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## **Producing Knowledge of the Middle East in the Middle East**

*Orta Doğu Bilgisinin Orta Doğu'da Üretilmesi*

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*“kapanmaz yaraların açık müzesi Ortadoğu”\**

### **Abstract**

*This article's departure point is the need for new theories of International Relations to analyze and elaborate a new picture of the Middle East. The Middle East has often been regarded as a region characterized by rapid and continuous change and instability, and accordingly defined as a laboratory of events. Therefore, it is a task of the intellectuals and academicians of the Middle East to produce some indigenous (local) theories which will contribute to casting and understanding a new picture of the Middle East. This article also stresses the need for new theories of International Relations in order to better grasp ever-changing world affairs. The article concludes with a brief analysis of the present performance of the Middle East regarding theory generation.*

**Key Words:** *Middle East, Theories of International Relations, Theory Generation, Political Analysis.*

### **Öz**

*Bu makale, Orta Doğu hakkında gerçekçi bir anlamlandırma ve analiz için yeni uluslararası ilişkiler teorilerine ihtiyaç olduğu vurgusunu merkeze almaktadır. Orta Doğu'nun çoğunlukla hızlı ve sürekli değişimlerin yaşandığı ve istikrarsızlığın hakim olduğu bir coğrafya olarak tanımlandığına şahit olunmaktadır. Bu makalede, bugünün hızlı değişimler dünyasını anlamak ve anlamlandırmak için mevcut uluslararası ilişkiler teorilerinin kapasitesinin ötesinde, teoriler kurmak gerektirdiğine işaret edilmektedir. Hadise zengini dinamik Orta Doğu coğrafyasının gerçekçi bir fotoğrafının sunulmasında, şüphesiz asıl katkısı bölge kaynaklı (yerel) teoriler sağlayacaktır. Bölge kaynaklı (yerel) teorilerin geliştirilmesi, Orta Doğu'lu akademisyen ve aydınları bekleyen bir görevdir. Bu makale, Orta Doğu'nun teori inşa etme yönüyle mevcut performansının kısa bir tahlili ile nihayete ermektedir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Orta Doğu, Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri, Teori İnşası, Siyasi Analiz.*

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\* “The Middle East: the open air museum of unhealed wounds”. A verse from a Turkish poem by Rahmi Kaya entitled “Pasaportsuz Kuşlar” (in Turkish), meaning “The birds with no passport” in English. For the whole text of the poem, see Rahmi Kaya (2007) ‘Pasaportsuz Kuşlar’, *Hece* [a monthly Turkish journal of literature], 124, April (Nisan), p. 21. Available at <[www.hece.com.tr/hece.124.ozel.4.htm](http://www.hece.com.tr/hece.124.ozel.4.htm)>, accessed February 15, 2008.

### The Middle East: A Subject of Continuous Inquiry for the Western Intellect

The Middle East is the name of a region, upon which the world powers always keep a close watch, due to its historical depth, natural resources, and geographic position. The Middle East has been so important in Western eyes that many Western people in history have undertaken hard journeys to this area. Travels to the Middle East have been the outcome of an 'imperial strategy', as Geoffrey P. Nash put it.<sup>1</sup> The works which were produced as a result of the long period of travelling to the Orient created the present-day collection of Orientalism.<sup>2</sup> The Middle East has been, historically and today, a focus of interest for the West, owing to economic, military and historical factors, and Orientalism can then, in a sense, be perceived as an outcome of the endeavours to satisfy the West's intense and continuous interest in the Middle East with the help of scientific, area-based knowledge. It is a fact that no scientific endeavour is possible without any material interest, as stressed by Cemil Meriç, a prominent figure of Turkish sociology.<sup>3</sup>

This paper seeks to highlight, in a different way, the point that the Middle East is not only a region of a major concern for the Western mind, but it is also one where the Western powers seek always to maintain their physical presence. The Middle East is a subject of inquiry and study for the West, but at the same time, a region where they maintain their physical presence through military operations for the purpose of getting an uninterrupted supply of energy resources like oil, as it has been evident by the rich collection of works produced by Orientalism. Gilles Kepel has accordingly attributed the reasons behind the United States (U.S.) presence in the Middle East to the following facts: the region holds the largest oil reserves and the existence of Israel.<sup>4</sup> Edward Said agrees, pointing out:

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<sup>1</sup> Orientalism, as defined by Edward Said in his book *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978), is the overall title of the efforts for defining the Middle East for the purpose of making it known and thus manageable for the Western intellect. The information and the works which enabled the formation of this field of study have been achieved through troublesome journeys to the Orient in history. Travels undertaken for the purpose of knowing the Orient, and thus adding this information to the knowledge pool of the West, were labelled as 'travel as imperial strategy'. For more on the phrase 'Travel as Imperial Strategy', see Geoffrey P. Nash (2005) *From Empire to Orient: Travellers to the Middle East 1830-1926* (London: I. B. Tauris), pp. 107-137.

<sup>2</sup> Orientalism has always been a very productive field of study in terms of books and articles about the Orient and the Middle East. The institutes of Oriental studies, which were once the core departments in almost every university in the Western world, published books and journals about the Middle Eastern affairs. The Western journalists and diplomats working in the Third World are another source of published works in the West.

<sup>3</sup> Cemil Meriç (1995) *Sosyoloji Notları ve Konferanslar* [Sociological Notes and Conferences], (1. Baskı/1st Edition), (Istanbul: İletisim Yayınları), p. 173. For a similar emphasis on the role of Orientalism in the Western world, see also Cemil Meriç (1986) *Kültürden İrfana* [From Culture to the Lore], (Istanbul: İnsan Yayınları), pp. 61-71.

<sup>4</sup> See Gilles Kepel (2006) *Fitne: İslam'ın Merkezinde Savaş* [Sedition: War in the Heart of Islam], (Çev./Trans.: Mahmut Özışık), (Istanbul: Doğan Kitap), p. 68.

At least since World War II, American strategic interests in the Middle East have been, first, to ensure supplies of oil and, second, to guarantee at enormous cost the strength and domination of Israel over its neighbours.<sup>5</sup>

It has already been evident by the statements of high-ranking U.S. officials that the U.S., as the major representative of today's Western world, will keep its presence in the Middle East. Dick Cheney, Vice President during the George W. Bush era, explained in a *Newsweek* interview in 2007 that the U.S. desires to stay and to maintain its presence in the Middle East with the following words:

I think most of the nations in that part of the world believe their security is supported, if you will, by the United States. They want us to have a major presence there. When we – as the President did, for example, recently – deploy another aircraft carrier taskforce to the Gulf, that sends a very strong signal to everybody in the region that the United States is here to stay, that we clearly have significant capabilities, and that we are working with friends and allies as well as the international organizations to deal with the Iranian threat.<sup>6</sup>

It has been also clearly evident through the costly military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan that the U.S. will stay in the Middle East for the foreseeable future as Dick Cheney said in his abovementioned *Newsweek* interview in 2007.<sup>7</sup> As Gilles Kepel put it, stability and prosperity must be restored in the Middle East, which is regarded as an eligible region for U.S. strategic needs and interests.<sup>8</sup> If stability and prosperity in the Middle East is a prerequisite for ensuring a steady supply of energy resources from this region, it is then an inevitable task for the U.S. to design projects for its economic and social revival, as the Marshall Plan did in Europe following World War II. Even though U.S. projects like the Marshall Plan of 1947 contributed to the recovery of post-World War II Europe, it has been seen that similar endeavours by the same country towards the Middle East have never yielded the same results. The negative impacts of the 2003 Iraq invasion and the U.S. operations in Afghanistan must be remembered here. Interestingly enough, the cover story of the German weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel*'s January 25, 2010 issue was entitled "Afghanistan: Der Friedhof der Supermächte" [Afghanistan: the Graveyard of Superpowers].<sup>9</sup> An official sign of U.S. concern and interest towards the Middle East is the Greater Middle East Project.<sup>10</sup> The Greater Middle East Project, which was created during the George W. Bush Administration, emerged basically a project to redesign the Middle East. The Greater Middle East Project had

<sup>5</sup> Edward Said (2003, July 20) 'Blind Imperial Arrogance. Vile Stereotyping of Arabs by the U.S. Ensures Years of Turmoil', *The Los Angeles Times*. Available at <http://articles.latimes.com/2003/jul/20/opinion/oe-said20/3>, accessed March 10, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> For the whole text of Cheney interview by Richard Wolffe, see <http://merln.ndu.edu/archivepdf/iraq/WH/20070128.pdf>, accessed February 10, 2010.

<sup>7</sup> See also Cheney interview by Richard Wolffe.

<sup>8</sup> Gilles Kepel (2006) *Fitne: İslam'ın Merkezinde Savaş*, p. 73.

<sup>9</sup> See *Der Spiegel* (2010) 'Afghanistan: Der Friedhof der Supermächte' [Afghanistan: the Graveyard of Superpowers], 4. Available at <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-68785446.html> accessed February 20, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> For a description of the content of the Greater Middle East Project, see Gilbert Achcar (2004, April) 'Greater Middle East: The US Plan', *Le Monde diplomatique*. Available at <http://mondediplo.com/2004/04/04world>, accessed March, 25, 2010.

certain deficiencies and dilemmas, and therefore led to reactions, just as had former U.S. projects developed for the Middle East. It might be concluded here that the act of designing projects seems to be an endless task for the U.S.<sup>11</sup>

Barack Obama, who came to the U.S. administration after George W. Bush, has shown signs of different policy aspirations towards the Middle East. President Obama's new foreign policy approach towards the Middle East demonstrated, in a sense, evidence for the inadequacy of the previous U.S. policies towards the region.<sup>12</sup> The U.S. search for suitable projects of Orientalist production under different titles for the Middle East, which is a critical region for it, delivers evidence that the U.S. has not still found the feasible project enabling it to manage this region. In the wake of this fact, the Middle East emerges as a region defeating every project endeavour designed outside the region. There have been a huge amount of statements and analyses prophesying that the Middle East is a difficult region to be grasped for the Western mind.<sup>13</sup> The Middle East is perceived, say, declared, as a challenge for the world, especially for the West, due to its economically and socially unstable character and risk potentials it poses to the outside world. As Richard N. Haass summarized it, "The New Middle East will remain a troubled and troubling part of the world for decades to come".<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, the high risk potentials defined by Western specialists on the region denotes the need for a comprehensive [or] novel understanding (reading) of the Middle East. The challenging character of the Middle East has even been clearly stressed by some U.S. writers who prepared analyses during the Bush era. Interestingly enough, for instance, Haass depicted the Middle East in 2007 as follows:

The overall impression is of a Middle East spinning out of control and the United States unable to do much about it.<sup>15</sup>

This statement about the Middle East can be perceived as a need for a new Middle East, just as the title of Haass's article reminds us. In the same article, Haass also stresses the

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<sup>11</sup> For similar emphasis, see Muammer Öztürk (2007) 'ABD'nin Ortadoğu Projeleri için son yok!' [No End for the U.S. Search for the Middle East], *Radikal*, August 09. Available at <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=229343>, accessed February 20, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> For similar evaluation of this point, see Paul Salem (2008) *The Middle East: Evolution of a Broken Regional Order*, Carnegie Paper, 9 (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), pp. 17-19. Available at [http://carnegieendowment.org/files/cmec9\\_salem\\_broken\\_order\\_final.pdf](http://carnegieendowment.org/files/cmec9_salem_broken_order_final.pdf), accessed March 10, 2010.

<sup>13</sup> It is worth noting here that the West's attitude of labelling and defining the Middle East as a region of continuous instability is also a proof of the West's mentality of categorizing other nations and regions mainly without even making an on-site research in the relevant countries. Almost the majority of Western researchers writing on the issues of the Middle East have deficiencies in terms of advanced language skills, which are main prerequisites to penetrate into the realities of this region. For a similar emphasis of the role of advanced skills for producing precise researches see, James A. Brill (1996) 'The Study of Middle East Politics, 1946-1996. A Stocktaking', *The Middle East Journal*, 4, Autumn, p. 504.

<sup>14</sup> Richard N. Haass (2006) The New Middle East, *Foreign Affairs*, 85 (6) November/December, p. 11. For a similar emphasis, see Nober Foundation (2007) *Towards a Grand Strategy for an Uncertain World. Renewing Transatlantic Partnership* (Lunteren: Nober Foundation), p. 57.

<sup>15</sup> Richard N. Haass (2007) 'The New Middle East', *Newsweek*, January 8, p. 18. Available at <http://www.newsweek.com/2007/01/07/the-new-middle-east.html>, accessed April 20, 2010.

need for new players in Middle Eastern affairs when he says “... one thing is certain: the American era in the Middle East is over.”<sup>16</sup>

### A Need for a Local Definition of the Middle East

The Middle East is the name of a region which still is not possessed of the instruments to express itself in its own terms.<sup>17</sup> The name “Middle East” was not coined in the region itself, but by Westerners, having been invented by the American naval historian Alfred Thayer Mahan to denote the region between Arabia and India, with its centre as the Persian Gulf.<sup>18</sup> The Middle East has today not produced any methodology and collection of works, after the disappearance of the Ottoman Empire, that serves as a comprehensive representation of this region on the historical stage<sup>19</sup> Orientalism has in this sense filled the gap in terms of regional know-how and area-based knowledge. With the heavy coverage of the First Gulf War, the invasion of Iraq, the Afghanistan operation and the Greater Middle East Project in the world media, the intellectuals of the Middle East have focused more and more on the affairs of their region. The intellectuals or academicians who write articles or prepare analyses about the Middle East, however, can do this only through making reference to the articles and works about this region written by Western intellectuals and academicians. Foreign policy experts in almost every non-Western country also create their analyses of both world affairs and their countries’ foreign relations by employing the Western theories of International Relations. It is a fact that all of the theories employed in the analysis of International Relations are of Western, and mainly American origin. This apparently creates a position of dependency on the West in terms of theories.

Theories developed up to now for the analysis of International Relations have contributed to the analysis of only one or a few of the many aspects of the world. But the world, as a complex and changing entity, has numerous aspects demanding proper understanding and interpretation. S. M. Walt pointed out that there is a need for new theories of International Relations to be added to the present theory pool in order to grasp the numerous aspects of the world as it actually is. Referring to the difficulty of properly grasping this complex world, Walt concluded that theories of International Relations undertake only a partial interpretation of the world despite an abundance of theories in the field of International Relations. On the other hand, making reference only to the theories developed from a particular mentality leads to the adherence to only a limited point of view. Analyses regarding international affairs emerge, to a certain extent, as outcomes of national mind-sets, taking into account their formation process. They normally reflect the approaches and policies of the

<sup>16</sup> Richard N. Haass (2007) ‘The New Middle East’, p. 20.

<sup>17</sup> For a similar emphasis on the speechlessness of the Middle East, see Muammer Öztürk (2006, September 27) Papa’nın söylev hamlesi ve oryantal suskunluk [The pope’s act of speech and the Oriental speechlessness], *Radikal*. Available at <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=199810>, accessed June 10, 2010.

<sup>18</sup> Bernard Lewis (1964) *The Middle East and the West* (New York: Harper Torchbooks), p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> The term ‘representative state’ is used here to denote the meaning of the German word ‘Ordnungshüter’ or ‘Kernstaat’, see Samuel P. Huntington, (1996) *Der Kampf der Kulturen, The Clash of Civilisations. Die Neugestaltung der Weltpolitik im 21. Jahrhundert* (aus dem Amerikan. Holger Fließbach), (München-Wien: Europa Verlag), pp. 246-250.

respective cultures and countries in which they originated. It will therefore be more tangible to interpret and grasp the world, where hundreds of nations reside, by including different and diverse approaches to the theory pool of International Relations.<sup>20</sup> As Karl Popper clearly pointed out, theories are the nets, i.e. they must serve as the nets, which we cast out to catch world realities. “The theory is the net we cast out to catch ‘the world’ – for rationalisation, description and domination”.<sup>21</sup> With regard to this principle, the need for new theories and novel approaches becomes evident for a better understanding of Middle Eastern affairs and realities. The character of the discipline of International Relations, as stressed by Quincy Wright in his book *The Study of International Relations*, contributes to this need. The discipline of International Relations, as Wright argued, is a discipline in process of formation, and deals with a world of continuous change.<sup>22</sup> Taking into consideration the steadily changing nature of International Relations, it seems to be a very hard task to cope with it. The changing nature of International Relations requires competent theories in order to get a clear grasp of the world affairs.

The Middle East is a region possessing a dynamic human potential and historical depth and has therefore been characterized as a challenge for both today’s world and world powers. Despite the huge collection of theories and policies, which were formed from within an Orientalist point of view, they have become insufficient to grasp and interpret this area adequately. By referring to the incentives derived from Walt regarding the need for variety in the theories of International Relations it occurs as a necessity, an urgent task to add theories developed in the Middle East to the collection of theories in order to properly grasp the peculiarities of this region. If any new theory contributes to the interpretation of any particular aspect of the world, it will have fulfilled its task.

The Middle East deserves the right to be adequately analysed even if it has been defined by a Western-oriented mind-set as a problematic region which needs to be ruled by the West. The U.S. invasion of Iraq and the operations in Afghanistan have shown that Western understandings of the Middle East must be totally revised. Barack Obama has accordingly inclined to an attitude of ‘rapprochement’ towards the Middle East just after he was inaugurated as President of the U.S. on January 28, 2009.<sup>23</sup> This attitude has been obviously

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<sup>20</sup> S. M. Walt (1998) 2 ‘International Relations: One World, Many Theories’, *Foreign Policy*, 110, Spring, pp. 29-46.

<sup>21</sup> For this definition of the term theory, see Karl Popper (1989) *Logik der Forschung* (9th Edition), (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr), p. 31; [German translation of the quoted sentence in the text: “Die Theorie ist das Netz, das wir auswerfen, um ‘die Welt’ einzufangen, - sie zu rationalisieren, zu erklären, und zu beherrschen”].

<sup>22</sup> Quincy Wright (1955) *The Study of International Relations*, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crafts, Inc.).

<sup>23</sup> For some reading on the U.S. President Obama’s this new rapprochement policy, see Lars Berger (2009) ‘Between New Hopes and Old Realities – The Obama Administration and the Middle East,’ *Orient*, II, pp. 22-35; Jochen Hippler/Jan Hanrath (2009) ‘Die U.S.-amerikanische Politik im Nahen Osten und Mittleren Osten unter Präsident Barack Obama’ [the U.S. Politics in the Near and Middle East during the Era of President Obama], *Orient*, II, pp. 56-66. See also Deutsche Welle (2010, January 19) Ein Jahr Obama - gemischte Bilanz aus deutscher Sicht [One year with Obama – a mixed balance sheet]. Available at <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,5147679,00.html>, accessed January 19, 2010

an outcome of the U.S. search for a new format of political know-how when his policies are compared with those of George W. Bush.

'New theories' for the Middle East means here not to have additional theories of Western origin, but to produce first-hand, indigenous theories formed by the intellectuals of this region. A discourse based in a regional approach to the Middle East can only be feasible if it relies on first-hand, area based information generated by the dynamics of the region. Theories of International Relations serve as instruments of analysis of world affairs, but nevertheless they have some deficiencies in providing expressions for all aspects of the world's regions. It is therefore fair to say that if the theories formed by the local minds of the world's various regions can only contribute to the understanding of certain realities of their respective regions they will have performed their task, say, *raison d'être* for the Middle East.

There can be found some more incentives for producing indigenous and local theories of International Relations in the Middle East. Barbara Slavin, for instance, chose the title of "Homemade Middle East peace" for her article published in *Los Angeles Times* on May 26, 2008. By quoting an initiative out of Qatar to broker a peace agreement in her article, she wrote: "Instead of complaining about a lack of U.S. leadership (or even-handedness), the region is trying to solve problems on its own."<sup>24</sup> She thus apparently clarified the role of a local intellectual attempt in the Middle East to solve the problems in this region.<sup>25</sup> This peace attempt from the side of the Middle East will certainly be an outcome of the theory generation competency and the scope of vision of the Middle East. The call for a Middle Eastern initiative in the form of a peace process or theory generation is also valid for the researchers' endeavours regarding theory generation from the side of the Middle East. Here lies a prospect for future research endeavours which lies before the intellectuals and academicians of the Middle East.

### **Conclusion: The Middle East's Score Card of Theory Generation**

The First Gulf War in 1991, also known as the Kuwait War, can be seen as a turning point for the intellectuals and academicians of the Middle East in dealing with the issues of this region. Keeping in mind the number of articles published and TV programmes produced concerning the issues of the Middle East, it can be concluded here that the experts on the Middle East have started to deal with and to publish a rising tide of scholarship on the issues in the region following the First Gulf War in 1991 and the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. An indicator of this rising interest in the issues of the Middle East has been the rise in the number of think tank<sup>26</sup> organizations, which were established, for instance, in the last decade in Turkey, and that of the academic journals published on the subject of area studies and Middle

<sup>24</sup> See <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/may/26/opinion/oe-slavin26>, accessed January 02, 2009.

<sup>25</sup> See Cheney interview by Richard Wolffe.

<sup>26</sup> According to a newly research, there are 21 Think-Tank organizations in Turkey. See James G. McGann (2010, January 10) *The Global "Go-To Think Tanks". The Leading Public Policy Research Organizations In The World*, Revised, (University of Pennsylvania: Philadelphia), p. 16.

See

[http://www.sas.upenn.edu/irp/documents/2009GlobalGoToReportThinkTankIndex\\_1.31.2010.02.01.pdf](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/irp/documents/2009GlobalGoToReportThinkTankIndex_1.31.2010.02.01.pdf), accessed March 20, 2010.

Eastern affairs. The rise of interest is explicitly a positive development in the direction of producing area-based know-how in the Middle East.

The majority of the literatures referred to in the analyses of International Relations in Turkey is almost all of Western and American (U.S.) origin. It may be regarded as a sort of *academic catharsis*<sup>27</sup> for the countries of the Middle East, say Turkey, to make references to the works and analyses produced by the think-tanks and research institutes of the developed countries. The rising amount of new analyses published in the Turkish media on the issues of the Middle East region, where Turkey lies, are, on the other hand, obviously indicators of a certain degree of sensitivity thereof. It is nevertheless pragmatic to ask a question about assessing which benefits have been gained through these analyses. The answer to this question may provide some data for the cost and benefits stemming from new forms of analysis. The real benefit of the analyses produced in the Middle East will be the contribution they have made to the formation of an indigenous Middle Eastern epistemology of International Relations, not their high amount in number. A study in this sense concerning the efficiency of the analyses of the Middle East has been neglected.

It is certainly a must for the developing countries to get an insight into the political analyses of the countries prepared by the think tanks in the U.S. and Europe in order to develop a stable position in foreign relations. Nevertheless it is important to read these analyses with an investigative approach since they were produced in the wake of specific, and external national priorities and mentalities. It is therefore required to possess guidelines for excerpting the useable data from these sources. But, as stressed earlier in this paper, what the Middle East essentially needs in terms of indigenous analyses is to establish its own regional epistemology of foreign policy analysis rather than to make references to the publications of the reputable research centres in the West. A more real picture of Middle Eastern affairs can only be produced through the involvement of the Middle Eastern mind and approach to the process of analysis of Middle Eastern affairs. An independent and original epistemology of a Middle Eastern International Relations can only be built on indigenous works of the intellectuals of this region. This fact opens a space for future research endeavours in the Middle East. This can be regarded as a call for future research regarding theory generation at the regional level as well and putting a burden on the researchers of the region for undertaking further research on theory generation at a regional level.

It still poses a challenge and task for the world community to clarify and understand the reality of the Middle East insightfully. It requires new sets of theories of International Relations to understand and interpret the web of events in the complicated picture of today's world. And the Middle East, as a dynamic and difficult region of the world, needs to be analysed competently. Competency in the analysis of political affairs means today having comprehensive and state-of-the-art theories which exhibit novel approaches to world affairs. It has not been realised today with the use of the present inventory of theories of International Relations, which are of Western origin, to present an adequate explanation of the social and political affairs of the Middle East. New theories of International Relations will certainly contribute to the understanding of the Middle East providing that they are formulated by local minds of this region. Theory production remains a topic for further study. The need for the

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<sup>27</sup> A term formed by the author to illustrate the attitude of the academicians and intellectuals inclining to be mentioned among the academicians/intellectuals of the developed countries.

production of new theories of International Relations, as noted by Walt, is in fact a call to local intellectuals.

A possible outcome of inadequate local knowledge may pave the way for paralysed or irrelevant analyses. Competency in indigenous languages and knowledge of indigenous history are essential tools for developing accurate and applicable political analyses, as noted by Michael Howard.<sup>28</sup> Any analysis of a country in the Middle East should therefore be made on the basis of accurate regional knowledge. It is also a fact that some academicians or intellectuals from the Middle East exhibit an Orientalist attitude towards neighbouring countries which they occasionally visit, and they produce some articles and reports in which they regard as strange the cultures, their ways of life and clothing styles of neighbouring countries.<sup>29</sup> The background reason for the critical attitude taken by Turkish intellectuals or writers may lie in the fact that these countries, e.g. Arab countries, do not have a Western life style. The overwhelming majority of Middle Eastern intellectuals maintains today critical views towards the societies they live in. It is essential to study and analyse the dynamic nature of the Middle East for getting rid of the extra burden of historical events and unrest which rest on the shoulders of this region and which has been tried under the burden of a history full of many unsolved events. Otherwise the burden of the events inherited from history might be transferred to the future as unsolved.

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<sup>28</sup> Michael Howard (1991) 'Ideology and International Relations', in: M. Howard, (Ed.) *Lessons of the History* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press), pp. 150-151.

<sup>29</sup> The intellectuals, who have an alienated attitude towards the custom and way of life of their societies, say, the societies in which they live, were named as *mustaghrip* by Cemil Meriç. The word *mustaghrip* means a person who is for the side of the West and has a pro-Western orientation. For more on the use of the word *mustaghrip* and the alienated attitude of the so-called Middle Eastern intellectuals, see Cemil Meriç (1980) *Mağaradakiler* [the Inhabitants of the Cave], (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), (Istanbul: Ötüken Yayınları), pp. 272-273.

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