

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

AN INVITATION

TO AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL JOURNEY AIMED AT BRINGING TO LIGHT SOME OF THE PARTICULAR DIMENSIONS & AREAS OF THE STORMY REALM OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA), AS WELL AS CONCERNING THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN MENA AND THE REST OF THE WORLD – ALTOGETHER AN ENDEAVOUR ASSUMED IN A TRUE “OLYMPIC SPIRIT” BY A “TEAM INTELLIGENCE” COALESCING AND OPERATIONALIZING THE NEXUS BETWEEN “HUMAN INTELLIGENCE” (HI) AND “ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE” (AI)

PART ONE

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Abstract¹: 1. “This study invites readers on an epistemological journey through the stormy and multifaceted landscape of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), aiming to illuminate the complex dimensions of the region and its interactions with the broader world. Central to this exploration is the innovative concept of “Team Intelligence,” which synergizes Human Intelligence (HI) with Artificial Intelligence (AI) to analyze the challenges, opportunities, and evolving dynamics of the MENA region. The study traverses’ key areas including geopolitical conflicts, environmental vulnerabilities, economic transitions, and cultural shifts, offering a comprehensive perspective on the region’s past, present, and future. Additionally, it delves into the intricate interplay between MENA and global actors, highlighting how regional developments resonate on the world stage. Guided by a spirit of inquiry and collaboration akin to an “Olympic Spirit,” this work is both a scholarly endeavor and an invitation to engage with the vital issues shaping one of the world’s most critical regions.”

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¹ The present *Abstract* comes out in two alternatives as worked up by the two “Artificial Intelligence” (AI) *Representatives* involved in the making of the current Study: *ChatGPT* authored *Abstract 1* (<https://chatgpt.com/c/31979fd3-1fc1-4cd6-aaca-dc22a9f1ab88>, 24 August 2024); *Perplexity.ai* authored *Abstract 2* (<https://www.perplexity.ai/search/The-latest-2023-DV0TCYyuTzCM3HO2LrrCVw>, 24 August 2024).

2. “The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, characterized by its rich history and complex socio-political landscape, faces a myriad of challenges, including ongoing conflicts, economic instability, and the pressing impacts of climate change. This study, with a self-explanatory title, seeks to explore the interplay between Human Intelligence (HI) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a means to address these multifaceted issues. Employing an interdisciplinary approach, the research analyzes case studies and theoretical frameworks to uncover how the integration of HI and AI can enhance understanding and response strategies in the region. Key findings reveal that leveraging AI technologies can improve predictive capabilities for conflict prevention, optimize resource management, and facilitate informed decision-making. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the necessity of fostering collaboration between HI and AI to create sustainable solutions that promote peace and resilience in the MENA region. Ultimately, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on the role of technology in shaping the future of the MENA region and underscores the importance of inclusive and adaptive governance in navigating its complexities.”

Keywords: *The Middle East and North Africa (MENA); Global Actors; Human Intelligence (HI); Artificial Intelligence (AI); Team Intelligence*

*A Preamble with Regard to Technicalities
on the Operational Nexus
“Human Intelligence” (HI) – Artificial Intelligence (AI)*

The present project is nurtured by the synergetic added-value of the nexus and interplay by the binary branches of today’s civilizational knowledge and practical action, namely – *Human Intelligence (HI) and Artificial Intelligence (AI)*, a demarche that is focused on both the particular case of today’s MENA realm, as well as on flashpoints marking MENA’s interplay with the rest of the world.

In practical terms, *we* – as concomitantly the initiator of the project and the “*HI Representative*” – have been having in view *a triadic collaborative demarche*, materialized in the coalescence of our ideas and considerations with *evaluations* received, at our very request, from some “*special contributors cum collaborators*”, namely “*two representatives of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) sphere*”: the first one is *ChatGPT* (<https://chat.openai.com>), already introduced by us in a previous study², the second one is *Perplexity AI* (<https://www.perplexity.ai>), shortly introduced on this very occasion³.

² Gheorghe Dumitru, “Navigating a Truly Critical Area of Today’s World “Polycrisis”: The Water with its Gamut of Global, Regional and National Crises and Challenges, Marked also by Geopolitical Ripples. Exploring and Assessing Such a Complex and Consequential Realm, as an Academic and Operational Demarche, at the Intersection of Tools and Lenses Specific to Each Side from the Nexus “Human Intelligence” (HI) – “Artificial Intelligence” (AI)”, in *Romanian Review of Political Sciences and International Relations*, Vol. XXI, No. 1, 2024, pp. 38-193. https://2c2e45e5-12d6-4ee7-81f3-41c6c611007c.filesusr.com/ugd/1c5576_7b51c6533c564310b92cbb4b173390ae.pdf.

³ Perplexity AI (<https://www.perplexity.ai>) is an AI-powered search engine and chatbot that utilizes advanced technologies such as natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning to provide accurate and

Eventually, one can speak of a really fruitful demarche, the respective *AI evaluations* equating with truly heuristic “*building blocks*” to our overall project.

An incontestable motivation for such a “*cooperative*” approach has also been related to the fact that, in a nutshell, one can speak of a clear complementarity between the two chatbots: *Perplexity AI, considered best for finding information on the Internet*, respectively *ChatGPT, seen best for versatility and advanced generative AI features*.⁴ As such, one can have in view a drive to reaching a fruitful integration of *the two AI representatives’* inputs into the overall edifice of the defined study, that very task being assumed by the representative of the “*Human Intelligence*” (HI), namely the present Study’s initiator and final author, bringing in its turn into the endeavor inputs, acknowledged as such, from a variety of scholars and research and academia institutions.

At our inquiring, here are the two *AI representatives’* opinions on their very involvement as active participants within a sort of “*mixed crew*”, “*chartered*” for the present project, focused on such a particular area which is the MENA’s realm and the region’s interaction with other areas of the world:

ChatGPT:

“The collaboration between Human Intelligence (HI) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents intriguing possibilities in navigating complex geopolitical situations, such as those in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Here are some considerations:

– **Complementary Strengths:** HI and AI possess distinct strengths. HI brings emotional intelligence, nuanced understanding of cultural contexts, and adaptability in decision-making, while AI offers computational power, data analysis capabilities, and pattern recognition, enabling rapid processing of vast amounts of information.

– **Data Processing and Analysis:** AI can aid HI by processing and analyzing massive datasets, identifying trends, and providing predictive analysis. This can help in understanding historical patterns, societal sentiments, and potential future developments in the MENA region.

– **Contextual Understanding:** HI excels in interpreting complex human interactions, cultural nuances, and historical contexts. This understanding is crucial in comprehending the intricacies of conflicts, social dynamics, and political landscapes in the MENA region, complementing AI’s data-driven analysis.

– **Decision Support:** AI can assist HI by offering data-driven insights and scenario analysis, aiding in strategic decision-making processes. HI can then use this information along with their contextual understanding to make informed and nuanced decisions with regard to the MENA region.

– **Ethical Considerations:** Collaboration between HI and AI requires ethical considerations, ensuring responsible use of AI technologies, addressing biases in algorithms, and respecting human rights and cultural sensitivities in the MENA region.

comprehensive answers to user queries. It is designed to search the web in real-time and offer up-to-date information on various topics. Perplexity AI is a powerful tool with an intuitive user interface that can help users find information on a wide range of topics. What Perplexity AI is and how to use it is discussed here: <https://medium.com/@entrustech/perplexity-ai-what-you-need-to-know-and-how-to-use-it-82ee6ce1fbd>.

⁴ <https://www.eweek.com/artificial-intelligence/best-ai-chatbots/>.

– Adaptability and Learning: Both HI and AI can learn from each other. AI systems can adapt based on HI’s feedback and insights, while HI can learn to leverage AI tools effectively, enhancing their decision-making capacities.

– Risk Management: Collaborative efforts should consider potential risks, such as overreliance on AI, lack of human judgment in critical situations, or misinformation derived from biased data inputs.

Ultimately, the synergy between HI and AI could offer enhanced capabilities in navigating the complexities of the MENA region. However, successful collaboration requires a balanced approach that leverages the strengths of both, addresses ethical considerations, and ensures human oversight in critical decision-making processes.”⁵

*Perplexity.ai*⁶:

“A joint perspective for a mixed crew of Human Intelligence (HI) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in navigating the stormy evolutions marking the region of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) could be based on the following key aspects:

– Complementary Capabilities: AI can analyze vast amounts of data and identify patterns, while HI can provide nuanced understanding and complex problem-solving, areas where AI often falls short.

– Human-AI Collaboration: Rather than viewing AI as a replacement for human intelligence, the focus should be on how these two forms of intelligence can complement each other. AI’s proficiency in data analysis and automation can amplify human abilities.

– Fostering Understanding: Utilizing AI in the MENA region can foster a better understanding of the region’s limitations, impacts, challenges, and opportunities, while highlighting how AI can be leveraged to address these issues.

– Ethical Reasoning and Problem-Solving: HI brings unique qualities like empathy, creativity, ethical reasoning, and complex problem-solving that AI cannot replicate.

In conclusion, the collaboration between HI and AI can provide a powerful framework for addressing the complex challenges in the MENA region, leveraging the strengths of both human and artificial intelligence to foster understanding, address limitations, and drive long-term solutions.”⁷

⁵ <https://chat.openai.com/c/3eb5c376-da6a-46af-9d2c-a8906562f37e>, 27 December 2023.

⁶ *Perplexity.ai* informed that it found “inspiration” for its answer in various “sources”, among them: *Collaborative Intelligence: Humans and AI Are Joining Forces. Humans and machines can enhance each other’s strengths* (<https://hbr.org/2018/07/collaborative-intelligence-humans-and-ai-are-joining-forces>), *Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Human Intelligence (HI): A Harmonious Partnership*, 12 Sept. 2023. (<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/artificial-intelligence-ai-human-hi-harmonious-shamir-lalani/>), *OPEN Study Days Conference: Utilizing Artificial Intelligence in Middle East and North Africa*, NATO, November 9, 2023 (<https://www.act.nato.int/article/open-study-days-conference-using-ai-mena/>), *Leveraging Human Intelligence in an Artificial Intelligence World* – LinkedIn. 17 Oct 2023 (<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/leveraging-human-intelligence-artificial-world-ravinder/>).

⁷ <https://www.perplexity.ai/search/The-latest-2023-DV0TCYyuTzCM3HO2LrrCVw?s=u>, 27 Dec. 2023.

*Some of the Most Revealing Dimensions
Substantiating the MENA Region’s Current Agenda
As the Two Categories of Participants
to Our “Team Intelligence”, Namely HI and AI,
Took Turns to Deal with them From a Peaceful Perspective*

*1. A Matter Consequential
for the Reader’s “Cognitive Consonance”
– HI’s Vision and Reactions by the Two AI Representatives*

The energy which has been helping pushing ahead the flux of ideas substantiating the present study has one particular source – *the metaphoric universe* engulfing the very region under consideration, namely the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

More, the fact that we should expect dealing with a particularly wide-ranging and extremely diverse “*universe*”, determined us to bring to the fore the defining expression: “*MENA – A World of Metaphors*”.

And that is part of an integrative “*world*” which *generically* interested referential names in the human civilization.

First, persons/great names as *Aristotle* – “The greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learned from others; and it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilar”⁸ and Hannah Arendt – “Metaphors being the daily bread of all conceptual thought... (with a caveat:) It may be wise to refrain from such metaphorical statements which, when taken literally, can only lead into a phony sentimentality in which all real issues are obscured”⁹.

Second, a plethora of scholarly contributions:

– “Metaphors make the world. Woven into the fabric of language, metaphors shape how we understand reality... When used properly, metaphors enhance speech. But correctly dosing the metaphorical spice in the dish of language is no easy task. They ‘must not be far-fetched, or they will be difficult to grasp, nor obvious, or they will have no effect’... (enough examples) highlight the role of metaphors in creating reality rather than simply helping to represent it”¹⁰.

– “The identity of the Middle Easter is closely associated with the “gene pool“ of metaphors. From this the Middle Eastern community may draw fruitful metaphors in the formulation of responses to new opportunities and crises.”¹¹

It is in this very context that one should also refer to a book, only not any volume, but one titled, pure and simple, “Gaza as Metaphor”¹², a seminal endeavor binomially focused:

⁸ Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1459a, <https://libquotes.com/aristotle/quote/lbj8w7e>.

⁹ H. Arendt, *Responsibility and judgment*, J. Kohn (ed.), New York: Schocken, 2003, pp. 13, 147-148.

¹⁰ https://aeon.co/essays/how-changing-the-metaphors-we-use-can-change-the-way-we-think?utm_source=Aeon+Newsletter&utm_campaign=3f507d63a9-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2024_02_08&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fc476d9131-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D.

¹¹ *A Middle Eastern Identity. Experimental articulation through a dynamic system of metaphors*, 1991. <https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs/idenmets/idenmide.php>

¹² Helga Tawil-Souri and Diana Matar, *Gaza as Metaphor*, London, Hurst & Company, 2016.

(i). “Open-Air Prison, Terror, Resistance, Occupation, Siege, Trauma, irrespective of when, where, and to whom the word is uttered, ‘Gaza’ immediately evokes an abundance of metaphors.

(ii). Similarly, a host of metaphors also recall Gaza: Crisis, Exception, Refugees, Destitution, Tunnels, Persistence...”

Eventually, “Gaza is more than simply a metaphor for far-away humanitarian disaster, or a location of incomprehensible violence – it is above all an inseparable part of Palestine’s past, present, and future, and of the condition of dispossession.”¹³

And, 10 years later, both the region and the entire world cannot but notice the resilience of “Gaza as metaphor” with the entire multipronged significance above-reviewed.

In light of all the above-reviewed reflections, it would be undoubtedly an inciting and rewarding epistemological journey through the nexus between *the earthly issues and challenges*, which for long have been trying and so harshly the region, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, *MENA’s more ethereal space of metaphors and idioms*, from where one can perceive further and in a particular light *the region’s horizon line*.

All these could be much more possible with relevant inputs by the two *AI Representatives*:

ChatGPT:

“Cultural Relevance: The MENA region is rich in cultural diversity, with each country and community having its own unique traditions, symbols, and expressions. Incorporating metaphors and idioms that resonate with local audiences can demonstrate respect for their cultural heritage and facilitate meaningful dialogue.

Nuanced Analysis: Metaphors and idioms can offer nuanced perspectives on complex issues, allowing for deeper exploration and interpretation. By drawing parallels and making comparisons, they can shed light on underlying dynamics and relationships that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Creativity and Innovation: In a field as dynamic as Middle Eastern studies, creativity and innovation are essential for generating new insights and approaches. Metaphors and idioms provide a creative framework for thinking about old problems in new ways, sparking innovative solutions and strategies.

Memorability: Well-chosen metaphors and idioms have the potential to stick in the minds of audiences, serving as memorable hooks for key concepts and ideas. This can be particularly valuable in public discourse and policymaking, where attention spans are often limited, and complex issues compete for attention.

In conclusion, while using metaphors and idioms can enhance the description and analysis of various aspects of the MENA region, it’s essential to approach

¹³ From the book’s introductory presentation on its first cover.

their use thoughtfully and critically. When used effectively, metaphors and idioms can enrich discussions, foster understanding, and contribute to innovative solutions to the challenges facing the region.”¹⁴

Perplexity.ai:

“Metaphors and idioms can be valuable tools for understanding and analyzing various aspects related to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, including the problems and challenges confronting the region and their regional and international ripples.

They can help to shed light on the historical, cultural, and political contexts that shape the region and its relationships with other regions.

Overall, the use of metaphors and idioms in the description and analysis of various aspects related to the MENA region can help to illuminate the complex and multifaceted nature of the region, as well as the historical, cultural, and political factors that shape its evolution and challenges.

Metaphors and symbolic phrases are used to convey complex ideas about the MENA region by providing vivid and evocative descriptions that help readers and audiences understand the nuances and dynamics of the region.

In academic literature, metaphors are employed to analyze and interpret the multifaceted social, political, and economic aspects of the MENA region and to make the complexities of the MENA region more accessible and relatable to readers.

In political discourse, metaphors and symbolic phrases are often utilized to shape public opinion and communicate policy positions. By using such metaphors, political actors seek to influence public perceptions and advocate for specific policies related to the MENA region.

Overall, metaphors and symbolic phrases play a crucial role in articulating the intricacies of the MENA region, whether in academic literature or political discourse, by providing a more engaging and understandable representation of its multifaceted nature.

*In conclusion, metaphors and symbolic tropes can help in conveying the complexities and dynamics of the MENA region’s past and present evolutions, while also adding depth and vividness to your analysis.”*¹⁵

2. The HI Representative’s Thought-provoking Original Views – “MENA, A Metaphor of The World” and the Two AI Representatives’ Evaluations

First, *we/HI Representative* introduced the phrase “*MENA, A Metaphor of the World*” separately to each of our two *AI Interlocutors*, asking them if one can consider the phrase “*The Middle East*” as a kind of metaphor created by the *World*, at a given moment, to ease its trajectory through the host of problems and challenges facing it in some of its most sensitive areas.

Substantive and indeed relevant answers were received in both cases.

¹⁴ <https://chat.openai.com/c/38a8da91-8139-4701-b26f-5ba3ea7f61bd>, 25 April 2024.

¹⁵ <https://www.perplexity.ai/search/The-latest-2023-DV0TCYyuTzCM3HO2LrrCVw>, 25 April 2024.

ChatGPT:

“The phrase “The Middle East” can indeed be considered a kind of metaphor, reflecting how geopolitical, cultural, and historical contexts are often framed to address complex problems and challenges. Here’s an evaluation of this perspective:

1. Historical Context and Creation

Colonial Legacy:

The term “Middle East” was coined in the early 20th century, particularly gaining prominence during the era of European colonialism. It was used to describe a region that was geographically east of Europe but not as far east as Asia, thus “middle” in relation to Europe.

This term reflects a Eurocentric view of the world, highlighting how regions are often defined and categorized based on external perspectives.

2. Metaphorical Dimensions

Geopolitical Simplification:

The Middle East as a phrase simplifies a complex and diverse region into a single entity. This can be useful for policy-making, diplomacy, and strategic planning, providing a common reference point for addressing issues like conflict, trade, and security.

Cultural and Religious Significance:

The Middle East is often seen as the cradle of civilization, home to major world religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam), and rich in cultural heritage. This metaphorical richness adds layers of meaning to the term beyond its geographic boundaries.

Strategic Importance:

The region’s strategic importance, due to its vast energy resources (oil and gas) and critical maritime routes, makes it a focal point for global powers. The term “Middle East” thus encapsulates the strategic interests and interventions of these powers.

3. Challenges and Criticisms

Homogenization:

The phrase can homogenize a diverse region, ignoring the distinct identities, cultures, and histories of its constituent countries and peoples. This can lead to oversimplified policies and a lack of nuanced understanding.

Conflict and Stability:

The metaphor of the Middle East often carries connotations of conflict, instability, and turmoil. This can perpetuate stereotypes and overlook positive developments and resilience within the region.

External Interference:

The term also reflects how external powers have historically viewed and intervened in the region, often with their own interests in mind. This has sometimes exacerbated conflicts and hindered local solutions.

Conclusion

In essence, “The Middle East” as a metaphor captures the geopolitical, cultural, and strategic complexity of a region that is pivotal to global affairs. While it

provides a convenient shorthand for addressing broad issues, it is essential to recognize and appreciate the diversity and specificity within the region to develop effective and respectful policies.

The metaphorical use of “The Middle East” underscores the importance of contextual understanding and the need for a balanced approach that considers the region’s rich tapestry of histories, cultures, and peoples.”¹⁶

Perplexity.ai:

“The phrase “The Middle East” can be considered a metaphor created by the world at a given moment to ease its trajectory through the problems and challenges facing some of the most sensitive areas in the region. Here are a few key points to consider:

1. The term “Middle East” is a geopolitical construct that emerged in the early 20th century as a replacement for “Near East.” It encompasses a diverse region including the Arabian Peninsula, Levant, Turkey, Egypt, Iran, and Iraq. The changing definitions and Eurocentric nature of the term have led to some confusion and criticism.

2. Metaphors are extensively used in Middle Eastern political discourse to frame issues, construct narratives, and shape perceptions about regional dynamics and conflicts. Metaphors like “The Arab Spring,” “The Path to Victory,” and “Green Colonialism” have been employed to characterize political upheaval, resistance movements, and external interventions in the region.

3. The use of metaphors in Middle Eastern politics can influence international relations by justifying policies, constructing identities, and shaping the dynamics of regional conflicts and interactions with external actors. Metaphors can also contribute to the escalation or de-escalation of conflicts by framing issues in certain ways.”¹⁷

*ADDENDUM: Yuval Noah Harari “Interceding”
And Echoes from the AI Representatives’ Camp*

We/ “HI” felt the need to further contextualize the subject-matter in light of the considerations advanced by the reputable historian, philosopher and author Yuval Noah Harari who asserted that, “over the past couple of years, new Artificial Intelligence tools have emerged that threaten the survival of human civilization from an unexpected direction.” According to the same source, “Artificial Intelligence has gained some remarkable abilities to manipulate and generate language, whether with words, sounds or images. Artificial Intelligence has thereby hacked the operating system of our civilization.”¹⁸

¹⁶ <https://chatgpt.com/c/3eb5c376-da6a-46af-9d2c-a8906562f37e?oai-dm=1&model=gpt-4o>, 28 May 2024.

¹⁷ <https://www.perplexity.ai/search/The-latest-2023-DV0TCYyuTzCM3HO2LrrCVw>, 25 June 2024.

¹⁸ https://www.economist.com/by-invitation/2023/04/28/yuval-noah-harari-argues-that-ai-has-hacked-the-operating-system-of-human-civilisation?utm_campaign=a.the-economist-today&utm_medium=email.internal-newsletter.np&utm_source=salesforce-marketing-cloud&utm_term=6/5/2024&utm_id=1892461.

Against this backdrop, with Artificial Intelligence at the helm of the operating system of the human civilization, many legitimate interrogations could be raised, including from a regional perspective. One would be related to a sectoral area, namely if the phrase “The Middle East” would be considered anymore as a kind of metaphor created by the World, at a given moment, to ease its trajectory through the host of problems and challenges facing it in some of its most sensitive areas. And here are the evaluations made by our two “AI” interlocutors:

ChatGPT:

“The assertions by the historian and philosopher about the transformative impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on civilization, and the subsequent interrogations it raises, indeed provide a compelling context for reevaluating metaphors like “The Middle East”. Here are my evaluations on this subject-matter:

The Role of AI in Civilization’s Operating System

AI’s Linguistic Capabilities: AI’s ability to manipulate and generate language has profound implications. It means AI can influence narratives, perceptions, and even historical interpretations, potentially reshaping how we understand and interact with complex concepts like “The Middle East”.

AI’s influence on language and metaphor creation could alter the way we conceptualize regions and conflicts. The phrase “The Middle East” could be recontextualized or redefined through AI-generated narratives and analyses.

Historical and Geopolitical Context: Historically, “The Middle East” has served as a geopolitical shorthand for a diverse and strategically important region. AI could provide deeper, more nuanced insights into this complexity, challenging the oversimplified and homogenized views often associated with the term.

Cultural and Social Dimensions: AI can analyze vast amounts of cultural and social data, revealing the intricate fabric of identities, traditions, and dynamics within the region. This could help deconstruct the monolithic metaphor and highlight the diversity and specificity of different areas within “The Middle East”.

Strategic Importance and Conflicts: AI’s predictive capabilities could better map and anticipate geopolitical trends and conflicts, offering more sophisticated frameworks for understanding and addressing the challenges in the region. This might shift the metaphor from one of perpetual conflict to one of dynamic, multifaceted interactions.

Potential Implications and Interrogations

Evolving Narratives: As AI shapes and disseminates new narratives, the metaphor of “The Middle East” could evolve. It might be replaced or supplemented by terms that reflect more current and accurate geopolitical realities, as understood through AI-driven analysis.

Bias and Manipulation: There is a risk that AI-generated narratives could reflect biases present in the training data or the objectives of those who control the AI systems. This could perpetuate certain metaphors or create new ones that

serve specific agendas, potentially complicating the discourse around regions like the Middle East.

Human-AI Collaboration: The collaboration between human intelligence and AI can offer a balanced perspective, leveraging AI’s analytical power while ensuring human ethical and contextual oversight. This synergy can refine metaphors and frameworks, making them more relevant and useful in addressing contemporary challenges.

Conclusion

The metaphor of “The Middle East” as a geopolitical and cultural construct may undergo significant transformation under the influence of AI. AI’s ability to process and generate language, analyze vast data sets, and predict trends offers an opportunity to deepen our understanding of the region. However, it also raises concerns about bias, control, and the ethical use of AI in shaping narratives.

As AI increasingly influences the operating system of human civilization, it is crucial to critically evaluate and guide its impact on how we conceptualize and address complex regional issues. The phrase “The Middle East” may evolve to reflect a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding, shaped by both human intelligence and artificial intelligence working in concert.”¹⁹

Perplexity.ai:

“As AI systems gain remarkable abilities to manipulate and generate language, they could potentially be used to create and propagate metaphors that shape the world’s understanding and response to the challenges in the Middle East. AI could be leveraged to frame narratives, construct identities, and influence international relations in the region.

The phrase “The Middle East” has long been used as a metaphor to conceptualize and navigate the complexities of the region. With the emergence of powerful AI language models, there is a risk that such metaphors could be manipulated to serve certain agendas and influence global perceptions and actions. It is crucial to be aware of this potential and to critically examine the use of language, whether human-generated or AI-generated, in shaping our understanding of the Middle East and other regions.”²⁰

3. “MENA, Cradle of Crises”

– Another Defining Vision cum Metaphor for Today’s MENA Region

(i). HI’s Condensed Heuristic Vision

Undoubtedly, the prevalent area in relation to which no other part of the world would come ahead of MENA is represented by *the whole host of crises and conflicts* which have been marking the region since time immemorial.

¹⁹ <https://chatgpt.com/c/3eb5c376-da6a-46af-9d2c-a8906562f37e?oai-dm=1>, 25 June 2024.

²⁰ <https://www.perplexity.ai/search/The-latest-2023-DV0TCYyuTzCM3HO2LrrCVw>, 25 June 2024.

It is here that one can meet some of *the most expressive metaphors from the bulk of such phrases related to the respective region*, with “*The cradle of crises*” one of the most resounding among them.

Given its relevance, the metaphor in case can be found as the title of the concluding chapter for a seminal 400 pages Book – “*The Middle East A political history from 395 to the present*”, recently published.²¹

By extension, one can legitimately see MENA as “*A cradle of crises and conflicts*”.

Against this background, as a result of forging their daily existence in a genuine and continuously active *furnace* charged with melting a diversity of issues of scale, evolving up to the stage of crises and even conflicts, be they economic, social, political and geopolitical, a number of countries and subregions from MENA have now their name amended with a corresponding metaphor: *Syria*: “The Shattered Mosaic”, *Libya*: “Anarchy on the Mediterranean”, *Yemen*: “The Worst Humanitarian Crisis in the World”, *Palestine*: “The Vanishing Land”, *Iraq*: “The Broken Republic”, *Egypt*: “Fallen Giant”, *Lebanon*: “A Crumbling State”, *Kurdistan*: The Struggle in the Mountains, *The Gulf*: “Wealth and Insecurity”.

Inscribed as titles for chapters in another germinal Book, one with a profoundly inspired overall title too – “*Battleground Ten Conflicts that Explain the New Middle East*”²², the respective phrases cum metaphors come to foreshadow dramatic, if not rightly tragic, national and regional trends and evolutions.

(ii). Considerations by One “AI Representative” – ChatGPT

“Here’s an evaluation of the “Cradle of Crises” metaphor:

1. Acknowledgment of Challenges: The metaphor effectively captures the reality that the MENA region has been beset by a multitude of crises, including political instability, economic challenges, social unrest, and security threats. It acknowledges the deep-seated issues that have plagued the region for decades.

2. Historical Context: The use of the term “cradle” implies that crises are not new to the MENA region but have deep historical roots. This recognition of historical context is important for understanding the complexities of the region’s challenges and the underlying factors contributing to them.

3. Complexity and Depth: The metaphor highlights the multifaceted nature of crises in the MENA region, suggesting that they are deeply entrenched and interconnected. This complexity includes both internal dynamics within individual countries and external factors related to regional geopolitics and global power dynamics.

²¹ Jean-Pierre Filiu, *The Middle East A political history from 395 to the present*, The English Edition Polity Press, 2023, pp. 349-356.

²² Christopher Phillips, *Battleground Ten Conflicts that Explain the New Middle East*, Yale University Press New Haven and London, 2024.

4. Negative Connotations: While the metaphor effectively communicates the severity and pervasiveness of crises in the MENA region, it also carries inherently negative connotations. The term “cradle” implies a place of origin or nurturing, but in this context, it suggests a place where crises are born and perpetuated, reinforcing a sense of despair or hopelessness.

5. Potential for Stigmatization: Using the metaphor “Cradle of Crises” may inadvertently contribute to stigmatizing the MENA region and its people, reinforcing stereotypes of perpetual conflict and instability. This can have negative implications for perceptions of the region and its inhabitants, as well as for efforts to promote peace and development.

6. Lack of Agency: The metaphor may imply a deterministic view of the MENA region as inherently prone to crises, overlooking the agency of individuals, communities, and governments in addressing challenges and shaping the region’s future. It’s important to recognize the resilience and agency of people in the MENA region in responding to crises and working towards positive change.

Overall, while the “MENA – Cradle of Crises” metaphor effectively conveys the severity and complexity of challenges facing the region, it should be used with caution due to its negative connotations and potential for stigmatization. It’s important to balance discussions of crises with recognition of the region’s strengths, resilience, and potential for positive transformation.”²³

(iii). *A True Universe of Concrete Cases*

The plural form used for the word *crisis* in the phrase-metaphor of *MENA as “Cradle of Crises”* is percussively signaling that we are faced with an ample *universe* as the number of concrete cases involved, but also as a kaleidoscopically determination, all in a dynamism not easy to measure.

We/ the HI Representative opened the discussion on the issue with a topic of the day: the unfolding of the tragic circumstances related to the food crisis in the Palestinian Gaza Strip in the context of the Israeli-Hamas War started on 7 October 2023, a crisis which, legitimately, would also be labelled “*food weaponization*”.

What we noticed also was that the crisis in case went in pair with an almost infinite array of official public stands, from the White House in Washington DC, to the EU in Brussels, not to speak about the numerous reports and warnings issued by governmental and non-governmental international organizations, UN components before anything else: “*After more than seven months of heavy Israeli bombardment in response to Hamas-led terror attacks on southern Israel, nearly one in two Gazans – around 1.1 million people – was facing hunger levels so catastrophic that the UN has warned that many are on the brink of famine.*”²⁴

²³ <https://chat.openai.com/c/38a8da91-8139-4701-b26f-5ba3ea7f61bd>, 25 April 2024.

²⁴ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/05/1150076>, 22 May 2024.

Hence, we could not notice that, *such a situation could resemble a kind of sui generis modern metaphor*, namely that of “*the chorus in the context of ancient Greek tragedy*”, known of playing a role limited “*to describing and commenting on an issue*”. A matter of serious concern given the further continuation for such an institutional and organizational framework with regard to the very case of the Gazan Palestinian situation, which has been intimately integrated into the open-ended Israeli-Palestinian conflict, unavoidably going in parallel with deepening the very real ‘Palestinian tragedy’ of today.

A situation whose holistic evaluation is best done here by *ChatGPT*:

“The unfolding food crisis in the Palestinian Gaza Strip, coupled with the array of official public stances from various international actors, does indeed resemble a modern-day interpretation of the chorus in ancient Greek tragedy. Here’s an evaluation of this comparison:

1. Chorus as Commentator: In ancient Greek tragedies, the chorus served as a collective voice that provided commentary on the unfolding events, often expressing collective emotions and moral reflections. Similarly, in the context of the Gaza food crisis, international actors, including governments, NGOs, and intergovernmental organizations, are offering commentary, issuing statements, and expressing concerns about the dire situation. However, like the chorus, their role is often limited to observation and commentary rather than direct intervention or resolution of the crisis.

2. Limited Impact of Commentary: While the chorus in Greek tragedy played a significant role in shaping the audience’s understanding of the events and themes, its ability to influence the outcome of the story was limited. Similarly, the numerous statements and reports issued by international actors regarding the Gaza food crisis may raise awareness and garner sympathy, but their impact on addressing the root causes and alleviating the suffering is often constrained by political complexities and power dynamics.

3. Integration into Larger Conflict: The Gaza food crisis is intricately intertwined with the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict, further complicating efforts to address the humanitarian situation. The continuation of institutional and organizational frameworks without meaningful progress toward resolving the underlying conflict risks perpetuating the cycle of suffering and deepening the Palestinian tragedy. Despite the chorus of international voices expressing concern, the underlying structural issues and political stalemate persist.

4. Need for Meaningful Action: While commentary and expressions of concern are important, they must be accompanied by concrete actions aimed at addressing the immediate humanitarian needs in Gaza and advancing a sustainable resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This may involve diplomatic efforts to facilitate dialogue and negotiations, as well as increased humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the population.

In conclusion, the comparison of the international response to the Gaza food crisis to the chorus in ancient Greek tragedy highlights the collective commentary and expressions of concern from various actors. However, without

meaningful action to address the underlying conflict and alleviate the humanitarian suffering, such commentary risks being insufficient to bring about meaningful change. There is a pressing need for concerted efforts to address the root causes of the crisis and work towards a just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”²⁵

Not less of interest in the overall realm of MENA as “*Cradle of Crises*” is the *clash of narratives*, legitimately calling to the fore here too the quasi-metaphor *weaponization*.

We/HI representative were very much helped in this respect by an overall conceptualization of the particular metaphor *Weaponization Of Narratives* as done by Andreas Krieg in his book “*Subversion. The Strategic Weaponization of Narratives*”²⁶, and that starting with a useful introduction into the general area of narratives:

(i). “Narratives are metaheuristic shortcuts that help us make sense of the complex world around us, dividing the world into good and evil, moral and immoral, and legitimate and illegitimate.”

(ii). Weaponized narratives imply a deliberate manipulation of existing narratives with the aim of subverting existing civil-societal and political discourse within a community that can lead to a change of attitudes, decisions, and behaviors. Weaponized narratives become means to offensively target the information-psychological center of gravity of communities, undermining the trust in the integrity of communications networks between individuals, communities, and institutions that ultimately feed policymaking... The weaponization of narratives is rarely coercive; it is much more subversive, eroding an adversary’s will gradually, subtly, and most often without the adversary noticing.”²⁷

Bradley Allenby and Joel Garreau advanced another referential view, rather concordant with the previous one: “*Weaponized narrative seeks to undermine an opponent’s civilization, and will by generating complexity, confusion, and political and social schisms. It can be used tactically, as part of explicit military or geopolitical conflict; or strategically, as a way to reduce, neutralize, and defeat a civilization, state, or organization.*”²⁸

As for MENA region, for long its realities had been themes of various narratives, inclusive weaponized ones where the authors’ interests were focused on the respective “practice”. In this very area of particular importance had been and continue to be *the dual narratives on the Israeli-Palestinians conflict*. “In the Israeli-Palestinian battle of narratives, they, more often than not, either are designed to thwart solutions or, by design or default, reinforce entrenched mutually exclusive positions. Words become part of a battle of competing narratives in which the narrative is a tool to achieve a political outcome.”²⁹

²⁵ <https://chat.openai.com/c/9380c722-690c-4cf3-8b03-4014979a9504>, 31 March 2024.

²⁶ Andreas Krieg, *Subversion. The Strategic Weaponization of Narratives*, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2023.

²⁷ Krieg Andreas’ *quoted book*, pp. 6, 73.

²⁸ Bradley R Allenby and Joel Garreau, “Weaponized Narrative Is the new Battlespace”. *DefenceOne*, January 3, 2017. www.defenseone.com/ideas/2017/01/weaponized-narrative-new-battlespace/134284/.

²⁹ James M. Dorsey, *Words matter*, 25 Apr. 2024, <https://medium.com/the-turbulent-world-of-middle-east-soccer/words-matter-ab2cbf4a5b95>.

As such, we were interested to have the evaluations of the two “*AI collaborators*” on the potential clash between *the competing Israeli weaponized narrative and the Palestinian weaponized narrative*, with the understanding that both narratives regard the present overall situation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), including concerning the critical Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as on diverse other factors contributing to the clash between an Israeli weaponized narrative and a Palestinian weaponized narrative. And the answer had been:

ChatGPT

“The potential clash between the competing Israeli weaponized narrative and the Palestinian weaponized narrative reflects the deep-seated divisions, grievances, and competing narratives that underlie the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Here’s an evaluation of this clash:

1. Mutual Reinforcement: The competing Israeli and Palestinian weaponized narratives often serve to reinforce each other, perpetuating a cycle of mistrust, animosity, and conflict. Each side utilizes its narrative to justify its actions, demonize the other, and mobilize support domestically and internationally.

2. Polarization and Divisiveness: The clash between the Israeli and Palestinian weaponized narratives exacerbates polarization and divisiveness within Israeli and Palestinian societies, as well as in the broader international community. Both narratives tend to promote a one-sided perspective, delegitimize the other side’s claims and aspirations, and cultivate a sense of victimhood and righteous indignation among their respective constituencies.

3. Obstacle to Peace: The clash between the Israeli and Palestinian weaponized narratives complicates efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. By perpetuating entrenched narratives of victimhood, historical grievances, and territorial claims, both sides find it challenging to compromise and engage in meaningful dialogue aimed at addressing the underlying issues and reaching a mutually acceptable resolution.

4. Propaganda and Manipulation: The clash between the Israeli and Palestinian weaponized narratives often involves the use of propaganda techniques, manipulation of historical narratives, and selective presentation of facts to advance political objectives and shape public opinion. This can contribute to a culture of misinformation, distrust, and cynicism, making it difficult to discern truth from fiction and undermining prospects for peace and reconciliation.

5. International Implications: The clash between the Israeli and Palestinian weaponized narratives has broader international implications, as it affects perceptions of the conflict and influences diplomatic efforts to resolve it. Both sides seek to mobilize international support for their respective narratives, leading to diplomatic confrontations, political maneuvering, and polarization within the international community.

6. Ethical Considerations: The clash between the Israeli and Palestinian weaponized narratives raises ethical considerations regarding the use of propaganda, distortion of facts, and manipulation of historical narratives to advance political

objectives. Both sides must consider the ethical implications of weaponizing their narratives and strive to uphold principles of honesty, transparency, and respect for diverse perspectives.

Overall, the clash between the competing Israeli and Palestinian weaponized narratives represents a significant obstacle to achieving peace and reconciliation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Addressing this clash requires efforts to promote mutual understanding, empathy, and dialogue, as well as a willingness to challenge entrenched narratives, confront historical injustices, and pursue a shared vision of peace and coexistence.”³⁰

Several factors contribute to the clash between an Israeli weaponized narrative and a Palestinian weaponized narrative:

1. **Historical Narratives:** Both Israelis and Palestinians have deeply ingrained historical narratives that shape their collective identities and perceptions of the conflict. These narratives often diverge significantly, leading to competing claims over territory, sovereignty, and historical grievances.

2. **Territorial Disputes:** The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is fundamentally rooted in competing claims over land, particularly in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem. The clash between Israeli and Palestinian weaponized narratives is fueled by rival claims to these territories and the desire to assert control and sovereignty over them.

3. **Security Concerns:** Security concerns are a central element of the Israeli weaponized narrative, which emphasizes the need to defend against terrorism, military aggression, and threats to Israel’s existence. Palestinians, on the other hand, highlight their own security concerns, including the impacts of occupation, checkpoints, and military incursions on their daily lives.

4. **Religious and Cultural Identities:** Religion and culture play significant roles in shaping the narratives of both Israelis and Palestinians. Jerusalem, in particular, holds immense religious and symbolic significance for Jews, Muslims, and Christians, leading to competing claims and narratives surrounding its status and control.

5. **Political Leadership and Ideology:** Political leadership and ideology play a crucial role in shaping and perpetuating the Israeli and Palestinian weaponized narratives. Israeli governments often emphasize security concerns and prioritize maintaining control over disputed territories, while Palestinian leadership focuses on national liberation, self-determination, and resistance against occupation.

6. **Media and Propaganda:** Media outlets and propaganda efforts on both sides contribute to the perpetuation of weaponized narratives. Israeli and Palestinian media often portray events, incidents, and historical narratives in ways that reinforce their respective narratives and demonize the other side.

7. **International Factors:** International factors, including diplomatic alliances, geopolitical interests, and global perceptions of the conflict, also influence the clash between Israeli and Palestinian weaponized narratives. International actors may align themselves with one side or the other, further exacerbating tensions and contributing to the polarization of narratives.

³⁰ <https://chat.openai.com/c/9380c722-690c-4cf3-8b03-4014979a9504>, 27 April 2024.

8. Trauma and Historical Memory: Both Israelis and Palestinians have experienced trauma and historical injustices as a result of the conflict, which contribute to the perpetuation of weaponized narratives. Historical memory, including narratives of displacement, violence, and loss, shapes perceptions of the conflict and reinforces rival narratives of victimhood and suffering.

Overall, the clash between Israeli and Palestinian weaponized narratives is driven by a complex interplay of historical, territorial, religious, political, and psychological factors. Addressing this clash requires efforts to promote mutual understanding, empathy, and dialogue, as well as a willingness to confront historical injustices and work towards a shared vision of peace and coexistence.”³¹

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“The potential clash between the competing Israeli and Palestinian narratives regarding the overall situation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), including the critical Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is a complex and multifaceted issue.

Based on the provided sources, a few key points can be made:

1. Narrative Divergence: The sources highlight that “the sharper the conflict, the wider the narratives diverge”. As the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has persisted, the respective narratives of the two sides have become increasingly polarized and entrenched.

2. Weaponization of Narratives: Both the Israeli and Palestinian narratives can be seen as “weaponized”, as each side seeks to frame events and construct identities in a way that promotes their own agenda and undermines the other. This can lead to the silencing or distortion of opposing perspectives.

3. Textbook Narratives: The analysis of history textbooks in Poland shows how the presentation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be shaped by political agendas, with a tendency to either incorporate or silence pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian voices. This highlights the importance of ensuring balanced and objective narratives in educational materials.

3. Implications for Conflict Resolution: The sources suggest that for conflict resolution, it is essential to acknowledge, understand, and appreciate the genuine narratives of both sides, particularly those with religious or historical origins, even if one may not agree with them. Bridging the gap between competing narratives is crucial.

In conclusion, the potential clash between the Israeli and Palestinian narratives regarding the MENA region and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a significant challenge that can hinder progress towards conflict resolution and mutual understanding. Addressing this issue requires a nuanced approach that recognizes the complexity of the narratives, the need for balanced and objective representation, and the importance of bridging the gap between competing perspectives.

Some factors that contribute to the clash between the Israeli and Palestinian narratives include:

³¹ <https://chat.openai.com/c/9380c722-690c-4cf3-8b03-4014979a9504>, 27 April 2024.

1. Indivisible Objectives: At the heart of the conflict is the deep structural problem where both Israelis and Palestinian nationalists want to live in and control the same piece of territory, each believing it is rightfully theirs. This situation, known as an “indivisibility” problem, makes it challenging to settle the dispute as the issue cannot be divided in a way that is acceptable to both parties.

2. Security Dilemma: The small size of the disputed territory, coupled with the historical acts of ethnic cleansing and expulsion, has created a severe security dilemma for both communities. Israel’s small population and vulnerable geography have given its leaders a powerful incentive to make the country more secure by expanding its borders, leading to further tensions and conflicts with the expelled Palestinians and neighboring Arab states.

3. Nationalism and Historical Claims: Nationalism plays a significant role in shaping the narratives of both Israelis and Palestinians, with each side fervently believing in the legitimacy of their claims to the land. The contested status of Jerusalem, a sacred site for three major religions, further complicates the situation and contributes to the clash of narratives.

4. External Influences: The involvement of external powers, such as the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, has also played a role in fueling the conflict by arming and supporting different sides for their own self-interested reasons. This external interference has further complicated the resolution of the conflict and perpetuated the clash of narratives.

These factors contribute to the deep-rooted clash between the Israeli and Palestinian narratives, making it challenging to find common ground and reach a lasting resolution to the conflict.”³²

With additional conclusions mirroring two different perspectives:

Perplexity.ai:

“Both the Israeli and Palestinian narratives can be “weaponized“ to influence regional and international actors. By emphasizing specific aspects of their narratives, such as security threats for Israel or resistance for Palestinians, these narratives can be used strategically to garner support, shape perceptions, and justify actions. The weaponization of narratives can impact diplomatic relations, public opinion, and policies towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict within the MENA region and beyond.”³³

ChatGBT:

“The identities of Palestinians and Israelis are diverse and multifaceted, encompassing various social, cultural, historical, and political dimensions. Here are some key characteristics that often define these identities:

³² <https://www.perplexity.ai/search/The-latest-2023-DV0TCYyuTzCM3HO2LrrCVw>, 27 April 2024.

³³ <https://www.perplexity.ai/search/The-latest-2023-DV0TCYyuTzCM3HO2LrrCVw>, 20 March 2024.

Palestinian Identities:

National Identity: Palestinians share a collective national identity tied to the historical land of Palestine, including their attachment to specific territories, cities, and cultural heritage.

Historical Narrative: Palestinians often identify with a history of dispossession, displacement, and the struggle for self-determination, particularly regarding the loss of land and the longing for statehood.

Cultural Diversity: Palestinian identity is diverse, comprising various subgroups with unique cultural traditions, dialects, customs, and religious affiliations (including Muslims, Christians, and others).

Dispersed Population: The Palestinian identity extends beyond the borders of present-day Palestine, including those living in the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, as well as refugees in neighboring countries and the global diaspora.

Political Divisions: Palestinians experience political fragmentation, with divisions between different political factions, such as Fatah and Hamas, often influencing perceptions of identity and aspirations for statehood.

Israeli Identities:

National and Ethnic Diversity: Israel is a diverse society, with Jewish citizens from various backgrounds, including those from different countries (e.g., Ashkenazi, Sephardic, Mizrahi) and various religious affiliations.

Historical and Religious Roots: Israelis often identify with historical narratives from biblical times and a connection to the land of Israel. Religious identity, particularly Jewish heritage, plays a significant role for many Israelis.

Democratic Values: Israel's identity as a democratic state is integral to many Israelis, emphasizing values such as equality, rule of law, freedom of speech, and pluralism.

Security Concerns: Due to historical conflicts and ongoing security challenges, security is a central aspect of Israeli identity, influencing policies and perceptions of national interests.

Complex National Identity: Israelis often grapple with the complexities of being a democratic, Jewish, and secure state, balancing these aspects within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”³⁴

*4. Exploring “MENA Edifice”, A Sui Generis “Geometric Locus”
for MENA’s Holistically Integrative “Pillars”, “Building Blocks”,
“Fault Lines” Included*

(i). HI’s Condensed Heuristic Vision

A fruitful concept-metaphor to be used in the approach of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) could be considered “MENA Edifice” that, with the goal of advancing an overall future perspective on the region, would be conceived as organically structuring the following components:

³⁴ <https://chat.openai.com/c/3eb5c376-da6a-46af-9d2c-a8906562f37e>, 25 December 2023.

– *A solid Floor/ Base and a resilient Ceiling*, in terms of principles, political, economic and social measures, reforming and institutional framework and so on.

– *The bulk of major pillars and building-blocks – Palestinians, Other Arabs, Israelis, Non-state Actors, Regional Powers, International Powers with interests and Influence in MENA, Multilateral Institutions*, each one being challenged, in terms of current evolutions and longer- term resilience, by both its own *Fault Lines and External Factors/ Interests*.

– The just above-reviewed *competing binary narratives* as the source, at any given moment, of a particular *glue* leading to a particular pattern of coalescing of the region’s pillars and building-blocks.

We can reasonably imagine the “*MENA Edifice*”, together with its “*structural components*” above-enumerated, as forming a *sui generis* “*planetary alignment*”, which is providing, at any given time, by its materiality and dynamism, the very source for “*MENA Edifice’s* overall profile with its panoply of inciting *markers*”.

Against the background substantiated by the particular circumstances of forces and actions defining the “*universe*” *in case*, exploring “*MENA Edifice*”’s realities, including conceptually and as a metaphorical realm equates with the challenging mission of opening of “*floodgates*” of a vast “*accumulation*” of *information* continuously adding from a diversity of sources.

(ii). *Evaluations on the Concept-Metaphor “MENA Edifice”*
By the Two AI Representatives

ChatGPT:

“The metaphor “*MENA Edifice*“ offers a compelling framework for understanding and analyzing the complex dynamics of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Here’s an evaluation of the vision and approach:

1. *Organic Structure*: The metaphor of an “*Edifice*“ suggests a holistic and interconnected structure, with various components working together to form a coherent whole. This reflects the interconnectedness of the different elements within the MENA region, including political, economic, social, and institutional factors.

2. *Solid Base and Resilient Ceiling*: The concept of a solid base and resilient ceiling provides a useful analogy for examining the foundational principles and overarching goals that underpin the region’s development and stability. This includes principles of governance, human rights, and economic prosperity, as well as mechanisms for conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

3. *Major Pillars and Building Blocks*: By identifying key pillars and building blocks within the *MENA Edifice*, such as Palestinians, Other Arabs, Israelis, Non-state Actors, Regional Powers, International Powers, and Multilateral Institutions, the metaphor helps to highlight the diverse actors and factors that shape the region’s trajectory. This approach encourages a comprehensive analysis that considers the perspectives, interests, and interactions of each component.

4. *Objective Narratives*: The metaphor emphasizes the importance of objective narratives in understanding and interpreting the MENA region’s dynamics. By framing the region as an *Edifice*, the approach encourages a nuanced and balanced assessment that avoids simplistic narratives or stereotypes.

5. Future Perspective: The concept of advancing an overall future perspective on the region, depending on the evolution of each component, underscores the dynamic nature of the MENA *Edifice*. This approach recognizes that progress and stability in the region require continuous engagement and collaboration across multiple fronts.

Overall, the “MENA *Edifice*“ metaphor offers a comprehensive and flexible framework for studying the complexities of the MENA region. It encourages a holistic approach that considers the interplay of various factors and actors, while also emphasizing the need for objective analysis and a forward-looking perspective. Utilizing this metaphor can help researchers and policymakers develop a deeper understanding of the region’s challenges and opportunities, ultimately contributing to more effective strategies for promoting peace, stability, and prosperity in the MENA region.”³⁵

Perplexity.ai:

The metaphor “MENA *Edifice*” is a useful tool for understanding the complex relationships and interdependencies between various actors and issues in the Middle East and North Africa region. By conceptualizing the region as a building with a solid base, resilient ceiling, and major pillars, this metaphor highlights the importance of a strong foundation of principles, policies, and institutions, as well as the need for objective narratives and cooperation between different actors in order to advance the region’s future.

Comparatively with “MENA *Edifice*”, the metaphor “MENA – Cradle of Crises” emphasizes the challenges and conflicts that have plagued the region for many years. While this metaphor may be accurate in some respects, it risks oversimplifying the region’s complexity and overlooking the progress and positive developments that have occurred in recent years.

Overall, both metaphors have their merits and limitations, and can be useful for different purposes in analyzing and understanding the Middle East and North Africa region.

The “MENA *Edifice*” metaphor is more forward-looking and emphasizes the need for cooperation and progress, while the “MENA – Cradle of Crises” metaphor highlights the challenges and conflicts that the region has faced and continues to face.”³⁶

5. “MENA *Edifice*” – Seven Decades of Conflict With “*The Elephant in the Room*”

(i). *HI’s Condensed Heuristic Vision*

One can legitimately appreciate that, the present juncture the MENA region, in its pattern of “MENA *Edifice*”, is passing through, could be best described by the well-known phrase “*The Elephant (is) in the Room*”.

³⁵ <https://chat.openai.com/c/38a8da91-8139-4701-b26f-5ba3ea7f61bd>, 25 April 2024.

³⁶ <https://www.perplexity.ai/search/The-latest-2023-DV0TCYyuTzCM3HO2LrrCVw>, 25 April 2024.

We have in view that, the intersection of “*MENA as the Cradle of Crises*” and “*MENA as an Integrative Edifice of an Ample Aggregate of Extremely Various Components*” has been leading to an assemblage of quintessentially existential threats for this central region of the world, both in terms of “*physical*” threats, which have been acting against the area’s stability for decades, but also threats felt in the “*ethereal*” realm of ideas and concepts, not always easy to be acknowledged or even to talk about.

All these bringing to light that referential characteristic of MENA defined as a realm of perpetual conflict(s). Hence, the validity of the region’s specific marker – “*The Elephant (is) in the Room*”.

Of course, it is known that, in the literal sense, “*The Elephant in the Room*” represents “*an obvious major problem or issue that people avoid discussing or acknowledging.*”³⁷ Only that, in light of the concrete decades-old evolutions in the MENA region, we can give a sui generis more extended meaning to the concept in case, in the sense that people haven’t been avoiding discussing the respective conflict per se, but about finding a definitive and durable solution to it, a solution which wouldn’t be just “discussed” but implemented effectively.

On the other hand, given the same very particular “nature” of the MENA region, presently the respective “*Elephant*”, namely *The Israeli-Arab/Palestinian Conflict*, is not at all alone, but intimately accompanied by several “*Cubs*” and “*Siblings*” from the same “*Elephantine species*”, first, the recurring *Israel-Hamas war in Gaza*, second, what recently came out from “*the shadow*”, namely *Israel-Iran confrontation*, third, *Israel-Hezbollah clashes at the Northern Israeli border with Lebanon*.

Not to wonder then of the ever-elusive horizon line with regard to a durable solution to the respective conflict, beyond what has been perennially accompanied it, as a kind of curse, namely *the zero-sum game marker*.

(ii). Evaluations by the Two AI Representatives

ChatGPT:

“The passage you’ve presented offers a rich and nuanced perspective on the complexities of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, particularly in relation to the Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict and its associated issues”. Here’s an evaluation of the key points raised:

1. “The Elephant in the Room” as a Metaphor for MENA.

- Traditional vs. Extended Meaning:

- The traditional understanding of “The Elephant in the Room” refers to an obvious problem that people avoid discussing. In the context of MENA, the passage suggests an extended interpretation: while the conflicts and crises in the region are widely discussed, the real “elephant” is the failure to implement a definitive and durable solution.

³⁷ “Elephant in the room.” *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/elephant%20in%20the%20room>. Accessed 2 May 2024.

○ This extension of the metaphor is insightful. It reflects the frustration that many observers and participants in the region's politics feel: despite decades of negotiations, diplomacy, and intervention, the core issues remain unresolved.

- MENA as “The Cradle of Crises”:

○ The phrase aptly captures the region's history and ongoing conflicts, which are both numerous and deeply rooted. These crises are not only “physical” (wars, territorial disputes, etc.) but also “ethereal” (ideological, religious, and cultural conflicts).

○ The dual nature of these threats complicates efforts to resolve them, as they require solutions that address both tangible realities and intangible beliefs and values.

2. Multiplicity of Conflicts (“Cubs” and “Siblings”)

- Interconnected Crises:

○ The passage identifies the Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict as the primary “elephant,” but acknowledges that it is accompanied by several related conflicts (“cubs” and “siblings”): the Israel-Hamas war, the Israel-Iran confrontation, and the Israel-Hezbollah clashes.

○ This framing is accurate and highlights the interconnected nature of conflicts in the region. These conflicts are not isolated; rather, they influence and exacerbate each other. For instance, the Israel-Iran confrontation has implications for Israel-Hezbollah tensions, which in turn affect the broader Arab-Israeli conflict.

- Challenges to Resolution:

○ The presence of multiple, interconnected conflicts makes finding a durable solution exceedingly difficult. Each conflict has its own set of actors, motivations, and historical grievances, making it challenging to address one issue without inadvertently worsening another.

○ The passage suggests that the region's “zero-sum game” mentality – where one side's gain is perceived as the other side's loss – has prevented meaningful progress. This perspective is critical for understanding why peace efforts have often failed or stalled.

3. Existential Threats and Perpetual Conflict

- Existential Nature of Threats:

○ The reference to “existential threats” underscores the gravity of the issues facing the MENA region. These threats are not just about control over land or resources; they often involve the survival and identity of peoples, nations, and ideologies.

○ The passage rightly points out that these threats operate in both the physical and ideological realms. The conflict in MENA is not just about territory; it's about competing narratives, historical grievances, and visions for the future.

- Perpetual Conflict:

○ The description of MENA as a “realm of perpetual conflict” is, unfortunately, consistent with the region's history. The passage acknowledges that the conflicts have persisted despite numerous attempts at resolution, often seeming like a “curse” that defies solution.

○ The idea of a “perennially elusive horizon line” suggests that while peace remains a goal, it is always just out of reach. This captures the sense of frustration and despair that many feel when contemplating the region’s future.

Conclusion: The passage offers a compelling and thoughtful analysis of the MENA region’s ongoing challenges, particularly the Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict and its related issues. By extending the metaphor of “The Elephant in the Room,” the passage effectively highlights the gap between discussion and action, pointing out that while the conflicts are widely acknowledged, the real challenge lies in implementing solutions.

The identification of multiple, interconnected conflicts as “cubs” and “siblings” of the main “elephant” is a particularly insightful way to describe the complexity of the situation. This framing helps explain why the region’s problems have proven so intractable and why a durable peace remains elusive.

In summary, the passage captures the essence of the MENA region’s challenges: a complex web of existential threats, interconnected conflicts, and a history of failed attempts to move beyond a zero-sum game. Addressing these issues will require not just discussion, but bold, innovative action that transcends the traditional approaches that have thus far failed to bring about lasting peace.”³⁸

Perplexity.ai:

“The considerations regarding the MENA region, particularly the Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict, as described in your query, highlight a complex interplay of longstanding issues and emerging challenges. Here’s an evaluation of the points raised:

The “Elephant in the Room” Metaphor

1. Recognition of Existential Threats: The metaphor of “The Elephant in the Room” aptly captures the pervasive nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its broader implications for the MENA region. It signifies that while discussions about the conflict are frequent, there remains a significant avoidance of addressing the root causes and finding viable solutions. This avoidance contributes to a cycle of violence and instability that affects not just Israel and Palestine but the entire region.

2. Intersection of Crises: The intersection of MENA as a “Cradle of Crises” and as an “Integrative Edifice” reflects the region’s multifaceted challenges. The presence of various conflicts, such as the Israel-Hamas war, the Israel-Iran confrontation, and the Israel-Hezbollah clashes, illustrates a complex web of hostilities that complicates peace efforts. Each of these conflicts can be seen as a “cub” or “sibling” of the primary “elephant,” contributing to an environment of perpetual conflict.

Long-standing Conflicts and Zero-Sum Game

1. Perpetual Conflict Dynamics: The MENA region’s conflicts are often characterized by a zero-sum mentality, where one side’s gain is perceived as the

³⁸ <https://chatgpt.com/c/1e7f6341-b978-4794-b912-3f2723279fe4>, 10 August 2024.

other's loss. This mindset hinders cooperative solutions and exacerbates tensions. The historical grievances stemming from events such as the 1948 displacement of Palestinians and ongoing military occupations contribute to this mentality, making it challenging to envision a future where coexistence is possible.

2. Complexity of Solutions: The text suggests that while discussions about the conflicts are prevalent, effective implementation of solutions remains elusive. This reflects the reality that political, social, and economic factors are deeply intertwined, requiring comprehensive approaches that address not only immediate security concerns but also underlying issues such as governance, economic development, and social justice.

Implications for Peace and Stability

1. Challenges to Durable Solutions: The presence of multiple, interconnected conflicts makes it increasingly difficult to achieve a durable peace settlement. Efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot be isolated from broader regional dynamics, including the roles of Iran, Hezbollah, and other non-state actors. The interplay of these actors complicates diplomatic efforts and often leads to escalations in violence.

2. Need for Inclusive Dialogue: To move beyond the metaphorical "elephant," there is a need for inclusive dialogue that engages all stakeholders, including marginalized voices within both Israeli and Palestinian societies. Addressing the grievances and aspirations of all parties involved is crucial for fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to any potential solutions.

3. International Involvement: The role of external powers, such as the United States, Russia, and regional players, is significant in shaping the dynamics of the MENA region. Their involvement can either facilitate conflict resolution or exacerbate tensions, depending on their interests and approaches. A coordinated international effort that prioritizes humanitarian concerns and respects the rights of all parties is essential for moving towards a lasting peace.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the evaluation of the MENA region through the lens of the "Elephant in the Room" metaphor underscores the complexity and interrelatedness of its conflicts. The Israeli-Arab/Palestinian conflict, accompanied by various regional tensions, presents significant challenges to achieving a durable solution. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that recognizes the historical context, engages diverse stakeholders, and fosters inclusive dialogue aimed at building a foundation for lasting peace and stability in the region."³⁹

6. "A Process but No Peace"

Ultimately, over a lap of time of more than seven decades, regional and international efforts aimed at a durable settling of the age-old Israeli-Arab/

³⁹ <https://www.perplexity.ai/search/The-latest-2023-DV0TCYyuTzCM3HO2LrrCVw>, 10 August 2024.

Palestinian Conflict have been following a trajectory loop which could be rightly defined by the phrase “*A Process but No Peace*”⁴⁰.

6.1. *The Peace Process Matrix*

(i). *HI on the Basic Dimensions*

In fact, it is not by mere hazard that “*The Middle East Peace Process*” has been continuing to this day to be marked by what we could call “*the resilience of an empty shell*”. Seemingly, *the paradigmatic causation* doesn’t look at all complicated: *the peace matrix for MENA region has been indeed, on the long run, the assemblage of the same quartet of factors*:

- *Land and Geography, too little and too reduced given the region’s needs.*
- *History, a rather heavy legacy and huge accumulation of narratives and evolutions to be easily brought as the luggage of the day.*
- *Religion, accomplishing a multiple use, with a dual ideological and political functionality being taken much beyond the religiosity’s original boundaries.*
- *Geopolitical dimension, still engulfing MENA in a “zero-sum game” between the local interests and interests followed by so many foreign agents acting in the region, be they great powers, regional powers, business companies up to simple individuals.*

(ii). *The Two AI Representatives’ Vision and Evaluations On the Peace Matrix’s Main Dimensions*

Notably, *the two AI Representatives’* evaluations on the MENA region’s peace matrix and its components proved their capabilities as keen observers in the sense of functioning as good prism through which to refract a rather thorny issue.

On “The Land and Geography”

“The Land and Geography hold significant importance for both the Jewish and Palestinian peoples, albeit with distinct religious, cultural, and historical significance.

For the Jewish people, the Land of Israel, historically known as the Promised Land, holds immense religious significance. It is deeply rooted in the religious texts of Judaism, including the Torah (the Jewish scriptures), where references to the land and its importance in Jewish history and identity are prevalent. The belief in the covenant between God and the Jewish people, promising the land to them, is a foundational element of Jewish faith and tradition. Jerusalem, as a holy city, holds special reverence in Judaism as well.

⁴⁰ “*A Process but No Peace*” is the title given to a section from the book previously quoted here: Christopher Phillips, *Battleground Ten Conflicts that Explain the New Middle East*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2024, pp. 95-97.

Similarly, for Palestinians, the land holds cultural, historical, and religious significance, though the connection is not as directly tied to religious texts in the same way it is in Judaism. The land, particularly historic Palestine, holds deep cultural and historical roots for Palestinians, encompassing family ties, heritage, and a sense of belonging. While not exclusively religious, there are Islamic and Christian religious sites and traditions in the region that are significant to Palestinians.

The conflict over land and geography is not solely driven by religious factors. It encompasses territorial disputes, historical narratives, political aspirations, displacement, and competing claims to the same land. Both Israelis and Palestinians have profound connections to the region, with historical, cultural, and religious ties playing various roles in shaping their identities and claims to the land.

Understanding the multifaceted nature of these connections and their significance to both sides is crucial in comprehending the complexities underlying the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Resolving the conflict requires addressing these diverse layers of historical, religious, political, and humanitarian factors while acknowledging the legitimate rights and narratives of both Israelis and Palestinians.” (ChatGPT)

On “The Use of Religion”

“The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is complex and multifaceted, with historical, political, territorial, and cultural dimensions. While the conflict involves land disputes, historical grievances, national aspirations, and geopolitical factors, the use of religious texts, including those from the Bible, can sometimes contribute to the narratives surrounding the conflict.

Both Israelis and Palestinians have deep historical connections to the land, often rooted in religious and cultural narratives. Religious texts, including the Bible, hold significant importance for both Jewish and Palestinian identities and are occasionally cited to assert historical claims to the land.

The Bible contains narratives that are foundational to Jewish history and identity, including references to the land of Israel (referred to as the Promised Land) and events like the exodus from Egypt and the establishment of ancient Israel. These narratives are deeply embedded in Jewish culture and tradition and contribute to a sense of connection to the land.

Similarly, Palestinians also have strong ties to the land, including historical and cultural narratives linked to the region. While the Bible may not be central to Palestinian identity in the same way, other religious and cultural narratives hold significance for their historical connection to the land.

The use of religious texts as motivations or justifications for the conflict can be complex and can contribute to differing perceptions of history, land rights, and the legitimacy of claims. Sometimes, interpretations or appropriations of religious texts are used to advance political or territorial objectives, contributing to the competing narratives in the conflict.

However, it’s essential to note that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is primarily a political and territorial dispute, and while religious narratives may play a role

in shaping identities and perceptions, the root causes and resolutions of the conflict are multifaceted and extend beyond religious texts. Achieving peace and a resolution to the conflict requires addressing a wide range of historical, political, and humanitarian issues while respecting the diverse narratives and identities of both Israelis and Palestinians.” (ChatGPT)⁴¹

6.2. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict Settlement: The Ballet Between “The Traditional Paradigm” – One-State Solution and Alternative Solutions*

(i). *The HI Vision*

A meaningful approach of the *One-State Solution*, a decade-old proposed settlement for the equally older Israeli-Palestinian conflict, could be done through a *binary prism*, namely seeing how the issue has been dealt with at the level of political principles and action, on the one hand, respectively in the scholarly works, on the other hand.

Essentially, at the political level the given solution is “*well and alive*”, formally being *still on the agenda*, while the scholarly enterprises have already declared it *dead*.

For the first area, we/ HI Representative will present the case of the UN Security Council debate “The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question” which took place on 17 July and 19 July 2024, and that over three meetings due to the big number of UN members who, in addition to the Security Council Members, wanted to present the stand of their countries on the Agenda issue. Going through the texts of the respective speeches, as included in the specific UNSC documents⁴², we could notice that a true leitmotif for the most part of delegates’ interventions had been the One-State Solution, with the language alternative the vision of two States, as an acutely needed settlement for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We present here some of the positions, which we considered relevant for both their substance and language:

UN Secretary-General: “Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must occur in line with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions and bilateral agreements in pursuit of the vision of two States — Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, viable and sovereign Palestinian State — living side by side in peace and security within secure and recognized borders, on the basis of the pre-1967 lines, with Jerusalem as the capital of both. The United Nations will continue to support all such efforts.”

United States of America: “The United States remains steadfast in our efforts to continue to work towards a two-State solution, where Israelis and Palestinians alike can live in peace and in dignity and to commit to patient, persistent, undismayed effort so that peace can be won.”

⁴¹ <https://chat.openai.com/c/3eb5c376-da6a-46af-9d2c-a8906562f37e>, 4 December 2023.

⁴² <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/pro/n24/211/52/pdf/n2421152.pdf>.

<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/pro/n24/211/58/pdf/n2421158.pdf>.

<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/pro/n24/214/29/pdf/n2421429.pdf>.

Switzerland: “The settlements are illegal under international law. They are a major obstacle to peace and to the implementation of the solution of two democratic States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace within secure and recognized borders. Only a political solution will bring lasting peace to the Middle East.”

China: The Two-State solution is the only viable way to resolve the question of the Middle East. Over the past decades, the Palestinian-Israeli situation has been repeatedly mired in turmoil and tension. The root cause of it all is the fact that the two-State solution has not been implemented and the Palestinian people’s national rights to independent statehood have not been realized – Gaza belongs to Palestine and the Palestinian people.

United Kingdom: “We express our serious concern at the escalating violence perpetrated by settlers in the West Bank. We condemn the recent Israeli expansion of settlements. We reject decisions by the Government of Israel to declare 2,357 hectares of land in the West Bank as State lands thus far this year — the largest of such declarations of State lands since the Oslo Accords. Such acts are not only illegal under international law but also undermine prospects for a two-State solution. Peace will be sustainable only if both Israelis and Palestinians recommit to a renewed peace process resulting in a two-State solution, with a safe and secure Israel alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian State – the undeniable right of the Palestinian people... the United Kingdom’s commitment to play its full diplomatic role in securing a ceasefire deal and creating the space for a credible and irreversible pathway towards a two-State solution. The world needs a safe and secure Israel alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian State.”

Japan: “Only a two-State solution, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security, will finally resolve the decades-long conflict. Japan remains steadfastly committed to achieving that goal.”

France: “The pursuit of a political settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of a two-State solution is a matter of urgency. We are resolved to play our full part in efforts to that end.

Bahrain: “In its capacity as the current President of the thirty-third Summit of the League of Arab States, the Kingdom of Bahrain reaffirm the full solidarity of the Arab States and their unwavering commitment to peace. The Bahrain declaration adopted by the Summit affirmed the unified Arab position and called for a peaceful, just and comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian question, and for irreversible steps to be taken to implement the two-State solution, in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy, and to guarantee the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to establish their independent, sovereign and viable national State.”

On the other hand, it’s been already a number of years since one could find publications – from articles to books – which tried to demonstrate that the two-States couldn’t be solution expected for the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, the main argument in support for the assertion being the impossibility of implementing it in practical terms. Here are just several such publications:

- Ian S. Lustick, *Paradigm Lost: From Two-State Solution to One-State*.⁴³
- Slomo Ben-Ami, *Prophets Without Honor: The 2000 Camp David Summit and the End of the Two-state Solution*.⁴⁴
- Michael Barnett (Editor), Nathan J. Brown (Editor), Marc Lynch (Editor), Shibley Telhami (Editor), *The One State Reality. What Is Israel/Palestine?*⁴⁵
- Michael Barnett, Nathan Brown, Marc Lynch, and Shibley Telhami, *Israel’s One-State Reality. It’s Time to Give Up on the Two-State Solution*, in *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2023, pp.120-135.
- *Can the Two-State Solution Be Saved?*, Debating Israel’s One-State Reality, in *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2023, pp. 196-209.

(ii). *The Two AI Representatives’ Vision*

ChatGBT:

“The recurring cycles of violence have shown that purely military approaches or unilateral actions are insufficient in bringing about lasting peace and sustainable solutions.

The two-state solution, which has been a focal point in peace negotiations for years, has faced significant challenges and obstacles, including issues related to borders, settlements, Jerusalem, refugees, and security concerns. These challenges have hindered its implementation on the ground.

The demarches aimed at exploring alternative frameworks, such as a one-state solution or (con)federation, reflected a call for innovative thinking and openness to new paradigms. These alternatives may present opportunities for addressing the complexities of the conflict in different ways and could potentially offer new pathways towards peace.

A one-state solution envisions a single, democratic state where both Israelis and Palestinians would live together with equal rights and representation. However, this approach comes with its own set of challenges, including questions about governance, identity, security, and equal rights for all citizens.

A confederation model might involve separate states or entities that maintain a degree of autonomy while sharing certain functions or resources in a cooperative manner. This approach could potentially address concerns related to self-determination while fostering cooperation and mutual interests.

However, any alternative solution will require a willingness from both Israeli and Palestinian leaderships to engage in meaningful dialogue, compromise, and a vision for a shared future. It also necessitates broader regional and international support, as well as the involvement of civil society to explore and build consensus around innovative approaches to conflict resolution.

While the two-state solution remains a widely supported framework, the exploration of alternative models demonstrates a recognition of the need for

⁴³ University of Pennsylvania Press Philadelphia, 2019.

⁴⁴ Oxford University Press, 2022.

⁴⁵ Cornell University Press Ithaca And London, 2023.

fresh thinking and creativity to overcome the longstanding obstacles to peace. Ultimately, the success of any solution will depend on the commitment of all parties involved to negotiate in good faith and find common ground for a durable and just resolution.”⁴⁶

Perplexity.ai:

“The two-state solution has been a prominent framework for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but its applicability on the ground has been limited. As a result, there is a need for national leaders, both Israeli and Palestinian, to consider alternative approaches, such as a one-state solution or a confederation, in addition to traditional negotiations and diplomacy.

The challenges and complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict require a fresh perspective and innovative thinking.

The historical grievances, security concerns, and competing national aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians necessitate a comprehensive and inclusive approach to achieving a sustainable peace.

This approach should consider the evolving dynamics of the conflict, the changing geopolitical landscape, and the need to address the root causes of the conflict.

In conclusion, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict requires a new and innovative approach to achieving peace. National leaders, along with external actors, should be open-minded and willing to consider alternative solutions, in addition to traditional negotiations and diplomacy, in order to achieve a sustainable and durable peace.

On the other hand, in pursuit of a sustainable peace between Israelis and Palestinians, several essential conditions or prerequisites are often discussed as potential components for a comprehensive agreement:

Borders and Territorial Arrangements: Determining clear and mutually agreed-upon borders is fundamental. This involves addressing the issue of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories and establishing a framework for territorial exchanges that might accommodate some existing settlements while ensuring the viability of a contiguous Palestinian state.

Security: Both Israelis and Palestinians need assurances of security. For Israel, this involves demilitarization of Palestinian territories and mechanisms to prevent terrorism and attacks on Israel. For Palestinians, it includes the cessation of occupation and the removal of barriers restricting movement.

Jerusalem: Resolving the status of Jerusalem is a critical and sensitive issue. Both Israelis and Palestinians claim Jerusalem as their capital. Finding a solution that accommodates the religious, cultural, and political significance of the city to both parties is essential.

Refugees: Addressing the issue of Palestinian refugees is crucial. Palestinians who fled or were displaced during previous conflicts seek recognition of their right of return to their ancestral homes or compensation for their losses.

⁴⁶ <https://chat.openai.com/c/3eb5c376-da6a-46af-9d2c-a8906562f37e>, 30 Nov. 2023.

Recognition and Mutual Coexistence: Mutual recognition of Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish state and acknowledgment of Palestinian national aspirations are pivotal for building trust and fostering peaceful coexistence.

Regarding the question of whether Palestinians would have their own state or if other arrangements could be considered, the traditional approach revolves around the establishment of an independent and viable Palestinian state alongside Israel (often referred to as the two-state solution). However, in recent years, alternative proposals, such as a confederation or a binational state, have also been suggested. These proposals aim to address the complexities of the situation and ensure equal rights and self-determination for both Israelis and Palestinians.

Ultimately, achieving a durable peace agreement requires genuine commitment, concessions, and compromise from both sides. It necessitates negotiations based on mutual respect, recognition of each other’s legitimate aspirations, and a willingness to make difficult choices for the sake of lasting peace and security for both Israelis and Palestinians.”⁴⁷

*(iii). Back to the HI – Looking Further in Scholars’ Purviews
For A Horizon Line Resonating with the Durable Peace
In the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*

This time we/HI Representative would like to refer to several considerations found in the works by two *Outstanding Scholars cum Philosophers*:

1. Hannah Arendt

– “Good relationships between Jews and Arabs will depend upon a changed attitude toward each other...not necessarily upon a formula.”⁴⁸

– “No Longer and Not yet.”⁴⁹ Based on that, the notable commentary by another scholar: “In the words of Hannah Arendt, Israel and Palestine currently inhabit the space “between the no longer and the not yet.”⁵⁰

2. Jean-Pierre Filiu

– “How Palestine was lost, and why Israel didn’t win.”⁵¹

“No military solution can be found to the challenge of two peoples living together on the same land. Understanding how Palestine was lost, and why Israel has not won, is therefore part of an open reflection on the imperative of a finally lasting peace in the Middle East and, therefore, on the future of this new millennium.”

⁴⁷ <https://www.perplexity.ai/search/2fdf8415-d908-485e-8b68-797308c88f74?s=u>, 30 Nov 2023.

⁴⁸ H. Arendt, *The Jewish writings* (J. Kohn and R. H. Feldman eds.), New York: Schocken, 2007, p. 427.

⁴⁹ *Idem*, *Essays in understanding 1930-1954: Formation, exile, and totalitarianism*. (J. Kohn ed.). New York: Schocken, 1994.

⁵⁰ <https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2024/5/24/2242626/-Israel-is-just-rearranging-its-deck-chairs-A-plan-exists-to-save-it-from-itself>.

⁵¹ Jean-Pierre Filiu, *How Palestine was lost, and why Israel didn’t win. History of a conflict (nineteenth-twenty-first century)*, Seuil, 2024.

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