that is satisfied by the status quo they ally with the dominant state and get economic and security aid but other states that happened to be dissatisfied are usually too weak to alter the status quo. But, if a state grows in power, which is determined by rate of industrialization, and is dissatisfied with the status quo then that state will initiate a war to turn over the status quo. In the
book, Causes of War, Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson argue that “The rising challenger begins a war to hasten the transition and bring benefits from the international system into line with the challenger’s rising military power”.

The change from a bipolar world to a single dominant power is not the only reason why the world is so different. Theories that thrived on viewing the world through the clash of two super-powers no longer apply now and this has been a critical policy failure for lawmakers. Tammen attempts to rectify this failure in two ways: first, by providing “a composite picture of Power Transition theory by integrating the various extensions and amplifications into a coherent whole,” and by translating power transition theory into policy relevant terms.

In power transition theory, war occurs because of three conditions: “power shifts, approximate equality of power, and dissatisfaction with the status quo.” Unlike balance of power theory, which comes into opposition to power transition theory, and solely focuses on the power of military, power transition theory defines power as “The cumulus of population, economic productivity, and the political capacity of the state to mobilize resources to support international policies.” In other words, the increasing industrialization of state increases its power. But as Levy and Thompson argue, the growth of a state “follows an S-shaped growth curve.” The power of state grows the more it industrializes but eventually levels off as the state continues to sustain itself. That is why a possible challenger can catch up to the dominant state. Because the dominant state has modest growth, a potential challenger rapidly industrializes and, then can, challenge the
dominant state, but once again the challenger must be dissatisfied with the status quo.

Considering the volatile state of peace in Middle East and center of two most dangerous conflicts, understanding the interaction of the structural and dynamic components of power transition theory provides a probabilistic tool, by which to measure the changes in the region and to forecast likely events in future rounds of change. While based on empirically tested propositions backed by large data sets, the theory has an intuitive feel that maximizes its utility for interpreting the interplay of the four emerging powers in the region. Before discussing the reasons for the emergence of new power centers, the study gives an overview of three major players that have been dominating the regional politics.

**An Overview of Old Power Centers in the Region**

For decades Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iraq have been exercising an important influence in Middle East. Beginning with Syrian, Egyptian and Saudi Arabian bandwagonning in 1973 against Israel to recover the territories occupied in 1967; their collaboration on the 1989 Taif agreement that brought an end to the civil war in Lebanon; through their assistance to the US war to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation; and the accord that underlie the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative, Cairo, Riyadh and Damascus have been able, at times, to effect major change in the Middle Eastern realm. But with the start of twenty-first century, the regional dynamics have started changing and the old order is withering away.

Syria has been turned from being an influential player to being a playing field amongst regional and international players. Assad’s regime has proven too strong to be brought down quickly and too illegitimate to continue holding power in the country. Hence, Syria
in all probability is entering a “lost decade”, in which the collapse of Assad regime will be followed by an uneasy transition. It will, therefore, take years to rebuild and regain political, security, and economic order in the country. Iraq due to internal and external factors for almost two decades has been absent from regional influence. “The American invasion of Iraq led up to the eclipse of secular Al-Baathists and abolition of the largest standing Arab army, ostensibly assuring greater security for Israel. However, this in effect, implied end of the ‘Sunni dominated’ Iraq, which was perceived “strong and motivated enough to balance the radical Shiite Iran.” Although, a new Shi’a-led state order is struggling to assert itself in Baghdad, however, it will not be easy for war-prone and terrorism infected country to re-emerge as regional power. Saudi Arabia faces the medium-term challenge of adapting its political institutions to changing political expectations. That challenge is set to have important ramifications for Saudi Arabia’s future regional position. Here, it seems necessary to discuss the elements that are instrumental in the emergence of new power centers.

**Emergence of New Power Centers in Middle East: The Instigating Elements**

The drivers of change in the Middle East may be viewed with a six-fold focus: 9-11 and US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan; rise of non-state actors; Arab Spring and fall of authoritarian rules; rise of Islamists against nationalist; declining U.S. and Western influence in the region; weakening of erstwhile powers and resulted vacuum in the region.

Firstly, after 9-11 attacks on US, President George W. Bush announced that “fighting terrorism and preventing future attacks
would be his administration’s top priority”. Governments were given ultimatum to decide whether they stood with the United States in war against terrorism or would face US wrath. In this regard, two operations first in Afghanistan and then in Iraq were launched and Taliban and Saddam governments were overthrown. Attacks in US and resulted operations, perhaps, triggered the chain of causes that would impact the whole region. The major benefactor of the two operations ironically has been Iran, whose wings US wanted to clip.

Second, the non-state actors have been strengthen in the region, owing to the successive failures of states in the Arab-Israeli conflict, 9-11 attacks and lack of adequate participation in the decision-making process. According to Arif Kamal, “They have, in cases, come up with enlarged roles compared with role of a state. For example, Hezbollah’s resistance to Israeli invasion of Lebanon (July 2006) brought them to a legendary status as this non-state actor was seen doing what all Arab regular armies had previously failed to do. Similarly, the rise of Hamas and its sustainability in the impoverished Gaza, in spite of its eclipse from power is a point in case.” These actors such as Al-Qaidah in Iraq have added another complexity in the region’s tense situation, further supporting the transformation of power.

Third, the ‘Arab Spring’ can be defined as a crisis in central authority, in which old orders in a sizable minority of states have proven untenable even as new and freer orders are struggling to emerge. In Tunisia and Egypt in 2011, internal mass protests forced the leadership to resign within weeks. Inspired by these successes and rooted in the issues of governance, economic disparities, youth bulge and full play of social media, popular
movements throughout the Middle East were bolstered. They demanded substantial political reform and, in some cases, regime change. After decades of authoritarian rule and political stagnation, popular movements were finally able to destabilize or overthrow a number of authoritarian regimes in the Arab world. This phenomenon has transformed the political set up of the Middle Eastern countries, governed by decades old dynastic rules.

Fourth, experts of Arab and Islamic affairs who have studied the 2011 Arab revolutions’ effects on both the Islamic and nationalist agendas have “noticed that “the mood of the Arab populace everywhere seems to be dominated by Islamic rather than Arab sentiment”. Some might claim that Islam is connected to Arab identity, and that Arabism is rather an ingredient of the Islamic community’s make-up. Nevertheless, a careful review of Islamic political theory reveals that “in his writings Imam Hassan al-Banna the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood and its first spiritual leader - believed in the presence of harmony and symmetry between the Islamic and Arab viewpoints.” The results of so called ‘Arab Spring’ also seemed to prove the ‘Islamic revival’ in the region, how well Islamists are doing in Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco are however, debatable issues.

Fifth, the declining US influence in the Middle East is a long-term, secular process, probably on going many years. It has had two major accelerators. One, the Iraq War, that discredited the US and weakened militarily and morally its posture in the Arab world. Two, the Arab Spring also is the contributor in diminishing US erstwhile leverage. The US has less familiarity with the new actors in the region and an even less powerful position from which to influence those actors on the ground.
Sixth, internal clashes and external invasion have weakened the Syria and Iraq creating a power vacuum in the region. This vacuum was filled by strategically and economically strong Iran and Turkey. Egypt, although passed through transformation, but it retained its erstwhile position of a leader in Arab World.

**The New Power-Centers in Middle East**

Iran is a regional power, thanks to three decades of social, economic, diplomatic, and military advancements. Iran has the world’s second largest gas and third largest oil reservoirs. One of Iran’s greatest successes is the dramatic expansion of its middle class. Despite declines in oil exports and tightened international sanctions, Iran ranked 18th worldwide by GDP (purchasing power parity adjusted) in 2012. Iran is also a formidable regional military power. However, for the last decade, its nuclear program has been a “game of hide and seek, and claims and disclaims”.

The Turk Government, what has come to be called as a moderately Islamic government, has been in power for the last 10 years. Ideological reinterpretation of secular and traditional thoughts, successful shift of power from military to civilian elite, geo-strategic location and economic boom have contributed in the confident posture of Turkey in its dealings with US and the West. Turkey has a booming economy, growing at 9-10 percent. Its average growth for the last 10 years has been around 7 percent. Its income per capita has tripled and GDP has doubled. So it’s not just a political success story; it’s also an economic success story scripted and strengthened by capitalism, entrepreneurship and internal political stability. In some ways, before the Arab Spring Turkey even was a winner. Based on America’s failure in Iraq and the absence of Arab leadership on the Palestinian issue a vacuum in the Middle
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East was created. Turkey was successfully able to fill that vacuum with its strategic depth; Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu called this "zero problems with neighbors."

Egypt’s demography and geographic disposition makes it significant in the region and the world as well. It is the largest populated country in Middle East and Africa with almost eighty-five million populations. Egypt also has the largest army in Africa and Middle East, with 450,000 personnel. Under Egyptian control, the Suez Canal and Sumed pipeline are the most important ways of transportation from the Indian Sea to the Mediterranean. Historically Egypt was also politically strong. As Nasser saw it, with considerable justice, “Egypt was potentially at the center of three circles: the African, the Arab, and the Islamic”. This geo-political importance made it the object of interest to the great powers. Egypt’s new standing has already breathed new life into the Arab League and allowed it success in mediating long-stalled intra-Palestinian negotiations. Even at this time, when Egypt is passing through another crisis in authority, its historic regional role, geographic disposition and military strength afford it a considerable clout in regional affairs.

Israel has the strongest military and is the only nuclear power to the west of Nile. Plus, Israel is significant for American interests and foreign policy in the region. Also, Israel from a strategic standpoint is imperative for western interests; because it impedes what the scholar Fouad Ajami calls the "Dream Palace of the Arabs." In essence, it impedes both pan-Arabism and pan-Islamism espoused by Nasser, Arafat, Saddam Hussein, and Bin Laden and the likeminded individuals. “Israel is a literal and figurative bulwark against a cross continental Arab-Muslim empire. It inhibits pan-
totalitarianism in the forms of Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism."\(^{18}\) Israel was among the biggest losers, as a result of Arab Spring, losing its last friend in the region with the fall of Mubarak regime in Egypt. And without Mubarak, King Abdullah of Jordan can no longer be counted on as a friend.

**Interplay of Power Centers and Way Forward**

As the biggest Arab country, with internal strife and political instability, Egypt’s domestic policies and especially its foreign orientations may crucially impact the newly emerging geo-strategic posture of the Middle East. Morsi had apparently attempted to create a new strategic balance between the Suni-Muslim states, Shi’i Iran, and Israel as well as among the USA, Russia, and China. According to Morsi, "international relations between all states are open and the basis for all relation is balance. We are not against anyone, but we are for achieving our interests."\(^{19}\) Now, when Morsi is no more and Brotherhood in Egypt is losing influence in power-corridors of the country, the future of Egypt remains dependent on armies capability to hold an election and Muslim Brotherhood’s potential to make a place in the new government for themselves.

Nevertheless, a compelling partnership for a strategic coalition in favour of Egypt is not Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Emirates but primarily Turkey, since both Turkey and Egypt are regional powers with Sunni Islamic democratic systems. According to Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoglu, "a partnership between Turkey and Egypt could create a new democratic axis of power."\(^{20}\) To be sure, both Ankara and Cairo are not hostile to Iran as are Saudi Arabia and most of the Gulf Emirates.

The Turkish and Egyptian governments will also endeavor not to antagonize Iran, unless their interests are in jeopardy. For
example, one contentious issue between Turkey and Iran is Turkey's dependence on Iran's gas supply and its leverage over the PKK (Kurdish Workers’ Party) through Iranian (and Syrian) Kurds. Nevertheless, Turkey and Egypt have a common interest and will probably coordinate their efforts to contain Tehran's attempts to create a "Shi' i Crescent" and control oil resources in the Gulf region. This strategy would certainly obtain full cooperation from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Emirates as well as the USA. Yet, both democratic Turkey and Egypt would be careful not to fully identify with the autocratic-monarchic-conservative Sunni-Muslim regimes, such as in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. They may even act as mediators between these Sunni regimes and Tehran.

The most important and challenging is the crucial Israeli-Palestinian problem, namely Israel's stubborn refusal to allow Palestinian self-determination in the form of a state and its continued siege over the Gaza Strip. Due to Israel's stubbornness, anti-Israeli manifestations, which had been largely curtailed by Mubarak's regime, erupted in Egypt, once his regime collapsed and full freedom of expression has been granted. Obviously, these pro-Palestinian and anti-Israeli sentiments have reflected the deeply rooted ideology of the Muslim Brothers and of their leaders, who were elected to govern Egypt. In this regard, Muhammad Morsi, the detained President of Egypt, appealed to President Obama in late September 2012, asking him to help in settling the Palestinian issue in the form of an independent state. He argued that if Israel expects Egypt to respect its peace treaty with it, Israel should also implement its commitments regarding the Palestinians within this peace treaty. Aside from hinting that this treaty could be revised, Morsi had not cut diplomatic relations with
Israel and even appointed a new Egyptian ambassador to Tel Aviv in early September 2012. Simultaneously, Egypt's new defense minister, Abd Ali Abd al- Ali Fath al-Sisi, coordinated with his Israeli counterpart, Ehud Barak, the dispatch of Egyptian armored and commando units to Sinai to fight Salafi and Jihadist elements.

The military led a takeover this July, following last year's revolution, has unfolded wide cleavages in the contemporary Egyptian society. After the clashes for and against Morsi’s regime that started on 28 June, on third July, the army ousted democratically elected President Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood. The military has appointed Adly Mansour as interim President and declared a rather speedy timetable to amend the Constitution by deleting the offensive provisions and submit it to a referendum, as well as hold presidential and parliamentary elections in six months. Despite the new government’s promises, the fight for and against military’s actions continues on the street. Those opposing Brotherhood rule and calling for President Morsi’s ousting (or for early elections) claim to lead a second revolution. On the other side, those supporting the president and the Brotherhood are accusing his detractors of crying foul and mounting a counter-revolution.

The West, worried about the sovereignty and security of the state of Israel has extended support for the military intervention that overthrew the Muslim Brotherhood’s government, widely viewed as conservative and anti-Israel. At The survival of America’s most important ally in the region, Israel is at stake and the United States is going to exhort all their support in favor of the Egyptian military, which is the major recipient of $1.5 billion per annum support from America. Saudi Arabia, a strong ally of the United
States, is seen to be falling in line with the American policy in supporting the military regime and possibly a religious democratic government in Egypt would be viewed as a direct threat to Saudi’s monarchical order.

Apart from continuing its previous demands that Israel signs the NPT, Egypt will probably exercise intense political diplomatic pressure on Israel to permit the creation of independent Palestinian state along the pre 1967 lines, with East Jerusalem as its capital. On this issue, Egypt will certainly be backed or supported by most of Arab Muslim states, as well as obtaining close cooperation with Turkey. Indeed within the newly emerging regional strategic axis between Ankara and Cairo, the Israeli-Palestinian issue will gain priority, alongside the Syrian crisis and the Iranian threat. Although both Turkey and Egypt maintain cold diplomatic relations with Israel, they can help broker a political settlement between Israel and the Palestinians, including Hamas, owing to their close relations with both Palestinian factions.

Over the years, Iran has secured a strong footing for itself in the region. Because, for political, economic, cultural, religious and military reasons, Iran is too important to be treated lightly by any state in Middle East or Asia. In complex domestic power structure of Iran, the broader governing polity shares Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s robust conviction that Iran is the linchpin of a wide region and can maintain firm independent positions. Ironically, US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan has supported the Iranian ambitions and furthered its agenda in the region. The Sunni Arab states of Jordan, Egypt and the Gulf are wary of Iran yet feel compelled by its strength to maintain largely cordial relations.
The relationship between Iran and Turkey pivots between friendship and rivalry, but Turkey favours good relations and the avoidance of further regional instability. Russia is a significant economic partner to Iran, is heavily involved in its nuclear programme, and tends to take the role of mediator at the international level. There is certainly a lot more amiability between Iran and Saudi Arabia, despite disagreements on Iranian nuclear program, Iranian apprehension on Saudi sport to Taliban in Afghanistan and Saudi concern about Iran, trying to create discord amongst the Saudi Shia community.

Pakistan and Iran have a number of areas of mutual interests, as fighting drug trade and defeating tribal insurgency along their common borders, as well as prospects for trade and energy. Iran and India have notably improved ties, mostly on the basis of Indian energy needs. Energy security and economic ties also dominate Iran’s dealings with China and Japan.

Syria and Iran maintain close relationship, as seen clearly in their alliance against the US and Israel, and support for Hezbollah. But due to the civil war in Syria, Iran’s fate in the country is linked with the survival of Assad regime. Iran’s relationship with Lebanon is long and complicated. The clash between Israel and Hezbollah in 2006 may partly be seen in the backdrop of the broader conflict between Iran and US/Israel. Israel considers Iran as the greatest threat to its security and the tensions between the two have increased. Now Israel seeks US assistance to attack Iran, claiming it to be a threat. While US also consider Iran a threat, however, it seems unlikely that Obama will support Israel in attacking Iran. Additionally, the revelation that Iranian-born close friend of president Obama, Valerie Jarrett has been taking the lead in ‘the

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undercover talks’ with Iran proves that US favours talks rather than confrontation with Iran. Adding to this is the complex results of Arab Spring.

The Arab Spring today, in some ways has become an amalgamation of two phenomena. One is an absolute political re-bargaining of the social contract in virtually every Arab country, affecting the domestic political balance of power. In addition to that there has been a total re-negotiation of the strategic balance of power in the region because of happenings in Egypt, Syria, and Bahrain and so on. The two evidently interact. Changes at the domestic level in Egypt, Syria and other countries are affecting the balance of power strategically in the region because of the changes in regimes and outlooks that change entails. On the other hand, the struggle in the regional arena is affecting how countries are positioning themselves in the domestic competition for power. For example, in Syria, Iran and Hezbollah are supporting to the regime, while the West and Turkey are favoring the opposition. In current Egyptian crisis, Turkey favoring the Morsi and Brotherhood government and the West provide hidden support to military and opposition’s agenda. It is the interplay of the regional strategic and domestic political calculus that makes it all the more challenging and complex for foreign countries to react to without ambivalence. These complexities and challenges carry implications for Pakistan that are discussed in the following section.

Implications for Pakistan

Pakistan has not only religious, political and economic ties with the Middle East region, but the region can also be ‘called the strategic depth of Pakistan’.²¹ Looking at the regional calculations of
emerging Middle East, following five points are noteworthy with regard to its implications on Pakistan:

- The continued repression in and occupation of Palestine by Israel still seems to be continued for the foreseeable future. This, due to close Indian and Israeli collaboration, also impacts the Indian occupation of Kashmir, an issue very close to heart for Pakistan.

- The crisis in Iraq due to US invasion has spiraled towards sectarian strife and civil war in the country. In addition to that, a foreign intervention in Syria could further increase the sectarian crisis that may spill over to Pakistan.

- The US policies and intervention in both Iraq and Afghanistan have not only disturbed the respective countries, but Pakistan has also directly and indirectly suffered both in terms of blood and treasure in the so called War on Terror.

- There is also the looming crisis in Iran on its nuclear program that threatens to escalate into a military confrontation in Pakistan’s neighborhood. This conflict carries the potential for the escalation of sectarian conflict within Pakistan.

- More than three million Pakistanis are living in the Middle Eastern countries. These countries are providing jobs to millions of Pakistani citizens. A large number of Pakistan’s remittances come from Middle East. Therefore, for Pakistan’s stability and prosperity, Middle Eastern region must remain stable.

In the present geo-strategic environment in the region although Pakistan enjoys cordial relations with Iran Turkey and Egypt;
however, Iran’s relations with the US, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries are quite tense due to their perception about its nuclear programme and its perceived role in the ongoing situation in Syria. The situation has been further compounded by the US and EU countries sanctions against Iran due to its nuclear programme. This has also brought the project of laying gas pipeline from Iran to Pakistan under strain. In any case Pakistan has to walk very pragmatically since it cannot lose friendship of Saudi Arabia and GCC countries for Iran and vice versa. At the same time Pakistan cannot afford hostile relationship with the US, it being the sole superpower. The prevailing tensions between Iran, GCC countries and the US are likely to remain for quite some time in the future. Hence in next some years it will be very challenging for Pakistan to further advance its relations with Iran, while also keeping good relations with Saudi Arabia, other GCC countries and the US unless some dramatic favourable development occurs.

**Conclusion**

To conclude, Middle East once again is in a period of uncertainty. Given Iran’s significant weight and influence in the broader Middle East, developments in that country will cast a shadow over everything else. However, for a long term peace in the region, the Palestine Issue needs to be resolved. Unfortunately, US, Iran and Israel continue to display a bunker mentality, in which zero-sum-game calculations prevail on the issues of Palestine and Iranian nuclear program. It is striking that in the Middle East today, hopes for peace are still held hostage to a regional order, characterized by the rivalries of postcolonial states, as opposed to postmodern ones. As long as regional politics remain the monopoly of these states, whose behaviors are defined by the “otherness” of
their neighbors, contentious rivalries will remain the modus operandi of the Middle East, to the detriment of everyone. A silver lining however can be seen with emergence of Turkey and Egypt as regional players in the region. But again, it will depend that all the players adopt the policy of cooperation or confrontation. By the end of the day, the choices of regional players will save or doom the region.

Endnotes

1 For a detailed discussion of the British role in the making of the Middle East, see Roger Adelson, London and the Invention of the Middle East. For the Middle East as a security concept, see Bilgin, "Inventing Middle Easts," 10-37. For a geopolitical analysis of the Middle East, see Davutoğlu, Stratejik Derinlik, 129-43, 323-455.
2 Arif Kamal, "Dynamics Of Peace and Stability In the Middle East Arena: Identifying the Contemporary Challenges and Options For Response", (Margalla Papers, 2009), 94-105. Explains the term that, "The nomenclature 'Middle East' has been a colonial (and later, a neo-colonial) convenience rather than a geographic expression. The connotation of this nomenclature has also been shifting like the 'shifting sands' of the region. For example, expression 'broader Middle East', now used by the US and G-8, is in fact synonymous with bulk of the muslim world."
4 Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, Causes of War (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell 2010), 44.
5 Ibid.
7 Levy and Thompson, Causes of War, 2010, 44.
9 Levy and Thompson, Causes of War, 2010, 44.9
10 Arif Kamal, "Dynamics Of Peace and Stability In the Middle East Arena: Identifying the Contemporary Challenges and Options For Response", (Margalla Papers, 2009), 96.
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12 Arif Kamal, "Dynamics Of Peace and Stability In the Middle East Arena: Identifying the Contemporary Challenges and Options For Response", (Margalla Papers, 2009), 98.
14 Michael J. Totten, "Arab Spring or Islamist Winter?", World Affairs Journal, January/February 2012. accessed on 06 April 2013 from, http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/arab-spring-or-islamist-winter
16 Egypt - Foreign Policy, accessed on 08 May 2013, from: http://countrystudies.us/egypt/123.htm
17 Egypt - Foreign Policy, accessed on 08 May 2013, from: http://countrystudies.us/egypt/123.htm
19 Daily News (Egypt), August 29, 2012.
Middle East's largely untapped frontier for intelligent cloud services. Technology such as AI, machine learning or blockchain would not be possible without the power of the cloud. Cloud is the underlying platform with the data storage capacity and massive processing capability to enable AI-powered applications. The cloud is a key factor in the Middle East's digital transformation, and the region is worth $2.2 billion to cloud services companies, according to the IDC, with growth predicted at an average of 24 percent a year. While cloud traffic in the region is dwarfed by activity in North America and Europe, the Middle East and Africa is expected to have the highest cloud traffic growth rate between 2016 and 2021, according to the Global Cloud Index.

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The original alliance system vehemently shifted to something new. Syria with each alliance there emerges a new conflict, which turns destructive as well as explosive in nature. This makes the region highly tumultuous and implores more. An emerging power or rising power is a state or union of states with significant rising influence in global affairs. Such a power aspires to have a more powerful position or role in international relations, either regionally or globally, and possess sufficient resources and levels of development that such goals are potentially achievable. There are few available conceptualizations of the term "emerging power". Therefore, there is no standard or agreed method to decide which states are emerging powers... Political upheaval, violence, and the Sunni-Shia divide have defined the Middle East and North Africa to outside observers for many years, but states across the region also confront shared global challenges of demographic transitions and governance in the age of social media, as well as the compelling economic potential of new technologies. The discussion will address what these profound undercurrents, as well as the changing climate and expanding role of women, mean for the major Arab states, Turkey, Iran, and Israel. The Hoover Institution hosted a public panel discussion "The Middle East in an Emerging World" on Monday, April 22, 2019 from 4:00pm - 5:15pm PST. The livestream can be viewed below. RSVP HERE ». Interplay of Power Centers and Way Forward. As the biggest Arab country, with internal strife and political instability, Egypt's domestic policies and especially its foreign orientations may crucially impact the newly emerging geo-strategic posture of the Middle East. Morsi had apparently attempted to create a new strategic balance between the Suni-Muslim states, Shi' i Iran, and Israel as well as among the USA, Russia, and China.