



The Country Exposed To Regional Entrapment

After The Arab Spring: Yemen¹

Arap Baharı Sonrası Bölgesel Tuzağa Maruz Kalan Ülke: Yemen

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Abstract

After the First World War, Yemen, which left the Ottoman Empire and declared its independence, witnessed a civil war between 1962 - 1968. A new civil war has been going on in the country since 2011. In the past Yemen, known as "happy Arabia" (Arabia Felix), where its people lived in prosperity and peace; today, continues to exist in chaos and far from these long-forgotten adjectives. The interventions of different states in Yemen, which is in a strategic geography that controls the Gulf of Aden, the Babülmandeb Strait, the Red Sea and the south of the Suez Canal, caused the country to have a fragile structure and the state administration to remain weak. Although the northern and southern regions of the country were united, the internal conflicts that came with the weakness of the government led the Houthis to capture Sana'a. Internal actors, who follow different agendas within themselves and play both political and social roles in Yemen, receive the support of external actors in line with their goals and interests in these wars. For instance, while Iran apparently resorts to soft power elements during these struggles, behind the scenes Iran resorts to hard power through the Houthis. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia, made an unprecedented move in the traditional foreign policy understanding in this power struggle and took its place on the stage by directly using the elements of hard power with the "Storm of Decisiveness" held in 2015. In this study, it is discussed that how external actors (United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Iran), which involved to Yemen's internal conflicts, change the course of conflicts and what effect they have on internal actors.

Keywords: Saudi Arabia, Iran, the UAE, The Arab Spring, Yemen.

Öz

Birinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra Osmanlı Devleti'nden ayrılıp bağımsızlığını ilan eden Yemen, 1962-1968 yılları arasında bir iç savaşa sahne olmuştur. Ülkede 2011'den itibaren devam eden yeni bir iç savaş yaşanmaktadır. Geçmişte halkının refah ve huzur içinde yaşadığı, "mutlu Arabistan" (Arabia Felix) olarak anılan Yemen, günümüzde bu sıfatlardan çok uzak, kaos içinde varlığını sürdürmektedir. Aden Körfezi'ni, Babülmendeb Boğazı'nı, Kızıldeniz'i ve Süveyş Kanalı'nın güneyini kontrol eden stratejik bir coğrafyada bulunan Yemen'e farklı devletlerin kendi çıkarları için yapmış oldukları müdahaleler, ülkenin kırılgan bir yapıya sahip olmasına ve devlet yönetiminin zayıf kalmasına sebep olmuştur. Her ne kadar ülkenin kuzey ve güney bölgeleri birleşmiş olsa da hükümet zayıflığı ile gelen iç çatışmalar Husiler'in Sana'yu ele geçirmesine yol açmıştır. Yemen'de kendi içinde farklı gündemler takip eden ve gerek siyasi gerekse toplumsal rol oynayan iç aktörler, bu savaşlarda hedef ve çıkar ortaklığı doğrultusunda dış aktörlerin desteğini almaktadırlar. Örneğin, İran bu mücadeleler sırasında görünürde yumuşak güç unsurlarına başvururken, perde gerisinden Husiler vasıtasıyla sert güce başvurmaktadır. Suudi Arabistan ise bu güç mücadelesinde geleneksel dış politika anlayışında görülmemiş bir hamle yaparak 2015 yılında düzenlenen "Kararlılık Fırtınası" ile doğrudan sert güç unsurlarını kullanarak sahnede yerini almıştır. Bu çalışmada, Yemen'deki iç çatışmalara müdahil olan dış aktörlerin, (Birleşik Arap Emirlikleri, Suudi Arabistan ve İran) çatışmaların seyrini nasıl değiştirdiği ve iç aktörler üzerinde nasıl bir tesire sebep olduğu ele alınmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Suudi Arabistan, İran, Birleşik Arap Emirlikleri, Yemen, Arap Baharı.

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INTRODUCTION

In fact, the importance of Yemen is indisputable due to its special strategic location, as it is located on the most important transit routes for energy and global trade, such as the Strait of Bab al-Mandab and the Gulf of Aden, and in short, it is located at the southern entrance to the Red Sea. This location has made Yemen the center of attention of international powers throughout history. Yemen has always been considered as a very important point in terms of security, politics and economy by the Gulf states, as it controls the maritime transport routes to Asia through the aforementioned Bab Al-Mandab strait. Therefore, any security problem and instability in Yemen inevitably affects and continues to affect the security and stability of some other countries in the Middle East, especially the Gulf states.

While the Ottomans took precautions against the smuggling of weapons and goods by the British, French and Italians in the Red Sea during their stay in the region, thanks to their strong armies in Yemen, they prevented the colonial powers from entering Yemen.

After the Ottoman rule, Yemen is divided into two parts between the Idrisids and the Zaydis, as a coastal and mountainous region, with the exception of the area controlled by the British. Although Yemen was generally politically stable during World War II, it faced difficult times especially in the years 1939-1941 due to the plague and famine. On May 22, 1990, South and North Yemen unified. At the end of 1992,

the first elections took place in a unified Yemen, and then the two countries were completely united. Ali Abdullah Saleh began to rule Yemen alone. In early 2011, the "Arab Spring" began in Tunisia and spread to the Arab world, including Yemen.

The government that ruled for 33 years before 2011 was unable to provide serious solutions to the country's problems, as well as the fact that political decisions in Yemen are under the influence of foreign powers, and there were no changes in the political, economic or social sphere, all of this caused the country to fall easily into winds Arab Spring.

Large-scale demonstrations began in Yemen on February 11, 2011. The events caused by these demonstrations did not bring stability to Yemen. For this reason, it is not appropriate to

call what is happening the Arab Spring. Because spring marks a positive beginning and transformation. What is happening in Yemen is proceeding negatively, which has caused the outbreak of regional and sectarian conflicts.

There are some influential internal forces that prepared the Yemen crisis, and they can be listed as the Islah party (the Muslim Brotherhood) (Yorulmaz, 2020), Ali Abdullah Saleh (the General People's Congress Party), the Yemeni Socialist Party (Ayhan, 2010, pp. 95-96; Şahin, 2020), the Houthis (Büyükkara, 2011, pp. 115-151; Bostan, 2020, pp. 103-104; ed-Düserî, 2011, pp. 9-35, 81; eş-Şucâ, 2013, pp. 48-51, 54-70; F. Polat, 2016, p. 84; Semin, 2015, pp. 1-3)

al-Qaeda (Açıklan, Coşkun, & Laçiner, 2010, pp. 105-108; Büyükkara, 2011, pp. 141-143; Arslan, 2015, pp. 23-25; Doğan, 2009; Haniye; Yakut, April 2015, p. 27; Zelin, 2012, pp. 141-143), and the sectarian structure (Ayhan, 2010, pp. 94-101, 109-111; Gökalp, 2013) in Yemen.

In this article, we aim to investigate the positions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which intervened in the country after the Yemen crisis, and an attempt to give the results of these interventions in the affairs of Yemen.

SAUDI ARABIA AND YEMEN

The Importance of Yemen for Saudi Arabia

Yemen has a great strategic importance in terms of political, economic and security for the countries in the Gulf region and the Arabian Peninsula. At the same time, Yemen dominates the Bab Al-Mandab Strait, which connects the Gulf of Aden, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean. All these have made Yemen the center of attention of international powers throughout history. It is seen as an extremely important point in terms of security, politics and economics by the Gulf countries, as it controls the sea transportation routes to Asia through the mentioned Bosphorus. Therefore, any security problem and instability in Yemen inevitably affects the security and stability of some other countries in the Middle East, especially the Gulf countries (Açıklım et al., 2010, p. 19).

The existence of islands such as the big and small Hunish, which are spread over the Yemen territorial waters of the Arabian Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea areas, overlooking the Perim Island and the Bab Al-Mandab Strait, also increases the importance of Yemen in terms of geographical location. In 1995, a dispute occurs between Yemen and Eritrea over the location and ownership of the islands in question, and the two countries have to fight because of the islands problem. Later, the United Nations intervened and decided that the aforementioned islands are in Yemen's territorial waters, and thus, the war ended (Yıldırım, 2015, pp. 8-9).

According to the sources, the fact that approximately 3.8 million barrels of global petroleum passes through the Strait of Bab Al-Mandab every day, which makes it one of the important global trade routes in the world. Because of those features, Bab Al-Mandab Strait ranks third in the world after the Hormuz and Malacca Straits in terms of the amount of petroleum passing through it. This increases the strategic importance and economic value of the Bab Al-Mandab Strait. All these explanations make Yemen a conflict area (local - regional - international) due to its geostrategic location. Because the power that controls this region becomes an important player in the region and in the world, as it controls one of the most important global waterways (Kulaklı, 2015).

Historical Development of Yemen- Saudi Arabia Relations

Most of the problems existing in Saudi Arabia - Yemen relations, seen as the cause of geographic boundaries between them. There have been some problems between the two countries due to the fact that the beginning and the end of these borders are not known clearly, that various tribes live in the border regions, and these tribes are not sensitive enough on these issues and do not know the borders.

Taif Agreement: The two countries experience a war in 1934 due to their disputes over their borders. An agreement is signed in Taif on May 20, 1934, after the war. With this agreement, the borders between the two countries are redrawn and rearranged. This is considered to be the first meeting between Saudi Arabia and Yemen (Ü. G. Polat, 2017, pp. 141-144; Sputniknews, 2019). While Some say that this war is not a border war and not because of the disputes over the borders, but a sectarian(Wahhabi-Zaydi) and ideological war. After this war between the two countries and the agreement signed subsequently, both countries began to respect their mutual independence for a long time and to give importance to the ways of cooperation between them (Salim, 1993, pp. 381-383).

The Armed Revolution of 1948: It is an armed revolution that was initiated in 1948 under the leadership of Imam Abdullah al-Wezir against the Kingdom of Al-Mutawakilia in Yemen. Imam Ahmed, son of Imam Yahiya, who was killed by the revolutionaries, started an uprising against the rebels who opposed his father's rule (el-Cenahî, 1992, p. 91; el-Sovyetî, 2007, pp. 82-83). He received support from Saudi Arabia to save his father's administration from "the putschists" in his own words. Imam Ahmed attacked from several fronts with the support of Saudi Arabia and the Arab League and entered Sana'a. He punished the followers of the old regime by putting them in jail and executed some of them. Thus, the people of Sana swore allegiance to Imam Ahmed as the Imam and the king of Yemen (el-Cenahî, 1992, pp. 100-101; el-Sovyetî, 2007, pp. 83-87,131-132). Thus, he re-established his father's rule and executes revolutionaries.

September 26, 1962 Revolution: Yemen and Saudi Arabia face each other again in 1962 after a long time. After the republican revolution, also known as the war between the republicans and monarchists, which took place by the Free Officers in 1962 against Imam Mohammed al-Badr, which opened the way between the two states. The existence of a republican regime in the Arabian Peninsula with this revolution disturbs Riyadh. Meanwhile, the events take on a different dimension when the Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, who supported Yemen, sent two-thirds of the Egyptian army to Yemen in order to support the Republicans. The unfolding events confronted the Cairo and Riyadh administration and turned into a regional conflict between the two countries. The Republicans were victorious with the result of the siege of You, also known as the seventy-day siege. Thus, Saudi Arabia had to recognize the republican administration in Yemen. After this incident, relations between Yemen and Saudi Arabia moved to a different stage (el-Sovyetî, 2007, pp. 131-132; Şahin, 2020, p. 83; Tevfikü'l-Cünd, 2016).

The 1969 War of Al Wedia'a and its aftermath: It is the war that took place in the Al Wedia'a region between Saudi Arabia and the Republic of South Yemen under the presidency of Abd al-Fattah Ismail Ali Al-Jawfi from 1969 to 1980. This war erupted when South Yemen army troops have advanced towards the city of Al Wedia'a and seized the town of Al Wedia'a, which was under the control of Saudi Arabia. As South Yemen forces began to advance towards the city of *Sharurah* after capturing Al Wedia'a (Kasas, 2017) land and air forces belonging to the Saudi kingdom took in action. The Yemeni forces, who could not face the attacks made by the Saudi air force in the region for about 10 days, finally had to leave Al Wedia'a on December 6 and the conflict between the two countries for about 10 days ends (el-Hâcirî, 1988, pp. 24-25; Kasas, 2017).

It should be noted here that until the unification of Southern and Northern Yemen in 1990, a stable and orderly process did not occur in either the south or the north. There are important differences between Abd al-Fattah Ismail, who came to power in Southern Yemen in 1969, and Saleh, who ruled in Northern Yemen, in terms of sectarian, cultural, goals and perspectives. Mutual competition continues until the unification of the South and the North

in 1990. In this process, while South Yemen received support from the Soviet Union, it supported Northern Yemen from Saudi Arabia. It is seen from time to time that some countries such as the USA and Egypt are involved in solving problems in Yemen (el-Sarrâf, 1992, pp. 298-299).

Saudi Arabia's attitude towards the unification of Yemen in 1990: Before moving on to the unification of Yemen in 1990 and Saudi Arabia's stance against this unification, we believe that it would be useful to briefly mention what happened before the unification and the role of Saudi Arabia in these events.

Ibrahim al-Hamdi, who was the President of Northern Yemen between 1974 and 1977, initiated the most important work in laying the groundwork for the unification of Southern and Northern Yemen. During the reign of President Ibrahim al-Hamdi, a number of projects and plans were being worked on for modern Yemen. Salaries of civil servants and soldiers were increased. Education was gained importance. Many projects that are important for the country were opened and farmers were supported, especially the cultivation of Yemen coffee. Ibrahim al-Hamdi made great efforts to solve the problems with South Yemen. He had put a lot of thought into uniting North Yemen with South Yemen and did detailed studies on this issue. During the reign of Ibrahim al-Hamdi, Northern Yemen witnessed a total development in civilization areas. For all these reasons, Yemenites consider Ibrahim al-Hamdi as the best President of the history of Yemen.

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al-Hamdi, Northern Yemen witnessed a total development in civilization areas. For all these reasons, Yemenites consider Ibrahim al-Hamdi as the best President of the history of Yemen.

These important steps taken for the entire country during the period of Ibrahim al-Hamdi disturbed the governments of neighbouring countries, especially Saudi Arabia. On October 12, 1977, Ibrahim al-Hamdi was assassinated by Saudi Arabia, and the leader of North Yemen was killed.

His assassination is actually seen as the assassination of modern Yemen, the union and the revival. The external and internal forces that carried out the assassination knew that if Ibrahim al-Hamdi remained in power, Yemen would be in a different position, unity would be established, and a powerful Yemen. The powers in question did not want such Yemen and they wanted a weak Yemen which should depend on them.

As we mentioned above, Ibrahim al-Hamdi's efforts to unite Southern and Northern Yemen and signing an agreement with South Yemen in this direction created great disturbance in Saudi Arabia, which did not want this. In order to cause unrest in Yemen, Saudi Arabia started to support some tribes to oppose the rule. Ibrahim

al-Hamdi was assassinated in one night, when he wanted to visit South Yemen for unity in Yemen, and he and his brother were killed. It is a common belief in Yemen where this assassination was carried out with the support of Saudi Arabia. It is understood that Saudi Arabia used all the opportunities it has in order to prevent the unity of Yemen and to prevent Ibrahim al-Hamdi's steps in domestic politics. Saudi Arabia's attitude and approach continues in this way until the Yemen union is established by Saleh in 1990 (el-Hâcirî, 1988, pp. 25-27).

1994 North-South tension and its aftermath: When it comes to 1994, a crisis broke out between North and South Yemen again and later turns into this conflict. It is seen that Saudi Arabia is also involved in this crisis. Saudi Arabia was biased on the South Yemen side (Orkaby, 2015).

After the failure of the separation between the north and the south and due to Yemen's stance on the Gulf crisis (Second Gulf War), Saudi Arabia returns to the border issue with Yemen. Yemen's opposition to the use of military force against Iraq and the foreign intervention in Iraq in 2003 negatively affects Yemen-American relations and Yemen-Gulf countries relations and creates a great tension in relations. As a result, aid to Yemen will be cut off. However, the USA is also aware that the worsening of the political situation in Yemen will not benefit them (Zeyd, 2018, pp. 63-65).

Yemen's opposition to the US and Saudi Arabia in the gulf crisis would have a certain price for itself. Due to the border crisis caused by Saudi Arabia, it has to make concessions at the border. The Jeddah agreement was signed in 2000 to end the ongoing border problem between the two countries. According to some, Yemen had to accept these agreements because of the persecution and troubles that the Yemeni people living in Saudi Arabia will be subjected to (Riedel, 2019).

Saada (Mount Dukhan) War (2009): It is the war that took place in the Dukhan Mountain between the two countries after the Houthis living in Saada city in the North of Yemen crossed the border of Saudi Arabia and attacked. The reason why the Houthis crossed the border with Saudi Arabia in 2009 is that at that time, Saudi Arabia supported the government of Yemen financially and logistically.

According to the Houthis, Yemeni forces from time to time used Saudi land to attack the Houthis. They attacked a military zone belonging to Saudi forces on Mount Dukhan, citing their permission to attack. In this attack, a Saudi Arabian officer was killed and eleven people were injured (ed-Dahşî, 2013, p. 81).

The Yemeni government sided with Saudi Arabia in this attack launched by the Houthis by crossing the border. Saudi forces respond strongly to the Houthis after infiltration and taking control of Mount Dukhan, by using heavy weapons and warplanes. However, when the Houthis conquered some Saudi regions, Saudi Arabia has to evacuate about 250 villages on the border (ed-Dahşî, 2013, p. 82; Hamood, 2019, pp. 114-115).

Saudi Arabia has taken full action against these attacks of the Houthis. While fighting at the front, on the one hand, it watched over the Red Sea to prevent any aid from Iran to the Houthis, on the other hand, and begins to impose an embargo on the Houthis from all sides. This war, which broke out between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis due to a border violation, ends in 2010 when the Yemeni government intervened and reached an agreement with the Houthis. The Houthis retreat from their seizures in Saudi Arabian territory (ed-Dahşî, 2013, p. 82).

As a result, the beginning of the conflict between Yemen and Saudi Arabia was actually the disputes at the border, before it later turns into a regional rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia with sectarian and political problems. When looking at some of the tensions and other relations between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, it always sees it appropriate in terms of its own interests that the uncertain environment in Yemen will continue and never end by using all the means it has since the establishment of Saudi Arabia.

It also supports every extremist group it deems appropriate and every tribe that will contribute to its own thinking in order to weaken security and stability in Yemen. Saudi Arabia constantly intervenes in the internal affairs of Yemen for his own benefit. Despite its rich resources, it tries to turn Yemen into a country with a bad economy, which is dependent on foreign countries, needs international loans and always needs help from outside (Hamood, 2019, pp. 9-10).

Yemen-Saudi Arabia Relations From The Beginning Of The Arab Spring To The Present Day

The Houthis participate in the youth revolution launched in early 2011 with the effect of the Arab Spring under the leadership of the Joint Meeting Parties to overthrow President Saleh. Thus, the effect of the Arab Spring begins to be seen in Yemen. The Parties, especially the Houthis, Joint Meeting Parties to overthrow the administration, reject the initiative of the Gulf countries, which have offered a peaceful solution to the Yemen crisis by bringing the Vice President Hadi to power.

Since Saudi Arabia fears that the movement led by the Houthis to overthrow the administration in Yemen will spread to its own lands, it is worried about the events taking place in Yemen and took some measures. First of all, it announced its support to President Saleh. It opposed the movements of the Arab Spring in different countries, wherever they may be. Because it is concerned that it will spread to Saudi Arabia.

2011 Houthis revolution, also known as the Arab uprising, as well as the social reaction created by the Arab Spring, it became clear that the government will no longer be able to maintain it. Salih's supporters in the administration and some of his supporters in some tribes also took a stand against the President. In addition to all these, Muslim Brotherhood, seen as the representative of the Yemeni Islah Party, and General Ali Muhsin, the Commander of the 1st Army, party between those who wanted to participate in changing the resignation of the president.

Upon these developments, the process rapidly changes direction with the coming together of General Ali Muhsin and the al-Ahmar tribe. Mansur Hadi, with the support of Saudi Arabia and the UAE, had taken over the administration instead of Saleh. The coming to power of Hadi, backed by Saudi Arabia, causes the Houthis to change sides and the Houthis start to act together with the former President Salih and take action to remove Hadi from the administration.

After a short period in 2014, the Houthis turned against Hadi and took control of Sana'a, after that they took control Aden. Saudi Arabia would be extremely uncomfortable with Babal-Mandap coming under the control of the Houthis, who had the support of Iran. Upon this, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries start to work together. The coalition of a number of Arab countries led by Saudi Arabia in 2015 and the launch of a military operation (Decisive Storm) against the Houthis, to restore Hadi's legitimacy (Öztürk, 2019, pp. 89-90; F. Polat, 2016, p. 83).

On March 25, 2015, Saudi Arabia and the UAE lead the Arab coalition that militarily intervened in the Yemen war. The reason for this intervention is that the Houthis and their allies took Sana'a and moved towards Aden, on the shores of the Arabian Sea in the south, in order to overthrow and control the internationally recognized Yemeni government in the capital Sana'a. The purpose of the military operation called *asifetulhazm* (Stability Storm) is to deter the Houthis from these rebellions, to re-establish the power of the legitimate government of Yemen and to secure the maritime trade routes (Aydn, 2015, pp. 7-8).

The Gulf Cooperation Council under the leadership of Saudi Arabia, the legitimate government in Yemen and the Houthis revolt against President Hadi and the reestablishment of the legitimate government under international law due to their end to legitimate rule transmits a letter to the United Nations Security Council requesting permission for an intervention.

The United Nations Security Council convenes and approves the military intervention in Yemen. The reason why the US approves of this intervention is that the nuclear negotiations with Iran have failed and Tehran wants to dominate and influence another Arab capital, Sanaa, as the fourth after Baghdad, Sham and Beirut. Therefore, the increasing influence of Iran on the Middle East disturbs the USA (Kurt, December 2015, pp. 15-17). The Houthis' taking Aden under control also means that this region will come under Iran's control as they also control the Strait of Bab Al-Mandab. It is clear that this situation will not serve Saudi Arabian and American interests.

The interests of Iran and Russia coincide with the interests of Europe and America. In addition, this strait is also a vital point for Israel and is important. It is a worrying situation that the Houthis gain control over Yemen and if this continues, the possibility of provoking the Shia minorities in some countries in the region (Kurt, December 2015, pp. 21-22). It can be seen that the Saudi Arabia-Iran rivalry in Yemen is not only creating regional hegemony on the one hand, but also a sectarian conflict on the other.

IRAN and YEMEN

The Importance of Yemen for Iran

As we have mentioned before, Yemen has a special strategic position due to its importance, the southern gate opening to the Arab world in general and to the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf in particular. Knowing well the understanding of Yemen's strategic importance, Iran's presence in such a strategic place strengthens its role in the region. Therefore, it is a war that it is essential for Iran to be effective in the Yemen region in terms of controlling the main entry and exit of international petroleum trade (Çoktan, 2018).

Iran wants to implement the same policy it followed in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon in Yemen. For example, the collapse or fall of the Assad regime will negatively affect Iran's influence in Lebanon, Iraq and Syria. The collapse of national security and American intervention in Iraq will not only unwanted in Iran but also reduce its influence on Iraq (Abdullah, 2015, pp. 180-181).

Iran's support to the Houthis in Yemen and increasing its influence on this country through the Houthis disturbs some Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia. These developments in Yemen and brings a secret competition and conflict among these countries with Iran. On the other hand, while Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries wanted to preserve Yemen's position before the Arab Spring and not change the demographics and geography of Yemen, Iran was working to take advantage of Yemen's strategic location to expand its relations and influence on the African continent, and it is also trying to use Yemen as a starting point to East of Africa (el-Gâbirî, 2015).³¹

With its support to the Houthi communities, Iran aims to intervene in Yemen and to have a voice in the Bab Al-Mandab Strait in order to strengthen its control over the international transit routes in the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea, thus further strengthening its position in the negotiations on its nuclear program. Thus, Iran wants to besiege the region by providing its influence in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq in the north, and Yemen in the south. If this happens, it means that Iran's project on the region will gain a new ground and the map of regional balances in the Middle East can be drawn again (el-Gâbirî, 2015).

On the other hand, according to some Western sources and the reports prepared by them, Iran is trying to develop a military strategy that extends to the future and aims to deploy its naval forces from the Strait of Hormuz to Bab Al-Mandab and from there to Malacca. In this case, Iran will control the Strait of Hormuz on the one hand, and on the other hand, it will threaten the petroleum movements on the sea route with the presence of Houthis allies in the Strait of Bab Al-Mandab. All these are increasing the pressure on Iran, both regionally and internationally (el-Esmer, 2019, p. 308).

Iran and the Houthis

Since the 1979 Iranian revolution, the Islamic Republic of Iran, has appeared as an emerging international and regional power. There was something unusual that coincides with the emergence of this "pragmatic" republic. That is, Iran was seen as the key to spreading the disease called political sectarianism in the Arab world from one place to another. With the Iranian revolution for the last forty years, this republic has been in an undeclared competition with the whole Middle East, especially with the Arab countries. Indeed, as a result of this rivalry and strict Shia, it had a fierce and prolonged war with Iraq. Since the Arab Spring in Syria within the framework of the start of the internal conflict was occurring in Syria and still continues to be. In addition, it has been in a proxy war with Saudi Arabia in the internal turmoil of petroleum in Yemen since 2011 (Çomarlı, 2020, p. 70; Doster, 2012, pp. 45-46).

Iran tries to influence Yemen through the Houthis (Zaydis). Although Zaydism does not exactly coincide with the Shiism in Iran in terms of belief and sect, Iran, which closely follows the Zaydis partial closeness to them and the difficulties of the Zaydis with the administration in Yemen, indirectly supports the Houthis and seeks ways to increase their effectiveness in Yemen (Abdullah, 2015, p. 180).

Immediately after the Khomeini revolution, Iran made great efforts to spread Shiism in Yemen by bringing Yemeni student groups from the early 1980s until the 2000s to provide education in Iran and Lebanon to cover the costs of the Iranian administration. Among the Yemeni people who were taken to Iran and Lebanon for education were Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi, his brother Abdulmalik and their father Badreddin al-Houthi.

When the armed conflict between the Houthis and the legitimate Yemeni administration began in 2004, it sought indirect support for the Houthis, with whom he had worked for many years and developed close relations. After the fourth round in 2007. The impact of internal conflict, Hezbollah's war on the Houthis methods slowly begin to appear. Hezbollah carried out against Israel in Iraq and they did likewise in operation, video recording of Hui military operations begin to be published. In addition, the internal structure of the Houthi movement transforms into the organizational form of Hezbollah's military movement, like the Political Office of Command. All this confirms the fact that the Houthis are in contact with Iran backed Hezbollah and that Hezbollah members are training the Houthis (Tamer, 2017).

After the 2011 Houthi uprising, Iran takes the leaders of the Houthis and their youth to their own country and organizes various programs there, or tries to intensify its presence in Yemen by organizing some conferences in Beirut under the leadership of Hezbollah. Then, on the initiative of some Arab countries in the Gulf in February 2012, after the agreement signed in Riyadh Houthis were not including them refusing to pass to the front position against this step.

After the agreement made in Riyadh, a common view was reached between the ruling party (General People's Congress Party) and the opposition parties (Joint Opposition Parties), and Salih was removed from the administration on February 27, 2012 and Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi was replaced by him. After this change, on 18 March 2013, all political forces come together by establishing a national dialogue to form a new government. At the date of January 25, 2014, the established national dialogue has disrupted. There upon, the Houthis and former president Salih decided to act together (el-Kadi, 2017, pp. 36-37).

After the end of the national dialogue in January 2014, the country began to enter a spiral of political impasse. Due to the weakening of the services, the weak performance of the government and President Hadi, a general public unrest began to emerge. This created a good opportunity for the Houthis and their supporters in the opposition. The Houthis seized Sana on September 21, 2014 without encountering any armed resistance. After falling for Sana, the Houthis has sit at the table with other political forces and *sign a peace and partnership agreement* to legitimize their coup. However, according to the agreement, the Houthis, who must withdraw from the cities after the establishment of the national partnership government, did not fulfill these obligations (ed-Demîni, 2018). Iran seen and supported the partnership agreement, which guaranteed the participation of the Houthis in power, as a success and an important regional strategic gain for its long-term policy in Yemen in one way or another. In the course of time, Iran took advantage of the vacuum created by

the Salih regime's inability to fully control parts of Saada, Hajj and Al-Jawf provinces, taking advantage of the Houthis' invasion of the capital Sana, the control of Hudaydah and the progress towards southern Yemen and indirectly as much as it could help him to become a military force (Çoktan, 2018). One of the reasons why Iran supported the Houthis capture of Sana because it has seen Sana as the fourth Arab capital to be participated in the Iranian revolution (es-Samâdi, 2020).

Iran's Activities in Yemen and Yemen Policy

After 2004, when the first armed clashes took place between the Houthis and the Yemeni government, Iran shifted from soft power policy to hard power policy (Tamer, 2017). With the outbreak of the Arab Spring in 2011, the Houthis gathered prominent youth and activists to organize conferences, study groups, and seminars where academics, tribal sheikhs and others were invited to take them out of Yemen to Beirut or Tehran. They make them a supporter of Iran and beneficial for them. These conferences and seminars lasted for months. When the program was completed for a group that was taken away, they are brought to Yemen, another group has moved to Iran or Lebanon. Every group taken away was carefully selected. Efforts are made to recruit prominent influential people in all departments in the media, security, military, political and public sectors (eş-Şucâ, 2013, p. 200).

On the other hand, Iran tried to support many religious groups in northern Yemen on various occasions in order to strengthen and control the northern part of Yemen. This was revealed when several Iranian spy cells were captured in Yemen and, in March 2012, the Hadi government detected and captured two Iranian ships carrying weapons to Yemen. In late December of the same year, Yemeni Coast Guard forces seized various weapons loaded on board an Iranian ship near the port of Salif on the Red Sea (eş-Şucâ, 2013, p. 197).

Especially after 2004, Iran also intensifies its intelligence activities in the Yemen region. According to Yemeni security sources, Iran transports and trains hundreds of Yemeni activists, media workers and politicians to train in Tehran and Lebanon, through Houthi groups and Hezbollah, then, it had putted educators, members of the press and people as donors in order to spy on different regions of Yemen on behalf of Iran (eş-Şucâ, 2013, pp. 197-198).

According to a 2012 report of the UN, Iran sent many explosive device (AFB) materials to Yemen and these shipments were made by Yemeni businessmen who supported the Houthis (Tamer, 2017).

The "Jihan 1 ship" belonging to Iran, which was captured by the Yemen Coast Guard forces in 2013, is the most important shipping vehicle carrying ammunition to the Houthis until then. This captured ship also has advanced weapons, explosives, rocket launchers, anti-tanks, as well as night thermal systems and defense and attack systems (el-Kadi, 2017, p. 53).

When the Houthis captured the capital, Sana, two planes loaded with Iranian light and heavy weapons land in Sana. Until the Decisive Storm operation had started, Iranian aid planes land at Sana at least one or two planes every day. Iran's weapon assistance to the Houthis also included long range ballistic and anti armored missiles. Houthis have high explosive warheads that are extremely accurate in hitting their targets (el-Kadi, 2017, p. 54). The Houthis carry out various operations in vital areas, including Saudi Arabian airports, petroleum and gas stations, with weapons from Iran and Yemen, technologically equipped by Iranian experts.

According to American security sources, many military elements belonging to the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and Lebanese Hezbollah have been identified in various camps in Yemen who trained the Houthis and prepared them for war (el-Kadi, 2017, p. 56).

On the other hand, Iran also supported the Southern Movement (in the South of Yemen) trying to separate from the north. Because if this separation is successful, Iran wants to secure a larger area vacated in southern Yemen regions. After the Houthis take control of Sana'a, after the Southern Movement declares war against the Houthis and wanted to expel them from Aden, Iran cuts off its support from the forces in the South (el-Kadi, 2017, p. 37).

Iran has given full support to the Houthis in terms of media and press. From time to time, Iran tried to attract Yemeni media outlets to serve its project, pretending to support the Southern Movement. According to reports, Iran persuades about 1300 Yemeni media members from various regions of Yemen and subjects them to training in Lebanon, Iran and Iraq. Yet Iran, to support its favor to have been written press as well as some major TV channels they could use (el-Kadi, 2017, pp. 50-51).

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES and YEMEN United Arab Emirates - Yemen Relations

Diplomatic relations between Yemen and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) began in 1971. UAE Emir Zayid bin Sultan paid four official visits to Yemen between 1972 and 1986. The relationship between Yemen and the UAE has started to revive as of 2010. Because the UAE, together with the Republic of Germany, chairs the economy and good governance working group of the International Friends of Yemen Group, which was established during *the Conference on Supporting Yemen's Development* in London in 2010 (Es-Sevra, 2014). The UAE is one of the Gulf Initiative countries that has led and helped create a roadmap for Yemen under the leadership of Hadi by removing Salih from the administration and transferring it to Hadi as of 2011. After the National Consensus Government has been established by the parties that come to the fore and participated, the Board of Directors of the Bay of Aden Port Operations decides the cancellation of the agreement for leasing the port of Aden to Dubai Ports World in 2008. Because the company in question is located on the international shipping line connecting the east and west of the port of Aden, it did not fulfill its part in the operation of the port, as it has seen the operation of the port of Aden as a strategic threat to the ports in its country (the port of Jabal Ali). It is as if the port of Aden has rendered passive and not operated as desired, opposite the Jabal Ali port (Merkezü'l-Fikr, 2015). Due to this decision taken by the government of Hadi in Yemen, the UAE turns against Hadi by re-establishing a relationship with Salih, whom he dropped from the power by withdrawing his support from Hadi, despite his support for the coming to power of Hadi before.

In general, the UAE has been against new movements that want to overthrow existing governments and seize power in countries such as Egypt, Libya and Syria, including Yemen, due to the Arab Spring (Duais).

Initially, the UAE cooperated with the Houthis to eliminate and remove the Islah party (Muslim Brotherhood) that sparked the revolution in Yemen in 2011, and also supported its ally, Salih (Şemseddin, 2014). Later in the process, the change of the situation on the ground in Yemen, the Houthis' have seizing and dominating the sensitive areas of vital importance in the region, mobilize the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE. It stepped in to restore the legitimacy of Hadi and disrupt Iranian openings in Yemen (Caner, 2020).

The UAE considered the separation of South Yemen from the North as the key to its own country's (Emirate's) control, domination and influence over the region. For this reason, Abu Dhabi has taken a stand against the Yemeni unity in 1990 ever since. In addition to the Emirate's hostile attitude towards the unification of Yemen, Saudi Arabia does not think differently from the UAE on this issue. When the civil war broke out in 1994, it is clear that the UAE and Saudi Arabia opposed Yemen remaining united (es-Saïd, 2019).

The United Arab Emirates' Yemen Policy and Its Presence in Yemen

After the Houthi coup in Yemen, on March 25, 2015, Saudi Arabia-led *Resolute Operation Storm* was launched by an Arab coalition involving the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Egypt, Morocco, Jordan and Sudan to resolve issues in Yemen (Kurt, December 2015, p. 17). It is understood that the aim of the UAE to join the coalition is to expand its influence and influence in important strategic places such as Bab Al-Mandab, which is located on the international sea route connecting the Indian Ocean, Red Sea and Suez Canal. For this purpose, the UAE is currently the country with the most military presence and influence in Yemen since 2015, after Saudi Arabia, and has increased its influence in the provinces of South Yemen (Sahlol, 2019, pp. 25-26).

Since 2013 the UAE, international organizations such as the Red Cross, primarily with various local groups, including the socialist party using US and some foreign elements in their favor, especially in southern Yemen, increasingly enhances the effect (Domazeti, 2018).

The UAE's forces are deployed mainly in the southern regions of Yemen, in the provinces of *Aden, Makha, Mukella, Shebawa, Hudaydah* and *Su-*

katra and various military bases. UAE forces do not coordinate with the government of Yemen. It acts independently in the cities and places where some ports, airports and islands are located above, and seeks to dominate these places. There are more than 200 islands connected to Yemen and Sukatra is the largest of these islands. These islands are home to many different plant and animal species (Sahlol, 2019, pp. 38-39). The UAE has aimed to dominate strategic sea points from Dubai to the Red Sea and achieved this to a large extent. These included Eritrea, Djibouti and Aden (Sahlol, 2019, p. 26).

When the uprisings began with the effect of the Arab Spring, the priorities and strategies of the UAE in the region will be revealed. Among these priorities is eliminating political Islamism. Because the UAE sees their presence as a threat to their survival (Sahlol, 2019, p. 28).

The UAE is increasing its fight with the Islah party (Muslim Brotherhood) in Yemen as it risks breaking down any peace agreement supported by its allies in the coalition and continues to supported the armed groups affiliated to them across the country to achieve their political and economic interests. These groups can be listed as *Security Line Forces, Elite Shebvaniyye* and *Tihamiyya Forces, Joint Forces (Giants)* and *Republican Guard Forces*. These groups listed are Yemeni local groups, all of which are paid by the UAE. Although the UAE entered Yemen together with Saudi Arabia to support the legitimate government of Yemen against the Houthi coup, after a while, it started to act independently and started to act independently from the coalition forces, and certain strategic centers, especially the ports in the south of Yemen and takes control of it. All of this reveals that the UAE's aim to enter Yemen is not to support the legitimate government in the country, but to use these regions it controls in line with its own interests (Domazeti, 2019).

Since its entry into Yemen, the UAE has focused on controlling the southern port cities and seeking local support by supporting the separatist fighters in the region. According to Amnesty International, Abu Dhabi used the forces it supports in Yemen to arrested and tortured an unknown number of Yemeni citizens who oppose their ideology in secret prisons scattered around the South (Karyağdı, 2018).

In fact, it has been understood that the aim of the UAE is to reduce the influence of the legitimate government in Aden, to destroyed all dynamics of political and civil life, and eliminated everyone who rejected their policies in South Yemen. Because the UAE is not much different from the practices imposed by the Houthis in North Yemen, with the methods of arrest, assassination, and torture in secret prisons used against all religious, political and social elements opposing them (Karyağdı, 2018).

As a result, with the intervention and intrigues of Saudi Arabia on the one hand, the Houthis on the one hand, and the UAE on the other, the legitimate government gradually has become weaker and its sphere of influence in Yemen shrunk. As a matter of fact, the UAE-backed council taking control of some cities in the south and deployed its forces there reduced the influence of the legitimate government on many issues, especially in the military field (Merkezü'l-eb'ad, 2019).

In the south of Yemen, the UAE's policies and practices in favor of the country that we have mentioned above contribute to the Houthis' increasing their power. Again, the weakening of the legitimate government as a result of the UAE's moved against the legitimate government caused the public's trust in the legitimate government to overthrow the Houthi movement. The Houthis try to attract people to their side by telling the public about the negative policies and practices implemented by the UAE in southern Yemen through the media (Online, 2019a).

The Taiz region is located at the head of the regions where the population is generally densely populated in Yemen, and at the same time, it is the region that has been exposed to the events the most since the country started to be affected by the Arab Spring. Since the outbreak of the Arab Spring in Yemen, while the legitimate government dominates a part of the region, the Houthis are effective in some and this case continues until now. However, as the Taiz area is very close to the Makha port, the UAE occasionally harassed and had seek to influence this area. The UAE supports the forces under the command of Tariq Salih, the nephew of Ali Abdullah Salih, who took the city of Makha headquarters in order to keep the Maha port and the city under control and carry the area of influence to Taiz. The salaries and weapons of everyone in this power are provided by the UAE. Recently, this force led by Tariq has been

called the "National Resistance" movement (Merkezü'l-eb'ad, 2020).

The removal of the Houthis from Makha would be an important strategic gain for the legitimate government of Yemen. It is extremely important to control Makha city and harbor. The security of Bab Al-Mandab's strategic course corridor is also provided here. However, the UAE seeks to confuse Taiz from within and pursue a siege and to separate Makha and its strategic port from Taiz in order to be more effective in the region.

The areas controlled by the UAE extend to the nearby islands overlooking the Bab Al-Mandab strait, as well as the island of *Myon*, the *small* and *large Hanish* islands, the island of *Zukar* and others. The fact that Saudi Arabia withdraws its forces from the conflicts in these coastal regions and that the legitimate government is excluded from the operation areas in these coastal regions will paved the way for the UAE in these regions. However, the UAE is still behind the events (Online, 2019b).

CONCLUSION

The intervention of Saudi Arabia, Iran and the UAE in Yemen has had many consequences for the country and the people living here. These results are thought to be effective in Yemen for a long time. These can be handled in four ways as social, political, economic and health.

Social consequences: The war, as a result of the intervention of the coalition of Saudi Arabia and the UAE in order to re-establish the legitimate government of Yemen overthrown by the Houthis, and the course of the war, in the words of the United Nations, caused the worst human crisis in the contemporary world to arise. It is reported that nearly 100 thousand people have been killed since the beginning of these operations. It is stated that at least three times the dead were injured in this war, although it could not be determined precisely. In addition, many people were lost due to hunger and poverty that occurred during the war. According to the British Children's Organization, more than 85,000 children were lost due to severe starvation in this civil war, which had no purpose and continued for a long time under the influence of foreign interventions (El-Cezira).

According to the United Nations, one of the biggest consequences of the conflict in Yemen is that it causes large internal and external migrations in the country. The number of those who migrated out of the country is not exactly

known. However, it is estimated that there are around 3 million people in Yemen who had to migrate between cities (El-Cezîra; Yelsel, 2017, p. 21). It should also be known that as a result of this civil war, more than 80% of the people of Yemen became able to survive under the threat of poverty (Post, 2019).

Political consequences: Political solutions imposed by international decisions have not worked in Yemen. These did not produce results, and all the institutions of the country such as politics, military, education and health collapsed and disappeared (Mebruk).

Economic consequences: Since the beginning of the civil war in Yemen, petroleum facilities, fuel and gas stations, electrical power plants, producer factories and many facilities that sustain the country's economy have been destroyed and this is still continuing. The extent of the economic damage to Yemen has not yet

In UNICEF reports, it is reported that 1.5 million people contracted cholera between 2017 and 2018, more than 2,500 people died from this disease, and 30% of these cases were children. Almost half of the country's population still has no access to clean drinking water, sewage services and general public services. This situation provides a suitable ground for the spread of epidemic diseases (El-Cezîra).

As a result, the country's economy has been adversely affected and continues to be affected by the Arab Spring, which started in Tunisia and affected the whole Middle East. The country has ceased to be a weak country that can develop due to the ongoing civil wars, and has turned into a country that has collapsed in all aspects. The destruction the state has been subjected to due to this recent civil war that started with the effect of the endless Arab Spring; It has become difficult to repair in political, economic, social and cultural fields and put a great human being in the country. As a matter of fact, researches reveal that more than 20 million Yemeni residents are unable to fully meet their basic life needs and that the country is facing a major hunger problem.

been determined due to the ongoing war (er-Râcihi, 2016).

The closure of Hudaydah port and Sana airport puts restrictions on commercial goods, food and medicines coming to Yemen. These restrictions cause the prices of basic commodities already existing in the country to rise and a shortage of medicines and fuel (Mahlâfi, 2017; Post, 2019).

Health consequences: The health system in Yemen is paralyzed by the ongoing war between the Houthis and the group formed with the support of Saudi Arabia (El-Cezîra). Health system collapse also leads to the spread of various epidemic diseases in the country. Therefore, the failure of medical examination to be carried out as desired, the increase in the cost of medicines and the shortage of vaccines, causing the general health services to be greatly distressed, and many citizens, especially children, to die from easily treatable diseases (Post, 2019).

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