

## **Abstract**

This study endeavored to discuss and analyze the attitude of G.W.Bush's Administration from Islamic Fundamentalism or Islamism in the Middle East. It aimed, in addition, to identify the nature of the different factors or determinants which govern the relationship between the Islamists and G.W.Bush's administration. The thesis has sought also to examine and analyze the specific significance of the Middle Eastern region. Three sources of significance can be identified in this context: the economic significance of the Middle East, its primary resources, in particular, Oil; the geographic significance of the region and how such factor has played an important role in motivating the United States interest in the region; and finally the cultural – religious significance for the Middle East which proved to be extremely important as a factor in analyzing the cultural and civilizational dimension in G. W. Bush's attitude from Islamism in the region. The thesis also endeavored to examine American interests in the region, and it was clear that these three important elements have influenced but, with varying degrees, Bush's foreign policy and overall attitude towards the region, which intended to maximize its benefits from the various resources available for the US in the region. In discussing G.W. Bush's foreign policy towards the region, it was also imperative to examine the fashion through which the Hawks, in his administration, have looked at the region as a whole in its cultural, economic and political dimensions (the American Big Middle East Project). Moreover, a discussion of how this project was used to attend to America's process of containing Islamism in the region. We also discussed the fashion or form by which the US dealt with Islamism which we called a process of containment rather than a process

of extermination or eradication. This was based on the assumption that the US used this enemy (Islamism) to justify its interventions in the region. This in turn would enable it to first use or consume the largest possible amount of its economic resources and secondly hit its cultural structure so as to pave the way for its hegemony over the Islamists' cultural and value systems.

We also sought to define the concept of political Islam which we thought can be divided into three classifications; the first was ideological and it ranges from moderation, fundamentalism to radical fundamentalism. We identified standards for moderation and extremism and examined patterns for each of the two classifications. We also examined political Islam from a geographic perspective discussing the various Islamic efforts made regarding the aim of establishing an Islamic state bearing in mind the huge differences in the form of that state. We examined here few classifications; patriotic political Islam, nationalist political Islam and universal political Islam identifying at the same time a specific pattern for each classification. We then moved to talk about the political forms of political Islam and identified two; the Islam of Islamic groups and secondly the Islam of political units. We then measured the stages of transformation of the Islam of Islamic religious groups and concluded that the most dangerous of these stages was the process of transformation to a political party discussing at the same time the few conditions on which basis we thought we could predict the possibility of Islamic transformations in the region. We did this by looking at the Islamic of political units in the region from 1932 to 2007. We examined as well the American attitude from these classifications and discovered that the US had no any particular position towards these

classifications only in the case where it becomes apparent that these groups have specific intentions to challenge US interests in the region or to interfere in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In other words, American interest in the region is the main determinant in US policy in addition to any indications that might demonstrate the Islamists intentions to impose its hegemony in the region.

The above does not exhaust all factors as there are definitely other secondary factors which constituted the motive behind reinforcing G.W. Bush's attitude from Islamism in the region. The return of the neo-conservatives to Bush's administration and their political impact, together with the Zionist lobby on US foreign policy, are important factors. The role of the Zionist lobby could be seen in the number of Jews in G.W. Bush's administration and how they played a role in inflaming the American attitude from Islamism through pushing the US administration to strike a blow against Islamism and do what needs to be done to contain the rising political impact of the Islamists in the region. This is in addition to the civilizational nature of the conflict which is very well accounted for by Fukuyama, Huntington and Bernard Lewis. These three played an important role in characterizing the conflict as civilizational, i.e. one between two civilizations and its subsequent negative impact as well on the conflict between modernity and authenticity. In this context, the events of September 11 constituted the last straw that broke the camel's back. According to some interpretations the events of September 11 were actually fabricated, given that Islam was meant to become, from the American perspective, the new enemy and accordingly these events were the convincing pretext for the US military intervention in the region without necessarily deciding on a specific date for withdrawal.

All of this has compelled G.W.Bush's administration to adopt a far-reaching strategy, asserting, as an excuse, the necessity to confront the Islamist "enemy". This very element allows the American presence in the region an unlimited time and in an area very close to the vital sources of energy. G.W.Bush's administration pursued its policy of containment against the Islamists by rallying the support of the international community in his decision to confront the Islamists in the region, and to financially besiege them. In addition Bush sought to strike a military blow against the Islamists through what is called the war on terror which we analyzed as a factor in this thesis and came to the conclusion that this war was but an instrument to control the natural wealth and capabilities of the people in the Middle East.

In the last chapter, we examine the extent to which G. W. Bush's administration succeeded in containing Islamic fundamentalism politically, economically and militarily. We then conclude that militarily and financially G.W.Bush's administration failed however it was able to, a certain extent, politically succeeded in its confrontation with the Islamists in the region through rallying the support of those Middle Eastern governments that have an interest in, at least, the political containment of the Islamists.