

The Strategy of Democracy Promotion and America's Global Ambitions; with Reference to the Middle East Region

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Abstract: *Promotion of democracy has been a corner stone of US foreign policy over many centuries. The USA stands as the principle promoter of democracy in the world. This study particularly focuses on determining the ulterior motives behind the US strategy of democracy promotion in the Middle East through a study of the US Middle Eastern Policy under some of the US administrations. The research problem of the study is to examine how the US has used democracy promotion as a tool in the path of her struggle for global domination. The main objective of the study is to identify the real motives behind the US strategy of democracy promotion in the Middle East region. Another objective is to assess the criticisms against the US strategy of democracy promotion in the Middle East region. A qualitative approach has been used to analyze the secondary data collected through data available in both printed and electronic form in data sources including books, government publications, policy papers, academic journals and conference proceedings. The US involvement in the region has become a controversial issue mainly due to integrating other American national interests with democracy promotion. Key finding of the research is that the US has not promoted democracy in good faith, but only as a strategic tool in pursuance of its global ambitions. Therefore, this study will be significant in clarifying the objectives of US involvement in the Middle East region, which will be helpful for future researchers in designing an appropriate framework for the US Middle Eastern policy.*

Keywords: *Democracy Promotion, the Middle East, Foreign Policy, Strategy, Global Ambitions*

I. INTRODUCTION

As it has been noted by Tony Smith, democracy promotion has been the central tenet of the US foreign policy in the twentieth century: in Woodrow Wilson's words, "to make the world safe for democracy". It still remains to be one of the key strategies in the US foreign policy. "America's self-assigned role in the world" which they use to launch its "democratizing mission on a selected group of countries", directly affects "America's ambitions on the international system"[1], particularly in its quest for global domination. The American mission to promote democracy worldwide is not a sincere step undertaken for the sake of other countries; but just as a strategy to ensure her own survival as the sole power in the international system. This is based on the assumption that, when the world is consisting of states that respect the western American values of democratic and liberal ideologies, it is easy for the US to ensure its leadership role in the world. Therefore, this paper will critically analyze the main research objective of assessing the real motives behind US democracy promotion in the Middle East region; thereby ultimately answering the main research problem of the study: has US promoted democracy in good faith or has it tried to pursue other global ambitions in the name of democracy?

According to Tony Smith, the Wilsonian mission of making 'the world safe for democracy' after 1945 consisted of "four separate but interrelated elements as: cooperation among democratic governments; economic openness; well-structured multi-lateral institutions; America's willingly assumed leadership"[2]. Therefore, America's self-imagined leadership role was designed in order to ensure its national interests and objectives that are needed to be achieved in its path towards global domination. Democracy promotion is only a foreign policy tool used by the US in its quest for domination. A new trend in US democracy promotion took place in 1990s with its march towards the Middle East. In Samuel P. Huntington's words "the third wave of democratization"[3] reached the Middle East, even though it was not felt so seriously as in other parts of the world. US attempts at democracy promotion became much more systematic towards the Middle Eastern region during the Reagan administration. As it has been discussed in the third chapter, primary determinants or interests of the US policy towards the Middle East were directed towards ensuring unhindered access to oil resources and ensuring the American interests in the state of Israel. These two interests are vital to the US, for spreading its dominance in the Middle East region.

However, as Sean Yom has observed, this strategy of democracy promotion integrate two traditionally opposing poles of American foreign policy ideology. They are "Wilsonian tradition of liberal internationalism" and "the school of hard realism". The Wilsonian tradition of liberal internationalism is evolving from the school of idealism, which is based on the assumption that, the US has a moral capacity and historical obligation to spread democracy and liberal values in the world. On the other hand, according to the school of hard realism, "the preemptive imposition of American power over the Arab world" is justifiable as a means of repressing potential security threats that are emanating from the region that put the American interests in danger. Therefore, this mission of encouraging democratic transitions in the Middle East has brought two opposing camps under one umbrella[4].

The strategy of democracy promotion in the Middle East facilitates both idealist and realist aspirations of the US. From the perspective of liberalists: democracy promotion in the Arab Middle East actualizes the long standing

America's self-imagined role as a promoter of democratic values in the world, as they have done in Japan and Germany after the end of the world war II. "For realists it would make the US more secure: it would win the war on terrorism" by eliminating threats emanated from terrorist groups like al-Qaeda ultimately solidifying "Washington's sphere of influence by seeding the region with moderate western friendly democracies"[5]. Therefore, the ultimate goal of American democracy promotion is clear: it is used as a strategy to accomplish its global ambitions: particularly to preserve its global domination. The US strategically takes an idealistic approach as a means of pursuing her realist expectations. Therefore, the desired end of democracy promotion is not a liberal expectation, but to achieve the realist aspirations of preserving their power in the international system. As it has been noted by Thomas Carothers, when it comes to democracy promotion policies, most of the US presidents have been idealistic in words but realistic in deeds, which became well exposed during the Bush administration[6]. Having such ulterior motives in US policies is the major criticism against US democracy promotion.

II. CRITICISMS AGAINST US DEMOCRACY PROMOTION POLICIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST REGION

Is the US trying to achieve some other American global ambitions in the name of democracy? These questions have sparked a huge debate over the US intervention in the Middle East in promoting democracy. The US is accused to have several ulterior motives behind their intervention in democracy promotion, which has been the major reason for failing their efforts in bringing democratic change in the region. Major criticisms regarding US policies in promoting democracy in the Middle East region have been:

A. *Integrating democracy promotion with other prominent US interests*

Mohammad A. Mousavi defines democracy promotion as a multipurpose tool of US foreign policy. This is mainly because many administrations including Reagan, G.H.W. Bush, Clinton and G. W. Bush adopted democracy promotion as a strategy to accomplish other national interests. "So democracy promotion has been a multipurpose tool that has served Reagan administration (for countering Soviet expansionism), the elder Bush's (a tool for New World Order), Clinton's (for pursuing global economic interests), and Bush's (as a key element of 'war on terror')", observes Mousavi[7].

The end of the cold war left US with no real enemy to compete with, but the September 11 attack drastically changed the US foreign policy and "since then war on terrorism became a new defining paradigm in US foreign policy"[8]. Thus the Bush administration saw democracy promotion as a strategic tool to ensure US security by countering terrorist and Islamic fundamentalist ideologies. As a result of this, "for strategic reasons, democracy promotion funding became increasingly focused on Iraq, Afghanistan and the broader Middle East and North Africa, and a few other countries central to the Global War on Terror" [9]. According to Thomas Carothers, Bush administration viewed the lack of political freedom in the Middle East as the major factor leading to the rise of "political extremism and anti-western terrorism". Therefore, the administration saw democracy promotion as a tool that would eliminate the roots of terrorism. Democracy promotion is thus presented as an intrinsic, even central, element of the US war on terrorism [10]. This makes one thing apparent: promoting democracy has not been the desired end goal of the US, but it was just a tool that the US has been adopted in order to achieve other objectives. Combining it with many other objectives have created many problems in the region.

Although, some may accept the Bush administration's argument that democracy promotion will lead to eliminate Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism in the Middle East in long run, the only thing that has been apparent is that, the US involvement in the region has brought restrictions on civil liberties and confined democratic freedoms of particularly Islamist movements. Do these actions abide by the general principles of democracy and liberty? Isn't this a violation of democratic freedoms in these societies? In the name of fighting terrorism, many Middle Eastern governments in collaboration with the US have increased anti-democratic policies in order to repress the opposing groups, particularly Islamic movements. Ultimately, what all this war on terror has done is to push for measures that are contradictory to the principles of democracy. This sparks debate on the fact whether the US has promoted democracy in good faith to bring about democratic transitions in conflict ridden countries or has it made democratization as a measure against terrorism? As Dalacoura argues, US intervention in the Middle East has raised up the question that: is democracy promotion only a "secondary goal which is juxtaposed with the US vital security concerns"? Is US trying to achieve her security objectives in the name of democracy promotion? Therefore, democracy promotion is not used as an objective, but as a strategic tool to attain other objectives. These overlapping ambitions lead to clash with each other, thereby tarnishing the US credibility.

B. *Double standards in American policies towards allies and foes in the Middle East region*

The US is charged against inconsistency: that means not having an equal standard in its policies towards countries in the region. Instead of having an equal standard, the US practice double standards in its engagement in the region which differs from country to country in the Middle East. As Sedaca and Bouchet have noted, in the context of counter-terrorism policies, the US policies have been again challenged because of its short term strategy of joining with non-democratic governments to achieve its "immediate security concerns. This revived questions about the United States' consistency and commitment to democracy and human rights, and led to renewed accusations of double

standards”[11]. The US approach towards democracy promotions differs from the US allies and foes in the region. This is another major criticism on US policies in the Middle East region which has undermined its credibility. A major accusation is that the US has not exerted much pressure for democratic reforms with regard to its allies whereas ‘unprecedented forcefulness’ is used in case of its foes. For instance, when the Iraqi government took over power in June 2004, they suspended some newspapers and broadcasters for violating the standards of the Coalition Provincial Authority (CPA). In that situation, the US disregarded the freedom of expression and freedom of the press in Iraq. The same America complained to the ruler of Qatar to halt Al-Jazeera for been extremely anti- American.

On the other hand, the US policy towards reforms for its allies like, Bahrain; Qatar; Kuwait; Yemen; Saudi Arabia; Egypt and Jordan had been less forceful and imposed in a limited manner, which highly contrast with the US forceful policies towards its foes like, Syria; Palestine and Iraq. US democracy promotion towards its foes was linked to the American security interests and the push for democratization has been abandoned easily once the security objectives were achieved. The best example can be cited from Iraq. During The Iraq war, which was justified on the grounds of promoting democracy, an unprecedented force was used to topple the regime of Saddam Hussein. The US engaged actively and exerted much pressure on the country until the ousting of Saddam Hussein. But soon after they made Iraq free from Hussein, they did not have constructive plans for post-Saddam Iraq. As Dalacoura has observed, “the American handling of occupied Iraq has undermined the prospect of long term democratization by strengthening sectarian and ethnic divisions between Shi’as, Sunnis and Kurds, and indirectly encouraging the re-Islamization of Iraqi politics”[12]. The irony is that, the US invasion in Iraq to eliminate the rise of terrorist and fundamentalist groups has now become the very reason for providing breeding grounds for the creation of new terrorist groups. The instability that was created in the post-Saddam Iraq still continues up to date, making Iraq home for the world’s most fatal terrorist group, the ISIS.

C. Supporting friendly autocratic regimes

The US longstanding policy of supporting certain authoritarian regimes in the region has contributed immensely to undermine US efforts at promoting democracy as well as to tarnish its credibility. The US has a historical record for maintaining friendly relations with strategically important but politically authoritarian and repressive regimes. For instance, at the climax of the cold war, the US supported repressive autocrats in Latin America; Asia and the Middle East; in terms of diplomatic; economic and military aid, to facilitate the US interest of containing Soviet expansion in the world. The US has frequently allied with these autocratic regimes in order to facilitate one of its vital regional interests of ensuring the protection and survival of the state of Israel. The US has allied with authoritarian regimes like Egypt and Saudi Arabia to support Israel against the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. To have such allies in the region is vital to facilitate the Arab-Israeli peace process.

The same US which stands as the principle supporter and distributor of liberal principles in the world has been supporting certain undemocratic autocratic leaders in the Middle East, as a means of ensuring the American regional interests. As long as the US possesses key national interests in the region, its need for maintaining relationships with non-democratic allies would not disappear. Sedaca and Bouchet have cited some examples for such relationships: “Clinton and Indonesia; George W. Bush and Egypt and Pakistan; Obama and Saudi Arabia and Bahrain”[13]. While maintaining close relationships with certain autocratic rulers, the US on the other hand put pressure on some other autocratic leaders in the regime for not been democratic in governance. This ambiguous treatment in US policies has led to make US policies less credible among Arab countries. Therefore, it is clear that once the US has certain ulterior motives to be achieved; then their policies also become ambiguous from country to country or region to region.

D. Limiting only to the rhetorical support for democracy without any real commitment

This is another major factor that has undermined the US democracy promotion policies. “The exuberant rhetoric that typically surrounds US democracy policy causes some observers to mistake words for deeds”[14]. According to many critics, the bush administration had an exaggerated pro-democratic rhetoric which was seen in many of his speeches. This rhetorical line emerged in many of his speeches justifying reasons for waging the Iraq war. For instance Bush in his speech to the American Enterprise Institute in 2003 stated: “The world has a clear interest in the spread of democratic values, because stable and free nations do not breed the ideologies of murder”[15]. Initially, the Iraq intervention was rationalized on the need of stopping Saddam Hussein of acquiring WMDs. But later the bush administration turned the Iraq intervention rhetorically into a democratizing mission. This strong pro-democratic rhetoric towards the Middle East later turned into a “global rhetorical framework”. In his second inaugural address which came to be known as his “freedom agenda”[16], Bush declared: “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”[17]. Every recent US administration has grandly talked of promoting democracy rather than they have acted. Even a slight look at the Bush administration’s commitments in democracy promotion projects a gap between talk and action on democracy. While giving lip service that they are deviating from the traditional US strategy of embracing friendly tyrants; they soon after returned to this same policy which became apparent in its relations with Saudi Government, Mubarak’s Egypt and Pakistan under the military dictator Pervez Musharraf.

E. Disregarding the role of religion (Islam) played in the region

When exporting new concepts and ideologies abroad, the exporting country should pay attention to the culture that is being prevailed in the importing country. The Islamic culture that is prevailing in the Arab Middle East has been a significant factor that frequently obstructs the realization of democratic reforms in this region. The Middle East is a region ridden with religious extremism. According to Samuel P. Huntington, Islam “rejects any distinction between the religious community and the political community”. Islamic fundamentalism advocates that political rulers in a Muslim country should practice Muslim and “sharia should be the basic law”. There is a sharp contradiction between the Islamic concepts of politics and democratic concepts of politics.[18] Under such circumstances, there is a difficulty for democracy and Islam to go hand in hand.

However, democratization process in the Middle East initially benefited Islamic fundamentalist groups since the repression forced on them were quite released with the introduction of democratic reforms. Repressive autocratic rulers began to relax their control over opposing parties with the introduction of democratization and western reforms. This allowed much freedom for Islamic movements within the Arab world. For instance, the Islamic Salvation Front of Algeria swept local elections in 1990; Islamic fundamentalists won 36 of 80 seats in parliament. In elections of 1987 and 2005, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt could make a considerable victory in elections when compared to their previous elections[19]. But the US was not happy with these benefits of democratization been achieved by Islamic fundamentalists. Therefore, some conservative voices in the American community believed that the Islamic groups can gain power not only through revolutions, but also by using these reform strategies and in their perspective the best way to prevent such fundamentalist groups from emerging into active politics is through banning them. As Sean Yom has stated, “the irony here is stunning, because coercive police states that have successfully crushed Islamist challengers include Libya, Syria and Saddam-era Iraq, which all rank among the most closed and repressive dictatorships in recent history”[20]. But these measures are against the democratic liberal principles. However, dealing with such fundamentalist groups should be handled cautiously, because such marginalization might make them further radicalized and violent. Therefore, under such circumstances the US should think in deep about the possible repercussion that can be occurred by pushing for democratization in the Middle East, a region ridden with extremism and fundamentalism.

F. Idealism in words and realism in deeds

When studying the US strategy of democracy promotion, a clash between realism and idealism can be found. It raises the question whether the US is promoting liberalism with realist expectations. Liberalism and realism are two extreme ends in theories of international relations. Liberalism is integrated with freedom and peaceful concepts like democracy, whereas power forms the central tenet of realism. The problems that have been occurred as a result of US engagement in democracy promotion have sparked debate on real motives behind US democracy promotion: is US using democracy as a means of fulfilling its interests in terms of power. According to Ehrman, “After the communist threat disappeared, some conservatives advocated an ‘America First’ policy that, in 1990, led them to oppose American intervention in the Persian Gulf and worry that American policy was serving Israeli interests at the expense of the United States..... Most neoconservatives, on the other hand, not only supported the Gulf and Iraq wars but also, as exemplified by Joshua Muravchik, have advocated a neo-Wilsonian policy wherein the United States has a moral obligation to assist by whatever means necessary the globalization of democracy”[21].

Eventhough, democratization acquired a greater prominence in the US foreign policy under the Bush administration, it has been reiterated to varying degrees under the Clinton and Obama administrations. The best example that proved the realist sentiment in democracy promotion policies under these administrations was: “the need to maintain relationships with non-democratic allies” which did not disappear (ex: Clinton and Indonesia, George W. Bush and Egypt and Pakistan, Obama and Saudi Arabia and Bahrain)[22]. This argument on the realist sentiment in the US democracy promotion was supported by Carothers when he stated, “The core strategic approach of US policy under Clinton remains what it has been for decades, a semi-realist balancing of sometimes competing and sometimes complementary interests. Where democracy appears to fit in well with U.S. security and economic interests, the United States promotes democracy. Where democracy clashes with other significant interests, it is downplayed or even ignored”[23].

III. DEMOCRACY PROMOTION AS A STRATEGY IN PURSUING AMERICA’S GLOBAL AMBITIONS

Countries in the international system try to widen their spheres of influence through variety of means where the US no exception. A state can expand its influence or the dominance via two forms as: territorially and ideologically. Similarly, states make use of certain strategies or tools to facilitate their territorial or ideological expansion. When it comes to US expansion, it has two forms in terms of hard power and soft power and the tools being “Manifest Destiny and democracy promotion respectively”[24]. Manifest Destiny originally meant westward expansionism, while it later evolved into a worldwide campaign on promoting or exporting democracy to foreign cultures. It was used as a justification for US expansionist foreign policy in cases of the American conquest of northern Mexico and their attempts at bringing Latin American countries under the US sphere of influence.

Winston Churchill has made a famous statement that: “the empires of the future are the empires of the mind”. The US seemed to have grasped Churchill’s account of future and tactically camouflaged manifest destiny with a more sophisticated strategy in terms of “democracy promotion, humanitarian purposes, human rights, and defending

democracy: a combination of the hard power and soft power or what Joseph Nye called ‘smart power’ [25]. According to Joseph Nye, Power is one's ability to affect the behavior of others to get what one wants. There are three basic ways to do this: ‘coercion, payment, and attraction’. Use of coercion and payment come under hard power whereas “ability to obtain preferred outcomes through attraction” falls under the concept of soft power. Joseph Nye further emphasizes that, “If a state can set the agenda for others or shape their preferences, it can save a lot on carrots and sticks”. What he implies is that, a state to be more successful in its attempts to expand its influence, it has to make use of smart strategies or tools that combine both hard and soft power tools.

With regard to the US, manifest destiny or military intervention has been used as a tool of hard power and democracy promotion as a tool of soft power. Manifest destiny refers to annexing a particular territory (for example Northern Mexico). Eventhough, military intervention is a hard power tool which implies taking over a territory; it can also be used as a tool paving the way for democracy promotion (for example Iraq, Panama) and humanitarian intervention (Haiti). The US has tried to expand its influence in two strands; “first, the appetite for territorial expansion which was satisfied by 1900 and, the second, expansion via ideological influence...which has never yet been satisfied” [26].

At present the US is not trying to engage in territorial expansion by conquering lands or imposition of colonial rule, but through the second strategy of disseminating its democratic ideology and free market economic principles. Therefore, territorial expansion no longer matters for the type of domination that the US tries to build in the world; but what really matters is the dissemination of the American ideology and culture. The US has used both soft and hard power tools and tactics in parallel as the manifestations of carrot and stick policy [27]. According to Mousavi, US policies based on the schools of thought in international relations can be divided as advocates of: “isolationism, selective engagement and primacy” [28]. Isolationists are against the US involvement in international affairs and its role abroad, while they emphasize domestic problems. The advocates of selective engagement believe that; the US remaining powerful enough in the international stage is important in preserving the global economy centers particularly in Europe and Southeast Asia. On the contrary, the advocates of primacy strongly adhere to the belief that, the US should stand as the greatest power on the international stage and should preserve its primacy through military and economic power. It is at this point that the US advocates of primacy see the need of formulating a grand strategy to maintain its prestige in the international system. In formulating such strategic foreign policy, states should not only try to match their resources with security interests, but also they should try to maintain a proper balance between their foreign and domestic policy needs. In that sense, the grand strategy should be tactically formulated by integrating both the economic and military might in order to attain their interests.

With the declaration of the Open Door Policy in 1900 by the turn of the twentieth century, the US emerged as a dominant player in the international stage, trying to expand its dominance and influence in the world. However, the end of the World War II gave rise to a bipolar world in which the US and the Soviet Union emerged as the two super powers. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, led to a unipolar world in which the US called for a new world order led by itself. 2002 National Security Strategy announced by the Bush administration declared the right to resort to force in order to eliminate any perceived threat or challenge to the US global hegemony. This is interpreted by most of the critics as a grand strategy. Noam Chomsky describes how the US defined its role as: “High on the global agenda by fall 2002 was the declared intention of the most powerful state in history to maintain its hegemony through the threat or use of military force, the dimension of power in which it reigns supreme. In the official rhetoric of the National Security Strategy, “Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States” [29]. This is a clear implication of the US struggle for global dominance and its measures towards it.

Chomsky further cites how John Ikenberry, a well-known international affairs specialist describes this grand strategy in a scholarly point of view. Accordingly, he describes this declaration as a “grand strategy [that] begins with a fundamental commitment to maintaining a unipolar world in which the United States has no peer competitor,” a condition that is to be “permanent [so] that no state or coalition could ever challenge [the US] as global leader, protector, and enforcer.” He continues his elaboration by saying that this grand strategy proves the “international norms of self-defense enshrined by Article 51 of the UN Charter almost meaningless”. More precisely, this strategy disregards international law and international institutions “as of little value”, allowing the US to behave at its own will. Ikenberry continues: “The new imperial grand strategy presents the United States [as] a revisionist state seeking to parlay its momentary advantages into a world order in which it runs the show, prompting others to find ways to work around, undermine, contain and retaliate against U.S. power. The strategy threatens to leave the world more dangerous and divided and the United States less secure, a view widely shared within the foreign policy elite [30].

With the end of a bipolar world, the US officials, specially the neo-conservative voice within the US was harshly against the emergence of a multipolar world and their expectation was that: the rest of the world should accept the US primacy in international politics. This became well evident from this grand strategy that was announced in 2002 under the Bush administration as the National Security strategy. From the standpoint of the recent US administrations, the remedy they are providing for instability in a multipolar system is the US primacy. In the eyes of the neo-conservatives like William Kristol and Robert Kagan, “American hegemony is the only reliable guardian of international peace and order” [31]. The end of the cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union left the US with no particular adversary in the international system. But this drastically changed in the aftermath of the 9/11 attack.

September 11 was a day that changed America forever, giving it a new defining paradigm within the US foreign policy: war on terrorism. As Fraser Cameron states, it was once the alien ideas of Communism that matters in policy making, but now it is the fear of Islamic fundamentalism that influence the policy making. It was Soviet Communism that needed to be combated once, but now it is the threats emanating from Iran and Iraq. Therefore, military intervention can be a preferred means to achieve these objectives[32].

As Chomsky has observed, the imperial grand strategy that came into light in 2002, “asserts the right of the United States to undertake preventive war at will: Preventive, not preemptive”. He further distinguishes between the preventive and preemptive war. Accordingly, “Preemptive war might fall within the framework of international law” whereas “preventive war falls within the category of war crimes”. Preemptive war is justifiable since it is undertaken when an enemy strike is believed to be imminent. But acts of preventive war which is in contrary to the rules of international law cannot be justified like in the case of Preemptive war measures. Preventive war is undertaken to prevent an imagined future threat which is totally base on unpredictable assumptions. In Chomsky’s words, Preventive war is undertaken “to eliminate an imagined or invented threat”[33]. It was the preventive war that was waged against Iraq by the Bush administration by justifying the invasion on the grounds that Saddam’s Iraq possessed Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) on a scale that it needed immediate military action. The rationale behind the Iraqi invention was that regime change was the most reliable tool to disarm Saddam’s Iraq which was accused by the Bush administration for possessing WMD and also to disrupt the potential link between Saddam Hussein and Al-Qaeda. But once they failed to prove the possession of such WMD as initially accused, then they justified by discovering certain equipment that could potentially be used to develop such weapons. Then their military intervention was justified in the name of democracy promotion.

According to Robinson, “The type of political system Washington will attempt to establish in Iraq has little to do with democracy and should not be referred to as such, as the terminology itself is ideological and intended to give an aura of legitimacy to US intervention”. He believes that US invasion in Iraq for democracy promotion as they say is a four step plan to achieve the following four objectives:

- i. Providing a solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict
- ii. Middle East Partnership for a civil society in the region
- iii. Further integration of the region into global economic system through liberalism
- iv. Avoiding the emergence of a regional power that would be a “challenge to the emerging US/transnational domination”

He further elaborates that the overall objective of Iraq invasion and the US democracy programs is “to force on the region for a more complete integration into global capitalism”[34]. Therefore, the US efforts in promoting democracy in Iraq were aimed at expanding its dominance through American ideology. Not only in Iraq, but also the US approach towards the entire Middle East region as a whole is an attempt at its ideological expansion: but in case of Iraq it became unprecedentedly forceful. Mousavi interprets the US intentions in the most precise and accurate way as: “From the inception, the US has been an imperially-powered engine. By 1900 with territorial expansion satisfied, the US ideological influence, which Robinson and Gallagher called —free trade imperialism, and what William called —idealism imperialism, turned out to be US foreign policy cornerstone but under the rubric of democracy promotion”[35].

IV. CONCLUSION

This study is primarily driven by a twofold aim: first is to examine how the US has promoted democracy in the Middle East; second is to critically analyze if the US has promoted democracy in good faith or has it tried to pursue other global ambitions in the name of democracy. US democracy promotion in the Middle East indicates an important strategy in the US foreign policy, since the US approach towards the region for promoting democracy has significantly varied from other parts of the world.

The US has primarily sought to maintain the stability of the region in order to ensure the US national interests by propagating the western liberal democratic political values and free market principles within the region. With regard to the Middle East, the US has sought to ensure its interests predominantly by allying with authoritarian regimes which can fulfill the US regional expectations. Eventhough this was true in case of US involvement in other regions also, particularly in Latin America, it has remained for a long time in the US policy towards the Middle East region rather than in other parts of the world. This changed to a certain extent under the Clinton administration which sought to encourage democratization in terms of economic and civil society reforms as they were seen as a prelude to political reforms. The Reagan administration launched a campaign in support of global democracy promotion, mainly with the ulterior motive of deterring Communism. With the collapse of the Berlin wall and in the absence of Soviet threat the Bush (senior) administration made global democratization as a central tenet of US foreign policy and as a key element of the ‘New World Order’. The Clinton administration reiterated the need for democracy promotion through ‘Democracy enlargement’, which some called as the ‘Clinton Doctrine’.

However, the most controversial era of democracy promotion for both the US and the Middle East region came under the G. W. Bush administration. Democracy promotion particularly in the Middle East, became a key element of the Bush administration in the aftermath of the 9/11 attack which was a turning point not only in the US foreign policy but

also in the entire global political history. For Bush, democracy promotion in the Middle East region was central to his “war on terror”, as the administration saw the region’s democracy deficit as a supporting factor to rising Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. As some scholars like Schraeder have noted, democracy promotion “has long served as a key vehicle for the projection of US political ideals as well as for the pursuit of the country’s material self-interests”[36]. This is the major criticism against the US democracy promotion measures in the Middle East: using democracy promotion as a tool in pursuing other national objectives and goals. This study which has critically analyzed the US democracy promotion in the Middle East region, has found out that the US has not promoted democracy in good faith, but only as a strategic tool to ensure its global ambitions. The American measures in promoting democracy have served other ulterior motives rather than using it for genuine purposes.

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