

Factors and Contexts of Divergence Between the United Kingdom and the Zionist Regime

Mohammad. Masoud Gol Aghaei^{1*}, Kazem. Zoghi Barani²

¹ Master of Science, Regional Studies, Imam Hossein (AS) University, Tehran, Iran

² Assistant Professor, Department of Political Geography and Geopolitics, Imam Hussein University, Tehran, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: masoudgolaghaei7880@gmail.com

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Global and regional developments in recent years have led to major changes in international relations. The relationship between the United Kingdom and the Zionist regime is no exception to this trend. These two entities, which have a long history of political and economic cooperation, have faced new challenges that contribute to their divergence. The present article examines the factors and contexts of divergence between the United Kingdom and the Zionist regime. The central question is: what factors contribute to the occurrence of divergence in the relations between the United Kingdom and the Zionist regime? The method of data collection is library research, and the data analysis method is descriptive-analytical. The findings of the study indicate that factors such as domestic political changes in the United Kingdom, the impacts of economic crises, and security developments in the Middle East play a significant role in shaping this divergence. On the other hand, public opinion and social movements in the United Kingdom, particularly regarding human rights and the Palestinian issue, can exert pressure to shift government approaches.

Keywords: divergence, convergence, United Kingdom, Zionist regime.

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1. Introduction

Israel, as one of the subjects of the United Kingdom's foreign policy after World War I, has continuously experienced varying degrees of dependence with this country across different decades. In 1950, only four years after the establishment of the Zionist regime, the United Kingdom, along with France, issued a statement supporting this regime and warned the Arabs against undertaking any actions against it.

In the historical political trajectory, both countries have at times acted as instruments for securing each other's interests. It can be stated that their mutual hostility toward the Islamic Republic has been one of the

fundamental elements bringing the two sides closer together, thus increasing its importance within the political mindset of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Nevertheless, the relationship between the two countries has never been entirely positive, and they have experienced challenges arising from expressions of divergence. Fundamentally, conflict and divergence stem from three primary issues: conflicts over interests, ideological conflicts, and economic disputes. In some instances, the presence of a third-party actor, a foreign power structure, or deep cultural and intellectual currents, such as nationalism, can also be considered in categorizing the sources of divergence (Azghandi & Aghaalkhani, 2013).



It appears that, considering the political, economic, and ideological tensions that have arisen between the United Kingdom and Israel at various points, there exist offensive capacities that the Islamic Republic could utilize to capitalize on the grounds for divergence between the two countries. Therefore, the present study seeks to explore and identify the grounds for divergence in the relations between the United Kingdom and the Zionist regime. The central question thus becomes: what factors contribute to the occurrence of divergence in the relations between the United Kingdom and the Zionist regime? Accordingly, the objectives of this research include examining and identifying the factors of divergence between the United Kingdom and the Zionist regime, as well as investigating the existing contexts of divergence across various arenas.

2. Methodology

This study is applied in its objective and falls under the category of qualitative research from the perspective of data analysis. The methods of data collection are library research and internet-based sources. The data analysis method employed in the present study is descriptive-analytical.

3. Theoretical Foundations

Realism in international relations is a highly influential theory that views power and national interests as the primary motivators of states' behavior in global interactions. From the realist perspective, divergence or the distancing of states from international cooperation is natural and inevitable. This view is based on several key principles explaining why states, even within the framework of international cooperation, ultimately pursue their national interests and may choose paths leading to divergence (Mohammadian et al., 2021).

Realists argue that, due to the absence of any central authority in the international political system capable of resolving disputes, states must rely solely on power to secure their interests and maintain their security (Kamrava, 2020). From the realist perspective, cooperation for mutual benefit is highly difficult because trust does not exist, and the fear of exploitation limits the potential for interdependence to stimulate cooperation and the formation of collective identity. Accordingly, in an anarchic situation, concern over deception and

betrayal leads states to fear entering into cooperative arrangements. Nevertheless, from the realist perspective, cooperation is not impossible; states will only engage in cooperation if it serves to enhance their national power (Kamrava, 2020). However, such cooperation remains vulnerable, fragile, and unstable (Waltz, 1997, p. 95).

4. Factors Influencing Divergence Among International Actors from the Realist Perspective

4.1. State-Centric Nature of the International System:

Realists believe that the international system is anarchic, meaning there is no central authority to compel states to cooperate. In this environment, states must strive for their survival and security, seeking to increase their power. According to Morgenthau, states are compelled to compete for power and resources in a disordered world (Morgenthau, 1948). This competition often leads to divergence and separation in international interactions because each state aims to maximize its own interests.

4.2. Balance of Power and Conflict of Interests:

Realists assert that a key principle of the international system is the balance of power. States form temporary alliances to prevent the domination of the system by a major power. However, since these alliances are often expedient and temporary, divergence within them is highly likely. For example, treaties and military or economic pacts are often created to curb the rise of a specific state, but when the national interests of one party are threatened, it may consider withdrawing from these agreements (Waltz, 1979). Thus, conflicting interests create fertile ground for divergence in international cooperation.

4.3. The Role of Mistrust and Security:

Mistrust is another key factor leading to divergence in international relations. Realists maintain that states cannot fully trust the intentions of other actors, even when formal treaties and agreements exist. According to Mearsheimer, states' distrust of one another prompts them to seek independent security guarantees rather than engaging in long-term cooperation, thereby intensifying divergence (Azghandi & Aghaalkhani, 2013; Garaudy et al., 2006; McCall, 1976).

4.4. Economic Divergence and Conflicting Interests:

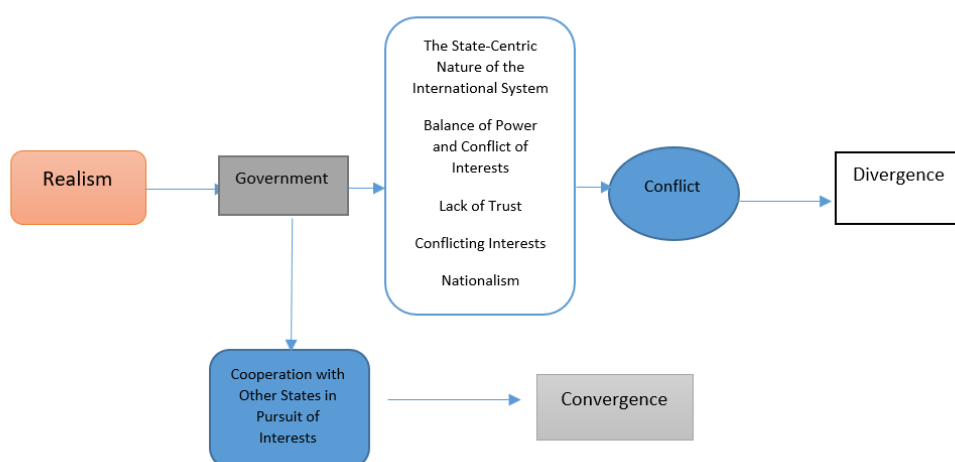
From the realist perspective, economics and international politics are inseparable, and states may distance themselves from international cooperation due to economic motivations. For instance, when a state needs to increase revenue and stimulate economic growth, it might adopt protectionist policies, leading to divergence from free trade agreements. According to the realist view, such economically motivated decisions, rooted in national interests, result in divergence among states in economic spheres (Gilpin, 1981).

4.5. Nationalism and the Desire for Independence:

Realists also emphasize the influence of nationalism and states' desire to maintain political and cultural independence. This desire for independence and avoidance of reliance on other countries can lead to divergence in international cooperation. For example, different countries, in efforts to preserve their cultural and political identities, may refrain from joining international institutions or adopt policies counter to global trends (Hasbara, 2019).

Figure 1

Conceptual Schematic of Divergence from the Realist Perspective, Drawn by the Author



5. Contexts of Political Divergence

The policies of various United Kingdom governments, such as the current Conservative government, have had a significant impact on the political divergence in relations with the regime. In particular, the role of Britain in peace negotiations and the two-state solution approach, which has at times faced challenges from Israel, has been identified as one of the factors contributing to distance and divergence between the two sides. Moreover, pressure from human rights organizations and international criticisms at the level of the United Nations have also had a direct impact on the United Kingdom's policies toward the regime. For example, in recent years, criticisms of the regime's illegal

settlement activities in the occupied territories by the United Nations and other human rights organizations have increased, influencing the positions adopted by the United Kingdom.

5.1. Political Parties and the Political Body

The activities of political parties in the United Kingdom can, in some cases, create openings for divergence between the two sides, such as those of the Labour Party or leftist groups in Britain. Certain political figures within the British government have repeatedly expressed their opposition to the regime and to the UK's supportive policies toward it. For instance, Paul Bristow, a Member of Parliament from the Conservative Party, in

2023 called on Rishi Sunak's government to declare a ceasefire to prevent further civilian casualties in Gaza.

5.2. *Brexit Referendum*

Following the announcement of the Brexit referendum results, Britain not only avoided displaying weakness but expanded its diplomatic relations with various countries and vigorously pursued exit negotiations with the aim of preventing potential crises (Major & von Ondarza, 2018), thereby seeking to enhance its security role within the Atlantic-centered system and strengthen its ties with traditional partners.

Changes in the United Kingdom's relations with the European Union after Brexit have fueled divergence in its policies toward the regime. Exiting the European Union provided the United Kingdom with new opportunities for bilateral agreements with countries such as Israel; however, this greater independence also increased international pressures to adopt human rights-oriented positions (Foreign Affairs, 2022).

5.3. *West Asia and Iran*

With the rising role of actors such as Iran and Turkey in the Middle East and shifts in United States policies, the United Kingdom has been compelled to revise its policies toward Israel. These global changes have led Britain to seek a balance in its relations with the regime and Arab countries. In this regard, Middle East peace negotiations and support for a two-state solution have added complexity to these relations (Al Jazeera, 2023). Another indicator of Britain's movement toward balancing the region is its arms embargo on the regime; in September 2024, the British government suspended 30 arms export licenses to the regime in response to calls from human rights groups and some Members of Parliament to halt ongoing violence in Gaza and the West Bank.

5.4. *Iran's Regional Policies*

Iran, as one of the regional powers, has consistently sought to expand its influence in the Middle East. This influence is exerted through support for resistance groups such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Palestine, development of military and missile programs, and strengthening relations with Shiite allies in the region. These policies, particularly those threatening the regime and countering Western influence in the region,

have raised serious security concerns for Israel. From the Zionist regime's perspective, Iran's regional activities are seen as a threat to its stability and security (Mohammadian et al., 2021). These concerns have, in turn, encouraged Israel to deepen its relations with Western countries, especially the United States. However, Britain's response to the Iranian threat has been more complex and, in some cases, has led to divergence in London and Tel Aviv's policies (Kamrava, 2020). Britain believes that maintaining the nuclear agreement and enforcing international inspections can prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. This approach has caused London and Tel Aviv to adopt differing positions on issues related to Iran.

Moreover, Iran has sought to expand its sphere of influence by strengthening relations with certain non-state and state actors in the Middle East. Supporting Shiite groups in Iraq and Yemen, cooperating with the Syrian government, and increasing its presence in Lebanon through Hezbollah are examples of these efforts (Saghafi-Ameri, 2021). These actions have drawn criticism and concern from Israel and have also prompted Britain to reconsider its regional policies. Recognizing the regional realities and the need to maintain stability, Britain has, in some instances, sought to reach agreements with Iran through diplomatic cooperation. This policy implies acceptance of Iran as an influential actor in the region and stands in contrast to Israel's hardline stance, which views any cooperation with Iran as a threat to its national security (Major & Von Ondarza, 2018).

5.5. *Governments of the Regime*

Another major factor in the political divergence between the United Kingdom and the regime is the internal developments and policies within Israel itself. The rise of far-right movements in Israeli governments, especially regarding policies toward Palestinians, has provoked criticisms from the United Kingdom and other European countries. This is particularly evident in matters such as settlement expansions and human rights violations in the occupied territories. These developments have led the United Kingdom to, at times, reexamine Israel's policies, especially from a human rights perspective (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

5.6. *The Impact of Right-Wing Policies on Diplomatic Relations*

The extremist right-wing policies in Israel have intensified especially since the rise of right-wing and nationalist governments, such as that of Benjamin Netanyahu. These governments have adopted harsh policies toward Palestinians, including increased military operations, settlement expansions, and human rights violations (International Crisis Group, 2023). Such policies have triggered serious international concerns, particularly in Britain, and have drawn criticisms from both the government and non-governmental organizations.

5.7. *The Role of Settlements in Political Tensions*

Settlements constitute one of the critical flashpoints in the relations between Israel and the United Kingdom. International criticisms in this regard, particularly from the British government and other European countries, reflect a global shift in perception toward this issue. The British government has repeatedly and publicly called on Israel to halt settlement expansions, describing them as obstacles to peace and negotiations. Furthermore, this issue has become a major challenge for the British government, as continued settlement policies by Israel could significantly impact diplomatic and economic relations between the two countries (European Union External Action, 2023).

5.8. *Political Groups: Palestinian Solidarity Groups*

The first successful examples of anti-Zionist political-social actions can be seen in the activities of Palestinian solidarity movements, which can be categorized among grassroots political and social groups. These groups often work to promote civil resistance, advocate for the establishment of justice and peace for Palestinians, support international law and human rights, and combat all forms of racism, aiming to create a massive anti-apartheid movement in support of Palestinians. Another key activity of these groups is fighting Islamophobia, which integrates the movement against the regime with the concept of Islamic Awakening or, more precisely, political Islam (www.palsolidarity.org).

These groups have multiple branches across England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland (www.scottishpsc.org). They possess a broad social base,

and interestingly, some of their core leadership structures are composed of native citizens as well as Palestinian refugees residing in various cities throughout the United Kingdom.

6. **Contexts of Economic Divergence**

The economic relations between the United Kingdom and the Zionist regime in recent years have faced multiple challenges, increasingly leading to divergence between the two countries. This divergence is particularly influenced by global economic crises, domestic political changes, and international sanctions. In this regard, reference can be made to the economic crises following the outbreak of COVID-19. These crises prompted various countries to prioritize meeting their domestic needs, thereby shifting their economic priorities. Specifically, the United Kingdom has encountered significant economic challenges, leading to a decreased focus on economic cooperation with Israel (UK Government, 2023).

Brexit has also had a profound impact on the economic relations between the United Kingdom and the regime. The UK's exit from the European Union has resulted in changes to its trade and economic policies. Britain must now seek new trade agreements with non-European countries, which could divert resources and attention away from cooperation with Israel (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2023). Moreover, the Labour Party's new positions, especially regarding human rights issues after Brexit, have intensified significantly and have placed British governments under pressure regarding extensive support for the regime, which could negatively affect the economic relations between the two sides.

One of Brexit's major impacts on the relationship between Britain and the regime has been the increased emphasis on human rights issues and related policies. In recent years, particularly after Brexit, the Labour Party has adopted more explicit positions on human rights matters. These stances can pressure the British government to reduce its political and economic support for the regime (Amnesty International, 2023). This shift in the Labour Party's perspective—being one of the major and influential political parties in Britain—has compelled successive governments to reconsider their policies toward the regime.

Due to its policies toward Palestinians, the regime has constantly faced international criticism. These criticisms

have intensified in recent years, prompting civil and human rights groups in Britain to pressure the government to reconsider its policies toward the regime (Middle East Policy Review, 2023). Although these changes may not directly affect economic relations, they push the political and social climate in Britain toward reducing economic cooperation with the regime.

Another factor contributing to the decline in economic cooperation between the United Kingdom and Israel is competition with emerging economies. After Brexit, Britain has sought to establish new economic relations with countries such as China, India, and the Gulf States. These nations, being large and rapidly growing economies, offer greater opportunities for trade and investment (Global Trade Insights, 2023). Consequently, Britain's focus on these markets may result in diminished attention to smaller and more limited economies like that of the regime. This shift in economic priorities can be considered one of the factors underlying the economic divergence between Britain and the regime.

6.1. *Sanctions and International Pressures*

International pressures and sanctions, particularly those imposed on the Zionist regime due to human rights violations and settlement policies, could fuel economic divergence between Britain and the regime. For instance, human rights organizations and certain European countries have exerted increasing pressure on the United Kingdom to alter its stance toward the regime. These pressures could lead to a reduction in economic relations and joint investments between the two countries (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

6.2. *Economic Impacts of Arms Export Suspension*

The suspension of arms export licenses to Israel could have significant economic impacts on the relations between the two countries. The arms industry constitutes one of the key sectors of economic cooperation between Britain and the regime, and any disruption in this area could result in a decline in joint investments and defense collaborations (Defense Economics Review, 2024). In fact, the regime, being one of the largest purchasers of arms from Britain, relies heavily on this cooperation to meet its defense needs. Therefore, any changes in Britain's policies could lead to

tensions in economic relations and a decrease in the regime's trust in the British government (Strategic Defense Analysis, 2024).

6.3. *Impact of International Pressures on Joint Investments*

International pressures and sanctions could indirectly affect joint investments between Britain and the regime. British companies cooperating with the regime might refrain from continuing their partnerships due to concerns about sanctions and international pressures. This could result in a reduction in British investments in the regime and a decline in joint innovation and projects between the two countries (International Business Journal, 2024).

6.4. *Social and Political Impacts on Public Opinion*

In addition to economic impacts, international pressures could also have social and political effects on public opinion in Britain. Increasing public awareness of human rights violations by the regime could lead to changes in people's and political parties' perceptions of this country. These changes could influence the policies of the British government, particularly the Labour Party, which in recent years has increasingly focused on human rights issues (Social Policy Review, 2024). A negative public opinion toward Israel could result in reduced political and economic support for the regime, consequently affecting the economic relations between Britain and the regime.

7. **Contexts of Security Divergence**

In the area of security divergence between the United Kingdom and the Zionist regime, multiple factors influence the relations between the two countries. The impact of security crises in the Middle East, such as the recent developments in Israel's neighboring countries like Syria and Lebanon, along with increasing tensions with Iran, may pressure the United Kingdom to alter its approach toward the Zionist regime. In these circumstances, Britain may show greater inclination toward adopting independent positions rather than closer cooperation, which could negatively affect the security relations between the two countries. On the other hand, new concerns regarding national security and changes in strategic priorities could act as a factor in

reducing reliance on military cooperation with the regime.

7.1. 2030 Roadmap Agreement

The 2030 Roadmap Agreement between the United Kingdom and the regime is an important initiative aimed at enhancing security and scientific cooperation between the two countries. Officially introduced in 2021, this agreement seeks to expand collaborations and establish a clear roadmap for the future of bilateral relations. The 2030 Roadmap Agreement includes several key objectives generally aimed at strengthening scientific and security cooperation between Britain and the regime (Department for International Trade, 2021).

- **Security Cooperation:** Given shared threats in areas such as terrorism and cybercrime, the agreement seeks to bolster security and intelligence cooperation.
- **Development of Technology and Innovation:** One of the key objectives of the agreement is to promote cooperation in emerging technologies, particularly in healthcare, energy, and cybersecurity. These collaborations can foster innovation and improve the quality of life in both countries (UK-Israel Tech Hub, 2021).

8. Contexts of Cultural and Social Divergence

The grounds for cultural and social divergence in the relations between Britain and the Zionist regime include the influence of public opinion, social movements, the role of media and social networks, and the activities of non-governmental and human rights organizations. These cultural and social dimensions, especially in recent years, have been recognized as determining factors in shaping governmental views and positions in both countries. The effects of these factors can lead to significant changes in bilateral relations and result in deeper divergences.

Public opinion and social movements, particularly in the United Kingdom, play a key role in shaping the country's foreign policies. Growing sensitivity to human rights issues and the situation of Palestinians has led to increasing public criticism of the Zionist regime's policies and demands for a shift in government approaches. This development not only affects political decisions but may also result in the reduction of Britain's historical support for Israel. Particularly, movements

such as "Jewish Voice for Peace" (JVP) and "Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions" (BDS) have effectively influenced public opinion and applied pressure on the British government.

8.1. Anti-Zionist Cultural Groups

8.1.1. PSC Movement

The Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) is a community composed of individuals cooperating for peace, equality, and justice, and against racism, occupation, and colonialism. This group believes that political struggles are vital to helping Palestinians determine their future independently of international aid or charity. The main objectives of the PSC include:

- a) Creating a mass campaign to support Palestinian rights, expose and oppose Israel and its collaborators.
- b) Strengthening political, cultural, and social ties with Palestinian organizations pursuing autonomy for the Palestinian people.
- c) Challenging and ending complicity by government institutions, corporate entities, and international organizations collaborating with Israel.
- d) Advocating for Palestinians' right to self-determination and return, supporting their struggle against military occupation.

8.1.2. FOA Group

In Britain, human rights organizations and social activist groups play a prominent role in promoting public awareness and advocating for Palestinian rights. One of the most prominent of these groups is Friends of Al-Aqsa (FOA). Founded in 1997 by human rights activist Ismail Patel, FOA aims to raise awareness about human rights violations in Palestine, counter the effects of Zionism, and encourage support for boycott movements such as BDS (Patel, 2019). FOA organizes conferences, lectures, demonstrations, and exhibitions to convey its message to British and international audiences. A notable activity of FOA is organizing "International Al-Quds Day" events annually in support of Al-Aqsa Mosque and Palestinian rights (Mohammadian et al., 2021).

8.1.3. JVP Movement

Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) is one of the most important Jewish anti-Zionist movements in the United States and

Britain, advocating for Palestinian rights and critiquing the policies of the Zionist regime. Comprising primarily Jewish individuals and justice advocates, JVP emphasizes human rights, justice, and ending occupation (Jewish Voice for Peace, 2022). This movement seeks to project an alternative voice from within the Jewish community emphasizing values like justice and solidarity. In Britain, JVP cooperates with human rights organizations and organizes public meetings, art exhibitions, and lectures addressing human rights issues in Palestine and critiques of Zionism (British-Jewish Collaboration Report, 2022). It also collaborates with groups like Jews for Justice for Palestinians to promote a joint message advocating for justice and ending occupation (Collaboration Report, 2023).

8.1.4. *Anti-Zionist Artists and Writers*

Britain, as one of the world's cultural and artistic centers, has long provided a space for free expression of various viewpoints. In recent years, Zionism and Israel's policies have drawn particular attention among artists and writers. Many British artists and writers, by criticizing Israel's policies and supporting Palestinians, have played important roles in raising public awareness and stimulating cultural debates.

8.1.5. *Visual Artists and Filmmakers Critical of Zionism*

Several British visual artists and filmmakers have addressed Palestinian issues and criticized Zionist policies through their art. One of the most prominent figures is Ken Loach, the renowned British filmmaker, who has addressed various social and political issues in his works. Loach has repeatedly criticized Israel's policies and expressed his support for the BDS movement in interviews and public events (Guardian, 2020). Similarly, Mike Leigh, a leading British director and writer, has taken a strong stance in favor of Palestinian rights, refusing to participate in film festivals associated with Israel and emphasizing the importance of justice and human rights (Independent, 2018).

8.1.6. *Critical Writers and Poets*

Some British writers have critiqued Zionism and supported Palestinian rights through books and articles. John Pilger, a prominent journalist and writer, has extensively addressed Palestinian issues and strongly

criticized the regime's policies in his writings and documentaries. He has highlighted the lives and struggles of Palestinians and called for global policy changes toward the regime (Rabbani Khorasgani, 2015). Caroline Lucas, British writer and politician, has also been a supporter of Palestinian rights. As a Member of Parliament and Green Party member, Lucas has referenced human rights violations by the regime and supported BDS as a legitimate tool to oppose these policies (Mohammadian et al., 2021).

8.1.7. *The Regime's Cultural Boycott Campaign*

The foundation of the Zionist regime was based on the migration and gathering of Jews from different cultural and historical backgrounds, and from the outset, promoting a so-called Israeli culture has been one of its primary objectives (Rabbani Khorasgani, 2015). The regime uses a project known as "Hasbara" (meaning explanation or clarification) under the guise of non-governmental initiatives within student unions, functioning as a tool of public diplomacy to promote Israeli culture academically. However, its true goal, similar to the "MASHAV" propaganda project, is to award scholarships, provide loans for cultural projects worldwide, and support artists (Hasbara, 2019).

The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) urges international film and art festivals to reject any Israeli financial support. Many musicians worldwide now refuse to perform in the occupied territories. Roger Waters has called on all cultural activists to boycott any activities or projects directly or indirectly associated with Israeli institutions (BDS, 2020).

8.1.8. *Anti-Zionist Jewish Movements*

Another successful movement in isolating and exposing the Zionist regime has been the "Anti-Zionist Jews" movement. Anti-Zionist Jewish networks and groups are diverse and represented across Europe and America. These groups seriously oppose Zionism both as a discourse and a political movement, conveying to the world the message that Zionism lacks a true religious foundation and that Judaism condemns many of the regime's actions. One of the leading groups in this area is the "Anti-Zionist Jewish League," which has been active for many years (Rabbani Khorasgani, 2015).

8.1.9. *The Academic Boycott Movement*

The most extensive support for the boycott movement against the regime comes from the academic and scientific boycott campaigns, as Israeli universities are considered primary justifiers and accomplices of the regime's colonial and racist actions, spreading Zionist ideology (BDS, 2020b).

These pro-Palestinian movements and groups have to some extent succeeded in rallying public opinion and shaping media narratives against the regime, particularly during the regime's attacks on Gaza, encouraging people to take positions against the regime. They have even organized street protests in London against the regime and the British government's supportive policies.

9. **Obstacles and Limitations to the Divergence Between the Regime and Britain**

9.1. *The Power and Media Influence of Zionism*

Zionism, being aware of the impact and role of newspapers, news agencies, cinema, music, and, more broadly, mass media in shaping public opinion, attitudes, and manipulating or distorting realities, has utilized these tools to achieve its goals worldwide. The Zionists' dominance over British media is so profound that within this country's media, no word is spoken nor any program produced against Zionism or its objectives. The situation is similar in many other European countries. Although Jews constitute only about half a percent of the British population, they almost monopolistically control the country's media and systematically promote Zionist propaganda. Media outlets such as Independent Television News (ITN), Granada Television, Pinewood Shepperton Group, the Express Newspapers, News International, Telegraph Group, and the Daily Mail are among the media influenced by Zionists in Britain (Kardan, 2007).

9.2. *Zionist Influence on Policy-Making*

Zionism has consistently leveraged its influence in European countries to impact their politicians and policies, and following the establishment of the European Union, it extended this influence particularly toward the Union's Middle Eastern policies. Utilizing financial, media, press, and Zionist lobbying tools,

Zionism has endeavored to align European policies with its own objectives. For example, European countries, along with the United States, boycotted the United Nations conference held in April 2004 in Geneva that condemned racism in Israel, even though Palestinians living in the occupied territories at that time were deprived of territorial and political rights and subjected to military control and home demolitions (Rabbani Khorasgani, 2015). Another example of Zionist influence in Europe was the prevention of Palestine's recognition in international forums. On July 13, 2012, a coalition of 104 pro-Israel lobby members of the European Parliament urged the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Catherine Ashton, to exert all efforts to block the Security Council's vote on recognizing a Palestinian state.

9.3. *Zionist Lobby*

Describing the immense power of the Zionist lobby in the West, the Kuwaiti newspaper *Al-Qabas* published an article by Amal Al-Arabid stating: "The Jewish lobby, dominant over all financial, banking, economic, and military institutions in these countries, determines the politics of America and the European Union. It is the Zionist lobby that designs the new geopolitical maps of the Middle East and East Asia, and it has crippled the European Union by creating financial crises" (www.yjc.ir).

The Zionist lobby's role in the Arab-Israel conflict can also be evaluated through formal groups that have established clear and real links between the British government and the Zionist regime in the occupied territories. Some of these known groups are as follows:

9.4. *Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland*

The Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland—also known as the Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Northern Ireland—was established in 1899 to advocate for the creation of a Jewish state. At that time, several Jewish leaders and members declared their support for Theodor Herzl's objectives, and the Federation became a hub for figures like Chaim Weizmann (Israel's first president) and a small group of British Zionists initiating efforts toward statehood (www.zionist.org.uk).

Following the issuance of the Balfour Declaration in 1917, London became a center for the global Zionist

movement for 30 years, during which the Zionist Federation played a major role. The Jewish Agency also opened its political office in the Federation's main building at 77 Great Russell Street and negotiated with the British government. The Federation sought political and financial support for the establishment of a Jewish state, leading to the creation of other key Zionist organizations such as the Women's International Zionist Organization, the Appeal for a United Jewish State, the Jewish National Fund, and various Zionist youth movements.

9.5. *Board of Deputies of British Jews*

The Board of Deputies of British Jews was originally formed in 1760 when seven representatives of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish community established a committee to pledge allegiance to King George III. Meanwhile, Britain's Ashkenazi Jewish community founded its "Secret Committee for Public Affairs." By the end of 1769, the Board of Deputies was jointly established by these two committees (<http://www.bod.org.uk>).

9.6. *Federation of Zionist Youth*

This organization consists of Jewish Zionist youth in Britain and maintains affiliated institutions in Jerusalem and the United States. In the 1950s, it managed to organize approximately 30 Jewish communities in England. Over the past two to three decades, it has become the largest and most important Zionist youth movement in Britain, striving to promote Zionist objectives.

9.7. *Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO)*

Comprising over 250,000 members in 50 countries (<http://www.wizo.org.uk>), this organization focuses primarily on raising funds to support social welfare initiatives for Jews in the occupied Palestinian territories. WIZO's British branch, the largest Jewish women's organization in Britain and Ireland, continues these efforts. Historically, Zionist women's groups existed under the Federation's oversight since the 1890s and formally established the Federation of Zionist Women in 1918. After Britain assumed the mandate over Palestine in 1920, WIZO was created to leverage this opportunity.

9.8. *Britain-Israel Communications and Research Centre (BICOM)*

The Britain-Israel Communications and Research Centre (BICOM), although claiming to be an independent organization, was established to enhance support for Israel within Britain (<http://www.bicom.org.uk>).

9.9. *Jewish National Fund (Britain)*

The British branch of the Jewish National Fund, established in 1939, aimed to support the formation of a Zionist state and carry out so-called charitable activities in Palestinian territories. Registered as a charity, it benefits from tax exemptions. It collects funds from British Jews and non-Jews and transfers them to designated agencies in Israel. It operates offices in London (headquarters), Birmingham, Dublin, Glasgow, Hull, Leeds, Liverpool, and Manchester.

9.10. *Institute for Jewish Policy Research*

Founded in London in 1996, the Institute for Jewish Policy Research collaborates with a wide range of non-Jewish individuals, institutions, and universities to amplify its voice.

9.11. *Economic Power and Influence of Zionism*

The Jewish community is highly organized and possesses significant financial power and political influence (Bolton, 2015, p. 6). In fact, Jewish economic strength has historically been one of their most important pressure levers (www.inconvenienthistory.com). After World War II, centers of power and decision-making in Europe and the United States gradually aligned with the Zionist lobby's will, given its control over major industries and financial resources (Mohammadian et al., 2021).

Beyond wealth accumulation, Jews historically leveraged financial resources for political gains, including purchasing land and influencing governments. Without the financial support of wealthy families such as the Rothschilds, the purchase of Palestinian lands and Jewish settlement initiatives might not have been possible. Activities also include establishing international banks, trading gold, silver, diamonds, textiles, creating multinational corporations in sectors like petrochemicals and pharmaceuticals, programming and producing computer technologies, and collecting

valuable artistic and antiquities collections, with prominent examples worldwide (Garaudy et al., 2006).

9.12. *Britain's Return to the Middle East and Strengthening of Relations with the Regime as an Ally*

One of Britain's main strategies in the post-Brexit era has been its return to the Middle East. British Middle East objectives are now being formulated based on principles akin to those in the pre-1970s era. Post-Brexit, Britain's special attention to the Middle East fits into its broader policy framework, seeking to leverage its United Nations Security Council membership and historic regional presence to advance its post-Brexit goals as a trans-regional actor. However, Britain does not limit itself to a single objective; instead, it aims to categorize and pursue all priorities that impact its interests and capabilities (Mohammadian et al., 2021).

10. Countering Iran and Potential Anti-British Powers

One of the factors that could influence such a situation is Britain's strategic relationship with the Islamic Republic of Iran, which may lead to distancing and opposition from Arab states, the regime, and the United States. However, in this case, it is expected that London's relations with Tehran would merely aim to safeguard its position in the Middle East, rather than be based on genuine rapprochement. One of the first reasons that could set the stage for such a situation is Britain's disregard for Iran's missile activities following the JCPOA agreement. The significant and meaningful differences in threat perceptions among Britain, the regime, and the Arab states have created considerable challenges, as today the primary concerns of the regime and Arab states in the Middle East revolve around Iran's influence and threats from its missile, nuclear, and military programs, rather than the regime's confrontation with the Palestinians.

One of the major potential powers opposing Britain and its colonial interests must be sought among groups known as the Resistance. Israel and Arab states have always been concerned about the Resistance groups, which they perceive as dependent on and supported by the Islamic Republic of Iran, considering Iran the main rival in the region. In light of Hezbollah's successes, and given that Britain has not achieved field success against the Resistance groups, the British government politically

decided to restrict Hezbollah. In alignment with American efforts to intensify pressure on this group, Sajid Javid, Britain's Home Secretary, stated on February 25, 2019, that the UK government would designate the entirety of Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. He said, "Hezbollah continues its attempts to destabilize the fragile situation in the Middle East, and we can no longer distinguish between its already banned military wing and its political party; therefore, I have decided to proscribe the entire organization". This decision was warmly welcomed by Zionist media outlets.

Overall, Britain and its regional allies oppose Iran's growing influence through Resistance groups in the Middle East, especially Hezbollah near the regime, and have therefore adopted similarly harsh approaches toward Iran.

11. Protecting the Regime and Supporting Its Policies Toward Palestinians

Given that the Brexit referendum coincided with the expansion of terrorist group activities, the continuation of unrest in the Middle East, particularly in Syria and Iraq, and the regime's concerns about extremists gaining control in Syria, Britain has continued to prioritize the protection of Israel's existence and security and the enhancement of Tel Aviv's strategic influence in the region as one of its core Middle Eastern policies. Prime Minister Theresa May had a profound interest in maintaining close relations with Israel, viewing it as mutually beneficial for both countries. Like the regime, she perceived Iran and Resistance groups throughout the Middle East—especially near the regime—as threats. May did not want Iran to become the dominant power in the Middle East or in proximity to the regime. She stated, "The regime plays an important role in the future of Britain's developments, and I believe the regime and Britain have numerous shared interests and commonalities" (May, 2016).

Following this statement, numerous meetings between the two countries were held after June 2016.

Evidence indicates that in the post-Brexit era, Britain will be less concerned with human rights and democratic issues and will focus its policies toward the regime on continuing past cooperation. Given the historical background between the two countries, it is expected that London and Tel Aviv will maintain a common outlook across many areas beyond military, economic,

and industrial relations, including counterterrorism, confronting Iranian influence, opposing Resistance groups, and promoting regional stability (Mohammadian et al., 2019).

Britain's post-Brexit revision of its Middle East policy, which previously supported the two-state solution for Palestine, now prioritizes strengthening bilateral relations without serious emphasis on establishing two states.

12. Closer Alignment with the United States

Today, Britain and the United States maintain a strong friendship and alliance, and their cooperation with the regime has sustained and expanded this proximity. One of the points of convergence in the "special relationship" between Britain and the United States in the Middle East is their joint emphasis on maintaining ties with Israel. They regard Tel Aviv as one of their principal and strategic allies, both historically and presently. Together, they have repeatedly taken positions against actions opposing the regime in international forums, voting against numerous United Nations resolutions critical of the regime. The shared goal of both countries is the protection and survival of the Zionist regime, necessitating their mutual cooperation in this regard.

13. Conclusion

The relationship between the regime and Britain, being deeply intertwined across shared domains, has maintained a seemingly unbreakable outlook. Despite minor disputes during the early stages of World War II, implicit cooperation between the two persisted and expanded with Britain's military and economic support. Only a few months after the regime's declaration of independence, relations entered a serious and diplomatic phase, with Britain becoming one of Israel's primary allies after the United States.

This relationship has endured not only due to internal factors such as the regime's lobbies and media influence within Britain but also due to external factors and mutual interests in the Middle East.

According to the overall findings, Britain views the regime, after the United States, as one of its principal allies both globally and regionally. Its approach to strengthening and expanding cooperation with Israel remains pragmatic. The Brexit referendum and its

consequences demonstrated that strengthening and sustaining the relationship between Britain and the regime is more favorable for Britain. Britain is poised to remain a stronger partner to the regime than before, and Brexit is unlikely to negatively impact their ties. Britain seeks to maintain relations with Israel to pursue its strategic Middle Eastern objectives, while simultaneously encouraging Tel Aviv not to align with Britain's adversaries and to collaborate with Britain's Middle Eastern allies during the post-Brexit period.

Additionally, Britain will continue its economic, security, and political relations with Israel and will leverage Israeli economic opportunities to prevent rival countries' influence in the Middle East. Britain aims to deepen ties with Israel to contain Iran's power and intensify regional balancing efforts against the Islamic Republic. Britain views Israel as a regional power capable of influencing strategic trends in the Middle East and serving as a factor to counter Iran's growing influence.

After analyzing the factors of divergence and obstacles to divergence between the two sides, it must be stated that the obstacles to divergence remain much stronger than the grounds for divergence, and at least for the foreseeable future, a full divergence between Britain and the Zionist regime will not occur. According to the author, all observed divergent trends have been temporary and have eventually dissipated.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

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