The Foreign Policies of Arab States

The Foreign Policies of Arab States

The Challenge of Globalization

New Revised Edition

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To Vanessa B. Korany (1981–2007)
One of a new breed of humane globalizers

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Acknowledgments

The second edition of this work was published in 1991, and was out of date by 1995. We hesitated to update it further, believing that the globalization, post-cold war, and post-9/11 contexts necessitated more than a straightforward update. This newly revised third edition is essentially a new book, but its objectives remain unchanged:

To offer, in a manageable size, field data and analysis of the foreign policies of as many pivotal Arab countries as possible.

To establish a bridge, using empirical analysis, between Middle East 'Area Studies' with its rootedness in the region and foreign policy theories with their rich store of concepts and methodologies.

When we thought of this project more than twenty-six years ago and then published it in 1984, we were not at all sure of the results. Published reviews by prominent experts of the region were supportive and encouraging. Many foreign policy theorists, who usually do not read Area Studies texts, seemed informed by our analysis, as references by B. Badie, M. Brecher, C. Hill, K. Holsti, C. Kegley, M. Herman, and J. Rosenau among others. The positive impact of the project suggested that Middle East specialists could go from being mere consumers of theory to being contributors to it.

This success could not have been achieved without our coauthors. The project was from the start an intercultural endeavor, with contributions by scholars from the region and those from the outside who interacted extensively with it. Over the years, it became intergenerational as well.

Our first thanks go naturally to our coauthors, without whose help this project would not have materialized in its present form.

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This is the first publication of the AUC Forum for International Affairs, the establishment of which was suggested by AUC President David Arnold and which is already carrying out an important function in promoting AUC's international visibility. Both of us would like to extend our warmest thanks to Professor Tim Sullivan, a fellow political scientist, and provost of AUC, for his continued support and interest, which have gone far beyond the call of his formal duties.

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This edition is the culmination of our long-standing friendship, one unaffected by differences in institutional affiliation, or academic or political attachment. We have enjoyed working together immensely.

Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki

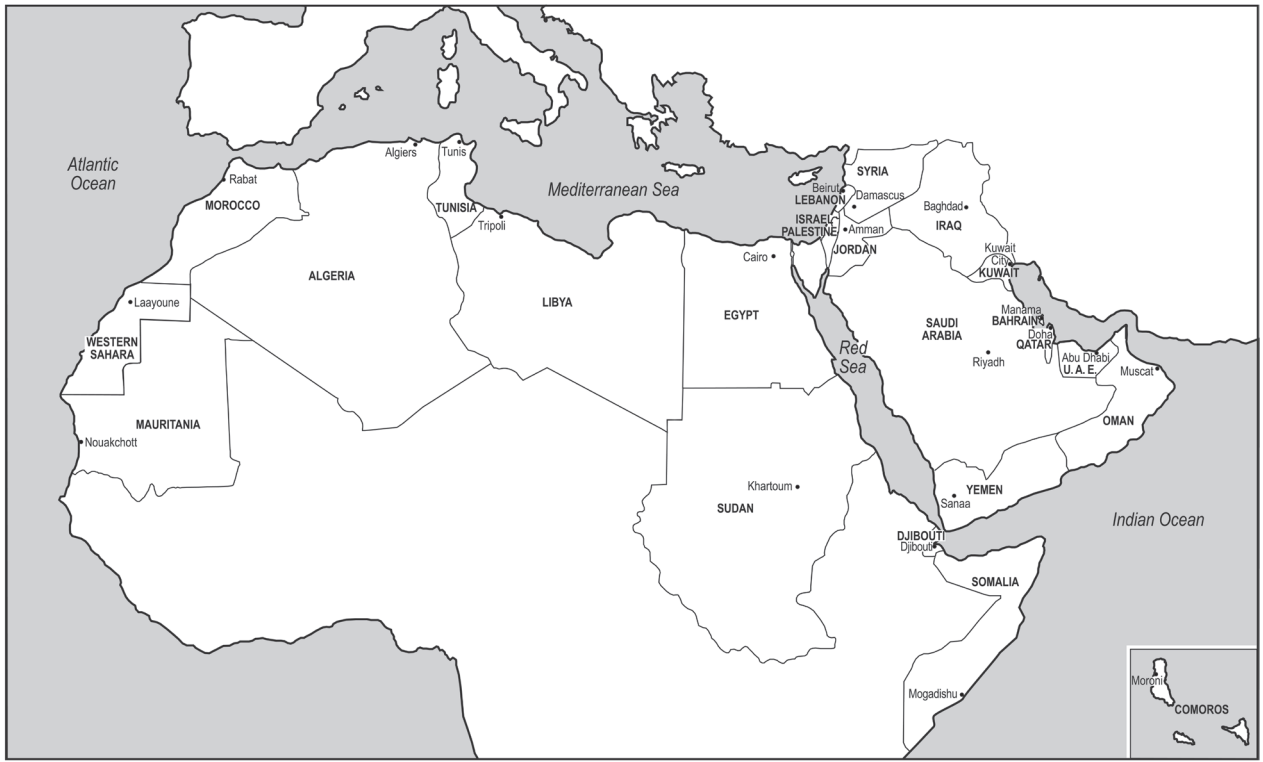
Introduction
Foreign Policies of Arab States

Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki

Arab states have been studied from many angles. We have books on Arab governments and politics, history and political developments, ideologies and intellectual trends, inter-Arab relations and the great powers' policies in the region. But although excellent studies have been carried out in recent years by established as well as younger scholars, we still have relatively little field work on Arab states' foreign policies, how these countries view the world and their role in it.

When the first edition of this book was published in 1984, our survey of the literature on Arab foreign policies in eight languages indicated the paucity of academic publishing in this area.[1] At that time, and with a few exceptions, the literature suffered from a number of limitations: it was of a descriptive or prescriptive genre, rarely linked to rigorous conceptualization in foreign policy analysis; most of it belonged to the tradition of diplomatic history or commentary on current affairs; and finally, other than statements about the role of leaders and personalities, there was almost no treatment of how foreign policy is actually made and implemented.

We suggested four reasons for this noticeable poverty in the established literature. First was the underdeveloped state of the subdiscipline of foreign policy analysis with reference to the global south, the former 'third world.' During the 1950s and 1960s, attempts at foreign policy theory-building basically viewed developing and newly independent states as having no purposeful foreign policies of their own. Their external behavior was analyzed as a reaction to the great powers' policies toward them, and hence emphasis was placed on the general international relations of



Map of the Middle East

a country or region rather than its foreign policy proper. Approaches to analyzing foreign policy at that time drew primarily on the experiences of developed countries and revealed an applicability problem in dealing with developing ones. A second factor was the limited availability of data in rapidly changing environments, in which foreign policy affairs were shrouded in secrecy and widely perceived as matters of utmost national security, adding to the serious archival problems of newly independent states. Third, students of Arab politics tended to focus their attention on regional political dynamics, marginalizing the analysis of single-actor behavior and its linkage to the established body of theory. There was no lack of analyses dealing, for instance, with inter-Arab relations or the Arab–Israeli conflict.

Fourth, we underlined the methodological weakness and lack of analytical rigor of the literature on the Arab countries, while noting that this literature had not contributed to the body of social science theory-building as had, for instance, the literature on Latin America. To the contrary, the field was still plagued by inadequate conceptualization, an overemphasis on historicism and the uniqueness of the Arab-Islamic situation verging on 'Arab exceptionalism,' and the neglect of a truly comparative outlook.

Since then our objective has been to attempt to fill these gaps, and to make a contribution to the understanding of Arab foreign policies based on systematic field work and the theoretical literature on foreign policy, and possibly contribute to its development and applicability to non-Western contexts. In the two previous editions of the book (1984, 1991), and this one, we committed ourselves to an intellectual enterprise that combines a comparative case study approach with theory building. Consequently, the book deals with Arab states as 'cases,' and seeks to apply the explanatory power of certain concepts and propositions in foreign policy theories to understanding them.

Another feature of this book is its holistic perspective, emphasizing interdependence among the different components of the foreign policy framework, treating them as a whole, as a set. Our framework perceives foreign policy in the context of its environment—domestic, regional, and global—which is getting more complex. Domestic factors are increasingly interwoven with regional and global ones. Indeed, this distinction is getting blurred in reality, and is emphasized here only analytically, as outlined in Chapter 1. In this context, and considering how globalization

is linked to the crisis of governance in the region (witness the outside pressure for reform and the redefinition of national sovereignty as the responsibility to protect) the globalization process cannot be perceived as purely and routinely an 'external variable.'

As a result, in the following chapters an assessment of globalization's impact is coupled with 'context-driven' data and analyses based on local sources and interviews. While placing Arab foreign policies in their global context, this volume provides a perspective from the inside, with all its complexities and intricacies.

Why should we study the foreign policies of Arab states? By Arab states, we mean those twenty-two countries that belong to the League of Arab States, founded in 1945.[2] They are primarily distinguished by cultural-linguistic homogeneity. These countries occupy a strategic part of the world: their lands stretch from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Indian Ocean in the east, and from the Horn of Africa in the south to the 'Northern tier' of Turkey, Iran, or Pakistan in the north. They control a number of important waterways: the Suez Canal, Bab al-Mandb, the Gulf of Aqaba, the Gulf, and the Strait of Hormuz. They perform crucial roles in Islamic, African and Mediterranean councils. Finally, oil wealth has enabled some of them to accumulate enormous financial resources that were placed at the service of their foreign policies.

We started our research with four main propositions on Arab foreign policies in mind:

Arab states share a number of norms and pan-Arab core concerns such as Arabism as an identity and the Arab–Israeli conflict. All Arab states—particularly those who want to play an influential regional role—address these core concerns, as Saddam Hussein did in his discourse during Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah did in a speech before the Arab summit meeting held in Riyadh in March 2007. In addition to being part of the collective Arab political culture, these concerns have been used by Arab regimes as a legitimating device and as a weapon to discredit opponents. Though still present, this collective aspect has been declining in deed if not always in words.

Arab foreign policies are primarily regional in orientation, due to three main factors. First, as small or medium powers, Arab states can exert more influence through a regional approach to foreign policy. Second, the Arab–Israeli conflict is perceived as a common Arab problem. Third, the shared belief system of either Islam or Arabism encourages regional

transstate interactions. Though the twenty-first century forces everybody to be globalized, most Arab countries are still politically focused on their immediate national-regional context.

There is an intimate relationship between domestic and external policies in most Arab countries. In Syria and Jordon, for instance the Palestine issue has direct implications on internal stability. For Saudi Arabia, the future of Jerusalem is a question closely related to the regime's legitimacy. Similarly, the future of Western Sahara is a matter of dispute for Morocco and Algeria. Among influential Arab states, Egypt provides an exceptional example of dissociation between domestic and regional foreign policies that allows the Egyptian leadership a noticeable degree of external maneuverability. Thus, the more a regime or leadership derives legitimacy from particular policies or behaviors in the international arena, the less freedom of action it enjoys. With the increasing impact of globalization and lack of governmental monopoly over information, even countries like Egypt have increasingly to take into consideration 'the public opinion mood.'

There is latent tension in the orientation of Arab foreign policies between the norm of Arabism and the interests of each state, between 'role-conception' and 'role-performance.' There has been growing discrepancy between the pan-Arab ideal, *raison de la nation*, and state behavior based on *raison d'état.* Thus one frequently notices a difference between the sources of a particular policy, which may be rooted in specific state interests, and the justification of that policy, usually articulated in pan-Arab rhetoric. This gap has been increasing as continued mass adherence to the pan-Arab norm coexists with the necessity of coping with immediate foreign policy dilemmas arising from the complexities of globalization.

Beneath this rhetoric, what are the differences among the foreign policies of Arab states? Arab foreign policies can be classified according to a number of criteria. One is *integration in the global system* and resigned acceptance of its rules. A second criterion is *degree of involvement* in Arab politics, ranging from quietism to activism. A closely related criterion is *distribution of resources and influence*, for in most cases, activism is a function of a strong or rich country. A fourth criterion is the *type of actor.* The Arab region has included a number of nonstate actors such as the League of Arab States, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Hizbullah in Lebanon. Indeed, the example of Lebanon is revealing, a state that for

some twenty years not only has had no independent foreign policy but whose territory has become an arena for the foreign policies of other regional actors. Iraq provides a similar case in point since 2003.

On what grounds were certain countries chosen over others for this study? Our choice of nine actors (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, and the UAE) was influenced by three criteria: orientation, degree of involvement, and distribution of resources and influence. There was a bias toward 'crucial' Arab actors whose foreign policies make a difference for the region and the world or which are still underresearched, as in the case of Lebanon, Morocco, or the UAE. Within the restrictions of space, we did our best to represent countries from the Arab east (the Mashreq), the Arab west (the Maghreb), and the Gulf region. The group includes rich as well as poor states, and strong as well as weak ones.

The structure of the book reflects our concerns regarding context-sensitive theory and coupling it with field work, and its division into chapters is funnel-like. The first chapter looks at the place and evolution of foreign policy analysis and situates 'the Arabs' in the era of globalization. The second chapter is conceptual and deals with various approaches to the study of the foreign policies of Arab countries as part of the global south. It presents the framework of analysis to be applied in the nine case studies, which does not seek to force countries into rigid slots, but rather adapts the slots to individual cases and their specificities. The authors of the different country chapters have followed the framework closely, allowing this book to avoid the tendency that some edited volumes have to present a patchwork of offerings, instead of enabling the expertise of individual authors to be integrated in a relatively coherent form. The authors differ in their emphasis depending on the availability of data or the importance of a particular variable to the analysis of a particular actor's foreign policies—in some cases, for example, the impact of history was so important that the author felt obliged to discuss historical legacy. Notwithstanding these variations, all the case studies use the same conceptual categories and address the same major questions.

Given the importance of the global and regional environments for Arab countries, Chapter 3 analyzes the globalization process and Chapter 4 the regional system as they relate to and impact upon Arab foreign policies. The objective of these two chapters is to outline how the global and regional environments provide constraints or opportunities for different

Arab actors. The nine case study chapters take up the nine Arab states in alphabetical order. The last chapter pulls the threads together conceptually and empirically. Conceptually, it investigates the possibility of bridge-building between foreign policy theorizing and Middle East studies. Empirically, the focus is on the dialectics of continuity and change, and especially the dilemmas of the latter in the context of globalization.

The last paragraph of the introduction of the 1991 edition of the book read as follows: "To sum up, although elements of continuity remain, the foreign policies of Arab states are presently facing major changes at the global, regional, and even state-society levels."[3] In 2007, we still pose the question of continuity and change in Arab foreign policies. What are the elements that persisted as issues of debate and contestation? And what are the new elements that changed the context of Arab foreign policies and created new challenges for them?

On the 'continuity' side, we find the Israel–Palestine conflict, Israeli occupation of Syrian territory, persistence of inter-Arab rivalries and Arab inability to cooperate further among themselves. On the 'change' side, the globalization process has changed the environment and context of Arab foreign policies radically. This development represents a set of theoretical and policy challenges to all states. For example, how do states respond to the globalization process and face up to its challenges? What are the different types of responses and the factors that account for them? And how does globalization affect the congruence and/or discrepancy between role conception and role performance, that is, between foreign policy orientation and foreign policy behavior? The answers to these questions represent the core of the chapters of this book.

Notes

1 Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, *The Foreign Policies of Arab States: The Challenge of Change* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 8–24.

2 The twenty-two members are Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros Islands, Egypt, Iraq, Djibouti, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates. Obviously some are more pivotal or central than others.

3 Korany and Dessouki, *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, 6.

1

Foreign Policy Analysis in the Global Era and the World of the Arabs

Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki

Introduction

The twenty-first century opened with two big bangs for the Arab world. It is argued that this century was in fact initiated in the early 1990s when the cold war ended and one of its superpower protagonists, the USSR, collapsed and disappeared. The veteran Egyptian journalist, Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal, called it the "Soviet earthquake." Since the mid-1950s, Moscow had been the traditional ally of many Arab countries, from Algeria and Yemen to Syria and the PLO. The presence of the USSR gave all Arab countries an alternative to Western, and especially to US, dominance in the region. With its unexpected disappearance, external constraints were increased rather than decreased, and the Arab foreign policy world with its East–West dimension was disturbed.

The 1989–1991 'revolutions in the East' and consequent Soviet collapse coincided with a major regional event: Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and the successful formation of a thirty-eight-state, US-led international coalition to chase Saddam Hussein's army out of Kuwait in February 1991. Both the invasion and the coalition action affected inter-Arab politics negatively for the years to come. Saddam's invasion violated a basic regional and international norm. Regionally the invasion went against the norm which prohibited any Arab state from using massive military arms to fight another Arab state. It also indicated that the

Arab–Israeli conflict is no longer the only violent conflictual dimension in the Arab core. Internationally it went against the norm of respect for a recognized state's existence, if not sovereignty, a norm established in the UN Charter as well as in other international covenants. The thirty-eight-state coalition brought to the side of the US troops countries such as Syria and Algeria, and Israel was no longer the sole military asset for the Americans in the region. But the necessity of coalition building allowed US troops to be stationed close to the Islamic holy places in Saudi Arabia. This was a period of huge division and debate within the Arab world, in both state and civil society, and its effects—beyond the occupation of Iraq—still linger.

The other 'big bang' to affect Arab regional politics was the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against New York and Washington which had a traumatizing effect on the American and Western public generally. Though Arab states were not a direct party to this second 'earthquake,' they had to suffer many of its regional and global consequences. For instance, there was pressure on their regimes to reform and democratize, and their majority religion—Islam—became increasingly associated in the public mind with fascism and terrorism. For in addition to Osama bin Laden, a Saudi businessman, and Ayman al-Zawahiri, an Egyptian doctor, the masterminds of the event, fifteen of the nineteen executors were Saudis, and the other four were nationals of Muslim countries. As global Islamophobia crept in, Arab governments as well as civil society were on the defensive and suffered from a sense of siege.

Thus in this world of globalized and dizzying change, Middle East *centrality* continues to rise. Examples of the Middle East's continuing centrality abound: the impact of 9/11, the 'war on terror,' creeping Islamophobia, the US-led invasion of Iraq. The Middle East, its politics, and its relations with the global system could even be seen as paradigmatic, that is, a reflection of a certain pattern of international relations and evolving global agenda. For instance, the invasion of Iraq is not an isolated case but demonstrates a pattern of interventionist politics against the threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), real or imagined, and the promotion of democratization, sincerely intended or politically (ab)used. For some people in the region it was a reminder of the old days of traditional colonialism. At the same time, old drivers of conventional Middle East centrality, the implications of the Arab–Israeli conflict, of oil, or of religiopolitics continue unabated.

Debates on Approaching the Region

Despite this continuing centrality, both old and new, the estrangement or gap between the dominant analysis of the region and the conceptual-methodological frameworks offered by most of the social sciences has persisted. This gap is a reflection of the opposition between area studies and the disciplines.[1] Self-defined area specialists emphasize the importance of geography, history, linguistic familiarity, and cultural continuity. 'Area specialists' aim principally for an interpretative understanding of the region. Social scientists, on the other hand, valued synchronic dimensions and the rigor of conceptual-methodological contributions. Their search for patterns of behavior and findings has focused on the Arab state,[2] civil society,[3] patterns of alliance formation and state survival,[4] or identity and Arab dialogue.[5]

A main aim of the Arab Foreign Policies (AFP) project since its first edition more than twenty-five years ago was to bridge this dysfunctional area studies–social sciences polarization. Consequently, the authors, Arab and foreign, were all political scientists who scrupulously utilized a uniform conceptual framework of foreign policy analysis. They were also well-entrenched in the Middle East area, and their familiarity with the different countries showed in their application of the proposed framework. Though this combinatorial/integrative approach is at present the standard, especially among a newer generation of Middle East specialists,[6] other specialists feel that it is not yet well established.

"All too often," Lawson remarks, "the Arab world is written off as a region where the normal rules do not apply. This attitude produces one of two equally deleterious consequences for academic inquiry. The most common result is that students of political science simply ignore events, trends, and developments in the Arab countries. Theoretical debates in international relations and comparative politics go on without taking into account any empirical evidence drawn from the Arab world. Textbooks include no cases from this part of the globe, either by original design or, as in two cases with which I am familiar, after deciding in the end not to include a chapter on a pivotal Arab case that had been explicitly commissioned for the collection."[7]

To these debates was added the new context of the post-cold war era: globalization.

Globalization: End of Foreign Policy Analysis?

Globalization is defined here in a nutshell as time-space compression and massive mobility, where the distinction between domestic/external, virtual/real time issues is increasingly blurred, even for the ordinary man or woman in the street. The international communications revolution, media satellite diffusion (for example, al-Jazeera or al-Arabiya), and the widespread use of cutting-edge cell phone and Internet capabilities, make globalization a daily reality in most Arab countries. Chapter 3 focuses on this specific aspect, and we explore here the impact of globalization on the intellectual field of foreign policy analysis (FPA).

The globalization mania—real or imagined—marginalized foreign policy analysis as an actor- or state-oriented approach and made it subordinate to a quasi exclusive focus on macrostructures or global systemic variables. Within our own libraries, of the documents acquired in the last fifteen years or so, the ratio of those dealing with globalization and macrostructures to those dealing with foreign policy analysis is more than twenty to one. This subordination of foreign policy analysis is not mere personal bias, but is supported by data extracted from influential books on globalization and microstructures. After surveying some basic texts on global transformations, Christopher Hill concludes, "In the combined 995 pages of these well-indexed and valuable volumes, foreign policy gets not a single reference. The same is true of Jan Art Schotte's *Globalization: A Critical Introduction* (2000). These authors are much more cautious than the 'hyperglobalists' about the likely impact of the changes they chart on the state and its political capacity. Yet their main theme is systemic transformation, with little interest in engaging with the major issue of foreign policy."[8] Major publications talked about "state retreat"[9] or "The End of Foreign Policy?"[10] in this "borderless world"[11] of global politics. This is contrary to the 1980s and early 1990s where influential volumes were devoted to a survey and analysis of the foreign policy field's prospects as an advancing normal science. Hermann, Kegley, and Rosenau[12] put out a volume titled *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy* in 1987 whose first chapter focused on theoretical developments, comparing five contemporary milestones from the works of Rosenau and Brecher to big teams such as CREON (Comparative Research on the Events of Nations). Big publishing houses tried to capitalize on the popularity of the field by commissioning their own series of foreign policy yearbooks (for example,

the Sage International Yearbook of Foreign Policy Studies) with their own editorial boards of prestigious international authorities in the field.[13]

Publications in English seemed to set the pace for those in other languages, even when the FPA field was declining. Thus the Fondation de Sciences Politiques in France commissioned one of their veterans, Marie-Claude Smouts, to survey recent developments in the International Relations field. Her outstanding *Les nouvelles relations internationales*[14] brought together excellent contributions by many well-established French and European international relations scholars, but devoted only one chapter out of fourteen to the analysis of decisions. As a result, foreign policy analysis, with its concentration on the state, looked as if it was betting on a losing horse, both conceptually and empirically. Thus, compared to the 1960s, 1970s, or even 1980s, where foreign policy analysis was established as a distinct subdiscipline within IR, and produced star scholars (such as James Rosenau), the 1990s saw a relative decline in such publications. This decline, as previously discussed, reflected a belief in the state's 'retreat' in this 'borderless world' of global politics.

This marginalization of foreign policy analysis was also reflected in many of the excellent studies and multiauthor volumes published by prestigious university presses on the international relations of the region itself. Without being at all exhaustive, examples include Fred Halliday's path-breaking *International Relations of the Middle East*,[15] Fred Lawson's solid analysis of the problems of sovereignty in the Arab context,[16] and the equally authoritative collection by Louise Fawcett.[17] Revealingly, none of them use 'foreign policy' in their titles, and it is mentioned only rarely in the indexes. This is not a judgment on their otherwise outstanding quality. It is rather a reflection of the trend toward the macro level in international relations in preference to the unit-based foreign policy analysis.

It is true that the state has been increasingly on the defensive and indeed challenged by competitors. For instance, the rapid proliferation of transnational corporations (TNCs) in recent years has brought the number of these firms up to 61,000 with the top one hundred TNCs accounting for $6,881 billion in assets, $4,749 billion in sales, and over 14 million employees in 2002. In addition, their approximately 900,000 foreign affiliates accounted for roughly one-tenth of the world's GDP and one-third of the world's exports. As further testament to the colossal impact of these corporations, it should be sufficient to note that of

the hundred largest economies in the world, fifteen are TNCs: "General Motors is now economically bigger than Denmark; DaimlerChrysler is bigger than Poland; Royal Dutch/Shell is bigger than Venezuela; IBM is bigger than Singapore; and Sony is bigger than Pakistan."[18]

TNCs are, by definition, interested in doing away with borders and territoriality—the state's bases of power. In the mid-1990s, the external sales of TNCs with large home-based markets ranged from 30 to 40 percent, whereas the sales of those with small home-based markets like the Swiss Nestlé or the Dutch Phillips ranged from 80 to 90 percent.[19]

On another front, a wholly dissimilar type of organization known as the nongovernmental organization (NGO) has mushroomed as well. In 1914, there were only 1,083 international NGOs, but by 2000, there were over 37,000, nearly one-fifth of which were formed during the 1990s. Moreover, there are currently an estimated 20,000 or more transnational NGO networks.[20]

NGOs are part of globalization's association revolution and are increasingly competing with the state in its own spheres of action, nationally and internationally (as the term 'international nongovernmental organizations' or INGOs indicates). For instance, the number of delegates to the World Women's Conferences rose almost sevenfold between 1975 and 1995 (from 6,000 to 40,000). NGOs have been the main instigator and pressure group for the elaboration and ratification of the "Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines" (The Ottawa Treaty).

The rise in the influence of TNCs and NGOs in relation to the classic international actor—the state—involves basic changes that are not merely quantitative. The TNCs and NGOs go against the state primacy and what it has traditionally represented in some important ways:

TNCs' rising influence shows the decline of geopolitics in the face of geo-economics;

NGOs' rising influence indicates the emergence and consolidation of global norms and the birth of "a global civil society."[21]

Since neither TNCs nor NGOs count on explicit/direct military power or organized armies, their rising influence contributes to the evolving meaning of a basic concept of foreign policy: the concept of power.

Globalization, National Sovereignty, and Foreign Policy

This rise of actors competing with the state has hit hard some of this classical actor's basic privileges and tools of conduct. For even before Max Weber's theory of state monopoly in the use of violence, the state had been identified with coercive power—both internally against domestic threats and internationally in formal war making. But globalization, with its mushrooming of nonstate actors emphasizing 'soft' power, was thus undermining one of the state's assets: hard power. Thus globalization was undermining the state in many of its basic domains, including foreign policy, in terms of its status as both primary actor and as monopolist of coercive means of conduct. Does this then mean either the end of the state, as some authors have affirmed, or its transformation into a 'virtual' one?[22]

Available data do not support the argument for the end of the state as an entity or as an international actor. In 1999, a liberal and free market-oriented magazine such as the *Economist* published data to show that despite the decline of the welfare state concept, state expenditures were on the rise during the 1990s—the 'globalization decade.'[23] It noted that, on average, government spending as a percentage of GDP in the world's richest market-oriented countries had risen steadily from 28 percent in 1980 to 44 percent in 1998. Thus, it appears that economies that are more open (or 'globalized') tend to exhibit larger, rather than smaller, government expenditures. In this respect, there is no evidence that globalization weakens the state. Moreover, setting up and running TNCs and NGOs requires a national base, as the state gives these actors their legal credentials.

In retrospect, then, the assumption of the end of the state was misleading. For the state persists, despite the deepening of globalization. In fact, one can even affirm that the deepening of globalization itself cannot be fully explained without factoring in the contribution of the state. As a Marxian analyst, Robert Cox, usually an antistatist, affirmed:

> Although production was the point of departure of this study, the crucial role, it turns out, is played by the state. States create the conditions in which particular modes of social relations achieve dominance over coexisting modes, and they structure either purposively or by inadvertence the dominant–subordinate linkages of

> the accumulation process. States thus determine the whole complex structure of production from which the state then extracts sufficient resources to continue to exercise its power. Of course, states do not do this in an isolated way. Each state is constrained by its position and its relative power in the world order, which places limits on its will and its ability to change production relations. A major point of emphasis in this study has been on the crucial importance of the state's relationship to production.

States undoubtedly act with a certain autonomy. Each state has evolved, through its own institutions and practices, certain consistent notions of interest and modes of conduct that can be termed its particular *raison d'état*. This autonomy is, however, conditioned by both internal and external constraints. State autonomy, in other words, is exercised within a structure created by the state's own history. The internal aspect of this structure lies in the historic bloc, as Gramsci called it, or its governing elite. The external aspect lies in the way the military and financial constraints of the world system limit the state's options and the extent to which its historic bloc is penetrated by class forces that transcend or are outside its own borders.[24]

Globalization has not led to the end of all prerogatives of the state. It has, however, affected one prerogative which is closely linked to its foreign policy: national sovereignty. Sovereignty has traditionally been conceived as the state's exclusive property both in domestic jurisdiction and in international representation. But given the increasing porousness of the state in the global era, this exclusiveness is in reality a fiction, if not a hypocrisy.[25] State porousness is closely linked to the conduct of foreign policy, for it limits, to some degree, the capacity of the state to respond to international challenges or penetration. Thus, the foreign policy or capacity of a failed state (for example, Somalia), or a collapsing ethnicized one (for example, Iraq), or besieged one, (for example, Sudan), does not have the same pattern as that of a well-entrenched centralized state (for example, Egypt). Egypt's foreign policy of self-assertion and ability to act as a pivot is different from that of besieged countries with a primary concern for survival, such as Jordan or Lebanon.

Thus types of foreign policy may differ not only because of differences in state capacity to resist permeation, but also because of the dynamics of the domestic environment and the influence of various groups on the

foreign policy process. For instance, the increasing impact of businessmen as a result of the drive toward privatization and market economy can itself lead to the 'privatization' of foreign policy. In the same way, the rise of strong Islamic groups can 'Islamicize' foreign policy, and the rise of ethnic groups, (for example, Kurds) can 'ethnicize' it.

Because of this complexity of the foreign policy process and its resulting behavioral diversity, the standard definition of foreign policy as the defense of 'national interest' is not at all helpful, as we shall see in the next chapter while discussing this concept and its main school, realism. More recent adjustments, like the notion of adaptation, could not save the national interest concept.[26]

In many of the cases that follow, a consensual national interest will be hard to identify. At best, it could exist at the verbal level or in general foreign policy orientation (defined in the framework as 'role conception'). But an increasing discrepancy—or misfit—could exist between orientation (or role conception) and actual foreign policy behavior (role performance).

Consequently, it is not only the state that is fragmented, or even in crisis but in many of these states also the foreign policy, from present Hobbesian Iraq to pressured Sudan or besieged Lebanon. In this case, foreign policy, especially in its behavioral dimension, cannot but fluctuate. The challenge is to work for a 'return' of FPA that is adapted to the new context of the twenty-first century.[27] In other words, foreign policy, both as practice and analytical field, has not come to an end with globalization. It has become more complex.

It is this lack of contextualization of the established body of foreign policy analysis that makes its concepts much less relevant and applicable to the cases at hand, as a cursory look at the dominant approaches analyzed in the next chapter shows.

Notes

1 This opposition area studies/social sciences has been widely treated. The most convenient source for Middle East Studies is Mark Tessler, ed., *Area Studies and Social Science: Strategies for Understanding Middle East Politics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).

2 The pioneering study is the collective four-volume study based on a series of international conference in 1986–87: and published in four volumes by Groom Helm. For a short selection of only a few chapters, see Giacomo Luciani, ed., *The Arab State* (London: Routledge, 1990).
3 Augustus R. Norton, ed., *Civil Society in the Middle East*, vols. 1 and 2 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995 and 1996).
4 Laurie Brand, *Jordan's Inter-Arab Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), and Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliance* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988). *The Origins of Alliance* offers a detailed application of alliance theory to the pattern of alliances in the Middle East.
5 Michael Barnett, *Dialogue in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).
6 An example is Rex Brynen, *A Very Political Economy: Peace Building and Foreign Aid in the West bank and Gaza* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2000). A representative, excellent collection of these advances is Marsha Pripstein and Michele Penner Angrist, ed., *Authoritarianism in the Middle East* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2005).
7 Fred Lawson, *Constructing International Relations in the Arab World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), ix.
8 Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy* (Houndmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2003), 311.
9 Susan Strange, *The Retreat of the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
10 Peter Haines, *The End of Foreign Policy?* (London: Fabian Society, Green Alliance, and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2001). See the comment in Hill, *Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*, 311–12. Also Kenichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State* (London: Harper and Collins, 1995).
11 Kenichi Ohmae, *The Borderless World* (New York: Harper Business 1990).
12 Charles Hermann, Charles Kegley, and James Rosenau, eds., *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987).
13 Pat McGowan and Charles Kegley Jr., *Foreign Policy and the Modern World System*, vol. 8 (Beverly Hills: Sage International Yearbook of Foreign Policy Studies, 1982). Publications in English seemed to set the pace for other languages. Thus the Fondation de Sciences Politiques in France commissioned one of their veterans, Marie-Claude Smouts, to survey recent developments in the international relations field.
14 Marie-Claude Smouts, ed., *Les nouvelles relations internationales* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Politiques, 1998).
15 Fred Halliday, *International Relations of the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
16 Lawson, *Constructing International Relations*.
17 Louise Fawcett, ed., *International Relations of the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
18 John Cavanagh and Sarah Anderson, *Field Guide to the Global Economy* (New York: The New Press, 2000).

19 The different issues of *Fortune* are littered with different data in this respect, but for a good synthesis see Robert Gilpin, *Global Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), chapter 11.
20 United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 2002–03* (New York and Oxford: UNDP/Oxford University Press, 2003), 102–103.
21 Helmut Anheier, Marlies Glasius, and Mary Kaldor, eds., *Gobal Civil Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, 2002, and 2003).
22 Richard Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Virtual State: Wealth and Power in the Coming Century* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).
23 *The Economist*, October 19, 1998, pp. 18–25. For more recent data, see the excellent yearbook by the Europa Regional Surveys of the World, *Middle East and North Africa 2007*, 53rd ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 2007).
24 Robert Cox, *Production, Power and the World Order* (New York: Columbia University Press 1987), 399–400.
25 Stephen Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 19–20.
26 The 'adaptation' concept was popularized by James Rosenau in "Foreign Policy as Adaptive Behavior: Some Preliminary Notes for a Theoretical Model," *Comparative Politics* 2 (April 1970): 365–87.
27 Such 'return' coincided with the then-approaching twenty-first century. An excellent example is Frederic Charillon, ed., *Politiques étrangères: nouveaux regards* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Politiques, 2002). This volume is both an inventory and an attempt at the rejuvenation of the field. See also Claude Roosens et al., eds., *La politique étrangere* (Brussels, Berlin, New York, Oxford: P.I.E./Peter Lang, 2004). Concerning the subject of this book, one of the previous contributors to the first and second editions, Raymond Hinnebusch, combined efforts with another prominent British scholar, Anoush Ehteshami, to produce *The Foreign Policies of the Middle East States* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2002). Much more general is Ryan K. Beasley, Juliet Kaarbo, Jeffrey S. Lantis, and Michael Starr, *Foreign Policy in Comparative Perspective* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2002). Some notable exceptions did exist already in the mid-1990s, for example, Laura Neack, Jeanne A.K. Hey, and Patrick J. Haney, eds., *Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in its Second Generation* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1995); Jerel Rosati, Joe Hagan, and Martin W. Sampson, eds., *Foreign Policy Restructuring* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994).

2

Foreign Policy Approaches and Arab Countries: A Critical Evaluation and an Alternative Framework

Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part is devoted to the critical evaluation of two major influential approaches in the analysis of foreign policy generally: at the two ends of the macro-micro spectrum the traditional realist power school, and the (behavioralist/scientific) psychological-idiosyncratic school. The former has been amply commented on in the literature, whereas the latter, perhaps because of its recent formulation and the aura of science that surrounds it, is still very much accepted as relevant mainly to the context of countries of the global south. This is why we evaluate it in greater detail here.

It is hardly fair to criticize existing approaches without an attempt to offer a new one. Hence, part two is devoted to the proposed framework to be applied to the nine case studies of the book. Despite epistemological and conceptual differences with the established approaches, the framework aims to build on what is relevant in them. It aims to be holistic and inclusionary rather than exclusionary. This part is subdivided into three sections: the conceptual definition of foreign policy on the world stage, the basic domestic determinants, and the making of the resulting foreign policy output.

The Principal Approaches and Their Applicability

Both the end of the Cold War and September 11 fuelled the continuing debates in the field of international relations (IR). Because the cold war

ended without a direct military confrontation between the two superpowers, the impact of factors other than wars in transforming the global system started to receive more attention. Moreover, the attacks carried out by al-Qaeda increased the need for theorizing about the impact of nonstate actors and the necessity of "bringing religion in." Constructivism was added to the old paradigm debate between realism and liberalism. Foreign policy analysis—like IR, the major macro field from which it emanates—is not free from debates.[1] However, without revisiting these approaches and evaluating them critically, we need to focus on how the most influential among them affected and perhaps still affect our topic: the foreign policies of Arab states. In this respect, two major schools of thought at the two ends of the spectrum of foreign policy determinants need to be singled out: the external-systemic and the psychological-idiosyncratic. Though very different in the level of analysis privileged and the type of explanation they purport to offer about a country's foreign policy, they both fall short as tools to analyze Arab foreign policies.

The State-Centric Power Approach

As the bedrock of influential Realism, this approach in foreign policy analysis and IR generally is so predominant that many consider the whole IR field to be a dialogue between the power school and its critics. State centrism is the bedrock of this influential Realist power school. And it is because of this state centrism that many confused foreign policy analysis, since it is usually state based, with Realism. Moreover, because of Realism's valued parsimony and (over)simplicity in identifying international politics with the policy of state survival, and foreign policy with "defense of national interest," it has a great appeal for decision makers and the proverbial man in the street alike. Even for specialists working on developing countries, who are sensitive to the impact of external constraints on these countries' foreign policies, Realism's and Neorealism's emphasis on the primacy of international systemic determinants can seem very relevant to their object of study. Did not Waltz's classic *Theory of International Politics* assert explicitly the primacy of international anarchy as the explanatory variable?[2]

For the Arab countries that concern us here—and as a part of the global south—Realism and its modernized version Neorealism seem, at first glance, relevant. But their emphasis on state centrism and international anarchy ends up offering only a partial and even misleading view,

for the emphasis on external-systemic determinants has led to a neglect of domestic sources of foreign policy. Worse still, it resulted in treating the state as a 'black box' and negating any impact of state–society relations on foreign policy. Such a neglect is inconsistent with a theory that has proposed the primacy, even the exclusivity, of the state as an actor in international relations. Yet the very basis of this approach, the state, was never analyzed. The most this Realist state centrism did in dealing with the state was to identify the Arab state with the European nation-state model, when their respective patterns of state formation were indeed different, as we will see.[3]

Moreover, what does 'national interest' mean operationally when the nation is fragmented among minorities? We need only consider the Kurds in Syria and Iraq, the Berbers in Morocco or Algeria, southerners and northerners in the Sudan, Christians and Muslims in Lebanon, and further subdivisions within each community—not to mention Somalia, a member of the Arab League and an extreme case of fragmentation. Were not the foreign policy attitudes of an Egypt or a Saudi Arabia toward the 2006 Israeli invasion of Lebanon determined, at least in part, by the perception that Hizbullah was the incarnation of the Shi'a community, and associated with Iran? Both Egypt and Saudi Arabia implied—at the highest level—that Hizbullah's fight did not serve Lebanon's national interest. Indeed, talking about national interest when the existence of the nation is itself in doubt is paradoxical. In this case, so-called national interest can be that of a group or an organization which hijacks the state label. As Lake rightly concluded, "There is no necessary reason why the interests of self-seeking politicians should coincide with the national interest."[4]

The Psychological-Idiosyncratic Approach

These serious conceptual and empirical defects of Realism and Neorealism, with their emphasis on external-systemic primacy, contributed to the emergence and popularity of an alternative approach from the other end of the spectrum: the individual-based psychological school. Indeed, the swift rise to the status of a 'classic' of a precursor of the psychological-idiosyncratic school, Snyder, Bruck and Sapin's *Foreign Policy Decision Making*,[5] is due to its attempt to cope with Realism's 'black boxing' of the state and the absence of an operational definition of 'national interest.' Perhaps as a reaction, Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin went to the other extreme by identifying the state and its 'national interest' with its

decision makers, usually the leader at the top. They pioneered a very popular approach that concretized something as abstract and shrouded in mystery as a country's foreign policy with its flesh-and-blood leader, usually omnipresent in the media, seen by all. Who does not identify Iraq's erstwhile foreign policy with Saddam Hussein, Egypt's with Nasser or Sadat, or Libya's with Qaddafi? Can we easily forget the impact on their respective countries' foreign policy of a Churchill, a de Gaulle, a Stalin, or even an Idi Amin? What is sometimes called a "great man theory of history" seems to be backed by foreign policy specialists and nonspecialists alike, as witnessed by the great popularity of the biography genre among best-selling books.

Thus, whether it is based on Boulding's "image,"[6] Brecher's "attitudinal prism,"[7] Holsti's "belief system,"[8] or the "definition of the situation" coined by Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin,[9] this school is anchored in the Sprouts' distinction between the decision maker's "operational" and "psychological" environments.[10] This distinction is the cornerstone of this approach and its main proposition is that decision makers respond not to the real world but to their perceptions and images of this world, which may or may not be accurate representations of that world reality. "Decision makers act in accordance with their perception of reality, not in response to reality itself."[11]

This consistency and continuity among principal theorists across time and countries results in the quasi exclusion of the operational environment, the real world, which is replaced by the decision makers' perception, indeed their 'own' world. Hence the operational environment as represented, say, by the state structure, is divorced from its interactive properties and complexities and reduced to the office of its decision maker(s).

This reduction of foreign policy to its psychological-idiosyncratic determinants acts as a cornerstone, for general foreign policy theory, especially in relation to the type of countries that interest us here, those of the global south. This is the case in two major building blocs of foreign policy analysis. Rosenau's pre-theory and Brecher et al.'s input-conversion-output framework. This pre-theory is based on five sets of independent or explanatory variables: from the very micro idiosyncratic or individual factor to the macro or global-systemic factor.[12]

But Rosenau[13] went beyond listing variables to establish the "relative potencies" or ranking of the independent variables (that is, foreign policy determinants) according to the following specific classificatory criteria:

size (large or small country); state of the economy (developed or underdeveloped); political accountability (open or closed political system); degree of penetration or nonpenetration of the country; and issue area (status, territorial issues, human and non-human resources). It is noteworthy that in all types of developing countries, big or small, the psychological factor is number one in determining foreign policy.

Three years after the publication of Rosenau's article in 1966, Brecher[14] and his colleagues at McGill University published a multivariable model of an input-conversion/output-feedback foreign policy system consisting of fourteen independent variables clustered in five groups and (following the example of Harold and Margaret Sprout) distinguishing between the psychological and operational environments. Although Brecher does not neglect the operational environment (that is, the world as it 'really' exists), his emphasis is clearly on the psychological environment (that is, each person's perceptions or images of the 'real' world), which includes two closely related sets of data: attitudinal prisms (that is, the psychological predispositions of the decision makers); and the elite's own representations of reality (that is, the cognitive representation of reality). On the other hand, the dependent variable—foreign policy output—is classified according to four issue areas: military–security, political–diplomatic, economic–developmental, and cultural–status. Brecher then applied this research design in a three-volume study of Israel's foreign policy and decisions.[15]

What is noticeable is that these two pillars of foreign policy theory-building, Rosenau and Brecher, differ significantly in their theoretical and methodological grounding. However, when their epistemologies and approaches converge, the psychological-idiosyncratic variable trumps all others. Brecher privileges the policymaker's 'psychological environment' over the 'operational' in all cases, whereas Rosenau limits this psychological primacy to the countries of the global south, despite their differences in size, regime, type, or level of development.

The monopoly of the psychological school can be explained by the lack of competing paradigms to account for a country's foreign policy. For instance, in a personal communication, Allison confessed that he did not think at all of the countries of the global south in elaborating his influential bureaucratic-organization model.[16] The a priori marginalization of variables other than psychological-idiosyncratic ones is encouraged by the fact that most developing countries lack institutional complexity.

Very few possess really effective legislatures, alternative political parties, or well-resourced lobbies. The result is a temptation, then, to conceive of foreign policy, as Zartman expressed it more than forty years ago, as a reflection of the whims and caprices of the man at the top.[17]

But this psychologism confuses appearance with reality, and chooses the easy way out by shunning the complexity—formal or informal—of the foreign policy process. Consequently, despite its apparent relevance to the situational characteristics of developing countries, the psychological-idiosyncratic model suffers from serious drawbacks. It neglects other weighty determinants of foreign policymaking: political, economic or social, inside and/or outside the state. Moreover, it still faces the problem of evidence supporting the correlation between the leader's personality and the country's foreign policy, especially when the leader changes and the pattern of foreign policy continues.[18]

Perhaps the psychological model is guilty of functionalist logic, which engages in a form of tautology instead of full-fledged explanation.[19] Functionalist logic answers a question such as "why did X die?" by stating that "X died because his heart stopped beating." Technically the answer is correct, but it fails to indicate, for instance, either the properties of the disease or the mechanisms that led finally to death.

Of course it would be a mistake to go to the other extreme and exclude psychological-idiosyncratic variables altogether, for these are highly relevant in many situations. What we are against is reducing all the complexity of a foreign policy, with its myriad facets, to just one explanatory factor, as some theory builders and journalists do. Our intention is rather to take a holistic approach to foreign policy analysis.

The Framework for Analysis

The political economy/historical sociology perspective adopted here hopes to build on these advances in foreign policy analysis. Since foreign policy is neither a matter of purely domestic nor purely global politics but rather lies at the intersection of both, its components (whether inputs or outputs) are interdependent, that is, constituting a whole or a set. In the case of the countries that are the focus of this book, these countries are part of an integrated and hierarchical global system whose effects penetrate the decision-making process. This penetration is both multilevel and historically determined. However, even the most dependent international actor is not entirely passive or reactive, but has opportunities that

give it room for maneuver which an insightful leadership can exploit. But global constraints certainly dominate, and tend to influence both the foreign policy process and its outcome. This is why international relations, in the present globalization context, with its external influences (for example, information technology, privatization drive) cannot be conceptualized as purely interstate relations. Rather we have to be conscious of nonstate actors, whether multinational corporations (MNCs) or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Moreover, an actor's foreign policy cannot be limited to its observable behavior for this is only the tip of the iceberg. Though measuring foreign policy behavior and identifying its indicators are basic, we also need to go beyond this descriptive dimension to interpret, explain, or decode the foreign policy mindset and vision or *weltanschauung* to properly analyze foreign policy.

Foreign Policy as a Role

An important prior task in explaining a country's international behavior is the precise definition of 'foreign policy output.' Does 'foreign policy' mean general objectives, specific acts, critical choices and decisions, or all of these combined? In his much-cited 1966 article, Rosenau deals extensively with foreign policy determinants and their comparative influence, but neglects to define what he means by foreign policy as an output. The 1968 article on foreign policy in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* follows Rosenau's example and offers no definition.[20] Even common textbooks neglect this conceptual task. Some more recent contributions have tackled the problem, but only partially. Their emphasis is usually on a positivist measurement of foreign policy behavior without including the 'vision' or mindset behind this behavior.[21]

In both the analysis of the foreign policy output and its inputs/determinants, we privilege a holistic approach especially in the definition of the foreign policy output/outcome. Consequently, we conceptualize foreign policy output as the product of a two-dimensional role on the world stage.[22] The role concept is very handy for our purposes, since it allows the disaggregation of foreign policy output into its relevant components: the actor's general objectives, orientation, or strategy ('role conception') and specific foreign policy behavior ('role performance' or 'role enactment'). This breaking down of foreign policy output into general objectives and concrete behavior draws attention to some important questions for both

the empirical analysis of foreign policy and theory building: how does foreign policy role conception (general strategy and declaratory objectives) conform to or depart from role performance (actual behavior)? What is the disparity ratio between 'saying' and 'doing,' the gap or misfit between conception and behavior? What determines the variations in disparity ratio between different regimes and countries? Is it a question of *intra-elite* conflict, with political elites agreeing on a consensual foreign policy orientation but disagreeing on the manner of implementation? Is it a question of *interole* conflict, with objectives and actions at the regional level conflicting with those at the global level? Or is it only a question of role strain, when the attaining of foreign policy objectives is beyond the capabilities of a dependent country of the global south, or beyond the capabilities of a regime lacking the legitimacy to mobilize needed resources? There could also be issues of role expansion or role contraction during the actual conduct of foreign policy—Egypt's intervention in Yemen in the 1960s is a clear example of role expansion, whereas some Arab analysts believe that Egypt's foreign policy in 2007 suffered from role contraction. Briefly, the use of role theory can be very suggestive both for foreign policy analysis and the conduct of foreign policy itself.

The introduction of role theory to foreign policy analysis offers numerous theoretical leads that might help the field to sharpen and operationalize its conceptual distinctions, and thus proceed more quickly in overcoming its handicaps and limitations. Moreover, since role theory is well established in the social sciences from anthropology to sociology or psychology, its use in foreign policy analysis could indeed be very enriching, for foreign policy analysis could then capitalize on the tried and tested conceptual components and methodological rigor of the more mature social sciences, home to this theory, to advance its own theory-building and empirical research.

The contribution of role theory is not limited to its conceptual capital; it is also of empirical relevance, as it reminds us of the close link between acting and politics on the world stage. For instance, the election of former actor Ronald Reagan to the highest political office in the United States in the 1980s, and the crucial political roles played by Mao's wife, Jiang Qing in the 1960s–1970s, and Argentina's Eva Peron in the 1970s (both women worked as actresses), establish a link between role theory and political analysis, a link more direct than most leaders would like to consider. They all "played roles" in the world of theater/acting and in the political world.

The empirical relevance of the role concept to foreign policy analysis can also be quite explicit. Witness the assertion made by a prominent Arab leader, Gamal Abd al-Nasser of Egypt, at the beginning of his career: "I always imagine that in this region there is a role wandering aimlessly about in search of a hero to play it. . . . It is we, and we alone in virtue of our position, who can play the part."[23] Nasser relates role to position or status of a social actor, state or a group, and their level of capabilities.

In retrospect, this quotation suggests other aspects of role theory that are highly relevant to foreign policy analysis. For instance, it reminds us that if objectives are not tailored to capabilities, the result is role crisis or foreign policy failures (for example, Egypt's defeat in the 1967 war with Israel, initiated when the better part of the Egyptian army was in Yemen). Role crisis can lead to role change or foreign policy restructuring (for example, Sadat's replacing the USSR with the United States as Egypt's dominant role partner, and his signing of a formal peace treaty with Israel, with all its bilateral and regional repercussions). In other words—as Linton reminded us seventy years ago,[24] and as Nasser confirmed more than fifty years ago—role opportunities and constraints, rights and duties, are inseparable properties of the actor's position, and capabilities.

In terms of determinants, the proposed framework of analysis consists of the following fourfold scheme: domestic environment, foreign policy orientation, decision-making process, and foreign policy behavior. The importance of systemic or external constraints/opportunities is treated in chapters 3 and 4, before we start the case study applications.

Domestic Environment

Each of the following factors is analyzed as either enhancing or constraining the foreign policy options of a country. They are usually interlinked in a country's foreign policy 'system,' but they are here presented separately for analytical purposes.

Geography

The relationship between geography and politics is close. In France, for instance, Andre Siegfried (1875–1959) established his global academic reputation by investigating the relationship between geographical locations and voting patterns.[25] Following this trend, Peter Taylor and Ron Johnson published *Electoral Geography* in 1979.[26] Geopolitics established an even closer relationship between geography and international relations/

foreign policy. Alfred Mackinder's theory of geopolitics related the structure of world influence to a country's geographical position.[27] At present, Israelis are obviously obsessed with the issue of "vital space," and all countries in the region are wary of who their neighbors are and what they do or intend to do. This was evident in the EU's decision to replace the Barcelona Process (1995–2005) with a European Neighborhood Policy. Moreover, how can we think of a country's resources—oil or otherwise—without factoring in geography? Even in relation to political culture and social structure, can we really imagine Bedouins without linking them to the desert?

Yet we must be careful not to slip into geographical determinism as many geographers, proud of the impact of their field, often do. The impact of geography is not static, especially in the era of globalization and digital technology. We know that states change their foreign policies, and the significance of geographical position varies over time. Already in the twentieth century, geographical parameters have been tempered by modern military weaponry and advanced communications technology.

This is not to suggest that geography has lost all significance. In many cases, major foreign policy objectives are obviously dictated by geographical considerations. The location of a country among its immediate neighbors contributes to its national identity. A state's potential development is also influenced by its geography: material endowments (size, topography, climate, and natural resources) play a vital role in determining whether a country will develop industry or agriculture or both, and geography also determines whether it can support a large population, and whether it has elements of power such as a strong economic base, or easily defensible borders. A nation's access to natural resources within its boundaries affects its ability to enforce its own foreign policy demands and to resist pressure by other states. Finally, geographical factors influence the actions of ruling elite. The significance of this influence depends upon the perception and interpretation of geographic factors by policymakers.

In the case of developing countries, two issues are of particular importance. The first is the issue of artificial boundaries: a number of African boundaries, for instance, were drawn along latitudes and longitudes in the colonial offices of London, Paris, and other European capitals. These political divisions ignored geographical, ethnic, and economic considerations. The 1980–88 Iran–Iraq war, and even Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, were related to border demarcation. Moreover, relations among

some Gulf countries have soured because of disputes over borders or no-man's-land areas that used to be insignificant stretches of sand or ocean water but acquired value because of strategic considerations or potential resource endowments (for example Bahrain-Saudi, Qatar-Saudi, Yemen-Saudi conflicts, and conflict between Iran and the UAE over three islands). The second issue concerns the proliferation of ministates that lack the ingredients of independent existence. This situation results in continuous dependence on larger countries for economic aid, political support, and military assistance.

Population and Social Structure

The discussion of population generally, and the problems of over- or undersized populations specifically, cannot be separated from a country's resource endowment. All Arab countries suffer from a noticeable population/resource gap, but with significant differences. Whereas most Arab countries in Africa, and Yemen, suffer from overpopulation in relation to their resources; the GCC countries face the opposite problem. In many of these oil-producing states there are too few people to carry out basic development projects and day-to-day state management. In a country such as the UAE, the ratio of expatriates to nationals is four to one. As a result, from the mid-seventies onwards there was a large migration from the overpopulated Arab countries to the GCC states. Though GCC nationals usually occupy the top administrative positions, there is an increasing demand for less dependence on expatriates (expressed, for example, in calls for 'Saudization'). The 'native takeover' depends, however, on adjusting the educational system to the needs of the labor market. For at present there is the contradictory situation of importing expatriates when nationals suffer from unemployment. As the Saudi scholar, Mai Yamani, explained:

> The huge windfall of oil wealth since the 1950s has not only restructured employment patterns, it has also distorted educational systems that were designed to meet the needs of rigidly hierarchical, traditionalist, and patriarchal social orders. In Saudi Arabia, for example, the educational system is a central mechanism for socializing the vast majority of the population into a specifically Saudi national identity. The system thus embodies the tensions that lie at the heart of the Saudi state, owing to the symbiotic

> relationship between the religious and political establishments. Textbooks—pink for girls and blue for boys—emphasize the rules prescribed by the religious and political elites, and religious texts constitute 50 percent of the national curriculum. The result has been to widen the huge skills gap in the country and leave the economy with insufficient indigenous expertise. Thus, despite high oil prices, unemployment remains high, with graduates of the sharia colleges being the worst affected.[28]

All Arab countries, however, suffer from the weight of the old and young 'dependents' within their populations. Because of the remarkable decline of mortality rates, life expectancy has increased noticeably. In the overpopulated countries especially, with increasing population mobility, the decline of traditional family solidarity, as well as the meager resources for health and welfare policies, 'senior citizens'—particularly women—undergo the abject effects of poverty and abuse. All Arab countries, however, experience the (negative) impact of the other 'dependents': the youth. Indeed, the under-twenty age group constitutes 60 percent of the population for the region as a whole. This high percentage puts a huge burden on state budgets in the fields of education and employment, and especially in the attuning of educational output to market needs.

In the era of globalization and ever-changing job markets, this education/employment fit cannot be taken for granted, even for the GCC countries. This has important implications for foreign policies, because as has so often happened in history, population developments can have spillover effects beyond state borders.[29] For instance, an important element of (in)security in the European Union is how to stop illegal immigration from North African countries and the successive waves of 'boat people.'

This is why the size, composition, and geographical distribution of a country's population are factors in the calculus of its foreign policy. Although a large population does not guarantee international influence, states with small populations are usually at a disadvantage. Population size is not in itself a sufficient index of power. It is the composition of the population, its social cohesiveness, education, and distribution of skills that really make the difference. As with geographical factors, population is not a static element; it must be viewed in relation to the sociopolitical context. It may surprise many to know that in the wars of 1948, 1956, and 1967, little Israel mobilized combat forces that were larger in number than

the combined forces of its Arab adversaries, whose total population was fifteen to twenty times greater than Israel's. The issue of social or national integration is particularly important in developing countries; most have ethnic, religious, and racial problems. The existence of minority groups in frontier areas further complicates matters for developing countries, especially when they seek help from a neighboring country.

Indeed the presence of minorities in so many Arab countries from Berbers in North Africa, to Kurds in Iraq and Syria to an emerging Sunni–Shi'a dividing line characterize increasingly the Arab social landscape. Yemen is at present going through a chronic tribal conflict involving the government in Sanaa. The fragmentation of Sudan and Somalia hardly needs to be revisited. Moreover, the recent claim by a highly placed Iranian official that Bahrain should be part of Iran because of its Shi'a majority, and Manama's strong reaction, could lead to what we call an 'ethnicization' of foreign policy.

Minorities and ethnic groups in the Arab region vary in terms of numbers and political significance. We find groups based on religion such as Christians in Egypt and Lebanon, or Jews in Morocco and Tunisia, and animists in southern Sudan. Various sects exist within the same religion. Another line of demarcation is ethnonational such as Kurds in Iraq, Druz in Syria and Lebanon, and Circassians in Jordan, Berbers in the Maghreb states.

Differences between these groups are often interwoven in complex ways. For example, Shi'a in Iraq are ethnically Arab while Kurds are Sunni by doctrine and have their own language and national symbols. The same is true for the Berbers, who, while sharing an adherence to Islam with the majority of the population in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, have their own language and ethnic identity.

A revival in ethnic consciousness and politics in the Arab region since the late 1960s is part of a global trend toward ethnic revivalism. Many Arab governments have adopted political and social policies aimed at promoting national integration. For example, Jordanian election laws ensure the representation of minority ethnic groups in the Parliament; likewise the entire Lebanese political system is based on the principle of ethnoreligious representation. In Iraq, a policy of granting de facto autonomy to the Kurds has existed since the early 1970s, and in Sudan, after a long civil war, an agreement was reached with the Sudanese Liberation Front (SLP) to divide wealth and power and give southerners the right to vote for self

determination in a referendum. Briefly, the quality of the population and the consequent level of national integration could add to or detract from foreign policy capabilities and their mobilization.

Economic Capability

This factor is based on the availability of natural resources in a country and its control of them, or ability to mobilize them in the service of its foreign policy. Economic capability affects both a state's objectives and its means of implementing them. Poor states, for instance, are likely to have a low level of diplomatic representation.

In the case of developing countries, two questions are investigated. Firstly, to what extent is the economic infrastructure (agriculture, industry, and services) capable of satisfying the economic needs of the population, thus reducing the need for foreign aid? Secondly, does economic development tend to enhance or decrease dependence on foreign sources?

The impression of the proverbial man in the street is that Arab sheikhs and their sheikhdoms are rich. In purely monetary terms, this impression is very true, especially at present with rising oil prices. Crude oil prices rose in the four-year period 2002–2006 by a monumental 121 percent. As a result, 2006 oil revenue for OPEC countries was estimated at $522 billion, compared to $179 billion in 2002.[30] The bulletin of the Dubai-based Gulf Research Center reported on July 13, 2007 that tiny Qatar's gold reserves more than quadrupled in January–April 2007.

However, in the era of globalization, economic capability is not measured only in monetary terms, or in material resources, or even the standard comparative advantage of the old economy. On the contrary, the new economy privileges competitive advantage, that is, technological advance, brain power, innovation and creativity; witness Japan's economic capability despite its relative poverty in traditional natural resources. An important indicator of a country's international status in this new economy is its rank in the General Country Index developed by *Foreign Policy Magazine*. This index is determined primarily by the quantity and quality of a country's educational system, as well as the level of its GDP expenditure on research and development. Where do Arab countries stand in this index?

The 2007 international country index divides countries into three groups, in an ascending order from the least developed (Group I, forty-eight countries) to the middle range (Group II, forty countries) to the

most developed (Group III, forty countries), with a total of 128 countries ranked. Only four Arab countries—all from the GCC—appear among the most developed group: UAE (29), Qatar (32), Kuwait (36), and Bahrain (39). These are followed by Tunisia (43), Oman (48), Jordan (53), Libya (66), Algeria (69), Egypt (84), Syria (92), and Mauritania (118). No classification is mentioned for Lebanon, Iraq, Sudan or even Saudi Arabia. For comparison's sake, Israel is ahead of all Arab countries as it is ranked at 15.[31]

An important characteristic of globalization and the new economy is the increasing speed of capital mobility ('crazy money'), and the exponential growth of foreign direct investment (FDI). Mostly because of geopolitical uncertainty in this conflict-laden region, FDI has been exceptionally low. According to the 2006 report from the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the region received just over $4 billion in 2005 compared to $103.66 billion for Latin America and the Caribbean, and $155.33 billion for East and Southeast Asia. But FDI is picking up in the Arab world, even though it is still unevenly distributed within the region. Though developed countries are still the most important source of FDI, intra-Arab petrodollar investments have been increasing in the last few years, but mainly in the luxury tourism sector, services, and real estate.[32] However, research and development (R&D) as well as educational services are attracting some investment. "The Qatar Science and Technology Park (QSTP), established in 2005, allows 100 percent foreign ownership in agriculture, high-tech, tourism, and other non-energy projects. Royal Dutch/Shell Group intends spending $100 million in QSTP. Meanwhile, Gartner Lee, a Canadian-based firm, is helping in the development and application of environmental and waste-management technologies in the emirate. The UAE has launched a nationwide scheme to promote FDI in nonoil industries."[33]

Military Capability

Military capability is both quantitative (number of troops and weapons) and qualitative (level of weapons systems and training, experience, and cohesiveness). Almost all developing countries depend for their armaments on a limited number of sources in the developed world. Arms sales have indeed been a major avenue for influence and penetration for developed countries. Most developing countries, however, aspire to establish large, strong armies. The army is viewed as a symbol of national independence and as an embodiment of the nation's dignity.

In 2004, US military analyst, Anthony Cordesman called the Middle East the "most militarized area in the world."[34] In 2007, the region still holds this dubious honor, as data from both the SIPRI Yearbook and the World Military Balance confirm.[35] With the nuclearization of Iran, occupation and civil war in Iraq, and the thirty-four-day Hizbullah–Israel war in July–August 2006, the use of the military instrument in foreign policy and the allocation of funds to bolster military capabilities have soared.

Data from the London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies suggest a decline in military expenditure by Arab states in the ten-year period 1996–2005, with expenditure falling to 5.16 percent of GDP in 2005 from a peak of 7.79 percent in 1998.[36] This percentage decline is deceptive, however, because it does not factor in huge increases in national revenue, especially after the rise in oil prices. In fact, in absolute monetary terms, the countries of the region are allocating more funds to bolster their military capabilities. Thus in the same ten-year period 1996–2005, average global arms expenditure increased by 34 percent, and while European expenditure was up only 8 percent, North African countries increased their spending by 58 percent and Middle East countries by 61 percent. If the inconsistent data for Iraq had been included, this last figure would have been much higher.[37]

Soaring military spending in the region was coupled with an increase in both the level of violence and the sophistication of weaponry. In Iraq, the number of deaths due to occupation and insurgency reached a total of 6,600 in July–August 2007, up 13 percent from the previous two-month period. Consequently, some media estimates of an average of one hundred deaths a day has proved to be too conservative. On the Israeli–Palestinian front, in the first six months of 2006, an estimated eight hundred Qassem rockets were fired into Israel, while the IDF fired 5,100 artillery shells into the Gaza Strip alone, leaving aside repeated Israeli military incursions.[38]

As for the increased sophistication of the military instruments of foreign policy, this was not limited only to states but also included nonstate actors like Hizbullah.

> According to Israeli intelligence reports, Iran began large-scale delivery [to Hizbullah] of the Fajr-3, which has a range of 43 kilometers, in 2000 and the Fajr-5, with a range of 75 kilometers, in 2002. . . . [T]he weapons are fired from mobile launchers, including

> customised Japanese trucks and . . . carry 200 pound high-explosives payloads. . . . [Consequently], in an attack on July 14 [2006] which showed the breadth of Hizbullah capability, two radar-guided C-802 Noor anti-ship guided missiles were fired off the Lebanese coast. One hit and sank a foreign merchant vessel, the second hit and sank the Israeli Eilat-class corvette, Hamit, which was part of a naval blockade. . . . The Noor system is a derivative of the Chinese C-802 anti-ship missile system."[39]

These data show that armaments and foreign policy interact closely in at least three aspects: first, countries that follow activist or change-oriented foreign policies usually embark on a policy of arms acquisition; second, the existence of large armies may entice decision makers to use the military instrument in their foreign policy; and third, the army acts as a constraint, influencing choices between various foreign policy options. The more issues of territoriality and physical power weigh on the conduct of foreign policy, the higher will be the influence of the military internationally and also domestically. This brings us to the discussion of political structure.

Political Structure

To what extent do political structures provide opportunities for or impose constraints on decision makers? A political structure may constitute a resource for foreign policy, depending on its stability, legitimacy, degree of institutionalization, and level of public support. Conversely, political factionalization and domestic instability may constrain the conduct of a purposeful foreign policy. There is at present in Arab politics a continuing dialectic between strong societies and weak states. It seems that formal state authority is increasingly incapable of keeping pace with societal change; hence the gap between this authority and its societal base has widened.

Long before September 11 or even before the diffusion of the 1990s Washington Consensus on privatization and economic liberalization, autonomous economic groups were on the rise in the Arab world. Political structures became less monolithic and policymaking was no longer the preserve of one person. Whereas the 1980s and 1990s saw the rise of diverse groups, including Islamists, the 1950s and 1960s were the years of the unstoppable "man on horseback," as Finer called the military.[40] Even

with a charismatic leadership such as Nasser's (1952–1970), the army, under the leadership of General Amer and his loyalists, was a contending center of power. It was the defeat of 1967 and the humiliation of the military top brass that gave Nasser the chance to fire and arrest them, and thus put an end to his "powerlessness of power," as Nasser's successor, Sadat (1970–1981), qualified his predecessor's reign.[41] Similarly, the Algerian regime currently seems to be going through the same process of demilitarization under President Bouteflika.

Some countries aware of the threat militarization poses to their rule, have tried to stop or keep it in check from the outset. In Saudi Arabia, the royal family established a National Guard under the direct rule of the crown prince. Despite its name, it is not only heavily armed, but also relies on the most sophisticated weapons. In August 2006 the US administration notified Congress of two direct arms contracts with the Saudi National Guard, "the largest contract, valued at $5.8 billion, covers the provision of 724 light-armoured vehicles, more than 2,300 long-range military radio systems, and night vision goggles and rifles. A further deal, worth $2.9 billion, would see the [National Guard] upgrade 315 M1A2 Abrams to M1A2S standard and take delivery of fifty-eight new M1A1 vehicles. Further plans include the remanufacture of twelve AH-64 Apache helicopters to AHD-64D configuration and the purchase of twenty-four Black Hawk utility/assault helicopters."[42]

By the year 2000, the quasi totality of Arab countries were undergoing political change in response to a changing international context and domestic pressures. Most of them, to varying degrees, were moving from one-party rule to multipartyism. The independent press and other forms of independent information were mushrooming. Civil society groups were becoming more active. Even if democratization was still a "poor cousin"[43] and much more procedural than substantive, since many elections were rigged, many governments were increasingly on the defensive and ministerial responsibility was an agenda item. As the experience of Algeria shows, that country paid 150,000 lives in a decade for aborting the electoral process in 1992. In the Gulf, Kuwait still leads the way thanks to the dynamism of its civil society groups and the activism of its legislature. Even in Saudi Arabia, where the Qur'an was traditionally the constitution, a Majlis al-Shura was formed and timid municipal elections were held.

As a result, the political domestic environment of Arab regimes is becoming increasingly complex for the policymaker. Their political

agenda is ever more crowded with national and international issues such as human rights, the status of women, the treatment of political prisoners, the necessity of transparency, and so on. The political structure of Arab countries today is much more complex than the surface polarization of incumbent governments versus Islamic movements.

Low levels of political institutionalization and high levels of political instability in most developing countries lead to several results for foreign policy. One is the primacy of the executive, particularly the development of a presidential center that dominates the policymaking process. The presidential center usually enjoys relative freedom of action, due to the weakness of an independent free press or credible opposition parties. In many of these countries, where the legitimacy base is uncertain, the link between domestic and foreign policy is more direct than in the developed countries: foreign policy is frequently used (or abused) for the achievement of domestic objectives, for example, in accumulatiing aid and accruing debt to solve acute problems of infrastructure, acquiring arms to pacify threatening elements in the army, and participating in the global campaign against terrorism to gain benefits and discredit domestic opposition groups, especially Islamists. This point will be further developed in our discussion of the decision-making process.

Foreign Policy Orientation

Orientation is one component of foreign policy output; the other components are decisions and actions. 'Orientation' refers to the way the state's foreign policy elite perceive the world and their country's role in it. Kal Holsti defines orientation as a state's "general attitudes and commitments toward the external environment, its fundamental strategy for accomplishing its domestic and external objectives and aspirations and for coping with persisting threats."[44] Taking the degree of involvement in international politics as a criterion, he identifies three basic types of global orientation: isolation, nonalignment, and coalition building or alliance construction. Orientations are necessarily stable, though by no means rigid or unchanging. They may change due to a radical alteration in the domestic political structure, the regional balance of power, or the global system. A foreign policy orientation can be ideologically driven (as, for example, for Hamas or Hizbullah) or pragmatic (as in the case of Jordan).

The analysis of a country's orientation may address questions such as: What are the country's general objectives and strategy at the global and

regional levels? How do we explain the adoption of these objectives and strategies by the ruling elite? How do orientations change over time and what are the sources of the change? Without explicating foreign policy orientation, the analysis of foreign policy behavior is reduced to a series of actions without their overall significance.

The Decision-Making Process

As explained above, there has been an overemphasis in the literature on the personalized character of the decision-making process and on the lack of political institutionalization in developing countries. Although this emphasis is essentially valid, it gives a simplistic and reductionist image of the decision-making process. An individual leader may have the ultimate say in the choice between alternatives, but he or she must take into consideration a great number of variables and must weigh the responses of various influential domestic groups. Moreover, in many instances the primary unit of decision making is not the president as an individual, but the presidency as an institution. Individual politicians are key actors in foreign policy decision making in developing countries, but this process takes place in a specific social and institutional context. Even in the most authoritarian regimes, institutional arrangements constitute an intermediary variable between individual decision makers and their environment.

In developing countries, the number and the relative influence of participants in the decision-making process vary according to the type of political regime and issue area—for example, 'high' (military, diplomatic) versus 'low' (economic, cultural) politics. These differences, however, do not affect the general decision-making pattern, which is dominated by the executive power around or through His Highness the monarch or president. Robert L. Rothstein argues that this political pattern is a function of two characteristics: conflict and poverty. Conflict is caused by the fractionalization of the polity into primordial or economic divisions that may be tribal, ethnic, religious, regional, or class-oriented. The frequency and the intensity of conflict are heightened by ever-increasing poverty caused by rising demands and insufficient resources. The situation leads to constant struggle between the various groups for control of the state.

If foreign policy as an arena of choice is a field of opportunities and constraints, the developing country enters this arena with the double burden of an "international system of increasing complexity" and a

"domestic base that is less secure and less manageable."[45] The impact of underdevelopment on policymaking is heightened by the fact that "new and inexperienced elites [are] forced to decide critical strategic issues without much knowledge or expertise, without many useful precedents, and in the face of sharp economic cleavages and serious foreign pressures."[46] External constraints, lack of resources, and knowledge deficits increase with the complexity of globalization.

The conceptualization of the decision-making process in developing countries as a "resource gap problem" involving group conflict takes a big step toward removing the blinders of psychological reductionism. It opens the door to further investigation of how and when an alliance between domestic and external groups can influence the resource gap and determine the decisions to be taken. It also explains the infiltration by outside groups of a developing country's decision-making process.

Foreign Policy Behavior

This includes the actions, positions, and decisions that the state takes or adopts in the conduct of its foreign policy. Foreign policy behavior is the concrete expression of orientation in specific acts, and it is analyzed in this book in relation to the superpowers as well as to the other regional actors.

Generally speaking, the developing countries' foreign policy behavior supports the United Nations and other international organizations, advocates change in the global system, promotes the idea of a 'new international economic order,' and places emphasis on regional issues. Foreign policy positions can be verbal as well as expressed through concrete acts. Moreover, acts can be positive (for example, trade relations, receiving an ambassador) or a major milestone that can make or break relations with other countries (for example, attending an important conference, carrying out a controversial visit), or negative, (for example, Mubarak's refusal to carry out a visit to Israel). Given the current globalization context, the global, as distinct from the regional arena, is increasingly important in foreign policy behavior.

We think that this framework for analysis has certain merits. It reflects conceptual advances in foreign policy analysis. It attempts to be holistic rather than reductionist, and thus deals with the different dimensions of both foreign policy inputs and outputs. And it is interdisciplinary, taking into account diverse factors relevant to the specific situation of the Arab countries with which this book is concerned.

Notes

1 The most relevant is Walter Carlsneas, Thomas Risse, and Beth A. Simmons, eds., *Handbook of International Relations* (London and Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002). Also useful are Paul Viotti and Mark Kauppi, *International Relations Theory*, 3rd ed. (New York and London: Macmillan, 1999); Greg Fry and Jacinta O'Hagen, eds., *Contending Images of World Politics* (London: Macmillan and New York: St. Martin's, 2000).

2 Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

3 Compare for example Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975). with Nazih N. Ayubi, *Overstating the Arab State: Politics and Society in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris 1995) and Lucian Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Authority* (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press, 1985).

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5 Richard Snyder, H.W. Bruck, and B. Sapin, *Foreign Policy Decision Making* (New York: Free Press, 1962).

6 Kenneth Boulding, "National Images and International Systems," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 3 (June 1959): 120–30. The presentation and the evaluation of the psychological school is taken from Bahgat Korany et al., *How Foreign Policy Decisions are Made in the Third World* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1986), chapter 2.

7 Michael Brecher, *The Foreign Policy System of Israel* (Oxford and London: Oxford University Press, 1972), and *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy* (Oxford and London: Oxford University Press, 1974).

8 Ole Holsti, "The Belief System and National Images: A Case Study," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 6 (September 1962): 244–52.

9 Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin, *Foreign Policy Decision Making*.

10 Harold and Margaret Sprout, *The Ecological Perspective on Human Affairs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965).

11 Brecher, *Foreign Policy System*, 11–12.

12 This pre-theory (See Figure 2 in Korany *How Foreign Policy Decisions are Made*, 43) is based on five sets of independent or explanatory variables: (1) the idiosyncratic or individual factor: all those aspects of the decision maker, "his values, talents and prior experiences, that distinguish his foreign policy choices of behavior from those of other decision makers"; (2) role: "the external behavior of officials that is generated by the roles they occupy and that would be likely to occur irrespective of the idiosyncrasies of the role occupants"; (3) the governmental factor: "those aspects of a government's structure that limit or enhance the foreign policy choices made by decision makers"; (4) the societal factor: those "non-governmental aspects of a society which influence its external behavior";

(5) the systemic factor: the "external environment or any actions occurring abroad that condition or otherwise influence the choices made by its officials."

13 James Rosenau, "Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy," *Approaches to Comparative and International Politics*, B. Farrell, ed. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1966) 27–93. Also, "A Pre-Theory Revisited: World Politics in an Era of Cascading Interdependence," *International Studies Quarterly* 28 (September 1984): 245–305.

14 Michael Brecher, Blema Steinberg, and Janice Stein, "A Framework for Research on Foreign Policy Behavior," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 13 (March 1969): 75–102. See also note 7.

15 In addition to the colossal two-volume study of the 1970s, Brecher also published *Crisis Decision-Making: Israel 1967 and 1973* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

16 Allison's 'confession' was in a written answer to Korany in 1985. His classic contribution is of course Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: The Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little Brown, 1971).

17 I. William Zartman, *International reations of the New Africa* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1966).

18 Bahgat Korany et al., *How Foreign Policy Decisions Are Made in the Third World* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1986), especially 56–58.

19 Roy Jones, *The Functional Analysis of Politics* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967).

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21 A representative example of this 'second generation' approach is Laura Neack, Jeannne A.K. Hey, and Patrick J. Haney, eds., *Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in its Second Generation* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1995).

22 The popularization of the 'role concept' in international relations is seen in the classic article by Kal Holsti, "National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy," *International Studies Quarterly* 14 (1970): 233–310. Holsti's excellent analysis stayed close to the concept's implicit or explicit use by international relations specialists. The role concept was originally developed in the various social sciences, from anthropology to sociology and psychology. For an early attempt to exploit this potential for the comparative foreign policy of India and Egypt, see Bahgat Korany, *Social Change, Charisma and International Behaviour* (Leiden: Sijthoff, 1976), 316–52. For the richness of the concept in social theory, see Michael Barton, *Roles: An Introduction to the Study of Social Relations* (London: Tavistock, 1965), and for some detailed applications to foreign policy, see Stephen Walker, ed., *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987).

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24 Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1936), 283–84.

25 The most succinct presentation is in *Le Dictionnaire des Sciences Humaines* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2006), 496–507.

26 Ibid.
27 The geopolitical approach is the most favoured in strategic studies; see Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1986); Michel Foucher, *Fronts et frontières: Un tour du monde geopolitique* (Paris: Fayard, 1991).
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31 *The Middle East Magazine*, February 2007, 30–36.
32 For details see UNCTAD, *The 2006 Annual Report* (Geneva: UNCTAD Publications, 2006).
33 Ibid., and *The Middle East Magazine*, March 2007, 31–37.
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36 *The World Military Balance*, chapter 5 on the Middle East.
37 *SIPRI: Yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, 97–98.
38 International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2007* (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies, 2007), 207–17.
39 Ibid., 211.
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41 Anwar Sadat, *In Search of Identity* (London: Collins, 1978).
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43 Bahgat Korany, "Arab Democratization: A Poor Cousin?" *Political Science and Politics* 27 (September 1994): 511–13.
44 Kal Holsti, *International Politics*, 7th ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 2004).
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3

Globalization and Arab Foreign Policies: Constraints or Marginalization?

Ali E. Hillal Dessouki and Bahgat Korany

The first (1984) version of this chapter emphasized the dialectics between the international system on the one hand and the Arab regional system and its state components on the other. In general, the relationship between the dominant system and any of its regions or subsystems is one of inclusion and subordination. But in the Arab region at that time, where memories of the 1973 oil embargo were still fresh and eagerly confirmed by the second oil shock following the Iranian Revolution, views differed. It was argued by some that the Arab region could achieve a higher degree of autonomy from global intrusions. After all, oil prices had risen more than fifteen times in less than ten years and Gulf countries had accumulated major financial reserves and increased their investments in developed countries. But our analysis indicated that in fact Arab subordination was still very much a reality, even if some aspects of a temporary contextor 'conjuncture' gave a different impression.

As the 1980s and 1990s passed, the subordination and sometimes marginalization of the Arab region not only persisted but even increased. Oil prices continued to fall. The Arab states exacerbated their own subordination by being more fragmented, and hence less effective, at the international level. Moreover, since the early 1990s, structural changes in the international system—namely globalization—posed further constraints on the region and its states' foreign policies.

This chapter starts by identifying the specific elements of the Arab region that affect its relations with the global system. It then reviews Arab government and intellectual debates on globalization and deals with the question of to what extent Arab states are integrated into the global system. Finally, it discusses the impact of globalization on Arab foreign policies.

Specific Elements of the Arab Region

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Arab region was closely linked to the dominant global system. A number of elements—namely geographic proximity to Europe, colonialism, commercial routes, and the Suez Canal—contributed to such a close relation. The four factors which account for the specificity of the Arab region are Islam, cultural homogeneity, oil, and the protracted Israeli–Palestinian conflict.

Islamic Resurgence and Its Impact on the West

Islam is the religion of the majority of peoples living not only in the Arab region, but also in Iran and Turkey. Notwithstanding Sunni–Shi'a differences. Islam is a "binding tie" and "unifying bond," providing a sense of identity and belonging to all its adherents. Under the impact of modern Islamic resurgence, Islam is interpreted as an all-encompassing system of beliefs and principles which regulate all walks of life including economics and politics. We have many works on the Islamic political system, Islamic democracy, Islamic economics, the Islamic theory of international relations, human rights in Islam, and Islamic foreign policy.[1] The call for establishing "the Islamic state" has been promoted by various political parties and movements.

In practice, Islam has been employed by governments and opposition groups alike to legitimate their foreign policy positions. This was most evident in Arab responses to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, and the subsequent war of liberation in 1991. Both supporters and opponents of the Iraqi invasion sought support for their positions in Islam. Even the secular regime of former President Saddam Hussein did not hesitate to declare jihad ('holy war') and add the words "Allahu Akbar" ('God is great') to the Iraqi flag.

Muslim communities all over the world have been influenced by the calls of political Islamists. This influence was not by chance. Islamist groups targeted these communities, recruited individuals, and organized

groups to spread their call among them. Since the 1970s, the international organization of the Muslim Brothers has operated offices in a number of European cities. Muslims living in Europe and the US were also influenced by television and satellite stations and Web sites targeted at them.[2]

Radical interpretations of Islam believe that conflict with the West is inevitable. Radical preachers cultivate a spirit of hostility to and confrontation with Western societies among their followers. They have found support for their beliefs in European and American notions of a 'clash of civilizations.' A series of recent European controversies have contributed to the flowering of these hostile sentiments: the 2007 knighting of Salman Rushdie, author of *The Satanic Verses*; the 2004 passage of a French law banning veiling in public schools; the publication of caricatures abusing the Prophet Muhammad in Denmark; and frequent insulting statements by some Western politicians about Islam.

As a result, feelings of anger and frustration have grown among increasing numbers of young Muslims both at home and abroad. This has created a milieu conducive to the spread of extremist ideas and a readiness to resort to violence. Islamic political resurgence achieved a noticeable 'spillover' almost everywhere Muslims live as minorities, a situation which has adversely affected their relations with surrounding societies. For instance, there have been many European court cases concerning the right of Muslim women and girls, both students and teachers, to wear the veil in public schools.

Such tensions are likely to continue. The 2004 US National Intelligence Council report *Mapping the Global Future* insisted that "part of the pressure on governance will come from new forms of identity politics centered on religious convictions. In a rapidly globalizing world experiencing population shift, religious identities provide followers with a readymade community that serves as a social safety net."[3] It further suggests that "outside the Middle East, political Islam will continue to appeal to Muslim migrants who are attracted to the more prosperous West for employment opportunities but do not feel at home in what they perceive as an alien and hostile culture."[4]

Cultural Homogeneity and Identity Crisis

As a people, Arabs enjoy a high degree of linguistic and cultural homogeneity. Notwithstanding subnational variations due to the local history of each community, the great majority of Arabs belong to the same religion

and the same cultural tradition; they share a common history and converse in the same language. One of the dominant intellectual and political trends in the Arab world of the twentieth century was Arab nationalism and the call for pan-Arab unity. The pan-Arab trend manifested itself in scores of cultural and literary clubs, in political movements with branches in a number of Arab countries. The Baath party and the Arab nationalist movement were two examples, as were the policies of Nasser's Egypt during the 1950s and 1960s.

According to pan-Arab ideology, the Arabs are one nation, and their division into separate states is an aberration resulting from 'foreign designs.' There are complex networks of interaction between Arab states, societies, and individuals. These include: labor migration, regional governmental and civil society organizations, and the rapid growth of Arab satellite television stations. All indicate a level of exchange and interaction in the Arab region that is unparalleled in other developing regions.

The intensity of Arab interaction belies some established theories of the global system, such as Galtung's notion of a feudal pattern of international interactions.[5] According to this pattern, interaction is intense among the most developed countries, quite high between developing and developed countries, and very limited among developing countries (the underdogs). Moreover, according to Galtung, interaction among developing countries usually takes place through developed countries.

Arab cultural homogeneity makes Galtung's theory of the global system less applicable to the Arab region. Arabs perceive themselves as having played a distinct part in world history and having a special role within Islam and among Muslims. Islam was revealed to an Arab; its sacred shrines are in an Arab country; and its book, the Qur'an, can only be recited in Arabic.

However, the fact remains that all attempts at Arab political unity or unification have ended in failure, with the exception of Yemen and the UAE. As a result, since the 1980s the call for political integration has been replaced by an emphasis on economic cooperation and promotion of inter-Arab trade. Raison d'état and national interest are the prime movers of the foreign policies of Arab states.

Since the 1990s a new round of debate on the Arab 'identity crisis' has taken place in the region. A number of Arabists and Islamic thinkers equate globalization with 'cultural invasion' that threatens the basic tenets of Arab Muslim identity. As examples of cultural invasion, they point to

youth involvement in Internet culture, new forms of communication and information technology, the spread of Western fashion designs and lifestyle, and the spread of foreign education and languages.

Oil and the Dilution of Resource Power

The popular image of the Arabs as Bedouins was replaced by the image of rich oil sheikhs in the 1970s when oil had a very special impact on the global system. The shock of the 1973 oil embargo, associated in developed countries with long lines at petrol stations, and fear of hard winters with a minimum of heating oil, showed that oil was a strategic security resource. This embargo by Arab oil producers packed a huge punch for two reasons: they possessed a substantial share of world oil exports, and they acted in the context of an energy-hungry world.

The result of their concerted action was twofold. Firstly it created a global crisis in the oil market and beyond. While the embargo itself lasted only five months, it provoked long-term energy shortages all over the world, a global recession, and permanent changes in the oil market. The second result was increased bargaining power for Arab oil producers. In less than a decade, the price of a barrel rose from $2 (in 1972) to $42 (at the end of 1981). From 1974 to 1976, OPEC countries increased their investments in US commercial banks and in treasury and portfolio securities from $5.5 to $8.9 billion.[6] Saudi Arabia saw its international status change almost overnight, from that of a purely Islamic leader to that of an oil power. The fact that Saudi Arabia was invited to sit on the IMF's board of directors showed that Arab oil producers could, if they chose, influence many aspects of the global economy.

However, by the end of the 1980s these expectations did not materialize and the world energy environment changed dramatically. The global economic recession and subsequent decrease in oil demand led to a decline in oil prices. The US built a strategic oil reserve to face energy emergencies. The developed countries' policy of conservation proved to be an even more important factor. Between 1973 and 1980, economic output in the major industrial countries increased by 19 percent while total energy consumption grew by only 4 percent.[7]

Developed countries have also demonstrated the fragility of oil power by entering the market as new producers with oil and gas fields of their own, in Alaska and the North Sea. Because of this increased competition and sagging oil demand, OPEC's sales started to slide in 1982, for the first

time in nearly two decades. By February 1983, OPEC's share of the non-communist world's total oil supply stood at 46 percent, down from 68 percent in 1976.[8] Arab oil-producing countries saw their revenues decline from the peak years (1980–1981) by more than half. For instance, between 1981 and 1988 Saudi Arabia's revenue declined more than 500 percent.

The next collapse of oil prices in 1998, caused in part by sharply reduced Asian demand, had a severe impact on the economies of Arab producing countries. Saudi Arabia's per capita income decreased sharply from $25,000 in 1981 to $7,000 in 2000. Oil-producing countries had to reduce both domestic spending and financial assistance to other Arab states.

In retrospect, then, so-called petro-power was a short-lived moment of resistance in the long history of international subordination. The ups and downs of oil as a source of global influence confirmed the primacy of global constraints in the shaping of Arab foreign policies.[9] The fact remains, however, that in 2005 the Arab states were responsible for 30.7 percent of world oil production, 61 percent of total OPEC production, and 11.4 percent of world natural gas production. Another fact is that the Arab region contains 60 percent of the world's proven oil reserves and 29.4 percent of its natural gas reserves. A third fact is that oil will remain a basic strategic resource for industrialized countries for a long time to come. Demand on oil increased steadily during the period 2002–2005, leading to an increase in price. Revenues of Arab producing countries increased from $338 billion in 2004, to $429.80 billion in 2005, and $447.20 billion in 2006.[10] The cost of oil continued to increase.

Israeli–Palestinian Conflict: Israel as an Extraterritorial Actor

The conflict over Palestine is the longest protracted social conflict in modern history. Arab countries viewed the dispersion of the Palestinians in 1948 as a blatant case of injustice to all Arabs, and for some to all Muslims. During the 1950s–1970s, Arab leaders used the Palestine issue as a weapon in inter-Arab disputes to promote their personal status and regional prestige. As late as 1990, Saddam Hussein acquired great popularity throughout the Arab world when he equated Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait with Israeli withdrawal from Arab territories it had occupied.

Israel represents an interesting case for the foreign policy analyst. Historically, Israel is a new state, established in 1948. Its population was formed through *aliyah* (Jewish 'ascent' or migration to the Holy Land) that started in the late nineteenth century. Ideologically, the state is

a fulfillment of the Zionist dream; the establishment of a Jewish state. Thus, it has a special relation with the global Jewish diaspora. Every Jew in the world has the right to Israeli citizenship, a right guaranteed by the Israeli law of return. Israel is believed to have a moral responsibility to protect Jewish minorities everywhere and defend their interests. Likewise, Jews all over the world are believed to have a moral duty to provide help to Israel. This specific feature of Israel has made it an extra-territorial actor on the world scene.

Thirty-five years ago, in his three-volume classic on Israel's foreign policy, Micheal Brecher dealt with this issue in relation to foreign policy analysis:

> The presence of externally based foreign policy interest groups is widespread in an age of "penetrating political systems": no state is totally immune from group pressures stemming from beyond its territorial bounds. None is comparable to Israel in this respect, however Israel is a self-conscious Jewish state; indeed that is its *raison d'être*, and Israel is the only Jewish state, indissolubly linked to world Jewry in the minds of her leaders and most Jews—and of most non-Jews in the Euro-American world as well.[11]

Among world Jewry, the more than six-million-strong North American Jews stand out. Not only are they more than the Jewish population of Israel, but they have also provided Israel with basic political, financial, and economic support.[12] Without them, Israel would not have achieved international recognition so quickly,[13] or surmounted its political, economic, and military challenges so successfully.[14] In the early years following the establishment of Israel, the World Zionist Organization attempted to secure for its president, Nahum Goldman, an invitation to attend an Israeli cabinet meeting which was refused by Ben Gurion, the Israeli prime minister.[15]

The result is that the influence of great powers has been continuously felt in the evolution of the Arab system. From the very beginning, the creation of Israel and the subsequent conflict between Arab and Israelis were determined by external factors.[16] Illustrations of such a role include the 1917 Balfour Declaration promising Jews a national home in Palestine, the Nazi holocaust and subsequent Western desire to help Jews to settle in Palestine, and the UN decision to partition

Palestine in 1947. The external role was equally evident throughout the wars of 1948, 1956, and 1973, as well as in the efforts to bring a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Arab Responses to Global Changes

Arab governments and intellectuals responded to global changes in the late 1980s and the 1990s in different ways. Some rejected or denounced them altogether, others remained ambivalent or skeptical, and some viewed them as a combination of opportunities and threats. Two major concepts galvanized Arab debates, namely 'new world order' and 'globalization.'

The New World Order[17]

The concept of a 'new world order' was first used by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in reference to his new policy of rapprochement with the West. President George Bush later popularized the term when he invoked it frequently during and after the Gulf crisis of 1990–91. Bush called for a new world order where "the rule of law supplants the rule of the jungle, a world in which nations recognize the shared responsibility for freedom and justice."[18] The 'new world order' was a symbol demonstrating the triumph of American military power and model of society.

On the official level, some Arab countries, such as Iraq, denounced the new world order. Saddam Hussein called it an "imperialist order" in which "the United States is the sole leader."[19] Some Arab countries, such as Algeria, expressed skepticism about the concept.[20] On the other hand, Arab governments such as Egypt and Jordan took a more positive posture. They argued that the new world order had its positive as well as negative aspects, its threats and opportunities, and that the Arab world should rise to its challenges. President Mubarak of Egypt took notice of the trend to form international economic groupings, and urged Arab governments to form their own economic groupings. King Hussein of Jordan criticized the state of disarray in the Arab region and called on the Arabs to "forge collective Arab action and closely review the ongoing phase . . . with a new Arab political thinking."[21]

Arab intellectuals also debated the concept of 'new world order' and their views echoed those of Arab officials. One group rejected the concept arguing that it presented nothing new either in content or objectives. Rather it was a continuation of the legacy of domination of Western powers, and a perpetuation of the old order in a new form.[22]

Another group acknowledged that the global system had changed, that it was still in transition, and that a new world order had not yet been born. As a result, many intellectuals avoided use of the term 'new world order'; instead they used terms such 'as a changing world,' 'new international trends,' or 'new global environment.' They criticized double standards in implementing UN resolutions and human rights safeguards strictly in the Gulf war of 1991, but ignoring them in other cases such as Palestine and Bosnia where Western interests were not at stake. In the Egyptian daily *al-Ahram* of May 25, 1993, Salamah Ahmad Salamah sarcastically contrasted the recent decision of the International Whaling Commission to set up safe havens on the high seas for whales threatened by extinction with the slow progress on establishing safe havens for Bosnian Muslims. It seemed, he noted, that in the new world order fish had more rights than human beings.[23]

A third group argued that the changes in the world system were not all negative. Rather, they contained both risks and opportunities. Consequently, Arab states should carefully examine the consequences of these changes, and follow realistic strategies to maximize their opportunities and minimize their risks. For example, some argued that the end of the cold war significantly reduced the strategic importance of Israel. Others concluded that the Arab states should develop closer relations with great powers such as the EU, China, and India to counterbalance the United States.[24]

Globalization

By the mid-1990s, the concept of new world order had disappeared from Arab discourse, and was replaced by 'globalization.' Once again, Arab governments such as Iraq and Libya denounced this new development. Iraq's deputy prime minister, Tariq Aziz, said Iraq opposed globalization because it served imperialist interests, represented the "economic hegemony" of the rich, particularly the US, and sought to spread Western culture which threatened "the cultures, systems and spiritual values of peoples."[25] Similarly, in a speech delivered to the students of Khartoum University in Sudan in 2001, the Libyan leader Muammar al-Qaddafi also denounced globalization, equating it with imperialism. He pointed out that globalization means expansion and occupation, which sometimes uses warships and armies, and at other times political, economic, and cultural means. He stressed that its objective was to make all world markets

open to American goods and services. He argued that Arabs stood to lose from these developments and would fall victim to them.[26]

President Bashar al-Assad of Syria was rather skeptical about globalization and expressed concerns over it. In an interview with *al-Wasat* magazine published in 1999, he said,

> I don't believe that globalization has occurred in a comprehensive sense. . . . Globalization entails the spread of a model, regardless of the nature of that model, and that has not taken place so far. We can say that the world is moving in the direction of globalization, but we do not know whether that will be achieved or not. Perhaps the clearest form of globalization has been the military one: a powerful state attacks less powerful ones whenever it wants in any part of the world. That results, to a lesser extent, in political globalization which involves dictating political decisions to other countries. Economic globalization has not been achieved either. . . . Perhaps the most concern is aroused by the cultural globalization. . . . So far, this has not happened but it raises concern, and the developing countries need to engage in a process of cultural self-protection in the face of this development.[27]

President Mubarak took a more balanced view and emphasized that globalization was a complex phenomenon which created new challenges. The opportunities it presented included progress in information technology, increasing capital flows, and more open markets. He also identified negative aspects such as problems of poverty, debts, and the growing marginalization of developing countries, which denied them a share of the fruits of globalization. Mubarak urged the world community to agree on a new forward-looking agenda to address various expectations and consequences of globalization. "As developing countries," he said, "we have to effectively share in formulating this agenda and put forth our vision in a sure and serious way."[28]

As was the case with the new world order, Arab intellectuals engaged in heated debates on globalization. Almost no group accepted globalization at face value. It was perceived with skepticism, fear, and a sense of danger. Some equated globalization with the expansion of global capitalism, which turned the free market into an ideology in itself rather than a mechanism to regulate demand and supply flows and in which

multinational corporations sought to reduce the role of the nation state in order to establish a global market. Some commentators, such as the Egyptian Marxist economist and former minister of planning Ismail Sabri Abdullah, called for following a path of "independent development" and "selective delinking" from the global economy; others such as the Egyptian liberal economist Hazem el-Beblawi, called for "integration with safeguards."[29]

In the same vein, some argued that globalization represented a new form of American hegemony. As the Arab-American political scientist Nasser Aruri put it, "As the US embarks on a second era of world hegemony, the goal remains the same, except that globalization has emerged as a benign label for the same goal."[30] Others were concerned with the cultural implications of globalization and its impact on national identity and cultural authenticity. Some argued that globalization carried the danger of cultural penetration, and the imposition of a radically different lifestyle, thus creating cultural hegemony and dependency.[31]

Another group underlined the point that globalization was not really 'global.' It remained partial and selective; its main activities existed in the North, where most of the world trade and money transactions take place. It discriminated against products of developing countries by establishing trade barriers while opening up markets for the products of industrialized nations. Moreover, the globalization process contained internal contradictions; it encouraged the movement of money and goods but restricted that of labor. Some also raised the issue of double standards in the implementation of political principles such as human rights and democracy. While the call for these principles had been, and should be, global, its implementation was limited by considerations of American national interests.

On the other hand, there were Arab intellectuals who argued that globalization is neither a faith nor a political ideology. Rather, it is a process and a fact of life which has to be reckoned with. This group agreed that globalization posed a challenge to the Arab world, a mix of threats and opportunities. Denying or denouncing globalization was not realistic, nor was rushing to embrace it without fully studying its impact. The Arab world should deal with globalization in a positive spirit by trying to capitalize on its opportunities and minimize its threats. The Jordanian economist Fahd al-Fanik eloquently summarized this argument thus: "Globalization will not be affected in any way no matter how

we curse it and warn against its consequences. Likewise globalization will not be affected in any way if we approve of it, welcome and support it. Globalization is happening because its objective conditions are being fulfilled. The fact that some people like it and some people dislike it is irrelevant. To discuss the pros and cons of globalization is a waste of time. What is worth discussing is how to cope with globalization and benefit from the opportunities that it poses."[32]

Are Arabs Connected?

Notwithstanding official speeches and intellectual discourse about the threats of globalization, the reality is radically different. Arab states and societies have not been integrated into many aspects of the globalized world.[33] For instance, the famous A.T. Kearney foreign policy globalization index provides an aggregate index measuring globalization of sixty-two countries based on a number of indicators such as (1) *technology*, referring to number of Internet users, Internet hosts, and secure servers, (2) *political engagement*, referring to state membership in international organizations, and number of foreign embassies hosted, (3) *personal contacts*, referring to international travel and tourism, international telephone traffic, and cross border transfers, and (4) *economic integration*, referring to foreign trade, direct foreign investment, and capital flows. The KFBGI of 2006 covers sixty-two states that produce 96 percent of the world GDP and represent 85 percent of its population. Singapore leads the list, followed by Switzerland, the US, Ireland, and Denmark.

Only four Arab states appear on the list, namely Tunisia (ranked 37), Morocco (40), Saudi Arabia (44), and Egypt (55). Compared to the rankings of 2004 and 2005, we find that both Morocco (which moved up the list from 47 to 40) and Egypt (from 60 to 59 to 55) improved their status, and that Tunisia (from 35 to 37) and Saudi Arabia (from 41 to 45 to 44) lost some ground.[34]

Resistance to Globalization: The Case of Democracy

Since its founding, the US has perceived itself as a champion for democracy. The collapse of the Soviet Union and similar authoritarian states was seen as a fulfillment of an American dream. The 'empire of evil' had been defeated, and a new wave of democracy was underway. Thus, democratization became an important component of the globalization process. The events of 9/11 gave new impetus to the US spread of democracy policy and led to a major

reorientation of the Bush administration's foreign policy in the Middle East. Democracy promotion was added to traditional US interests in the region such as oil, stability, and Israel. The new 'Bush Doctrine' underlined the active pursuit of democracy in all regions of the world.[35]

Bush developed his vision in a steady and definitive way. In December 2003 he declared a forward strategy for freedom in the Middle East. Addressing the UN General Assembly in September 2004, he promised to help reformers in the region, and to support the building of a community of peaceful democratic nations. In his state of the union address of February 2, 2005 President Bush confirmed his commitment to promoting democracy in the region and called upon Egypt and Saudi Arabia to lead the area toward freedom and democracy.

Other American officials elaborated on the new American commitment. They argued that democracies do not fight each other, and democratic regimes give their peoples the freedom to express their views and grievances openly, thus reducing the desire to resort to violence or terrorism. Further, democracy fosters economic growth which leads to social and political stability. This was exactly what Arab regimes needed, they emphasized.

In this context the US took a number of initiatives to demonstrate its commitment and encourage the process of reform in the Arab region. The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) declared by former Secretary of State Colin Powell in December 2002 identified a broad range of reforms to be pursued as components of American national interests in the region. On January 2004 the While House launched a new initiative called the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) to be implemented in cooperation with the Group of Eight (G-8). The initiative proposed a number of programs and activities which involve governments, business communities, and civil society organizations.

In the face of mounting pressures for political reform, most Arab governments followed two lines of action: first, to dilute and weaken external pressure; and second, to initiate controlled reform measures. As to the first, Arab leaders argued that reform must emanate from within, and that the agenda of reform must correspond to the requirements of each society and its level of development. Some warned that instant democracy could lead to instability and the possibility of radical anti-American Islamist groups reaching power, as had almost happened in Algeria or had happened in Palestine. Most Arab leaders made a link between promoting

democracy and the resolution of the Palestine issue. They argued that the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands since 1967, and double standards in US policy in the region created an environment of hostility and extremism, hardly conducive to democratic development.

Both the US and the European Union bought part of this argument. President Bush, who was earlier quoted as saying that the short-term objective of stability should not take precedence over promoting democracy, now states that democracy cannot be established overnight, that America took so many years to develop its democratic institutions, and that the pace of democratic development would be different form one nation to another. It seems that American decision makers became increasingly aware of the contradictory implications involved in following the policy of promoting democracy and that of global cooperation against terrorism. The US finds itself in a dilemma: it seeks the help and cooperation of Arab governments in the war against terrorism, thus reducing its ability to pressure them to reform their political institutions. Its language has become one of dialogue and persuasion rather than of pressure and confrontation.

As to the second line of action, Arab governments felt the need to take some partial reform measures. The passing away of the heads of seven states in the region (Jordan, Morocco, Bahrain, UAE, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait) during the period 1999–2006 provided their successors with the opportunity to reform. There was also the 1995 palace coup in Qatar that saw Crown Prince Sheikh Hamd bin Khalifa assume power. In all cases, the new rulers wanted to establish their own legitimacy and constituencies.

Efforts for political reform took different forms during the period 2001–2007. Constitutional amendments introduced multiple-candidate presidential elections, instead of referenda, in Algeria, Yemen, Tunisia, and Egypt. Parliamentary elections were held in Jordan, Oman, Bahrain, Morocco, Qatar, Lebanon, and Egypt. In Bahrain, the parliamentary elections held in 2002 were the first since 1975. In some cases, Arab and international observers were invited to monitor elections. Elections for half the seats in municipal councils were held for the first time in Saudi Arabia in 2004.

In 2005, Kuwait granted women the right to vote, and this was followed by the appointment of a female political scientist as a minister. During the early years of this century, women in the Gulf countries (with the exception of Saudi Arabia) joined other Arab women in gaining

political rights. These reforms are definitely welcomed but their ultimate outcome remains obscure. Whether they will lead to the development of free democratic institutions, or remain as cosmetic changes to authoritarian structures of power remains to be seen.

To sum up, the Arab world is the region least affected by the wave of democratic change taking place in the world. Over the last two decades Arab political systems have demonstrated their ability to resist democratization pressures more effectively than any other region. Despite growing demands for political reform both from within and from outside, these systems have managed to deal with them in a gradual, incremental, and piecemeal manner. When reform has occurred, it has usually been too little and too late. With the exception of Iraq which was subject to massive military intervention, no Arab country witnessed a collapse or breakup of its political institutions as happened in Eastern Europe in 1989.

There are twenty-two Arab political systems, including the Palestinian Authority. They include eight monarchies, none of which can be described as a truly constitutional monarchy. As for republics, most presidents continue to rule for life. Their reigns usually end by death or military coup. In 1999, an analysis of Arab heads of state made three important conclusions. First, as a group Arab leaders remained in power far longer than leaders from any other region. Second, the median term of Arab leaders in office was twenty years. In contrast, the median term for African leaders was only nine years, and for European and Latin American leaders it was just four and three years respectively. Third, Arab leaders were significantly older than leaders from other regions.

Two possible factors explain the ability of Arab rulers to resist demands for democratization. One is resource endowment. Oil wealth led to the prevalence of rentier politics. It allowed governments to delay change and dilute demands for political reform. The continued influx of oil money over a long period of time gave oil-producing countries the opportunity not only to appease their populations but also to pursue an active 'diplomacy of the purse.' Oil wealth has a 'rentier impact' on non-oil Arab countries which take the forms of (a) remittances by expatriate Arab labor, (b) financing media empires, such as newspapers and satellite television stations, and (c) supporting political parties and organizations. With their conservative political systems and orientation, oil-producing countries, especially Saudi Arabia, have constrained the democratization process in the Arab world at large by supporting other regimes in their

resistance to external calls for change and diluting internal demands for political change.

Another explanation lies in the ethnic fabric of many Arab societies, which emphasizes tribal, religious, and confessional differences at the expense of the modern concept of citizenship. For instance, Lebanon's political system is essentially founded on a religious basis. Political and senior civil service posts are distributed along religious and confessional grounds. It followed that political loyalties and ambitions developed along ethnic and confessional lines, at the sake of the broader concept of citizenship essential for the evolution of a modern democratic polity.

The Primacy of Global Constraints

There is an obvious discrepancy between the centrality of the Arab region, seen from the perspective of global powers, and its failure to integrate either among its member states or into the global system. One reason is the continuing tendency for political fragmentation and competition between its governments and rulers. The outcome has been further external penetration and intervention in Arab states' domestic affairs. The role of global actors has become increasingly influential in the international politics of almost all Arab states. This institutional rigidity of Arab regimes and resistance to change has invited the US, the EU, and Japan to initiate proposals and implement projects to help accelerate the process of democratization and social change in the region.

Failed Regional Economic Integration

In contrast to the worldwide trend toward regional economic integration and cooperation, efforts by the Arab states have met with limited success. Progress was made in some joint Arab projects such as the construction of a gas pipeline to carry Egyptian natural gas to Jordon, Syria, and Lebanon, and the setting up of a regional electricity network between Egypt, Jordan and Syria. But efforts to establish an Arab free trade zone achieved limited results. In 1997, the Arab League initiated a program to establish a Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA). The initiative called for tariff reduction at the rate of 10 percent a year over a ten-year period with the expectation that tariffs would be eliminated by 2007. That objective was not achieved because of disagreement on rules of origin and the right given to each country to exclude certain products from tariff reduction. Some countries abused this right and offered

long lists of exceptions which made GAFTA effectively meaningless. In 2005, the level of inter-Arab trade stood at around 10 percent of total Arab trade. This figure is low when compared with intraregional trade in other regions: 60 percent in EU countries, 40 percent in East Asian countries, and 37 percent in the countries of the North American Free Trade Agreement.[36]

The limited success of Arab economic integration is attributable primarily to the policies of Arab governments and the presence of alternative initiatives from external actors. For instance, the US signed free trade agreements with both Jordon and Bahrain. It also signed Qualified Industrial Zones Agreements (QIZ) with Jordon, Egypt, and Israel. Most Arab Mediterranean countries signed partnership agreements with the EU with a view to establishing a Mediterranean free trade zone by 2012.

Enhanced US Position in the Region

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the war to liberate Kuwait in 1991 created a political and security environment conducive to an American hegemonic position in the Arab region. Most Arab states supported the US-sponsored Arab–Israeli peace process, and after 9/11, they cooperated in the war against terrorism. In the Gulf region, the US followed a policy of maintaining a strong military presence to defend and control oil sources. Its peak was during Operation Desert Storm in January 1991, in which half a million American troops participated. Since then the US has kept a military presence in most Gulf states (the largest one is al-Odaid military base in Qatar) that includes land troops, air force facilities, and warships at sea. In addition, American military cooperation with Arab states includes joint maneuvers, supply of arms, provision of advisers and technicians, and monitoring of borders. American influence is no longer confined to Arab countries with long-standing relations with Washington such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan, but extends to the Maghreb states as well, which traditionally kept close ties with France.

For a while, it seemed that the American military presence in Iraq ensured Washington great strategic advantages. Iraq is the largest Arab state in the Arab east, has borders with Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Jordan, and possesses the second-largest Arab oil reserves. Notwithstanding differing views on American troop withdrawal from Iraq, it is most likely that American bases will continue to remain there for a long period for both economic and strategic reasons.

Restructuring the Region and Globalization of Security Arrangements[37]

As argued before, in many respects the Arab region is the least influenced by the globalization process. Consequently, a number of global powers put forward projects and programs to help accelerate the process of political and economic change in the region. As these countries did not globalize voluntarily, global powers felt the need to employ economic and political conditionalities to initiate desired changes. In particular, there were many initiatives to establish new security regimes which secure crucial roles for these powers. The first was the Madrid peace process initiated in October 1991. In June 1993, the NATO Mediterranean dialogue with nonalliance members was initiated. By 2007, NATO officials concluded negotiations with six Arab states, namely Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Mauritania, Egypt, and Jordan, as well as with Israel.[38] In 1994 the EU launched its Euro-Mediterranean project whose objective was to secure European strategic interests in the Mediterranean. It aimed to "support the establishing of a zone of stability and security and creating conditions for lasting and sustainable rapid economic development in the Mediterranean countries."[39]

In the aftermath of the events of 9/11, US initiatives included the proliferation security initiative in 2003, which asserted the right of the US and a number of European states to stop and search any ship suspected of transporting weapons of mass destruction. Another one was the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) in November of the same year, which was later called the greater Middle East partnership (GMEP). These initiatives were endorsed by the G-8 in June 2004.

One feature of all these projects is the integration of global powers as active actor in the development of the region. The initiatives cover a broad area of issues such as women's education, the promotion of information and communication technology, strengthening the role of NGOs, encouraging small enterprises, and the promotion of democratic practices. Their objectives are to help integrate Arab and Middle Eastern countries into the globalization process, and to make these countries more accessible to global forces.

Conclusion

To the majority of international actors, the global system represents an arena of both constraints and opportunities. In the case of Arab countries, as with the global south more broadly, the constraints outnumber

the opportunities. Since the early 1990s, the range of choices has been narrowing. The opportunity for any country to balance one superpower off against another has gone. Arms control regimes have become more disciplined and restrictive, and advances in technology have allowed the US to closely monitor arms traffic from states such as North Korea and Iran.

The analysis thus far suggests that globalization reinforced the limitations and constraints already existing on Arab foreign policies and added new possibilities of marginalization. Most of the hoped-for Arab sources of strength have either been diluted or weakened by the major actors in the global system whose mission was made easier by the policies of most Arab states. The Arab states's 'selective globalization' policy led to mounting tensions between Arab states and the global system. Norms prevailing in these states are increasingly incongruent with those dominant at the global level.

Notes

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10 *Al-Tahrir al-iqtisadi al-'arabi* (Cairo: League of Arab States, 2006), 84.

11 Michael Brecher, *The Foreign Policy of Israel* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 137.
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4

From Arab System to Middle Eastern System?: Regional Pressures and Constraints

Paul Noble[1]

The foreign policy of states is shaped not only by their national situations and the values/perceptions of policymakers but also by the global and regional environments in which they operate. National and elite interests/concerns influence what governments would like to do (motivating causality) but systemic conditions shape what they are *able* to do. Systemic conditions shape state behavior[2] in two main ways.

In the first place, they serve as a set of constraints or opportunities, permitting states a certain range of possible action (permissive causality). Secondly, systemic conditions generate pressures that push or pull states in certain directions (stimulus or efficient causality). The previous chapter explored the dominant world system and its impact. This chapter will explore the regional system in its various facets.

In the post-cold war era, there has been considerable debate about the potential for stability in the global south. In the international relations literature, it is often assumed that the world is divided into two zones: a zone of stability/peace encompassing the developed world, including most major powers (the 'core'), within which traditional security concerns have eased considerably; and a zone of turbulence/conflict consisting of the developing states (the 'periphery'), characterized by a range of acute security concerns.[3] Analysts differ, however, about the sources and nature of the expected turbulence and consequently about the type(s) and severity of the security concerns confronting the states of the periphery.[4]

Among mainstream analysts, realists maintain that, apart from the impact of conditions of 'anarchy,' there are a range of conditions in the global south that generate considerable potential for interstate conflict/violence.[5] To begin with, besides the pronounced imbalance of power in many developing regions, there are widespread and often acute differences over distributional issues concerning territory, people, resources, power, and influence that serve as important motivating factors for conflict. There is also a lack of factors which could serve as constraints on conflict, including the checks and balances of great power competition (reduced in most areas since the end of the cold war) and a balanced diffusion of nuclear weapons. As a result, peripheral regions such as the Middle East will be characterized by persistent revisionism, arms buildups, and coercive pressures. This ensures the continued prominence of realist-style territorial/existential, power-political, and military-security concerns in these areas.

Liberals/institutionalists admit that factors which serve as significant constraints on conflict/violence in the developed world (for example, economic interdependence, democracy, strong international institutions) are currently much weaker in the periphery.[6] However, they argue that parts of the global south are beginning to experience some transformation through economic development, a degree of economic/political liberalization, and elements of regional economic interdependence or at least strong links to the global economic system.[7] This serves to mitigate the potential for conflict and to generate incentives for accommodation and cooperation. Realist-style problems may persist but their importance is steadily diminishing and giving way to other types of concerns, notably economic ones. As these processes deepen and spread, more and more of the global south will experience similar transformations.

While both perspectives provide insights into international relations in the contemporary periphery, it is important to recognize that it is not the presence or absence of traditional realist-style security problems that constitutes the defining feature of this arena. Internal and transnational pressures, arising from conditions of political and economic underdevelopment, also figure prominently as destabilizing characteristics. The most notable of the alternative perspectives on turbulence in the periphery is the 'weak state-fragmented society' model.[8] This model emphasizes that developing societies are characterized by deep vertical (communal), horizontal (class), and ideological cleavages as well as by institutions and

regimes lacking legitimacy and capacity. The result is widespread internal conflict and instability, with severe challenges not only to regimes and their basic ideological direction but also to state institutions themselves and even the national cohesion/territorial integrity of the state. These internal political threats, it is argued, constitute the most pervasive as well as most immediate and acute problems facing most developing countries. Since such internal conflicts are arguably the source of most cross-border conflict as well, they constitute the most important source of turbulence within the periphery today.

Economic underdevelopment/dependency approaches constitute another alternative perspective on turbulence in the contemporary periphery. Like economic liberalism, such approaches maintain that developing countries are not simply state units operating in an international system characterized by anarchy but also economic units functioning in an increasingly interconnected transnational world economy. Unlike the liberal school, however, which emphasizes interdependence, with its mutual benefits and constraints, this approach stresses the pronounced hierarchy of the world economy and consequent relationships of inequality, dependence, and vulnerability.[9] Thus internal political threats may be the most immediate (and acute) security concern of developing states. However, it is argued, economic difficulties are both equally pervasive and more fundamental, since they are the major source of virtually all security concerns in the global south today, whether human security, regime security, or national/state security.[10] Moreover, economic difficulties contribute to turbulence in much of the periphery by fueling domestic political unrest and generating discontent with the status quo, both external and domestic. However, the overall effects are likely to be less clear-cut since poor economic conditions also generate weakness, which limits the ability to translate discontent into forceful action. Substantial economic needs may also lead to accommodative, even pliant, foreign policy behavior in order to attract economic assistance or to allow governments to devote attention and resources to internal development.

Let us turn now to examining systemic conditions within the region at the domestic, intersocietal, and interstate levels and analyzing their impact on the security agendas and foreign policies of Arab states with a view to assessing the applicability of these competing perspectives.

Systemic Conditions: Setting (Textural) Factors

Two sets of setting factors will be examined here: domestic conditions in the Arab world and intersocietal relations (affinities and linkages) among Arab/Middle Eastern countries.

Unit (Domestic) Conditions

A single unit's internal conditions are not normally considered a systemic property. However, when similar domestic conditions prevail among many regional states, and these conditions influence their external relationships and behavior, they may be treated as such.

Political Conditions

Arab states, like other developing countries, have suffered from a range of problems common to underdeveloped postcolonial societies. These include serious communal, class, and ideological cleavages, weak state institutions, and limited regime legitimacy. Material development has led to social change that has sharpened social as well as ideological cleavages and generated strong pressures on governments ill-equipped to meet them. The result has been widespread political unrest and instability.[11] The situation has been exacerbated by the extensive permeability of Arab states and societies and their ensuing exposure to strong transnational political pressures. During the 1950s and 1960s these developments weakened the international position of Arab states, made their foreign policies more rigid and assertive, and added an important ideological dimension to Arab foreign policies.[12] During the 1970s, domestic political instability declined in the Arab world. The underlying problems and pressures persisted but Arab regimes were now better able to overcome these challenges and consolidate their position. The relative durability of regimes was due to several factors. Vastly improved internal security and coercive capabilities were one element. They were reinforced by more sophisticated checks and balances among military forces combined with the difficulty of successfully coordinating a coup within a greatly enlarged officer corps.[13] In addition, the oil boom strengthened the position of Arab states by furnishing regimes with vastly increased financial resources. Even Arab have-not countries benefited significantly in the form of substantial aid flows and worker remittances. These financial resources increased not only the coercive capacity of Arab regimes but also their cooptive capacity, particularly with new social

forces. The improvement in the domestic political situation of key Arab states strengthened their position in the regional arena and generated greater flexibility in policy, particularly toward traditional opponents. The other noteworthy change was the declining importance of ideology for the leadership of key states. As a result, Arab foreign policies became more pragmatic, with tangible national interests prevailing over ideological considerations. This in turn led to reduced revisionism and more flexibility in regional relationships.[14]

Since the 1980s, the Arab world has experienced renewed domestic unrest and ideological tensions, reflected particularly in the Islamist challenge, which was heightened by the emergence of a revolutionary Islamic regime in Iran in 1979. The 1990–91 Gulf crisis underscored the continuing internal instability of Arab states as well as their vulnerability to transnational pressures, this time from Iraq. Since then, domestic political conflict and instability have been very much in evidence throughout the Arab world.

Several factors have fueled this renewed instability. One was a pronounced deterioration in economic conditions, which will be explored in the next section. Sociocultural frustrations constituted a second source of unrest. Modernization continues to transform the condition of the population, challenging both the way of life and basic values. The increasing impingement of the West on Arab societies (sociocultural globalization) heightens societal insecurity. This, together with the perceived failure of imported social, economic, and political institutions, has generated a search for cultural authenticity and institutions with indigenous roots.[15] Deepening socioeconomic difficulties have not only increased dissatisfaction with the existing order but have also provided opportunities for religiously affiliated organizations to meet basic human needs, thereby enhancing their attractiveness. Tight government control over civil society often leaves the mosque as the only semi-autonomous forum for social/political association. These developments have contributed to the growing appeal of Islamist movements and have served to revive and refocus the ideological debate within Arab societies.

Political frustrations over continued authoritarian rule are another source of domestic tension. The end of the cold war coincided with a new wave of democratization in Eastern Europe, Latin America, and other parts of the global south. Expectations that this might carry over to the Arab world have yet to be fulfilled to any meaningful extent.[16] Even

in countries where some progress has been achieved (Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, and possibly Kuwait and Jordan) the robustness and durability of these achievements appears uncertain. Elsewhere, steps toward political liberalization and democratization have been limited (for example, in Bahrain, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia) and in danger of being frozen or reversed as governments engage in restrictive measures in the face of continuing opposition. Moreover, the pressures for greater accountability and transparency in the face of official corruption, misuse of public funds, and the enrichment of those with close regime connections have met with little response, creating an additional source of discontent. Generally, Arab regimes appear to be tired and unable to engage in meaningful renewal with respect to competence, integrity, political participation, and social justice. This further undermines their legitimacy and bases of support.

Foreign policy frustrations constitute another major source of discontent. During the first Gulf war, Saddam Hussein capitalized on widespread dissatisfaction with the regional order to mobilize popular opinion throughout the Arab world. Since then, many aspects of the regional order that Arabs found unsatisfactory have intensified, notably US predominance combined with policies that appear insensitive to Arab interests, Israel's persistent territorial claims/encroachments on its Arab neighbors, and Washington's seeming double standard in its continued indulgence of Israel while maintaining punitive policies toward Arab/Middle Eastern 'rogue' states. These developments have resonated widely and generated substantial resentment in the Arab world.[17] The situation is particularly sensitive in countries that are closely linked to the US and accommodative toward Israel.

Political security problems are compounded by succession issues in several Arab states. Some long-term rulers have passed away (Syria, Jordan, Morocco, Bahrain, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Kuwait) or been forced aside (Iraq, Qatar). Their departure not only removed an important stabilizing force but also threatened to exacerbate internal divisions. These problems are more serious in republican systems than in monarchies. Nevertheless, the danger is that regimes will emerge weakened at a time of increasing domestic discontent and challenges.[18]

This combination of socioeconomic difficulties, religious revivalism, political blockage, and foreign policy frustrations has created fertile ground for domestic conflict and instability in the contemporary Arab

world.[19] This has been accompanied by renewed ideological debate centering on the role of Islam within many Arab societies. These trends have posed a broad range of challenges to the Arab political order. In some cases, the national unity and territorial integrity of the state have been severely challenged by violent conflict due either to pronounced vertical cleavages (as in Iraq, Sudan, and Lebanon) or the recent unification of the territory (as in Yemen). The problem in the Arab world in recent decades, however, has been more one of weak *regimes* than of weak *states*. Thus the most widespread and frequent challenges have been to regimes and/or the basic ideological direction of states, usually involving a sharp conflict over the role of Islam in society. In some cases (Algeria, Egypt, Sudan) this has manifested itself in protracted political violence usually involving radical Islamic groups. Other Arab regimes both in the Gulf (Bahrain, Saudi Arabia) and in the Levant (Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon) have also experienced significant unrest/opposition and occasional violence, much of it linked to Islamic or sectarian groups. In addition, virtually all Arab governments have engaged in major crackdowns on dissident elements, reflecting their concerns for regime security.

Despite the seriousness of these challenges, Arab states and regimes have so far proven relatively resilient. No state, with the partial exception of Iraq, has fallen prey to balkanization. Indeed, after years of internationalized civil war, Lebanon was reunified, albeit initially under the aegis of a neighboring power (Syria). Regimes have maintained their hold on power except in Iraq which was ousted by US and British forces. A backlash against radical Islamist violence strengthened the position of the Egyptian and Algerian regimes in the late 1990s and led several groups involved to renounce armed action. Moreover, if the recent dramatic improvement in oil revenues persists, it will reduce some domestic opposition at least in the major oil-producing states. Nevertheless, the Islamist challenge remains powerful in most Arab societies as are the issues which have fueled its growth.[20]

Because domestic unrest and instability continue to present serious problems for virtually all Arab states, internal political security has become the most pervasive and immediate security concern for most Arab governments. This internal unrest has weakened the position of many Arab states, particularly in the regional arena, exposing them to transnational political-ideological pressures and obliging governments to devote substantial attention and energy to the domestic front. Domestic conditions

have also affected the foreign policy behavior of Arab governments, although not always in ways that international relations theory would lead us to expect.[21] Contrary to a widely held assumption, regime insecurity has not lead to much external assertiveness in recent years, arguably with one major exception—the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and refusal to withdraw in 1990–91.[22] It does appear, though, to have contributed to some rigidity in policy, particularly in regard to conflict resolution or normalization of relations with traditional opponents (for example, Syria, the Palestinians and, to some extent, Egypt and Jordan vis-à-vis Israel). However, contrary to some of the assumptions of the "democratic peace" literature, the predominantly authoritarian character of Arab regimes and their limited progress toward democratization has not seriously hampered some governments from adopting accommodative policies or even achieving peace in protracted conflicts (for example, Egypt and Jordan).[23] Indeed, the absence of democratization may actually have facilitated accommodative moves in these cases, given the prominence of nationalist values and strong mistrust of Israel among important segments of the public and elements of the elite in these countries. Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Sharaa's remark at the time of the Madrid Conference (1991) that in Israel the people wanted peace but the government (Likud) did not, while in Syria the government wanted peace but the people did not, is telling in this regard.[24] This suggests that, in the short run, increased political liberalization/democratization might result in reduced flexibility regarding a settlement/normalization with Israel, since populations might be inclined to hold more hardline views than governments. There is also the danger in periods of political transition that competing elites/opposition forces could use nationalism as a mobilizing tool to enhance their position.[25] Overall, peace may be more important for promoting democratization in the Arab world than democratization would be in promoting peace.[26]

Economic Conditions

Economic conditions play a key role in shaping the international positions and policies of states. In the Arab world there is wide variation in economic circumstances.[27] Virtually all Arab states, however, have experienced significant economic fluctuations over the past three decades, much of this stemming from developments in the oil market.[28] During the oil boom from 1973 to 1981, the economies of major producing states developed rapidly while other Arab economies benefited indirectly not only

from the flow of aid but also from employment opportunities for their workers and the return flow of remittances. During the next two decades all Arab economies suffered in varying degrees from the prolonged softness in world oil markets and the continuing costs of regional conflicts as well as domestic turmoil. The extremely slow pace of economic liberalization and the consequent preference of international investors for other areas also hampered Arab economic development. Beginning in 2000, but especially since 2004, the price of oil has climbed dramatically, generating a substantial rise in the revenues of major Arab oil producers as well as more modest improvements in the economies of other Arab states.

The oil-producing states have experienced the sharpest fluctuations in economic fortunes. Between the early 1980s and late 1990s, virtually all experienced a significant drop in oil revenues (Table 1) and in most cases in per capita GDP as well (Table 2). The latter trend was intensified by high demographic growth. Economic difficulties were exacerbated by prolonged external or domestic conflict, related political-military expenditures, and/or international sanctions.[29] This was particularly true of Iraq, Libya, and Algeria. Iraq's economy suffered from a twenty-five-year period of wars and stringent economic sanctions. With its physical infrastructure and productive facilities (including oil facilities) heavily damaged or seriously deteriorating, and its health, educational, and other human services in need of extensive upgrading, Iraq now ranks as a low-income developing country. Libya, until recently, faced extensive international sanctions, which sharply limited its links with the outside world, especially its ability to obtain investment capital and technology. For its part, the Algerian economy, despite substantial oil and gas resources, was hurt by a prolonged and bloody civil war. In the case of the Gulf states, economic problems were compounded by the high costs of financing the first Gulf war as well as subsequent major arms purchases. In short, the prolonged reduction in oil revenues together with the costs of regional and domestic conflict placed substantial strains on the economies of the oil-producing states during this period and beyond.[30] While some had options to cushion the effects on their economies (for example, the drawing down of financial reserves or the incurring of debt, domestic or foreign), they were still obliged to limit domestic expenditure, thereby slowing economic growth and creating additional difficulties on the employment front.

Since 2000, the upsurge in oil prices has led to substantial growth in the revenues, GDP, financial reserves, and in some cases per capita GDP[31]

of major Arab oil-producing states except for Iraq and Libya, (Tables 1, 2), although in some respects the position of certain key producers (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait) is still weaker than it was in 1980. Moreover, demand for energy is likely to grow, especially from large industrializing economies like China and India. Thus even with new or expanded sources of supply (Caspian region, Russia, Canada), oil and gas prices are likely to remain relatively high (in the $50 range per barrel) well into the foreseeable future.[32] This, in turn, should lead to a sustained improvement in economic conditions in Middle Eastern energy-producing states.[33]

Table 1

Oil Prices/Revenues, Eastern Arab World, 1980–2005

	1980	*1989*	*2000*	*2002*	*2004*	*2005*	% change *1980–2005*
Oil prices ($)[a]	28.67	17.31	27.60	24.36	36.05	50.64[b]	+ 76.6%
Oil Revenues (Billion $)							
Saudi Arabia	101.4	24.1	70.6	63.6	106.0	108.7	+ 7.2%
UAE	19.5	11.5	21.6	16.6	30.0	35.0	+ 79.5%
Kuwait	18.4	9.3	18.1	14.0	25.5	30.7	+ 64.1%
Qatar	5.4	3.1	6.5	5.6	7.0	7.3	+ 35.2%
Oman	2.4	3.7	8.9	7.5	10.3	11.2	+ 366.6%
Bahrain	3.2	0.8	4.4	3.9	5.3	0	- 100.0%
Iraq	26.1	6.8	17.4	9.1	16.2	20.1	- 23.0%
Egypt	2.0	1.0	2.5	2.4	4.6	2.2	+ 10.0%
Syria	1.3	2.3	3.5	4.2	4.0	4.1	+ 215.0%
Yemen	0	0.5	3.4	3.1	3.8	4.1	+ 410.0%
	179.7	63.1	156.9	130.0	212.7	223.4	

[a] Average annual price of the OPEC crude oil basket

[b] Average of low and high mid-year estimates

Sources: Middle East Economic Survey, Energy Tables: 2000–2005, Average Annual Prices, http://www.mees.com; Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region 1998–1999*

(New York: United Nations, 1999) for 1980, 1989 average annual oil prices and oil revenues; ESCWA, *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region 2004–2005* (New York: United Nations, 2005) for 2000–2005 oil revenues.

Lower- to middle-income Arab countries also experienced economic adversity during the 1980s and 1990s. Some, like Egypt and Syria, were affected directly by the softer oil market as their own oil revenues fell. Most were harmed indirectly by significant reductions in the flow of financial aid and worker remittances from wealthy oil-producing states or, in the case of Syria, from former Soviet bloc countries. Many poorer Arab economies were hurt by the costs, both direct and indirect, of prolonged regional conflicts (Syria, Palestine, Jordan) or civil wars (Lebanon, Sudan, Yemen) during this period. Some of the same countries which sympathized with Iraq during the first Gulf war (Yemen, Jordan, the Palestinians) suffered not only from the termination of aid but also from the forced return of hundreds of thousands of their nationals from the Gulf states. In short, the 'have-not' Arab states (and Lebanon) experienced a decade and a half or more of limited resource flows and high conflict-related costs. This contributed to weak economic growth rates, a decline/stagnation in per capita incomes, and serious unemployment problems.[34] By the 1990s, however, some were able to benefit from an easing of the conflicts they were involved in or from their contributions to the easing of other regional conflicts. Thus the Lebanese economy benefited greatly from the ending of its civil war in 1989 as well as the mobilization of substantial investment by Rafiq al-Hariri. Egypt experienced important economic gains, notably substantial debt relief, from its contribution to the first Gulf war coalition and its subsequent contribution to regional peacemaking activities. Jordan likewise benefited from its peace treaty and subsequent economic cooperation with Israel. Morocco and Tunisia, for their part, experienced economic improvement as a result of economic reforms and some privatization.[35] By the year 2000, these developments had translated into higher economic growth rates, an increase in per capita GDP, and increased financial reserves. By 2004 virtually all lower to middle income Arab countries (except Iraq and Syria) were experiencing at least modest economic improvement (Table 2). Although their economic concerns have now eased somewhat, major difficulties remain. Large segments of the population of these countries continue to suffer economically. Moreover, in Egypt and Syria, the combination of declining oil production and growing domestic demand for

energy is likely to reduce oil export revenues before long, although natural gas production is beginning to rise.[36] In addition, pressures from international financial institutions/donors for reductions in consumer subsidies to help ease budget deficits and for privatization measures with potential unemployment-generating effects, threaten to accentuate economic stresses in these societies.

Table 2

GDP Per Capita, Arab World 1980–2004 ($)

	1980	*1989*	*2000*	*2004*	*% change 1980–2004*
Qatar	34,077	14,104	27,500	40,714	+ 19.5%
UAE	29,323	14,660	22,466	23,976	- 18.2%
Kuwait	20,941	11,863	17,181	18,821	- 10.1%
Bahrain	9,034	8,392	11,000	14,571	+ 61.3%
Saudi Arabia	16,701	5,751	8,495	10,485	- 37.2%
Oman	6,048	4,942	8,291	9,185	+ 51.8%
Lebanon	1,526	1,070	4,800	5,228	+ 242.6%
Jordan	1,322	1,006	1,238	1,982	+ 49.9%
Syria	1,501	1,587	1,072	1,225	- 18.3%
Egypt	524	1,356	1,443	1,055	+ 101.3%
Iraq	4,078	3,880	1,207	907	- 77.7%
Yemen	468	678	491	674	+ 44.0%
Libya	11,972	4,976	7,509	4,561	+ 61.9%
Tunisia	1,368	1,263	2,041	2,820	+ 106.1%
Algeria	2,256	2,214	1,759	2,740	+ 21.4%
Morocco	919	970	1,146	1,716	+ 86.7%
Sudan	530	776	401	597	+ 12.6%
Mauritania	508	515	330	517	+ 1.8%

Sources: Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region 1998–1999* (New York: United Nations, 1999) for 1980, 1989 data on the GCC and other Eastern Arab States; United Nations,

Statistical Yearbook 1986–87, 1995 (New York: United Nations, 1987, 1995 for 1980, 1989 data on North African Arab states; Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) *Country Reports 2001* (October, November, December) for 2000 data on all Arab states (GDP ÷ population); Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Reports 2005* (August, September, October) for 2004 data on all Arab states (GDP ÷ population).

During the 1980s and 1990s therefore, economic concerns rose sharply in importance in the Arab world. In fact, they became as widespread and arguably as serious as internal and transnational political concerns. Apart from generating economic and human security problems, persistent economic difficulties also had a significant impact on regime and state security. In particular, they placed growing strains on Arab political systems, exacerbating social cleavages and feeding popular discontent, while at the same time hampering the ability of regimes to satisfy key support groups and co-opt new social forces.[37] Economic difficulties also have had a negative impact on state security, particularly in the medium to long term, by contributing to the weakness of national economies as well as limiting states' financial and technological capacity to develop a strong military.[38] Since the early 2000s, economic concerns have eased considerably, at least in the oil-producing states. With oil prices and revenues likely to remain elevated for some time to come, these concerns will presumably remain moderate. In less well-off Arab states, however, significant economic and related security concerns remain.

Apart from increasing the importance of economic concerns within Arab societies, the widespread economic difficulties of the 1980 and 1990s also clearly weakened the position of Arab states in both the global and regional arenas. This stemmed as much from the political unrest generated by economic conditions as from limitations on resources available for military and foreign policy activities. In addition, economic difficulties served to reinforce the economic dependence of the Arab world. Less wealthy Arab countries, in particular, became more reliant on the US and Western powers not only for aid but also for export markets, relief from debt burdens, and foreign investment. The protracted weakness in world oil markets also altered the balance of forces between producer and consumer states. With the reduced demand and the emergence of alternative sources of supply, major Arab oil producers found their economic (and political) leverage vis-à-vis the Western powers diminished considerably. In short, the relationship between major Arab oil producers and Western powers turned into one of asymmetrical interdependence rendering the

Arab world more vulnerable to external pressures.[39] This had a significant impact not only on the economic policies of many Arab states (macroeconomic policies, external and internal economic liberalization) but also on their foreign policies, particularly toward the Western powers and Israel.

The recent dramatic strengthening of oil markets and the probability that these conditions could persist for some time have enhanced both the economic position and leverage of the oil-producing states. This, in turn, has substantially reduced the asymmetry in their relationship with the West. Nevertheless, important economic vulnerabilities remain. These stem not only from the substantial economic needs of less well-off Arab states but also from the need of producer states for technology and services to develop their oil and natural gas reserves. Arab economic vulnerability is compounded by concerted efforts at policy coordination among the dominant economies and international financial institutions as well as by the rise of strong major power-centered groupings that exert a powerful economic pull on neighboring developing regions (apart from the United States, the European Union serves as an important pole of attraction for the Middle East and North Africa) via trade arrangements, aid and investment flows, and debt-relief measures. Outside the economic sphere, of course, dependence is reinforced by the extensive political and military needs of all Arab states.

Finally, prolonged economic difficulties have tended to encourage more flexible policies in conflictual relationships. Economic concerns have gained salience within Arab societies relative to nationalistic concerns that tend to prolong conflicts. Governments and populations alike are more aware of the economic costs (including opportunity costs) of conflict and war.[40] The impact of economic problems on both regime and state security is also more clearly recognized by decision makers. This altered political-economic calculus has served as a motivating factor encouraging some Arab governments to pursue accommodative policies in protracted regional conflicts. It also has been a useful permissive factor in getting populations to accept accommodative initiatives, that is, the prospect of peace dividends has helped to offset domestic political opposition at least in the short term.

Intersocietal (Relational) Conditions

Intersocietal relationships constitute another key set of conditions shaping the foreign policies/relations of Arab states. These depend on the

extent of identitive affinities between the peoples/societies of an area as well as the nature and density of the social and economic links between the countries involved. These are systemic conditions in the proper sense since they involve relationships between the units of a system, although they are of a textural rather than a structural type. Together, these two sets of factors shape the strength or weakness of the societal ties underpinning a state system.

Identitive Affinities/Differences

In the post-cold war period, considerable attention has been paid to the role of identitive differences/affinities in shaping relations both within and between states. The best known proponent of this view has been Samuel Huntington who has argued that identitive affinities, defined in broad "civilizational" (religious-cultural) terms, constitute the fundamental factor shaping post-cold war relationships. For Huntington, civilizational differences form the main faultlines in the contemporary international system.[41] Consequently, the more heterogeneous an area in civilizational terms, the more conflict-prone it will be. Furthermore, civilizational affinities, it is argued, lead to solidarity and mutual support (civilizational rallying) in the face of conflict with outsiders and thus limit the intensity of conflicts within civilizational groupings.

While Huntington's theory, with its emphasis on identitive factors, provides useful insights, its focus on 'civilizations' as the main unit of identification limits its utility in understanding contemporary international relations.[42] Overall, the Middle East can be characterized in civilizational terms as an area of substantial homogeneity (it is overwhelmingly Islamic), arguably the most homogenous of any developing region. Following Huntington's logic, one might expect the most acute conflict to take place between Islamic and non-Islamic countries/groups either within or outside the region. Relationships between Islamic states/societies of the region should be less conflictual and characterized by elements of solidarity against outsiders.

The theory does provide a partial guide to Middle Eastern international relations. With regard to extraregional relations, some states (Iraq, Iran) have indeed been involved in major clashes with Western powers. Furthermore, a heightened sense of collective identity as well as suspicion and hostility toward the 'other' have arisen both in Arab-Islamic societies and, to some extent, in Western societies in the wake of September

11, 2001 and other attacks in Western countries, as well as in the ensuing US-led war on Islamic terrorism. These feelings have intensified in most Middle Eastern societies as a result of US policies that appear insensitive to Arab/Islamic interests as well as Washington's double standard in the region, which combines continued indulgence of Israel, despite its persistent territorial claims and military encroachments, with punitive US policies toward Arab/Islamic 'rogue' states.[43] This climate of opinion has served as both a pressure and constraint on Arab governments. At the regional level there have also been acute conflicts between Islamic and non-Islamic groups/peoples both at the interstate (Arab–Israeli) and domestic levels (Lebanon, Sudan).

Other regional developments, however, raise questions about Huntington's theory. In the first place, many acute conflicts in the Middle East have occurred among Muslims. At the interstate level this includes the prolonged and bloody Iran–Iraq war and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait as well as numerous lesser conflicts. Intra-Muslim violence has been even more evident at the domestic level in such deadly conflicts as the Algerian civil war, growing sectarian violence in Iraq, and most political violence in Egypt. Secondly, while there has been a heightened 'civilizational' (Islamic) consciousness and sense of solidarity at the popular level, there has been limited civilizational rallying at the governmental level, for example, in Iraq or Iran's conflicts with the Western powers or even in Israel's conflict with neighboring Arab states. 'Rallying' has been much more attitudinal than behavioral in character and has not significantly altered government policies. In fact, at the governmental level there has been a pronounced tendency to cooperate with Western (non-Islamic) powers rather than to confront them (for example, Saudi Arabia, GCC states, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia). Such vertical cooperation has tended to be stronger than horizontal (intraregional, intra-Muslim) cooperation.

While the 'civilizational' dimension of identitive factors may have debatable explanatory power in the Middle East, other identitive differences/affinities have played, and continue to play, a role in regional international relations. Beneath the apparent civilizational homogeneity of Islam, there exist significant ethnolinguistic and cultural divisions (between Iranian, Arab, Kurdish, and Turkish peoples/cultures) and sectarian divisions (between Sunni and Shi'a).[44] There is a stronger correlation between these factors and conflict (whether interstate or

domestic) than there is with civilizational factors. Moreover, even where the axes of conflict do run along larger identitive lines, identitive concerns are generally not the main motivating factor. Rather, the conflicts are primarily about distributional or directional issues (including the role of Islam in society).[45] In the vast majority of cases, therefore, identitive differences serve primarily as intensifiers rather than independent generators of conflict.

While identitive differences are a feature of the overall Middle East region, and of most regions of the global south, the Arab world, for its part, has been characterized by extensive linguistic, cultural and, to a lesser extent, religious homogeneity. This substantial homogeneity, especially among elites, has in the past contributed to a strong sense of kinship and common identity.[46] This, in turn, led to a preoccupation with certain common issues and a sense of solidarity when any segment of the Arab community found itself in conflict with a non-Arab actor. However, it also generated intense (and critical) interest in the affairs of other Arab countries as well as challenges to the legitimacy of existing state units and pressures for political union. In short, a factor that ought to have facilitated cooperation among Arab states has served instead as a source of conflict. The ethnoreligious homogeneity of peoples has also contributed to the extensive permeability of Arab states and societies. This has taken several forms—the intense circulation and resonance of information, currents of opinion, and ideologies, the development among Arab populations of a strong identification with, and responsiveness to, leaders/political movements in other Arab states and the emergence of cross-border alliances between groups or individuals in one Arab state and leaders/movements in another. These conditions in turn have given rise to a *transnational* political process involving not only governments but also political movements and even individuals. As a result, Arab societies have been highly susceptible to transnational appeals. They have also experienced the activation of cross-border alliances and movements as well as the external penetration and manipulation of their internal politics. The aim of such activities has often been to delegitimize, destabilize, and ultimately overthrow opposing regimes, to reshape the basic policy directions of states, and frequently to undermine their political autonomy. Such transnational political warfare constituted the main instrument of conflict within the Arab system during most of its history.

In short, the Arab system of the 1950s and 1960s differed substantially from traditional state systems. In the traditional model, member states are assumed to resemble a set of billiard balls that come in contact at their hard outer shell, with governments largely able to insulate their domestic systems from external influences. Instead, the Arab system resembled a set of interconnected organisms separated only by porous membranes or, alternatively, a large-scale domestic system divided into compartments of varying degrees of permeability.

During the 1970s and 1980s, significant changes occurred in these aspects of the Arab arena. A reduction in the intensity of identification with the larger Arab community was in evidence as Arab governments and populations became increasingly preoccupied with the external and domestic problems of their own societies as well as with communal and class concerns. This in turn contributed to a decline in the permeability of Arab states/societies. The peoples of the Arab world appeared less disposed to identify with political leaders in other Arab states and much less likely to respond to their cross-border appeals. The Arab public had become at least partly immune to previous slogans and rallying cries due to the failure of their accompanying policies. Earlier transnational movements based on pan-Arab nationalism fragmented or disappeared outright. In short, not only the automatic spillover effects of events but also the potential for cross-border political mobilization declined significantly.[47] At the same time, the advent of an Islamic revolutionary regime in Iran (1979), the rise of Islamic movements in many Arab societies, and the participation of Islamists from various Arab countries in the anti-Soviet guerilla war in Afghanistan generated new bases of permeability and new sources of transnational political-ideological pressure.

The Kuwait crisis and subsequent coalition war with Iraq raised questions about these supposed trends toward the submergence of broader identities and an end to the permeability of Arab states/societies.[48] Saddam Hussein enjoyed a measure of success in his campaign for transnational political mobilization. His appeals to Arab nationalism and solidarity, as well as to Islam, in the face of Western "imperialism" and Israeli assertiveness, struck a responsive chord and produced substantial outpourings of support across much of the Arab world. The crisis raised political consciousness and mobilized popular opinion in Arab societies, generating significant pressures on many Arab governments. These developments clearly revealed not only the continuing permeability of Arab states but

also the persistence within Arab societies of a sense of attachment to the larger Arab community and an emerging Islamic consciousness. At the same time, the crisis demonstrated that there were important limits to such transnational political mobilization. The responsiveness to Saddam Hussein's appeals was not as widespread, or intense, as Nasser received in his day. While shaken, no regimes were overthrown or forced to change their policies in any major way.

Although the 1990–1991 Gulf war reawakened a sense of shared Arab identity and solidarity among attentive and mass publics, it also contributed to the further erosion of this solidarity at the governmental/elite level. This was particularly noticeable in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and other Gulf states. At one level, the immediacy of the threat and the forcefulness of the assertion of Iraqi interests generated, among elites and publics alike, a stronger sense of identification with their own states. At the same time, it created marked animosity not only toward Iraq but also those Arab peoples who sympathized with it, all of whom had been beneficiaries of considerable financial assistance from the Gulf states. The ensuing sense of betrayal led to a psychological distancing of these regimes and societies from the rest of the Arab world.[49] This was reflected not only in punitive measures toward countries siding with Iraq but also in apparent diminished sensitivity to the concerns and needs of other Arab societies. In turn, Saudi Arabian and Kuwaiti pressures on Yemen, Jordan, and the Palestinians, as well as against nationals of these countries residing in their territory, generated strong resentment among the target communities. The resulting tensions and ill will between elites and populations have subsided in most cases but have by no means disappeared. In short, the crisis and its aftermath served in many cases to accentuate the differences between Arab elites and publics as well as to intensify attachments to individual states and their interests.

A similar mixture of circumstances prevailed during the recent Palestinian intifada (2000–2005) and the US-UK war with Iraq and subsequent occupation of that country (2003–). At the governmental and to some extent the elite level, the sense of local identity (state and/or dynastic) predominates; national issues, both domestic and foreign, rather than larger Arab issues are the primary focus of attention; and *raison d'état* prevails over *raison de la nation* or *raison de l'umma* (the Arab Islamic community). However, the emergence during the last decade of transnational Arabic language satellite television channels with extensive coverage

of regional news, public affairs, and political/social issues has substantially increased the flow of information and opinion and generated much greater awareness of regional developments among Arab elites and populations. In particular, this has served to transmit riveting real-time images of regional conflicts in which Arab populations are experiencing severe pressures and violence at the hands of non-Arab powers (Palestinian–Israel conflict, US–Iraq conflict, and the US/Western campaign against Islamic terrorism). This has aroused Arab public opinion around issues of common concern.[50] This, in turn, has given rise to a renewed sense of attachment to the larger Arab community on the part of important segments of Arab societies, although this attachment has clearly diminished in intensity compared to Nasser's day. Moreover, a heightened sense of Islamic identity has emerged since the 1970s and has become an additional, and more powerful, basis of transnational identification. These broader identities may even be strengthened should the US overplay its current dominant position and continue to be perceived as insensitive, if not outright hostile, to the interests and values of Arab/Islamic countries. Thus it is premature to proclaim the definitive triumph of local nationalisms and the end of any broader sense of community within the Arab world, since many common concerns and frustrations persist among the populations of Arab/Islamic countries.

In addition, the two coalition wars against Iraq and the second Palestinian intifada reveal the continuing permeability of Arab states/societies and their consequent vulnerability to transnational pressures. Regional developments continue to resonate and generate discontent, particularly within countries that are viewed as too closely associated with the US or too accommodating toward Israel. While the pan-Arab mystique has declined and transnational movements based on it have failed, there has been a clear increase in transnational responsiveness and cross-border ties based on Islam.[51] Most of these ties involve nongovernmental groups but there are opportunities for governments to capitalize on the Islamic factor as well. Heightened Islamic consciousness has made Arab states vulnerable not only to transnational appeals and activity from within the Arab arena but also from the larger regional arena, notably from Iran. Here there has existed a dual basis of attraction. One is the revolutionary Islamic message; the other is the Shi'a character of the revolution, which has been attractive to Shi'a communities throughout the Arab world.[52] While both have generated

transnational political security concerns among Arab states, it is the latter aspect of Iran's appeal that arguably has been most effective.

The evidence with regard to permeability is therefore mixed. On the one hand, the persistence of broader affinities and issues within Arab societies ensures their continuing exposure to transnational political-ideological pressures. It is thus premature to talk of the end of permeability and the full consolidation of the Arab state system along the lines of the post-Westphalia European system. On the other hand, the various Gulf and regional crises, including the most recent ones, reveal that there are definite limits to transnational political mobilization in the region. This is due to a combination of the strength of local identities, the preoccupation of states and societies with their own problems, and the ability of governments to contain spillover effects through strong internal security measures.

Linkages

The level and nature of the linkages between societies is considered by many, especially liberal theorists, to be the most significant setting condition shaping relations between states. Most regions of the global south tend to be characterized by what Galtung termed a "feudal interaction pattern."[53] According to this model, countries of the periphery interact more intensely with developed societies of the center than with each other. Only limited links are supposed to exist among developing societies themselves. The Arab world, however, has been characterized by a high level of societal interconnectedness but much lower levels of economic interconnectedness. The former is due in large part to the extensive linguistic/cultural homogeneity among Arab countries. By way of contrast, in the larger region both societal and economic linkages (between Arab and non-Arab countries) have been very weak.

Social and communications links constitute one significant form of interconnectedness. These ties take several forms in the Arab world. One is the extensive movement of persons (Table 3), including both short-term visitors and students, workers, and others who take up residence in other Arab countries for varying periods. In fact, 65 to 70 percent of eastern Arab world travel is intraregional, more than in any other region of the global south. The most striking example is provided by the two million Palestinians who have migrated to various parts of the Arab world since the late 1940s. During the 1970s oil boom, many skilled and unskilled workers, teachers, and professionals migrated to

Table 3

Societal Links, Global South: Intraregional Travel (1997)

	Eastern Arab World		*Sub-Saharan Africa*		*East/ Southeast Asia + Pacific*		*South Asia*		*South/Central America + Caribbean*	
	Total	(%)	Total	(%)	Total	(%)	Total	(%)	Total	(%)
Intraregional	5.57[b] 6.32[c]	65.5[b] 74.3[c]	7.54	58.9	59.59	65.2	1.19	22.8	22.10	19.1
Europe/North America	1.68	19.8	2.53	19.8	22.90	25.0	1.64	31.2	85.05	73.7
Other destinations	0.49	5.9	2.73	21.3	8.93	9.8	2.41	46.0	8.23	7.2
	8.5	100.0	12.8	100.0	91.4	100.0	5.3	100.0	115.4	100.0

[a] Number of travelers in millions.
[b] Number and percentage of travelers within the Eastern Arab world alone.
[c] Number and percentage of travelers from the Eastern Arab world to the Eastern Arab world and Arab North Africa combined.

Sources: World Tourism Organization, *Yearbook of Tourism Statistics 1999* (Madrid: World Tourism Organization, 1999), Regional Tables, Outbound Travel by Region of Destination.

more prosperous Arab countries. The movement of workers slowed and remained relatively stable for roughly twenty years after the recession in the oil industry in the 1980s but has grown substantially once again during the recent oil boom (Table 8).

Similarities in language and culture combined with developments in communications technology have also contributed to the extensive flow of information, ideas, and opinion in the Arab world. The electronic media in particular have been important instruments for the diffusion of news and views. President Nasser was the first to take advantage of this, using radio (via the 'Voice of the Arabs' station) to carry his message and galvanize opinion throughout the Arab world. During the 1970s and 1980s, the growth of national communications media (particularly television) under governmental sponsorship tended to overshadow transnational communications, thereby reducing the permeability of Arab societies and reinforcing national preoccupations.

Beginning in the 1990s, the development of satellite communications technology provided a major boost to transnational communications links in the Arab world (Table 4). This is reflected in the rapid proliferation of Arab language satellite television channels serving region-wide audiences. The regional impact is particularly strong in the case of channels providing extensive coverage of news and public affairs as well as political, social, and religious issues, such as al-Jazeera, al-Arabiya, and Abu Dhabi TV.[54] The relative ease of diffusion of electronic signals across borders and the resulting substantial increase in the flow of information and opinion has served not only to increase the permeability of Arab societies but also to generate greater mutual awareness among Arab elites and peoples. It has also contributed to the mobilization of public opinion on issues of common concern,[55] namely regional conflicts in which Arab populations are experiencing severe pressures or violence at the hands of non-Arab powers (for example, the ongoing Israeli–Palestinian conflict, the allied bombing of Iraq targets in 1998, the Western campaign against Islamic terrorism post 9/11 particularly in Afghanistan, followed by the US-UK war and occupation of Iraq from 2003 on. In addition, it also serves to dilute narrower national and sub-regional perspectives and sensitize populations to a broader Arab perspective, thereby potentially strengthening a sense of Arab identity.[56] Despite the costs involved, access to satellite television has spread rapidly in the Arab world, extending beyond elites and attentive publics to ever wider sections of the public, with coverage

ranging from about 40–50 percent of the population in Egypt, Syria, and Jordan to 65–90 percent in the Gulf States and Lebanon. Conversely, Internet use is more limited in the Arab world with only 5 percent of the population currently enjoying access, significantly below the rates in East and Southeast Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean but higher than those in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Table 4

Communications Links, Arab World/Middle East: Satellite Television (2003–2004)

TV Households (millions)		*Satellite TV receivers* (millions)	*Population with access to Satellite TV (estimates)*[a] (millions)	% of total population
Saudi Arabia	3.67	3.40	17.0	71
Gulf Arab States	N/A	N/A	7.0–10.0	65–90
Egypt	13.31	5.94	29.70	41
Lebanon	0.85	0.79	3.95	95
Jordan	0.91	0.47	2.35	42
Syria	3.25	1.99	9.95	53
Algeria	4.71	4.20	21.00	63
Morocco	4.65	1.87	9.35	30
Tunisia	1.93	0.60	3.00	30
Turkey	14.77	4.88[b]	24.40	33
Israel	1.72	0.63[b]	3.15	46

[a] Estimates. The estimate of access to satellite broadcasts is based on the number of satellite TV receivers multiplied by a factor estimating the number of people who could view TV via each receiver (about 5).

[b] There are, in addition, sizeable numbers of cable TV receivers in Turkey and Israel.

Sources: EUTELSAT 2005 "The Cable and Satellite TV Market 2004," http://www.eutelsat.com for data on TV households and satellite TV receivers; percent access rates to satellite TV for the Gulf Arab states are based on estimates by Professor

Hussein Amin in Jon Alterman, *New Media, New Politics?* (Washington: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1998) and J. N. Fakhreddine, " Balancing Act: UAE Satellite TV Channels between National and Pan-Arab Markets," *Transnational Broadcasting Studies*, 13, 2004, http://www.tbsjournal.com; estimates of total population (2004) used as a reference point for calculation of percent access rates to satellite TV are drawn from the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), *Country Reports 2005* (August, September, October).

Table 5

Communications Links, Global South: Internet Use (2004)

	Internet users per 1000 population (% internet access)	*Internet users* (millions)
East/Southeast Asia[a]	143 (14.3%)	100.994
(with China)[b]	97 (9.7%)	194.994
Latin America/Caribbean	115 (11.5%)	62.500
Middle East[c]	65 (6.5%)	22.148
Arab World[d]	52 (5.2%)	16.787
South Asia	26 (2.6%)	37.800
Sub-Saharan Africa	19 (1.9%)	12.900

[a] East Asia, Southeast Asia, Pacific excluding Japan, China, Australia, New Zealand.

[b] East Asia, Southeast Asia, Pacific including China.

[c] Arab states of Southwest Asia, Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Israel.

[d] Arab states of Southwest Asia, Egypt, Arab states of North Africa.

Sources: World Bank, *World Development Indicators Database*, Online Tables, 2005, Internet Users, Internet Users per 1,000 population.

There is also some evidence of regionalization in the print media though it is more limited. Here, extraregionally based newspapers and magazines operated by a multinational Arab staff and owned by Saudi nationals have emerged, notably *al-Hayat*, *Asharq al-Awsat*, and *al-Quds al-'Arabi*.[57] Regional newspapers have many of the same effects as regional satellite television, although on a much smaller scale. For one thing, the audience is more limited in both absolute and relative terms. In Egypt,

for example, the leading regional newspaper, *al-Hayat*, sells only several thousand copies daily (and 40,000 regionally), albeit to a quality readership of elites and opinion leaders, compared to a readership of 700,000 for Egypt's leading newspaper *al-Ahram* and an audience of possibly 30 million for transnational Arab television.[58] Moreover, it is much easier to block the transnational diffusion of newspapers and magazines since the printed media are more subject to government control.

In short, the Arab world (particularly the eastern Arab world) continues to resemble a large sound chamber in which currents of thought as well as information circulate widely and enjoy considerable resonance across state frontiers. The intensity of the sound has diminished since Nasser's day and, to a lesser extent, the scope of the reverberations. Still, the Arab world is characterized by extensive flows of social communication and multiple channels of contact between societies. These transnational links have remained strong and arguably have even increased in recent years. By way of contrast, social and communications links between the Arab world and non-Arab perimeter states (Israel, Turkey, and Iran) are far more limited, with the partial exception of Iran. These larger regional links are hampered by linguistic-cultural differences and lengthy legacies of political conflict.

Economic links, on the other hand, have generally been weak both in the Arab world and in the overall Middle East arena. Among Arab states, while trade ties have consistently remained limited (Table 6),[59] other types of economic links increased considerably during the 1970s due to boom conditions in the petroleum industry. Large sums were transferred from wealthy oil-producing states to less well-off states, particularly those on the front line with Israel. The Arab world became the only regional system in the global south characterized by major intraregional financial flows, which came to represent a substantial percentage of the total financial assistance received by system members. Large numbers of workers flocked from poorer Arab countries to the oil-producing states to fill positions created by the oil boom. This in turn generated a substantial return flow of savings to their home countries. As a result, the Arab world came to constitute much more of an economic system.

From the mid-1980s on, the substantial decline in the demand for oil, and the consequent slump in revenues, brought a marked reduction in economic links within the Arab world. Intraregional aid flows dropped significantly as oil-producing states cut back on assistance programs (Table 7). This was accompanied by a slowdown in the flow of

remittances as employment opportunities contracted (Table 8).[60] The 1990–91 Gulf crisis resulted in a further curtailment of financial flows. At one level, Saudi Arabian and Kuwaiti anger at the stands taken by Yemeni, Palestinian, and Jordanian authorities led to a cessation of financial assistance to these countries and the forced repatriation of a million persons, although new opportunities opened up for other Arab nationals (for example, Egyptians).[61] The persistent softness of oil markets in the 1990s combined with the drain on the financial resources of Gulf states arising from the costs of the war and subsequent arms buildups further served to limit financial flows. The renewed oil boom in recent years has resulted in a noticeable increase in Arab economic links once again, at least in workers' remittances and foreign direct investment flows (Table 8, 9). At the same time, a number of constraints have been present, notably renewed security concerns about the potential radicalizing effects of expatriate Arab workers, the new emphasis in the Gulf states on the employment of local personnel, continuing political tensions between Arab countries, the reduction of economic links between Iraq and the Arab world since the 2003 war, and the sharp decline in the Syrian presence in Lebanon. Thus while the density of economic links in the Arab world is higher than indicated by trade flows alone,[62] it is limited in comparison with Asia and South America.

Table 6

Economic Links, Global South: Intraregional Trade (as a % of the trading activity of regional states)

	Exports			Imports		
	1989	*2000*	*2004*	*1989*	*2000*	*2004*
Asia	31.1	39.0	42.8	29.2	40.8	43.0
Latin America/Caribbean	13.9	17.3	17.3	17.4	16.9	18.6
Middle East (and Iran, Israel, Turkey)	6.2	6.8	9.9	7.2	9.2	10.5
Eastern Arab World	10.9	8.8[a]	8.8[b]	9.1	8.8[a]	8.8[b]
Africa	5.8	9.4	8.6	6.1	10.8	9.9

[a] Exports and imports combined.

[b] 2003 data.

Sources: Adapted from International Monetary Fund, *Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook 1990, 2001, 2005* (Washington: International Monetary Fund, 1990, 2001, 2005) regional tables (plus country tables for Turkey, Libya), for main regional tables 1989, 2000, 2004; Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Statistical Abstract of the ESCWA Region 2000* (New York: United Nations, 2000) for Eastern Arab World data for 1989; Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Annual Review of Developments in Globalization and Regional Integration in the Countries of the ESCWA Region 2004* (New York: United Nations 2005) for Eastern Arab World data for 2000, 2003.

Table 7

Economic Links, Arab World: Official Aid (million $)

	1975	1980	1989	1999	2004
Total	4708	5534	823	337	676
Recipients					
Egypt	2525	2	83	89	57
Geographic Syria/ Arabian Peninsula	1335	3803	236	131	458
North Africa	600	1561	322	117	160
Unspecified	248	168	182	0	0

Sources: Adapted from Pierre van der Boogaerde, *Financial Assistance from Arab Countries and Arab Regional Institutions*, Occasional Paper 87 (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 1991) Table 32 for 1975, 1980, 1989 data; 1999 and 2004 data are adapted from OECD, *Geographic Distribution of Financial Flows to Aid Recipients 1995–1999, 2000–2004* (Paris: OECD, 2001, 2006), Country Tables (ODA Loans Gross, Grants); 2004 data consist of entries for Arab Agencies (Multilateral) and Other Donor Countries.

Table 8

Economic Links, Arab World: Worker Remittances[a] (billion $)

1975	1980	1989	1999	2004[b]
1.13	5.99	6.44	7.54[c]	15.36

[a] The figures represent total remittances received through *official channels* by Arab countries whose migrant workers were concentrated heavily within

the Arab world, for example, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, Sudan, Tunisia. It does not include North African Arab countries whose remittances are derived almost entirely from workers in Europe, for example, Morocco, Algeria.

[b] In 2004 the main recipient countries were Lebanon ($5.1 billion), Egypt ($3.3 billion), and Jordan ($2 billion).

[c] Data for Syria unavailable for this year.

Sources: Adapted from Pierre van der Boogaerde, *Financial Assistance from Arab Countries and Arab Regional Institutions*, Occasional Paper 87 (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 1991) Table 32 for 1975, 1980, 1989 data. 1999 and 2004 data are drawn from International Monetary Fund, *Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2001, 2005*, Part 2, World and Regional Tables, Table B-19 (Workers Remittances), Credit component (Washington: International Monetary Fund, 2001 and 2005).

Table 9

Economic Links, Arab World: Foreign Direct Investment Flows (billion $)

	Average annual flow 1985–2000	*2000*	*2002*	*2003**
Global FDI flows to the Arab world	3.1	2.6	5.4	8.6
Inter-Arab FDI flows	1.0	1.8	3.0	3.7

* In 2003 the main suppliers of inter-Arab FDI were Saudi Arabia ($1.3 billion), the UAE ($850 million), and Kuwait ($650 million). The main recipients were Lebanon ($850 million), Morocco ($670 million), and the UAE ($650 million)

Sources: UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), *World Investment Report 1997, 2001* (UN: New York and Geneva, 1997, 2001) Annex, Table B.1 for Global FDI Flows to the Arab World (1997 report for 1985–1994, 2001 report for 1995–2000); Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), *Annual Review of Developments in Globalization and Regional Integration in the Countries of the ESCWA Region, 2004* (New York: United Nations, 2005) Table 2 for Global FDI Flows to the Arab World, 2000, 2002, 2003 and p. 46 of the same volume (text) for Inter-Arab FDI Flows 1985–2000, 2002, 2003. The 2000 figure for Inter-Arab FDI Flows is drawn from the 2002 issue of the latter publication, p. 36.

Economic ties are more limited in the overall Middle East region. Trade links are at roughly the same level as those among Arab states but financial and labor flows are virtually nonexistent. The only exceptions have been Israeli–Palestinian/Jordanian trade and labor links, the UAE–Iran transshipment trade, and Iraq's use of Turkish pipelines for oil exports. In recent years, these have been supplemented by growing Turkish–Israeli economic ties and developing Iraq–Iran trade ties. In addition, some Jordanian–Israeli cooperation in the mid-1990s and Egyptian–Israeli manufacturing cooperation through the Qualified Industrial Zones initiative in 2004 has developed as part of a US-sponsored partial extension of free trade privileges for Israeli products in the US market to Jordan and Egypt.[63] There are also elements of economic interconnectedness arising from joint involvement in the oil industry (Iran and Arab producing states within OPEC) and shared water systems (Turkey and Syria/Iraq, Israel and adjacent Arab states) although the latter have produced much more conflict than cooperation. Nevertheless here, as in the Arab world, a vertical pattern of economic interaction still prevails.

For proponents of the liberal paradigm, the paucity of economic links, particularly in the context of already tense relationships, is a cause for concern. The weakness of these links means that an important constraint on interstate violence or war is absent, thereby enhancing the prospect of such outcomes. Such a judgment may be premature, however. There are some indications from other developing regions (East/Southeast Asia), as well as from the Middle East itself, that the increasing integration of regional states into the global market economy and the ensuing shared vertical links with Western economic powers may serve as substitute constraints in limiting regional violence/war.[64] This stems from the growing awareness that adventurous behavior could hamper the much-needed flow of aid and investment as well as debt relief from major economic powers and international financial institutions.

As the peace process gained momentum in the 1990s, attempts were made by the US and Israel to reinforce these vertical links with economic ties between Israel and the Arab states.[65] These were justified both as confidence-building measures (especially toward Israel) during the process of accommodation and ultimately as peace-consolidating measures following conflict resolution.[66] While such steps were welcomed openly by Jordan and quietly by some Gulf and North African states, they were met with resistance from the Syrian government and from publics in

Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, and other Arab countries. There have been two main sets of concerns in this regard. First, objections have been raised to measures of normalization on the part of Arab states before an honorable, comprehensive settlement is reached between Israel and Syria as well as the Palestinians. Economic cooperation, it is argued, could reduce Israel's incentive to reach such a settlement. Secondly, even if an honorable settlement were reached there were fears that, given Israel's more advanced economy, the extensive liberalization of economic relations would lead not to interdependence and mutual constraints but rather to dependence and Israeli domination in the case of neighboring Arab states, to Israeli penetration and significant levers of influence in other parts of the Arab world, and to privileged ties with outsiders to the detriment of Arab economic cooperation.[67] As a result of US prodding, some progress has been made in recent years in manufacturing and trade cooperation between Israel and certain Arab (Jordan/Egypt) and Middle Eastern states (Turkey), despite the lack of real movement toward an overall settlement. Should prospects improve for a peace settlement, further increases in economic links between Israel and the Arab world would be likely. However, given the political as well as economic obstacles, these are not likely to attain the critical mass needed to serve as a deterrent to renewed conflict/violence. Shared economic ties to the Western powers will continue to constitute more effective constraints in this regard.

Systemic Conditions: Structural and Interstate Factors

We turn now to the characteristics of the regional system proper, namely the changing patterns of relations among regional states. Three sets of systemic properties will be explored here: the framework of regional interaction (interactional conditions), the pattern and level of power (structural conditions), and the quality of relations among regional states (behavioral conditions).

Interactional Conditions

The framework of regional interaction has undergone considerable change over the years. For much of the postwar period the Middle East was a segmented regional arena consisting of several distinct but overlapping subregional clusters of states.[68] Until the late 1960s, there were two main clusters—the inter-Arab and the Arab–Israeli.[69] The Arab cluster

was the largest and arguably the core component of the regional system.[70] Not only did the overlapping presence of Arab states constitute the link between different clusters but interaction within the Arab world was also both broader in scope (multidimensional) and more intense overall than in other clusters. The strength of the linkages between Arab states/societies stemmed largely from the sense of common Arab identity that generated a strong interest in each other's policies and gave rise to considerable pressures for solidarity in the face of challenges by outsiders. The permeability of Arab states/societies also heightened transnational activities and relationships. As a result, Arab governments tended to focus more continuously (and attentively) on inter-Arab developments than on other regional relationships. In the Arab–Israeli cluster, relations have been polarized (with Israel and the neighboring Arab states confronting each other) and unidimensional (military-conflictual) in character.[71] Other forms of interaction were virtually nonexistent as the Arab system remained relatively impermeable to normal contact with Israel. By the 1970s, a new regional subsystem emerged in the Gulf area.[72] A number of factors contributed to this, notably the achievement of independence by several small Gulf Arab states following Britain's withdrawal from the area and deepening tensions between the states of this area. Elsewhere in the region, Turkey, after decades of inattention to the Middle East, became increasingly involved with its regional neighbors in the 1980s and 1990s over a wide range of issues (oil supplies/pipelines, water issues, the Kurdish problem, the Islamic revolution in Iran, the Iraq problem, and Syrian territorial claims).[73] This gave rise to a new 'northern sector' encompassing Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran.

From the 1970s on, the pattern of regional interaction began to change in other ways as well. To begin with, while the regional arena remained largely segmented, the center of gravity of regional relations shifted as the Arab–Israeli and Gulf sectors became the arenas of most intense interaction.[74] In the Arab–Israeli sector, the 1967 war resulted in territorial losses for neighboring Arab states giving them, for the first time, a direct stake in the conflict. This heightened stake and the accompanying determination to recover their territory led to extensive arms buildups and forty more years of conflict punctuated by three more wars (in 1973, 1982, 2006), a violent transnational conflict in south Lebanon, and two major insurrections in Palestine (1987–1990, 2000–2005), as well as two peace settlements (Israel–Egypt, Israel–Jordan)

and two sporadic "peace processes" (Israel–Palestine, Israel–Syria). Needless to say, this conflict became the overwhelming preoccupation of the frontline Arab parties. In the Gulf sector, Iran's growing ambitions, periodic tensions between Iraq and Gulf Arab states (especially Kuwait), and the heightened importance of the area's oil all served to intensify interaction and turn the Gulf sector into the primary focus of attention for the states of this area.[75] This tendency became strongly pronounced after the Islamic revolution in Iran and the outbreak of the long and bloody Iraq–Iran war (1980–1988). Relations within the Arab sector remained wide-ranging but declined in intensity. The simultaneous existence of acute conflicts with perimeter powers on two distinct fronts led to divided preoccupations, as Arab states in each sector concentrated their attention and energies on immediate problems in their own areas. This, together with the declining appeal of pan-Arabism and pan-Arab issues, contributed to the increasing fragmentation and ineffectiveness of the Arab system.

For much of the postwar period then, the main 'systems' were sub-regional in character: interaction within each sector (subsystem) was relatively intense while cross-sector/region-wide interaction was much weaker. Since the late 1970s there has been a slow but steady expansion/diversification of interaction between sub-regional sectors. After the initial wars in the Gulf, this process intensified considerably, giving rise to new regional interaction patterns. The most important contributing factor has been the expanding range and scope of involvement of non-Arab perimeter powers within the region. In recent decades both Israel and Iran have extended their reach and activities beyond their immediate neighborhoods to other parts of the region. This was facilitated by developments in military technology and an emerging 'peace process' in the case of Israel, and by a combination of the growing appeal of Islamic ideas and movements and the resurgence of Shi'a consciousness across the region in the case of Iran.[76] Turkey, for its part, experienced increased friction with its regional neighbors but closer ties with Israel. In addition to the expansion of the potential for hostile interaction, the post 1990–91 Gulf war period witnessed the development of a variety of other contacts between Arab states and perimeter powers in both Arab–Israeli and Gulf sectors. This expanding regional reach/activity of the perimeter powers brought them into more intensive contact with Arab states near and far as well with each other.

The growing regionalization of interaction has created a genuine region-wide security complex characterized by increasing military, political-diplomatic, and transnational political linkages.[77] In the military sphere, key states have acquired, or are on the road to acquiring, a region-wide military power projection capacity (Table 13). Israel is currently the only state with a developed long-range strike capacity (air power and missiles). However, Iran has made substantial progress in this area and should have a region-wide projection capacity within a few years. It has also provided a substantial arsenal of short-range rockets, missiles, and related training to Lebanese Shi'a military forces (Hizbullah) for use vis-à-vis Israel. Others (Syria, Saudi Arabia) have developed some shorter-range delivery capacity. With Middle Eastern states increasingly exposed to military pressures from outside as well as inside their respective sectors, a region-wide military security complex is emerging. Increased linkages have also been in evidence in the political-diplomatic sphere. Here Israel had virtually no official interaction with the Arab world until its peace treaty with Egypt in 1979. The launching of the 'peace process' in the 1990s led to a substantial expansion of political-diplomatic contacts with Arab frontline states as well as with those of the Gulf and North Africa.[78] Most were subsequently suspended but some contacts do remain even if downgraded for now. For its part, Iran under the Shah had developed ties with a number of Arab states as well as Israel and Turkey. Under the Islamic regime, virtually all links were broken. Since the 1990–91 Gulf war, Iran has made considerable progress in restoring relations with Saudi Arabia/the GCC states, Egypt, and Turkey in addition to maintaining ties with Syria, Lebanon, and the Sudan.[79] While many of these links are sporadic or limited, a region-wide political-diplomatic chessboard is clearly in the process of forming. Transnational political links constitute another dimension of expanded regional interaction. Previously such links were largely limited to the Arab system where they were extremely intense. By the 1990s, the growing appeal of Islamic ideals and the strength of Islamist movements along with the sharpening of identitive cleavages within societies (Sunni vs. Shi'a, Kurds vs. Turks/Arabs and even Iranians) served to draw Iran, Turkey, and the Arab world into a broader, more diversified network of transnational ties. In this connection, the growing ties between Iran and Shi'a political movements in Iraq and Lebanon as well as Sunni Islamic movements in Palestine have been particularly significant. On the other hand, economic ties, at least in their traditional form (trade),

remain relatively limited within the region (see Table 6). However, in addition to inter-Arab financial and labor flows, there are some economic links between perimeter powers and the Arab world involving the oil industry (linking Iran and Arab oil producers), shared water systems (Turkey and Syria/Iraq, Israel and the neighboring Arab states) and more broadly based links between Israel and Jordan/Palestine as well as Turkey.

This emerging region-wide security complex has not eliminated the subregional sectors. In fact they not only persist but arguably remain the locus of the most intense interaction in the area. However, they are all increasingly enmeshed in a wider network of regional relations. The Arab system in particular continues to function but is experiencing an increasing erosion of its boundaries and heightened permeability to a broad range of pressures and activities from the perimeter powers. In short, the Middle East regional system is not a single undifferentiated arena but rather a complex of partly distinct but overlapping and interrelated sectors. In many ways, it remains a 'system of systems.'

Structural Conditions

Structural conditions (the distribution and level of power) are arguably the main system-level factor shaping the security concerns and policies of states. Given current regional interaction patterns, structural features will be explored at two levels: the overall regional arena (i.e., the relative positions of Arab states and non-Arab perimeter states) and the Arab arena.

Middle Eastern System

The Middle East is characterized by relatively high levels of hard power resources compared to most systems of developing states. This is particularly evident in the military sphere. Here Middle Eastern states are first overall in the global south with regard to tank forces, per capita defense expenditures, and arms transfers, but second to those of East Asia in military manpower, combat aircraft, and total military expenditures (Table 10). Military capabilities have continued to rise since the first Gulf war (especially air power, missile capacity, and weapons of mass destruction) but defense expenditures declined in the late 1990s and early 2000s due to weak oil revenues. The Middle East is weaker in terms of economic capabilities (Table 11). Per capita income is second highest in the global south (after South and Central America) as are foreign exchange reserves (far behind East and Southeast Asia). The Middle East is also far behind

Table 10

Military Capabilities, Developing Regions (2004)

Military Manpower				*Combat Aircraft*			*Tanks*[d]			*Military Expenditures/ GDP*	*Overall*
	thousands	(ave)[e]	%	units	(ave)[e]	%	units	(ave)[e]	%	%	%
East/Southeast Asia (incl. China)[a]	6,307	(450)	43.3	5,098	(364)	43.1	16,914	(1208)	31.4	2.0	39.2
Middle East/North Africa[b]	3,575	(170)	24.5	3,801	(181)	32.2	26,253	(1250)	48.7	5.6	35.1
South Asia	2,276	(379)	15.6	1,292	(215)	10.9	6,936	(1156)	12.9	2.8	13.2
South/Central America[c]	1,245	(62)	8.5	1,036	(52)	8.8	2,098	(105)	3.9	1.3	7.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	1,173	(30)	8.1	586	(20)	4.9	656	(42)	3.1	1.3	5.4
	14,576		100.0	11,813		100.0	53,857		100.0		100.0

[a] Includes China but not Japan and the states of the Pacific.
[b] Includes Israel, Turkey, Iran plus the Arab states of the Middle East and North Africa.
[c] Includes Mexico and Cuba but not the Caribbean states.
[d] Includes Main Battle Tanks (MBT) but only a small fraction of light tanks.
[e] Figures in brackets denote the average number of units per country in the region.

Source: International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2005–2006* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for IISS, 2005).

Table 11

Economic Capabilities, Developing Regions (2004)

GDP billion $ (ave)[d]			%	*GDP Per Capita* $ (ave)[e]	%	*Foreign Direct Investment* billion $ (ave)[d]		%	*Foreign Exchange Reserves* billion $ (ave)[d]		%	*Overall* %
East/Southeast Asia[a]	3,907	(244)	44.9	1,978	19.2	131	(8.2)	58.2	1,686	(105)	70.5	48.2
South/Central America[b]	1,996	(100)	22.9	3,840	37.2	57	(2.8)	25.3	212	(11)	8.9	23.6
Middle East/North Africa[c]	1,425	(68)	16.4	3,163	30.7	17	(0.8)	7.6	290	(14)	12.1	16.7
South Asia	877	(125)	10.2	608	5.9	7	(1.0)	3.1	145	(21)	6.0	6.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	493	(12)	5.6	719	7.0	13	(0.3)	5.8	59	(1.4)	2.5	5.2
	8,698		100.0	10,308	100.0	225		100.0	2392		100.0	100.0

[a] Includes China but not Japan and the states of the Pacific.
[b] Includes Mexico and Cuba but not the Caribbean states.
[c] Includes Israel, Turkey, Iran plus the Arab states of the Middle East and North Africa.
[d] Figures in brackets denote the average amounts per country in the region.
[e] Regional GDP totals divided by regional population totals.

Sources: Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Reports, 2005* (Main Reports: August, September, October) for Middle Eastern and North African states and *Country Reports, 2006* (Main Reports—February, March, April, May) for the remaining regions (London: Economist Intelligence Unit, 2005 and 2006).

these two regions in terms of size of GDP and foreign direct investment. For nearly two decades from the mid-1980s to 2000, economic capabilities stagnated or even declined in much of the region due to a substantial decline in oil revenues. The lack of diversified economic development, limited flows of foreign investment/foreign aid, and questionable economic management compounded the situation. The sharp increase in oil revenues in recent years has greatly improved the financial position of the oil-producing states. However, overall economic capabilities have grown at a slower rate due to the persistent constraints mentioned above.

Military capabilities constitute an important basis of power and influence in the larger Middle East arena due to the intensity of regional conflicts, the high levels of military strength, and the existence of significant power imbalances. Military strength is not only useful for deterrence and defense but also continues to be usable for other coercive purposes, as evidenced by the recurrent resort to force/coercive diplomacy in recent decades, particularly between perimeter or external powers and Arab states. Potential coercive uses of military power include: the maintenance of control over neighboring occupied territories (Israel vis-à-vis Palestinian and Syrian territories, Iran vis-à-vis contested Gulf islands, Syria in Lebanon until 2005); armed incursions into neighboring territories to respond to cross-border attacks or to attack hostile forces, support affiliated groups, or generally to exert influence (Israel vis-à-vis Lebanon and the Palestinian territories, Turkish activity in northern Iraq, and potentially Iran in southern Iraq); and finally the attempted destruction of emerging nuclear forces or other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery (Israel vs. Iraq previously, or Iran and Syria potentially). While such limited uses of force are likely to continue, the regional buildup and spread of WMD and missile delivery systems, as well as the substantial levels of damage they can generate, are likely to operate increasingly as constraints on the resort to large scale or extreme forms of force in the region.

Economic capabilities may not be as important as military capabilities in the short term but in the medium to long term they are crucial power resources. To begin with, they underpin all other types of capability. Financial resources are essential for developing large well-equipped armed forces, while a country's level of technological development is a key determinant of national defense production capacity (which in turn shapes not only the level of military capabilities but also the degree of

dependence vis-à-vis major power arms suppliers). Moreover, economic conditions have a substantial impact on the degree of internal cohesion of a country and the level of support for a regime, which are key factors in an effective foreign policy. Economic capabilities also constitute instruments of influence in their own right. However, such direct uses have been more limited in the overall Middle Eastern system than in the Arab system. For one thing, given the weak economic links in the larger regional arena, there is limited scope to use direct economic pressures coercively. One important exception is shared water systems, where riparian states, especially upstream states, are in a position to exert substantial pressures through the reduction of water flows; another is international oil pipeline facilities. There is more scope, however, for employing economic capabilities directly as rewards—for example, the provision of aid, technology, expertise, access to investment, access to transit facilities or water supplies, and the opening of markets. Israel and to a lesser extent Turkey are well positioned to provide some of these services, which could generate levers of influence. However, in Israel's case, such links are likely to remain limited (apart from Palestine and Jordan) until there has been more substantial progress toward a mutually acceptable settlement on the Syrian and, especially, the Palestinian front.

Political capabilities, both external and internal, retain their usefulness as soft power resources in the region. External political capabilities, namely the cross-border appeal of the leadership, policies, and/or ideologies of governments and countries remain important in principle given the continued permeability and unsettled direction of Middle Eastern states and societies. However, the former principal basis of such influence, namely the sense of common identity and solidarity among Arab societies, has declined considerably in intensity, as noted earlier. Moreover, no existing Arab governments appear to have the prestige and credibility to effectively undertake such transnational political or ideological mobilization. At the same time, the spread and intensification of Islamic consciousness across the region has created a new basis for cross-border responsiveness and ties. Few, if any, Middle Eastern governments, however, with the exception of Iran and possibly Saudi Arabia, appear to have the credentials and appeal to take advantage of these opportunities. Even in the case of Iran it is much more the Shi'a character of the revolution (that is, the identitive factor) than the Islamic message itself (the ideological factor) that is the basis of its appeal and influence, which

Table 12

Conventional Military Capabilities, Middle East (2004)

Military Manpower			*Tanks (high/medium quality)*		*Combat Aircraft (high quality)*		*Overall*
	thousands	%	units	%	units	%	%
Israel	525[a]	17.5	2,790	22.9	340	22.0	20.8
Turkey	515	17.1	1,329[d]	10.9	358[d]	23.1	17.1
Iran	545[b]	18.1	705	5.8	127[e]	8.2	10.7
Egypt	468	15.6	2,500	20.5	155	10.0	15.4
Syria	307	10.2	2,500	20.5	92	6.0	12.2
Saudi Arabia	199	6.6	565	4.6	265[e]	17.1	9.4
UAE	50	1.7	300	2.5	76[e]	4.9	3.0
Jordan	100	3.3	576	4.7	16	1.0	3.0
Kuwait	15	0.5	368	3.0	51[e]	3.3	2.3
Yemen	66	2.2	310	2.5	10[e]	0.6	1.8
Oman	41	1.4	117	1.0	24[e]	1.6	1.3
Bahrain	11	0.3	140	1.1	22[e]	1.4	0.9
Lebanon	72	2.4	0	0	0	0	0.8
Qatar	12	0.4	0	0	12[e]	0.8	0.4
Iraq	80[c]	2.7	0	0	0	0	0.9
	3,006	100.0	12,200	100.0	1,548	100.0	100.0

[a] Israeli figures involve *mobilized* manpower (see Cordesman below, Figure 5.24). All others involve *active* forces.

[b] Includes Revolutionary Guard.

[c] Includes National Guard.

[d] Figures for Turkey adjusted from IISS, *The Military Balance* according to Cordesman's standards.

[e] Figures for Gulf states adjusted from Cordesman's tables to exclude medium quality aircraft.

Sources: International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) *The Military Balance 2005–2006* (Abingdon, UK; Routledge for IISS, 2005) for military manpower; Anthony Cordesman, *The Military Balance in the Middle East* (Westport, CT: Praeger/Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, 2004) for high and medium quality tanks and high quality aircraft (adapted from IISS).

Table 13

Nonconventional Military Capabilities (WMD), Middle East

	Nuclear, Chemical, Biological Weapons	Delivery Systems
Israel	Active nuclear weapons program Advanced production capability 150–200 nuclear weapons Active chemical weapons program Advanced production capability Some weaponization Probable biological weapons program Production capability	100 short (500 km) + medium-range (1500 km) + some longer-range (3000 km) nuclear capable missiles 200–400 medium + longer-range (1600, 3500 km) nuclear capable aircraft Nuclear + chemical weapons delivery capacity
Iran	Nuclear weapons research No weapons production capability yet (Warheads?) Probable chemical weapons program Probable production capability Possibly some weaponization Probable biological weapons program Probable limited production capability Weaponization uncertain	400 short-range missiles (300–500 km) Some medium-range missiles (1300 km) Some aircraft delivery capacity Probable chemical and possible biological weapons delivery capacity

	Nuclear, Chemical, Biological Weapons	Delivery Systems
Turkey	No evidence of nuclear weapons program (nuclear research only) No evidence of chemical weapons program No evidence of biological weapons program	Very short-range missiles (below 300 km)
Syria	No evidence of nuclear weapons program (nuclear research only) Active chemical weapons program Advanced production capability Weaponization Biological weapons research	400 short-range missiles (300–600 km) Some aircraft delivery capacity Chemical weapons delivery capacity
Egypt	No evidence of nuclear weapons program (nuclear research only) Probable chemical weapons production program Possibly some weaponization Biological weapons research Possible production capability	Some (50?) short-range missiles (300–500 km) Some aircraft delivery capacity Probable chemical weapons delivery capacity
Saudi Arabia	No evidence of nuclear weapons program No evidence of chemical weapons program No evidence of biological weapons program	40–60 medium- to long-range missiles (2000+ km)

Sources: Center for Non-Proliferation Studies (CNS) (Monterey Institute of International Studies), *Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East (2001)—Overview of NBC Weapons: Israel, Iran, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Saudi Arabia*, http://www.cns.miis.

edu/research/wmdme; CNS and Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), *WMD Country Profiles Database (2006): Israel, Iran, Syria, Egypt* http://www.nti.org/e_research/profiles/index.html; Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Proliferation News* – World Missile Chart 2006, Chemical Weapons Status 2005, Biological Weapons Status 2005, Country Resources – Israel Nuclear Forces 2005, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/npp; Ian O. Lessor "Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East" in *The Future Security Environment in the Middle East*, eds. Nora Bensahel and Daniel L. Byman (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2004); Joseph Cirincione, Jon Wolfstal, and Miriam Rajkumar, *Deadly Arsenals: Nuclear Biological and Chemical Threats* (2nd ed.) (Washington: Carnegie Endowment, 2005) chapters on Israel and Iran; Magnus Normark, Anders Lindblad, Anders Norqvist et al., "Syria and WMD: Incentives and Capabilities" (Stockholm: Swedish Defense Research Agency, 2004), http://www.nti.org/e_research/profiles/syria/index.html.

are largely restricted to Shi'a communities across the region. Thus while there are significant opportunities to use the Islamic factor to enhance transnational influence, on the whole it is nonstate actors (that is, political-religious movements) rather than states who appear to have benefited most from this.

Although external political capabilities have declined as a power resource, internal political capabilities, in the form of the level of domestic support for governments and the degree of cohesion of societies and states, clearly remain a key factor in a country's regional position. Weakness in these areas renders a state not only highly vulnerable to cross-border appeals and subversive pressures but also unable to act in a vigorous and sustained manner in the regional arena. Domestic political strength and societal cohesion, on the other hand, enable a state to take advantage of opportunities in the regional arena. Unfortunately, the vast majority of Middle Eastern states, with a few notable exceptions, find themselves in a weak to mediocre position in these areas.

In terms of power distribution, the Middle Eastern system is characterized by a very unbalanced multipower pattern marked by the preeminence of two non-Arab perimeter states: Israel and Turkey. These two powers enjoy a clear lead in military capabilities combined with a narrower lead in overall economic capabilities. Their preeminence is reinforced by the fact that they are the only regional states with some strength in both spheres. Both also enjoy a decisive advantage in hard power resources over their immediate neighbors. The third perimeter state, Iran, is in weaker condition overall but its power position among Persian Gulf states is improving due particularly to Iraq's decisive defeat at the hands of the US and the consequent

Table 14

Economic Capabilities, Middle East, 2004

GDP			*GDP Per Capita*		*Manufacturing Production*[*]		*Financial Reserves*		*Overall %*
	billion $	%	$	%	billion $	%	billion $	%	
Turkey	301.9	24.8	4,175	2.7	80.9	34.5	35.6	17.9	20.0
Israel	116.9	9.6	17,191	11.3	35.0	14.9	27.1	13.6	12.3
Iran	161.4	13.3	2,339	1.5	40.8	17.4	32.7	16.4	12.0
Saudi Arabia	250.6	20.6	10,485	6.9	25.3	10.8	27.3	13.7	13.0
UAE	103.1	8.5	23,976	15.7	13.8	5.9	18.5	9.3	9.9
Qatar	28.5	2.3	40,714	26.7	2.1	0.9	3.4	1.7	7.9
Kuwait	52.7	4.3	18,821	12.3	8.6	3.7	8.2	4.1	6.1
Egypt	76.6	6.3	1,055	0.7	13.0	5.5	14.3	7.2	4.9
Lebanon	18.3	1.5	5,228	3.4	2.7	1.2	11.7	5.9	3.0
Bahrain	10.2	0.8	14,571	9.5	1.2	0.5	1.9	1.0	3.0
Oman	24.8	2.0	9,185	6.2	2.0	0.8	3.6	1.8	2.7
Syria	22.8	1.9	1,225	0.8	3.8	1.6	3.9	2.0	1.5
Jordan	11.1	0.9	1,982	1.3	1.8	0.8	5.2	2.6	1.4
Yemen	13.7	1.1	674	0.4	1.1	0.5	5.6	2.8	1.2
Iraq	25.5	2.1	907	0.6	2.5	1.0	0	0	1.0
	1,218.1	100.0	152,528	100.0	234.6	100.0	199.0	100.0	100.0

* Manufacturing production is calculated by dividing GDP by the percentage of manufacturing activity therein. 'Manufacturing production' is a narrower category than 'industry,' which sometimes includes construction, mining, or the oil industry. For some countries (Israel, Iran, Kuwait, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon) manufacturing production was adjusted/estimated from figures for industry and other categories. The figures for Iraq are also an estimate since there was no breakdown of the composition of the GDP.

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), *Country Reports 2005* (Main Reports – August, September, October) of individual countries for GDP, GDP per capita (GDP ÷ population), manufacturing production (GDP x % manufacturing activity), and financial reserves (minus gold).

severe limitation of its military capabilities. With even moderate growth in its conventional and nonconventional military capabilities, Iran is likely to resume its position as the strongest Gulf state within the next decade.

Israel emerges as the state with the greatest all-round power resources in the region. To begin with, it is the leading military power, whose position is even stronger than indicated in the tables. Israel's military advantage is based on: the strongest overall conventional forces in the region, including clear superiority in air power and quality ground forces that are generally well equipped and well led, although the 2006 Israeli war in Lebanon exposed some notable deficiencies; a monopoly of nuclear weaponry as well as a powerful long-range strike capacity; and finally the most advanced national intelligence-gathering technology in the region (satellites).[80] In short, Israel enjoys a decisive advantage in military technology which is strengthened by substantial technological and financial support from the US. Its position is further bolstered by the most developed national defense production capacity in the region, which both reduces its vulnerability to pressures from major powers and provides it with useful links to other regional military forces such as Turkey and Jordan). Its military superiority generates major security concerns not only for Arab frontline states but also for those farther afield, given its long-range power projection capacity. These concerns have been heightened by Israel's defense cooperation arrangements with Turkey which provide access to Turkish air space and possibly base facilities.

Israel's superior military strength and long-range strike capacity enable it not only to deter large-scale surprise attacks against Israel

proper but also to use its military power in a coercive manner to promote its interests. As previously noted, such potential assertive uses include the maintenance of control over neighboring occupied territories, military intervention to shape developments in its immediate area, and the destruction of emerging regional nuclear forces to preserve its military primacy. Nevertheless, as other regional states like Iran and Syria develop an improved missile capacity and acquire some weapons of mass destruction, their deterrent capacity against large-scale Israeli attacks will increase significantly. Thus, even though Israel is capable of inflicting much more damage on its neighbors than they could inflict on Israel, the increasing costs will tend to act as a constraint on large scale or extreme forms of military action thereby neutralizing some of Israel's military superiority. However, it will be several years before Iran or any Arab states develop sufficient capacity to reduce the military imbalance, and accompanying security concerns, in any meaningful way.

Israel is also the only Middle Eastern state with substantial across-the-board economic strength. It possesses a diversified and productive economy with an important high-tech manufacturing/services sector which generates considerable export earnings.[81] This is strengthened by a significant inflow of foreign investment. As a result, per capita income, manufacturing production, and financial reserves are among the highest in the region. This all-round economic strength not only underpins Israel's other capabilities but also generates levers of influence in its own right. With its technological development, skill levels, and connections in international business and financial communities, Israel is well positioned to forge links with other regional states that would provide it with some economic levers of influence. Apart from Turkey, Jordan, and Palestine though, these links are only likely to develop substantially after there has been real progress toward a settlement of the Syrian–Israeli and Palestinian–Israeli conflicts.

Finally, Israel arguably enjoys the strongest internal political capabilities of any Middle Eastern country. This includes what until now has been a relatively cohesive society inclined to support its democratically elected government, especially in view of what are perceived as persistent regional threats. Israel has also been characterized by limited susceptibility to transnational political attacks and subversion, with the partial exception of its close to 20 percent Palestinian population. In recent years, however, the divisions in Israeli society/political life have become

more intense—notably between orthodox and secular Jews, as well as between those committed to a 'greater Israel' and pragmatic elements seeking a more balanced settlement. These divisions, combined with the strengthening of nationalist and Islamist sentiment among Israel's Palestinian population, threaten to undermine the cohesion and stability of the country in coming years. At the same time, Israel's external political capabilities in the region are nonexistent, since the country holds no transnational political or ideological attraction for the peoples of the Middle East.

Turkey is the second strongest military power in the region with capabilities substantially superior to its Arab neighbors (Table 12).[82] Its ground forces are among the largest in the region while its air power rivals Israel's and is in the process of being upgraded (with Israeli assistance). Despite the sizable number of troops tied down in the conflict with Kurdish forces as well as facing Greece in Cyprus, Turkey can still bring superior military strength to bear in the northern sector against Syria or Iraq. However, since Turkey does not have Israel's long-range strike capacity, it can only exert serious military pressures against states in its immediate vicinity, not those farther afield. Turkey also ranks prominently in economic capabilities due mainly to the size and relative diversity of its economy compared to those of Arab states. Despite significant difficulties in recent years, the Turkish economy is now performing reasonably well due to sizable international loans, an increased flow of foreign investment linked to its potential membership in the EU, and improved national economic management.[83] Still its manufacturing sector is not as sophisticated as Israel's and its standard of living is much lower.

Despite the relative strength of the Turkish state, Turkey's political capabilities were weakened for a number of years by a prolonged conflict with Kurdish nationalist forces and an emerging Islamist challenge. These developments also underscored Turkey's new permeability to transnational influence. Both problems have now eased, the former as a result of the capture of Kurdish nationalist leaders and the weakening and dispersal of their guerrilla forces, as well as Turkey's adoption of a more accommodative policy on Kurdish linguistic and cultural issues in order to facilitate its membership in the EU. The Islamist challenge has also become more muted due to the advent to power of a cautious Islamist party pursuing moderate policies and the parallel moderate reaction of the Turkish military-security establishment.[84] Apart from its

improved internal political capabilities, Turkey, like Israel, has little or no external political capabilities in the Middle East, in the sense of transnational political or ideological attraction for the peoples of the region.

The third perimeter state, Iran, prior to 1979 had been the preeminent power in the Persian Gulf and one of the two principal powers in the region. Now it is in a weaker position and subject to a variety of constraints. The long-delayed rebuilding and modernization of its armed forces has been hampered by the refusal of Western powers to sell arms and strong US pressures on other powers (Russia, China) to refrain from doing so as well. Iran's limited financial resources until recently have also been a contributing factor. Despite these constraints, Iran has made progress in upgrading its military capabilities (including the strengthening of its naval forces in the Gulf), achieved significant momentum toward the development of a nuclear capacity, and made considerable progress toward the acquisition of a medium-range missile capacity (Table 13).[85] The latter could compensate for the lack of long-range air power and provide Iran with some deterrent/retaliatory capacity against attacks on its territory.

These developments helped for a time to produce a rough balance of military power with Iraq. However, Iraq's overwhelming defeat by US-UK forces (2003) and the ensuing termination of all WMD and missile programs as well as severe limitations on conventional weaponry have left Iraq badly weakened as well as militarily vulnerable. It has also left it even more vulnerable to transnational political involvement/influence from Iran directed at Iraq's majority Shi'a community. These vulnerabilities in turn have created a significant imbalance in Iran's favor[86] but Iran is unlikely to be able to take advantage of this, at least militarily, given the continuing strong US military presence in the Persian Gulf region and, for a time, in Iraq itself. Important economic and technological constraints on an Iranian military buildup are also likely to remain. The military power gap between Iran and Saudi Arabia/the GCC states is also evident given the vast disparity in ground forces, Iran's stronger naval forces, and its emerging medium to long-range missile capacity. However, the military security implications of some of these disparities are less dangerous than might appear. Iran's ground forces are of limited use against the Gulf States (other than Iraq and possibly Kuwait) due to the absence of direct land access; its amphibious capacity is insufficient to mount any substantial attack; finally, its air force is largely offset by superior Saudi/GCC fighter/interceptor capacity.[87] Still Iran would be in a

position to engage in coercive diplomacy and even limited military force regarding territorial waters, shipping, offshore oil and gas resources, and control over strategic islands. In short, Iran could emerge within the next decade as the leading military power in the Persian Gulf, albeit by a much smaller margin than Israel and Turkey enjoy in their respective sectors. Its acquisition of a medium- to long-range missile capacity combined with weapons of mass destruction would also create some deterrent capacity vis-à-vis Israel as well as increasing opportunities for coercive diplomacy in the Gulf.

In economic terms, Iran is weaker than Israel, Turkey, or even Saudi Arabia. Its main strength is its energy reserves although revenues from this source fell dramatically during the 1980s and 1990s. They have since recovered substantially. There has been some diversification of economic development although Iran's manufacturing sector is nowhere near as large as Turkey's and Israel's or as sophisticated as Israel's. Per capita income is low compared to other major regional actors. The economy has also been badly managed in recent decades and has suffered from a tough US containment policy that has sharply limited investment flows.[88]

While significantly weaker in hard power resources, Iran does have an advantage in soft power resources (political capabilities) since its Islamic regime continues to have significant transnational appeal. As previously noted, this takes two forms. One is a religious/ideological appeal based on the regime's revolutionary Islamic message, which has enjoyed some success in a period of heightened Islamic consciousness. At another level, the Shi'a character of the Iranian revolution is clearly attractive to Shi'a communities across the Arab world (notably in Iraq and Lebanon but also in Bahrain, Kuwait, and eastern Saudi Arabia). In fact, this is arguably the strongest component of its appeal, even if it is more limited in scope geographically. In terms of internal political capabilities, however, the Islamic regime suffers from internal factionalism, disaffection among educated youth, as well as ethnic and religious differences in peripheral regions that undermine support for the regime and weaken the cohesion of the country.[89]

In the new Middle Eastern power structure, Israel and Turkey have emerged as clearly preeminent in hard power resources both overall and in their respective sectors. The third perimeter power, Iran, while much weaker in hard power resources, will probably pull ahead of other Gulf states in the coming decade but power disparities here are unlikely to be as great as those in other sectors. The states of the eastern Arab world are

Table 15

Military Capabilities, Arab World (2004)

Military Manpower			*Tanks (high/medium quality)*		*Combat Aircraft (high quality)*[a]		*Overall*
	thousands	%	units	%	units	%	%
Egypt	468	23.5	2500	27.2	155	17.2	22.6
Syria	307	15.4	2500	27.2	92	10.2	17.6
Saudi Arabia	199	10.0	565	6.1	265	29.5	15.2
UAE	50	2.5	300	3.3	76	8.4	4.8
Jordan	100	5.0	576	6.2	16	1.8	4.3
Kuwait	15	0.8	368	4.0	51	5.7	3.5
Yemen	66	3.3	310	3.4	10	1.1	2.6
Oman	41	2.1	117	1.3	24	2.7	2.0
Bahrain	11	0.6	140	1.5	22	2.5	1.5
Lebanon	72	3.6	0	0	0	0	1.2
Qatar	12	0.6	0	0	12	1.3	0.6
Iraq	80[b]	4.0	0	0	0	0	1.3
Algeria	137	6.9	801	8.7	94	10.4	8.7
Libya	76	3.8	425	4.6	83	9.2	5.9
Morocco	201	10.1	520	5.6	0	0	5.3
Tunisia	35	1.8	84	0.9	0	0	0.9
Sudan[c]	104	5.2	0	0	0	0	1.7
Mauritania[c]	16	0.8	0	0	0	0	0.3
	1990	100.0	9206	100.0	900	100.0	100.0

[a] Figures for Gulf states adjusted from Cordesman's tables to exclude medium quality aircraft.

[b] Includes National Guard.

[c] Figures for Sudan and Mauritania adjusted from IISS, *The Military Balance* according to Cordesman's standards.

Sources: International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), *The Military Balance 2005–2006* (Abingdon, UK; Routledge for IISS, 2005) for military manpower. Anthony Cordesman, *The Military Balance in the Middle East* (Westport, CT: Praeger/Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, 2004) for high and medium quality tanks and high quality aircraft (adapted from IISS).

Table 16

Economic Capabilities, Arab World (2004)

GDP			*GDP Per Capita*		*Manufacturing Production**		*Financial Reserves*		*Overall*
	billion $	%	$	%	billion $	%	billion $	%	%
Saudi Arabia	250.6	29.7	10,485	7.4	25.3	24.3	27.3	14.0	18.9
UAE	103.1	12.2	23,976	16.9	13.8	13.3	18.5	9.5	13.0
Qatar	28.5	3.4	40,714	28.7	2.1	2.0	3.4	1.7	9.0
Kuwait	52.7	6.2	18,821	13.3	8.6	8.3	8.2	4.2	8.1
Egypt	76.6	9.1	1,055	0.7	13.0	12.5	14.3	7.3	7.4
Lebanon	18.3	2.2	5,228	3.7	2.7	2.6	11.7	6.0	3.6
Bahrain	10.2	1.2	14,571	10.3	1.2	1.2	1.9	1.0	3.4
Oman	24.8	2.9	9,185	6.5	2.0	1.9	3.6	1.9	3.3
Syria	22.8	2.7	1,225	0.9	3.8	3.7	3.9	2.0	2.3
Jordan	11.1	1.3	1,982	1.4	1.8	1.7	5.2	2.7	1.8
Yemen	13.7	1.6	674	0.5	1.1	1.1	5.6	2.9	1.5
Iraq	25.5	3.0	907	0.6	2.5	2.4	0	0	1.5
Algeria	77.0	9.1	2,740	1.9	7.7	7.4	43.2	22.2	10.2
Morocco	53.2	6.3	1,716	1.2	9.4	9.0	16.3	8.4	6.3
Libya	26.0	3.1	4,561	3.2	1.1	1.0	25.6	13.2	5.1
Tunisia	28.2	3.3	2,820	2.0	5.7	5.5	3.9	2.0	4.0
Sudan	21.2	2.5	597	0.4	2.1	2.0	1.6	0.8	1.4
Mauritania	1.5	0.2	517	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.2
	845.0	100.0	141,774	100.0	104.0	100.0	194.6	100.0	100.0

[*] Manufacturing production is calculated by dividing GDP by the percentage of manufacturing activity therein. 'Manufacturing production' is a narrower category than 'industry,' which sometimes includes construction, mining, or the oil industry. For some countries (Kuwait, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Algeria, Tunisia, Sudan, Mauritania) manufacturing production was adjusted/estimated from figures for industry and other categories. The figures for Iraq are also an estimate since there was no breakdown of the composition of the GDP.

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), *Country Reports 2005* (Main Reports—August, September, October) of individual countries for GDP, GDP per capita (GDP ÷ population), manufacturing production (GDP x % manufacturing activity), and financial reserves (minus gold).

thus faced with significant imbalances in capabilities vis-à-vis the perimeter powers, imbalances which are likely to grow in the foreseeable future. The problem is compounded by military, intelligence, and economic cooperation between the two leading perimeter powers. Such imbalances pose serious conventional security problems for eastern Arab states. More importantly, they generate opportunities for revisionism and coercive pressures directed against important national and Arab interests.

Arab System

For almost three decades, the Arab arena has been characterized by a competitive multipower structure. This pattern was seriously threatened following the Iran–Iraq war when Iraq, attempting to capitalize on its military strength and growing transnational political appeal, moved forcefully to establish its dominance in the Gulf as well as its preeminence in the larger Arab world. Iraq's defeat in the first Gulf war ended this threat. As a result, the Arab world was characterized once again by a multipower structure but one which was more balanced than that in the overall Middle Eastern system. Iraq's subsequent overwhelming defeat and occupation by US/UK forces in the second Gulf war has generated not only a serious imbalance in the Gulf area (in Iran's favor) but also a lesser imbalance in the Arab system.

The major structural change in the Arab world in the last two decades has thus been the dramatic weakening of Iraq resulting from the combined effects of two wars with Western coalition forces and an intervening period of stringent economic sanctions. Iraq had emerged as the leading

military power in the Arab world, combining large and well-armed conventional forces with an emerging medium-range missile capacity and substantial progress in the development of weapons of mass destruction (particularly nuclear weapons). Now, following its second war with Western coalition forces, Iraq no longer possesses any WMD or missile capacity and is severely restricted in its conventional capabilities, ranking far behind the three other leading Arab powers. Iraq's economic capabilities have suffered almost as much. Three wars and a prolonged period of economic sanctions covering a quarter of a century have resulted in serious damage to Iraq's physical infrastructure and productive facilities, as well as a sharp decline in GDP, manufacturing production, oil output and, above all, per capita income (which is now less than one quarter what it was in the early 1980s).[90] Financial reserves are also nonexistent. It will certainly take Iraq a considerable period of time to recover its pre-1980 economic strength. Iraq's internal political capabilities have also been greatly weakened. In particular, the destruction of a highly centralized and powerful regime along with the severe weakening of state institutions have exacerbated ethnic, religious, and ideological cleavages as well as intensified both the competition for power and political instability.[91] This has greatly increased Iraq's permeability to the influence or even intervention of neighboring states such as Iran and Turkey. Instead of serving as a force to be reckoned with on the eastern flank of the Arab world, therefore, Iraq is now more of a power vacuum.

The other leading Arab powers (Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria) have experienced fluctuations in their positions since the first coalition war with Iraq. Overall they emerged from that war in an improved situation only to see their positions deteriorate in the period preceding and following the second coalition war. Saudi Arabia is a good example. As a result of the military pressures experienced in the course of several wars in the Gulf area, it has strengthened its conventional military capabilities appreciably in recent decades.[92] This has involved the acquisition of more advanced armaments for its air and ground forces as well as an increase in their size. Although still weaker in conventional capabilities than Iran, it has nevertheless reduced the disparities somewhat. Unlike Iran, however, it has not yet developed any WMD.[93] While Saudi military strength has increased in the last two decades, its economic position has fluctuated considerably. It initially weakened due to softness in oil markets and rapid population growth combined with the costs of war and arms purchases. This

decline was reflected in per capita income (Table 2) as well as in a substantial increase in unemployment and government debt, both domestic and external.[94] However, significant increases in oil prices/revenues in recent years have led to considerable improvement in Saudi Arabia's economic capabilities, a situation which is likely to persist for the foreseeable future. Unemployment, however, remains an ongoing problem as discussed above.

For its part, the internal political position of the Saudi regime has weakened over the past decade and a half due to increasing dissatisfaction with political repression, corruption, and a perceived failure to live up to Islamic values at a time of growing Islamic consciousness and, until recently, deteriorating economic conditions. This dissatisfaction was reinforced by Saudi Arabia's perceived close relationship with Washington at a time of increased US assertiveness vis-à-vis parts of the Arab/Islamic world and intensified backing of Israel. Internal political challenges have manifested themselves not only in overt questioning and criticism of the regime by younger Islamic elements but also in acts of violence directed initially against Americans and Westerners and subsequently against Saudi targets as well.[95] The apparent linkage between the perpetrators of this violence and Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network, the involvement of significant numbers of Saudi nationals in the operations and financing of al-Qaeda's worldwide activities, and widespread sympathy within Saudi Arabia for his cause have undoubtedly intensified the regime's sense of vulnerability. The recent violence directed at Saudi targets, however, has undermined sympathy within the country for extremist Islamic causes and strengthened the hand of the security forces. At the same time, the regime has neglected to take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen its political position by restricting itself to very limited measures of democratization internally. Externally, Saudi Arabia's political-military position has improved, at least within the Arab world, with the dramatic weakening of Iraq and the consequent reduction in the threat from this quarter. However, the power vacuum created by Iraq's overwhelming defeat and occupation, the greatly increased internal instability and potential for fragmentation of that country, combined with the increase in Iran's transnational political involvement and influence (the Shi'a connection) have generated new dangers and challenges for Saudi Arabia. Caught as it is between the shadow of the past (three acute wars in the Gulf in two decades) and the shadow of the future (the possible resurgence of Iran as

well as the potential power vacuum, internal instability, and increased permeability of Iraq), Saudi Arabia remains preoccupied with its own internal and external vulnerabilities.

Egypt is the Arab power whose position improved most after the first Gulf war. Following Iraq's initial defeat, Egypt emerged as the strongest conventional military power in the Arab world.[96] This was the result of a substantial upgrading of its armament and to some extent its defense production capacity since the 1980s, with extensive assistance from the US. It has also acquired a modest missile capacity but this is not as developed as that of Syria, let alone Israel. Egypt's economic capabilities have also improved during this period due to a major debt relief package and substantial economic assistance from Western and Arab sources as well as measures of economic liberalization, which have attracted some foreign investment. As a result, government finances as well as the country's current account situation and financial reserves improved along with an increase in per capita income (Table 2). In the late 1990s and early 2000s, however, tourist revenues and foreign investment declined (partly due to the resurgence of regional conflicts), the real economic growth rate slowed, and the Egyptian currency was progressively devalued, reducing Egypt's GDP and per capita income in dollar terms.[97] For a time Egypt was also weakened by domestic political conflict and violence. While the Egyptian state has proved resilient and Islamist forces have now renounced violence, domestic discontent has grown not only over corruption and the failure of the regime to reform or renew itself but also over its close association with the US despite the latter's strong backing of Israel and its offensive against radical Islamists and Iraq.[98] Needless to say, these internal political difficulties have weakened the regime internationally as has the limited nature of its democratic opening domestically. Finally, in terms of regional political position, Egypt, unlike its Arab competitors, has not been hampered by involvement in an acute conflict with neighbors or other severe external political-military pressures. While the first Gulf war enabled Egypt to resume a leading place in the Arab system after a decade of marginalization, subsequent attempts to play a leadership role were hampered by the fragmentation of the system and a reliance by Arab states on outside powers to provide the services that Egypt expected would reinforce its claim to indispensability (for example, a supportive intermediary role in the Arab–Israeli conflict and a political-military security role in the Gulf). Egypt's seeming inability to curb the

aggressive behavior of the Israeli government toward the Palestinians or to influence American policy toward the conflict and other regional issues further served to weaken its regional influence.

Syria, for its part, has found itself in an increasingly weakened position. It remains the second strongest military power in the Arab world, some distance behind Egypt. Nevertheless, financial constraints, especially the termination by the Soviet Union of favorable terms for arms acquisitions, have led to a weakening of Syrian conventional military capabilities, particularly in relation to Israel.[99] Not only have overall numbers of tanks and combat aircraft declined since the mid-1980s, but also a lack of financial resources has hampered the acquisition of the most technologically advanced equipment in these sectors. This deficiency is most noticeable in the area of high-quality combat aircraft. Overall levels of military manpower have also been reduced. At the same time, Syria has undertaken a significant buildup of its short- to medium-range missile strength and apparently also its chemical and biological weapons capacity. Syria's economic capabilities have also declined after an initial boost following the first Gulf war from higher oil production levels and earnings as well as increased economic assistance from the Gulf states. Rising domestic energy consumption is now cutting into oil export earnings while limited oil reserves are likely to lead to lower production levels and depletion of Syrian energy resources. These difficulties are reflected in weak GDP growth rates and reduced per capita income (a 20 percent decline since 1989) as well as limited financial reserves.[100] Syria's political capabilities have declined even more sharply. Externally, Syria's regional political position improved after the initial Gulf war as it emerged on good terms with Egypt and Saudi Arabia, consolidated its hold over Lebanon, and made some progress toward resolving the conflict with Israel. However, over the past decade its position has weakened substantially as it has found itself under pressure from both Israel and Turkey, unable to prevent Jordan and the PLO from pursuing separate settlements with Israel, and facing challenges in Lebanon. Syria's position deteriorated further following the most recent Gulf war as it was now confronted with a US-occupied Iraq on its eastern border and found itself under pressure from that source.[101] In addition, following the apparent involvement of Syrian security services in the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri (2005), Syria faces widespread major power criticism and a loss of key Arab support. This, combined

with strong Lebanese opposition, forced Syria to withdraw its military and security services from Lebanon after a thirty year presence/occupation, thereby significantly limiting its influence in this country.[102] This influence has now been reestablished to some extent due to the growing influence of its Lebanese ally, Hizbullah. Syria's internal political capabilities have also suffered in recent years despite major achievements in regime consolidation during President Hafiz al-Assad's rule. His death and the inexperience of his successor (his son Bashar al-Assad) have raised serious questions about Syria's future political stability.[103] These questions have intensified in the wake of international pressures for the arrest and punishment of high-ranking figures in Syria's security services and government who were involved in the al-Hariri assassination. These pressures threaten to undermine the cohesion of President al-Assad's power base, creating growing doubts about the future of the regime.[104]

The prevailing multipower pattern in the Arab world has several distinctive features. First, it is *relatively balanced*, with no state exceeding 20 percent of existing power resources and no significant disparities among the leading powers (apart from Iraq in its current condition). This relative balance is due in part to a second feature of the pattern, namely the *lack of consistency in the capability profiles* of the leading states. In the overall Middle East arena, Israel and Turkey are preeminent in both military and economic capabilities. In the Arab arena, however, those with the strongest military capabilities (such as Egypt and Syria) tend to have much weaker economic capabilities, while those who rank high on economic capabilities (such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Kuwait) possess more limited military capabilities. The problem is compounded because, in addition to the inconsistencies, the leading Arab states suffer from internal difficulties that further weaken their regional position. In short, none of the leading actors has a strong, across-the-board power base that would maximize the effectiveness of its regional activities. Hence the multipower structure represents more a balance of weakness than a balance of power, a condition which is likely to persist.

These weaknesses in turn contribute to a third feature of the structure, namely the (sub)regionalizing tendencies in the pattern of influence. The absence of any dominant power has provided opportunities for key Arab states to develop at least partial spheres of influence in their immediate areas. This has been most noticeable in the Arabian peninsula where, due to its superior material capabilities, financial assistance, and

cross-border ties, Saudi Arabia remains the preeminent power. However, it continues to encounter difficulties in consolidating its influence, not only from a unified Yemen but also within the GCC. These difficulties are exacerbated by the reliance of other GCC states on the US, which serves to offset Saudi influence. Egypt, for its part, remains the principal force in the Nile Valley and is able to exercise some influence with regard to neighboring Libya but faces resistance from the formerly Islamist-backed Sudanese regime, which has been strengthened by oil revenues. Finally, Syria was successful for many years in maintaining a partial sphere of influence in the western Fertile Crescent, playing a major but contested role in Lebanon and exercising quasi veto power over Jordanian and PLO initiatives toward Israel. After the first Gulf war, it initially consolidated its hold on Lebanon only to face serious challenges in recent years. Its influence over Jordan and the PLO has declined sharply, as it proved unable to prevent the former from concluding a unilateral settlement with Israel in 1994 or the latter from pursuing such a settlement at various points (1993–1995, 2000). In fact, Syria has lost some ground to Israel and the US in the competition for influence in its immediate area although its position has improved since 2006 due to the failure of US policy in Iraq and Israeli policy in Lebanon.[105] In other words, while there are (sub)regionalizing tendencies in the pattern of influence, there are also significant elements of resistance and even competition.

Fluctuating power/status relationships constitute a fourth structural feature. Since the early 1970s, key Arab states have experienced significant changes in military/economic capabilities, domestic political conditions, and pressures/opportunities arising from regional conditions. These, in turn, have affected the influence and assertiveness of these states at both the regional and subregional level. This was evident in the rise to prominence of Saudi Arabia and, in a more limited way, Syria in the 1970s, followed by Iraq in the late 1970s and again in the late 1980s. Since Iraq's drive for predominance was defeated, power relations have become more stable. Substantial fluctuations in power resources among the leading Arab states seem unlikely in the foreseeable future, although changing domestic political conditions could have a significant effect on the position of these states. The real question mark is Iraq. However, given the extensive damage to its economy, the destruction of its military capabilities and serious internal political instability, it would probably take one or two decades for it to be in a position to mount any new challenge.

The current power structure in the Arab arena has several implications for the policies/relationships of Arab states. At one level, the diffusion of power, and particularly the balance of weakness, serves to limit conflict. No single state has the capacity to engage in extensive revisionism or achieve a hegemonic position. At another level, the diffusion of power contributes to the increasing fragmentation of the system. Prior to 1967, when Egypt enjoyed a commanding influence in the region, President Nasser's widespread appeal and the respect and fear that it engendered helped him to mobilize much of the Arab world in a common front against outsiders. Since then, without this unifying pressure there has been a strong tendency for system members to go their own way. The cohesion of the system has suffered accordingly.

Behavioral Conditions

One striking feature of the Middle Eastern arena has been the high levels of interstate revisionism, conflict, and violence. Widespread dissatisfaction with the state/territorial frameworks, the allocation of populations, as well as with status and power relations have given rise to frequent revisionism and protracted conflicts in the Middle East. These conflicts have led to the highest level of major power arms transfers[106] and second highest level of militarization (Table 10) in the global south. The Middle East and Asia have also experienced the most frequent and damaging wars of any developing regions. The Iran–Iraq war, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and the two coalition wars against Iraq reinforced these patterns.

Table 17
Interstate War/Armed Interventions: Developing Regions

	1945–1995	1990–2005
Asia[a]	12	1
Middle East	11[b]	2[c] (3)[d]
Africa	7	1
South and Central America	5	0

[a] Includes South, Southeast, and East Asia
[b] Includes North Africa
[c] Excludes North Africa

[d] SIPRI lists two Middle Eastern interstate conflicts during this period. Israel–Palestine, however, is listed as an intrastate conflict when it could be treated as a quasi-interstate conflict.

Sources: Data for 1945–1995 from Kalevi, J. Holsti, *The State, War, and the State of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 22, Table 2.1. Data for 1990–2005 from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, (SIPRI), *SIPRI Yearbook 2006: Armaments, Disarmament, and International Security* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) Appendix 2A – text and Table 2 A.1.

Over the last decade, the level of regional conflict has fluctuated considerably but remained substantial. Territorial and existential revisionism persist while power/status revisionism has grown. The level of militarization remains high although the rate of its increase has slowed down. Moreover, missile technology and weapons of mass destruction continue to spread. Some conflicts have eased at times only to flare up again (for example, the Arab–Israeli conflict). There has been only one purely regional interstate war during this period (the 2006 Israeli campaign in Lebanon) but there has been some resort to limited force and coercive diplomacy. In addition to regional sources of disturbance, the sole global superpower (the US) has, in recent years, adopted a pronounced revisionist policy in the area aimed at marginalizing, destabilizing, and promoting regime change in hostile regional states ('rogue' states).[107] This has been carried out by various methods including the use of force. In short, the Middle East remains a conflictual and threatening environment characterized by the continued prominence of realist-style challenges as well as non-conventional transnational pressures.

Middle Eastern System

Level and Pattern of Revisionism/Conflict

While problems exist in all sectors, the most serious regional challenges confronting the states of the eastern Arab world arise from non-Arab perimeter powers (Israel, Turkey, Iran) as well as the dominant global power. The distribution of power constitutes one major contributing factor. As previously noted, the eastern Arab states are faced with significant imbalances of power both within the overall region and in their respective subregions. These seem unlikely to diminish in the near future and may increase. Such imbalances generate opportunities for revisionism and

coercive pressures by perimeter powers but constitute only a potential threat. The threat is activated if and when these imbalances are accompanied either by revisionist policies or claims or by coercive pressures, including the threat or actual use of force. Let us turn then to examine the nature and intensity of the challenges posed by the perimeter powers in their respective sectors.

Arab–Israeli Sector

For decades, the Arab–Israeli sector was the area of greatest conflict and most intense security concerns for Arab states. The Egyptian–Israeli peace treaty (1979) greatly reduced Egypt's security concerns on this front. However, the quasi separate peace simultaneously exacerbated the security problems of other frontline parties since it allowed Israel a freer hand to pursue revisionist policies and apply coercive pressures toward them. Over the years, the pressures on the Israeli front have varied significantly in their intensity but have nevertheless remained substantial. At present, they are arguably still the most serious of any facing Arab states.

These pressures and accompanying security concerns are overwhelmingly of the conventional realist type (existential, territorial, military, and power pressures) although there are subsidiary nonconventional elements as well, such as economic pressures. The power dimension has intensified over the last decade. Israel's decisive superiority in military strength creates serious problems primarily for the frontline states but also for those farther afield, given its long-range power projection capacity. These concerns have been heightened due to Israel's defense cooperation arrangements with Turkey, which provide it with access to Turkish air space and possibly base facilities. Syrian (or possibly Saudi Arabian) development of an improved missile capacity combined with chemical weapons could increase Arab deterrent capacity against a large-scale Israeli attack. However, it will probably be a decade or more before this is sufficiently developed to reduce the military imbalance and accompanying security concerns.

While the power imbalance has intensified, Israeli policy and the challenges it poses have fluctuated considerably. Following the initiation of serious efforts at conflict resolution (Madrid 1991), the advent of a Labor government (1992) led to a significant softening of Israeli policy, which contributed to a major breakthrough in the Palestinian–Israeli conflict (1993), an Israeli–Jordanian peace treaty (1994), and significant

progress in negotiations on the Syrian front (1995). These developments substantially eased the conventional security concerns of Arab frontline parties and raised hopes of an honorable comprehensive settlement. With the Likud victory in 1996, however, the level of revisionism and threat to basic interests of frontline states and communities intensified. The election of a Labor-led coalition under Ehud Barak (1999) resulted once again in more flexible Israeli policies and a substantial narrowing of differences on all fronts, including an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.[108] However, the dramatic breakdown of Israeli–Palestinian negotiations at the Camp David Summit (2000) and the subsequent electoral victory of Ariel Sharon (2001) led to a sharp intensification of violence and Israeli pressures on this front.

The problems have been greatest on the Palestinian front where the pressures are not only territorial but also existential in nature. The situation has improved in one sense given Israel's recent apparent willingness to recognize at least limited Palestinian national rights. However, encroachments on Palestinian lands have continued with the expansion of existing settlements and the toleration of new emplacements, the establishment of a road grid for Israeli and settler use alone, and maintenance of control over West Bank water resources.[109] All this has occurred despite the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the spirit, if not the letter, of Israeli–Palestinian agreements that no unilateral changes in the status quo should be made pending a final settlement. While Prime Minister Barak ultimately pursued a more flexible policy toward the Palestinians than his predecessor (or successor), there were still limits to his flexibility regarding key issues in final status talks (that is, settlements, territorial changes, Jerusalem, and a Palestinian right of return) as was evident in negotiations at Camp David (2000).[110] Thus despite the significant narrowing of differences regarding the terms of a final settlement, the highlighting of those very differences, and of the potentially painful permanent losses that a settlement would entail, heightened the perceived Palestinian threat to Palestinian interests. This perception of threat, which was reinforced by Ariel Sharon's provocative visit at this point to the Haram al-Sharif, contributed to a renewed intifada.

The subsequent accession to power of a hardline nationalist coalition under Ariel Sharon led to much more aggressive military pressures and more revisionist policies regarding settlements, territory, and Jerusalem as well as attempts to severely undermine, if not destroy, the Palestinian

Authority. Sharon's subsequent withdrawal from Gaza (2005), based on a reassessment of how much Palestinian population and territory Israel could realistically expect to absorb or control, reflected an easing of this revisionism. There were also indications that further withdrawals, based on the same logic, were being contemplated, this time from the West Bank. At the same time, Sharon's government and that of his successor (Ehud Olmert) pushed ahead relentlessly with the expansion of the main settlement blocs, the intensified construction of a 'security' fence extending well into Palestinian territory, and the isolation of East Jerusalem from the West Bank, and talked about maintaining a security zone along the Jordan river in any settlement.[111] These, along with earlier encroachments, appeared likely to physically transform the situation on the ground in such a way as to make Israeli control over a significant area of Palestine virtually irreversible. As a result, Palestinians would be left with a patchwork of populated enclaves (Gaza, northern West Bank, southern West Bank) separated from each other and from East Jerusalem by a grid of Israeli controlled settlements, roads, and security zones. What they would effectively be offered in terms of territory, resources, and control over their own destiny would be too little to ensure an honorable and stable settlement. In short, the full range of vital Palestinian interests—territorial integrity, resources, national autonomy, and even national existence—still face serious challenges although the scope of the territorial pressures may have eased somewhat.

On the Syrian front, Israeli revisionism has been basically territorial and power-political in nature. These challenges have been reinforced by Israel's decisive military superiority and its periodic resort to coercive diplomacy and military pressures. These pressures eased after the initial post-Gulf war Labor government (led by Rabin/Peres) offered an almost full Israeli withdrawal in return for extensive security arrangements and normalization measures. The subsequent Likud government (1996) insisted that if peace negotiations were to resume, they would basically be back to square one, effectively withdrawing the previous government's offer. The Barak government, for its part, appeared strongly interested in reaching a settlement with Syria. President Hafiz al-Assad also seemed more firmly committed to concluding a peace agreement. Nevertheless, whether due to bargaining tactics or policy reservations, Prime Minister Barak proved unwilling to undertake complete withdrawal from territory occupied during the 1967 war (particularly the northeastern shore of Lake

Tiberias).[112] His successor, Ariel Sharon, pursued a renewed harder-line policy, showing little inclination to revive negotiations with Syria despite President Bashar al-Assad's declared interest in doing so.[113] This naturally has heightened Syrian concerns about Israeli intentions. The current Israeli government seems to prefer to let international pressure on Syria build up over the al-Hariri assassination, thereby weakening both the al-Assad regime and Syria itself, in the expectation that this would contribute to a softening of Syria's negotiation stand. Such a change is unlikely, however, given the domestic difficulties likely to confront either a weakened al-Assad regime or any successor regime. Hence while a settlement that would resolve territorial and other concerns would appear more likely on the Syrian than on the Palestinian front, it remains in doubt for the foreseeable future. Territorial concerns remain along with persistent military security concerns arising from Israel's military predominance. Important Syrian interests are also threatened in Israel's challenge to Syria's former preeminent influence among neighboring Arab territories. This challenge, based on a combination of military superiority and economic strength and attractiveness, has already enjoyed some success with Jordan and the Palestinians and may extend to Lebanon now that Syria has been forced to withdraw from that country.

In the case of Lebanon, the problem has been not so much Israeli territorial revisionism as periodic military intervention to eliminate hostile forces from the border areas and to pressure the Lebanese government to halt the activities of such forces. The military campaign waged by Israel in Lebanon in the summer of 2006 is a striking example of this tactic.[114] Needless to say, such intervention poses a military security threat to Lebanon and raises questions about Israel's intentions despite its earlier withdrawal from the territory. Concerns remain therefore regarding military security/power relationships and Israel's perceived interest in drawing Lebanon into its orbit.

Thus, despite the emergence of some flexibility in Israeli policy, this sector still poses important conventional security problems for the eastern Arab world. This is due to a combination of some continuing Israeli revisionism regarding territorial issues and power relationships, a pronounced imbalance of military power, and recurrent coercive (especially military) pressures. In addition, Israel's long-range power projection capacity generates military security concerns for Arab states farther afield. Arab concerns are reinforced by Israel's economic strength which could

come to dominate neighboring economies. Israel, however, does not pose any transnational political threat to Arab countries.

Gulf Sector

For the last two decades, the Persian Gulf has been a turbulent and dangerous environment, characterized by extensive revisionism, multidimensional threats, and three highly destructive wars. While an Arab power—Iraq—had previously been the main disruptive force, given its current and projected weakness/instability we will focus here on the role and policies of the main perimeter power—Iran.

The challenge that Iran poses for the eastern Arab world is more complex than that of other perimeter powers. At the level of power relations, the situation is less clear-cut than in other sectors where the perimeter powers enjoy a decisive advantage. On the one hand, given the destruction of its military capabilities, its war-ravaged economy, and sharp internal divisions combined with cross-border Iranian influence, Iraq finds itself in a seriously weakened position vis-à-vis Iran. This pronounced imbalance will likely persist for two decades or more, especially as Iran proceeds to upgrade its military capabilities while Iraq is faced with important limitations on its armaments. On the other hand, although Iran possesses superior ground forces, and possibly naval forces vis-à-vis Saudi Arabia and the GCC states, the latter enjoy an advantage in air power that could offset this to a considerable extent. Important geographic constraints on the use of Iranian ground forces also remain. Still, Iran can project some military power in the Gulf and its emerging missile as well as nuclear capacity has become worrisome. At the same time, in terms of financial and economic capabilities Saudi Arabia and the GCC states enjoy a clear advantage over Iran.

In terms of actual policies, Iran has posed widely varying problems for its Arab neighbors in recent decades. Under the Shah, the pressures were overwhelmingly power-political, military and, to some extent, territorial in character and were directed almost entirely at Iraq. After the advent of the revolutionary Islamic regime with its strong appeal to disadvantaged Shi'a communities and Islamists, Iran constituted a mainly transnational political/ideological threat. As Iran's military performance improved during the Iran–Iraq war, as reflected by the capture of the Faw peninsula (1987) this generated renewed conventional security concerns as well. Since the first Gulf war, Iranian policy has fluctuated, reflecting

both changing regional conditions and divisions within the regime. In the Gulf, its initial emphasis, following the 1991 war, was on accommodation (including a toning down of ideological criticism), mixed with an assertion of Iranian centrality in Gulf affairs. The latter was reflected in its emphatic opposition to the involvement of outside states, including those from the region, like Egypt, in emerging Persian Gulf security arrangements and insistence on its own inclusion in such arrangements. At the same time, taking advantage of the growing strength and influence of Shi'a and Islamic movements in the region, Tehran played a more assertive role farther afield, as evidenced by its activities in Lebanon (ongoing support for Hizbullah), Sudan (the provision of weapons and advisers to the Islamist-backed regime), and Algeria (political and other support for Islamist rebels in the emerging civil war). When Saudi Arabia and the GCC states appeared unreceptive to its views regarding Gulf security, Iranian policy hardened. Tehran then sought to forcefully consolidate its control over Abu Musa and the Tunbs (1992), strategically located islands claimed by the UAE, as well as to strengthen its naval capabilities in the Gulf. It also increasingly contested exclusive Saudi control over the annual hajj (pilgrimage), a central element in Muslim religious life. Later, Shi'a disturbances erupted in Bahrain (1994, 1996) and terrorist actions directed at US military personnel in Saudi Arabia (al-Khobar Towers bombing, 1995) were blamed by American officials on Iran.[115] These developments reinforced fears about Iranian intentions and heightened security concerns at least among some Gulf states.[116] Still, the Iranian challenge appeared to be much more political and ideological than military in character.

From the mid-1990s, the combination of growing economic difficulties and a shifting balance of domestic forces, as reflected in the election of a reformist president (1997, 2001) and a reformist parliament (2000), led to new Iranian overtures toward Saudi Arabia and the GCC states.[117] These overtures eased fears about security challenges (both conventional and transnational) and met with a favorable response, in part because the Gulf states were convinced that they were more serious than before. There was also a desire among Gulf states to encourage moderate forces in Iran and thereby reduce conventional and transnational political pressures in the medium to long term. This was seen as useful at a time of renewed fears about Iraqi intentions and capabilities. Iran was also viewed as a potential counterweight to an aggressive

Iraq. In recent years, however, the victory of hardline conservative elements in both parliamentary (2004) and presidential (2005) elections have rekindled fears about the future course of the Iranian Revolution. The combination of these domestic changes, the legacy of Iran's Islamic regime's hostility toward Arab governments in the Persian Gulf, the Iranian leadership's renewed emphasis on the development of Iran's nuclear and missile capacity, the pronounced weakening of Iraq, and the growth of Iranian influence in that country have all generated renewed concerns about Iranian intentions.[118] Nevertheless, there has been no evidence of any shift as yet in Iranian policies regarding the Gulf.

So far, Iranian coercive pressure in the Persian Gulf has taken a very limited military form—brief aerial encounters during the Iran–Iraq war, the dispatch of small armed forces to consolidate control over the contested islands. It could be argued that this restraint has been due simply to Iran's relative military weakness and might not hold much longer. However, unlike Saddam Hussein, the Iranian leadership, whether hardline or pragmatic, does not appear inclined to adventurous, large-scale military action (as distinct from transnational political, ideological, or possibly 'terrorist' activity).[119] The more realistic danger is of a resort to coercive diplomacy and limited military pressures relating to strategic islands, territorial waters, shipping, or energy reserves in Gulf waters. How much of a threat Iran poses will depend on the methods used to achieve its objectives. Iran is likely to pose a growing challenge but not an acute conventional threat to other Gulf states. Imbalances of power will re-emerge but they will not be nearly as pronounced as in the Israeli or Turkish sectors. Little or no territorial revisionism will occur (with the exception of the disputed islands).[120] As Iranian capabilities rise, however, even pragmatists in the leadership are likely to become somewhat revisionist with respect to status/power relations, attempting to assert Iran's centrality, if not preeminence, in Gulf affairs.

In short, Iran presents a more complex challenge than other perimeter powers, a combined conventional and transnational political-ideological challenge (the latter based on its appeal to Shi'a and possibly Islamist constituencies in Arab countries).[121] This political-ideological challenge is not limited to states in Iran's immediate vicinity but extends much farther afield. While Gulf regimes were reassured by policy developments under President Khatami, there is still considerable wariness about Iranian intentions and capabilities. Caught between a troubling past and an

uncertain future in the Gulf, Arab governments in the area will, in effect, sleep with one eye open.

Northern Sector

A new set of challenges has emerged in recent years as a result of Turkey's renewed activity on the northern perimeter of the region. Since losing the Arab portions of its empire in World War I, Turkey's involvement with the Arab world has been relatively limited. In the 1990s, Ankara became increasingly active in the area due to a combination of domestic concerns and regional developments.[122] Turkish attempts to harness the Euphrates and Tigris rivers for irrigation and electricity generation created serious friction with downstream states (Syria, Iraq). Turkey's conflict with its Kurdish minority led to intensified cross border activity and conflict with neighboring states with large Kurdish communities. The two Gulf wars and the ongoing Iraqi problem also heightened its involvement in the area.

Increased Turkish activity poses a number of challenges for neighboring Arab states. First, there is the substantial imbalance of power, which creates opportunities for revisionism and coercive pressures. The threat is not as serious as in the Israeli sector not only because the differences in strength are not as great but also because Turkey, unlike Israel, must deploy its forces on more than one front (both externally and internally). Hence only part of its strength could be brought to bear against Syria or Iraq. Moreover, Turkey does not have Israel's extended military reach. Hence, it poses a potential threat only for neighboring Arab states, not those further afield. Secondly, while Turkish foreign policy is characterized by elements of revisionism, this is more limited than in the case of Israel. Turkey does not pose any territorial or existential threat to neighboring Arab states. Iraq may fear that Turkish military intervention in northern Iraq could lead to the separation of the Kurdish region. However, this is not the objective of Turkish policy even though it might be an unintended consequence. Turkey would not want to annex these territories since they would be difficult to control and would exacerbate Turkey's own Kurdish problem.[123] Even the secession of Kurdish regions from any of the neighboring states would harm Turkish interests since it would encourage Kurdish separatist tendencies in Turkey itself. Turkey, given its military capabilities, may pose a threat of potential military incursions into its neighbors' territories but it does not claim any of its neighbors' territories

or pose a threat to their existence. Thus the threat in this case is not one of territorial revisionism but rather of repeated infringement of Iraqi sovereignty through military intervention.[124]

Turkish policy is somewhat revisionist with respect to power relations in its immediate area. While Ankara is seeking to gain the upper hand in relations with Syria and Iraq and has thrown its weight around, it is questionable whether it has been seeking hegemony. A more plausible interpretation is that Turkey has acted assertively for more limited objectives, namely to stamp out challenges to its territorial integrity, domestic stability, and basic direction from the immediate neighborhood. Concerns about Turkey's objectives have been strengthened by its resort to coercive pressures, both military and economic, against nearby Arab states. These have included military threats directed against Syria over its assistance to Kurdish resistance movements, military intervention in northern Iraq to eliminate Turkish-Kurdish guerrilla forces, and the restriction of water flows to Syria and Iraq along shared river systems.[125]

Thus since the first Gulf war, Arab states have faced a new set of regional pressures, this time in the northern sector. These pressures are overwhelmingly conventional in nature (that is, military, power-political, or territorial) although they are more limited in intensity and range than in the case of Israel. Turkey, like Israel, is also in a position to exert economic pressure on its Arab neighbors. However, it too poses no transnational political threat since it holds no ideological attraction for Arab states, nor are there any ethnic/religious affinities on which it can capitalize (with the limited exception of the small Turkmen population in northern Iraq).

Pattern of Alignment

For much of the cold war, the Middle East remained loosely polarized as a result of alignments between regional states and the opposing superpowers. The polarization was loose because bilateral vertical ties were generally not accompanied by effective horizontal ties among each power's regional allies. One exception was alignments between perimeter powers, either openly in the context of the multilateral Western-centered Baghdad Pact/Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) or in a more informal bilateral context (for example, political ties between Israel and Iran and, to a lesser extent, Israel and Turkey in the late 1950s and the 1960s).[126] In addition, there were periodic loose alignments among each

superpower's Arab allies. By the 1980s, many of these horizontal alignments had faded—the Israeli–Iranian connection after the advent of Iran's Islamic regime, the Israeli–Turkish connection after the oil boom heightened the importance of the Arab world for Turkey. At the same time, new regional ties emerged that have persisted to the present day. One is the Syria–Iran alliance (1980) which bridged the divide between Arab states and perimeter powers. This alliance stemmed primarily from common threat perceptions generated by growing Iraqi as well as Israeli power and assertiveness and continuing US pressure.[127] The newly forged ties strengthened Iran's position in its war with Iraq, enhanced the two countries' positions in Lebanon, and provided the Syrian government with both economic and domestic political benefits.

The post-cold war period led to further changes in Middle Eastern alignment patterns. The collapse of the Soviet Union as a world power led to a serious erosion of its links with regional states. The United States, on the other hand, consolidated its ties both with perimeter powers (Israel, Turkey) and with the vast majority of eastern Arab states (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait/GCC states, Jordan). Even former adversaries (the PLO, Libya) have gravitated in its direction, seeking US assistance to achieve an honorable settlement of the conflict with Israel and/or to meet serious economic needs. Thus previous alignments centered on the opposing superpowers were replaced by a preponderant US-centered network of vertical political, military, and economic ties.

Although these vertical ties constitute the strongest alignments in the region, there has also been renewed alignment activity at the horizontal level, centering particularly on the perimeter powers. The most striking development here has been the establishment of close military, intelligence, and economic ties between Israel and Turkey (1996).[128] This axis has served to strengthen the position of these powers in the regional arena. For Israel, the new relationship is not only important politically but also enhances its long-range military power projection capacity through access to Turkish airspace and electronic intelligence facilities. This intensifies the military and political pressures it can bring to bear on regional opponents such as Syria and Iran, as well as in northern Iraq. For Turkey, benefits include the enhancement of its military and intelligence capabilities through access to Israeli defense production, military training, and intelligence-gathering facilities, as well as the strengthening of its position vis-à-vis both Greece/Cyprus and Syria (and potentially vis-à-vis Iran or even Iraq). Through this

alignment, Turkey has also sought to bolster its support from the US (in the form of military assistance, diplomatic backing, economic aid and investment, and support in the competition for pipeline routes) by gaining the backing of Israel's friends in the US Congress, administration, and business community. This improved US connection proved especially valuable at a time when Turkish relations with Europe were strained and Greece was able to hinder both EU membership and economic assistance for Turkey. The Israel–Turkey axis has also fitted in well with Washington's prevailing strategic conceptions regarding the containment of Middle Eastern 'rogue' states like Iran and Syria.

The Israeli–Turkish axis is likely to remain a significant factor in the Middle Eastern scene since it serves important interests for both parties. For Israel, the Turkish connection represents a continuing interest, given its relative isolation in the region, its ongoing concerns regarding Syria, Iran, and Iraq, and the military, intelligence, and economic benefits which it can derive. For Turkey, ties with Israel are regarded as beneficial especially by the military-security elite which established them. There is, however, a distinct coolness toward the link, and even some criticism of Israel, on the part of the current moderate Islamist Turkish political leadership.[129] Nevertheless, they continue to defer to the military-security elite on national security issues. The growth of Iranian missile strength and WMD would undoubtedly generate new incentives for both Israel and Turkey to maintain or even enhance this link. On the other hand, Turkey's interest may wane if it makes progress toward EU membership (thereby reducing its sense of isolation), if tensions ease further with Greece, and/or if domestic conflicts that expose Turkey to external intervention (for example, the Kurdish and potentially the Islamist problem) are bought under control.[130] In addition, attempts have been made, especially by Israel, to develop links between this grouping and Arab states (notably Jordan). In the Jordanian case these links include intelligence exchanges, increased economic ties, and possibly some military ties. Arab sensitivities regarding the continuing Arab–Israeli conflict have prevented any further evolution of this relationship. However, should there be substantial progress in the peace process, Jordan and others might very well be drawn into closer ties with Israel. In any case, the alignment of the two leading regional powers serves to further weaken the position and intensify the conventional security concerns of eastern Arab states. Syria in particular is under pressure since it now finds itself partly encircled, compounding its problems on

both fronts. Farther afield, Iran and even Iraq also face an increased challenge from Israeli–Turkish cooperation.

Set against this US-backed Israeli–Turkish axis is the long-standing Syrian–Iranian alliance. Here common concerns persist regarding the dangers of continued US predominance in the region as well as the threat that Israel poses for both states.[131] The Iranian–Syrian link has served to enhance both countries' leverage vis-à-vis Israel (through their support for the Lebanese Shi'a movement Hizbullah) while simultaneously strengthening their respective positions in Lebanon.[132] Indeed, for Iran in particular, Lebanon's Hizbullah may very well serve as its first line of counterattack against any future Israeli military strike. This alignment has been further extended recently (partly via Hizbullah) to include the Sunni Palestinian movement Hamas.[133] The prospects of the Syria–Iran alliance are closely tied to the evolution of the challenges that have sustained it to date. If there is little improvement in relations on both the Syrian–Israeli and Lebanese–Israeli as well as the Iranian–US front, the alignment will continue to prove useful to both Iran and Syria. If, however, conflict eases significantly on one front but not the other, strains are likely to emerge in the relationship. Thus if substantial progress is made toward a settlement between Syria/Lebanon and Israel, tensions will surface over Hizbullah's future role in Lebanon. Much will then depend on domestic developments in Iran. If hardline Islamist forces maintain their influence, they will presumably encourage resistance to any disarmament of Hizbullah and its transformation into a purely political and social movement. If, on the other hand, pragmatic Islamist forces eventually prevail, they will probably accept such a transformation, thereby limiting potential strains in the alignment. Improvements in US–Iranian relations alone combined with continued blockage on the Syrian–Israeli front would presumably encourage a similar softening of Iranian policy regarding Hizbullah and Israel, potentially generating friction with Syria. If conflict eases significantly on both fronts, Syrian–Iranian ties could experience considerable erosion since both parties would feel less need for an alignment. Even with a substantial improvement of relations on both fronts, however, incentives will persist to maintain the alignment in some form as long as US dominance in the region persists and the Israeli–Turkish axis continues to operate.

The third set of horizontal alignment activities in the region has centered on the Arab sphere. Here initial attempts to transform the first Gulf war alliance of Saudi Arabia, the GCC states, Egypt, and Syria into

a permanent peacetime coalition proved fruitless. What has remained is varying degrees of bilateral political cooperation particularly between Egypt and Saudi Arabia, combined with the persistence of the GCC as a pole of cooperation, albeit weakened by tensions between some members. In recent years these loose Arab alignments have tightened somewhat as a result of the reemergence of Iran as a regional power, the growing assertiveness of Shi'a communities in the Arab world, the development of close Iranian ties with key Shi'a political forces in countries where they are now the dominant community (Iraq) or the largest one (Lebanon), and finally Iran's new role as patron of 'resistance' movements (Shi'a or Sunni) on the Israeli front (Hizbullah, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad). These trends have generated increasing concern on the part of key Sunni Arab governments and elites that this Iranian-led Shi'a axis could threaten Sunni and Arab interests as well as regional 'stability."[134] This in turn has contributed to the emergence of an informal Saudi–Egyptian–Jordanian–UAE grouping seeking to counter growing Iranian and Shi'a influence.

The Middle East has thus been characterized by the combination of an overarching network of US-centered vertical political, military, and economic ties, and a modified form of polycentrism involving several loose groupings at the horizontal (regional) level. With US encouragement, this polycentrism is now showing signs of incipient polarization into pro vs. anti-Iran alignments.

Arab System

Level of Revisionism/Conflict

During the 1950s and 1960s, the Arab world constituted a highly threatening environment for the vast majority of Arab states.[135] The objectives of the leading power, Egypt, were extensively revisionist; this posed a severe threat to a wide range of fundamental interests and values. The revolutionary character of the Arab system was also reflected in the methods employed in pursuit of these policies. These consisted primarily of an extensive resort to transnational political warfare designed to destabilize and ultimately overthrow opposing governments. Many Arab regimes, therefore, faced serious challenges not only to their basic direction and vital national interests but also to their very political survival. During the 1970s and 1980s, while conventional security threats/pressures from the perimeter powers rose sharply (and, in the case of Iran's revolutionary Islamic regime, transnational

political-ideological threats as well), the levels of revisionism and conflict in the Arab system declined significantly. The leaders of the major Arab states now became more pragmatic and their objectives more limited. Less emphasis was placed on political warfare designed to topple regimes; instead an effort was made to influence other governments directly through traditional techniques of statecraft, particularly diplomacy, as well as economic rewards and pressures. In short, the Arab system became more moderate and regimes/states felt less threatened.[136]

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (1990) threatened to transform the Arab system into a revolutionary system once again.[137] The invasion raised fears that Iraq had become highly revisionist because its objectives appeared to include not only alterations in the state/territorial framework and the destabilization of opposing regimes but also substantial changes in the pattern of power. Saddam Hussein appeared to be positioning Iraq to intimidate Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states with a view ultimately to achieving a dominant position in the eastern Arab world. Equally worrisome were the methods employed by Iraq. One concern was the possible use of large-scale military force to settle disputes and the accompanying prospects of the militarization of inter-Arab politics. Another was the initiation of a campaign of intense political warfare involving attempts at transnational political mobilization and the overthrow of opposing regimes. The eastern Arab world with its new imbalance of power, increased revisionism, intensified conflict and polarization, and heightened domestic instability, had once again become a threatening environment.

Iraq's subsequent decisive defeat at the hands of a Western and Arab coalition and the accompanying severe curtailment of its hard power resources, combined with extensive external constraints, sharply reduced its potential for revisionism or a resort to major coercive pressures. These weaknesses and constraints became far more pronounced after its total defeat and occupation during the second Gulf war. Several additional factors have contributed to the relative moderation and restraint which have prevailed in inter-Arab relations since the first Gulf war. These include: the relatively balanced multipower structure, specifically the 'balance of weakness' that reemerged in the wake of Iraq's defeat, the persistent internal difficulties experienced by leading Arab powers, and the serious challenges posed by the perimeter powers.

One additional contributing factor to this moderation has been the further easing of differences over *directional issues* (that is, basic

orientations), which include both the ideological issue of what constitutes a legitimate domestic order and foreign policy issues concerning the proper stance toward outside powers. For several decades the Arab world was characterized by a pronounced heterogeneity of ideology and regimes. These differences have declined since the 1970s and continued to do so after the end of the cold war. The combination of the failure of socialism, triumph of market economics, and the intense search for foreign investment have led to the introduction of at least some measures of economic liberalization in most Arab countries, thereby reducing differences in this sector. In the political sector, although the types of political system and the nature of the elites vary significantly (for example, hereditary monarchies vs. republican systems), all remain predominantly authoritarian in character. Several have introduced elements of pluralism and even some degree of political liberalization although democratization remains limited. Thus regime differences are not a significant source of conflict between Arab states at this point and no major Arab state poses an ideological threat to others. An ideological cold war centered on the role of Islam in society clearly exists within the Arab world but it is being carried on primarily *within* Arab states/societies rather than *between* them. This could change quickly, however, if an Islamist movement were to come to power or achieve a dominant influence within a key Arab state. In the post-cold war/post-Gulf war era, differences in basic foreign policy orientation have also eased markedly among Arab governments. With the decline of the Soviet Union, the vast majority of Arab states, including some former Soviet allies, have turned clearly toward the US and Western powers to meet their needs. Arab states continue to differ in their approach to these powers, but these are no longer differences of principle. Similarly, with respect to Israel, virtually all Arab states have come to accept the principle of a settlement although differences persist regarding the actual terms of settlement, the linkage between settlements, and the extent and timing of normalization.

The relative moderation in policies is also reflected in a reduction in conflict over *distributional issues* (that is, tangible interests). While the state/territorial framework is still not accepted as fully legitimate, no leading Arab power is actively revisionist. There are unsettled territorial issues in parts of the Arabian Peninsula (including Iraq's apparent reservations about Kuwait's boundaries) but these are limited in scope.[138] This decline in serious challenges to the state/territorial framework has been due to the

stronger roots and increased acceptance it has developed over time as well as to the decline of the pan-Arab mystique and failure of earlier attempts at unification. Differences concerning status and influence have also been a persistent problem in inter-Arab relations. Since the dramatic weakening in Egypt's position in the 1970s, the combination of inconsistent capabilities and the fluctuating external as well as domestic fortunes of the principal Arab powers have produced both a leadership vacuum and an unstable power hierarchy in the Arab system. This uncertain and shifting balance of forces has tended to encourage recurrent maneuvering for position as well as periodic assertiveness. While the power hierarchy has stabilized since the second Gulf war, the competition for influence continues both overall and at the subregional level, albeit in a more muted fashion.

Egypt is attempting once again to assume a leading role within the Arab world. It is pursuing this objective, however, not by transnational political warfare or other coercive methods but rather by patient diplomacy. Cairo believes that its capabilities, experience, and diplomatic connections enable it to contribute significantly to the advancement of Arab interests, notably in the achievement of an honorable settlement on the remaining Arab–Israeli fronts and the promotion of stability in the Nile Valley. It is also attempting to play a bridging and coordinating role among Arab states on various issues. Other Arab states, while recognizing Egypt's potential contribution, are reluctant to see it play too large a role, especially in their respective areas. In the Nile Valley itself, Egyptian revisionism is limited and the pressures it exercises are of the transnational political type based on links to various domestic political forces in the Sudan.

Saudi Arabia regards itself as the leading power within the Arabian Peninsula and is determined to preserve, if not enhance, this position. This poses both conventional (territorial, power-political) as well as nonconventional security challenges to its smaller Arab neighbors. The relationships of greatest tension are with Yemen and Qatar. In these and other cases, Saudi Arabia has relied heavily on economic pressures/inducements as well as transnational political ties/intervention to assert its preeminence. In the larger region, Saudi Arabia has in recent years attempted to play a more active leadership role in easing domestic (Lebanon–Palestinians) and interstate conflicts (Lebanon–Syria, Israel–Palestinians) and also bolstering Sunni communities (Iraq/Lebanon) in order to contain growing Iranian and Shi'a influence and assertiveness in the region.[139]

Syria has sought to establish itself as the leading power in the western Fertile Crescent, due to its overall weight and historical role in the area, and expects other Arab states to accept this preeminence. It is also convinced that a common front of neighboring states under its leadership is necessary to defend Arab (and Syrian) interests in the conflict with Israel. Syria believes that it must play a leading role here, not only to be taken seriously by Israel and the major powers but also to strengthen its position in the larger Arab system. Since the first Gulf war and the initiation of peace negotiations, Syrian influence has declined noticeably, as Jordan and the Palestinians have acted unilaterally to conclude agreements with Israel. Syrian relations with Lebanon have been more troubling. Syria has, until recently, seriously limited Lebanon's autonomy by its strong military and political presence in the country, its extensive influence over Lebanon's foreign and defense policies and its choice of leaders, as well as by the close links established between the two countries in many spheres. The margin of Lebanese autonomy expanded only slowly after the end of the civil war (1989) and the attempted political reconstruction of the country. However, after the apparent involvement of Syrian and affiliated Lebanese security services in the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister al-Hariri, massive Lebanese opposition, in conjunction with international and Arab pressure, forced Syria to withdraw its military and security services after a thirty-year presence.[140] Syria seemingly no longer constitutes an existential/territorial threat to Lebanon nor does it pose a conventional military threat. It continues, however, through its alliances with Lebanese political forces (such as Hizbullah and Amal) and the operation of its intelligence services within the country, to constitute a transnational political threat to Lebanon's autonomy.

Finally, given its pronounced weakness as well as serious internal divisions and political instability, Iraq as a whole is highly unlikely to become a source of active revisionism or coercive pressures for a considerable time to come, although some of its component parts or political forces might. Indeed, instead of constituting a threat to its neighbors and a major force to be reckoned on the Arab world's eastern flank, it is now highly permeable to the influence and even intervention of neighboring states (particularly Iran and Turkey).[141]

In short, the revisionism of the leading Arab states is by and large limited in scope and confined to immediate neighbors. Moreover, the pressures are transnational political and/or economic, rather than military,

in character. Thus non-conventional security concerns predominate in the Arab sphere while conventional security concerns remain limited.

Pattern of Conflict and Alignment

After its invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Iraq came to be perceived by other leading Arab states as the main threat to the existing Arab order. This remained the principal axis of conflict in the Arab system for most of the 1990s as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria retained their interest in the containment of Iraq, at least as long as Saddam Hussein remained in power. They left the main adversarial role to the US, however, and began to distance themselves when some of Washington's policies toward Iraq appeared overly punitive. While easing their opposition somewhat, they nevertheless continued to keep the Iraqi regime under close scrutiny. A secondary axis of conflict also emerged in the form of a pronounced split between the former Arab coalition partners and countries which sympathized with Iraq, although some of these conflicts (for example, with Jordan and with the Palestinians) eased substantially by the mid-1990s. Finally, tensions also arose between preeminent subregional powers and weaker states in their immediate area as the former attempted to consolidate their influence (for example, Syria vis-à-vis the Palestinians and Jordan as well as Lebanon, Saudi Arabia vis-à-vis Yemen and Qatar, Egypt vis-à-vis Sudan). Few, if any, of the latter disputes were particularly acute.

Following its overwhelming defeat and occupation in the second Gulf war and the subsequent elimination of Saddam Hussein's regime, Iraq ceased to be perceived as a direct threat to the Arab order. Nevertheless, Iraq remains a source of concern and tension within the Arab world. To begin with, the power shift within Iraq from Sunni to Shi'a preeminence has generated, on the part of ruling Sunni elites in the Arab world, both sympathy for fellow Sunnis in Iraq and fears that the newfound Shi'a preeminence would accentuate Shi'a–Sunni tensions across the Arab world and lead to greater Shi'a assertiveness, especially in Iraq itself, Lebanon, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and possibly Yemen.[142] A second source of tension has been the fear that a primarily Shi'a Iraqi government led by Islamic movements with ties to Iran could be susceptible to Iranian influence and might be drawn into that country's orbit.[143] Thirdly, there is the concern that an Iraq beset by serious communal divisions (Arab–Kurd, Sunni–Shi'a) might slip into intensified intercommunal conflict or violence. This in turn could lead one or more of the competing communities

to look to fellow ethnic or religious groups or states outside Iraq for support and/or to attract the intervention of neighboring states/groups in support of their kin.[144] All these potential developments raise fears that Iraq, in whole or in part (specifically the Kurdish and Shi'a areas), might be drifting not only out of the Sunni mainstream but even partly out of the Arab world itself, either into larger Shi'a/Iranian or Sunni Islamist orbits or into autonomous units, as in the case of the Kurdish areas.

In short, relations between Iraq and the rest of the Arab world are characterized by distinct unease and suspicion, an unease based in the first instance on identitive issues (Arab Sunni vs Shi'a and Kurds) but also on directional issues (Islamism) and to some extent distributional issues (patterns of alignment and influence). This constitutes the *relationship of primary tension* in the current Arab system (although not an outright axis of conflict) as other Arab powers and states maintain a wary stance, keeping Iraq under surveillance pending clarification and reassurance regarding its direction. At the same time, key Arab states such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia attempt to promote Sunni inclusion in the new Iraqi political system as well as reconciliation with the Shi'a and Kurdish communities, while Jordan provides facilities and personnel for the training of Iraqi armed forces and police and other state-building activities. On the other hand, tensions persist between Iraq and Syria, which has failed to halt completely the flow of personnel and resources from Iraqi Baathists and Islamists as well as from international terrorist networks across the border into Iraq for the purpose of fighting the US presence and destabilizing the new government. Relations have also been strained between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria over Syrian policy toward Lebanon, especially its apparent role in the assassination of Prime Minister al-Hariri, a Saudi ally, and to a lesser extent over the Iraqi situation.[145]

Apart from these divisions between the main Arab powers, there are relations of lesser tension between individual Arab powers and weaker states in their immediate neighborhood. This is most evident in the western Fertile Crescent, where Syrian–Lebanese relations have been particularly strained over continuing Syrian intervention (including assassinations) and efforts to control Lebanon. In the remaining sectors, namely the northern Gulf (Iraq and Kuwait), the Arabian peninsula (Saudi Arabia, the GCC states and Yemen) and the Nile Valley (Egypt and Sudan) tensions have eased compared to the recent past but some problems remain. None of the above-mentioned disputes/tensions, with the exception of

Syria–Lebanon, are particularly serious at this point. Nevertheless, the friction they generate contributes to Arab fragmentation.

In addition to altering the pattern of conflict, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait also contributed, at least in the short term, to a shift in the *pattern of alignment* from the polycentrism of the 1980s to the polarization of the leading Arab powers. Egypt and Syria, previously the odd ones out, joined with Saudi Arabia and the GCC states in a common front to oppose Iraq. In the wake of the conflict, efforts were made, with strong US encouragement, to consolidate this crisis alliance and turn it into a peacetime coalition. These efforts focused initially on the creation of joint Arab security arrangements for the Gulf area to provide a minimum of political-military coordination in the event of renewed threats. These plans, which were embodied in the Damascus Declaration (March 1991), envisaged continuing Egyptian and Syrian political-military contributions to Gulf security paralleled by important Saudi/Gulf-state financial contributions to the Egyptian and Syrian economies.[146] The proposed security arrangements failed to materialize, however, due largely to reservations of the GCC states. These included doubts about how much Egypt and Syria could contribute to their military security in comparison with the US and Western powers. The latter were viewed as the only states who both possessed the required strength and force projection capacity to meet GCC military security needs and had clearly demonstrated their commitment to do so. Additional concerns included the cost of the financial assistance involved, potential internal political security problems arising from the presence of Egyptian and Syrian troops on their soil as well as concern about Syrian links with Iran.

The failure of the proposed joint security arrangements for the Gulf undermined prospects for a peacetime coalition of the three leading Arab powers and their GCC associates, a coalition that might have provided leadership in dealing with the multiple challenges facing the eastern Arab world. The result was an erosion of trilateral political cooperation, including that directed against Iraq, and the reemergence of polycentrism. While trilateral political cooperation declined, bilateral political ties persisted between Egypt and Saudi Arabia but eased between these states and Syria. In the Gulf sector itself, limited progress was achieved in economic and military cooperation within the GCC. However, divergences in national situations combined with political tensions centering on Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Bahrain led to differences of emphasis in

policy toward Iran, Iraq, and the Arab–Israeli conflict, thereby hampering political cooperation.[147] In the Arab–Israeli sector, cooperation was even more limited.

Since the most recent Gulf war (2003), the eastern Arab states continue to face significant challenges arising from the Iraqi situation, Iran, and Israel, as well as from the United States. Yet the Arab system remains characterized by limited cooperation and loose,weak alignments. In the case of Iraq, after its overwhelming defeat and the elimination of Saddam Hussein's regime, the country ceased to be a direct threat to other Arab states but became instead a source of serious concern for reasons already noted. The persistence of an 'Iraqi problem,' albeit in a different and less direct form, has led not to close coordination of policy and action among Arab states but rather largely to wariness, distancing, and separate voicing of fears and concerns regarding developments in Iraq, the contending Iraqi forces, and the US occupying power. Even among leading Arab states, there has been a divergence of policy/approach on the part of Egypt and Saudi Arabia on the one hand and Syrian on the other.

With regard to the broader Gulf sector, the Iranian challenge appeared to ease considerably following the election of President Khatami and the growing prominence of pragmatists in the Parliament in the late 1990s. While this lessened the incentive for alignment or cooperation on the part of Saudi Arabia and the GCC states, they nevertheless improved their economic and, to a lesser extent, their political and military cooperation in recent years. The main challenge is still to come however. The return of the hardliners in the Iranian Parliament and presidency since 2005, Iran's increasing missile and nuclear capacity, as well as its regional political reach have already spurred closer cooperation between Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan as well as between Saudi Arabia and the GCC States, to counter the growth of Iranian (and Shi'a) influence and ambitions.[148] Whether it will lead much further remains doubtful.

In terms of the Arab–Israeli sector, the danger posed by Israel grew after the advent to power of Ariel Sharon (2001) and his government's adoption of more revisionist policies and more forcible methods. Despite intense expressions of concern from attentive and mass publics (fueled by Arab satellite television images), Arab governments failed to forge more than a rhetorical common front. Some political coordination has occurred between Egypt and individual Arab actors like the PLO, Syria,

and Jordan, on this front. However, there has been little or no overall coordination, and, more often than not, some tension, between these parties themselves.

Thus polycentrism predominates but is supplemented by loose bilateral (Egypt–Saudi Arabia, now expanded to include Jordan) and multilateral (Saudi Arabia–GCC states) alignments. The problem in the Arab world therefore is not so much acute conflict or polarization as a lack of cohesion and even fragmentation in the face of significant challenges from perimeter powers (Iran, Israel) and a turbulent Iraq. Moreover, growing cross-border sectarian (Shi'a), ideological (Sunni Islamist), and ethnic (Kurdish) ties seem likely to link important segments of the Arab world to larger transnational networks transcending the Arab system. This tendency has been reinforced by interstate or mixed links drawing states/political forces in the Arab world into the orbits of perimeter powers based on identitive, economic, or power ties (for example, between Iran, Syria, Lebanese Hizbullah, and Palestinian Hamas, between Iran, Iraqi Shi'a movements and the Iraqi government, between Iran, Qatar, and the UAE, between Israel, the Palestinians, and Jordan. These developments appear likely to intensify the process of linking the Arab system to a larger network of regional relations.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the new millennium, the Middle East remains a turbulent and conflictual environment. The region has several noteworthy features: one is the *multidimensionality* of the area's security problems and the fact that all are relatively serious. Significant realist-style security concerns persist. The level of militarization remains high as missile technology and weapons of mass destruction continue to spread. Eastern Arab states are faced with significant imbalances of power in favor of the perimeter powers both overall and in their respective sub-regions. Levels of interstate conflict have fluctuated considerably but territorial and even existential conflicts persist while power/status revisionism has grown. These problems have not been alleviated by the presence of regional economic interdependence or democratic political systems, factors which, according to liberal theorists, serve as important constraints on the outbreak of violence and war. While conventional security problems remain prominent, Arab states suffer simultaneously from a variety of nonconventional concerns, notably renewed manifestations of domestic

instability and violence. In some cases this has taken the form of threats to the national unity and territorial integrity of the state, but the most widespread challenges have been to the political security and ideological direction of regimes. These challenges are exacerbated by the continued permeability of Arab societies to transnational political and ideological pressures, particularly those based on Islam. Finally, although economic conditions have improved dramatically for the major oil-producing states in recent years, less well-off Arab states continue to face problems of modest growth rates, high levels of unemployment and underemployment, and widespread poverty. This simultaneous presence of several types of security problems, all relatively serious, distinguishes the eastern Arab world from most regions of the global south. Only Asian states suffer from the same combination of conventional and nonconventional security concerns. By way of contrast, in Africa and Latin America nonconventional security problems tend to predominate while conventional security concerns are relatively minor.

Secondly, the *overall mix* of security concerns has shifted. At one level, traditional realist-style concerns appear to be easing in some sectors but intensifying in others. Meanwhile, internal and transnational political security concerns have risen sharply and are now more widespread, more immediate, and more acute in most cases than conventional security concerns. Economic concerns, which intensified sharply in the 1980s and 1990s have now eased significantly for many Arab states but remain worrisome for others. These concerns are exacerbated by the dynamics of the global economy, notably the accelerated rhythm of globalization, mounting pressures for economic liberalization, and the growth of major power-centered regional economic groupings.

Thirdly, more variations are observable across the Arab world in the mix of security concerns, particularly among subregions, producing a *fragmentation of concerns*. In the Gulf sector, Saudi Arabia and most GCC states are preoccupied both with recurring conventional security problems (emanating mainly from Iran) and with rising internal and transnational political problems. Iraq's main concerns are internal, both political and economic, although it is also faced with transnational political pressures and, for many Iraqis, external military political and economic pressures from the US In the Arab–Israeli sector, conventional security problems are the main concern for some parties, like Syria and the Palestinians with external political and economic pressures from

the US and Western Europe a particular concern for Syria. They are also burdened, however, with significant political-economic developmental challenges. In the case of Egypt and Jordan, conventional security problems have become secondary to internal political and economic concerns since their respective peace treaties with Israel. The Maghreb states, for their part, have been preoccupied with domestic concerns as well as external economic relations.

Faced with these multiple acute challenges, certain patterns of response have emerged among Arab states. The most prominent is a *globalization of responses*, namely a tendency to rely heavily on the sole superpower and other Western powers to meet pressing national concerns ('vertical cooperation'). This is particularly evident in dealing with conventional security problems, ranging from military security in the Gulf to the achievement of an honorable settlement with Israel. It is even more prevalent in efforts to cope with economic difficulties. By way of contrast, internal/transnational political security problems have been dealt with through a combination of repressive measures domestically and cooperation among Arab security services regionally ('horizontal cooperation'). Paradoxically, the close links with the US and Western powers that constitute the foundation of most Arab strategies for dealing with conventional and economic security concerns tend to exacerbate their most immediate and possibly most acute concern, namely internal political security.

Conflictual conditions in the region, especially pressures from the perimeter powers, pose significant challenges to Arab interests and at the same time create incentives for cooperation. Despite these incentives, the difficult security environment has generated as much divergence as consensus among Arab states. Moreover, the differences in the national situations of these states have led to uncoordinated, often divergent responses. In short, confronted with challenges from different quarters, Arab states remain divided in their preoccupations, dependent on major powers to cope with their most pressing problems, and generally fragmented in their responses. These developments in turn raise questions about whether the Arab world will continue to constitute a distinct subregional system or merge into a larger network of regional relations.

Notes

1 The author wishes to thank the Inter-University Consortium for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies (ICAMES-McGill/Montreal) and especially its director, Rex Brynen, for financial and other support in the preparation of this chapter.

2 For a general discussion of the impact of systemic characteristics on state behavior, see Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), chapters 4 and 5. For a further exploration of the various types of causality, the roles played by systemic, positional, and unit-level factors in explaining foreign policy behavior, and the various dimensions of such behavior, see Paul Noble, "Systemic Factors Do Matter, But . . . : Reflections on the Uses and Limitations of Systemic Analysis," especially 34–35, 57–59, in Bassel F. Salloukh and Rex Brynen, eds., *Persistent Permeability: Regionalism, Localism, and Globalization in the Middle East* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate 2004).

3 James M. Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, "A Tale of Two Worlds: Core and Periphery in the Post-Cold War Era," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992); Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky, *The Real World Order: Zones of Peace, Zones of Turmoil* (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1995), chapters 1, 3.

4 Bahgat Korany, Paul Noble, and Rex Brynen, "Introduction: Security Concerns, Old and New" and "Conclusion: The Changing Regional Security Environment" in *The Many Faces of National Security in the Arab World* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1993).

5 For a discussion of these factors, see Goldgeier and McFaul, "A Tale of Two Worlds" (on limited diffusion of nuclear weapons), Ari Kacowicz, *Zones of Peace in the Third World* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 35–39, 47–50, 55–59 (on power imbalances, distributional differences/dissatisfaction with status quo), Barry Buzan and Gerald Segal, "Rethinking East Asian Security," *Survival*, 36, 2 (1994) (on substantive differences, power dynamics), Aaron Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia," *International Security* 18, no. 3 (1993–94) (on uneven distribution of nuclear weapons, nationalism, distributional differences).

6 For arguments along these lines, see Goldgeier and McFaul, "A Tale of Two Worlds "(limited economic interdependence, weakness of democracy/shared values), Singer and Wildavsky *The Real World Order* (limited material development, few democracies), Kacowicz, *Zones of Peace* (few liberal democratic regimes, limited economic development, limited economic interdependence), Buzan and Segal, "Rethinking East Asian Security," (limited economic interdependence, few democracies, weak international rules/regimes/institutions), Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry" (few democracies, limited economic interdependence, weak international institutions).

7 Kacowicz, *Zones of Peace*, chapter 5; Emmanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), chapters by Amitav Acharya (Southeast Asia) and Andrew Hurrell (South America).

8 Mohammed Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), chapters 2, 8, 9; Barry Buzan, *People, States, and Fear*, 2nd ed. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991), chapter 2; Brian Job, ed., *The Insecurity Dilemma* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), chapter 1.

9 Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 67, 72, 82–85, 92–97; Vendulka Kubalkova and Albert Cruickshank, *Marxism and International Relations* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1985), introduction, chapter 3; Robert Packenham, *The Dependency Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), particularly chapter 5.

10 Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework of Analysis* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998) chapter 5; Baldev Raj Nayar "Political Mainsprings of Economic Planning in the New Nations," *Comparative Politics* 6, no. 3 (1975); Laurie Brand, *Jordan's Inter-Arab Relations: The Political Economy of Alliance Making* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), chapter 1.

11 Ayoob, *Third World Security Predicament*, chapter 2 ("State Making and Third World Security"), especially 34–42.

12 For a fuller discussion of internal political conditions in the Arab world in the 1950s and 1960s and their impact on the international position and behavior of Arab States, see Paul Noble, "The Arab System: Pressures, Constraints and Opportunities" in *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, 2nd ed., Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, eds. (Boulder: Westview, 1991), 50–51, and related notes.

13 Risa Brooks, "Civil–Military Relations in the Middle East" in *The Future Security Environment in the Middle East*, Nora Bensahel and Daniel Byman, eds. (Santa Monica: Rand, 2004).

14 Noble, "The Arab System," 51–54.

15 Graham E. Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 17–19, 73–75.

16 For an overview of the factors facilitating and (mainly) restricting political liberalization and democratization in the Arab world as well as the dynamics of these processes, see Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany, and Paul Noble, *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World* vol. 1, *Theoretical Perspectives*, and vol. 2, *Arab Experiences* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995, 1998). See also Nazih N. Ayubi, *Over-stating the Arab State* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1995), chapter 11; Nora Bensahel, "Political Reform in the Middle East," in *The Future Security Environment in the Middle East*, Bensahel and Byman, eds.; Hassan M. Fattah, "Arab Democracy, a U.S. Goal, Falters," *New York Times*, April 10, 2006.

17 This resentment is borne out in the surveys of the Pew Global Attitudes Project, Gallup International, and Zogby International, see Rex Brynen, "Permeability Revisited" in Salloukh and Brynen, *Persistent Permeability.*

18 Daniel Byman, "The Implications of Leadership Change in the Arab World" in Bensahel and Byman, eds. *The Future Security Environment in the Middle East*.

19 Rami G. Khouri, "The Human Tsunami Beneath Calm Middle East Waters," *The Daily Star* (Beirut), December 29, 2004.

20 For some of the key factors and issues which have contributed to the growth/strength of political Islam in Middle Eastern societies see Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, 13–46, 68–81. See also, International Crisis Group, "Understanding Islamism," ICG Middle East Report 37 (2005), http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3301, for an analysis of the different streams of Islamic activism (both Sunni and Shi'a) and their responses to the challenges faced by these societies.

21 Jack Levy, "The Causes of War: A Review of Theories and Evidence," in *Behaviour, Society, and Nuclear War*, Philip Tetlock, Jo L. Husbands, Robert Jervis et al., vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 271–74; Jack Levy, "The Diversionary Theory of War" in *Handbook of War Studies*, ed. Manus J. Midlarsky (Boston: Unwin, Hyman, 1989); Noble, "Systemic Factors Do Matter, But . . ." in Salloukh and Brynen, *Persistent Permeability*, 47.

22 F. Gregory Gause III, "Iraq's Decisions to Go to War, 1980 and 1990," *Middle East Journal* 56, no. 1 (2002).

23 For some of the main contributors to the democratic peace literature, see Michael E. Brown, Sean Lynn-Jones, and Steven Miller eds., *Debating the Democratic Peace* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), Bruce M. Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), Zeev Maoz, "Normative and Structural Causes of Democratic Peace, 1946–1986," *American Political Science Review* 87, no. 3 (1993), and David Lake, "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War," *American Political Science Review* 86, no. 1 (1992). With regard to the Middle East, Tessler and Grobschmidt argue that greater progress toward democratization in the Arab world would have a positive effect on efforts to resolve the Arab–Israeli conflict. See Mark Tessler and Marilyn Grobschmidt, "Democracy in the Arab World and the Arab–Israeli Conflict" in David Garnham and Mark Tessler, *Democracy, War, and Peace in the Middle East* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995). This theoretical perspective has been a major factor behind President George W. Bush's democracy initiative in the Middle East in recent years. For democratic peace theory's applicability to the Middle East, see Michael C. Hudson, "Democracy and Foreign Policy in the Arab World" in Garnham and Tessler, *Democracy, War and Peace in the Middle East.* Gause has made the related argument that democratization will probably not lead to a reduction in cross-border violence and terrorism in the Middle East; F. Gregory Gause III, "Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?" *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 5 (2005). For the ensuing debate, see "Tyranny and Terror," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 1 (2006).

24 Sharaa added, "We are more flexible than the Arab people"; Thomas L. Friedman, "The U.S. Now Expects the Mideast Talks to Take Time Out," *New York Times*, November 5, 1991.

25 Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War," *International Security* 20, no. 1 (1995).

26 Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament*, 194–96; Christopher Layne, "Kant or Cant?: The Myth of the Democratic Peace," *International Security* 19, no. 2 (1994).

27 For an outline of the diversity in resource endowment and economic structure in the Arab world/Middle East, see Alan Richards and John Waterbury, *A Political Economy of the Middle East*, 2nd ed. (Boulder: Westview, 1996), chapter 3.

28 United Nations Development Program, Regional Bureau for Arab States, *Arab Human Development Report 2002* (New York: United Nations, 2002), 85–86 and accompanying figures; Paul Rivlin, *Economic Policy and Performance in the Arab World* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2001), 48–65.

29 *Arab Human Development Report 2002*, 88–89, 92–93.

30 Many of these trends and the challenges they pose are best exemplified in the case of Saudi Arabia, see Anthony Cordesman, *Saudi Arabia Enters the Twenty-First Century: The Political, Foreign Policy, and Energy Dimensions* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003), chapters 1, 5, 6.

31 According to estimates/projections made by the Institute for International Finance (Washington) and the International Monetary Fund, oil and gas export receipts for GCC states were expected to reach over $300 billion in 2006, more than double the average receipts for the years 2000–2002. Also the overall GDP of GCC states was expected to reach $600 billion in 2006, almost double the average figure for the years 2000–2002. "GCC Enters Fourth Year," *Daily Star* (Beirut), January 3, 2006.

32 For analyses of projected oil and natural gas reserves, demand, and prices, see Ian O. Lesser, "Energy and Middle Eastern Security," in Bensahel and Byman, *The Future Security Environment in the Middle East*; International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook 2006* (Paris: International Energy Agency, 2006). Nicolas Sarkis, "L'après-pétrôle a déjà commencé," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, May 2006; Michael L. Klare, "Limites de la puissance pétrolière saoudienne," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, March 2006; Daniel Yergin and Michael Stoppard, "The Next Prize," *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 6 (2003); and Lew Watts, "Little Brother is Unlikely to Bully Gas Importers," *Financial Times*, April 5, 2007 focus more specifically on the natural gas market.

33 Still, virtually all the major oil-producing states suffer from serious demographic pressures and consequently high youth unemployment rates. Saudi Arabia, for example, has an official unemployment rate of 12 percent but the rate for twenty to thirty year olds is estimated at close to 25 percent. See Roula Khalaf, "Gulf States Struggle to Close Jobless Gap," *Financial Times*, April 26, 2007.

34 See, in addition to the *Arab Human Development Report 2002*, Rivlin, *Economic Policy and Performance* 31–44, 85–94, 95–115, 135–65 and Alan Richards, "Economic Reform in the Middle East" in Bensahel and Byman, *The Future Security Environment in the Middle East*, 57–98, 117–28.

35 Rivlin, *Economic Policy and Performance*, 115–31; Richards and Waterbury, *A Political Economy of the Middle East*, 233–59.

36 Bassam Haddad, "Syria's Curious Dilemma," *Middle East Report* 236 (2005): 4–13; Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), *Syria 2006, Country Profile, Main Report,* section on Economic Sectors/Mining and Semi-Processing; EIU, *Egypt 2006, Country Profile, Main Report*, Economic Sectors/Mining and Semi-Processing.

37 Brand, *Jordan's Inter-Arab Relations*, chapter 1.

38 Nayar, "Political Mainsprings of Economic Planning."
39 F. Gregory Gause III, "Theory and System in Understanding Middle East International Politics" in Salloukh and Brynen, *Persistent Permeability*, 21–23.
40 For the theoretical argument regarding this tendency, see Carl Kaysen, "Is War Obsolete?" *International Security* 14, no. 4 (1990).
41 Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (1993). For an expanded version of this argument, see Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).
42 Richard Rubenstein and Jarle Crocker, "Challenging Huntington," *Foreign Policy* 96 (1994); Stephen M. Walt, "Building Up New Bogeymen," *Foreign Policy* 106 (1997).
43 Fuller, *Future of Political Islam*, 83–95, 149–63. Fuller points out that jihadist groups genuinely embrace Huntington's concept of the clash of civilizations (150). For a similar view, see Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2004), 93–107, 123–39.
44 Vali Nasr provides a useful analysis of the split between Sunni and Shi'a both historically and in its current manifestations. Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival* (New York and London: Norton, 2006), particularly 227–54.
45 Rubenstein and Crocker, "Challenging Huntington"; Fuller, *Future of Political Islam*, 83–95, 145–49, 152–54, 156–59.
46 For an expanded discussion of the impact of linguistic/cultural homogeneity on popular and elite attitudes, intersocietal relations, foreign policy, and interstate relations in the Arab world in the 1950s and 1960s, see Noble, "The Arab System," 55–57; F. Gregory Gause III, "Sovereignty, Statecraft and Stability in the Middle East," *Journal of International Affairs* 45, no. 2 (1992): 446–51.
47 Fouad Ajami, "The End of Pan-Arabism," *Foreign Affairs* 57, no. 5 (1978–79); Michael Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 200–36.
48 Rex Brynen and Paul Noble, "The Gulf Conflict and the Arab State System," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 13, no. 1–2 (1991), 130–34.
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50 Rex Brynen, "Permeability Revisited: Reflections on the Regional Implications of the al-Aqsa Intifada" in Salloukh and Brynen, *Persistent Permeability*, 127–31; Marc Lynch, *Voices of the New Arab Public: Iraq, Al-Jazeera, and Arab Politics Today* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), chapters 1, 4–6.
51 For transnational links between Sunni Islamists, see Kepel, *War For Muslim Minds*, 170–182; Nasr, *The Shia Revival*, 227–31, 242–49.
52 See Nasr, *The Shia Revival*, 142–43, 170–71, 179, 199, 208, 215, 231–42 for illustrations of the ties and responsiveness between Shi'a.

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58 Ibid., Tables 8.1 and 6.1.

59 While overall levels of inter-Arab trade are limited (amounting to only 8 to 10 percent of total Arab trading activity), there are significant variations at the national level. In 2003, for example, inter-Arab trade as a percentage of national trade ranged from a high of 14–26 percent in the case of Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, and Oman to below 10 percent in the case of Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and most of the Gulf states as well as the North African states. See: Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, *Annual Review of Developments in Globalization and Regional Integration in the Countries of the ESCWA Region, 2004* (New York: United Nations, 2005), Tables 10, 11. Fahd Fanek, a Jordanian journalist/economist has argued that the low figure for inter-Arab trade is misleading since the vast majority of Arab exports consist of petroleum, most of which goes to international markets. He points out that, if petroleum is excluded from both exports and imports, the volume of inter-Arab trade in nonoil commodities would rise to around 22 percent. This would put the Arab world in second place for trade links among developing regions of the world. See: Fahd Fanek, "Inter-Arab Trade—How Much is Too Little?" *Jordan Times,* January 21, 2002.

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61 For a discussion of labour migration and remittances as well as the factors shaping these in the 1980s and 1990s, see Rivlin, *Economic Policy and Performance*, 71–75.

62 For an analysis of various types of inter-Arab economic linkages and attempts at economic cooperation into the 1990s, see Hudson, *Middle East Dilemma*, chapters 10–14. For developments since then, see the annual reports of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), *Annual Review of Developments in Globalization and Regional Integration in the Countries of the ESCWA Region* (New York: United Nations).

63 For a description and evaluation of Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs), especially the Jordanian–Israeli version, see Pete W. Moore, "QIZs, FTAs, USAID and MEFTA: A Political Economy of Acronyms," *Middle East Report* 234 (2005), 18–23. For an analysis of the Egyptian–Israeli QIZ agreement, see Ahmed el-Naggar,

"Conflicting Interests," Niveen Wahish, "Enter QIZ," Ibrahim Nafie, "Reality Check," all in *Al-Ahram Weekly*, December 16, 2004, and also Neil MacFarquhar, "Melting Icy Egyptian–Israeli Relations Through a Trade Pact," *New York Times*, December 16, 2004.

64 Friedman advances a variant of this argument in his book on globalization. See: Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 2nd ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2006), chapter 14.

65 Shimon Peres, *The New Middle East* (New York: Holt, 1993).

66 For a general discussion of confidence-building measures, see Gabriel Ben-Dor and David B. Dewitt, *Confidence Building Measures in the Middle East* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), chapters 1 and 15. For an (implicit) distinction between confidence-building measures and peace-consolidating measures, see page 172. Also see Hisham Awartani and Ephraim Kleiman, "Economic Interactions Among Participants in the Middle East Peace Process," *Middle East Journal* 51, no. 2 (1997) for emerging economic links between Israel and its immediate Arab neighbors.

67 Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics*, 221–26, 229–34; Atif Kubursi, "Prospects for Arab Economic Integration After Oslo," in Hudson, *Middle East Dilemma*, 307–309, 311–14; Glenn E. Robinson, "The Greater Middle East Co-Prosperity Sphere, the Arab–Israeli Problem, and Gulf Security" in *Gulf Security in the Twenty-First Century*, David E. Long and Christian Koch, eds. (Abu Dhabi: The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 1997).

68 For decades scholars have disagreed not only over the geographical contours of the Middle Eastern region but also over the most appropriate focus for system-level analyses of the international relations of the region. Many analysts have focused on the region as a whole although their definitions of the region often diverge, see Michael Brecher, "The Middle East Subordinate System and its Impact on Israeli Foreign Policy," *International Studies Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (1969); Louis Cantori and Steven Spiegel, *The International Politics of Regions* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970); L. Carl Brown, *International Politics and the Middle East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 7–11; Leonard Binder, "The Middle East as a Subordinate International System," *World Politics* 10, no. 3 (1958); F. Gregory Gause III, "Systemic Approaches to Middle East International Relations," *International Studies Review* 1, no. 1 (1999). Others have chosen to concentrate their attention in whole or in part on particular subregional systems, for example, the Arab system (Kerr, Noble, Mattar, and Dessouki, see note 70); the Arab–Israeli system (Brecher to some extent and Evron, see note 71); the Gulf system (Ramazani, Buzan, and Rizvi, see note 72); or the two together (Buzan, see note 74). For the purposes of this analysis, the Middle Eastern regional system will be defined basically along the lines set out by Gause in "Systemic Approaches to Middle East International Relations" and "Theory and System in Understanding Middle East International Politics" (in line with Cantori and Spiegel), namely Egypt, the Arab states of West Asia, and the three non-Arab perimeter powers—Israel, Iran, and Turkey. Unlike Gause, I will not include the great powers in the regional system proper but rather treat them as a major power intrusive system

which is analytically distinct from, but practically intertwined with, the Middle Eastern regional system; see Noble "Systemic Factors Do Matter, But . . . ."

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72 Rouholla K. Ramazani, *Revolutionary Iran* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); Barry Buzan and Gowher Rizvi, *South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers* (London: Macmillan, 1986), chapters 1 and 6.

73 Kemal Kirisci, "Turkey and the Muslim Middle East" and William Hale, "Economic Issues in Turkish Foreign Policy," in *Turkey's New World*, Alan Makovsky and Sabri Sayari, eds. (Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2000); Malik Mufti, "From Swamp to Backyard: The Middle East in Turkish Foreign Policy," in *The Middle East Enters the Twenty-First Century*, Robert O. Friedman, ed. (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2002).

74 Barry Buzan, *People, States, and Fear*, 2nd ed. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991), 187, 194, 197, 199.

75 Edmund Ghareeb, "Iraq in the Gulf," in *Iraq in Transition*, Frederick Axelgard, ed. (Boulder: Westview, 1986).

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77 See Buzan, *People, States, and Fear*, chapter 5, for the concept of regional security complex.

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79 Gary Sick, "Iran's Foreign Policy: A Revolution in Transition," and Asef Bayat and Bahman Bakhtiari, "Revolutionary Iran and Egypt," in *Iran and the Surrounding World*, Nikki R. Keddie and Rudi Mathee, eds. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002).

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83 Economist Intelligence Unit, *Turkey 2006, Country Profile, Main Report*.

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5

Regional Leadership: Balancing off Costs and Dividends in the Foreign Policy of Egypt

Ali E. Hillal Dessouki

Over the last fifty years the foreign policy of Egypt has undergone two processes of 'restructuring,' under presidents Gamal Abd al-Nasser (1955–1970) and Anwar Sadat (1970–1981), and a long period of stability and continuity under president Hosni Mubarak (1981–).

Foreign policy restructuring entails a major alteration or breakup in the orientation of an actor in favor of establishing a new set of commitments and alliances. It is more than a change in tactics or instruments of policy implementation and goes beyond the routine fluctuations and oscillations of the foreign policy behavior of developing countries. It involves a basic reconsideration of an actor's perceptions of the global or regional system and of the it's role within that framework. Indicators of the restructuring of foreign policy orientation include patterns of diplomatic, commercial, military, and cultural relations between the country and the outside world.[1]

The first restructuring took place in the 1950s, in the larger context of decolonization and national liberation movements in the global south. Nasser's Egypt was a leading advocate of the right of developing countries to pursue an independent and nonaligned foreign policy. Given the dominant Western influence in the Arab region, this policy led to a series of confrontations with the US, UK, and France and to a closer relations with the Soviet Union. The Western powers' refusal to sell the Egyptian government arms (1954–1955) and to help finance the High Dam project

(1956) were two critical factors in the restructuring process. By the end of Nasser's era, Moscow was the major source of military and economic assistance to Egypt.

In the 1970s, Egypt once again restructured its foreign policy orientation, reflecting a trade-off between economic and political objectives as perceived by Sadat. He distanced himself from Nasser's policies and adopted a pro-Western posture. His objective was to attract foreign economic aid and investment. At the domestic level, he officially changed Egypt's name from the United Arab Republic to the Arab Republic of Egypt, a symbolic break with pan-Arabism, and also changed the national flag and national anthem. Economically, he moved Egypt away from Nasser's Arab socialism toward a path of economic liberalization. Sadat gradually replaced the one-party system that had existed since 1953 with a form of controlled political pluralism. At the regional level, the country changed its alliances and forged closer relations with pro-Western, moderate oil-producing states, particularly Saudi Arabia, from 1971–1973. Sadat made a more fundamental change by initiating a peace policy toward Israel, which led to the conclusion of the Camp David Accords in 1978 and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979. As a result of Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977, Egypt was expelled from all Arab and Islamic councils. At the global level, Egypt shifted away from an essentially pro-Soviet position that had seen it grant naval and air facilities to the Soviet Union to a strategic alignment with the United States. Egypt became a major strategic and political cornerstone of American policy in the Middle East.[2]

Mubarak did not make fundamental changes to this foreign policy orientation. He maintained close ties with the US and respected all commitments related to the peace treaty with Israel. At the same time, he adopted low-profile measures to redress the imbalances that resulted from Sadat's impulsive way of conducting foreign policy. These measures included rapprochement with Arab and Islamic countries, as well as following balanced policies toward big powers. In marked and deliberate contrast to Sadat, Mubarak adopted a nonsensationalist and nonconfrontational style. His immediate objectives centered on mending the breach with other Arab and Islamic countries, and balancing Egypt's international position through closer cooperation with the European Union countries, Japan, and China.

He succeeded in achieving most of these objectives. By December 1989, Egypt had restored diplomatic relations with all Arab countries except

Libya. Egypt was also welcomed back into the Arab League as well as the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Mubarak started to develop new objectives and priorities over the years, in the face of major global and regional changes. Mubarak may be said to have created his own vision of Egypt's foreign policy, which did not replace Sadat's but existed parallel to it.

Egyptian foreign policy under Mubarak has been characterized by stability, moderation, and predictability. With the exception of participation in the international coalition for the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, Egypt has not engaged in armed conflict during his quarter century-long rule, the longest nonwar period in Egypt's modern history. Mubarak succeeded in protecting Egypt from the waves of instability prevailing in the region. The price has been, according to critics, a retreat from Egypt's regional leadership role. The regional role of Egypt, its requirements, and its costs are once again the focus of discussion and contestation in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Domestic Environment

Geography

Egypt occupies the northern corner of Africa with an extension across the Gulf of Suez into the Sinai Peninsula in Asia. It is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, the Sudan to the south, the Red Sea to the east, and Libya to the west. Egypt consists of three regions: the Nile Valley and Delta (a little more than 4 percent of the total area), which extend from the Sudan northward to the Mediterranean; the Eastern Desert and the eastern gate to Egypt, the Sinai Peninsula (28 percent), which extends from the Nile Valley to the Red Sea east of the Suez Canal; and the Western Desert (68 percent), which stretches from the Nile Valley westward to Libya.

Egypt's geography has two important implications. First, Egypt's geographical position has made it an easy country to control and rule. Historically, the main features of Egyptian society and the Egyptian polity have been centralized rule and the absence of long-standing regional allegiances. Dependence on the Nile for irrigation called for central administration and enabled the government to extend its authority to the distant parts of the land. Second, because the territory is mostly desert, 96 percent of Egyptians live on little more than 4 percent of the total area of their country.

In his classic two-volume book *The Character of Egypt*, the eminent geographer Gamal Hamdan views the history of Egypt as an interaction between the Nile and the desert, and draws a number of conclusions about Egypt's national interest and policy based on this interaction.[3] The problem with this geographical determinism is its static bias, particularly its assumption of certain unchanging geographical forces shaping foreign policy. As we discussed in Chapter 2, the influence of geography depends upon the interaction between geographical factors and how a particular elite or leader perceives their significance.

Egypt's geographical position lends itself to two different perceptions of its natural foreign policy orientation. Some view the relative physical isolation of the valley and the way it sets the country apart from its neighbors as the most important factor in Egypt's situation. In the twentieth century, this perception has given rise to tendencies toward isolationism and nonengagement in regional affairs. Others see Egypt's geographical position primarily as a bridgehead, a linking point, a crossroads between Africa, Europe, and Asia and between the eastern and western parts of the Arab world. Adherents of this school advocate an active foreign policy in the Arab world and Africa. Egypt's eastern Arab policy is justified in terms of Arabism and security; its southern African policy rests on the need to protect the Nile waters, the lifeline of Egypt. Nasser embraced the activist view through most of his rule, but Sadat gradually emphasized Egyptian patriotism and the importance of concentrating on Egypt's domestic economic problems. In the war of words that followed the Camp David Accords, Sadat openly described his Arab foes as being "dwarfs," "uncivilized" and "unfit to understand the complexities of the modern world."

While maintaining the thrust of Sadat's legacy, Mubarak has revived Egypt's role in the Arab world and, to a lesser degree, in Africa. His understanding is that Egypt cannot hope to assure its economic security, which is dependent on external aid, or its strategic security, without positioning itself as an active regional partner. His view of Egypt's geographical position therefore emphasizes the bridgehead and linking point interpretation.

Population and Social Structure

Egypt's population is characterized by social cohesiveness. Historically, Egypt is one of the oldest continuously settled communities in the world. Egyptians long ago acquired the sense of being one people. All

Egyptians have Arabic as their mother tongue, with the exception of the Nubians (less than 1 percent) and an insignificant number of isolated Berber-speaking groups in the Western Desert. More than 90 percent of the population is Muslim, and Islam is the state religion. The indigenous Copts form the largest minority religious group, but speak Arabic, and have hardly any racial or ethnic differences with Egyptian Muslims. Since the 1950s, Egypt has experienced a 'baby boom.'

According to the national census of 2007, Egyptians now number 76.4 million, compared to 61.4 million in 1996, an increase of 24.3 percent. The census results indicate that 3.9 million Egyptians live abroad, compared to 2.1 million in 1996, an increase of 78 percent. As a direct consequence of this population explosion, Egypt's population is remarkably youthful. Almost one half of Egyptians are under twenty years of age; 69 percent are under thirty-five. As a result, governments are increasingly incapable of meeting increasing demands for food, education, health services, and work opportunities satisfactorily. Another result is the migration of 3.9 million Egyptians in search of work abroad, particularly to oil-producing Arab states.

In contrast to most developing countries, Egypt shows a high degree of social and national integration, and its national unity has been lauded by subsequent presidents. There are no fundamental minority cleavages to constrain foreign policymakers or limit their options. Sadat often contrasted Egypt's deep-seated unity with the sectarian, familial, and communal fragmentation of most Arab countries and argued that this unity allowed Egypt to pursue a purposeful foreign policy and to make hard decisions (such as peace with Israel) that would be impossible for most Arab countries because of their domestic fragmentation. In the 1990s, religious freedoms in Egypt became a foreign policy concern due to the activities of advocacy Coptic associations in North America and Europe. The one major area of anxiety is Christian concern about the possible implementation of Islamic law in Egypt and the status of Copts in an Islamic state, and Mubarak has tried to address these concerns with measures affirming the 'civil' nature of the state in Egypt.[4]

The population of Egypt constitutes a relatively large human resource pool, allowing the government to mobilize an army of about one million in 1973. Egyptians working abroad provide another positive resource: their remittances reached $3.3 billion in 2004 and constitute a significant source of hard currency for Egypt.[5]

Notwithstanding these positive aspects, population growth has had an adverse impact on Egypt's developmental efforts. It has aggravated unemployment problems, increased the dependency ratio, augmented rural migration to urban centers, and led for a while to the diversion of resources from investment to consumption needs.[6] Egypt is a prime example of structural imbalance between population and material resources. During the 1980s, population increased at a rate far beyond the rate of growth in arable cropped land, and far beyond educational and industrial development. In the 1980s and 1990s Egypt had to use its limited hard currency to import foodstuffs. This made the country more dependent on the outside world and more vulnerable to fluctuations in world food market prices. The extent and consequences of food dependency are likely to be major policy concerns in Egypt for years to come.[7]

Economic Capability

Since the Second World War, Egypt has had a balance of payments deficit that has had to be filled from other sources. From 1948 to 1958 it was filled from existing Egyptian currency reserves; from 1958 to 1964 Egypt received foreign aid from Eastern and Western sources; from 1965 to 1972 the Soviet Union subsidized most of the deficit; from 1973 to 1977 the main source of aid was Arab oil-producing countries; and since 1978, the US has become the major supplier of economic aid and assistance. Because of Egypt's important strategic-political position and role, its policymakers have managed to mobilize external resources to ease the growing population-resources gap, but this is a tragic success, as it proves the limits of Egypt's developmental plans.

Starting from the 1970s, the tensions resulting from a limited resource base, the pursuit of an activist foreign policy, and increasing economic troubles at home became more evident. Economic difficulties contributed to the evolution of a more inward-looking and less activist foreign policy. The failure of the government's development efforts to meet the needs of an increasing population resulted in growing shantytowns, unemployment, and the potential for political instability. This led the Egyptian leadership increasingly to seek external help.

The era of revolutionary zeal and enthusiasm (1955–1965), which witnessed the ascendancy of Egypt and a number of other global south states in international politics, was gradually replaced by more sober behavior from the 1970s onward as serious internal social and economic problems

began to surface. In Egypt, ideological and political considerations were overshadowed by more immediate economic concerns, and as John Waterbury wrote, "the primacy of economics has become undisputed in the Egypt of 1975."[8]

The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), private financial institutions, and the oil-producing Arab states all played a role in influencing Egypt's economic policy.[9] For two years (1975 and 1976) they pressured Egypt to make its economy more acceptable and accessible to the world market by curbing subsidies and devaluing its currency. In January 1977 the Egyptian government responded to these pressures and increased the prices of a number of basic commodities. Demonstrations and riots erupted and the government had to rescind its decisions.

From that point on, governments were reluctant to risk political stability for economic reform. The proximity of foreign policy decisions and domestic affairs became evident and direct. Sadat's decision to visit Jerusalem in November 1977 cannot be understood without taking into consideration the food riots in January of the same year. The signing of the Camp David Accords in 1978 and the Egyptian–Israeli peace treaty in 1979 opened the door for an influx of Western aid and money to Egypt.

In 1986, a decline in oil prices affected Egypt adversely and forced it to follow inward-looking policies and resort to heavy borrowing. As a result, from 1986–1992 per capita income grew by only 10 percent. Again foreign policy decisions come to the rescue of the economy. Mubarak's decision to participate in the international coalition to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation resulted in a financial bonus for Egypt. The US took the lead in relieving Egypt from half of its debts, to be followed by European and Arab states. Overnight, Egypt's external debt decreased from some $44 billion to almost half that sum.

This development enabled the government to pursue economic reform programs that reduced the fiscal deficit from 17 percent of GDP in 1991 to about 1 percent in 1996. In 1996, the Egyptian government signed an agreement with the IMF which involved significant trade liberalization. The government pursued a gradual economic reform program over the 1990s which gained momentum in the first years of this decade. In July 2004, it adopted a comprehensive growth-oriented reform plan whose objectives included the increase of private investment and foreign direct investment. As a result, the GDP increased by 5.1 percent in 2004–2005, the highest in four years.

According to a Barclays capital report in February 2006, this increase was accompanied by "a sizable surplus on the current account, as strong Suez canal receipts and tourism revenues, coupled with high worker remittances, contributed to more than compensate for the trade deficit, combined with capital inflows, mostly from Gulf investors." According to the same report the main risk faced by Egypt was "economic vulnerability to regional political instability."[10] Mubarak recognized the importance of political stability for consolidating these positive economic trends. The economy continued its progress. In 2006, the GDP increased by 7.2 percent, the highest in 10 years, and FDI reached $10 billion, an increase of 50 percent in three years. Nonoil exports increased from $4.4 billion in 2001–2002 to $8.2 billion in 2005–2006, an increase of 86 percent in four years.[11]

Whether at times of stress or ease, the impact of economics on foreign policy is clear. For a while, Egypt's limited resources put a constraint on its government and made it dependent on foreign aid and therefore vulnerable to external influence. Later when the economy was growing, shared economic interests with other countries also imposed constraints. Egypt has had to keep balancing its economic and political interests and steering its foreign policy in such a way as to protect its economic interests. A clear example is what happened in May 2007. The government of Qatar invited a number of Egyptian opposition figures to attend a conference on democracy where the Egyptian government was heavily criticized as being undemocratic. The same day, President Mubarak received Sheikh Hamad Bin Jasim al-Thani, the prime minister of Qatar, to discuss issues of common interest including the establishment of a Qatari industrial zone over 2100 feddans in Borg al-Arab city in Egypt with investments expected to reach some $4 billion. Both Egypt and other Arab countries are starting to make a distinction between political and economic relations and to recognize that common economic interests should not be affected by the fluctuations of inter-Arab politics.

Military Capability

The issues of armament and having a strong army have been central to Egypt's modern politics and foreign policy as a result of the five wars it has fought with Israel (in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1969–1970, and 1973) and its active regional leadership role. The two restructurings of Egypt's foreign policy orientation were related to problems of arm supply.

In the 1970s, Egypt's arms arsenal was considerably weakened by: (1) the failure of the Soviet Union to supply the army adequately after the war of 1973 and the eventual severance of the Soviet military link in 1976; (2) the time needed to shift procurement needs from the Soviet Union to the West and to forge a new link with the United States; and (3) the economic costs of massive rearmament. From 1967 to 1975, according to official estimates, Egypt spent $25 billion for military purposes, and this was matched by an equal amount in war-related losses. During the same period, Egypt received less than $900 million from Arab states.[12]

Of particular interest in this regard is the experience of the Arab Military Armaments Organization (AMIO), founded in 1975 as a joint venture between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar and endowed with more than $1.4 billion in an effort to combine oil money with Egypt's skilled labor force. By 1978, the groundwork was laid for the establishment of a basic Arab defense industry located mainly in Egypt. Contacts were initiated with the American Motors Corporation to assemble jeeps and with the Ryan Teledyne Corporation to produce high-altitude drones (pilotless planes equipped with light and infrared censors), and with Lockheed Aircraft Industries to build C-130 military transport.[13] Contracts were also signed with Westland of Britain to construct 50 Lynx helicopters and the Swingfire antitank missile.[14] This project was reduced by half in May 1979 in protest against the Egyptian–Israeli treaty and the other three Arab partners decided to terminate the venture as of July 1, 1979. Egypt rejected the decision and instead transformed AMIO into a fully Egyptian enterprise. In 1981, Egypt produced $40 million worth of arms, and in 1983 it assembled the new French Alpha Jets. Increasingly, Egyptian arms deals are made on the basis of coproduction, with an Egyptian role in assembly and parts production.[15] By 2007, Egyptian military industries participated in assembling and building significant parts of sophisticated equipments such as M1A1 Abrams tanks, M8 Buford tanks, the Chinese K-8E trainer aircrafts, and the Patria 155mm GH 52 towed howitzers.[16]

Egypt has one of the best-trained and most highly skilled armies in the region. The Egyptian armed forces number well over 350,000, making the Egyptian military the largest in the Arab region and in Africa.[17] Throughout the 1980s Egypt embarked on an ambitious program of military industrialization, with the aim of establishing a credible indigenous arms capability. One aspect of this project was the Iraqi–Egyptian cooperation to produce

ballistic missile Badr 2000, modeled on the Argentinean missile, Condor 2. This development incited a political controversy over the proliferation of unconventional weapons in the region. In 1989, due to intense pressure from the United States, Egypt declared its abandonment of the project. It is also worth mentioning that during the same year, 1989, the US accused Egypt of obtaining a chemical weapon capability. The accusation was strongly denied by President Mubarak. In the 1990s and as late as 2003, US intelligence reports accused Egypt of military cooperation with North Korea to build Scud and other kinds of ballistic missiles. Again, Egyptian officials denied the existence of such cooperation.

As for military expenditure, it does not represent a significant percentage of Egypt's GDP. In constant 2003 dollars, military expenditures reached $2,400 million in 1988, decreased from $1906 million in 1990 to $1712 million in 2000, and started to increase in the early years of the twenty-first century, reaching $2021 million in 2003, $2070 million in 2004, and $2,225 million in 2005. Due to Egypt's economic growth, however, military expenditure continued to decline as a percentage of GDP, from 6.2 percent in 1988, to 4.5 percent in 1990, to 2.7 percent in 2000, and 2.8 percent in 2003 and 2004.[18]

Egypt's military capability has been enhanced by close cooperation with the US. Since 1978, American military aid has continued at the level of $1.3 billion a year. The US has helped to modernize the Egyptian army and provided it with F-4 jet aircraft, F-16 jet fighters, M60 A3 and M1A1 tanks, Apache helicopters, aerial surveillance aircraft, anti-aircraft missile batteries, and other equipment. Egypt and the United States also cooperate in a set of annual multilateral military exercises dubbed Operation Bright Star which involve the deployment of American troops to Egypt. Operation Bright Star is the largest military exercise in the world.[19]

In addition to the United States, the Egyptian armed forces inventory includes equipment from France, Italy, the UK, Finland, Ukraine, and China. Egypt also participates in NATO's Mediterranean dialogue forum, an initiative by NATO to cooperate with nonallied members in the Mediterranean region. Egypt provides military assistance and technical training to a number of African and Arab states, and is the only Arab state with a spy satellite.[20]

The Egyptian leadership is committed to maintaining a strong and credible military capability. It is a force to protect peace and regional stability. Its main objective is to protect Egypt and deter potential enemies.

Political Structure

From 1952 to 1970 the basic characteristics of the political regime in Egypt were an absence of political competitiveness, the centralization of power, an emphasis on mobilization rather than participation, the supremacy of the executive over the legislative branch, and the repression of political dissent. Whenever possible, the government penetrated and dominated intermediary associations such as trade unions, professional associations, and religious institutions, bringing them under its legal and financial control. The political system gave its leaders an almost free hand in the conduct of foreign policy. The leader was not accountable to either a free press, opposition parties, or an independent strong parliament. The regime controlled both the mass media and the legislature and could mobilize their support for its objectives.

In the 1970s, two important developments took place. The first was the increasing civilianization of the ruling elite. Sadat followed a policy of professionalizing the army, disengaging it from political affairs and placing more reliance on civilians on high posts. For the first time since 1952, civilians assumed the posts of vice president (Mahmoud Fawzi) and prime minister (Aziz Sidky, Fawzi, Abdel Aziz Hegazy, and Mostafa Khalil).

The second development was the gradual democratization of the political structure, leading in 1976–1977 to the establishment of a controlled multiparty system. The democratization process was inspired in part by foreign policy considerations, notably Sadat's rapprochement with the United States and his desire to project an image of a stable and democratic Egypt.

In 1980, opposition political parties included the Socialist Labor Party, the National Progressive Unionist Party, the Liberal Socialist Party, and the New Wafd. The opposition had a weak parliamentary representation (20 seats out of 390), but exercised a far greater influence through its newspapers and publications. Foreign policy was a major bone of contention. Opposition parties criticized Sadat's pro-Western policy, Egypt's increasing dependency on the United States, the new policy toward Israel and the break with Arab countries. The Muslim Brothers' journal, the monthly *al-Da'wa* ('The Call') also voiced the same concerns, and its writers condemned these policies.

The government could have used these criticisms as a justification for stiffening its negotiating position with Israel. Sadat, however, perceived them as a sign of vulnerability and the erosion of his personal stature, an

interpretation that led to political polarization and the confrontation of 1981, which saw the arrest of 1,963 leading politician and writers in September and Sadat's assassination in October.

Mubarak, characteristically, followed a more conciliatory policy toward the opposition. He released those arrested in 1981 and met with leaders of the opposition on a number of occasions. The democratic process became more entrenched in Egypt during the 1980s and 1990s; although the ruling National Democratic Party remained in control, opposition parties and groups gained in strength. For instance, in the 1987 elections, the opposition won 100 seats in parliament and some forces hitherto deprived of political representation such as the Muslim Brothers were allowed to participate, although indirectly, in the democratic process.[21]

The democratization process developed in a gradual and controlled manner and expanded its base in the first years of this century due to a number of domestic and external factors. Demands for political change from political parties, NGOs and advocacy groups increased. Egypt has a vibrant civil society and in 2007 the number of NGOs stood at 22,000. A number of privately owned newspapers such as *al-Misri al-yawm* ('The Egyptian Today'), *Sawt al-umma* ('Voice of the Nation'), *al-Dustur* ('The Constitution'), *al-Fagr* ('The Dawn') and others articulated political and social grievances in sharp and sometimes exaggerated ways. A protest movement called the Egyptian Movement for Change (known in Arabic as 'Kefaya,'—meaning 'enough') emerged in 2004 as an umbrella group including diverse elements of political parties, civil society associations, and Muslim Brothers. Additionally, the US used its influence on Egypt to promote the process of democratization. More than once, President Bush called upon Egypt to lead the Arab region along the road of democratization and respect for human rights.

As a result, in February 2005, President Mubarak proposed a constitutional amendment to introduce competitive elections in lieu of a referendum for the office of president. The amendment was approved in May and the first competitive presidential elections, featuring ten candidates, took place in September. In 2006, major constitutional changes were concluded with the objective of enhancing the role of parliament, putting limitations on the powers of the president, and ensuring more parliamentary representation for political parties and women.

The parliament developed as an active arena for political contestation. The 2005 elections resulted in a lower house of parliament in which

opposition forces occupied a little more than 20 percent of seats. The bulk of these seats were won by representatives of the Society of Muslim Brothers, which was banned by a decree in the early 1950s but continued to exist as a political force in the country. Other opposition parties took a meager twelve seats and independents won twenty-one seats. As for political parties, their number continues to grow, reaching twenty-four in 2007. The increase in number however did not translate into political effectiveness. Opposition political parties "remain structurally weak and plagued by aging leadership, a history of infighting, and petty personal politics."[22]

Foreign Policy Orientation

President Sadat (1970–1981) laid down the foundation of a foreign policy orientation that outlived him. He perceived the US as the sole superpower in the world and prophetically described the Soviet Union as less than a superpower. Sadat's strategy concerning the United States was designed to achieve three objectives: first, to outbid Israel and secure US support in the peace negotiation; second, to obtain US military and economic aid at an increasing rate; and third, to assure pro-Western Arab governments that their opposition to Egypt's relationship with Israel would lead nowhere and that Egypt remained the centerpiece of US strategy in the region. Sadat was attracted to the American way of life, to the consumer society, and free market economy. Politically, the United States held "the key to peace" in the area, "99 percent of the cards of the game," as he frequently stated. This was because the United States was the only country that could exert influence on Israel. Sadat's perception of the US was also reinforced by his desire to establish better relations with Arab oil-rich countries whom he considered a vital source of economic aid.[23]

Contrary to Nasser, who saw the Arab region as Egypt's natural sphere of influence and leadership and therefore the main space for an active Egyptian foreign policy, Sadat saw Egypt's leadership position as a structural property rather than a behavioral attribute, a property that could not be challenged or taken away. Consequently, he did not feel the need to pursue an activist Arab policy to maintain this leadership. For instance, as early as 1974–1975, Egypt dismantled its apparatus for exercising influence in Lebanon which had included financial support to political groups, subsidies for newspapers, an intelligence presence, and close contacts with politicians from various political parties. In Sadat's mind, the costs of that leadership style overshadowed its dividends.

Upon assuming office in 1981, Mubarak developed his own understanding of the international system and Egypt's position in it. In contrast to Sadat's American-centric worldview, Mubarak perceived a multipolar system in which Egypt's success depended on opening its channels with all great powers. This vision was translated into a series of foreign policy objectives that Mubarak and Egyptian diplomats set out to achieve without resorting to shock treatment or confrontational tactics.

One of the first objectives the Mubarak regime pursued was the restoration of Egypt's relations with the Arab world. This required Egypt to distance itself from Israeli practices against the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, and also from the United States, the main supporter of Israel. Mubarak understood that the achievement of this objective required skill and patience, as Egypt, for economic and political reasons, needed to maintain its close ties with the United States. Egypt's quiet and constant diplomacy succeeded; diplomatic relations with almost all Arab states were reestablished by 1989, and Egypt resumed its membership in the Arab League.

Mubarak recognized that Egypt's success in obtaining aid and tackling its enormous debt problem was related to establishing its importance as a leader in the Arab world and global south. In the 1980s, the regime therefore followed an active foreign policy in Africa and the Arab region. Mubarak regularly attended summit meetings of the Organization for African Unity (OAU). In 1986 the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted an international conference commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the organization's founding. Egyptian diplomatic efforts were also exerted on behalf of solving a number of African disputes, such as the situation in Namibia, and the Senegal–Mauritania dispute.[24]

Egypt also revived its role in the Nonaligned Movement and called for the revitalization of the movement in order for it to play a meaningful role in today's international system. The Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a number of roundtable discussions with experts from India, Yugoslavia, and Zimbabwe to discuss the means of achieving this revitalization. Mubarak also attended Nonaligned Movement meetings in New Delhi in 1983, in Kuwait in 1987, and in Belgrade in 1988. Egypt was keen however to maintain close relations with the United States, despite strains resulting from incidents such as the *Achille Lauro* affair in 1985[25] and disagreements over Egypt's debts to the United States.

The dramatic developments of the 1990s, both globally, in the form of the collapse of the Soviet Union and disintegration of the socialist camp, and regionally, in the form of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and Egyptian participation in the international coalition to liberate it brought Egyptian interests closer to those of the United States. As mentioned in Chapter 3 on globalization, Mubarak held a balanced view of the globalization process as presenting a combination of opportunities and risks and believed that foreign policies of countries of the Global South should seek to maximize its benefits and reduce its threats.

Mubarak considers the economic development of Egypt as the main challenge to its national security and understands the important role of the US in achieving this objective. He recognizes the importance of trade liberalization and integration into the global economic market and has actively pursued a policy of economic reform. The policy developed gradually during the 1990s and took a leap forward in 2004, when a new cabinet was formed to kickstart the implementation of active economic reform policies.

Mubarak has expressed ambivalence toward the globalization process, welcoming its positive economic implications, but wary of its potential to increase inequality between rich and poor states. In particular, he has been cautious about the political dimension of globalization, namely democratization. Democratic regimes are not a product for export; they develop naturally and over time within the specific historical-cultural contexts of every nation, Mubarak notes. This has led to a number of skirmishes between Cairo and Washington which will be discussed later in this chapter.

At the regional level, Mubarak perceives the Arab world not only in economic and political terms, but also as an "identity issue." He has expressed his skepticism of the different projects for 'new,' 'greater,' or 'broader' Middle East and views them as attempts to dilute the 'Arab identity' of the region within a larger geographic grouping. Mubarak also stresses the importance of inter-Arab economic cooperation through trade, joint ventures, and direct investment. He has encouraged the establishment of economic high commissions between Egypt and many Arab states. He also emphasizes that inter-Arab disputes are meaningless and irrelevant in the new globalized world. Arab solidarity is important for the Arab states to have a role in the world, and a precondition to reach a settlement of the Arab–Israeli conflict.

Over a quarter of a century in power (1982–), Mubarak has been motivated by a down-to-earth perception of Egypt's national interest that focuses on raising standards of living of an increasing population. He has never been moved by mass calls for dramatic gestures such as demands for the closure of the Suez Canal during the American military intervention in Iraq in 2003 or the withdrawal of the Egyptian ambassador from Israel during the war in Lebanon in 2006.

The Decision-Making Process

Under Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak, foreign policy has been the *domaine privée* of the president and his close associates. Although the three leaders differed in their styles and orientations, all centralized and personalized the foreign policymaking process. The influence of different individuals upon the process depended not on their position in the cabinet or the bureaucracy but rather on their personal relations and access to the president. Thus, for instance, the increased responsibilities of Ismail Fahmi and Amr Moussa as ministers of foreign affairs under Sadat and Mubarak respectively, reflected presidential confidence in them as individuals and not a change in the function of the ministry as an institution.

The dynamics of the decision-making process are, however, more complex. Presidents and kings, however authoritarian and unaccountable, do not make decisions in a vacuum but rather in a specific institutional context that shapes the behavior of individuals, the formulation of options, and the way choices are made. Compared with other Arab countries, Egypt is an organizationally developed and intellectually diversified society. Consequently, the leader, notwithstanding his immense power, has to assume the various roles of arbiter, mediator, and lobbyist at one time or another.

Egypt's foreign policy decision-making process comes closest to the 'leader-staff group' or the 'presidential center' type.[26] This type of process involves an authoritative decision maker who can act alone, with little or no consultation with other people or institutions except for a small group of subordinate advisors. These advisers are appointed and dismissed by the leader and have no autonomous power base. The leader-staff type of decision-making results in a highly personalized diplomacy. It is also characterized by the ability to respond quickly and to adopt nontraditional behavior. For example, in July 8, 1972 upon the receipt of an unsatisfactory message from the Soviet Union, Sadat informed the Soviet ambassador

immediately of his decision to dismiss Soviet advisors working in the army and announced the decision publicly ten days later.

President Mubarak represents the career officer par excellence. He had no political affiliation before being chosen by Sadat in 1975 to be his vice president. He had not joined the Free Officers association before 1952 and maintained a strict adherence to his military career, rising to the position of director of the Air Force College, then to commander-in-chief of the Egyptian air force. He held this position in October 1973 when the air force led the initial attack on Israel in the October war. Despite this strictly military background, Mubarak has demonstrated great flexibility and moderation as a political leader. He revealed himself to be a compromiser of the first order, being highly consultative, respecting expert opinions and not seeking to impose his own.

Presidential Staff

Contrary to both Nasser and Sadat, who surrounded themselves with many functionaries assistants and advisors in the realm of foreign policy, Mubarak has relied on a small number of aides and on the machinery of the foreign ministry. During the 1980s and the 1990s, Mubarak's primary aide was Osama al-Baz, a career diplomat who was the first undersecretary of the ministry. His background includes the study of law in Cairo and Harvard Universities. He worked closely with Sadat as an insider in the Camp David negotiations, and was able to survive the transition to the Mubarak regime, emerging as the president's chief foreign policy confidante. In 2007, al-Baz still retains the title of political advisor to the president but he does not seem to play an active role. He is no longer invited to official meetings, and does not join the president in his travels abroad.

The president's secretary for information and monitoring, who acts as a liaison officer between the president and holders of key government posts, usually comes from the foreign ministry. In 2004, the holder of this post became official spokesman for the president. Over the years, the position has been occupied by a series of career diplomats. Mostafa al-Fekky was the first to occupy this post under Mubarak and the longest to stay in it—eight years, in contrast to an average of two to four years for his successors. He was the most active in public debates, explaining and arguing the president's point of view on current issues. The holders of this post attend almost all meetings of the president with government officials

and foreign dignitaries, and keep records of them. They also accompany the president in his visits abroad. All of them went back to their diplomatic careers after finishing their presidential assignments.

National Security Council

The National Security Council, established in 1969 and referred to in the 1971 constitution, is the highest organ for strategic planning and national security issues. Its membership includes the president, the prime minister, the ministers of foreign affairs and defense, and the head of intelligence. The council has no definite jurisdiction and meets upon the invitation of the president. Under Mubarak, the council has hardly met and has been replaced in practice by what the press refers to as "the political group." The core of this group includes the prime minister, the speaker of the two houses, ministers of defense and foreign affairs, and the head of intelligence in addition to the president, who invites the group to meet. Others may be invited depending upon the issue under discussion. The meetings have neither an agenda nor a record of their discussions.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Egypt's foreign ministry has a history that goes as far back as 1837, when it was established as a *diwan* (department) during Muhammad Ali's reign. It was abolished on December 17, 1914 with the proclamation of Egypt as a British protectorate, and it was reinstated in 1922 after independence. Under Sadat, the role of the ministry was naturally overshadowed by the presidency, and the foreign minister acted mainly as a presidential adviser. He did not attend all the president's meetings with foreign officials. For example, Sadat was the sole Egyptian envoy at some of the most crucial sessions in the Egyptian–Israeli negotiations. During his visit to Egypt in November 1973 and January 1974, Kissinger primarily conferred with Sadat alone. Messages were exchanged directly between the president and other heads of state without the knowledge of the ministry, and Egyptian ambassadors to Arab capitals were not informed about the many visits Ashraf Marwan, a chief presidential aide, made to these countries in the early 1970s.[27]

In contrast to Hermann's notion of 'positive reinforcement,' according to which staff members tend to sympathize with their leaders' wishes and demands, in 1977–1978 three successive Egyptian foreign ministers

resigned in protest over presidential policy. When the stakes are high and the dangers great, even staff members who are totally depended on the president do take independent positions.

Under Mubarak, the role of the ministry has expanded significantly. For the first time, the president made a point of meeting all new Egyptian ambassadors before they assumed their posts. Moreover, also for the first time, heads of departments in the ministry were sent abroad as presidential envoys. During Mubarak's rule, five men assumed the foreign minister portfolio namely, Kamal Hassan Ali, Essmat Abd al-Meguid, Amr Moussa, Ahmed Maher, and Ahmed Abu al-Gheit. With the exception of Kamal Hassan Ali, a former army officer, all have been career diplomats at some point. Additionally, there exists the position of state minister for foreign affairs, which was occupied by Boutros Ghali (for African affairs) and Fayza Abu al-Naga (for economic cooperation). This post is equivalent to a minister without a portfolio. It existed under Nasser and Sadat, but not all cabinets included ministers of state. The president uses it when he needs to give a boost to a particular sphere of activity.

Other Ministries and Nongovernmental Organizations

There are some ministries which maintain official representation in key capitals of the world, such as the ministries of defense, trade and industry, higher education, and information. Technical officers from these ministries operate in coordination with the diplomatic mission. In addition, a number of nongovernmental associations have become more active in debating foreign policy issues. For example, the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs established in 1999, is a major forum for Egyptian and foreign speakers alike. Membership of the council includes diplomats, university professors, researchers and journalists concerned with foreign policy matters. The council convenes an annual conference and the minister of foreign affairs makes a point of participating in its deliberations.

Another new factor is the role of business association in forging foreign policy links and ties. The American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt has for more than a decade sent 'doorknock'missions to the United States to explain policies of economic reform in Egypt to American officials and encourage their business counterparts to invest in Egypt. Similar organizations include Egypt's International Economic Forum and the Federation of Egyptian Industries.

Foreign Policy Behavior

In this section we will deal primarily with Egypt relations with the United States, the Arab region and Israel.

Egypt–US Relations

In the 1970s, the United States made a dramatic return to Egypt's and the Arab world. US diplomacy could contain, outmaneuver, and sometimes expel Soviet influence from the region. Even with radical Arab regimes such as Algeria or Syria, the Unites States maintained flourishing commercial and economic relations. The big success story, however, is that of US–Egypt relations. In 1970 there were no diplomatic relations between the two countries; they were resumed in March 1974.

Within four to five years, Egypt developed special relations with the United States. Since 1978, the United States has become a "strategic partner" in the Egyptian–Israeli relation, the major supplier of arms, and the primary provider of economic assistance to Egypt. This has left the Egyptian regime open to criticism, both domestic and Arab, for being a client of the United States.

Indeed, the analysis of US–Egypt relations during the 1980s shows a significant degree of independence from the United States displayed by the Mubarak regime. Egypt seems to fall into the category of 'client prevalent and client centric."[28] This is a category of relations, described by Christopher C. Shoemaker and John Spanier, in which the client has a substantial degree of independence and maneuverability in the conduct of foreign policy. This independence was not demonstrated in the Sadat era, because this was essentially a period of creating and consolidating relations with the United States. Once relations became more routine under Mubarak, the regime, motivated by the personal inclination of the leader as well as domestic criticisms of US–Egypt relations, began to exercise this independence. For example, the Mubarak regime resisted pressures from the United States for access to military facilities in the Ras Banas base. The Egyptian press criticizes US policies on a number of issues. The regime has been keen on enhancing Egypt's image as an independent regional leader to bolster both its domestic legitimacy and its bargaining position in the global arena.[29]

Political-Diplomatic Relations

US–Egypt relations were closely related to negotiations with Israel in the late 1970s. President Carter's decision to take an active approach to the

Arab–Israeli conflict in 1978 resulted in the signing of the Camp David framework and the Egyptian–Israeli treaty in 1979. The treaty opened the door for much closer economic and political relations. An important outcome of US involvement in the peace process was that Egypt–US relations could no longer be viewed in purely bilateral terms. Israel began to figure constantly as an important factor in what became, for all intents and purposes, triangular relations. Many Egyptians felt that relations between Egypt and the United States were influenced not only by Egyptian policies toward the United States but also by its policies toward Israel. This situation gave Israel added leverage over Egypt and added tension to the relationship as a whole. As a result, Egypt frequently urged the US to adopt an even-handed policy on issues of Palestine and the Arab–Israeli conflict. During the 1980s, Mubarak emphasized the necessity of an active and impartial American role in the peace process. The Mubarak regime has been anxious to continue efforts toward the settlement of the Arab–Israeli conflict. Mubarak argued that an international conference would be the best means to this end, but the United States and Israel were not receptive to the idea. This disagreement was evident in Mubarak's visits to Washington in 1985 and 1988.

The strength of Egypt–US relations is demonstrated by their ability to withstand the strains resulting from the different viewpoints and policies of the two countries. During the 1970s, Sadat conducted the relationship with a high degree of visibility, using media and visits by high officials to demonstrate its strength. Under Mubarak, however, relations became more regularized and institutionalized. For most of the 1990s, the day-to-day relationship was no longer a visible political matter. Even when the regime attempted to establish its independence from the United States, this was done without sensationalism.

For instance, the two countries held different views on the wisdom of American military intervention in Iraq and its consequences. Mubarak warned American officials of the implications of their decisions, stating that Iraq was not an easy country to rule. He further refused American proposals to establish an Arab peace force to replace American troops in Iraq. In 2007 Mubarak criticized the way the US was preparing for the international conference on Middle East peace, particularly the absence of a time frame and the ambiguity of expected results.[30]

There have also been disagreements between the two countries about Egyptian domestic politics. In 2005–2006, US government officials including President Bush and several congress persons demanded the release of

Ayman Nour, leader of the al-Ghad ('Tomorrow') party, who was convicted on charges of election-related forgery. The US State Department's international religious freedom report of 2007 made a number of accusations on the situation of Copts, Baha'i, and some Muslim sects such as Quranis, which Egyptian officials denied, criticizing the report for not being impartial.[31] Another controversy erupted when the State Department criticized a court verdict in Egypt against four opposition journalists. The official spokesman of the foreign ministry reacted angrily, dismissing the American statement as based on inaccurate information and stressing that Egypt, while appreciating its special relation with the US, does not allow other countries to interfere in its domestic affairs. Another issue of contention was Congress's decision to withhold $200 million from the annual US aid package till Egypt showed more cooperation on certain issues, such as fighting the cross-border smuggling of arms to Gaza through underground tunnels, and the status of human rights in Egypt.

In 2004, Abdel Moniem Said Ali, director of the Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, described the status of relations between the two countries as follows:

> Over the past three decades, therefore, US–Egyptian cooperation has advanced both countries' interests and has served as one of the major forces for stability in the Middle East. Yet, the alliance remains an ambivalent one. Starting from the beginning of the twenty-first century, the US–Egyptian coalition has shown signs of losing energy and momentum, and even some signs of friction and erosion. A major reason for this development is the growing gap between US and Egyptian perceptions of the security and strategic challenges in the Middle East . . . despite everything the U.S–Egyptian relationship has the potential to overcome its problems and further the interest of both countries.[32]

We concur with this view. Despite the recurrence of these controversies, the relationship is rooted in shared political and strategic interests and therefore will be able to withstand these problems.

Military Relations

Military cooperation between the two countries has taken various forms including arms supplies, transfer of military technology, provision of

military facilities, joint training and maneuvers, and direct US military aid to Egypt to the tune of $1.3 billion a year since 1978. Military relations have also included the licensing and coproduction of arms as explained earlier in this chapter. Sadat offered the US 'temporary limited access' to Cairo West Airport. The exact date of such agreement is unknown. Egyptian officials do not talk about these issues. as to reasons, it was most likely linked to the outbreak of the Iranian revolution. In 1980, US troops began conducting exercises in Egypt as part of Operation Bright Star. In April 1988, US and Egyptian ministers of defense signed a memorandum of understanding that established the principles of cooperation between the two countries which enhanced their military-strategic relations. In January 1991, Egypt participated in the US-led international coalition to liberate Kuwait; Egyptian troops represented the second largest contingent after US forces.

Economic Relations

In the last five decades, Egypt has been a major recipient of foreign aid, and since 1978 the US has contributed a total of $28 billion toward Egypt's economic and military development, making Egypt the second largest recipient of American aid after Israel. The US aid program coincided with two developments: the signing of the peace treaty with Israel in 1979, and Egypt's adoption of economic liberalization policies in the mid-1970s. The political underpinnings of this aid were articulated in a 1981 US Agency for International Development (USAID) document as follows: "Our high level of aid to Egypt is premised on the belief that President Sadat's peace initiative is crucial to that objective and that these efforts will be supported and enhanced by a vigorous and growing economy."[33] USAID activities cover a broad range of needs: food, infrastructure improvements, upgrading of social services such as education and health, technical assistance, and agricultural and industrial projects.

By the late 1990s, both countries agreed on a ten-year plan to reduce aid, and to concentrate instead on a policy of promoting trade and investment. Thus the amount of USAID funding has been on the decrease, from $815 million in 1998 to $575 million in 2004. Almost all this amount is channeled and administered by USAID. By contrast, financial remittances from Egyptians living in the US have been steadily increasing, from $33.2 million in 1999–2000, to $34.6 million in 2002–2003, to $37 million in 2003–2004. The significance of these figures is highlighted in comparison

with remittances from the largest Arab oil-producing country, Saudi Arabia, which were $24 million, $21.4 million, and $21.3 million in the same years.[34]

Another positive development was the signing of the Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZ) agreements between the US, Israel, and Egypt in 2006, which increased Egyptian exports to the American market by 65 percent in 2006–2007. The value of textile exports increased from $600 million to $850 million a year. However, negotiations between the two countries toward a free trade agreement reached a dead end.

Egypt and the Arab World

Egypt's Arab policy has been primarily motivated by two objectives: the need for a solid Arab consensus to reach a comprehensive settlement of the Arab–Israeli conflict, and the need to generate economic and financial growth. At the time of Sadat's death in October 1981, Egypt was virtually isolated in the Arab world. All Arab states, with the exception of Sudan and Oman, broke diplomatic relations in protest of the Camp David Accords. The headquarters of the League of Arab States, located in Cairo since its establishment in 1945, was moved to Tunisia. Thus, one of Mubarak's first foreign policy objectives was to restore Egyptian–Arab relations, while reassuring the United States and Israel of Egypt's respect for its contractual commitments. Mubarak seized every opportunity to demonstrate that Camp David did not tie Egypt's hand regarding its Arab responsibilities. Mubarak condemned the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, withdrew the Egyptian ambassador from Tel Aviv after the Sabra and Shatila massacres, and refused to visit Israel.[35]

These efforts bore fruit; by 1989, Egypt had restored diplomatic relations with most Arab countries, and Mubarak was invited to attend the Arab summit in Casablanca in June of that year. Egypt even joined the Arab Cooperation Council which included Jordan, Iraq, and North Yemen. However, with the Kuwait conflict, the Council seemed in jeopardy, and in the summer of 1990 the Arab region seemed divided again, with Egypt and Iraq in different camps. Egypt felt threatened by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, which challenged its regional role and prestige. The Iraqi army occupied Kuwait less than ten days after Saddam Hussein had promised Mubarak not to use force against Kuwait. This explains Egypt's firm position throughout the crisis. Mubarak took the initiative, called for an Arab summit meeting which he presided over, endorsed its resolutions, and sent Egyptian troops to Saudi Arabia.

The war and its aftermath provided an opportunity for Egypt to reassert its regional position. It led to the formation of a new grouping, the Damascus Declaration group in 1991, consisting of the GCC countries, Syria, and Egypt. Due to Iranian protest and Arab rivalries, this framework of cooperation was short-lived and Egypt went back to conducting its Arab policy on a bilateral basis.

During the 1990s, Egypt's foreign policy emphasized the importance of Arab solidarity and the development of functional relations between the Arab states. It attempted to overcome the fragmentation of Arab states resulting from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. President Mubarak made a number of initiatives to reform the structure of the Arab League to make it more effective. He advocated the convening of regular, annual Arab summit meetings and Egypt hosted the 2003 summit. With regard to internal problems in Iraq, Lebanon, and Sudan, Egypt encouraged different political parties to reach a political settlement through dialogue, with Egypt making sure to maintain relations with all of them.[36] In particular, Egypt emphasized the importance of promoting economic interests between Arab states. By 2005, Arab countries became the second largest market for Egyptian exports, after the EU. Egyptian exports to the Arab region reached $2.2 billion in 2006 compared to $600 million in 2000, an increase of 266.7 percent in six years. Despite this significant increase during the period 2000–2006, the trade balance was still in favor of other Arab states.

Egyptian–Israeli Relations

While Egypt's relations with the Arab world improved during the 1980s, its relations with Israel came to be described as a 'cold peace.' From the beginning there was a difference between Egyptian and Israeli understandings of the peace process. Peace to Egypt was basically a solution to its economic and social problems, a means of creating stability and allocating resources back to development. To Mubarak, as to Sadat, this meant the end of hostilities and the establishment of proper relations with a neighbor state. This did not mean a privileged position for Israel in Egypt. The Israelis on the other hand, had a broader understanding, which was articulated in the concept of 'normalization,' touching a complex web of economic, social, touristic, and other relations.

A number of issues stood in the way of implementing this vision of normalization between the two countries. One important factor was

Israeli policies toward the Palestinians and the neighboring Arab countries. Israel's bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor, its invasion of Lebanon and implication in the Sabra and Shatilla massacres, and its suppression of the Palestinian uprising, all have forced Egypt to distance itself from Israel and to freeze the normalization process. Egypt was forced to withdraw its ambassador from Israel by the shock and outrage of Egyptians over the Sabra and Shatilla massacres.

Egypt has been active in promoting, and mediating the peace process. In 1999–2000, Egypt hosted a number of meetings to help the process, such as the meeting of September 1999 to sign an Israeli–Palestinian agreement to ensure the implementation of previous commitments, and the meeting of US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and President Yasser Arafat in October 2000. It also hosted the meeting between Prime Minister Sharon and President Mahmoud Abbas in February 2005. It helped the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and promised to train Palestinian security forces and increase border guards to prevent smuggling arms to Gaza.[37] After a meeting in Egypt between Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and President Mubarak, Olmert stated that "the relationship between Egypt and Israel is qualitative and very central to our worldviews and to the types of relations we want to build in the region. The leadership of Hosni Mubarak is an important key to the success of the process."[38]

Conclusion

Egyptian foreign policy seems to be under revision. This is not to imply or predict a major policy reorientation, but rather a recognition that Egypt is taking on new roles and means of implementing them. Egypt requested the resumption of strategic dialogue with the US, and a first round took place in 2007 with no definite results. In the same year the Lebanese leader Nabih Berri, speaker of the parliament, called upon President Mubarak to give more attention to the situation in Lebanon, stating that Egypt is the Arab country most accepted by all adversaries. In September, the vice president of Iraq, during a visit to Cairo, appealed for a stronger Egyptian political and business presence in Iraq. Domestically, there have been increasing calls for a more active Egyptian role in the Arab region. The Egyptian foreign policy elite seem divided between the desire to perform an assertive regional role and wariness of its costs.

Notes

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3 Gamal Hamdan, *Shakhsiyat Misr*, 2 vols. (Cairo: Maktabat 'Alam al-Kutub, 1980 and 1982).
4 In December 2006, Mubarak introduced a set of constitutional amendments which included a provision stating that the state is based on the principle of citizenship (Article 1) and prohibited the exercise of any political activities on a religious basis (Article 5). A year earlier, he made Christmas an official holiday for all Egyptians; Egypt is the sole Muslim country to have done so.
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7 Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, *al-Taqrir al-iqtisadi al-'arabi, 1985*, 354–55.
8 John Waterbury, "Egypt: The Wages of Dependency" in *The Middle East: Oil, Politics and Hope*, A.L. Udovitch, ed. (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1976), 293.
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10 Barclays Capital Research, "Egypt: Poised for another Solid Year," February 13, 2006, 1.
11 *Ingazat misriya*, Egyptian Council of Ministers, April 2006.
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13 *Christian Science Monitor*, February 8, 1978.
14 *Arabia and the Gulf*, September 18, 1978, 10.
15 Jim Paul, "The Egyptian Arms Industry," *MERIP Reports*, 1983, no. 112: 26–28.
16 See http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/egypt.htm and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_of_Egypt.
17 Some estimates put the number at 450,000 thus making the Egyptian army the eleventh largest in the world. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_of_Egypt.
18 The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, http://first.sipri.org/non_first/milex.php
19 http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/egypt.htm.
20 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_of_Egypt.
21 Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, *al-Taqrir al-istratigi al-'arabi, 1987*, 332–34, 338.
22 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Arab Political Systems—Baseline Information and Reform: Egypt* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment

for International Peace, n.d.), 12, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/arabpoliticalsystems.

23 On Sadat's perception of the Soviet Union see his interview in *Time*, January 2, 1978 and another interview with Joseph Craft in the *Los Angeles Times*, April 14, 1980.

24 Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, *al-Taqrir al-istratigi al-'arabi, 1988*, 657–60.

25 In October, four armed Palestinians hijacked the Italian cruise ship off the coast of Egypt and demanded the release of fifty Palestinian prisoners held by Israel. The hijackers eventually surrendered to Egyptian authorities in exchange for safe passage. But when the Egyptian plane carrying the hijackers was flying them to Tunisia, US fighter jets forced it to land in Sicily. The incident created tensions in US-Egyptian relations.

26 Charles Hermann, "Decision Structure and Process Influences on Foreign Policy," in *Why Nations Act*, eds. Maurice A. East, Stephen A. Salmore, and Charles F. Hermann (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1978), 69–102.

27 Hamdi Al Taheri, *Khamas sanawat fi-l-siyasa* (Cairo, 1982): 21–23.

28 Christopher C. Shoemaker and John Spanier, *Patron–Client State Relationships: Multilateral Crises in The Nuclear Age* (New York: Preager Publishers, 1984), 26–44.

29 Raymond Hinnebusch, "The Foreign Policy of Egypt" in *The Foreign Policies of the Middle East States*, eds. Raymond Hinnebusch and E. Anoushiravan (London: Lynne Rienner, 2002): 94–97, 108–11.

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33 *Al-Taqrir al-istratigi al-'arabi, 1985*, 379.

34 Ali, *Ambivalent Alliance*, 7.

35 Mubarak repeated that Egyptian public opinion would not accept such a visit due to Israeli repression of the Palestinians. See interview in Douglas Jehl, "Netanyahu to visit Egypt but Mubarak won't reciprocate," *New York Times*, March 3, 1997, A9.

36 Interview with Egypt's Foreign Minister Ahmed Abu al-Gheit in *Asharq al-Awsat*, September 30, 2006.

37 Jeremy M. Sharp, *Egypt Background and U.S. Relations*, CRS Report for Congress, updated June 14 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2006), 12–14.

38 Ibid., 15.

6

Foreign Policy under Occupation: Does Iraq Need a Foreign Policy?

Mohamed Soffar

> "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' most difficult task has been to develop an independent Iraqi foreign policy at a time when our country is under legal occupation."
>
> —Hoshyar Zebari

Introduction

A chapter on Iraqi foreign policy in the post-Saddam era requires that we ask the reader to bear with a lengthy but indispensable introduction. Two problems abet each other and discourage attempts to study the case at hand. The problem of a political analyst is to immediately seize the never-lasting and ever-flowing present, to grasp the 'now(s)' still in the making. Or, I risk the event's slipping into the past and belonging to another scientific discipline, namely the history of diplomacy. The problem of a philosopher is to seek the truth in Kant's line separating the manifestation of the object from the thing in itself, to demarcate the borders between appearance and reality, phenomenon and essence, and thus between sanity and insanity. In many instances, my object of study seems to vanish, and the distinction between sanity and insanity appears to be blurred. Confronted with such a labyrinthine case study, I have no other option but to trust in Foucault's advice of losing myself to find it again, bumping into faces I shall never have to see in the future.

A. Yousef Ahmad, analyzing Iraqi foreign policy during the Baathist regime's early victories in the Iraq–Iran war, focused on the gap between role conception and role enactment.[1] Such a gap, ensuing from the constraints of domestic environment on the ingredients of national power, made pre-1991 Iraq a prime example of an "unfulfilled leadership role" (Ahmad, 1991:186). Charles Tripp (2002), a decade later, after Iraq had suffered two humiliating military defeats and destructive economic sanctions, approached Iraqi foreign policy by problematizing the state. The state was considered a project to be symbolically and materially realized in order to overcome the fear that "Iraq . . . is little more than lines drawn on a map that may be erased or altered at the whim of the great powers."[2] Both scholars end up presenting the reader with almost the same argument, disguised in different terminologies but nevertheless disclosed in their description of Iraq's changing international status (unfulfilled leadership versus survival politics). The core of the argument was that "the foreign policy of Iraq can be best understood by examining the state of Iraq itself."[3] In this chapter, I shall trace the connection of Iraqi foreign policy to the condition of the Iraqi state or, under the current circumstances of de facto occupation and insurgency, the destruction-reconstruction dialectics of the state as a myth and an apparatus in post-Saddam Iraq. At the dawn of the new millennium, while America enjoyed a preeminence unattained by past empires, Henry Kissinger (2002) gave his book—aimed at countering the temptation to dispense with a long-range foreign policy as America stood at the apex of its power—the title 'Does America Need a Foreign Policy?' Though Iraq under American occupation is located at exactly the inverse position in the international order, it still seems valid to draw upon Kissinger's question so as to frame the main problematic of this chapter: 'Does Iraq need a foreign policy?' It is as though foreign policy, as a political phenomenon, accompanies the state only within a certain power zone. Above its upper edge or maximum limit (as in the case of an empire, like America) just as beneath its lower edge or minimum limit (as in the case of an occupied country, like Iraq) foreign policy appears questionable and even dispensable. As such, the target of this chapter is not to draw a balance sheet for Iraqi foreign policy's pros and cons, but to highlight the extent to which post-Saddam Iraq—with an American-installed and dominated state apparatus—needs a foreign policy in the very first place.

Between Iraq's defeat in the Kuwait war in 1991 and the fall of Baghdad to the Americans in 2003, the wheel turned a full circle. According to

Kissinger, the 1991 war ended short of realizing American interests in the Gulf, namely securing the flow of energy supplies by maintaining stability in the region. Too weak to counter Iran, too strong for the Gulf sheikhdoms, and too embittered toward the US, defeated Iraq could not be part of any equilibrium in the region.[4] Nonetheless, the same war, continues Kessinger, left the US without any real challenge from the region's states and with more freedom of action. American decision makers could afford a large degree of inflexibility and indifference to the interests and reactions of the region's populations. Moreover, the US became the most significant determinant of Iraq's future since the 1991 war.[5] From 1991 up to the present, Iraq has became a US foreign policy issue, not as a tiny part of a clean break, but as a major pillar of a new American century. The US foreign policy toward Iraq attempted to realize American interests in Iraq not attained by military operations. Politics is indeed the continuation of war by other means.

In the period from 1991 till 2003, four phases of US foreign policy toward Iraq could be clearly discerned: the aftermath of the1991 war; dual containment; military containment; and finally the 'war on terror.' Although the accumulation of US foreign policy strategies and decisions in the three initial phases had a great impact on the Baathist regime, it is the final phase that decided the fate of Iraq and fully shaped its political system in the post-Saddam era. Thus, special emphasis will be laid upon the 'post-9/11' or 'war on terror' phase.

1. Confusion and unclearness of objectives and decisions marked the first phase directly following the 1991 war. With its declared objective of liberatiing Kuwait accomplished by a victorious military campaign, the George H.W. Bush administration produced neither a clear vision for Iraq's future nor fresh objectives for its own intervention. The threat of the territorial disintegration of Iraq as well as the waning of international support for the war were the administration's main justifications for ending the war without marching on Baghdad and overthrowing Saddam Hussein. A clear sign of American confusion and indecision was the reaction to Shi'a and Kurdish upheavals; while inciting Shi'a and Kurds to rebel against Baghdad, the US turned a blind eye to the Iraqi army's crushing of both rebellions.[6]
2. The dual containment policy announced by Martin Indyk in March 1994 as the Clinton administration's strategy toward Iraq and Iran sought to maintain stability and equilibrium in the Gulf region by

containing, not supporting, either of both regional powers, Iraq and Iran, who were hostile to US interests. According to Indyk, several strategic developments were conducive to dual containment: the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the possibility of establishing a regional power balance in the Gulf with military capabilities reduced to a minimum after two devastating wars, the Gulf states' willingness to engage with the US in security arrangements, and the progress achieved in the peace process between pro-American Arab states and Israel.[7]

3. With the Desert Fox operation in December 1998, quasi-peaceful containment based on international inspections and United Nations Security Council resolutions turned into military-based containment detached from international support.[8] US foreign policy toward Iraq entered its third phase, with unique characteristics. The US was ready to deal with Iraq outside the umbrella of the United Nations, which had failed to secure Iraq's compliance. Launching an incessant retaliatory war on the Baathist regime and subjecting its military forces to daily defeats and losses was aimed at encouraging the Iraqi army to remove Saddam Hussein. Extending the area of air strikes beyond the no-fly zones to include military sites as well as oil refineries in the middle zone was intended to undercut the Iraqi regime's economic resources. Supporting the activities of the Iraqi opposition as well as providing it with financial help culminated in the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998.[9] It was the Clinton administration that legally annexed the fate of Iraq to US foreign policy, a line that would be exploited to its fullest by the G.W. Bush administration.[10]
4. The post 9/11 or 'back to the future' phase was premised on the link between the 9/11 attacks and the invasion of Iraq or between al-Qaeda network and the Baathist regime. Many Arab analysts tried to seek the link between 9/11 and the war on Iraq link in US oil interests in the Gulf in the light of the north Atlantic political and economic rivalry as well as the American industrial need for Arab oil.[11] Some Arab analysts attributed the lumping of al-Qaeda and Saddam in one box to the traumatic experience of the 9/11 attacks and their effect on America's self-conception of its role in the world.[12] Others sought to establish the link in President Bush's Hobbesian worldview and his messianic principles of America's role in making such a dangerous world a safer place.[13]

It is my opinion that the previous link was neither a product of US interests in Iraq's oil reserves nor even a result of the neoconservative ideology of the Bush administration. It was rather a fruit of the strategic thinking of the US intelligence community in the fashion of Steven Spielberg's famous movie series *Back to the Future*. Strategic thought, concerned with revealing potential threats and opportunities, identifying friends and foes, or formulating strategies and tactics, is all about the future not the present. The logic of 'back to the future,' or, in the movie's language, 'temporal displacement,' consisted of two steps: traveling to the future to trace the repercussions of the present condition; and traveling to the past to remedy the root causes of the present condition in order to change the future. In December 2000, the National Intelligence Council (NIC) issued a report on potential threats facing the US from foreign and domestic attackers. Four major trends were identified: criminal organizations around the globe expanding the scale and scope of their activities; diverse transnational networks of terrorism freewheeling away from state sponsorship; weak states drifting toward cooperation with terrorist groups, creating de facto new state supporters; and most importantly US opponents, states and nonstate actors as drug lords, terrorists, and foreign insurgents, choosing political and military strategies to minimize US strengths and exploit perceived US weaknesses. "By 2015," the report noted, "the United States . . . will face threats from North Korea, probably from Iran, and possibly from Iraq, in addition to long-standing threats from Russia and China." Therefore, 9/11 signified that "the United States cannot afford to ignore the warning given by its top intelligence analysts," commented Anthony Cordesman in the comfort of hindsight.[14] Read in the language of *Back to the Future*, 9/11 was a signal that the nightmare scenario was getting started. But, unlike in the movie, where it was possible for Michael J. Fox to make a journey to the past to remedy the causes and change the future, in reality George W. Bush could only intervene in the present to prevent the nightmare scenario from reaching its endgame in the future, that is, cooperation between state and nonstate opponents of the US. The link between 9/11 and the war on Iraq, cooperation between al-Qaeda and the Baath regime, originally projected out in the future became a prism for looking back at the present. Such temporal displacement is responsible for empirically verifying a pattern for the emergence and development of the 9/11–Iraq link.

Domestic Environment

The analysis of Iraq's domestic environment will concentrate upon its geography, population and ethnicities, economic and military conditions, and the post-Saddam political situation. Emphasis will be laid upon the last element due to its significance for Iraq's foreign policy.

Geography

If geography, just like history, never works the same way twice, the most feasible way to highlight a country's unique geographical character may be by examining the interaction between two crucial aspects: site and situation. Whereas the former denotes the permanent natural characteristics of a territory, its size, form, topography, and resources, the latter refers to the invisible geometrical relations between a certain territory and its neighbors.[15]

Iraq's medium size (437,400 square kilometers) lends the country the advantage of strategic depth in relation to its small-sized neighbors, like Kuwait (1,700 square kilometers) and Bahrain (700 square kilometers). Nevertheless, this strategic advantage vanishes in relation to Iran which, at 1.6 million square kilometers, is four times the size of Iraq. Iraq's borders, another source of heavy strategic burdens, do not enjoy the orderliness of a circle or a square with coasts along international waters. Iran rather assumes the shape of a triangle with its base to the north in Kurdistan's mountains and its narrow head to the south in the Persian Gulf. Iraq overlooks the Gulf water, the country's most important strategic and commercial outlet, but it has only been allowed a tiny foothold on the Gulf shores. Iraq's topography represents the weakest point in the country's geographical site. The mountains in the Kurdish north, just like the swamps in the Shi'a south, lay bare the country's national integration crisis, since such topography weakens the grip of the central government in Baghdad on the north and the south. As such, regaining the state's control over both areas in case of foreign invasion or local rebellion becomes extremely difficult.[16]

From another angle, Iraq does not lie in the heart of the Arab homeland, but on its northeastern frontier, a geographic location that denies the country the influential regional status Egypt enjoys due to its central geographic location. In contradistinction, Iraq, exiled from the Arab heartland, is located amid ethnic groups, nations, and states belonging to different, often hostile, cultures and histories. Besieged by land from all directions save for the Shatt al-Arab waterway, Iraq has vital interests

regarding three of its neighbors: Syria, its passage to the Mediterranean; Jordan, its path to the Red Sea; and also Kuwait, its route to the Gulf. Ahmed has rightly noted that "the geography of Iraq presents more constraints than opportunities."[17]

Population and Social Structure

Arab world specialists and observers' ethnoreligious classification of Iraq divides its population into three ethnic boxes: Shi'a, Kurdish, and Sunni. Though mixing ethnic and religious categories, this tripartite division turns a blind eye to the reality of mixed families in Iraq, like Kurdish-Arab or Sunni-Shi'a. Although it misrepresents the religious-ethnic reality, the image of a tripartite Iraqi population has created its own reality that has dominated the political discourse in Iraq.[18] Fully aware of the tripartite division's defects, this chapter will rely on it to present the social structure in Iraq.

Two main features strike every observer about the nature of Iraq's social structure: politicization and fragmentation. The Baathist governance style, leaning heavily on brute force to keep the Iraqi population under lock and key, depoliticized the state and turned it into a highly repressive apparatus, effacing political space and pushing its aspirations, motives, interests, and even conflicts into the social sphere. The politicization of ethnicity or ethnic/religious identity meant that politics was pursued in an alternative space whose external boundaries and internal bonds were forged by the experience of exclusion and repression, with the aim of factional identity assertion and interest satisfaction.

The US-led Coalition Provisional Authority, pursued a de-Baathification policy, which, in dissolving the institutions of Saddam's regime, including police, army, and intelligence organs, as well as persecuting their rank-and-file members, ended up, whether intentionally or not, dismantling the state per se on Iraq's territory. This state became, during the long years of the Baath rule, as the sole holder of Iraq's national unity. With its disappearance, disagreements, divisions, and even armed conflicts within as well as between Iraq's religious and ethnic communities were diabolically unleashed, fragmenting the social structure of Iraq and preventing observers from drawing sharply the lines separating its communities.

Mythically speaking, the authoritarian rule of the Baath was Iraq's oil lamp that for long years imprisoned the genii. But instead of rubbing the lamp like Aladdin wisely did, the American crushed it with his military

boot, letting loose the ethnic and religious genii against one another and eventually against himself.

Despite the lack of reliable statistics on the demographic situation in Iraq, the Shi'a are estimated to make up 15 to 16 million of Iraq's 25 million inhabitants.[19] Suppression and persecution under Saddam's rule nurtured bonds of sectarian solidarity and communal identity among the Shi'a, even among secular and anticlerical individuals. Although not all Shi'a came under the regime's heavy hand, the sense of grievance born of marginalization just for being Shi'a became a unifying factor. The fall of Saddam's regime boosted Shi'a identity politics, whose religious symbols invaded Iraq's public space. Portraits of Khomeini and other Shi'a figures appeared in Baghdad and southern cities, where entire neighborhoods, streets, bridges, hospitals, and schools were renamed after Shi'a martyrs. Shi'a identity politics reached a high point at the end of April 2003 with the march on the Shi'a holy city of Karbala to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, a pilgrimage previously banned under Baath rule.[20]

Three main sociopolitical forces dominate Iraq's Shi'a. The *hawza* of Najaf or communal leadership is composed of ulama (doctors of Islamic law), tutors, and students, who come from the entire Shi'a world to join the various religious schools and institutions in the city. Under Baath rule, the *hawza* lost much of its financial independence and political influence; the number of its colleges dropped and its local financial resources diminished. However, with the vanishing of the state in post-Saddam Iraq, the *hawza* became the sole symbol of order, whose highly respected personnel were able to fill the political vacuum. Many Shi'a, moreover, regarded it as a source of identity and certainty as the country sank more and more into violence and anarchy. Having fully reemerged in post-Saddam Iraq, the *hawza* turned into a sociopolitical actor in its own right. Not only did turbaned men appear on the streets to keep law and order, but the *hawza* also drew up development plans for Shi'a areas, including building a university, a college for girls, mosques, and hospitals. The *hawza* even provided its own satellite television service.[21]

Another Shi'a sociopolitical force is the Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council (SIIC, known till May 2007 as SCIRI or the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq) founded by Mohammed Baqir al-Hakim in 1982, after leaving for Iran in 1980. In Tehran, the then-SCIRI came under the patronage of Iran, which pressed a number of Iraqi Shi'a

Islamic parties to support the SCIRI as an umbrella for all Iraqi Shi'as. The SCIRI adopted Iran's principle of *wilayat al-faqih* ('the rule of the jurist') as the blueprint for Islamic government in Iraq and recognized the authority of Khomeini, and after him Khameini, over the world's Shi'a. SCIRI set up its own military unit, the Badr Corps, whose strength is estimated at between 4,000 and 8,000 fighters and which gained battle experience by fighting on the Iranian side in 1988. Ambivalence marks SCIRI's attitude toward the US occupation of Iraq; while it displayed readiness to cooperate with the US and chose to take part in the municipal and national councils as well as the Interim Governing Council, it continues to reject in the strongest terms any long-term US role.[22]

The third Shi'a sociopolitical force is the Sadrist movement headed by the thirty-four-old Moqtada al-Sadr, son of Ayatollah Muhammad Sadiq al-Sadr, who was eliminated with his two sons in February 1999 by the Baath regime. Moqtada depends in his position on the legacy of the father, who not only refused to flee Iraq, but also launched opposition from within against Saddam, whom he invited publicly to repent. Sadiq al-Sadr sought to close the rift between Shi'a and Sunni by raising the banner of Islamic unity. Opposed to Iranian influence, he attempted to establish the primacy of Iraqi Shiism through proclaiming himself *Wali Amr al-Muslimin* (Commander of the Muslims) and as such challenged the pan-Shi'a leadership of Ayatollah Khameini. The legendized legacy of the father bestows a degree of reverence and authority on the young Moqtada, who in actuality possesses few religious credentials. Following the fall of Saddam, Moqtada deputized a number of his followers to divide Shi'a areas in Baghdad into districts to facilitate the administration of and service provision to the Shi'a population. His followers established law and order, protected hospitals and public buildings, and imposed an Islamic dress code and gender segregation. In al-Sadr City, the Hikma mosque, belonging to the grand Sadr, was used to set a quasi-court system in the absence of a public judicial system. Also, the *hawza* police established by Moqtada's agents in order to keep law and order was able to hold criminality at bay. Success in filling the state vacuum left by the collapse of the Baath regime secured for Moqtada and his followers a power base in the poor neighborhoods of Baghdad and southern Iraq.[23]

The Kurdish problem is a historical leftover in the region. The collapse of the Ottoman Empire left the populations under its reign to grapple with many questions of politics, religion, nationality, race, and borders.

The resulting Kurdish question continues to be shaped by history; it has failed to tear itself from the shackles of historical events.

The first historical milestone on the way to Iraqi Kurdistan was the Kurdish rebellion against the 1974 Autonomy Law, rejected by Mullah Mustafa Barzani, head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), for limiting the powers of the regional government and excluding the city of Kirkuk. The defeat of the rebellion and the demise of its leader in exile sowed the seeds of rivalry between the Kurds, a rivalry that defines Kurdish politics until now. A group of Barzani's rivals in the Kurdish national movement together with some members of his politburo broke away from the KDP to form the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) under the leadership of Jalal Talabani. There is little difference between the PUK and the KDP in terms of ideology or organization, as both are manifestations of Kurdish family politics. The two parties are dominated by strong leaders forming a first circle within the party structure by family members. Both parties hold on to the dream of full independence for Kurdistan and declare their endorsement of an expanded autonomy within a federal Iraq.[24]

In 1991, Baathist Iraq's defeat in the war following the invasion of Kuwait proved to be a watershed in Kurdish history. Sensing the weakness of the central government in Baghdad and the atrophy of its repressive organs, Kurdish activists staged, in March of the same year, a popular upheaval in the north, starting in the small town of Rania and then spreading to the large city of Sulaymaniyah. But, denied any form of US military support, the insurgents surrendered the liberated areas after three weeks in the face of Baghdad's counteroffensive. More than 1.5 million Kurds fled to Iran and Turkey for fear of renewed mass executions and chemical attacks. The UN Security Council passed in April 1991 resolution 688 to condemn the repression of civilians in the Kurdish populated areas. This was followed by the Allied forces' Operation Provide Comfort in order to cope with the huge refugee crisis. The Allies established a temporary enclave or safety zone in northern Iraq, north of the 36th parallel, to which displaced Kurds chose to return. In May 1992, the Kurdish people participated in their first-ever elections to choose representatives to their 105-member National Assembly. Iraqi Kurds even went a step further in October 1992 by announcing the formation of a Kurdish federal state to be incorporated in federal Iraq.[25]

However, the period between 1994 and 1998 witnessed armed conflicts between the two main Kurdish parties to the extent that Iraqi

troops were invited back to the region, yet were soon forced out again due to international pressure. Conflicts between the KDP and the PUK marked Iraqi Kurdistan with political dualism in the form of parallel Kurdish administrations with their own cabinets and prime ministers. Under considerable international pressure, the leaders of the two parties came to a rapprochement by signing a new accord to establish a 'Joint High Leadership' in the Kurdish region, to be chaired by both Barzani and Talabani.[26]

Human Condition

In a 2003 report issued by the Center for Economic and Social Rights, the refugee camp metaphor was used to describe the condition of Iraq: "[T]he current plight of the population in Iraq [is] . . . in some ways analogous to that of people living in a refugee camp."[27] With this image in mind, this part will have to reduce the socioeconomic condition of Iraq to its most basic level, the human condition.

Sanctions represented the on-the-ground execution of the US strategy toward Iraq in the phase of 'dual containment,' and as such were responsible for creating the country's refugee camp condition. It is therefore indispensable to highlight the politics of sanctions, or the logic of sanctions, in order to fully comprehend their objectives and consequences. Sanctions, though a less violent alternative to war, were considered a prime tool for a coercive foreign policy that President Wilson called "a peaceful and deadly remedy that no nation can resist."[28] However, it was only after the end of the Cold War, with another 'new world order,' that such treatment became most frequently prescribed. Following its military failure in Somalia, the US opted for sanctions as an alternative to military intervention to the extent that by 1997 about fifty countries, constituting 68 percent of the world population, were subject to US-imposed sanctions. Despite their low level of effectiveness, sanctions remained popular in the international community. The externalization of financial costs to the sanctioned country made sanctions a much cheaper alternative to the high costs of military intervention. That "many of these costs, however, are born by the civilian population not by the offending regime" underscores the moral void of sanctions.[29]

Four days after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the Security Council passed Resolution 661 that constituted the basis of a very comprehensive system of sanctions. An arsenal of resolutions followed—in just five

months, from August 1990 till January 1991, fourteen resolutions were adopted—consolidating the Iraqi sanctions system until its removal by Resolution 1483 on May 22, 2003. A very wide ban was imposed on Iraq and the then-occupied Kuwait regarding imports and exports, transfers of funds, shipment and transportation, as well as any industrial, commercial, or public utility undertaking. Only supplies or payments intended for strictly medical or humanitarian purposes and, in humanitarian circumstances, foodstuffs were exempted from the resolution prohibitions. The resolutions that assessed humanitarian needs and allowed for the purchase of Iraqi oil built up the famous Oil for Food Program.

Although these resolutions never failed to express concern for the nutrition and health situation of the civilian population, they constructed the program in a fashion that, instead of ensuring a trickle of medicine and food supplies to the civilian population, plugged such holes in the sanctions system. Since one third of Iraq's oil revenues paid UN expenses, reparations to Kuwait, and compensations claims, of the $57 billion of the revenues Iraq earned till 2002, only $23 billion were spent on goods that actually reached the country. This amounted to about $170 per person per year, which was less than half of what the UN spent on food for dogs used in Iraqi demining operations (about $400 per dog per year). Moreover, the US fought aggressively to minimize the humanitarian goods entering Iraq, sometimes providing reasons for its refusal, while at other times giving no reason at all. One commentator noted that "[s]ince August 1991 the United States has blocked most purchases of materials necessary for Iraq to generate electricity, as well as equipment for radio, telephone, and other communications."[30]

The resolutions that founded the sanctions system contained no mention of an expiration date or time limit, but clearly underscored the possibility that sanctions could go on forever. Since these resolutions were adopted by the Security Council with its veto system, putting an end to sanctions that needed a new resolution to be passed by the Security Council could be easily vetoed by the US to maintain the perpetuity of sanctions. It was only possible to lift sanctions after the U.S-led invasion of Iraq and the removal of Saddam Hussein from power.

An incident from early 2001 reveals beyond doubt that sanctions were nothing but another form of warfare, even more ruthless and inhumane than military warfare; it was biological war in reverse. Under the claim that medical supplies contained live creatures that could be extracted and used to develop a missile or other delivery system, the US placed holds on $280

million for the purchase of vaccines to treat infant hepatitis, tetanus, and diphtheria, as well as incubators and cardiac equipment. Although UN health agencies objected strongly and European biological weapons experts insisted that the US claim was scientifically impossible, the US refused to release the sum.[31] On being asked whether the deaths of half a million children in Iraq were morally justifiable, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright replied: "This was a very hard choice, but we think the price is worth it."[32]

The system of sanctions imposed on Iraq for twelve years had an effect on Iraq's infrastructure (electricity, drinking water, and sewage). In the 1991 war, the Allied forces destroyed four of Iraq's five hydrochloric plants and damaged severely all its electrical production facilities, relegating Iraq from a modern society to a preindustrial one. Making matters worse, sanctions led to a chronic decline of electrical capacity through delays and difficulties in acquiring spare parts, irreparably aging infrastructure, and immigration of trained professionals to Western countries. As a result, the average of blackouts in some urban neighborhoods was estimated to be twelve to fourteen hours per day, but on the national level power cuts mounted to nine hours per day in 2002. It was estimated that rehabilitating the Iraqi electrical system infrastructure would cost $20 billion. Problems of electricity supply, which negatively affected water-sewage and water-treatment facilities, damaged medical equipment and interrupted medical procedures, spoiling irreplaceable vaccines and medicines, created a public health catastrophe.[33] The Iraq Living Conditions Survey showed that electricity problems did not improve after the American-led invasion. Three out of four households reported a reduced and less stable electricity supply; more than 3.2 million households experienced unstable electric supply, yet only half of this number had an alternative source of electricity in case of power cuts.[34]

Throughout the 1990s, the amount of available potable water dropped from 330 to 150 liters per person per day in Baghdad and from 180 to 65 liters per person per day in rural areas. Nationwide, the output of portable water in 2002 was about 50 percent of pre-Gulf war levels. Worse still, rehabilitation and sewage treatment was impossible under the famous Oil For Food Program; as a result, the UN agencies working in Iraq found 25 percent of all water samples to be highly contaminated. If war broke out, the UN estimated, only 39 percent of the population would have access to water and sanitation services.[35] The figures of the Iraq Living Conditions Survey were apparently different, a matter that might be attributed to the difference in calculation units or the

availability of reliable data. It indicated that on average only 33 percent of all Iraqi households had an unstable supply of drinking water. Yet, the figures become more dramatic at governorate level: in comparison to the 36 percent of Baghdad households suffering from unstable supply, in the southern governorates of Karbala and Al-Muthana 48 percent and 54 percent of all households, respectively, lacked a stable drinking water supply. Adding the criterion of safety, the water condition appeared to be getting worse and worse. The Iraq Living Conditions Survey reported in 2004: "Nationwide, 54 percent of households have access to a safe and stable supply of drinking water; 29 percent have drinking water from safe sources but with an unstable supply; and 17 percent of all households have neither safe nor stable drinking water."[36]

As if the human condition in Iraq needed to sink lower, sectarian violence escalating in size and ferociousness in the post-Saddam era resulted in 'internal displacement' that deprived Iraqis of the most basic condition of human existence: a roof over their head. More and more Iraqis are becoming refugees in their own country. Based on information from the Ministry of Displacement and Migration, 27,000 families or 162,200 people were registered as displaced and had applied for government assistance in June 2006. However, in less than three months, the official figure rose to 234,000 people forced to flee. Official numbers do not, however, reflect the magnitude of the problem, since many displaced people do not register for assistance, because they lack necessary documents or they simply do not want to.[37] It is worth noting that although internal displacement overlaps at the moment with sectarian violence in Iraq, it dates back to before the US invasion of Iraq. It was a salient feature of Baathist policy toward ethnic and religious groups in Iraq, especially the Kurds and Shi'a.[38] Occupation mismanagement and sectarian violence just gave new impetus to an already existing mechanism.

Mixed areas, where sectarian violence is most likely to ensue, are considered hotbeds of 'internal displacement.' Take as an example the capital Baghdad, where the diverse ethnic and religious groups of Iraq are represented. Organized campaigns by radical groups and militiamen seek to create all-Sunni as well all-Shi'a enclaves. Just as Sunnis faced violence and assaults to leave Shu'la, Sha'b, Sadr City, and other areas of Shi'a majority, Shi'a in their turn were forced out of Ghazaliya, Khan Dhari, Taji, and neighborhoods of Sunni majority.[39] The main pattern of displacement is that members of an ethnic-religious community go to

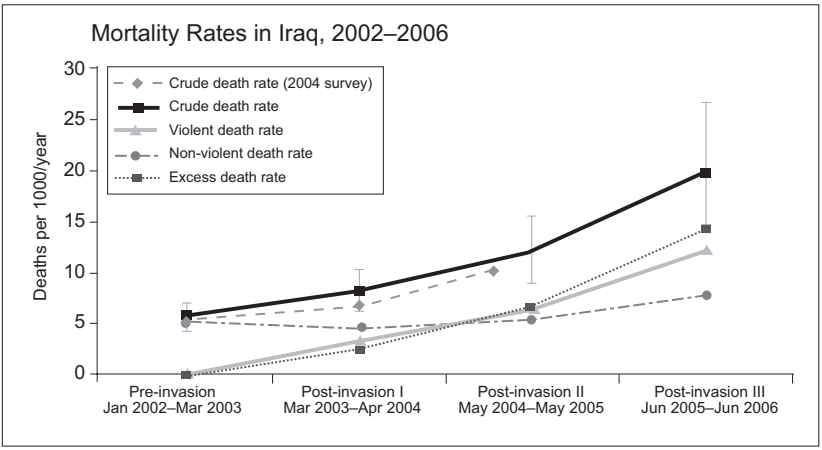
the areas where their community prevails. Those who have the capability to flee to neighboring Arab countries, Europe, or the US, do not think about it twice. Other displacement patterns do exist and disclose the human suffering Iraqis are subject to on a daily basis. Nighttime displacement is a sort of avoiding the dangers of violence and murder, but refusing to leave one's home, through sleeping in different places each night. Daylight displacement means taking "different routes on different means of transportation" and going to different places for fear of sectarian attacks.[40]

Military Situation

The situation of post-Saddam Iraq is actually one of war of all against all, not in the state of nature, before men entered society, as Thomas Hobbes taught, but after men discarded both state and society. There are no stronger or more accurate words to depict this situation than those of the Baker-Hamilton report's very first paragraph: "The situation in Baghdad and several provinces is dire. . . . The level of violence is high and growing. There is great suffering, and the daily lives of many Iraqis show little or no improvement. Pessimism is pervasive."[41] Turning to October 2006, "the deadliest month for U.S. forces,"[42] the report states that 102 American soldiers were killed, and total attacks rose from the average of 70 per day in January 2006 to 180 per day in October 2006. On the Iraqi side, approximately three thousand are killed every month.[43]

However, a slightly broader picture of the level of violence can be found in the November 2006 *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq* quarterly report presented by the Department of Defense to Congress. During the reporting period (May–November 2006) the average of weekly attacks[44] rose by 22 percent. The four provinces of Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, and Salah al-Din, which have 37 percent of the population, received the lion's share (78 percent) of attacks; Anbar and Baghdad alone accounted for 54 percent of all attacks. Casualties of coalition forces, which attracted the majority of attacks about 68 percent, increased by 32 percent, while Iraqi security forces and the civilian population suffered the majority of casualties.[45] In a mortality study conducted by an American-Iraqi team of public health researchers, it was found that approximately 600,000 people were killed in the violence of the war since its beginning in 2003. Figures 1 and 2 show the distribution of these death rates by years (2002–2006) and by provinces.

Figure 1

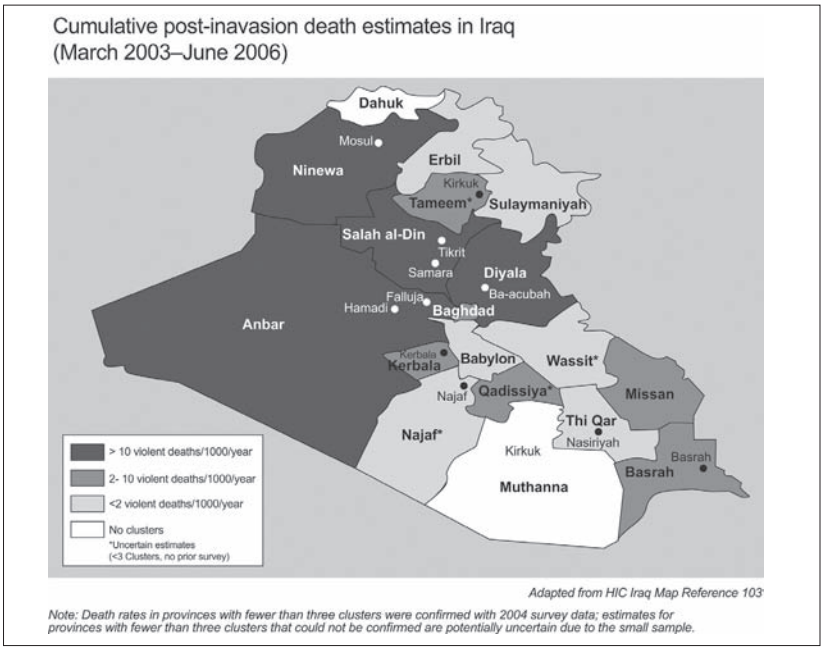


Source: Human Cost of War in Iraq: Mortality Study, 2002–2006.[46]

The transition from an insurgency against US occupation forces to an ethnic and sectarian struggle among Iraqis sums up the evolution of the military situation so far.[47] When US forces entered Baghdad, expecting a fierce battle in defense of the capital, they suddenly found themselves without an enemy. The various authority structures and personnel simply dissolved; the Iraqi state apparatus that had ruled the country for the last three decades vanished. Debates among military experts could not confirm whether the Iraqi ex-president devised a guerrilla strategy in anticipation of defeat. What is certain, however, is that angered individuals who resented the occupation and its indignities started forming small cells of fighters, tapping preexisting party, professional, tribal, geographic, and neighborhood networks. Ex-army officers were ideal candidates to form the vanguard and backbone of the armed resistance, providing it with military and intelligence skills, knowledge of the whereabouts of concealed arms stockpiles, and communication and organizational structures.[48] So the insurgency started.

Based on the armed opposition's discourse, the level of sophistication of military operations, as well as the degree of coordination and division of military labor, four phases of the insurgency, though overlapping and intertwined, can be discerned. The first phase that started in May 2003 and peaked in 2004 was one of 'competition.' Armed attacks of little

Figure 2



Source: Human Cost of War in Iraq: Mortality Study, 2002–2006.

significance that began in late May grew rapidly in number and intensity and went unclaimed till June 2003, when claims of responsibility and names of armed groups began to show up. This phase witnessed the sprouting of small local groups with little coordination and much exaggeration of their actions, many of these groups disappearing as fast as they emerged. The quality of their propaganda efforts progressed from crude leaflets, to highly professional videos with elaborate sound tracks, and finally to the Internet as the principal means for communication. Competition on the ground was a sort of natural selection; less effective groups either disappeared from the scene or merged with more successful ones. Such tendency toward centralization manifested itself in the transformation of sporadic and isolated cells to larger networks having clearly defined structures with specialized functions exercising control over given areas. Tactical cooperation and distribution of operational responsibilities within organs as well as independent organization were not a rare occurrence.[49]

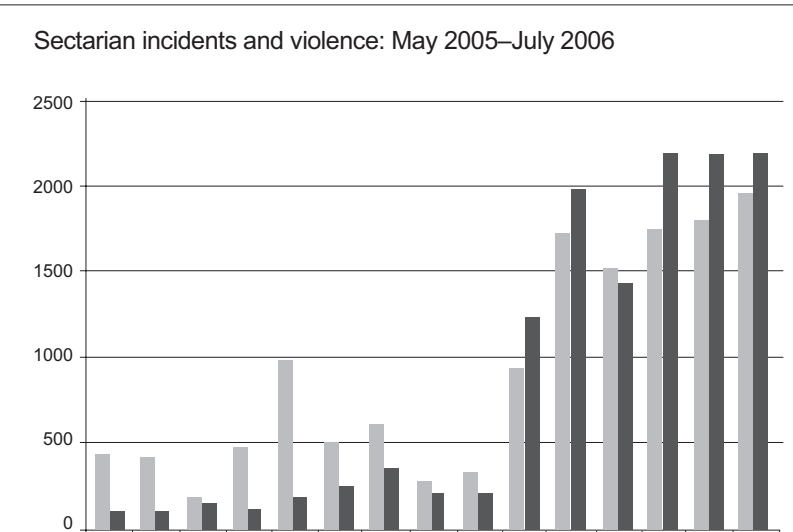
The second phase of 'consolidation' that covered the period from mid-2004 to mid-2005 was characterized by the armed resistance groups' need for legitimation of their actions. Initially, the frustration of large segments of the Iraqi population over the wrong policies of the US occupation, deteriorating levels of security, as well as catastrophic life conditions boosted the level of popular support for *al-muqawama al-wataniya* ('national resistance') as distinguished from *al-irhab* ('terrorism'). Yet popular support turned into revulsion with the spread of brutal practices like beheading, hostage taking, public killings, and suicide attacks against Iraqis lining up for jobs in the army or police force. The perception that Sunni resistance was targeting Shi'a drove a wedge between Sunnis and Shi'a. Fearful of alienating their support base and eager to maintain their legitimacy, fighting groups, mainly Sunni, sought the opinions of prominent religious scholars, who in their turn interpreted the struggle through the prism of jihad against the crusaders. Based on the same Qur'anic passages used by these groups, religious arguments resolved tensions between fighting groups and led to their convergence in creed and code to the extent that they escaped all possible categorization attempts as Arab nationalist or jihadi religious.[50]

The third phase of 'confidence' in the period between mid-2005 and the beginning of 2006 witnessed high measures of self-confidence reached by the armed resistance groups. Their attitude to their own operations moved from extended self-justifications and explanations to claims of responsibility or terse denials. Their propaganda, though portraying US occupation as a bridgehead for a new Western domination of the region, downplayed reports of US military success and showed rising confidence in the results of military struggle. Their publications, which announced a "long-term, open-ended jihad" whose outcome was not guaranteed, promoted the prospect of an "outright victory and a swift withdrawal of foreign forces."[51] This phase of confidence was, however, short lived; it only needed a spectacular incident of sectarian violence to burn all the bridges between the Sunni and Shi'a communities.

It was the bombing of the golden mosque in February 2006 that threw open the doors of the current phase of 'civil war.' Against the background of internal displacement and mutual violence in mixed areas leading to the creation of all-Sunni or all-Shi'a enclaves, sectarian violence evolved from scattered and spontaneous events of beating, raping, and killing to organized militia-backed ethnic cleansing. "Different factions built up

their militias, and infiltrated the new Iraqi security forces."[52] The continuous sectarian fighting led to the creation of twenty-three militias around Baghdad. Moqtada al-Sadr developed death squads that acted independently of his command and that he himself failed to restrain on several occasions. Sunnis, in contrast, sought the protection of armed resistance groups or formed loosely organized neighborhood death squads to defend against al-Sadr's Mahdi Army.[53] Two major attacks were catalysts of an endless cycle of reprisal killings between the Sunnis and Shi'a: one was the abduction of 150 people from the Sunni-controlled Ministry of Higher Education; and the other was the killing of two hundred persons in bombings in Sadr City. Baghdad, the national capital that had attracted members of all communities in the past, formed the center of sectarian violence that sent ripples throughout the mixed areas of the whole country. In Baquba, near Baghdad, dead bodies were a daily scene on the streets as Sunni and Shi'a militias attempted to scare one another out of

Figure 3



	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July
Casualties	440	425	190	500	1000	510	620	280	340	960	1735	1530	1760	1820	1970
Incidents	110	120	150	120	190	260	360	210	210	1250	2000	1450	2200	2200	2200

*Casualty data reflect data for each period and are derived from unverified initial reports submitted by coalition elements responding to an incident; the inconclusivity of these numbers constrains them to be used only for comparative purposes.

Source: MNC-I, as adapted from: US Department of Defense, Measuring Stability in Iraq, August 2006 Report Congress, p. 35; Note: +/- 5% margin of error.

the city. In Kirkuk, ethnic and sectarian violence involved Shi'a, Sunnis, Kurds, and other minorities mixed together. According to UN estimates, 120 Iraqis were killed every day due to sectarian violence.[54] Confirming the galvanizing effect of the February incident, Figure 3 points to the ultimate fact that the rising rate of sectarian violence incidents and casualties blurred on the ground the distinction between insurgency and civil war.

Political Situation

Due to the current circumstances of Iraq, it is more feasible to trace political strategies and processes than to delineate structures and bodies. Strategies are often anchored in covertly or overtly intended tactics of a certain party, but as they gain momentum uncontrollable processes with almost totally unintended consequences are unleashed.

Under Baathist rule, Iraq became an Orwellian nation par excellence. A thoroughly constructed and administered security structure with a network of informers held the different regions, ethnicities, and sects of the country together. A first circle of Saddam's family and close relatives, members of his tribe and those from his hometown Tikrit constituted the core of a state structure based on brutality and fear, a structure whose organs were "instruments of support for one-man rule."[55] The US invasion of Iraq tore open the chronic relationship between the state and the society in the Arab world; it was not a nation-state but a contra-nation state. Not only did the battle of Baghdad never take place, but the state structure melted into thin air, resulting in a catastrophic power vacuum. The various postinvasion strategies of the US in Iraq were about not just filling up the vacuum of power, but more precisely fusing the power relations produced on the battlefield with the postcombat state institutions molded to fill the vacuum. The US won the war, the Kurds supported, the Shi'a collaborated, and the Sunnis were defeated.

As early as April 2003, initial alarms concerning the security situation and the incapability of the US to handle the postconflict situation were being raised. "Regular soldiers are neither trained nor equipped to undertake such duties. . . . The U.S. military is particularly ill-equipped to perform post-conflict duties. . . . On the civilian side . . . no single department has responsibility for stabilization and no one at the planning table can present a comprehensive view of what the U.S. can offer, or what it will cost."[56] Another report warned against the uncertainty that could rapidly fill the space created by state disintegration and exert constant

pressures toward "political division and social fragmentation." Another report warned against the uncertainty that could rapidly fill the space created by state disintegration or exert constant pressures toward political and social division. "If this disorder develops into large-scale violence and is combined with the brutality of modern weapons, the result may be one of the toughest political and humanitarian crises."[57] It is against this background that the successive postinvasion strategies should be viewed.

Although the creation of an Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) was the first postinvasion strategy to be discarded, its inherent failures would characterize future plans as well. In January 2003, the Bush administration created the ORHA and appointed General (Ret.) Jay Garner at its head with the purpose of developing and implementing plans to establish a democratic government after the end of the war. The initial plan was 'to cut off the head of the snake but leave the body.' The coalition was to remove Saddam and the rest of the Iraqi elite and install ORHA with other coalition personnel in their stead, acting temporarily as the head, till a new Iraqi elite could be recruited to take control of Iraq's body.[58] Garner's plan was premised on the assumption that the Iraqi army, police, and the rest of its government institutions would remain intact and on duty. However, as US soldiers famously tore down Saddam's statue in al-Ferdaws square, they brought down with it not just all manifestations of public order, but Garner's plan too. Seventeen ministries—save for the oil ministry that was tightly guarded by US troops—were ransacked and burned down; their staff were frightened, demoralized, and scattered; police and army officers went home and took their weapons with them. To make matters worse, ORHA had neither the plan nor the capacity to deal with the breakdown of public order. A small number of its staff had experience in peace operations and even fewer had visited Iraq previously and none of them spoke Arabic. ORHA's staff, isolated in a heavily guarded headquarters and working under unbearable conditions, could not even communicate with each other except by office visits, let alone communicate with other parts of the country.[59]

In May 2003, a major shift in postinvasion strategies came about with the appointment of Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III[60] as the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) that succeeded ORHA and discarded its plans of early elections and transitional government.[61] The CPA failed to account for $20 billion expended between May 2003 and June 2004, of which $12 billion in cash were spent without adequate

controls.[62] Moreover, Bremer's deputy for financial matters literally stated that transparency and accountability were neither possible nor even desirable at the CPA.[63] All this is an indication of the way the CPA dealt with the postinvasion situation in Iraq. Nonetheless, one can single out three CPA-delivered strategies that shaped the features of new Iraq's political landscape and continue to influence it till now: disestablishment, decentralization, and balkanization.

In contrast to ORHA's 'cut the head and leave the body' strategy, CPA's first strategy of disestablishment aimed at no less than dismembering both head and body. In the early morning of May 16, 2003, just four days after his arrival in the burning Iraqi capital, Paul Bremer signed CPA Order Number 1 on the De-Baathification of Iraqi Society. The order eliminated the party structures, removed its leadership and full party members from positions of authority and responsibility, and debarred them from future employment in the public sector. The first three management layers in ministries as well as affiliated corporations and institutions were to be screened, investigated, and their personnel fired, if Baath party membership was proved. Rewards were to be made available for providing information about senior party members and individuals "complicit in the crimes of the former regime."[64] Following the order's signature, Bremer emphasized in a meeting with ORHA's senior ministry advisers that according to the President's instructions "de-Baathification will be carried out even if at a cost of administrative efficiency."[65] The de-Baathification order could only instigate disorder. Large numbers of senior officers in the police and other security institutions that enforced law and order were discharged. An entire layer of government officials with indispensable expertise and managerial skills were squeezed out. Even former Baathists who cooperated with the occupation authorities and the ORHA were not excluded from dismissal. "De-Baathification seemed not only unwise but also unfair."[66]

On May 23, 2003, Paul Bremer promulgated CPA Order Number 2 on the Dissolution of Entities, which amounted to nothing less than the total dissolution of the Iraqi state or what was left of it. Among the dissolved entities listed in an attached annex were the ministries of defense, information, and state for military affairs, the Iraqi national intelligence, the army, air force, navy, the air defense force, and all the organizations subordinate to these entities. It was noted that additional entities and organizations "may be added to this list in the future." Any rank, title, or

status granted to persons employed by any of the dissolved entities was cancelled, and these persons were dismissed. Payments, including pensions, to senior party members as well as officers holding the rank of colonel and above were terminated.[67] Disbanding the Iraqi security apparatuses exacerbated the political vacuum by implicitly permitting acts of looting and the ransacking of public buildings and equipment and assaults on their personnel. It also removed from the field the institutions capable of combating the sweeping waves of criminal violence resulting from the reemergence of Saddam-era criminal networks. The disappearance of security institutions and personnel and the spread of criminal violence in a society used to excessive security presence and a near absence of violence represented a traumatic experience for Iraqis. Thus, families armed themselves and barricaded their homes for fear of home-invasion robberies, murders, abductions, rapes, carjackings, and kidnappings conducted by freely roaming gangsters.[68] The first two orders of the CPA clearly traded the coercion-based public space for the insecurity-ridden battlefield. The power vacuum created favorable circumstances for insurgents in tribal Sunni areas and for sectarian militias in Shi'a areas, and as such hampered attempts to develop government institutions that could provide Iraqis with basic services. Little wonder that the country moved from a condition of insurgency to one of civil war.[69]

Having done away with the Baathist state structures, the second CPA strategy of decentralization aimed at reestablishing the Iraqi state after doing away with its endemic overcentralization. The aggressiveness of the Iraqi state against its neighbors in the region as much as against its own population was attributed to the wide authority of the central government at the expense of local bodies.[70] The new state structure was designed in such a way as to keep in check the Iraqi state as well as its future rulers' external and internal political behavior. The decentralization strategy sought to reverse the relationship between central and local authorities by expanding widely the latter at the expense of the former. Eventually, this risked not only the creation of a weak state but also the division of the country.

The 'November 15 agreement' of 2003 for the restoration of full Iraqi sovereignty allows a glimpse of the decentralization strategy. A system of local caucuses in the governorates would play a central role in selecting the national government of Baghdad.[71] An organizing committee in each governorate would oversee the selection of candidates for the local caucus that

in its turn selected delegates to the transitional national assembly tasked with the selection of a government and the preparation for the election of a constitutional assembly.[72] It was, however, the Law of Administration for the State of Iraq governing the country's affairs during the transitional period that framed the meaning, purpose, and arrangements of decentralization. In spite of the legal suspension of this law after the formation of an elected government (via Article 3), its arrangements would continue to govern the Iraqi state in the foreseeable future. From among the transitional government's matters of 'exclusive competence,' the area of natural resources was singled out as an exception to such exclusiveness. Their management was to be in consultation with the governments of the regions, while distributing the revenues of their sale would be proportional with population distribution, deprivation under the previous regime, and degree of development (Article 52). Not only was the anomalous political status of Iraqi Kurdistan, with its semi-independent regional government, legally recognized, but it became the norm for decentralization arrangements in other parts of the country. Just as the governorates of Dohuk, Arbil, Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, Diyala, and Nineveh formed the Kurdistan region governed by the Kurdistan Regional Government, so shall "any group of no more than three governorates outside the Kurdistan region . . . have the right to form regions" (Article 53). Devolution of authority was elevated to be the norm for the Iraqi state. Authorities not exclusively reserved to the transitional government were to be exercised by regional governments and governorate administrations (Article 57), and additionally, "the federal government [would] take measures to devolve additional functions to local, governorate, and regional administrations" (Article 56).[73]

The third strategy of balkanization was more a result of balance-of-power politics than the old colonial 'divide and rule' strategy. It was about reshaping the Iraqi political landscape through the exploitation of already-existing hostilities and differences of gender, ideology, ethnicity, religion, and sect, and the formation of mosaic-like social groups not just to be played against one another but to balance one another. In this sense, it created a balance point, external to the mosaic-like structure, from which a balance holder could hold all the strings of influence, if not directly manipulate, the political actors. Again, this strategy was aimed at controlling the political behavior of the Iraqi state by building structural checks and imbalances into its foundations that reflected, regardless of legal formulas, the new power relations created on the battlefield.

The starting point for this strategy was the American representation of an Iraq (a fragmented and unbalanced country) that invited the 'MacArthur of Baghdad'[74] to play his role and thus legitimized US occupation. Formed as the British cobbled together three ex-Ottoman provinces, the "relatively young nation" of Iraq formed "a patchwork with sharp ethnic and sectarian differences."

For centuries under the Ottomans as well as the Baathists, the Sunni, a minority of 20 percent of the population ruled the Shi'a Arab majority. Between Germany or Japan on the one hand and Iraq on the other, the main difference was that Germany and Japan "had lost and surrendered," but in Iraq the coalition had "defeated a hated regime not a country."[75] There could be no clearer indication of the civilian administration's role of embedding the power relations produced in battle, extending the range of defeat to the whole country, in order to establish a new Iraq based on a new sectarian balance of power.

The Governing Council (GC) provides an exemplar for this strategy and represents an ideal type for cloning the rest of the country's institutions. In the summer of 2003, American and British diplomats traveled the country to search for candidates to the interim government. They were able to identify "women, tribal, and religious leaders to be considered for membership" in the government. "We decided to name the interim government the 'Iraqi Governing Council' or GC."[76] The GC's membership was to reflect the fragmented composition of Iraq in terms of ethnicity, religion, sect, gender, and ideology. It included twelve Shi'a, five Kurds, four Sunnis, two women, one Assyrian Christian, and one Communist. Ambassador Bremer's chosen formula for recognizing the Shi'a majority of the GC membership was "Iraqi society's balance."[77] That the GC provided a model for future government institutions was first witnessed in the twenty-five-member cabinet which the GC appointed and whose composition reflected "the same factional and ethnic balance of the Council itself."[78]

The Achilles' heel of this strategy is that the battle on the ground has not yet ended, but has taken other forms, and thus the balance-holder is too weak to balance, let alone influence, the other actors. The more the GC style shapes state institutions in the various fields and levels of government, destabilization rather than docility spreads, since more and more institutions are integrated in the power balance, whose external balancing point become weak and shaky with every passing day. This accounts for the chronic instability and paralysis of the postinvasion state structure.

The transitional law, the transitional assembly, the constitution, the elections, and with them the cabinets of Allawi, Jafari, and al-Maliki are, as they say, history.

Foreign Policy Orientation

Hoshyar Zebari is the central figure in contemporary Iraqi foreign policy. Serving four rulers of Iraq—Bremer included—and surviving two US secretaries of state, the Iraqi minister of foreign affairs represents the sole constant amidst "turmoil, confusion, and constant change."[79] His speeches and interviews offer a sort of understanding of the global and regional systems as well as the position of the new Iraq in them. Since the new foreign policy orientation under Zebari represents a radical break with the old one under Saddam, contrasts will be occasionally drawn in order to point at the direction of change.

The Global System

Two characteristic dimensions of Saddam Hussein's perception of the global system were of relevance to the core of his foreign policy. First, the transition of the global system from bipolarity to multipolarity was perceived as a "welcome development," as it granted Iraq and Arab countries "freedom of action." Second, rising tensions and contradictions between the superpowers were perceived as unfavorable to global south countries' interests, as they encouraged proxy wars between satellite countries. Steering Iraq's foreign policy between opportunity and challenge provided a rationale, at least in theory, for Iraq's foreign policy of nonalignment.[80]

For Hoshyar Zebari, it was the bipolar structure of the global order that allowed authoritarian rule and dictatorships the opportunity to evolve and flourish by offering them the room to maneuver and pit one superpower against the other in pursuit of their own self-interests.[81] The transition from the bipolar system with its cold-war politics to "today's one-pillar world" had as a consequence the severe restriction of authoritarian regimes' room for maneuver.[82] Besides, terms like the 'international community' or the 'civilized world' that dot Zebari's speeches reflect his recognition of a global tendency of the one-polar system. It is the international consensus on universal values of democracy and human rights that rallies the world's nations in a community. Such a consensus narrowing down state actors' freedom of action can only lead to the convergence of their foreign policy behavior toward international norms,[83] as reflected in

Iraq's invitation to the international community to help consolidate the country's new democratic order.[84]

In the foreign minister's view, the extension of the aggressive nature of Saddam's regime to the realm of foreign policy led to "blatant disregard for international law, support for terrorism and deluded regional ambitions."[85] The task assigned to the new foreign policy would be the "normalization of diplomatic relations with the international community on the basis of cooperation and respect for mutual interests and international law."[86] In other words, the core aim of the new foreign policy was "to rehabilitate Iraq into the international community and erase the disastrous legacy of Iraq's foreign policy under the former regime."[87] That the new Iraq regained full representation in the UN, Arab League, and all other international organizations was a mark of success in the "huge task" of moving Iraq from the category of "an outlaw," "a rogue state," and "a violator of international human rights standards" to that of "a responsible member" of the international community.[88]

The Regional System

The Baathist ideology with its three historical goals (unity, freedom, socialism) for the Arab nation had serious implications for Iraq's foreign policy. It provided the former Iraqi president with a prism for viewing the region as well as defining Iraq's role in it. Refusing to accept the legitimacy of existing political borders and divisions, which is the direct implication of the 'Arab nation' concept, meant not just favoring the transformation of the existing regional reality, but also assigning Iraq a role similar to that of Nasser's Egypt in leading the aspired regional change.[89]

The installation of a new regime in Iraq with a non-nationalist ideological orientation went hand in hand with the disintegration of the Arab regional system. These new facts would imprint themselves on Zebari's perception of both the region and Iraq's role in it. In his first speech on December 16, 2003, before the UN Security Council, Hoshyar Zebari referred three times to the region as the "Middle East region."[90] The "Arab nation" vanished from every reference made by the foreign minister to the region's identity and was substituted by either "neighboring countries," "Iraq's neighbors," "Arab countries," or the "broader Islamic community."

The repeated denunciation of Saddam's regional legacy discloses Zebari's perception of Iraq's new role in the region. According to Zebari, Saddam's "territorial ambitions" and "unappeasable drive to be recognized

as the twenty-first century leader of the Arab world" made Iraq a "regional bully" that intimidated neighbors, stirred instability, sabotaged the peace process with Israel, and dragged the whole region into catastrophic wars. The war with Iran, the invasion of Kuwait, the development of weapons of mass destruction, and support for international terrorism combined to "poison Iraq's relations with the Arab world, with the Islamic world" and it would be the task of Iraq's regional foreign policy to "overcome these legacies . . . and to get rid of the bad culture of Saddam."[91]

As it starts a new balance sheet, democratic Iraq cannot separate itself from its Arab and Islamic environment. By leading an "active and transparent foreign policy," the new Iraq hopes to build bilateral relations with its neighbors, reengage them, and pursue reconciliation with Arab and Muslim countries by and large. Its new role is to be "an honest and cooperative partner in the region and a friendly, peaceful neighbor" that respects the national interests and security concerns of its neighbors, and to "enhance regional cooperation and not launch wars against them at the will of one man."[92] The new Iraq's regional role is based on economic, political, and strategic considerations. Its huge potential as a marketplace and center for bilateral trade makes Iraq "the central lynchpin that binds the region together," and creates an incentive for reconciliation with its neighbors.[93] Moreover, as "the strategic and geographical heart of the Middle East" the stability of Iraq has implications for regional security and stability. As much as a sovereign and unified Iraq would benefit the national interests of its neighbors, "the failure of the experiment in Iraq will have disastrous consequences far beyond its own borders."[94] Beyond that, the success of Iraq can give impetus to democratic reforms and waves of tolerance across the entire Middle East.

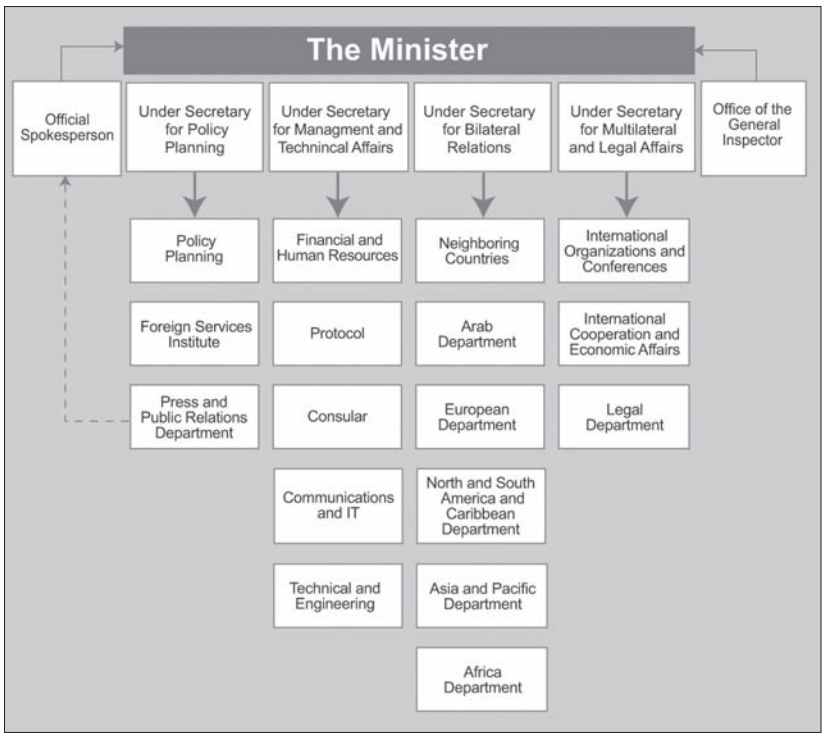
Foreign Policy Thinking

The organizational structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Figure 4) is divided on a functional as well as a geographical basis into departments that are supposed to function as two-way channels passing information to higher echelons and directives to lower ones. Yet, the security situation in Baghdad and in the Green Zone[95] raises serious doubts about the credibility of a formal organizational chart. In his speech at the ceremony marking the transfer of sovereignty, Hoshyar Zebari acknowledged the "role and contribution of Ambassador Bremer . . . to get the Ministry . . . up and running." He went on to list how Bremer's expertise shaped the "ambitious

program of ministry reform" in developing a new work culture, initiating training and development programs for hundreds of Iraqi diplomats, and instituting fair and merit-based selection procedures.[96] Nonetheless, one is obliged to dismiss the previous remarks as mere courtesy.[97]

Just like Saddam's Iraq, the new Iraq is no exception to the conventional wisdom that "sufficient and accurate data on the details of foreign policy decision-making . . . are simply not available" in developing countries.[98] But unlike in Saddam's Iraq, not even a 'leader-staff style' is identifiable. It therefore seems more reasonable to shift the analysis from opaque foreign policy decision making to the more accessible foreign policy thinking articulated by the man at the 'center of the stage.' Three elements are of relevance here: Iraq's self-image, objectives, and strategy.

Figure 4



Source: Official Web site of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, http://www.mofa.gov.iq.

With regard to the self-image of Iraq, the foreign minister emphasized in his very first speech at the United Nations Security Council that "the situation in Iraq is much more complicated than that of Afghanistan or Somalia."[99] On different occasions, he has repeated that the Iraqi people have been traumatized by the legacy of decades of human rights violations and systematic policies bent upon dividing the country on ethnic and sectarian lines.[100] Originally, Iraq was cut out of the Ottoman Empire, with different nationalities, ethnic groups, and religions lumped together in the ancient land of Mesopotamia. Iraq has since suffered continuous "grievances, marginalization, and persecution of different sectors of society by minority rulers."[101] As for the current Iraq, it is facing a destructive campaign of terror, "a deadly mix of remnants of the former regime determined to turn back the clock, and foreign elements whose sole agenda is to destroy the ongoing political process." The collapse of the state and its institutions created a situation that these forces are determined to exploit for "their own extreme agendas."[102] Unable to rely on its own military forces to maintain security and order and therefore in need of the assistance of the multinational forces, the current Iraq feels "grateful to the coalition who helped liberate us . . . and recognize[s] the sacrifices of the coalition forces in helping the people of Iraq."[103] Nevertheless, the Iraqis, despite the US willingness to help, are determined to govern, rule, and own Iraq, because "this is our country."[104] In a nutshell, Minister Zebari forwards an image of an Iraq torn between two competing visions that invites, if not legitimizes, the US occupation of the country. On the one hand is the vision of a new, peaceful, and democratic Iraq that is part of the Arab world and has a representative government. On the other is a reign of terror and violence and obstruction of the electoral process under the pretext of resistance. The foreign troops, having liberated Iraq from Saddam's rule, help the bearers of the first vision to deliver a new Iraq, and their early withdrawal carries the threat of civil war.[105]

On the new Iraq's list of foreign policy objectives, two often appear to be constant guidelines in the foreign minister's speeches and interviews, namely sovereignty and economic reconstruction. The first foreign policy objective, "to ensure Iraq's independence, regain power and sovereignty," was mentioned in his speech at the ceremony of transfer of sovereignty.[106] That foreign policy is devised as a tool for the creation, rather than a manifestation of sovereignty, can be understood from the foreign minister's instrumentalization of the concepts of 'international legitimacy'

and 'internal legitimacy.' With UN Security Council Resolution 1546, that Zebari was instrumental in shaping, the international community departed from all previous UN resolutions legitimating the occupation of Iraq and recognized the interim government as the legitimate representative of the Iraqi people. This 'recognition' of the sovereignty of the interim Iraqi government merely removed the label of 'occupation' and replaced it with the label of 'international legitimacy.' The latter was intended, in turn, to create internal legitimacy for the interim government in the minds of the Iraqi people, especially those elements carrying arms against the government under the pretext of resisting US occupation and the US-installed government. It was in this fashion that diplomacy became instrumental in bequeathing sovereignty and legitimacy on the new government of Iraq.[107] After all, it was the foreign minister's personal opinion that the legitimacy of the new government was not an Iraqi issue; "legitimacy is created more here in Washington than back in Iraq." For legitimacy has many sources, and is not acquired through elections alone.[108]

However, the mere existence of foreign troops, even after the removal of the occupation label from the military helmets, must be viewed as problematic from the prism of legitimacy. To get around this problem, the foreign minister opines that Iraqis, just like other Arabs, refuse the presence of foreign troops on their soil, but the legacy of "Saddam and his crimes" has rendered inevitable the existence of foreign troops.[109] Like all dictatorships, when the head is removed, the whole system collapses, creating a power vacuum that needs to be filled.[110] The existence of foreign troops is thus "an Iraqi need more than an American or a coalition need" and an alternative to more catastrophic scenarios arising from a power vacuum ensued by a premature withdrawal, such as the disintegration of Iraq, the rise to power of a junior Saddam, reigning chaos and civil war,[111] or the launch of attacks against neighboring countries from Iraqi territory.[112]

The second foreign policy objective is economic reconstruction that seeks to build the government's real legitimacy after its symbolic projection through international recognition. Economic reconstruction is expected to help lay the foundations for a sustainable economy that encourages the private sector, capitalizes on Iraq's resources, and creates employment opportunities. The provision of basic services and coupling social welfare with subsidy reform as integral parts of the new economic system can raise public confidence in the government and hence its legitimacy.[113] Donor conferences offer the most suitable occasions for Iraqi diplomacy to make a

case for the need for foreign aid to support Iraq's economic reconstruction efforts before the international community. Despite its wealth, Iraq's economy and infrastructure were devastated by mismanagement and long years of economic sanctions. The previous regime's disincentives for initiative resulted in Iraq's lagging behind even in vital sectors such as gas and oil as well as a brain drain of the country's technical experts. A serious engagement by the international community could enable Iraq to eliminate poverty and hunger, reintroduce primary education for children, reduce child mortality, and combat endemic diseases.[114] Accordingly, the Iraqi government welcomes the engagement of donor countries and their coordination with UN activities through the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq. It also urges them to accelerate the implementation of commitments made in previous donor conferences at Madrid, Brussels, and Amman, and supports the Secretary General's call to provide $107 million required for elections.[115] Iraq's government also requests the international community to relieve its economy of the burden of debt reparations and compensation claims.[116]

Embodying Iraq's self-image and foreign policy objectives is the dual strategy devised by Minister Zebari and easily traceable in his speeches and interviews. The first aspect of the Iraqi foreign policy strategy is positioning the new Iraq as one of the most crucial fronts in the US 'global war on terror.' In the minister's view, "Iraq stands alongside New York, attacked on September 2001, Madrid, Beslan, London and Sharm al-Sheikh," as "the battle being fought in Iraq is not ours alone, but a fight to protect the freedoms of the rest of the civilized world."[117] Global terrorism, the enemy of the US incarnated in Iraq by "foreign fighters," "remnants of the former regime," and "vengeful religious extremists," "who have no agenda for Iraq or the region," seeks, through "a deadly cycle of violence and terror," to prevent democratic ideals from taking root in Iraq.[118] The creation of conditions that allow Iraqis to choose the "path of freedom, values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law via the ballot box," values that supposedly underlie the new regime in Baghdad, represent the greatest blow to the lost cause of terrorists and their nihilistic message.[119] It could be argued that, in Zebari's understanding, there is a trade-off between the right of the US-led forces to protect themselves and accomplish their mission on one hand, and the sovereignty of the Iraqi government on the other. The latter's opinion about the future presence of these forces as well as offensive military operations expected to have serious political and security effects "should be listened to and followed."[120]

The second aspect of Iraqi foreign policy strategy reflects the complex position the new Iraq found itself shortly after its birth. By removing the Baathist regime in Iraq and the Taliban in Afghanistan, the US intervention had the unintended consequence of lifting all constraints on Iran's expansion in the region to fill the power vacuum created in the wake of the Arab regional system's disintegration. A gap was therefore opened up between the global and regional balances of power; the US might stand on top of the global order, but Iran as a major regional power could defy its hegemony in this part of the world. Bridging this gap by playing a mediatory role between the US and Iran, and at times playing one against the other, has given Baghdad room for maneuver and a degree of independence that counterbalances its self-positioning in the US global strategy. The intense efforts of the Iraqi foreign minister to arrange for sideline meetings between US and Iranian envoys at two regional conferences on Iraq in Baghdad (March 2007) and Sharm al-Sheikh (May 2007), and direct US–Iran talks for the first time in three decades at the Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki's office in Baghdad in May 2007, constituted an integral part of the intermediary role. By reducing US–Iran tensions played out in Iraq, this mediation seeks to create common cause and a shared interest for Washington and Tehran to back the new Iraq. This logic was betokened in al-Maliki's opening statement at the direct US–Iran meeting, which emphasized that Iraq should turn neither into a base for terrorist organizations, nor into a launching ground for US forces to threaten any neighboring country.[121]

Foreign Policy Behavior

In this section, the foreign policy behavior of the new Iraq will be analyzed at the global and regional levels. On the global level, the analysis includes Iraq's relations with the US and the European Union countries. On the regional level, it deals with Iraq's policy toward Iran, Turkey, and its Arab neighbors.

The Global Level

Relations with the United States

After the invasion of Iraq and installation of a new political regime, the US, with almost 150,000 soldiers tethered the fate of the country to its foreign policy. Little wonder, the US holds the upper hand in the relation

between both countries. But four years after the invasion, Iraq became more a matter of local politics than international politics to the US. It is, therefore, indispensable to come to grips with the 'Iraq syndrome' as it refers to the climate that engulfs US–Iraq relations.

The Iraq syndrome is the quick and dramatic erosion of public support for the war, after broad enthusiasm at the outset, which developed into a realization that the war was a mistake with a strong aversion toward such ventures in the future. According to polls in August 2005, only 36 percent of Americans were in support of staying in Iraq, while 61 percent were in support of withdrawing. It was claimed that the Iraq syndrome would continue to impact US foreign policy even after withdrawal from Iraq. The US attitude toward Iran and North Korea, Iraq's fellow members in the 'axis of evil,' was pinpointed by Mueller, who coined the term, as litmus test for the emergence of the Iraq syndrome.[122] The subdued language of Bush administration officials against North Korea and the successive meetings between US and Iranian ambassadors gave credit to Mueller's claim.

It was against this backdrop that in November 2005 the National Security Council released the *National Strategy for Victory in Iraq*, whose main purpose was to define and set criteria for what the Bush administration considered 'victory.' It argued that ultimate victory in Iraq, "as the central front in the global war on terror," will not be marked by a "single particular event" like enemy surrender, but "will be achieved in stages."[123] Yet because the criteria for progress in the short, medium, and longer terms lacked specificity and measurability, the strategy had to dispense with a time frame and a ceiling for troop levels in the clearest terms, stating that "[n]o war has ever been won on a timetable—and neither will this one," and "[c]oalition troop levels . . . will increase where necessary to defeat the enemy or provide additional security."[124] An unwillingness to commit to a definite end, in the administration's language, to "stay the course," is likely to be a continuing feature of the Iraq policy of the Bush administration in its remaining years.

In the final days of 2006, it became clear that the year had been "tragically and inescapably, a bad one in Iraq." Secretary of Defense Gates confirmed that "we aren't winning," but he did not go as far as Colin Powell to assert that "we are actually losing." Even former Secretary Rumsfeld recognized the deterioration and put forward a laundry list of options to salvage the situation in Iraq.[125] In contrast to the late recognition of the graveness of the military situation, the financial burden of the war made itself felt very early with direct costs at $77.3 billion in 2004, $87.3 billion

in 2005, and $100.4 billion in 2006. It was estimated that staying in Iraq another four years would cost at least $1 trillion.[126]

Given this situation, all sides were looking to the report of the Iraq Study Group (ISG) appointed by the US Congress on March 15, 2006 and co-chaired by ex-Representative Lee Hamilton and former Secretary of State James Baker. Like most commissions created after a tragedy, the ISG tried not just to solve a problem but to fill a political vacuum. Neither the administration nor the Democrats succeeded in addressing the most difficult political questions about Iraq, namely, "What are U.S. interests in Iraq, and how many more American lives and taxpayer dollars will we risk to protect these interests?"[127] It was debated even between both ISG co-chairs, Baker and Hamilton, whether President Bush was actually following the report's recommendations. What is not debatable, however, is that the Baker-Hamilton report's recommendations will, for the foreseeable future, remain a credible benchmark for evaluating the Iraq policy of Bush as well as of the coming administration.

Even George W. Bush admitted in public that the situation in Iraq was unacceptable to the American people, that there was an ongoing vicious cycle of sectarian violence, that the responsibility for policy mistakes rested with him, and that above all a change of strategy was needed. His Address to the Nation on January 10, 2007 summed up elements of the new strategy that was claimed to have benefited from the "thoughtful recommendations of the Iraq Study Group." The new strategy, known later as 'the surge,' was based on a simple, and even reductive, logic that reproduced the premises of the November 2005 National Strategy for Victory in Iraq. Failure in Iraq would be disastrous to the US, as it would create chaos in the region and threaten the security of the American people. Since 80 percent of sectarian violence was concentrated in Baghdad, securing the capital would stabilize the whole country. But the lack of a sufficient number of troops to control the cleared neighborhoods had crippled past efforts to secure Baghdad. Thus, the new strategy commited 20,000 additional American troops to be deployed to Baghdad.[128]

At the time, the new strategy was criticized as offering much less than what the rhetoric of 'burden of freedom,' 'hope of liberty,' and 'decisive ideological struggle' had suggested. Two main features of the plan are worthy of mention: a tactical shift in fighting the insurgency toward controlling cleared neighborhoods and disarming Shi'a militias, and confrontation with Iran and Syria as against the dialogue approach suggested by the

ISG.[129] Six months later, on June 13, 2007, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid sent a letter to President Bush calling on him to reconsider his Iraq policy and endorse congressional proposals to bring the war to a responsible end. In their view, "this so-called surge" that they understood as no more than a military escalation had failed and had achieved little toward curbing violence or fostering political reconciliation. "The unsettling reality is that instances of violence against Iraqis remain high and attacks on U.S. forces have increased. In fact, the last two months of the war were the deadliest to date for U.S. troops."[130]

In a small gathering at the Council on Foreign Relations on June 14, 2007, Hoshyar Zebari, warned that "a premature withdrawal would make Iraq an open farm for our neighbors." No Iraqi wanted US troops to stay indefinitely, he added, but even after the troops left the Iraqi government would consider " some long term arrangement between Iraq and the United States beyond this regular extension of the mandate,"[131] that is, a 'status of forces agreement.'

Relations with European Union Countries

Right from the start, the war on Iraq caused a bitter split within the EU. The pro-US bloc led by the UK with Italy and Spain and supportive of military action stood in confrontation with the German–French bloc, opposed to the US policy.[132] As Iraq grew to be a sensitive issue for the US relationship with the EU, the degree of the latter's involvement in Iraq, in terms of establishing relations and committing resources, hinged upon the readiness of the US to establish a multilateral framework for Iraq.[133] Three main objectives underpin EU engagement in Iraq: the development of a stable democratic system; the establishment of an open market economy; and the integration of Iraq in the regional and international systems. The EU represents the second largest trade partner of Iraq after Turkey, supplying Iraq with 22 percent of its imports.[134] Opting for a multilateral approach to reconstruction assistance, the European Commission provided €718.5 million for restarting the basic services of water, electricity, sewage. In fact, EU countries are the main donors to the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq, with 58 percent of total donor deposits.[135]

Under Chancellor Merkel, German foreign policy toward Iraq seeks to overcome the previous German government's antiwar legacy expressed in the verbal duel between Joschka Fischer, the then German foreign minister, and former US defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld at the thirty-ninth

Munich Conference on Security Policy in February 2003. German–Iraqi relations focus on three main domains: security affairs, political process, and economic support. With the aim of supporting Iraqi security forces, Germany initiated training programs for Iraqi police forces. From March to November 2004, twelve experts from the German Federal Criminal Police Office trained twelve Iraqi security officers in the United Arab Emirates. And from end January to March 2005, ten *Bundeskriminalamt* experts administered with UAE personnel a training program for thirty Iraqi bodyguards. Both the Federal Ministry of Interior and the Federal Ministry of Justice designed courses to educate seven hundred high-ranking officials from the criminal police and justice ministry of Iraq. In coordination with NATO, the German armed forces offers inter-European air transport for Iraqi soldiers receiving training in NATO schools in Germany as well as other European countries.[136]

As the new constitution was being written, the Iraqi government requested the German government to support the nascent political process in Iraq. The German foreign ministry assisted in election monitoring by supporting the activities of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, in building a network of Iraqi NGOs. To bolster civil society organizations in Iraq, Friedrich Ebert sponsored training seminars in Jordan and Germany. In parellel, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation provided legal advice for Iraqi experts and decision makers during the constitution-writing process. The *Deutsche Welle* broadcasting network provided intensive training for six Iraqi journalists in Berlin and Bonn. Finally, the German government was an early proponent of substantial debt relief in order to enable Iraq to build a free state and healthy economy. Of the 80 percent debt relief for Iraq agreed upon by the Paris Club members, Germany's share is €4.4 billion. The debt settlement agreement was signed on December 22, 2005 in Berlin. German companies are already participating in the reconstruction efforts in Iraq, either continuing prewar projects or obtaining new contracts. In 2005, German exports to Iraq, the most important of which consisted of machines, spare parts, and electronic devices, reached about €280 million. To enable the Iraqi government to create more jobs, the German government decided to contribute €8.2 million for the *International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq*.[137]

In the context of conflicting French-American approaches to war from Vietnam to Kosovo, France's outright opposition to the use of military force and endorsement of a UN inspection regime was perceived in Washington

as an attempt to systematically obstruct US policy.[138] Not only did the Bush administration take its French-bashing polemics to the public realm, but the clash on Iraq policy led to Washington's reevaluation of its strategic relationship with Paris.[139] After the conclusion of the war, France made a bid to restore normal relations with the US by cooperating with it on three main issues: international terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and Iraq's reconstruction. After all, as Erwin Wall wrote, "France disapproved of the invasion, but no one can seriously want the United States to fail in the occupation."[140]

Fully aware of the benefits of the French postwar conciliatory attitude, foreign minister Zebari requested from his French counterpart, Michel Barnier, the resumption of diplomatic relations previously severed by the Baathist regime in 1990. On July 12, 2004, a joint statement simultaneously issued in Baghdad and Paris announced the reestablishment of full diplomatic relations.[141] The first visit of the new Iraq's foreign minister to France was evidence of the development of postwar Iraqi–French relations. Zebari elaborated on the importance of European and French support for the political process and urged the French senate speaker to establish bilateral relations with the Iraqi parliament in order to allow it to benefit from French legal and political expertise.[142]

Cooperation between the two countries has progressed in institutional, academic, and cultural arenas. France initiated projects related to the health sector, like the rehabilitation of hospital services and infrastructure in Iraq as well as the installation of a water treatment station at Sadr City. Eighty-two Iraqi students holding PhD scholarships, 326 interns, and about ninety-five prominent persons from various fields were invited by France to receive education and training. A program was set up to rehabilitate twenty schools in Iraq as well as raise the level of French language teaching.[143] As a sign of its contribution to Iraq's reconstruction, the French government concluded with Iraq on December 21, 2005 a bilateral agreement providing for the cancellation of 80 percent of Iraq's public debt to France, which amounted to €4 billion.[144]

Right from start, the British Prime Minister Tony Blair was outspokenly supportive of the US policy toward Iraq. Together with Spain and Italy he opposed the German-French line within the European Union. His "Clear Ultimatum to Saddam" speech revealed that his Iraq policy was strongly related to and determined by two other issues: strengthening the transatlantic alliance, and realizing a vision of the Middle East that guaranteed the security of Israel.[145] While his "Vision for Iraq and the Iraqi People" clearly

affirmed that the UK's military presence in Iraq would be temporary, it left no doubt that its engagement in Iraq "[would] be for the long term."[146] A total of 7,200 soldiers represented Britain's contribution to the US-led multinational forces. However, after serving for four years in southern Iraq, three thousand British troops pulled out of Iraq in May 2007.

Even before the transfer of sovereignty, Minister Zebari was bent on strengthening the relationship between the nascent regime in Baghdad and the British government. On an official visit to the UK in April 2004, he met the chairman and members of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, held talks with the minister of state for the Middle East, and addressed an audience at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. Briefings for foreign ambassadors as well as an address to the leaders of the Muslim community in London were also included in the minister's trip schedule.[147] The 2005 and 2006 press releases of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs reveal that the frequent reception of British ambassadors and delegations from the Foreign Office's Iraq Department and House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee by Zebari as well as his correspondence and meetings with the British foreign ministers focused on one issue, namely the political process, encompassing the constitution, elections, cabinet formation, and the security situation.

This could be explained in the light of the fact that British think tanks and consulting companies, like PA Consulting, Adam Smith International, and Tim Bell, have played a leading role in the creation of state institutions in Iraq. British advisors work on the most basic level to reorder Iraqi government operations and restructure the ministries argued to be integral to promoting the UK's goal of a privatization-oriented government structure that could move Iraq's economy and society in a business-friendly direction. After all, a total of sixty-one British companies were identified as benefiting from £1.1 billion of contracts and investments in Iraq.[148] Out of these mutual interests came Zebari's plea for the new British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, not to initiate any policy changes with regard to Iraq and to "continue very much the same policies of Tony Blair."[149]

The Regional Level

Relations with Iran

Under the current circumstances, the diverse Iranian interests in the region account for the complexity of its foreign policy objectives in Iraq.

Iran finds itself facing a double paradox. First, although the US placed Iran in its 'axis of evil' and its intervention in Iraq signalled that Iran could be next, Iran was the greatest beneficiary of the US war against Iraq. Iran's influence in Iraq is greater than at any time in the past in terms of official visits, negotiations, agreements, investments, and intelligence operations.[150] Second, though Iran has every reason to fear the repercussions of US failure in Iraq (chaos and disorder, civil war drawing in regional neighbors, or partition permitting Kurdish independence), the success of the US in creating a pro-Western Iraqi government with good relations with Israel, thereby increasing Iran's isolation in the region definitely cannot be perceived in Tehran as a bright prospect either. As a friendly Shi'a-dominated government in Baghdad is the best option for Tehran at the moment, Iranian and US interests converge on supporting the status quo. However, the nature of future Iranian involvement in Iraq, whether support or sabotage,will depend to a great extent on the US attitude toward Iran and the outcome of the nuclear issue.

Picking up on the previous line, Iraqi foreign policy attempts to seize the momentary Iranian support for the status quo to consolidate the Iraqi government's sovereignty and to benefit from Iran's relations with various Iraqi groups to stabilize the situation in the country. By playing the role of a mediator between the US and Iran, Iraq not only seeks to open up for itself a limited leeway for action, but also, most importantly, to balance the overwhelming US hard power presence, with the soft power of historical, cultural, and economic relations with Iran. The first step on this road was a five-day visit in April 2005 to Tehran by a delegation from the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs to sign two memoranda on visits to the holy shrines and consular facilitation. An institutional framework for Iraqi–Iranian relations was laid down through an agreement on the formation of four specialized committees expected to meet every six months to handle visitors' problems and consular affairs. The Iraqi delegation concluded its trip with a visit to holy Rida Shrine in the city of Mashhad.[151]

Dr. Kamal Kharazi, the Iranian foreign minister, who was received in Baghdad in May 2005, was the first minister to arrive in Iraq from the country's Arab and Muslim neighbors. He met with key figures of the Iraqi political elite, President Talabani, Vice President Abdel Mahdi, Foreign Minister Zebari, Interior Minister Solagh, and SCIRI's chairman al-Hakim. The reactivation of the Joint Ministerial Committee dealing with consular measures, holy shrines visits, border issues, and security

cooperation, and holding regular meetings between the two ministers were the main topics on the agenda. "The visit will open very wide prospects for cooperation between the two countries and we are confident that the future is for us," affirmed Hoshyar Zebari to his Iranian guest.[152]

But the breakthrough in relations with Iran came in July 2005 with the three-day visit of the then-Prime Minister, Ibrahim al-Jafari, to Tehran, heading a large delegation composed of ministers for foreign affairs, defense, oil, electricity, tourism, communication, trade, immigration, and women's affairs. In line with his affirmation to the Iranian hosts of the Iraqi government's readiness for cooperation in various fields, an agreement was reached on the formation of several joint committees for energy, security, water resources, commerce, and religious tourism. The visit was regarded by the Iraqi foreign ministry as ushering in a new era of productive cooperation between both countries.[153]

Relations with Turkey

Iraq became the center of gravity for US–Turkey relations, whose deterioration represents the "great underreported story of the Iraq war."[154] With a bloody history of struggle against the Kurds residing inside its borders, Turkey views Iraq mainly through the Kurdish lens, and an almost exclusive concern with Turkish territorial integrity. Furthermore, reaching a settlement with the Kurds is one among other criteria set by the EU for Turkey's accession, as well as a matter that the Islam-friendly ruling party of Justice and Development and the secular-oriented military have clashed over.

From this perspective, Turkey's interests in Iraq could be reduced to two primary concerns: denying any Kurdish insurgent group, especially the Marxist PKK, a safe haven in northern Iraq; and minimizing the contagion effect of the political activities of Iraqi Kurds on their brethren in Turkey.[155] Both concerns forced Turkey to take several problematic stances that showed heightened sensitivity to the Kurdish question. After 1991 and the containment of Iraq, successive Turkish governments continued to cooperate with Saddam Hussein on Kurdish insurgent groups. In March 2003, the Turkish parliament turned down a request to allow US troops on Turkish soil and thus forced the US to abandon its plans of a second front in the war on Iraq. Shortly after the end of the war, Turkish special forces were dispatched twice to northern Iraq (in April and June 2003), but were detained and interrogated by US troops in what the

Turkish Foreign Minister Abdallah Gul described as a "sad incident which should have never occurred between two allies."[156]

The convergence and divergence between the US and Turkey on Iraq will reflect themselves on the relations between Iraq and Turkey. Supporting the Iraqi government represents a point of convergence between the US and Turkey. Since an unstable Iraq has the potential to undermine US objectives and spread instability to Turkey, the creation of a democratic, stable, and unified Iraq represents a shared long-term interest of both countries.[157] The first visit by the Iraqi president following the transfer of sovereignty was to Turkey in August 2004. On the invitation of the Turkish government, former president Ghazi al-Yawar held talks in Ankara with the Turkish president, prime minister, and foreign minister on Turkey's participation in reconstruction and the restoration of full diplomatic relations.[158] Ex-prime minister Jafari's visit to Turkey in May 2005 accompanied by ministers of finance, oil, trade, industry, and electricity aimed to open new horizons for relations between both countries as well as securing Turkey's support for the unity, integrity, and stability of the new Iraq.[159] Economic and trade cooperation was the main theme of talks between the Iraqi foreign minister and Turkish officials during the former's visit to Turkey in July 2006. In all, two memoranda were signed to promote trade, absorb the expansion of economic ties, and raise the volume of imports and exports to serve the policy objectives of both countries.[160]

However, the question of how to deal with Kurdish aspirations was a major area of divergence between the US and Turkey. Ankara has sought to contain as much as possible the political activities of Iraqi Kurds for fear of the contagion effect, and views with suspicion the federal arrangements in Iraq that allow for a special status for the regional government of Iraqi Kurdistan. By contrast, Washington's increased reliance on the Kurds, a result of Turkey's noncooperation on the second front, as well as its engagement of Kurdish units to maintain order in the north might not have gone as far as supporting Kurdish independence, but have led it to favor Kurdish autonomy. Under these conditions, the PKK, with four thousand fighters located in Iraq, stepped up its attacks and killed six hundred Turks in 2006 alone.[161] In a press conference on July 9, 2007, the Iraqi foreign minister announced that Turkey had amassed 140,000 troops on the northern borders of Iraq. Zebari's recognition of the legitimacy of Turkish security concerns with regard to Kurdish rebels was coupled with

his opposition to military interference and violation of Iraqi sovereignty.[162] As tensions grew and the Turkish army bombed border villages, an Iraqi government spokesman expressed his regret, called for ceasefire and a return to dialogue, and still insisted that "Iraq want[ed] good relations with Turkey."[163]

Relations with Arab Neighbors

Of all Iraq's foreign relations, relations with neighboring Arab countries have been the most dissatisfying to Iraqi officials. A recent evaluation by Hoshyar Zebari of these relations betrayed that "most of our neighbors, with the exception of Kuwait have not been helpful at all to . . . our effort . . . to stabilize the situation or to help our key ally, the United States also . . . to get out of this difficulty."[164]

The flow of refugees into Syria remains unspoken of in comparison to the flow of insurgents and arms across Syria's borders to Iraq that became a divisive issue between Syria and the new Iraq. With estimates of their total number ranging between 1.2 and 1.4 million, at a rate of 40,000 refugees per month, Iraqi refugees weigh to a breaking point on Syria's already worn out infrastructure and overburdened public services.[165] The Iraqi foreign minister chose, however, to focus his criticism of the Syrian government on its noncooperation on the flow of foreign fighters into Iraq.[166] He attributed the Syrian attitude to two factors: its fear, as an authoritarian regime, of the values of democracy taking root in a neighboring country, and the misconception of the Syrian government that a democratic Iraq would threaten its national interests.[167] The breakthrough came with the Syrian foreign minister Walid al-Moallem's visit to Baghdad in November 2006. It resulted in the restoration of diplomatic relations after twenty-four years and in Syria's pledge to cooperate on the issues of border control and security.[168] However, the Iraqi foreign minister expressed to the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington his dissatisfaction with the Syrian government about border control, media agitation, and Baath party activities.[169]

The Saudi Shi'a community, an underrepresented and discriminated-against majority in the oil-producing Eastern Provinces, represents a major source of alarm to the Saudi government. It is a whiteboard for the demonstration effect of both sectarian violence and Shi'a rule in Iraq, as well as a hotbeds for Iranian agents, in case Riyadh sought to blunt Iranian influence in Iraq by infiltrating Iran's Arab Sunni minority. This explains

the Saudi government's ambivalent attitude toward US policy in Iraq. On the one hand, it supports the success of the US objective of restoring order for fear of the spillover of sectarian tensions and violence. On the other, it has criticized the US-engineered political process in Iraq for "handing over the country to Iran," in the words of the Saudi foreign minister.[170] In reply, Iraq's interior minister, Bayan Jabr, disparaged the Saudi foreign minister as a "Bedouin on a camel" who wanted to give lessons to Iraq "the cradle of civilization."[171] Despite Zebari's attempt to dismiss Jabr's comments as "regrettable and inappropriate," this verbal clash served as the worst start imaginable for relations between the two countries. In an opening speech to the annual Arab summit in Riyadh in March 2007, King Abdullah described the situation in Iraq as "an illegitimate foreign occupation."[172] Two months later, he declined twice to meet Iraq's prime minister, al-Maliki, at the Sharm al-Sheikh ministerial conference.[173]

With the disappearance of the Turkish front, Jordan took on a new prominence during the invasion of Iraq. Jordan's interests in Iraq fall under the mixed concerns of security and economy. The potential development of Iraq's sectarian strife into a full-blow civil war that could draw in regional forces as well as the breaking apart of Iraq along ethnosectarian lines represent serious threats to Jordan's security.[174] Not less of threat is a Shi'a-dominated government that becomes an integral part of a 'Shi'a crescent' extending from Iran to southern Lebanon, strangling Jordan by thwarting its efforts to revive the Arab–Israeli peace process and putting at peril its strategic partnership with Israel. The suspension of the daily supply of 98,000 below-market-price barrels of oil from Iraq that raised gas, petrol, and home heating oil prices by 43 percent put a heavy burden on Jordan's dependent economy.[175] An influx of Iraqi refugees estimated to be from 700,000 to one million, which raised the population of Jordan by 15 percent, could only exacerbate the situation.[176]

Iraq's relations with Jordan enjoyed the best start possible with the latter being the first Arab government to establish an embassy and send an ambassador to Baghdad.[177] As to military cooperation, fifty thousand Iraqi police and seven thousand special operations forces received professional training in US-funded army and police facilities in Jordan. In December 2006, a protocol signed by the two countries gave rise to three committees to facilitate cooperation on counterterrorism, extradition requests, and border control.[178] However, the dramatic Hilla bombing that was perpetrated by a Jordanian and caused the death of 120 Iraqis provoked

a confidence crisis between Baghdad and Amman. The spokesman of interim Prime Minister Jafari expressed his sorrow that ex-Baathist and key terrorists were operating from Jordan. The assault on the Jordanian embassy by demonstrators in Baghdad followed by a mutual withdrawal of ambassadors soured relations between the two countries. But quite remarkably, core aspects of the relationship—trade, transport, security, and training—were unaffected by the Hilla incident. Later on, an exchange of visits between Iraqi and Jordanian officials healed some of the wounds, even though a sense of distrust precipitated.[179]

Conclusion

This chapter has been trying all along to pick up on Kissinger's problematic of the need for foreign policy in the context of Iraq at a very critical juncture of its history. Not only is the state collapse among the realities to be accepted,[180] but also the breakdown of social cohesion puts in question the existence of the country itself. The realities of post-Saddam Iraq forced the analysis in a direction other than that of Ahmad[181] and Tripp,[182] though it is not totally dissimilar to theirs. While both authors examined the effect of internal and external constraints on Iraq's foreign policy through the agency of the Iraqi state (leadership versus survival), what was at stake here was how post-Saddam Iraq's foreign policy has sought to circumvent internal and external constraints in order to reestablish the Iraqi state as an internal apparatus as well as an international actor.

To grasp such role of foreign policy in the new Iraq, Eric Voegelin's concept of cosmion is of utmost importance. The cosmion is a world of order, an analogue of the cosmos, whose main purpose is to create for man a shelter that gives his life a semblance of meaning. The cosmion depends, for its creation and maintenance against internal and external enemies, upon the application of violence as well as the evocation of language.[183] Put it differently, establishing a cosmion or political order in Iraq requires accordingly a sword and a word.

As for the 'sword' of the Iraqi government, a report of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigation of the US House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services reveals that Iraqi police are ineffective and its organization riddled with corruption and sectarian influence.[184] Not much better are Iraqi armed forces that rely heavily on the coalition for logistics, transportation, fire support facilities, and equipment and are still far from becoming a national force due to sectarian, ethnic, and cultural

factors.[185] In sum, Iraqi security forces are "not yet ready to take full responsibility for their nation's security."[186] The government in Iraq does not possess a real sword but leans on a borrowed sword that it holds no grip on.

With no 'sword' of its own, the government in Iraq is left only with the 'word' to build the cosmion; hence the indispensability of foreign policy for the survival of the Iraqi state. With the aim of spreading the cosmion-building word, three types of actions that appear to have no practical consequences on the ground have been taken by the government in Iraq. First, constructing a word-formulating apparatus: in 2005, the Foreign Service Institute sent 385 Iraqis for thirty-six training courses in several countries across the world.[187] Moreover, a sum of 10.5 billion dinars was allocated for the reconstruction of the eleven-storey building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[188] Second, opening up word-disseminating outlets: on the one hand, the foreign minister holds meetings with heads of foreign diplomatic missions in Baghdad as well as with heads of Iraqi diplomatic missions abroad as part of the ministry's "diplomatic campaign" to win the government in Iraq "Arab and Islamic legitimacy."[189] On the other, the foreign minister is very keen to meet with editors-in-chief of Iraqi newspapers, managers of Iraqi and Arab satellite channels, and members of the Iraqi journalists union to affirm the ministry's "unlimited backing" of the Iraqi press in its "noble task" of "conveying facts to the people and propagating authentic concepts."[190] Third, pursuing petty symbolic gains: among their other activities Iraqi ambassadors devote efforts to cultural activities, like inaugurating an Iraqi art exhibition or a virtual science library abroad. Gaining a position in a UN body, chairing a meeting of a group of countries, or just representing Iraq in a conference or a workshop is portrayed as a world interest in enhancing diplomatic relations with Iraq and a sign of the country reclaiming its position in the international community.

In this context, the word makes up for the absence of the sword in creating the cosmion; foreign policy becomes a tool for the creation of sovereignty, not its manifestation, as suggested by Zebari's 'outside-in' notion of legitimacy. The international community's recognition of the new regime in Baghdad, a goal of Iraqi foreign policy, could tear off the label of foreign occupation and make the regime acceptable to those of its citizens who perceived it as a creation of the occupation. Thus, foreign policy bequeaths internal legitimacy on the government and enables the cosmion to be created in Iraq.

Notes

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7

Foreign Policy as a Strategic National Asset: The Case of Jordan

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The somewhat precarious and vulnerable nature of the Jordanian state is often illustrated by referring to Winston Churchill's boast that he created it by a stroke of his pen on a Sunday afternoon in 1921. While Churchill marked the borders, it was up to the new Hashemite rulers to bond with the local inhabitants and to create a nation-state.[1] Their new country did not have much to offer in terms of material and human resources. Its central location in the context of the Arab–Israeli conflict however, allowed the Hashemite regime to solicit significant economic, political, and military external support.

Foreign policy became a major national resource, allowing the Hashemite regime to provide its population with a basic degree of the services required of a Middle Eastern state in the twentieth century, and to protect its sovereignty during times of regional and domestic turbulence. In view of its central importance, decision making regarding foreign policy continues to be the king's prerogative. Jordan's royal family, are in effect, also its most effective and active ambassadors.

King Abdullah I established the foundations of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, but it fell to his grandson King Hussein—who ruled from his coronation in 1953 until his demise in 1999—to play the role of nation and state builder. His success was recognized on his death, when he was widely mourned by Jordanians as the 'father' of their nation, as well as by over fifty heads of state from all over the world who arrived in Amman to pay him tribute in what was described as "one of the greatest events in modern Middle East history."[2]

"Husseinism," as his style of governance was described, took into account the role of domestic determinants in shaping foreign policy, but also went a step further by using regional and extraregional policies to consolidate and legitimize the regime, thereby ensuring its survival.[3]

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, a time of increasing regional and domestic instability, with civil wars looming in both Iraq and the Palestinian Territories, the survival of the Jordanian state was as much at stake as the survival of the regime. Many wondered if Abdullah II, who had lacked political experience before ascending the throne, would be able to exhibit the skill and flexibility of his father, or if on his watch Jordan would become relegated to the status of "a fairly civilized, very friendly and economically irrelevant patch of sand somewhere between Israel and Saudi Arabia."[4]

Domestic Environment

Geography

The absence of natural barriers between Jordan and its much stronger neighbors, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Israel, as well as its poverty in terms of natural resources—particularly oil and water—form the physical foundations of its vulnerability. The need to obtain steady supplies of oil at preferential prices to meet the local demand for cheap fuel plays an important role in guiding Jordan's regional alliances.[5] Its lack of sufficient water resources is also a grave concern as Jordan is one of the most water-scarce countries in the world.[6]

Water shortage is a feature of life throughout the country as a result of a growing population and increased urbanization. It is an impediment to the drive for industrialization, and leaves Jordan dependant on importing much of its domestic food requirements. Over 85 percent of its area is desert and steppe, and only a small section in the northwest receives adequate supplies of rain to support agriculture.

The River Jordan, the main source of water, crosses the borders of Lebanon, Syria, Israel, and the occupied West Bank. The allocation of its waters has been the focus of regional conflict for decades, and Jordanian officials repeatedly object to what they consider unfair use of the river's waters by both Israel and Syria.[7]

The country's central location is, on the other hand, an asset in terms of its potential to serve as a major transport hub for trade and tourism

in the region. The government is actively seeking to develop this potential by improving the transportation infrastructure, creating new railway tracks linking different parts of the country and increasing the airport's capacity to handle a larger volume in cargo as well as tourists.[8]

Jordan's sole port, Aqaba, which lies in the south on the Red Sea, plays a central role in these development plans. The coastline originally only extended for nine kilometers, but in view of its importance in economic terms, Jordan negotiated an agreement with Saudi Arabia to extend it to twenty-four kilometers.[9] Aqaba is an important route for transit trade, particularly into landlocked Iraq.

Population and Social Structure

Jordan has a predominantly young population, with a high literacy rate (91.3 percent). Nearly 70 percent of a population of approximately six million is under the age of twenty-nine, and almost forty thousand job seekers enter the labor market every year, which presents the government with a significant challenge in terms of providing employment.[10] This demographic profile has led the government to focus on developing its educational services in order to provide Jordan with a qualified and competitive working force, particularly in terms of information technology skills. It is estimated there are almost 457,000 Internet users in Jordan.[11]

Jordan's population is predominantly concentrated in urban areas and is largely Arab (98 percent) with Circassian and Armenian minorities, each accounting for 1 percent. The majority (92 percent) are Sunni Muslims, while 6 percent are Christians, mostly Greek Orthodox, and there is a small number of Shi'a Muslims.[12]

The most politically significant demographic division in Jordan is that between the original inhabitants of the Emirate of Transjordan, the 'East Bankers,' and the Jordanians of Palestinian or West Bank descent. The original inhabitants of the East Bank numbered less than 400,000 in 1948.[13] Significant numbers moved from the West Bank into Jordan as the result of the 1948 and 1967 conflicts, as well as the formal annexation by Jordan of the West Bank. By 1968, Palestinians outnumbered the original Jordanians 900,000 to 581,000.[14]

In 1989, King Hussein announced the severing of political and administrative ties between Jordan and the West Bank, as a means of insulating Jordan from the escalating Israeli– Palestinian violence associated with the first intifada. Hussein thereby established the first

foundations for a Jordanian identity that was distinct from the politics of the Palestinian cause.

Abdullah endorsed this distinction, making "Jordan First" the keynote of his policies in a bid to focus domestic political debate on issues of development and stability. The domestic ramifications of the Arab–Israeli conflict were not eliminated however. Jordan's foreign minister, Abdelelah al-Khatib, has pointed out that his country suffered the most as a result of this conflict, and that it continues to be impacted by its developments on a daily basis.

Palestinian-Jordanians vary in terms of their social and economic status. There is an economically and socially successful group, largely active in the business and professional sectors. A 1996 study by Jordan's University Center for Strategic Studies estimated that 82 percent of capital in Jordan at the time was controlled by citizens of Palestinian origin.[17] At the other end of the spectrum there are the Palestinians living in refugee camps, with low standards of living, little access to services, and an unemployment rate of 45 percent.[18]

East Bank Jordanians regard themselves as the foundation on which the Jordanian state was built. There has been an indigenous Arab population, maintaining an essentially tribal way of life there for millennia.[19] On coming to Jordan, Abdullah I actively sought to create links with the existing tribal social structure, based on a shared respect for traditional Arab values as well as ties of marriage and patronage. Positions in the army and the growing government bureaucracy became the principal instrument through which to give this population a vested interest in the survival of the Hashemite regime. This tradition was upheld during Hussein's reign, but the policies of economic liberalization implemented by King Abdullah II have posed a direct threat to this group's position within Jordanian society.

Economic Capability

When King Abdullah II ascended the throne, he inherited a national debt that was roughly the equivalent of 90 percent of Jordan's gross domestic product(GDP).[20] Simply servicing this debt places a severe burden on the economy and significantly hampers development projects. In the year 2000, Jordan spent more on servicing its debt than it did on education, and twice as much as it did on health care.[21] According to a USAID report, the total external debt service on a cash basis during the first ten months of 2005 alone amounted to $482 million. This situation leaves the

government's budget vulnerable to shifts in the exchange rate between the dollar, to which its currency is pegged, and the currencies of the countries to which the debt is owed, and this can quickly erode any progress made.[22]

The Jordanian budget deficit amounted to $320 million, or 4.5 percent of GDP in 2006, but the economy expanded by 6.2 percent, and exports rose by 18 percent that year. The rate of unemployment is high, estimated at between 12.5 percent and 17 percent. One hundred thousand jobs and a growth rate of 8 percent would be needed every year to lift the country out of economic stagnation.[23]

Abdullah has actively sought to reduce Jordan's foreign debt, succeeding in bringing it down to 82 percent of GDP in 2005, and to 72 percent by 2006.[24] His strategy has been to decrease dependency on foreign aid by increasing exports and foreign investment on the one hand, and cutting back on government spending by downsizing the bureaucracy and abolishing subsidies on the other. He has embarked on an extensive program of privatization, selling important government-owned concerns such as the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company, the world's sixth-biggest phosphate producer. The sale of 37 percent of the company's shares, which has a long term debt of over $39.4 million, raised comment, as they were sold well below the market price.[25]

One of the foundations of this new strategy has been the establishment of Qualified Industrial Zones, which numbered fourteen by 2005, from which manufacturers can export tariff and tax free to the US market by meeting precise rules of origin. These require that a minimum of 35 percent of exported goods must be composed of local content; 11.7 percent of this must be Jordanian, 7–8 percent must be Israeli, and the remainder can originate in Jordan, Israel, the West Bank or Gaza. Jordan's exports to the US rose from less than $20 million in 1999, to over $200 million by 2002. Under the free trade agreement which it signed with the US in 2001, tariffs between the two countries are to be phased out over the next ten years.[26]

This experiment has not had the positive impact on economic development that was hoped for, however. Nearly half of the workers in these zones are not Jordanian. Moreover, there are doubts that Jordan will be able to continue to fulfill its 11.7 percent quota in the future, and that this increase in exports will, in fact, be sustainable.

Another important component of the regime's strategy to attract foreign investment was the establishment of the Aqaba Special Economic

Zone Authority, which hopes to attract some $6 billion in investment, roughly half in tourism projects, 30 percent in transport, and 20 percent in industry. The single biggest property project in this area so far is a tourism development at a cost of $995.7 million, to be built by the Saudi Arabian construction firm Oger, in partnership with Seraya Aqaba, owned by Lebanon's Saad al-Hariri, who holds the exploitation rights.[27]

In September 2006, the CEO of the company in charge of developing Aqaba announced that Aqaba had already attracted more than $1.6 billion in investment from the Gulf states during the two preceding years. Total investments in the area came to $7 billion. In addition to functioning as a major transit port for trade into Iraq, Aqaba also saw an increase in the volume of trade passing through it as a result of the 2006 war in Lebanon.[28]

Jordan has a small but developing information and communications technology sector with a skilled workforce, many with experience abroad. Between 1999 and 2002, this sector expanded from $60 million to $167 million, and its exports grew by 350 percent. The growth of this sector was aided by a major reform program to remodel the educational system and introduce the necessary skills to allow Jordan to become a regional information technology hub. The $380 million "Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy" program was launched in July 2003, backed by a $120 million loan from the World Bank, and similar amounts pledged by agencies such as USAID, the European Investment Bank, Kuwait's Arab Fund and the Islamic Development Bank in Jeddah.[29]

The path of economic liberalization carried a high social price. In a public opinion poll released in September 2005, 87.5 percent of respondents felt that the differences between rich and poor had increased over the last ten years.[30] The King has openly admitted that gains in the economic sector have not equally benefited all Jordanians. He has responded to criticisms that pervasive corruption is partly responsible for this inequitable distribution of wealth by tackling this issue through legislation and by prosecuting a number of public officials implicated in illegal activities.

Military Capability

A survey of the most basic military statistics reveals Jordan's persisting vulnerability vis-à-vis its strong neighbors. For example, in 1989 Jordan's defense budget stood at $465.7 million, as compared to a budget of $6.37 billion for Israel, $2.49 billion for Syria and $12.87 billion for Iraq (1988

estimates).[31] Its active armed forces at the time numbered 85,250 compared to Israel's 141,000, Syria's 404,000 and Iraq's "million man army."[32]

Despite investing heavily in military spending, allocating between 8.2 percent and 8.9 percent of its GDP to this sector between 1998 and 2003,[33] Jordan's position vis-à-vis its neighbors did not visibly improve. In the year 2000 its armed forces had increased to 103,880, while Syria's stood at 316,000, Israel had an active military force of 172,500 and Iraq a force of 429,000. Whereas Jordan possessed 1,246 main battle tanks and 16 attack helicopters, Syria had 4,850 tanks and 87 helicopters, Israel had 3900 tanks and 133 helicopters.[34] It is estimated that Jordan spent $1.46 billion on its military in 2004.[35]

While Britain provided the initial support to create Jordan's army, known as the Arab Legion, the US has been Jordan's main military supplier since the 1950s. It significantly stepped up its support to Jordan's military forces following the civil war of 1970–1971 between the Jordanian army and PLO forces. Hussein was often critical of the US, however, for refusing to supply Jordan with air cover deemed necessary for its defense. The two countries maintained close military cooperation through a combined exercise program, and joint annual exercises.[36]

During 1995, the US used Jordan as a base for almost 1,200 personnel and thirty-four US F-15 and F-16 aircraft involved in enforcing the no-fly zone in southern Iraq. Jordan was officially designated a combat zone for US personnel on September 19, 2001, with secret bases housing US military and intelligence-gathering personnel. On January 30, 2003, Jordan granted the US blanket overflight rights, facilitating aircraft carrier strikes on Iraq from the eastern Mediterranean. By the beginning of Iraq's invasion, over five thousand US and coalition troops were stationed in Jordan.[37]

In recognition of Jordan's support in this war, the US provided it with generous military aid. In particular, Jordan was promised the coveted F-16 fighters it had long been asking for. The Jordanian Air Force joined a special partnership program with the Colorado National Guard, which contracted to assist Jordan in training pilots to fly the F-16 fighters, and in upgrading the planes.[38]

Political Structure

Ultimate authority in Jordan rests with the throne, although the day-to-day running of government is assigned to the cabinet. The king is the head

of state and commander in chief of the armed forces. His powers include the appointment and dismissal of the prime minister, the right to declare war, and the negotiation of treaties.

Jordan has a bicameral national assembly. The Senate (the House of Notables) is composed of fifty-five seats. It is often referred to as the 'king's assembly' because he appoints its president and members from pro-regime former prime ministers, ministers, the heads of important clans, and former high-ranking military officers and security officials. Their term runs for four years, and, as opposed to members of the House of Representatives, they have the power to initiate legislation.

The House of Representatives is composed of 110 seats, with a quota reserved for Circassians and Christians. King Abdullah extended this quota system to include a separate quota for women. Representatives may not propose legislation, but have the power to amend, approve, or reject legislation proposed by the cabinet. They also have the right to cast a vote of no confidence in the cabinet. The king may postpone elections for the House of Representatives or call them at his will. He may also disband the House, and pass legislation by royal decree in its absence.[39]

Thirty-one political parties were established in Jordan on the basis of the electoral law of 1994. These parties included leftist, Islamist, Arab nationalist, and conservative orientations, but few had a genuine popular base. The composition of the parliament elected in 2003 reflected the traditional bias in the political system, as eighty-four seats were won by conservative and tribal candidates.[40] Critics have long pointed out that Jordan's electoral system is biased to allow a higher level of representation to rural areas dominated by the tribal system, as opposed to urban centers where a more educated and politically aware population is concentrated.[41]

Public officials in Jordan are generally chosen from the political establishment, an elite group with strong ties to the throne. King Hussein actively cultivated this group, and was careful to include in it representations of all social and ethnic groups, as well as different ideological orientations. His style of government has been described as "monarchial pluralism,"[42] for his ability to give representation to all groups within Jordanian society, maintain their loyalty to the crown, and balance their sometimes conflicting demands. This balance was reflected in his appointments to the cabinet, upper house of parliament, and royal court. To maintain this complex arrangement, and the flexibility of changing policy, Hussein relied on frequent rotations in the cabinet and other top political

positions. The average lifespan of a cabinet in Jordan was, and continues to be, less than one year. This political establishment acted as a buffer, allowing the crown to remain above politics, and King Hussein to act as arbiter and patron to all social and political groups. Hussein was known to pardon even his most outspoken critics, and to extend personal courtesies to Jordanians of all political persuasions.

Abdullah, on the other hand, has disrupted the careful balance maintained by his father. He has clearly adopted the course of economic liberalization, and his appointments to the cabinet and royal court reflect this bias. Traditional supporters of the regime have found themselves marginalized, losing their ability to influence the allocation of government resources and jobs. Support for the regime among traditional politicians who dominate parliament has therefore eroded, and they have actively blocked regime reforms that undermine their privileged position.

For example, in 2005, conservative members of parliament forced the resignation of the liberal prime minister Adnan Badran after only a few months in office.[43] Among their complaints was his failure to respect the traditions of regional representation in the formation of his cabinet. They were not persuaded by his argument that members of the cabinet are chosen solely on the basis of merit.

These politicians also oppose changes that would expand the scope of political participation to include Palestinian Jordanians. In November 2006, Adnan Abu Auda, a former advisor to Abdullah, and holder of ministerial positions under Hussein, sparked a furor of protest by discussing, in a program on the satellite channel al-Jazeera, the inadequate representation of Palestinian Jordanians in politics. Abu Auda is himself one of the few of Palestinian background who have achieved political prominence in Jordan. Prominent tribal figures officially demanded that he be tried for criticizing the Jordanian regime. He was in fact questioned by authorities, but no charges were brought against him.

The Islamic Action Front, the political arm of the Muslim Brothers, is in fact the only political party with a broad base of support among East Bankers as well as Palestinian Jordanians. It won seventeen seats in the House of Representatives in the 2003 elections. The regime historically maintained good ties with the Muslim Brothers, as their ideology was basically moderate, and they accepted the legitimacy of Hashemite rule.[44] However, both the Muslim Brothers and their political arm started to take a more outspoken and critical position toward the regime after Jordan

signed its peace treaty with Israel. Tensions with the regime mounted significantly after Hamas came to power following the 2006 parliamentary elections in the Palestinian Territories. As confrontation between Hamas and Fatah escalated, culminating in the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip in 2007, Abdullah sided firmly with Fatah and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Abdullah exerted increasing pressure on the Muslim Brothers in Jordan to sever all relations with Hamas throughout this period, arguing non-Jordanian organizations with extranational agendas should not be tolerated. After a period of internal debate, Jordan's Muslim Brothers opted to preserve their long-standing policy of coexistence with the regime. They elected a new leader and new executive committee in March 2006, from which important pro-Hamas figures were markedly absent.

A more serious threat to the political order in Jordan has been the spread of the militant and radical Islamist ideology embraced by returning 'Arab Afghan' fighters. This group found a new base of operations in Iraq, where Jordanian security was unable to monitor them. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi—who became leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq until his death at the hands of US forces in April 2006—was in fact a Jordanian, and a sworn enemy of the Hashemite ruling family. Opinion polls had revealed widespread support inside Jordan for al-Zarqawi and his anti-US violence in Iraq.

Suicide bombings that killed civilians at several hotels in Jordan in November 2005 reduced this support, but it did not disappear completely. In some areas, large numbers of Jordanians refused to join in prayers for those killed in the attacks. Moreover, hundreds of mourners visited Zarqawi's family to express their condolences upon his death. The government refused to allow his body to be returned to Jordan for burial.

Two members of parliament who visited his family to express their condolences were tried by the State Security Court and sentenced to one year and one month's imprisonment. King Abdullah issued a royal pardon, but these incidents illustrated how little progress had been made in curtailing support for this brand of militant extremism.

Official statistics, revealed to the press, indicate that about one thousand Jordanians returned from Iraq between 2003 and 2007 after taking part in various forms of subversive action there. Six hundred of these individuals are in prison or undergoing trials, and the rest remain under close security monitoring. There are fears now regarding a "third generation" of jihadists, that have so far remained below the radar of the security

agencies, and who are thought to be recruited, trained, and activated through the Internet.[45]

These developments have been accompanied by a growing awareness of the "heavy hand" of the security apparatus in Jordanian society.[46] Those using internet cafés are required to provide identification, which managers keep on record, before being allowed to go online. In April 2007, a taped interview by al-Jazeera satellite channel with Prince Hassan, the former crown prince of Jordan and uncle to the present king and an edition of a local newspaper were confiscated by security agencies on the pretext that their content would damage Jordan's strategic regional relations.

The regime has continuously failed to introduce political reforms that could provide it with a new base of social support. In fact, even reformist establishment figures have appeared to be disillusioned with the regime's commitment in this respect. For example, in 2007, Marwan Muashar, whom Abdullah had appointed head of the panel charged with implementing the National Agenda Initiative, Jordan's blueprint for reform, resigned to take up a post with the World Bank. Muashar was an establishment figure close to the king, and was formerly ambassador to the US and foreign minister. His twenty-six-member panel could not be described as radical, as it did not include members of the opposition or even the middle class, but the reform-oriented members of the tight elite surrounding the king.[47] The departure of Muashar appears to indicate the failure of even this moderate approach to reform.

Foreign Policy Orientation

Jordan's foreign policy role, as defined by Hussein, was linked to the "Hashemite vision"—a vision of a new Arab renaissance, an Arab world characterized by democracy, cooperation, and "above all, open to the outside world."[48] Close relations with the West played a central role in the pursuit of this vision. First Britain, then the US, provided the economic and military requirements necessary to establish Hashemite rule, and to maintain the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Jordanian state.

Hussein built on this support to give Jordan a regional significance far exceeding its actual capabilities. In the words of Henry Kissinger, Jordan came to be perceived in the West as one of "the friendly countries on which the stability of the region depends," as well as "a reliable and staunch friend of the US, and genuinely helpful in the Arab–Israeli diplomacy."[49]

The key to Hussein's success lay in his ability to manifest a number of royal personae which linked him to multiple constituencies.[50] He was regarded in the West as an enlightened ruler, one of the earliest in the region to introduce democratic reforms (in 1989), and a voice of reason in the Arab–Israeli conflict. His command of the English language, his marriages to Western women, as well as his personal demeanor, made him accessible and acceptable to a Western audience during a period when few other Arab leaders were.

Hussein's unique ability to forge ties with his audience was nowhere clearer than in the way he connected to Israeli society. In the moving eulogy he gave at the funeral of the assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, as well as in his consolation of the parents of young Israeli schoolgirls shot in a border incident by a Jordanian soldier, King Hussein stressed the values of common humanity and the need for peace, and Israelis regarded him as a friend to their country.

While King Hussein appreciated the benefits of good bilateral relations with the US, he maintained a greater degree of public distance from its policies than can be seen in Jordan today. For example, Hussein was quoted in 1984 as saying, "We see things this way, Israel is on our land. It is there by virtue of American military assistance and economic aid that translates into aid for Israeli settlements."[51] During the cold war, the US focused on strengthening Jordan as an opponent of the PLO, in the context of its efforts to contain Soviet influence in the region as well as its concern for Israeli security. It was therefore willing to tolerate Hussein's public criticisms and studied distance.

This tolerant position changed, however, once the US emerged as the world's only superpower. During the crisis of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Hussein strongly opposed direct US military intervention, trying to use his close ties with both sides to negotiate a political settlement. He was reportedly stunned by the abrupt and hostile response he received from Prime Minister Thatcher and President Bush (senior).

King Abdullah has often referred to the difficult times Jordan passed through as a result of its stance during this crisis and his determination not to allow such a situation to develop again. He has maintained close ties with the US, and supported its military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, despite the cost to his domestic political standing.

There has always been a strong Islamic dimension to Jordan's foreign policy. Both Hussein and Abdullah have capitalized on their

Hashemite background to legitimize Jordan's position as a defender of Islam's symbols and proponent of its true traditions. The precise focus of this Islamic dimension has been strongly influenced by regional conditions. Jerusalem, with its holy Islamic sites, was, for King Hussein, a central issue. He wished to reinforce the Hashemite family's historical role as custodians of Islam's holy sites. He also hoped to use his Islamic credentials to legitimize Jordan's links with the West Bank as part of a Hashemite state.

In the post 9/11 world, King Abdullah has emphasized Hashemite religious prestige to enhance Jordan's political importance as an ally in the war on Islamist fundamentalist ideologies. The king announced plans for the establishment of a special educational institution in Jordan to provide high-level training for Islamic preachers, and personally identified himself with the "Amman Message," a sermon on religious tolerance delivered by Jordan's religious authority Sheikh Izz al-din al-Tamimi, in the king's presence during November 2004. In July 2005, Jordan also hosted an international Islamic conference attended by more than 170 Sunni and Shi'a scholars and intellectuals from over forty countries, who all condemned the use of violence in the name of Islam, particularly Sunni–Shi'a violence in Iraq.

Jordan's Islamic stance was historically linked to its Arab context. Hussein viewed Islam as an important component of Arab renaissance, and his family's religious credentials an unbreakable link between Jordan and its Arab audience. While his Arab alliances with powerful neighbors shifted and changed, pan-Arabism provided a constant ideological justification for the pursuit of Jordan's interests.

In place of his father's pan-Arabism, Abdullah embraced the vision of a new Middle East into which Israel would be fully integrated and would have normal relations with its Arab neighbors. He diligently tried to persuade Arab parties that Israel could make concessions on the Palestinian and Syrian fronts if its concerns regarding its integration into the region were dealt with.

At the 2005 Arab Summit held in Algiers, Jordan's foreign minister Hani al-Malqy attempted to persuade Arab leaders to amend the Saudi peace initiative adopted at the 2002 Arab Summit in Beirut by accepting normalization with Israel before a comprehensive settlement was reached. He failed to even get the proposal on the agenda and was shortly thereafter relieved of his post, as King Abdullah maintained his ideas had been misrepresented by his minister. In the spring of 2007, Arab leaders

once more endorsed the Beirut initiative, and Jordan along with Egypt was charged with promoting it in Israel.

Opening up Jordan to the world economy is a central concept of Abdullah's vision. Jordan therefore joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2000, and has been active in promoting the establishment of free trade areas. Abdullah is also a firm believer in an economically integrated Middle East, including Israel. The growth in Jordanian exports from the Qualified Industrial Zones and the electricity-generating and desalination projects that could be accomplished by the joint Jordanian–Israeli–Palestinian project of building a canal linking the Red and Dead seas,[52] are held up as examples of what Jordan could gain from cooperation with Israel.

Jordan is aware that it needs to acquire the necessary skills to compete once the Middle East becomes a free trade zone. The regime has been successful in attracting major transnational corporations to directly sponsor development projects in Jordan, such as the Jordan Education Initiative. Building on the Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy program, a Jordan Education Initiative was adopted by the World Economic Forum, and launched during its meeting at the Dead Sea in June 2003.

An estimated $3.7 million was transferred from the global partners in this initiative to local ICT companies as a direct result of the Jordan Education Initiative program, thereby strengthening local industry with the injection of both resources and expertise. The global corporations involved in this initiative, most of which were US based, were encouraged to participate in the hope that this program could be replicated in other Arabic-speaking countries, thereby providing a wider market for the curricula developed for the Jordan Initiative.[53]

Decision-Making Process

As is the case with other small countries, Jordan does not enjoy a great deal of autonomy in deciding its foreign policy. It must always contend with the pressures of its stronger neighbors as well as extraregional powers. Its foreign policy decisions are made extraordinarily significant by their tremendous domestic impact in both economic and political terms. Achieving economic security through financial aid, oil for domestic fuel consumption at preferential rates, as well as the sizeable remittances from Jordanians working abroad, is a central objective of Jordan's foreign policy.[54] It is not, however, its sole objective, and maintaining domestic

political stability has become, at various points in history, the determining factor influencing decision making.

Hussein displayed great skill in balancing the domestic and external constraints on his foreign policy, and in fact used it to ensure the survival of his regime. This was particularly evident in his stance during the crisis of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Hussein resisted enormous pressures to join the anti-Iraq coalition, which lost Jordan important Western and Arab aid, and caused thousands of Jordanians to lose their jobs in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and other Gulf countries.[55] This threw the economy into a deep recession. Moreover, the port of Aqaba was placed under a US blockade to prevent smuggling into Iraq under an internationally imposed regime of sanctions.

Hussein's efforts to explain Jordan's need to remain neutral in this conflict met with a harsh response in the West, leading to Jordan's isolation. On the other hand, Hussein achieved considerable popularity on the domestic front, where Iraq was popular for its economic aid to Jordan: providing it with oil, a market for Jordanian exports, and employment for its transport industry. Saddam Hussein's political and financial support to the Palestinian cause also played a significant role in enhancing his popularity in Jordan and the occupied Palestinian Territories. It was Hussein's judgment, later endorsed by some of his critics, that the monarchy could easily have been overwhelmed by the pro-Saddam fervor that swept Jordan had he made any other choice.[56]

In 1994, Hussein was able to reverse his strategy, gaining debt forgiveness, aid, and the lifting of the Aqaba blockade by signing a peace treaty with Israel. Although Hussein had maintained cordial, but secret ties with various Israeli figures, he did not proceed to a formal relationship until the Oslo process was already under way. He was therefore able to justify joining the peace process in terms of protecting Palestinian interests, as well as alleviating the economic hardship from which all Jordanians suffered.

Hussein remained the ultimate decision maker in the realm of foreign policy. His brother Hassan, crown prince for most of Hussein's reign, was intimately involved in foreign policy as well, particularly with all negotiations and contacts with Israel.[57] Other political figures were involved in a consultative and executive capacity, such as the prime minister, security chiefs, and close court advisors.

Decision making in the realm of foreign policy continues to be a closed process under King Abdullah.[58] He has introduced a new State Policies Committee, which convenes on a weekly basis to discuss important

issues. This committee includes members of the king's office staff, the prime minister, as well as representatives of the security agencies. The latter appear to have gained more influence than ever before, openly acknowledging their proactive and preemptive role outside Jordan's borders.[59] On the other hand, the relative importance of the prime minister with respect to foreign policy appears to be undermined, as members of Abdullah's office staff, which has been growing both in size and influence, play an important role in this committee. As some analysts point out, neither the king's office staff, nor the security agencies are subject to public scrutiny or responsibility, increasing the distance between those involved with foreign policy and the general population.

A prominent and controversial figure of this group is Bassem Awadallah, the Western-educated economist who is considered one of the major architects of the economic liberalization program. The king attempted to install him as minister of finance in the Badran cabinet in 2005, but he drew such vehement opposition from the House of Representatives that he was rapidly forced to resign. He was criticized for being "unknown," that is, not a member of the traditional elite. More importantly, his complete control over foreign aid to Jordan, which he was seen to exercise without reference to traditional considerations of patronage, was widely resented.

In April 2006, Abdullah returned him to public service by naming him director of his office. The king also appointed former foreign minister Farouk Kasrawi as his special advisor. Both these figures are of Palestinian origin, and this has raised a degree of concern that, for the first time in the kingdom's history, the King's closest advisors are perceived to be West Bankers.[60]

Some analysts have read foreign policy implications into the king's choice of advisors, viewing this as a prelude to a new phase in Jordanian–Palestinian relations. They argue that the king "has begun to realize that regional dynamics in Israel and the PA territories are providing all the reasons to revive his father's . . . political interests in the West Bank."[61] The Palestinian roots of this new elite, in combination with the Palestinian background of the queen, and Jordan's role in providing humanitarian assistance to the West Bank, could all help unite the Palestinian population around the king.

As the situation deteriorated in the West Bank due to the building of the separation barrier, proposals regarding a Jordanian security role

in the West Bank or even a revival of formal Jordanian–Palestinian links once more came under discussion and were unofficially floated in the US by Jordanian establishment figures.[62] On the other hand, Jordan's prime minister Marouf al-Bakheit publicly denied in November 2006 that Jordan had any intention of reconsidering its decision to sever ties with the West Bank.[63]

There is no doubt that preserving Jordan's interests in the final status arrangements between Israel and the Palestinians is of paramount importance to the future of the Hashemite state in Jordan. Defining the nature of the political, economic, and security ties between Jordan and the emerging Palestinian entity will be one of the most important challenges King Abdullah II faces during his reign.[64] As Gaza under Hamas rule moved toward deeper isolation in the summer of 2007, most analysts viewed some form of integration between Jordan and the West Bank as increasingly probable.

Foreign Policy Behavior

The International Arena

King Abdullah's international efforts reflect a preoccupation with his country's economic problems—the need to guarantee aid, reschedule debts, and encourage investment and tourism. Shortly after he ascended the throne in December 1999, he paid his first state visit to Japan, one of Jordan's—and the Middle East's—most important donors. During this visit, Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi announced a comprehensive package of economic assistance to Jordan amounting to approximately $400 million, which would run through 2001. The package included a rescheduling of debts as well as the reduction of rescheduling interest rates from 3.9 percent to 2.2 percent.

In 2004, King Abdullah made another state visit to Japan to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries. On this occasion, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced that Japan was ready to provide Jordan with a further ¥4 billion (approximately $36 million) in non-project grant aid. A framework document for the Japan–Jordan Partnership Program was also signed.

The European Union is another of Jordan's important international partners. In 2002, for example, it allocated an aid package of €90 million

to help with economic and democratic reforms necessary to help Jordan comply with the terms of the association agreement it had signed with the EU in November 1997, and which came into effect in May 2002.The main aim of this agreement was to create a free trade area between Jordan and the EU by 2010, and to help increase economic growth for the business community.

It is estimated that Jordan had received more than €1.5 billion in grants and loans during the preceding five years from the EU, individual member states, and the European Investment Bank.[65] During 2002–2004, €142 million in grants were made available to Jordan, as well as €40 million for the assistance of small and medium industries.

It is noteworthy that both Japan and the EU made special references to cooperation with Jordan in providing humanitarian and reconstruction aid to both Iraq and the Palestinian Territories, thus underscoring their appreciation of Jordan's close ties with these parties which allows it to play an important regional role. Its role in helping to integrate Israel into the regional system has also been recognized. In May 2005, the EU, Jordan, and Israel announced the upgrading of the trade agreement between Jordan and Israel to complement existing preferential trade agreements between Israel and the EU, and Jordan and the EU. Its aim was to extend the access enjoyed by goods originating in either country to include products based on material originating from the other.

The US is, of course, Jordan's major international partner. Since 2001, Jordan has been a major recipient of US aid. In 2001, it received $228.4 million, and in 2002 a supplementary amount of $125 million was added to the original grant of $228.4 million. In 2003, Jordan was allocated $451.4 million, and a supplementary $1.106 billion in response to the extra burden placed on it by the war in Iraq. Aid levels eventually decreased, and by 2005 Jordan was receiving a total of $660.6 million. Jordan received $454.1 million in 2007, but in 2008, this aid was increased to a total of $663.5 million, an increase of almost 48 percent.[66] Jordan's military cooperation with the US in its 'war on terror' was previously discussed in the section on military capability.

Such cooperation was made possible by the designation of Jordan as a major non-NATO ally of the US on November 13, 1996, under the Clinton administration. As part of the agreement, Jordan would prevent the International Criminal Court from launching proceedings against US personnel present in Jordan. Jordan's lower house of parliament

initially refused to endorse this agreement, although the upper house had. It eventually reversed its decision and endorsed the agreement in January 2006.

Jordan signed a free trade agreement with the US in October 2000 that went into effect in December 2001. The agreement was aimed at removing trade barriers between the two countries over a ten-year period. Jordan's exports to the US increased from $73 million in 2000, to $1,267 million in 2005.[67] It ranked seventieth among US trading partners that year, and imported aircraft parts, machinery, appliances, vehicles, and cereals from the US to the amount of $643 million.

Jordan's relations with the US have not been free of tensions. Abdullah repeatedly tried to convince President Bush that Israel's increasing use of violence against the Palestinians, the absence of a settlement that would end instability by giving the Palestinians a state, and finally unqualified US support for Israel made his domestic situation increasingly untenable. Jordanian popular animosity toward Washington was expressed in 2002, for example, by a boycott of US products.

Although President Bush attended a summit including Israeli Prime Minister Sharon and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas hosted by Abdullah in 2003 in order to further the peace process, Jordan felt the US was not giving sufficient attention to this problem. In 2004, King Abdullah "postponed" a scheduled visit to the White House after President Bush endorsed Ariel Sharon's unilateral disengagement plan. This endorsement included support for Israel's territorial claims in the West Bank, as well as Bush's statement that Palestinian refugees could not return to lands lost in 1948. King Abdullah sent a letter to President Bush in which he stated that the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip must be undertaken as part of the internationally sponsored 'road map,' not as an alternative to it.

Anti-US sentiment became increasingly strong in Jordan as the US continued to support Israeli aggression on the Palestinians as well as the devastating Israeli war on Lebanon. Threatened by civil wars breaking out on both its Iraqi and Palestinian borders, Jordan has made increasingly urgent appeals for US assistance in reaching a resolution to the Israeli–Palestinian situation, as, for example, in Abdullah's eloquent address to the US Congress in March 2007.[68]

Regional Behavior

King Abdullah is equally keen to establish strong and cordial relations with Jordan's regional neighbors. In his first year as king, he visited all the Gulf states as well as Syria and Libya, to repair ties that had weakened in his father's later years. During the last decades of the twentieth century, Jordan was often forced to choose between cordial relations with one or the other of its strong neighbors: Syria and Iraq.

Jordan and Syria were linked to opposing camps during the cold war and backed different sides during the Iraq–Iran War in the 1980s. There was also friction between the two regimes as the late Syrian President Hafiz al-Assad accused King Hussein of backing the Muslim Brothers, his fiercest domestic opposition. Hafiz al-Assad attended King Hussein's funeral, and initiated an improvement in bilateral relations.

King Abdullah made a two-day visit to Syria in April 1999, which was declared "a turning point" in the relationship between the two countries, and during which Abdullah established a connection with the heir apparent, Bashar al-Assad.[69] Jordan was one of only three countries visited by Bashar during the first six months of his presidency—the other two being Egypt and Saudi Arabia.[70] The two countries signed a free trade agreement in October 2001, in order to return bilateral trade to its former levels.

An important aspect of bilateral relations in terms of Jordan's development is cooperation on water issues. Jordan feels that Syria has violated existing water-sharing agreements by drilling 360 wells on the banks of the Yarmuk River, thereby depleting its underground water resources. The recently constructed Jordanian al-Wehda dam, launched with great fanfare in the presence of both countries' leaders in 2004, has also been a source of contention.

Disagreements surfaced in October 2006 when Syria refused to release water from its own dams on the Yarmuk to the al-Wehda dam.[71] Relations were already strained by Syria's support of Hizbullah's position during the Israeli war on Lebanon in July–August 2006, and al-Assad's severe criticisms of Arab leaders, including Abdullah, who had blamed Hizbullah for instigating the war.

Jordan's ties with its other powerful neighbor, Iraq, can be described as being simultaneously deeper and more complex. Jordan and Iraq developed a relationship of economic codependence during the 1990s, when Iraq was Jordan's major supplier of oil and Jordan was Iraq's main trade route. Large numbers of Jordanians found employment in the business of

transporting incoming trade from the Aqaba port over land into Iraq. At the same time, Jordan was also a base for the Iraqi opposition to Saddam's regime as well as an intelligence headquarters for Western efforts to unseat him.[72]

Although political relations between the two countries were somewhat strained after Jordan signed a peace accord with Israel, they received a boost when King Abdullah came to power. Jordan was the first Arab country to lift the trade embargo on Iraq. The regime had allowed a large number of voluntary organizations to operate in support of the Iraqi population suffering under sanctions. For example, the Jordanian National Mobilization Committee for the support of Iraq collected 3.5 million pencils from the public to deliver them to Iraqi schoolchildren, as UN regulations prohibited importing graphite into the country.

Jordan continued to receive Iraqi oil on extremely favorable terms and plans were announced for a pipeline project connecting the al-Haditha oil wells on the borders to the Jordanian oil refinery near al-Zarqa.

In view of these favorable economic ties, Jordan was understandably reluctant to endorse the US war in Iraq. During the war, the Jordanian regime refrained from vilifying Saddam. King Abdullah made the personal gesture of sending his half brother, Prince Ali to bring Saddam's daughters and grandchildren to safety in Amman, providing them with a house and a financial stipend. Jordan was also a base for Saddam Hussein's defense team.

At the same time, Jordan cooperated fully with the US, both in military terms and in efforts to restore order and prevent the eruption of civil war in Iraq. It hosted several meetings of Sunni Iraqi groups as well as between US officials and insurgent militias, such as the meeting reportedly held in Amman in October 2006 between a US delegation and the Islamic Army, one of the largest Iraqi armed militias.[73]

Relations between the two countries were strained when a suicide bombing in al-Hilla, Iraq was discovered to have been carried out by a Jordanian. The attack killed 118 persons and wounded 148 others, besides causing considerable material damage. Iraqis were shocked by a popular outpouring of support in Jordan for this act. They responded violently, sacking the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad, burning the Jordanian flag and demanding that King Abdullah make a personal apology for these celebratory responses in Amman.[74] While both countries sought to overcome these incidents on an official level, there appears to be insufficient understanding of the impact of the apparent alliance between former Baathists

and Islamist fundamentalists inside Jordan on future relations between the people of both countries.

The November 2005 suicide bombings carried out by Iraqis in Jordan only added fuel to this combustible relationship, and increased worries regarding the large number of Iraqi refugees residing, legally and illegally, in Jordan. Sectarian animosity toward Shi'a Iraqis residing in Jordan also began to be a problem as the result of perceived violence against the Sunni population in Iraq.

Although Jordan hosted a summit between US President George Bush and Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki in 2006, its attempt to establish itself as regional mediator was somewhat undermined by al-Malilki's refusal to attend a three-way meeting that included Abdullah. Abdullah's relations with both Iraq and Syria were influenced by what appeared to be a new form of regional polarization between pro-Iran and anti-Iran state and nonstate actors. Abdullah had openly characterized Iraq as a battleground between Iran and the West. He warned of spreading Iranian influence throughout the Arab world, firmly placing himself, and Jordan, in the anti-Iran camp.

This position brought Jordan's relationship with its powerful neighbor to the South, Saudi Arabia, to a new level. Relations between the two countries had historically been marked by an undercurrent of tension, as the Saud family was responsible for removing the Hashemites from their position as rulers of the Hijaz and custodians of the Islamic holy shrine in Mecca.

The Saudi family, on the other hand, resented Hussein's "Hashemite vision" and bid for leadership on the basis of kinship with the Prophet. However, for its own domestic considerations, Saudi Arabia welcomed the existence of the Hashemite kingdom on its borders, as a buffer isolating it from the frontlines of the Arab–Israeli conflict. The two countries had much in common during the cold war, both opposing the spread of Communism and radical Arab regimes with socialist leanings.

Saudi Arabia stepped in to compensate Jordan for its loss of oil supplies from Iraq between 2003 and 2005. Its strong opposition to Iran's growing regional influence, on historical, ideological, and some would say sectarian grounds, provided new avenues of cooperation between the two countries. In a move to assert Saudi leadership, and undercut Iran's influence with Syria, Hamas, and Hizbullah, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia opted to "reactivate" his initiative for comprehensive regional

peace. Jordan's efforts in 'marketing' the initiative in Israel, and among the Palestinians, were therefore solicited.

Jordan's relationship with Palestinian leaders, from both the PLO and Hamas, has been long and complicated. There is evidence that Jordan played a role in supporting the emergence of Hamas as a means of undercutting PLO influence in the West Bank.[75] Hussein gained popularity among the Palestinians for the manner in which he handled Israel's attempted assassination of Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal in Amman in September 1997. He not only ensured Meshaal's life was saved, but also secured the release of the long-imprisoned Hamas leader, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin.[76]

Abdullah, however, expelled Meshaal from Jordan in 1999, and has since insisted that only Jordanian organizations with no extranational agendas can be allowed to operate in Jordan. He supported the international boycott of the Hamas government elected in 2006, brought charges against alleged Hamas members for smuggling weapons into Jordan, and cancelled a scheduled visit by Ismail Haneya, the Palestinian foreign minister in the Hamas cabinet. As progress on the Palestinian–Israeli front stagnated, and domestic Palestinian conflict escalated, Abdullah heavily sponsored Mahmoud Abbas, and tried to improve relations between him and Israeli leaders.

Abdullah has maintained the ties with Israel established by his father, but while he has frequently met with Israeli officials, he does not enjoy the admiration Hussein had acquired in Israeli society. Relations were initially strained as a result of widespread and intense popular outrage in Jordan at Israeli violence toward the Palestinians in the second intifada. Relations improved somewhat in 2004 and 2005. King Abdullah made a private, secret visit to then Israeli Prime Minister Sharon at his ranch in March 2004, to discuss a proposed Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the West Bank. In early 2005, Jordan named an ambassador to Israel after the post had remained vacant for more than four years as a sign of Jordan's protest against Israeli violence against Palestinians during the intifada. Jordan's foreign minister also paid a visit in March that same year, and in April Israel announced it would release some, but not all of its Jordanian prisoners.[77]

The Jordanian monarch and Jordanian officials continued to express their opposition and concern regarding unilateral Israeli actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Marwan Muasher, while Jordan's foreign minister, expressed Jordanian concerns in an interview with the

Washington Post, on January 30, 2004: "We are afraid that the day might come when Israeli leaders might argue 'Jordan is Palestine.' Why are we worried? The wall will effectively divide the West Bank into three parts. It will make life impossible for the Palestinians: dividing them from their work, their schools, and their lands. If that happens, what options do Palestinians have? They will leave, voluntarily or by force, for Jordan."

In February 2006, an Israeli military commander publicly predicted that Abdullah would be Jordan's last Hashemite king, implying that Jordan would become a Palestinian state. Israeli officials rapidly apologized, proclaiming that Ariel Sharon's argument that Jordan is in fact the alternative Palestinian state was no longer credited by Israel. Relations between the two countries were further strained when Amman reportedly refused to receive Israel's foreign minister in view of strong popular anger at widespread Israeli destruction of Lebanon during the July–August war that same year.[78]

Nevertheless, Abdullah has remained committed to integrating Israel into the region through peaceful relations with major Arab countries. He actively promoted the Arab Initiative for Peace endorsed by the Arab Summit in Saudi Arabia in 2007 with the Israeli establishment. This earned him some harsh criticism in the Arab world for allegedly conceding important Palestinian rights in order to persuade the Israelis to accept the initiative.

Jordan has traditionally maintained strong ties with Egypt. They have repeatedly joined in trying to persuade the US to take a more active and less pro-Israel stance toward the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. Since both countries share borders with the Palestinian Territories, they are adversely affected by the growing violence, and fear its effect on their domestic populations. As the only two Arab countries to have formal peace treaties with Israel, they are both active in trying to mediate between Israel and the Palestinians. The countries have active bilateral trade and there are a substantial number of Egyptian laborers in Jordan, who are from time to time a source of strain in the relationship. The two counties are also connected through the huge electrical grid that connects Jordan, Syria, and Turkey through Egypt with North Africa.

Conclusion

It can be argued that the domestic costs of Jordan's heavy investment in foreign policy as a means of securing regime survival and resources for development have become higher under Abdullah. Jordan's historical

reliance on external sources of income—aid, oil grants, and remittances—allowed the regime to avoid the political costs of unpopular policies such as the removal of subsidies and enforcement of taxes. It also allowed Jordan's external debt to reach unacceptable levels. Under Abdullah, foreign aid, especially from the US and EU, would only be forthcoming if Jordan complied with various strategies of economic reform, which had a crippling effect on the mostly poor population.

The political price of these policies became even higher as many argued that the regime had not in fact abandoned its control over foreign aid designated to support the private sector and civil society, but had merely diverted its funds away from the poor population and into the coffers of a limited elite. This perception arose as a result of the regime's strategy of public–private partnership, which meant the establishment of new economic concerns often dominated by members of the establishment. Civil society organizations headed by members of the royal family, "royal NGOs," appeared to receive a substantial share of this aid as well.

The projects Abdullah personally endorsed to project a modern image for Jordan and therefore receive Western financing, such as introducing computer technology and e-curricula in schools, had little impact on the wider population. In economic as well as social terms, Jordan seemed divided into two spheres: one that was modern, Westernized, economically active, and close to the royal family, and another in which poverty, unemployment, and commitment to traditional, in many cases militant and fundamentalist, values prevailed.

Abdullah's foreign policy has come into contradiction with strong domestic currents linked to Jordan's previous regional alliances. For example, there is a broad segment of Jordanians who benefited from close ties to Iraq under Saddam Hussein, and who still regard him as an Arab hero. These include local industries that found a secure and large market in Iraq, and truckers from the poor and underdeveloped south who found lucrative employment in transporting goods to Iraq. The oil Saddam Hussein provided made fuel available at affordable prices, and his political and financial support of the Palestinians made him widely popular in the refugee camps. He is still regarded as Jordan's most generous benefactor, not only on the street, but also among some circles in the political establishment.

There also remains strong political support for Hamas on the Jordanian street, due to its historical links to the Muslim Brothers. The regime is eager to prevent Hamas from acquiring additional influence as a result of

Iran's financial and political support, and has openly acted to undermine its strength, in Jordan as well as in the Palestinian Territories. Either of these groups, in particular the organized and militant Hamas, could seriously threaten domestic political stability, leading the regime to rely even further on security interventions.

The Hashemite regime has historically proved itself able to withstand crises and to survive. Indeed, the cohesion of the Hashemite ruling family itself does not appear to have been shaken, even by a number of abrupt changes in the line of succession, as opposed to other Arab ruling families.[79] Abdullah, however, seems far less successful than his father in mobilizing support on the domestic and Arab levels. While his foreign and economic policies, as well as his Western life style, have alienated the regime's traditional base, he has not been successful in creating a new one.

In the Arab context, Abdullah is viewed with suspicion for his support of the complete normalization of relations with Israel, some would argue at the price of sacrificing important Arab interests. Moreover, in the age of wide media coverage, his ability to appeal to conflicting constituencies at the same time, in the tradition of his father, is seriously undermined. The palace has repeatedly found it necessary to 'clarify' various actions or statements that have caused domestic or Arab furor, marking Abdullah's management of foreign policy as much less polished than his father's.

The question remains whether, by openly and unequivocally siding with US positions in Palestine, Lebanon, and Iraq, Abdullah has not only seriously damaged his credibility on the Jordanian street, but also undermined Jordan's ability to perform the role of mediator to an increasingly skeptical Palestinian, and Arab, audience.

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8

The Art of the Impossible: The Foreign Policy of Lebanon

Bassel F. Salloukh

"Is a Lebanese foreign policy possible?"

Ghassan Salamé[1]

"Does Lebanon have anything but a foreign policy?"

Paul Salem[2]

Studying Lebanon's foreign policy entails walking a methodological tightrope between the two positions in the opening quotes above. Indeed, can a polarized, regionally contested, and internationally entangled state have a viable foreign policy? If so, what are the parameters and uses of this foreign policy given the region's geopolitics and a stubborn legacy of external intervention in the country's domestic politics? On the other hand, can a small, weak country afford not to have a foreign policy proactively serving its economic and security interests? Moreover, how do domestic and foreign politics overlap in a state lacking national consensus on a range of strategic issues? Finally, whose foreign policy choices should be privileged by the student of Lebanese foreign policy—those of the president, the prime minister, the speaker of parliament, the foreign minister, the variable sectarian substate actors, or all of the above?

From a theoretical perspective, Lebanon's foreign policy captures the dynamic overlap between domestic and foreign politics, and is a 'two-level game' par excellence.[3] Disagreement among Lebanon's variable sects and

subsects over foreign policy choices often avalanche into violent confrontations—as was the case in 1958 over the Eisenhower Doctrine, in the late 1960s and early 1970s over support for the Palestinian movement, over the May 17, 1983 agreement with Israel, and, in the postwar period, over the type of relation Lebanon should have with Syria, the optimal resistance strategy vis-à-vis Israel, and the country's regional and international alliances. The flip side of this equation is also a constant in Lebanese politics: local actors deploy transnational ideologies or bandwagon with external actors to strengthen their positions in domestic political struggles. Whether surfing the Nasserist wave in the 1950s and 1960s or, at different occasions, invoking Syrian, Israeli, Iranian, Iraqi, American, French, or Saudi intervention and assistance, Lebanese politicians marshaled external actors for domestic political battles. Consequently, this overlap between domestic and foreign politics exacerbates Lebanon's permeability to regional pressures and its vulnerability to external intervention, permitting outside actors to become the ultimate arbiters over matters Lebanese. In the process, Lebanese politicians compromise the sovereignty of their state and its foreign policy independence for instrumental political ends. In post-Syria Lebanon, foreign policy has reemerged as a battleground between overlapping local and external actors bent on redefining Lebanon's position in the international system and the region's geopolitics. Lebanon has thus returned full circle, to that foundational moment in 1943, when negotiating a new domestic consensus entailed agreement on the state's foreign policy choices.

Domestic Environment

Population, Social Structure, and Political Structure

On September 1, 1920, General Henri Gouraud, the French high commissioner in Beirut, proclaimed the creation of '*Grand Liban*.'[4] The annexation of Syrian territory to the Mount Lebanon core produced a plural society with overlapping sectarian, ideological, economic, regional, and cultural cleavages.[5] Most significant for Lebanon's foreign policy choices were its national and cultural cleavages, where different segments of the population subscribed to their own "vision of Lebanon."[6] This cleavage overlapped with two culturally contradictory conceptions of the national identity: Lebanism and Arabism.[7] The proponents of Lebanism emphasized Lebanon's Mediterranean, Phoenician heritage. The mainly, but not exclusively, Sunni Muslim proponents of Lebanon's Arabism maintained

that, historically, Lebanon had always been part of Syria, and that its history was part and parcel of Arab history.[8] A formula had to be devised to mediate between these competing views, and secure a viable consensus for the nascent independent state. This formula, articulated in the 1943 *Mithaq al-watani* ('National Pact'), was the cornerstone of Lebanon's political system and foreign policy.

An unwritten gentlemen's agreement between Maronite President Bishara al-Khouri and Sunni Prime Minister Riyad al-Solh, the National Pact described Lebanon as an independent state with an Arab face *(dhu wajh 'arabi)*. It committed Muslims to renounce any demands to reunite with Syria and accept the continued existence of Lebanon as an independent and sovereign state, provided it considered itself part of the Arab fold and Christians renounced external, namely French, tutelage. In addition to this mutual veto on foreign policy choices, the pact recognized the need to give priority to Lebanon's Arab relations. Nevertheless, to allay Maronite sensitivities, it made these relations conditional on the Arab states' respect of Lebanon's "independence, . . . its complete sovereignty, and the inviolability of its present boundaries." The pact also stated that "Lebanon shall not be used as a beachhead by colonialism nor will it be used as a corridor for the colonization of its brotherly Arab states."[9] Indeed, the pact balances between Christian and Muslim expectations of Lebanon's foreign policy to maintain cordial relations with the Arab states, a Muslim demand, but not at the expense of Lebanon's sovereignty and independence, a Christian demand. Consequently, Lebanon's regional and international foreign policy was checked by a number of constraints:

> Lebanon was to regard itself as an Arab state "with a special character," to cooperate economically, politically, culturally and militarily with the Arab states, act in concert with them on the international level, refuse to align itself in any way with any foreign power against the interests of the Arab states singly or collectively, but in disputes among the Arab states, themselves, was to remain neutral. In return, the Arab states had to recognize its independence and not to make attempts to incorporate it in any unification schemes.[10]

The latter provisos were duly incorporated in the October 7, 1944 inter-Arab Alexandria Protocol and the March 23, 1945 Charter of the League of Arab States.

The pact also acknowledged an often-neglected security trade-off between Syria and Lebanon. Damascus was willing to forgo its historical claims to the annexed areas provided that independent Lebanon did not constitute a base used by hostile foreign or Arab parties against Syria.[11] However, until the negotiation of the October 22, 1989 Ta'if Accord and the May 22, 1991 Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination *(Mu'ahadat al-Ukhuwwa wa-l-Ta'awun wa-l-Tansiq)* between Lebanon and Syria, Lebanese politicians rarely honored this security trade-off, with Beirut often serving as a center for conspiracy against Syria. These apprehensions were reanimated after the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon on April 26, 2005.

The conduct of foreign policy in prewar Lebanon was a presidential privilege, a consequence of the constitutional powers enshrined in the presidency. Always occupied by a Maronite, the presidency was the single most powerful office. The prime minister's ability to influence policy was often a function of his personality, his communal standing, and the amount of latitude in executive affairs delegated to him by the president. In most matters, but especially in foreign policymaking, the prime minister was subordinate to the president.

The Postwar Political Structure

The outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975 was in part an expression of the outdated nature of the National Pact. By then, as Table 1 suggests, Lebanon's political sociology had been transformed fundamentally,[12] and its regional landscape was in radical flux.[13] A number of power-sharing documents were promulgated during the war years, but all proved stillborn. Lebanon had to wait for the ripe moment when domestic, regional, and international factors converged to end the war, and allow the negotiation and implementation of a new power-sharing agreement.

A postwar power-sharing agreement replacing the 1943 National Pact, the Ta'if Accord of October 22, 1989 was the result of Saudi and American mediation with the different Lebanese political groups and with Syria.[15] It altered postwar foreign policymaking, and placed genuine constraints on the country's foreign policy choices.[16] On the subject of Lebanon's cultural identity, Ta'if declared Lebanon a country with "an Arab identity and belonging" *(Lubnan 'arabi al-huwiya wa-l-intima')*, a proviso that, at least theoretically, commits Lebanon to a pro-Arab foreign policy orientation. Ta'if shifted the balance of executive power away from

Table 1: Christian and Muslim Sects as Percentages of Population: 1913–2000[14]

	1913	1932	1975	2002
Christians				
Maronite	58.3	28.8	23	
Greek Orthodox	12.6	9.8	7	
Greek Catholic	7.7	5.9	5	
Other	0.8	6.8	5	
Total	79.4	51.3	40	26.4–30
Muslims				
Shi'a	5.6	19.6	27	
Sunni	3.5	22.4	26	
Druze	11.4	6.8	7	
Total	20.5	48.8	60	70–73.6
Total Population	414,963	786,000	2.55 million	3.3 million

the Maronite president, and toward the cabinet in its collective capacity. This naturally empowered the Sunni prime minister's office.[17] The implications of this on postwar foreign policymaking are spelled out in Article 52 of the constitution: whereas in its 1943 amendment, this article gave the president the sole power to negotiate international treaties, its post-Ta'if amendment made this prerogative conditional on the approval of the prime minister and cabinet. Moreover, Section 1 of Article 65 empowered the cabinet to "craft the general policy of the state in all spheres," including foreign policy.[18] Shifting foreign policymaking from the presidency to cabinet in its collective capacity was a major concession by the Maronite political establishment given its traditional role as guardian of Lebanon's sovereignty and independence from suspicious pan-Arab unitary schemes. First introduced in the May 31,1984 ministerial manifesto of Rashid Karamé's national unity cabinet,[19] it was later adopted as part of the Ta'if constitutional package.

The Ta'if Accord recognized unambiguously that Lebanon and Syria are linked by "special relations" *('ilaqat mumayyaza)* and share common interests entailing policy coordination. On the subject of the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon, Ta'if committed Syria only to "redeploy" *('i'adat tamarkuz)* its troops to the Beqa' and its western approaches two years after

the promulgation of constitutional reforms. Most importantly, the future mission and continued presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon was deemed a bilateral issue.[20] These provisions represented a fundamental break with the National Pact, and the culmination of an uninterrupted Syrian attempt to predicate the end of the war and the promulgation of constitutional reforms on Lebanese recognition of the special relations binding the two states. They committed Lebanon to a pro-Syrian foreign policy alignment, and paved the way for bilateral agreements that underscored Lebanon's pro-Syrian foreign policy both at the regional and international levels.

Other constitutional amendments altered the structure of post-war foreign policymaking. By strengthening parliamentary oversight of the executive, and making it almost impossible for cabinet to dissolve Parliament, Ta'if increased the powers of the Shi'a speaker of parliament. The latter has emerged, alongside the president and the prime minister, as a key player in shaping state policies, including foreign policy. Ta'if applied the principle of equitable confessional division of seats to parliament and all other primary *(fi'a oula)* posts throughout state institutions. Lacking a two-thirds majority, Parliament cannot convene to elect a president. This allows Muslim sects a greater say in the choice of the president and foreign policy choices. Moreover, Muslim sects, especially Shi'a and Druze, enjoy greater representation after Ta'if in ministerial, judicial, administrative, and military posts. Moreover, all post-Ta'if cabinets have rotated the top four ministries—Foreign and Expatriate Affairs, Defense, Interior, and Finance—among Lebanon's four main sects: the Shi'a, Sunnis, Maronites, and Greek Orthodox. This has allowed Muslim sects to control the Ministry of Foreign and Expatriate Affairs much more frequently than in past decades, though it was traditionally deemed a Christian privilege (see Appendix).

Geography, Economic Capability, and Military Capability

Geography

With the exception of the border with Israel in the south, Lebanon broadly straddles the Syrian hinterland. As Table 2 shows, a substantial share of Lebanese exports is destined for Arab countries. Lebanon's laissez-faire economy, and Beirut's location as a trading entrepôt city, predicates economic viability on free access to the Arab interior via Syrian land routes, and hence normal relations with Syria.

Table 2: Destinations of Exports (Annual Averages, as percentage of total Lebanese exports)[21]

Destination of Exports	1951–52	1964–66	1971–73	1986–87	2001–02
Arab Countries	49	66	67	68	47
Industrial Countries	39	18	15	17	33
Other	12	16	18	15	20
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Since Lebanon's independence, Damascus has punished Lebanon economically by closing its border posts to commercial land traffic from Lebanon whenever political relations between the two states were strained.[22] Lebanon's geographic contiguity with Syria played into the hands of the latter's allies throughout the civil war. Syrian land routes served as arteries through which military supplies reached Syria's allies, and Hizbullah's armed resistance against Israel in southern Lebanon after the mid-1980s was predicated upon a steady flow of Iranian-supplied military hardware via Syria. This provided Damascus political capital with its Lebanese allies, and consolidated its influence in Lebanon throughout the civil war and after. It also allowed Syria to dominate the war to peace transition. This geographical leverage was demonstrated immediately after the withdrawal of Syrian troops. Throughout July 2005, Damascus closed its borders with Lebanon to ensure that the first postwithdrawal cabinet headed by Fu'ad Saniora would not assume a confrontational role vis-à-vis Syria. And when UN Security Council Resolution 1680—which "strongly encourages" Syria to delineate its disputed borders with Lebanon and establish diplomatic ties with it—was promulgated on May 17, 2006, officials in Damascus dismissed the resolution and reminded Beirut that no Syrian trucks were waiting to cross the borders into the Arab interior.[23]

Economic Capability

The structure of Lebanon's economy also constrains its foreign policy choices. A lack of rent-generating natural resources, a lopsided laissez-faire economy based on commerce and services, and state neglect of agriculture and industry necessitate amiable relations with major Western capitals as well as almost all Arab states, especially the Gulf countries.[24] Lebanon's fiscal health depends on capital inflows from Arab countries

and remittances by Lebanese expatriate communities, especially those residing in oil-rich Gulf states.[25] Throughout the 'Arab cold war' years, Saudi officials used the economic weapon to realign Lebanon's foreign policy away from its pro-Egypt orientation.[26] The failure of postwar fiscal and monetary policies increased dependence on external aid, capital inflows, and remittances. Lebanon's postwar foreign policy toward the European Union has also been driven by economic interests, namely Beirut's desire to attract foreign aid and investment in postwar reconstruction.[27]

The fiscal crisis of the Lebanese state and a net public debt estimated at $44 billion in 2006, make Arab monetary aid, capital inflow, and remittances basic to any viable economic recovery plan. Gulf monetary aid has been instrumental in allowing the Lebanese government to restructure its external debts and project international trust. Deposits in the Central Bank of Lebanon by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the UAE have enabled the Central Bank to defend the stability of the Lebanese pound and forestall speculation crises.[28] The support of the Gulf states was also instrumental in the success of the Paris 2 donor conference of November 23, 2002. The conference resulted in $3.1 billion in long-term low-interest loans for Lebanon, and another $1.3 billion from international and regional agencies for developmental projects. Engineered by Rafiq al-Hariri, Paris 2 was meant to demonstrate international confidence in Lebanon's ability to manage and restructure its public debt. Gulf countries pledged a substantial share of the loans.[29] The success of the Paris 3 conference of January 25, 2007, convened to help restructure the debt and implement structural economic reforms, also hinged in large measure on generous donations and loan commitments from Saudi Arabia ($1.1 billion), Gulf-owned Arab funds ($950 million), the US ($890 million), France (€650 million), and the European Commission (€585 million).[30] In this case, however, aid commitments were aimed at bolstering the political standing of the anti-Syria March 14 alliance against its domestic opponents in post-Syria Lebanon.

Capital inflow from Arab investors—estimated at $1 billion in 2004—and tourism revenues, both overwhelmingly from the Gulf states, have been the prime sources of postwar economic growth. Remittances by Lebanese expatriates, many of whom reside in oil-rich Gulf countries, reached $4.5 billion in 2003, financing local consumption and contributing significantly toward Lebanon's balance of payments surplus.[31] Moreover, the success of future fiscal and monetary reforms aimed at reducing the public debt and the budget deficit depends in large measure

on some $5 billion in remittances and $1.5 billion in direct investment annually, most of which will come from Gulf investors and Lebanese expatriates residing in the Gulf states.[32]

Lebanon's foreign policy toward the Gulf countries is shaped in large measure by these economic constraints. Lebanon was the first Arab state to denounce the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. And when the US began organizing a coalition to liberate Kuwait, President Elyas al-Hrawi suggested to his cabinet that Lebanon dispatch a token military force to secure receipt of aid from the oil-rich states in recognition of its support for the liberation effort.[33] The government is also sensitive to any criticism of the Gulf states in the media. When the anti-Hariri New TV satellite station aired programs critical of Saudi Arabia in 2003, Riyadh complained strongly to Beirut and signalled that the economic conditions of Lebanese expatriates residing in the kingdom were in jeopardy. The Lebanese government threatened to sue the station under the pretext of compromising Lebanon's relations with a sister Arab state.[34] And when a meeting of Arab foreign ministers, headed by Lebanese Foreign Minister Mahmoud Hammud, discussed a resolution supportive of Iraq before the US invasion, Gulf Cooperation Council states hinted that Beirut might suffer economic consequences, forcing al-Hariri to rush to Kuwait to apologize and mend bilateral relations.[35]

Military Capability

Lebanon's weak and multisectarian army has constrained the state's foreign policy choices in various ways. The Lebanese army is small, its military hardware is outdated, and the country possesses no real air force or navy.[36] Consequently, as Table 3 demonstrates, it has no war-fighting capability against Israel or Syria. This has exposed Lebanon to military invasion and intervention by its neighbors.

The Lebanese government has confronted Israeli invasions in 1978 and 1982, and its multiple land, air, and sea incursions into Lebanese territory mainly through diplomacy. Lacking a viable military option, the government has attempted to liberate land occupied by Israel by invoking UN Security Council Resolution 425, or by negotiation. Under the presidency of Amin Gemayel, the latter strategy entailed a pro-American foreign policy that alienated large sectors of Lebanese society and ultimately paralyzed his administration. Armed resistance was left to extralegal groups. After 1985, Hizbullah monopolized the armed resistance against Israel,

Table 3: Comparative Military Capabilities: Lebanon, Israel, and Syria[37]

Country	Total Active Army Manning	Tanks	OAFVs	Artillery	Combat Aircraft	Armed Helicopters
Lebanon	70,000	310	1,463	172	0	0
Israel	125,000	3,950	8,770	1,542	438	100
Syria	215,000	4,500	4,600	2,540	548	71

forcing its withdrawal from Lebanon on May 25, 2000, except for the contested Shebaa Farms and the Kfarshouba heights. Moreover, Hizbullah is Lebanon's only viable deterrent to Israel's military superiority. This, in turn, gives Hizbullah veto power on foreign policy choices vis-à-vis Israel. It has resisted attempts to reposition Lebanon in the American regional camp following Syria's withdrawal, and to adopt a confrontational foreign policy toward Damascus. Hizbullah also dismissed UN Security Council Resolution 1559 of September 2, 2004, which mandated the "disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias" in the country.[38] Moreover, although Hizbullah accepted the deployment of the Lebanese Army in south Lebanon, and the expansion of UN troops and mandate in the south after the July 2006 war, it has refused to decommission its weapons arsenal, insisting that a viable defensive strategy against Israel entails a complementary role for the irregular forces of the resistance alongside the regular units of the Lebanese army.[39]

Similar constraints have operated in Lebanon's relation with Syria.[40] The entry of Syrian troops into Lebanon in June 1976 led to a gradual loss of foreign policy independence. Lebanon was henceforth placed at the service of Syria's eastern front deterrence strategy vis-à-vis Israel.[41] Any attempt to break away from the Syrian vise—whether through the May 17, 1983 agreement or the 'war of liberation' launched by Michel 'Awn on March 14, 1989—was resisted by Damascus, either through its proxy Lebanese allies, or through the overwhelming military power of Syrian forces stationed in Lebanon.[42]

The sectarian composition of the Lebanese army, traced in Table 4, also constrains foreign policy choices. It inhibits the deployment of the army for domestic purposes, exposing the domestic arena to foreign actors and intervention. During the 1958 civil war, the army was kept on the sidelines

lest it should disintegrate. A solution to the conflict had to be imported from the outside, through Egyptian and American mediation. This, consequently, imposed a pro-Egyptian foreign policy on then-President Fu'ad Shihab. Sectarian considerations also inhibited the army from intervening against the Palestinian commandos stationed in Lebanon in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The weakness of the army, and its inability and unwillingness to confront the commandos, led to the Cairo Agreement of November 3,1969 regulating army–commando relations. It conceded sovereignty in some parts of the country to non-Lebanese actors. Lebanon's foreign policy toward the Arab–Israeli conflict was consequently tied to non-Lebanese interests. When the army was finally deployed during the early stages of the 1975 civil war, battalions fractured along confessional lines in January 1976, and then along sectarian lines. In the postwar phase, Syria streamlined the army with its own military establishment and objectives, and tried to reindoctrinate it along pro-Syrian lines. After the Syrian withdrawal, the weakness and limitations of the Lebanese army were reexposed: its deployment in south Lebanon and throughout the country to keep the peace between domestic opponents stretched it to the breaking point; it has proved unable and unwilling to confront pro-Syrian

Table 4: Sectarian Composition of Army Officers Corps (in percent)[44]

Sect	Pre-1945	1945–1958	1958–1975	1975–1990	1991–2004
Maronite	47.6	43.8	34.8	32.2	30.3
Greek Catholic	12.6	11.9	9.9	9.3	7.5
Greek Orthodox	5.8	8.1	8.7	7.7	8.7
Armenian	5.8	1.7	1.5	1.7	1.5
Total Christians	71.8	65.5	55	51	47.1
Sunni	8.7	14.7	15.3	16.6	16.1
Shi'a	2.9	9.3	15.3	20.9	27.2
Druze	14.6	9.9	14.5	11.2	9.6
Total Muslims	26.2	33.9	45	49	52.9
Jewish	1.9	0.6	0	0	0

Palestinian groups stationed in Lebanon challenging the sovereignty of the Lebanese government and acting as conduits for Syrian influence in Lebanon.[43] Nor has it been able to neutralize Syrian and other intelligence networks operating in Lebanon.

Foreign Policy Orientation

Both the National Pact and the Ta'if Accord placed limits on the state's foreign policy orientation. These limits, discussed in earlier sections of this chapter, were intended to achieve a minimal consensus among the different sects over the state's foreign policy orientation. Lebanon's pre-Ta'if foreign policy at the international level is generally identified with a center-right orientation, best articulated by Philippe Taqla, Rashid Karamé, and Fu'ad Shihab.[45] Lebanon was to position itself between the West and the Nonaligned Movement without alienating the Soviet Union. It was to retain close relations with the Western world, especially France and then the US, while supporting Arab causes on the international scene. Foreign policy stances that strayed from this position—such as Chamoun's in 1957–1958 and Gemayel's in 1982–1983—engendered political crises and armed confrontation. With respect to the state's international foreign policy orientation, the Ta'if Accord limits itself to reiterating Lebanon's membership in the Nonaligned Movement. However, and until Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon, a pro-Syria regional orientation had a direct bearing on the state's international orientation and foreign policy choices.

Lebanon's Arab foreign policy exhibits greater diversity. Nassif Hitti identifies four options that Lebanon has faced here: 'forced accommodation,' 'confrontation,' 'passive preventive accommodation,' and 'active preventive accommodation.'[46] Forced accommodation is chosen when the state faces an internal crisis manifested in the lack of domestic consensus over its Arab orientation. It involves making concessions to the most relevant Arab actor on the Lebanese domestic scene, at the cost of conceding a measure of state sovereignty and authority, either to eschew domestic escalation or negotiate a new consensus. The Arab policies of Charles Helou (1964–1970) and Suleiman Franjieh (1970–1976) fit this description. In the case of a confrontationalist Arab policy, the regime contests the demands and interests of the regional Arab hegemon, aligning itself with the latter's regional or international opponents. In the pre-Ta'if political system, this Arab policy option required the complacence of a weak prime minister, permitting the presidency to defy the

mutual veto enshrined in the National Pact. The Arab policies of Camille Chamoun (1952–1958) during the premiership of Sami al-Solh, and of Amin Gemayel (1982–1988) during the premiership of Shafiq al-Wazzan, fell into this category. This Arab policy orientation led to the collapse of the national consensus, political paralysis, and consequent domestic upheaval. An Arab policy of passive preventive accommodation involves refraining from taking any action that may provoke the Arab pole wielding most influence over domestic politics to avoid violent repercussions. This approach characterized the Arab policies of Elyas Sarkis (1976–1982), Elyas al-Hrawi (1990–1998), and Emile Lahoud (1998–2007) vis-à-vis Syria. Finally, an active preventive accommodationist Arab policy is characterized by a rapprochement with the Arab hegemon. This allows the state to engineer a new national consensus and consolidate domestic stability. It is useful for two reasons: first, because it endorses the hegemon's stances in the regional and international arena without necessarily undermining Lebanon's regional and international interests; second, it insulates the domestic political arena from transnational manipulations and engages in a process of state building to foster national unity. Fu'ad Shihab (1958–1964) opted for this regional foreign policy choice.

These are the foreign policy options at the state level. Looking below the systemic level of analysis, a plethora of substate sectarian foreign policy orientations may be identified.[47] These foreign policy orientations are dynamic, overlapping with domestic politics in stubborn two-level games, in which sectarian leaders appeal to different external actors or institutions to buttress their domestic position against local opponents.

In the period leading up to the civil war, two main foreign policy orientations dominated Lebanon. One, identified with the Maronites and allied Christian sects (though it did not encompass all Christians), called for Lebanon's insulation from regional politics, especially the destabilizing effects of the Arab–Israeli conflict. This position upheld Lebanese sovereignty by calling for full neutrality in the Arab–Israeli conflict, and opposing Lebanon's use as a staging ground for commando operations against Israel. The other, gathering the main Muslim sects plus secular Christian segments represented in the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) and the Lebanese Communist Party, identified Lebanon with a pro-Palestinian foreign policy orientation. In this view, Lebanon should be placed at the service of the confrontation with Israel. It was a position dictated ostensibly by Arab nationalist motives, but aimed at using

the commando factor to empower Muslim politicians in their quest to achieve structural political reforms to redress the balance of sectarian power away from Maronite preponderance.[48]

During the civil war years, substate foreign policy orientations served to consolidate the powers of different sects. At one time or another, Maronite politicians invoked Syrian, Israeli, American, and Iraqi help against their opponents and in defense of their political prerogatives. The mainly Muslim anti-status quo groups bandwagoned with the PLO during the early phase of the war, and then shifted to a pro-Syrian alignment when the latter turned against its erstwhile Christian allies after 1977. Hizbullah, which made its official debut on the Lebanese political scene on February 16, 1985, aligned with Iran.

In the post-Ta'if period, Lebanon's foreign policy was oriented toward the liberation of Israeli-occupied Lebanese territory, the release of Lebanese prisoners in Israel, and the repatriation of Palestinian refugees. However substate foreign policy orientations fractured and became more complex. The Maronite camp divided along factional lines. Some politicians opted for a deeper alliance with Syria, namely the Franjieh family, presidents Elyas Hrawi and Emile Lahoud, Karim Pakradouni's wing of the Phalange party, and a bevy of independent Maronite politicians. The Maronite opposition, represented by Michel 'Awn's Free Patriotic Movement, the then-outlawed Lebanese Forces, the Qornat Shihwan Gathering, Amin Gemayel's Reformist Phalange Movement, Dori Chamoun's National Liberal Party, and Raymond and then Carlos Eddé's National Bloc Party, opposed Syrian control over Lebanon's domestic and foreign policy but lacked a viable external supporter. Syria's role as the external party overseeing the transition from war to peace was sanctioned by the principal regional and international actors involved in Lebanese affairs (Saudi Arabia and the United States, respectively). The Greek Orthodox political elite has presented a more checkered tapestry. The SSNP elite is aligned with Syria, but other Greek Orthodox politicians, such as Fu'ad Butrus and 'Isam Faris, have strong connections with France and the US. Among the Muslim sects, Nabih Berri's Shi'a Amal Movement, the Druze Arslan clan and Walid Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party, the Sunni Karamé and Miqati families in Tripoli, Rafiq al-Hariri in Beirut, and the Shi'a Hizbullah emerged as solid Syrian allies in the postwar era, though Hizbullah maintained strong ideological, financial, and logistic connections with Tehran.[49]

The assassination of al-Hariri on February 14, 2005, and the subsequent withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon, reopened the debate among Lebanese over whether Israel or Syria was the country's real enemy, and what strategy could serve best to deter future Israeli aggressions against Lebanon while delinking the country from the wider regional confrontation between Iran and Syria, on the one hand, and Israel, the US, and the so-called moderate Arab states led by Saudi Arabia, on the other. The post-Syria phase has also witnessed a reorientation of substate foreign policies as Lebanon's foreign policy is repositioned within the changing geopolitics of the region. With the exit of Syria from Lebanon, France and the US assumed the role of external patrons of Lebanon's domestic and foreign politics. Syria's *wisaya* (guardianship) in the past fifteen years was replaced with American–French *riʿaya* (sponsorship).[50] Saudi Arabia assumed the role of the Arab state involved most intimately in Lebanese affairs, followed closely by Egypt. Lebanon, once again, became a battleground for a grander regional geopolitical contest, this time involving the US and its allies, on the one hand, and the Iranian–Syrian alliance and its substate allies, namely Hizbullah and Hamas, on the other. Domestic actors turned to their external patrons for direction and support. Most Christian politicians, Jumblatt, and Saad al-Hariri invoked French–American, and Saudi in the case of the latter, support; the Hizbullah–Amal Shiʿa coalition balanced domestic and external pressures with support from the Iranian–Syrian alliance, with Hizbullah and Iran the dominant partner in each dyad. The Franjieh and Karamé families retained their pro-Syrian orientation, as did the SSNP and the Arslan clan. In a classic two-level game, each side is trying to anchor Lebanon in a particular regional camp to consolidate its own domestic position.[51] ʿAwn is the only politician who has resisted affiliation with external actors.

The Decision-Making Process

Pre-Taʾif foreign policy decision making was the constitutional privilege of the Maronite president. A strong Sunni prime minister, such as Riyad al-Solh or Saʾib Salam, could participate in crafting the government's foreign policy, and announce it in the ministerial manifesto, but was not equal to the president in the decision-making process. Input into the decision-making process came from the foreign minister only when the latter was a presidential confidant. Charles Malik, Philippe Taqla, Fuʾad Butrus, and Elie Salem played this role in the Chamoun, Shihab, Sarkis,

and Gemayel presidencies. Some presidents relied on their own foreign policy teams. Gemayel's foreign policy team consisted of Ghassan Tueni and Wadi' Haddad in addition to Salem. At times of domestic crisis and upheaval, almost always related to clashes over the state's regional policy, a new foreign policy consensus was negotiated with input from the major sects and external actors.

Foreign policy decision making continued to be monopolized by the president in the postwar period till Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon, despite the constitutional reforms adopted in Ta'if shifting this prerogative to cabinet in its collective capacity. Both Hrawi and Lahoud were selected by Hafiz al-Assad, and toed the foreign policy line choreographed by Damascus. Their foreign ministers, with the exception of the independent Salim al-Hoss, followed Syria's dictates carefully, and deferred to their Syrian counterparts in regional and international forums.[52] The foreign minister's input into the decision-making process, and the execution of the state's foreign policy, was consequently reduced substantially. Throughout the Hrawi presidency, a tug-of-war between three foreign policy decision-making poles emerged, though within the framework of the foreign policy orientation dictated by Syrian officials: the foreign minister, allied closely to the president, who attempted to assert authority over foreign policy execution; al-Hariri, who tried to expand the parameters of autonomous decision making by using his personal connections with some members of the Syrian regime, namely Vice President Abdel Halim Khaddam and Chief of Staff Army Corps General Hikmat al-Shihabi, and with Arab and Western capitals, especially Riyadh, Paris, and the Vatican; and then-commander of the army, Lahoud, who wielded veto power over army deployments in south Lebanon and hence over the state's foreign policy vis-à-vis Israel.[53]

During Lahoud's tenure, foreign policy decision making in the security sphere was centralized in the presidency. Al-Hariri's margin of maneuver in foreign policymaking was limited to economic, not political, matters. He conducted his own foreign policy with the Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia, and was allowed to use his international connections to attract investments and aid for Lebanon, as during the Paris 2 donor conference, but strategic issues, particularly those pertaining to the Arab–Israeli conflict, remained in Lahoud's hands and, by implication, Syria's. Constrained by the perennial domestic confrontation with Lahoud, al-Hariri demonstrated his chagrin by dropping the pro-Syrian foreign minister from his delegation on a number of important foreign trips.[54]

When he was out of office, al-Hariri used his personal connections to complicate Beirut's relations with Saudi Arabia, France, and the US.[55] He was also able to shift the locus of Lebanon's postwar relations with Western capitals from the Christian political elite to the Sunni community.[56]

With Syria's exit from Lebanon, foreign policy decision making became much more dissonant. No longer monopolized by the presidency, foreign policymaking turned into a veritable battle between different political coalitions and their representatives in cabinet, each supported by external actors. In tandem with the Ta'if reforms, the prime minister plays a leading role in foreign policymaking, as does the speaker of parliament. On some occasions, Saniora has demonstrated a unilateral approach to foreign policymaking, inviting recrimination from the president and other political actors.[57] Moreover, the foreign minister has resumed the role of spokesperson and representative of the country's complex foreign policy orientation, and enjoys much more input in decision making than before.

The Ministry of Foreign and Expatriate Affairs plays a largely technical role, articulating the government's foreign policy as embodied in the ministerial manifesto. Much of the ministry's work involves liaising with diplomatic missions in Beirut and abroad, serving Lebanese expatriate communities and the country's commercial and economic interests. Article 1 of Law 1306 of June 18, 1971 describes the ministry's functions as preparing, coordinating, and executing Lebanon's foreign policy, as well as serving Lebanese expatriate communities.[58] The ministry provides little input into foreign policymaking, however. The diplomatic corps has complained repeatedly of government disregard of the ministry's prerogatives, both in foreign policymaking and execution, and the government's preference for liaising with foreign ambassadors posted in Beirut instead of Lebanese ambassadors abroad.[59]

The administrative structure of the ministry is divided into twelve departments, each responsible for a specialized function. These include political and consular affairs, economic affairs, expatriate affairs, protocol, international organizations, administrative and financial affairs, and legal and research affairs. Throughout the war years, the diplomatic corps retained its administrative and professional standards.[60] Sectarian tensions within the corps were minimal, compared to other state institutions. In the postwar period, the ministry, like all other state institutions, fell victim to the neopatrimonial predatory appetites of ex-warlords. Though the

diplomatic corps holds regular exams of high standards, clientalism and sectarianism have crept into it at the expense of professionalism.[61] This has transpired in tandem with a number of postwar structural transformations.

The cultural orientation of postwar diplomatic corps personnel has changed. Prewar cadres were predominantly francophone. In the postwar period, the corps is divided equally between English- and French-educated members. Women represent a substantial proportion of the postwar corps. Although the diplomatic corps quota has always been divided equally among Christians and Muslims (see Table 5), in the post-Ta'if era Muslim, especially Shi'a, representation in important diplomatic posts has increased. The Shi'a share of the Muslim quota, ignored by successive postindependence administrations, and allocated instead to the Sunnis, had already been consecrated during Fu'ad Butrus's ministerial tenure in the Sarkis presidency.

A separate Ministry for Expatriate Affairs was formed during Hrawi's presidency. Presided over twice by a Shi'a minister and once by a Druze,[62] it was detached from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to focus strictly on expatriate relations. It recruited its corps of attachés along neopatrimonial lines, with fixed sectarian quotas. It was abandoned at the outset of Lahoud's presidency, and returned to the Ministry of Foreign and Expatriate Affairs as one of its original twelve departments. The absorption of its attachés into the diplomatic corps with their ranks intact caused resentment among the latter's personnel.

Foreign Policy Behavior

Though Lebanon's foreign policy behavior is supposed to be shaped by the National Pact and, in the postwar era, the Ta'if Accord, the idiosyncratic and ideological predilections of different presidents have left an indelible mark on the country's regional and international relations.[64] Some presidents preserved the delicate domestic consensus over the country's foreign policy behavior and, consequently, insulated the state from regional and international crises. Others abandoned the national consensus, risking domestic instability and exposing the country to regional and international contests. Yet other presidents were helpless in the face of overlapping domestic and external challenges, opting to manage the crisis through a foreign policy of accommodation. This final section outlines the main patterns of Lebanon's foreign policy behavior at both the international and regional levels.

Table 5: Sectarian Distribution of Ambassadorial Positions[63]

Sect	Number of Positions
Muslims	
Sunni	14.34
Shi'a	14.34
Druze	4.25
'Alawi	1.06
Total Muslims	34
Christians	
Maronite	18.06
Greek Orthodox	7.43
Greek Catholic	4.25
Minorities	4.25
Total Christians	34

The International Level

President Bishara al-Khouri (1943–1952) successfully avoided identifying Lebanon with any Western military alliance. Chamoun's bandwagoning with the Eisenhower Doctrine against his domestic opponents, and the consequent foreign policy shift to an explicitly pro-American orientation, triggered a short civil war.[65] Chamoun's successor, Shihab, francophone by upbringing and sensibility, restored the foreign policy balance by pursuing close economic, cultural, diplomatic, and military relations with the West, particularly France, without antagonizing Egypt and the Soviet Union.[66] His successor, Helou, drew closer to Charles de Gaulle's France, as the latter became increasingly critical of Israel's attacks against Lebanon. The slide to civil war in the 1970s coincided with Franjieh's presidency, one that lacked international experience, and tended to delegate Lebanon's foreign policy to Syria.[67]

Sarkis considered the US a guarantor of Lebanon's sovereignty and independence, and of Christian prerogatives. He cultivated close relations with Washington, especially in the military field, but did not endorse Washington's regional initiatives. Nor would Sarkis allow his relations with Washington compromise Lebanon's sovereignty and relations with Moscow, or close relations with Syria. Moreover, though he considered

Washington essential to the resolution of the Lebanese crisis, he was convinced that a comprehensive and final settlement of the Middle East conflict entailed an active Soviet role.[68] UN Security Council Resolution 425, promulgated on the morrow of Israel's 1978 invasion of Lebanon, and calling for Israel's immediate withdrawal from Lebanese territory, captured the dilemmas of the Sarkis presidency.[69] It reflected a convergence of interests between different international and regional actors at the expense of Lebanon's own sovereign interests. Hence the resolution was not promulgated under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter (a US demand), nor did it serve to extend Lebanese sovereignty in south Lebanon over the Palestinian commando (a Soviet demand on behalf of its regional allies, Syria and the PLO).[70]

Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon caused the hitherto cautious Sarkis to seek US mediation to stop the invasion and organize the evacuation of Palestinian and Syrian troops from Beirut. This tilt toward Washington at Syria's expense late in Sarkis' presidency developed into a full alliance during Gemayel's. Gemayel and his foreign policy team believed that only the full weight of American diplomacy could secure Israel's and, consequently, Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon.[71] Gemayel also used his alliance with the US to strengthen his position against domestic rivals. Despite local and Syrian opposition, Gemayel considered the May 17, 1983 agreement with Israel a necessary price for Israel's withdrawal.[72] But when Washington failed to deliver Israel, Gemayel realized that he had miscalculated. Henceforth he would turn to Damascus for help in resolving the domestic impasse.

Syria's role as the main implementer of the war to peace transition, with US and Saudi acquiescence, allowed Damascus to dominate Lebanon's postwar foreign policy.[73] Syria shaped Lebanon's foreign policy vis-à-vis the Arab–Israeli conflict, and deployed it at the service of its own geopolitical objectives. Lebanon's relations with Washington passed by Damascus. Lebanon's decision to participate in the October 1991 Madrid conference and its negotiating strategy in the subsequent Washington negotiations were coordinated fully with Damascus.[74] Moreover, although Lebanon participated in the Madrid conference based on UN Security Council Resolution 425 and delinked it from UN Security Council Resolution 242, which established the principle of 'land for peace,' the Lebanese delegation in Washington abided by two negotiating principles that served Syria's negotiating strategy and geopolitical

interests: close coordination with the Syrian–Israeli track, and the comprehensiveness of any prospective peace settlement.[75] Consequently, the tempo of Lebanese–Israeli negotiations was dictated by Damascus based on developments in the Syria–Israel negotiations; and Lebanon was now committed to Syria's own terms of reference for peace negotiations with Israel. The Lebanese delegation was instructed by Damascus to negotiate only Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon; peace negotiations would await developments on the Syrian–Israeli track.[76] The coordination with Syria was so extensive that a paper submitted by the Lebanese delegation on May 11, 1993 in response to an Israeli proposal was drafted in Damascus, in Vice President Khaddam's office.[77]

After the signing of the Oslo Accords in September 1993, Syria's control of the Lebanese-Israeli negotiations was consecrated formally in the slogan *talazum al-masarayn* (the cohesiveness of the two tracks, namely, Lebanon's and Syria's), underscoring Syria's indispensable role in any viable comprehensive Middle East peace settlement.[78] Syria also negotiated with Washington new rules of engagement between Hizbullah and Israel via the 26 'April Agreement' on behalf of Lebanon when Israel launched Operation Grapes of Wrath in April 1996. And when Israel withdrew from Lebanon on May 24, 2000, Damascus used Hizbullah operations in the contested Shebaa Farms to underscore the geopolitical perils of ignoring its own occupied lands, and to forestall delinkage of the Lebanese and Syrian tracks.[79]

Close relations with France, a cornerstone of Lebanese foreign policy since independence, were deepened after Jacques Chirac's ascension to the presidency in 1995.[80] Chirac's personal relations with al-Hariri, and his acceptance of a dominant Syrian role in postwar Lebanon and in the country's foreign policy vis-à-vis the Arab–Israeli conflict, allowed Paris to play a dynamic role in Lebanon and the region.[81] However Lahoud's battles with al-Hariri hampered the presidency's relations with France. The convergence of US and French policy over Lebanon late in Lahoud's presidency, and the promulgation of UN Security Council Resolution 1559, created a deep rift between Paris and the Lebanese presidency. Henceforth, al-Hariri deployed his relations with Paris to balance against both Lahoud and Syria.

Beyond the security issue area, Lebanon enjoyed considerable leeway after 1990 in conducting its international relations. Domestic economic interests were paramount in shaping Lebanon's foreign policy

behavior toward Western countries and the European Union. The density of these relations permitted a postwar realignment toward the West on nonsecurity matters despite the Syrian role.[82] Lebanon was also active in Euro-Mediterranean diplomacy. It was a signatory to the Barcelona Declaration of November 26, 1995, and pursued negotiations for an EU partnership agreement regulating cooperation in the political, trade, investment, financial, social, and cultural spheres.[83] Marketed by al-Hariri's economic team as an instrument to modernize the Lebanese economy and expose it to international competition, an association agreement between Lebanon and the EU was initialed on June 10, 2002.[84] It was followed by an interim agreement that enforced the agreement's economic and trade provisions with immediate effect on March 1, 2003. The association agreement later came into effect on April 1, 2006.

Negotiations toward the association agreement with the EU underscored the dissonance in postwar Lebanese foreign policy decision making and behavior. While Syria controlled security-related matters, al-Hariri and his team focused on the economic issue area. This dissonance was also expressed in al-Hariri's attempts to retain friendly relations with the US at a time when the Syrian-backed presidency assumed a confrontational attitude toward it on a range of issues, including the deployment of the Lebanese army to south Lebanon, the financing of terrorism, the road map to Arab–Israeli peace, and Syria's dominant role in Lebanese politics.[85] It was also clear in the reactions of different local actors to UN Security Council Resolution 1559 of September 2, 2004. Reflecting a convergence of American and French policy over Lebanon and Syria, it declared its support "for a free and fair electoral process in Lebanon's upcoming presidential election conducted according to Lebanese constitutional rules and devised without foreign interference or influence." The resolution also called on "all remaining foreign forces to withdraw from Lebanon."[86] Hizbullah, Lahoud, and Syria ignored Resolution 1559, while al-Hariri used it to strengthen his domestic position against the latter two.

The Regional Level

Bishara al-Khouri and Riyad al-Solh ensured that Lebanon assumed a neutral stance in inter-Arab conflicts. This delicate balancing act stood in stark contrast to Chamoun's confrontation with Cairo that climaxed with his endorsement of the Eisenhower Doctrine.[87] The concomitant 1958 war, the result of a convergence in Chamoun's domestic and foreign

policies, underlined the consequences of deviating from the National Pact's foreign policy principles.[88] It demonstrated the Arab nationalist Muslim opposition's readiness to invite Arab intervention in Lebanese affairs to serve its domestic agenda, and also Chamoun's use of external cover, in the form of the Eisenhower Doctrine, to neutralize his domestic opponents and engineer his reelection.[89] Shihab opted for rapprochement with Egypt to insulate the country from external interventions, and neutralize Sunni politicians' instrumental use of Nasserism to strengthen their domestic political positions. Only then could domestic stability be achieved and, subsequently, a process of state building launched to engineer allegiance to state institutions.[90]

Helou followed in the footsteps of Shihab's regional foreign policy, maintaining close cooperation with Nasser on regional matters and the Arab–Israeli conflict.[91] He attempted to balance two foreign policy objectives in a changing regional environment: defending Lebanon's sovereignty from external interference without jeopardizing its relations with Arab states, especially Egypt. As the country became increasingly polarized along confessional lines over commando operations launched against Israel from Lebanon, this balancing act became increasingly difficult to sustain. This was most dramatically expressed in the Cairo Agreement of November 3, 1969, promulgated to organize commando operations from Lebanon into Israel. By cordoning off some parts of Lebanon for commando activity, it showed how the interplay between domestic and foreign politics compromised Lebanon's sovereignty.[92]

Both Franjieh and Sarkis aligned Lebanon's regional policies with Syria's. The former sought a solution to the problem of commando activity in Lebanon under Syrian auspices.[93] Franjieh used Syria's weight with its Muslim allies in Lebanon to negotiate minimal constitutional reforms (via the Constitutional Document of February 14, 1976) and contain the political demands and military activities of the National Movement and Palestinian groups.[94] His strategy failed when the latter groups refused to abide by Syria's dictates, thus inviting its direct military intervention in June 1976. Sarkis was a genuine believer in the necessity of special relations between Beirut and Damascus, especially in the foreign policy and security spheres, but not at the expense of Lebanon's sovereignty and independence, or its relations with other Arab states, especially Saudi Arabia. Nor did this relationship justify Syrian interference in Lebanon's domestic affairs.[95] He attempted to use his alignment with Syria on regional and international

affairs, à la Shihab, to strengthen his hand in domestic politics, secure a resolution of the civil war, and insulate Lebanon from regional politics.[96] Sarkis thus sought al-Assad's help in restraining the Palestinian armed groups in Lebanon to create room for a political solution to the Lebanese crisis. Syria declined to free Sarkis' hand in domestic matters, however.[97] Sarkis also faced opposition from Syria, the PLO, most Arab states, and the Soviet Union in his attempt to implement UNSCR 425 and thus delink the crisis created by the presence of Palestinian commando bases in south Lebanon from the wider regional conflict.[98] Syria insisted on using Lebanon as a pawn in its geopolitical confrontation with Israel. However, Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, and the concomitant Syrian withdrawal from Beirut, forced Sarkis to realign away from Syria toward the US.[99]

Gemayel relied on the US in the hope of securing both Israel's and Syria's withdrawals from Lebanon. When his strategy failed, and faced domestic upheavals, he turned to Damascus for help against his opponents. Syria conditioned its assistance on the abrogation of the May 17 agreement, which Gemayel undertook on March 5, 1984. Gemayel later tried to strike a Shihab-like deal with al-Assad. He wanted to achieve an alliance with al-Assad, and elicit the latter's help in turning the pro-Syrian militias into supporters of his government. In exchange, Gemayel entertained close cooperation with Damascus in the security, economic, and information fields. Syria, on the other hand, sought constitutional reforms that would empower its Lebanese allies and establish special relations between the two states. However, Gemayel's efforts ended in failure.[100] He later clashed with al-Assad over a Syrian-brokered constitutional reform package, which he believed would undermine substantially the executive powers of the Maronite presidency and appoint Damascus umpire over Lebanese politics.[101] He thus engineered a coup against the December 8, 1985 Tripartite Agreement. Henceforth Gemayel's presidency was paralyzed by domestic deadlock and international indifference.

The pro-Syrian regional and international foreign policy alignment stipulated in the Ta'if Accord was consecrated by official treaties between the two governments during Hrawi's presidency. The Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination streamlined the security and foreign policy objectives of both countries. The treaty reiterated the reciprocal security guarantees stipulated in the Ta'if Accord. Moreover, Article 1 of the treaty declared that "the two states will work to achieve the highest levels of cooperation and coordination in all political and economic

and security and cultural and scientific and other fields." Article 5 called upon both states to "coordinate their Arab and international policies and achieve the broadest cooperation in Arab and international institutions and organizations on different regional and international issues." The treaty also provided a mechanism for the institutionalization of coordination between the two countries through bilateral executive, economic, foreign policy, and defense and security committees (Article 6).[102] Given the power disparity between the two countries, the treaty invariably institutionalized Syrian tutelage over Lebanon, chiefly in the foreign policy and security fields.

The latter objective was also secured with the Defense and Security Agreement *(ittifaqiyat al-difa' wa-l-amn)* of September 1, 1991. The agreement provided for comprehensive coordination and cooperation among the military, security, and intelligence establishments of Lebanon and Syria. It was clearly intended to streamline the security and defense establishments of the two countries. Article 21 banned "any action or activity or organization, in all military and security and political and information fields, that may cause danger or threat to the other country." Article 22 stipulated that "each side commits [itself] not to offer refuge or facilitate the passage or provide protection to individuals or organizations who operate against the security of the other state, and in case they escape to it, the other side commits [itself] to apprehend them and deliver them to the other side per [the latter's] demand." The agreement also provided for meetings to be held monthly, or whenever the occasion arose, between the military and security officials of each country to exchange pertinent information (Articles 23 and 24). Finally, the agreement called upon the defense and interior ministries of both countries to promote the exchange of officers and instructors in military schools and training camps to "achieve a high degree of military adaptability and coordination [between the two armies], in confronting mutual dangers."[103]

Lebanon's postwar pro-Syrian foreign policy sanctioned the indefinite deployment of Syrian troops in Lebanon, declaring it "legitimate, necessary, and temporary."[104] It also linked the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon with the achievement of a just and comprehensive settlement of the Arab–Israeli conflict.[105] This open-ended legitimation of Syria's military presence in Lebanon served Damascus' geopolitical interests, and contravened the Ta'if Accord that called for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon two years after the promulgation of constitutional reforms, that

is by September 1992. Little wonder, then, that Hrawi and Lahoud avoided an activist regional and international foreign policy. Moreover, they both deployed their alignment with Syria against their domestic rivals.

Lebanon's relations with Iran have passed through a number of phases.[106] In the pre-Ta'if phase, which coincided with Iran's revolutionary phase, Tehran limited its relations with Lebanon to Hizbullah, and the latter served the objectives of the radical Iranian leadership. In the post-Ta'if phase, coinciding with Rafsanjani's realist presidency, a triangular relationship emerged between Iran, the Lebanese state, and Hizbullah. In 1990, Tehran dropped its original opposition to the Ta'if Accord, recognized the legitimacy of the Lebanese state, and pursued cordial relations with it, but also cemented its ties with Hizbullah. Tehran's influence with Hizbullah rested on a mix of ideological affiliation and material support. Al-Hariri later played an instrumental role in strengthening bilateral relations between Iran and Lebanon under the Khatami presidency, especially in the economic sphere.

Conclusion: Foreign Policy Battles in Post-Syria Lebanon

The battle between overlapping domestic, regional, and international actors over Lebanon's foreign policy resumed in earnest immediately after Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. The March 14 alliance, led by Saad al-Hariri, Walid Jumblatt, and the Lebanese Forces, sought to realign Lebanon's international foreign policy in a pro-American direction. The opposition, on the other hand, led by Hizbullah, Michel 'Awn's Free Patriotic Movement, and Nabih Berri, resisted this foreign policy realignment. The March 14 alliance has bandwagoned with the US to strengthen its domestic position. It deployed the United Nations Security Council against local rivals but also to insulate Lebanon from Syrian intervention. Hence the demands for the stationing of UN troops along the Syrian–Lebanese border and the establishment of a tribunal investigating al-Hariri's assassination by the Security Council under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter. UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which ended Israel's July 2006 war, is being interpreted and used instrumentally by Saniora to disarm and emasculate Hizbullah. This exposed further dissonance in Lebanon's wartime diplomacy: the March 14 alliance, represented by Saniora and supported by the US and the so-called moderate Arab states led by Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan, conditioned the end of the war on Hizbullah's disarmament; the latter rejected this conditionality and

refused any direct reference to the decommissioning of its weapons arsenal.[107] Saniora also attempted to convince the US administration that placing the Shebaa Farms under UN custody would deny Hizbullah a pretext for maintaining its weapons arsenal.

Lebanon's regional alignments are also being renegotiated after Syria's withdrawal. The March 14 alliance has aligned with the pro-American 'moderate' Arab states. It has also called for the renegotiation of bilateral treaties coordinating Lebanon's security and foreign policy with Syria's. On the other hand, and with the exception of 'Awn, the opposition, but especially Hizbullah, is allied with the Iranian–Syrian regional camp. The confrontation between these multiple dyads, at both the domestic and geopolitical levels, has intensified the overlap between domestic and foreign politics in Lebanon.[108] This has exacerbated struggles between rival domestic groups over control of the post-Syria Lebanese state, hardened sectarian sentiments, exposed the country to external intervention, and brought it to the brink of civil war as regional foes confront each other via local proxies. Post-Syria Lebanon's foreign policy behavior, both at the regional and international levels, is intimately connected to this power struggle. Invariably, Lebanon's sovereignty and foreign policy independence is the prime casualty of this overlapping contest.

Appendix: Lebanese Foreign Ministers by Sect

Name	Sect	Cabinets
Salim Taqla	Greek Catholic	25/9/1943–2/7/1944 3/7/1944–9/1/1945
Henri Far'awn	Maronite	13/1/1945–22/8/1945
Hamid Franjieh	Maronite	22/8/1945–22/5/1946
Philippe Taqla	Greek Catholic	22/5/1946–14/12/1946
Henri Far'awn	Greek Catholic	14/12/1946–7/6/1947
Hamid Franjieh	Maronite	7/6/1947–26/7/1948 26/7/1948–1/10/1949
Philippe Taqla	Greek Catholic	1/10/1949–14/2/1951
Husayn al-'Uwayni	Sunni	14/2/1951–7/6/1951
Charles Helou	Maronite	7/6/1951–11/2/1952
Philippe Taqla	Greek Catholic	11/2/1952–9/9/1952
Nazem 'Akkari	Sunni	9/9/1952–14/9/1952

Sa'ib Salam	Sunni	14/9/1952–18/9/1952
Nazem 'Akkari	Sunni	18/9/1952–30/9/1952
Musa Mubarak	Maronite	30/9/1952–30/4/1953
George Hakim	Greek Orthodox	30/4/1953–16/8/1953
Alfred Naqqash	Maronite	16/8/1953–1/3/1954 1/3/1954–16/9/1954 16/9/1954–9/7/1955
Hamid Franjieh	Maronite	9/7/1955–19/9/1955
Salim Lahoud	Maronite	19/9/1955–19/3/1956 19/3/1956–8/6/1956 8/6/1956–18/11/1956
Charles Malik	Greek Orthodox	18/11/1956–18/8/1957 18/8/1957–14/3/1958 14/3/1958–24/9/1958
Philippe Taqla	Greek Catholic	24/9/1958–14/10/1958
Hasan al-'Uwayni	Sunni	14/10/1958–14/5/1960
Philippe Taqla	Greek Catholic	14/5/1960–1/8/1960 1/8/1960–20/5/1961 20/5/1961–31/10/1961 31/10/1961–20/2/1964 20/2/1964–25/9/1964
Fu'ad Amoun	Maronite	25/9/1964–18/11/1964
Philippe Taqla	Greek Catholic	18/11/1964–25/7/1965
George Hakim	Greek Orthodox	25/7/1965–8/2/1968
Fu'ad Butrus	Greek Orthodox	8/2/1968–12/10/1968
Ali Arab	Shi'a	12/10/1968–20/10/1968
Husayn al-'Uwayni	Sunni	20/10/1968–15/1/1969
Rashid Karamé	Sunni	15/1/1969–25/11/1969
Nasim Majdalani	Greek Orthodox	25/11/1969–13/10/1970
Khalil Abu Hamad	Greek Catholic	13/10/1970–27/5/1972 27/5/1972–25/4/1973
Fu'ad Naffie	Maronite	8/7/1973–31/10/1974
Philippe Taqla	Greek Catholic	31/10/1974–23/5/1975
Lucian Dahdah	Maronite	23/5/1975–1/7/1975
Philippe Taqla	Greek Catholic	1/7/1975–16/6/1976

Camille Chamoun	Maronite	16/6/1976–9/12/1976
Fu'ad Butrus	Greek Orthodox	9/12/1976–16/7/1979 16/7/1979–25/10/1980 25/10/1980–7/10/1982
Elie Salem	Greek Orthodox	7/10/1982–29/4/1984
Rashid Karamé	Sunni	30/4/1984–11/6/1987
Salim al-Hoss	Sunni	11/6/1987–23/12/1990
Faris Bwayz	Maronite	24/12/1990–15/5/1992 16/5/1992–30/10/1992 31/10/1992–24/5/1995 25/5/1995–6/11/1996 7/11/1996–26/10/1998
Salim al-Hoss	Sunni	4/12/1998–26/10/2000
Mahmoud Hammud	Shi'a	26/10/2000–16/4/2003
Jean Obeid	Maronite	17/4/2003–25/10/2004
Mahmoud Hammud	Shi'a	26/10/2004–19/4/2005
Mahmoud Hammud	Shi'a	19/4/2005–21/7/2005
Fawzi Salloukh	Shi'a	21/7/2005–

Source: Ministry of Foreign and Expatriate Affairs, Beirut, Lebanon.

Notes

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14 For 1913 figures see Ghassan Salamé, *al-Mujtama' wa-l-dawla fi-l-mashriq al-'arabi* (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wihda al-'Arabiya, 1987), 103. For 1932 and 1975 see Helena Cobban, *The Making of Modern Lebanon* (London: Hutchinson, 1985), 16. Total population figures for 1932 include a small Jewish community. For 2002, see Walid Shuqayr, "Lahoud wa-l-Hariri ittafaqa 'ala taghyir al-hukuma wa Dimashq nasahat bi-tajanubih," *al-Hayat*, October 23, 2002, quoting Interior Minister Elyas al-Murr.
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17 See Articles 55, 56, and 65 of the 1990 Constitution in *al-Dustur al-Lubnani: tarikhuhu, ta'dilatuhu, nassuhu al-hali, 1926–1991* Shafiq Jiha, ed. (Beirut: Dar al-'Ilm li-l-Malayin, 1991), 67–69 and 75–76.
18 Ibid., 75.
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29 Saudi Arabia promised $700 million, Kuwait $300, the UAE $300 million, and Qatar and Bahrain $200 million each. See the coverage of Paris 2 in *al-Nahar*, November 24, 2002; and *al-Hayat*, November 24, 2002.
30 See *al-Safir*, January 26, 2007.
31 These and capital inflow figures are from Iskandar, *Rafiq Hariri and the Fate of Lebanon*, 133 and 187.
32 Ibid., 187.
33 Elyas al-Hrawi and Kamil Mnassa, *'Awdat al-jumhuriya: min al-duwaylat ila al-dawla* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar li-l-Nashr, 2002), 177.
34 See Ibrahim al-Amin, "al-Hariri naqala ihtijajan Sa'udiyan rafi' al-mustawa," *al-Safir*, May 20, 2003.
35 *Al-Hayat*, February 20, 2003; *al-Safir*, April 29, 2003; and *al-Nahar*, May 6, 2003.
36 For a discussion see Anthony H. Cordesman, *The Military Balance in the Middle East* (London: Praeger, 2004), 194–201.
37 Ibid., 2, Figure 1.1. OAFVs refers to 'Other Armored Fighting Vehicles.'
38 The text is at http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/sc8181.doc.htm (accessed September 3, 2005).
39 Hasan Nasrallah declared this defensive strategy before the July 2006 war. Compare Nasrallah's speech reproduced in *al-Safir*, May 24, 2006 with his interviews in *al-Safir*, April 28, 2006 and November 1, 2006.
40 See Reuven Avi-Ran, *The Syrian Involvement in Lebanon since 1975* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991).
41 See Raymond A. Hinnebusch, "Revisionist Dreams, Realist Strategies: The Foreign Policy of Syria," in *The Foreign Policies of Arab States: The Challenge of*

Change, Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, eds., 2nd ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 382–83.

42 See Marius Deeb, *Syria's Terrorist War on Lebanon and the Peace Process* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

43 Namely the followers of Ahmad Jibril's PFLP-GC and Abu Musa's breakaway Fatah faction.

44 Oren Barak, "Towards a Representative Military? The Transformation of the Lebanese Officer Corps since 1945," *Middle East Journal* 60, no. 1 (Winter 2006): 89, Table 2.

45 See the analysis in Salamé, "Is a Lebanese Foreign Policy Possible?", 355.

46 Nassif Hitti, *The Foreign Policy of Lebanon: Lessons and Prospects for the Forgotten Dimension*, Papers on Lebanon no. 9 (Oxford: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1989), especially 12–13 and 20 for the discussion below.

47 For a discussion see Salem, "Reflections on Lebanon's Foreign Policy," 72–73.

48 Wade R. Goria, *Sovereignty and Leadership in Lebanon, 1943–1976* (London: Ithaca Press, 1985).

49 Waddah Sharara, *Dawlat 'Hizbullah': Lubnan mujtama'an islamiyan* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar li-l-Nashr, 1996); and Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004).

50 Jihad al-Zayn, "Kul al-dakhil al-lubnani . . . khariji," *al-Nahar*, December 20, 2005.

51 Joseph Smeha, "al-Mawqi' al-lubnani bayna khayarayn iqlimiyayn," *al-Safir,* February 16, 2006.

52 In one Arab foreign ministers' meeting, Ahmad Maher, Egypt's foreign minister, asked his Lebanese counterpart, Mahmoud Hammud, to look at him when answering his queries and not Faruq al-Shar', Syria's foreign minister. This story was recounted by Ali Hemadé on his program *al-Istihqaq*, Future TV, May 20, 2005. A similar incident transpired during the November 1995 Euro-Mediterranean summit in Barcelona, involving foreign ministers Faris Bwayz, Ehud Barak, and al-Shar'. Barak had asked Bwayz which country he was from, only to notice the latter looking at Shar' before responding. See Habib C. Malik, *Between Damascus and Jerusalem: Lebanon and Middle East Peace* (Washington, DC: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1997), 79.

53 A good example of this transpired in August 1993, when Lahoud refused to implement a al-Hariri-engineered decision by the Supreme Council for Defense (al-Majlis al-A'la li-l-Difa') to deploy the Lebanese Army in the south after a massive Israeli military operation. Unbeknownst to al-Assad, the decision had been cleared by Khaddam, al-Hariri's ally in Damascus; it would have placed the army on a collision course with Hizbullah. When Lahoud refused to implement the decision, al-Hariri informed him that the orders came from Khaddam. Lahoud was intransigent, and threatened to resign. When al-Assad learned of Lahoud's position, he invited him to Damascus. Complimenting him on this position, al-Assad informed Lahoud that it was not Syria's policy to send the Lebanese Army to south Lebanon. See Lahoud's comments to cabinet on March 1, 2006, reproduced in *al-Safir*, March 2, 2006.

54 For example, when al-Hariri visited the White House in late 2002, Minister for Foreign and Expatriate Affairs Mahmoud Hammud was not informed of the visit beforehand. See the interview with Hammud in *al-Safir*, November 19, 2002.
55 Salim al-Hoss (former prime minister and minister of foreign and expatriate affairs), in discussion with the author, Beirut, August 7, 2003.
56 Joseph Smeha, "Ittifaq al-Ta'if: inhiyar al-mumarasa," *al-Akhbar*, January 4, 2007.
57 For example during the March 28, 2006 Khartoum Arab Summit, when Saniora and Lahoud clashed over the phrasing of the summit's final resolution pertaining to the resistance against Israel: whether it was the role of the state or Hizbullah.
58 Law 1306 of June 18, 1971, "Nizam wizarat al-kharijiya wa-l-mughtaribin wa tahdid malakatiha al-'adadiya" (manuscript).
59 Dhafer al-Hasan, "al-Diblumasiya al-lubnaniya wa-l-'arabiya: al-waqi' wa-l-murtaja," *al-Safir*, July 28–29, 2003.
60 Fu'ad al-Turk (former ambassador and director general of the Ministry of Foreign and Expatriate Affairs) in discussion with the author, Beirut, July 24, 2004.
61 See Fawzi Salloukh, *al-Waqi' al-lubnani: qadaya wa ara'* (Beirut: Dar al-Manhal al-Lubnani, 1999), 15–23 and 305–23; and al-Hasan, "al-Diplomasiya al-lubnaniya wa-l-'arabiya."
62 Rida Wahid in al-Hariri's first cabinet of October 31, 1992–May 24, 1995; Ali al-Khalil in al-Hariri's second, May 25, 1995–November 6, 1996; and Talal Arslan in al-Hariri's third cabinet of November 7, 1996–December 3, 1998.
63 Figures obtained from the Ministry of Foreign and Expatriate Affairs, Beirut, Lebanon. The fractions are meant to allow for some sectarian flexibility in the allocation of ambassadorial positions within otherwise fixed Muslim and Christian quotas.
64 The mandatory authority appointed Lebanese ministers of foreign and expatriate affairs before 1943. Hamid Franjieh (December 1, 1941–July 27, 1942) and Philip Bolous (July 27, 1942–March 18, 1943) were two such ministers. The actual practice of Lebanon's foreign policy was monopolized by the mandatory authorities, however. Consequently, this chapter explores the foreign policy behavior of independent Lebanon.
65 See Caroline Attié, *Struggle in the Levant: Lebanon in the 1950s* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004).
66 Interview with Fu'ad Butrus, former minister of foreign and expatriate affairs, Beirut, August 9, 2003. See also Salamé, "Is a Lebanese Foreign Policy Possible?" 355; and Basem al-Jisr, *Fu'ad Shihab: dhalika al-majhul* (Beirut: Sharikat al-Matbu'at li-l-Tawzi' wa-l-Nashr, 1988), 72.
67 Ibid.
68 Karim Pakradouni, *al-Salam al-mafqud: 'ahd Elyas Sarkis, 1976–1982* (Beirut: 'Abr al-Sharq li-l-Manshurat, 1984), 282.
69 It called "upon Israel immediately to cease its military action against Lebanese territorial integrity and withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory." See the text of the resolution in Khalidi, *Conflict and Violence in Lebanon*, 203.

70 Fu'ad Butrus, "al-Qarar 425: wilada wa khalfiya wa mawqi'an," 7–8 (manuscript). For the diplomacy of the resolution see Khalidi, *Conflict and Violence in Lebanon*, 123–43.

71 Interview with Elie Salem, former minister of foreign and expatriate affairs, Beirut, July 28, 2003. This uncritical reliance on the US is clear in the memoirs of Gemayel's foreign policy team. Abdalla Bouhabib, *al-Daw' al-akhdar: al-siyasa al-amrikiya tujah Lubnan* (Beirut: Sharikat al-Matbu'at li-l-Tawzi' wa-l-Nashr, 1991); and Elie Salem, *al-Khiyarat al-sa'ba: diblumasiyat al-bahth 'an makhraj* (Beirut: Sharikat al-Matbu'at li-l-Tawzi' wa-l-Nashr, 1993).

72 Interview with Abdalla Bouhabib, former Lebanese ambassador to the US, Beirut, July 23, 2003. For Gemayel's view see Amin Gemayel, *al-Rihan al-kabir* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar li-l-Nashr, 1988), 99–131.

73 On the American role see the interview with Faris Bwayz in *al-Safir*, November 14, 2002.

74 See George Bkasini, *al-Jawlat al-da'ifa: qissat al-mufawadat al-lubnaniya-al-isra'iliya min Madrid ila Washington* (Beirut: al-Furat li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi', 2001), especially 8–15, 21, and 29.

75 Ibid., 30.

76 Ibid., 99–118.

77 Ibid., 99. Simon Karam, then Lebanon's ambassador in Washington, and a member of the Lebanese negotiating team, accused his colleagues of over-coordinating with the Syrian delegation (ibid., 95).

78 Samir Kassir, *Dimuqratiyat Suriya wa istiqlal Lubnan: al-bahth 'an rabi' Dimashq* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar li-l-Nashr, 2004), 85–90.

79 Walid E. Moubarak, *The Position of a Weak State in an Unstable Region: The Case of Lebanon* (Abu Dhabi: Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 2003), 30–34.

80 Dawoud al-Sayigh, *Lubnan wa-l-'alam: bayn al-dawr wa-l-darura* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar li-l-Nashr, 2002), 49–80.

81 Jacques Chirac's speech to the Lebanese Parliament, text in *al-Hayat*, October 18, 2002, and his comments in the press conference at the close of the Ninth Francophone Summit in Beirut, in *Asharq al-Awsat*, October 21, 2002.

82 Najem, "Lebanon and Europe."

83 Sami E. Baroudi, "Lebanon's Foreign Trade Relations in the Postwar Era: Scenarios for Integration (1990–Present)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 41, no. 2 (March 2005), 201–25.

84 The text of the Association Agreement is at http://www.economy.gov.lb/NR/rdonlyres/D44EE124-274B-475F-A796-01E5F9F837EE/0/AssociationAgreementEN.pdf (accessed May 11, 2007).

85 See Sami E. Baroudi, "U.S.–Lebanese Relations in the 21st Century: A View from Beirut," *Arab World Geographer* 8, no. 4 (Winter 2005), 196–219. Emile Lahoud criticized the road map because it omitted any mention of the Palestinian refugees' right of return. See Lahoud's comments to Secretary of State Colin Powell in *al-Safir*, May 5, 2003.

86 The text is at http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/sc8181.doc.htm (accessed September 3, 2005).

87 Miles Copeland, *The Game of Nations: The Amorality of Power Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969), 226.
88 For an analysis of the war and its diplomacy see Qubain, *Crisis in Lebanon*; Irene L. Gendzier, *Notes from the Minefield: United States Intervention in Lebanon and the Middle East, 1945–1958* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); and Attié, *Struggle in the Levant*, 185–227.
89 Kamal S. Salibi, *Lebanon and the Middle Eastern Question*, Papers on Lebanon no. 8 (Oxford: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 1988).
90 See al-Jisr, *Fu'ad Shihab*, 71–77; and Tawfiq Kfoury, *al-Shihabiya wa siyasat al-mawqif* (Beirut: n.p., 1980).
91 See Charles Helou, *Hayat fi dhikrayat* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar li-l-Nashr, 1995).
92 See the text of the Cairo Agreement in Khalidi, *Conflict and Violence in Lebanon*, 185–87. It was later abrogated on May 21, 1987.
93 Interview with Fu'ad Butrus, Beirut, August 9, 2003.
94 For a discussion see Khalidi, *Conflict and Violence in Lebanon*, 50–56, and 189–91 for the text of the Constitutional Document.
95 See Pakradouni, *al-Salam al-mafqoud*, 31–36, 204, and 282.
96 Interview with Salim al-Hoss, Beirut, August 7, 2003.
97 Interview with Abdalla Bouhabib, Beirut, July 23, 2003.
98 Interview with Fu'ad Butrus, Beirut, August 9, 2003.
99 Interview with Salim al-Hoss, Beirut, August 7, 2003.
100 Salem, *al-Khiyarat al-sa'ba*, 365–371.
101 See Gemayel's interpretation of the Tripartite Agreement in Gemayel, *al-Rihan al-kabir*, 140–47.
102 For the text of the treaty see *al-Safir*, May 23, 1991.
103 For the unclassified articles of the agreement see *al-Nahar*, September 7, 1991; and *al-Safir*, September 16, 1991.
104 Comments of Foreign Minister Jean Obeid, *al-Nahar*, May 3, 2003.
105 Lahoud's comments to Secretary of State Colin Powell, *al-Safir*, May 5, 2003.
106 For a discussion see H.E. Chehabi, "Iran and Lebanon after Khomeini," in *Distant Relations: Iran and Lebanon in the last 500 Years*, H.E. Chehabi, ed. (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies and I.B. Tauris, 2006), 201–30.
107 Hence the difference between Saniora's seven point program and UNSCR 1701. See the texts in, respectively, *al-Nahar*, 27 July 2006 and *al-Safir*, August 6, 2006.
108 Speaker of Parliament Nabih Berri best captured this overlap when he advised Amr Moussa, Secretary General of the League of Arab States, mediating between the opposing domestic camps, to "work on the S-S equation," that is, to mend relations between Saudi Arabia and Syria given the consequences of this on the Lebanese crisis. Ibrahim al-Amin, "al-Sa'udiya taqtarih istidafat malikiha li-l berri wa Nasrallah, wa-l-Hariri," *al-Akhbar*, January 15, 2007.

9

The Far West of the Near East: The Foreign Policy of Morocco

Jennifer Rosenblum and William Zartman

Introduction: The Noble Kingdom

Morocco is a historic kingdom on the northwest corner of Africa, the westernmost extension of the Arab-Muslim world and a major north–south bridge from Africa and the Arab world to Europe. Overrun successively by the Berbers, Carthaginians/Phoenicians, Romans, Vandals, Arabs (but not the Ottomans), and French, all of whom left their traces, it reemerged independent in the modern era in 1956 as a multiparty monarchy, shaking off its heavy traditional garb but seeking a careful evolutionary path to modernization and avoiding the revolutions that had destabilized the other Arab countries. Since Morocco has few natural resources except for phosphates, its economy is agriculturally based but with a growing export sector. It also exports, principally to Europe, able youths in search of more rapid future returns than their country can provide, whose frustration often feeds fundamentalist anger. In its region and in the larger Arab, African, and Mediterranean regions to which it belongs, Morocco pursues a leadership role in the service of an independent foreign policy, consonant with its historical and geographic position.

Domestic Environment

Geographical Position and Historical Legacy

Morocco's strategic location at the crossroads of the Maghrebi, Arab, African, Mediterranean, and Atlantic regions has shaped its history and

identity. It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the west, the Mediterranean Sea to the north, and the Sahara to the south divided between Algeria to the southeast, and Mauritania to the southwest. It covers an area (713,500 square kilometers) slightly larger than that of California plus Arizona or a bit smaller than Turkey, including the disputed Western Sahara (267,028 square kilometers).

The historical and religious legitimacy of the Moroccan monarchy lends a sense of stability, continuity, and direction to the Moroccan political system and its foreign relations. While the current Alawi dynasty dates to 1666, the monarchical institution has existed since the eighth century and the king is the head of the religious community. Despite Morocco's inability to stave off the French and Spanish during the protectorate era (1912–1956), the struggle for independence restored the preeminence of the monarchy under King Mohammed V (r. 1927–1961). The approach of King Hassan II (r. 1961–1999) to foreign policy was based on cultural, religious, historical, and the king's personal considerations. The marginal role of Islam in the formulation of foreign policy was frequently cloaked in religious rhetoric and symbolism that affirmed the king's religious credentials.[1] Despite the monarch's dominant role in determining foreign policy, his decisions were often tempered by domestic opinion. A case in point is Hassan II's decision to curb his support for the anti-Iraq coalition in the first Gulf war, when he was met with staunch opposition from the Moroccan public.[2]

Morocco joined the United Nations (UN) and the Arab League (LAS) in 1956, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 (though it resigned from this organization over the admission of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic in 1981), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1987, the Arab Maghreb Union in 1989, and the World Trade Organization in 1995 after having hosted the inaugural meeting in Marrakech; a Moroccan, Mohammed Bennouna, holds the Arab seat on the International Court of Justice. Morocco's deeply rooted tradition of national unity and integrity "gives it autonomy within all its worlds, a tradition of separate action and separate ability to act that gave a historical pedestal to the policy initiatives of Hassan II."[3] During the cold war, Morocco was officially nonaligned, although unlike many other Arab states during the cold war it generally displayed pro-Western sympathies, while skillfully maintaining relations with the Soviet Union for economic reasons.[4]

Morocco's geopolitical alliances can best be described as concentric circles, where allegiance and association are most intense at the center, and become more variable toward the periphery.[5] The Maghreb, the central component of Morocco's identity, has consistently taken priority in terms of the foreign policy agenda. In the early years of independence, Morocco was pressed by the Istiqlal (Independence) Party to focus national policy on the neighboring lands with which Morocco shares a historical and ethnic kinship, covering Spanish Sahara, Mauritania, northern Mali, and the Spanish Mediterranean enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. Most of these territorial claims dated to the Almoravid period (the eleventh to twelfth centuries) when they constituted a major part of the *bilad al-siba* ('land of dissidence,' where the king's religious but not temporal authority was assured) but were disconnected from Morocco by the protectorates. Traditionally, Morocco has considered its formal independence from the colonial powers of France and Spain in 1956 as a gradual process of "retrocession," in which the Spanish and French protectorates were rejoined by the International Zone of Tangier in 1956, the southern Spanish protectorate of Tarfaya in 1958, and the Spanish territory of Ifni in 1969.[6] Yet the confrontations brought on by this irredentism undermined Morocco's position in the region and led to its increasing isolation. Hassan II gradually abandoned hope of annexing its historical territories, with the notable exception of the Western Sahara.

Morocco's ongoing conflict over the Western Sahara represents the most significant issue and prolonged foreign policy concern of the country. Mohammed V was won over to the irredentist position by the nationalist Istiqlal Party in 1958. Hassan II's decision to annex the Western Sahara in 1976 provided him with a means to renew his claims to legitimacy, consolidate his power, and assert leadership: the Sahara adventure attracted the support of opposition parties as well as the military, both of which had become a grave challenge to the monarchy during the 1960s and 1970s. Having linked its own legitimacy to the Sahara issue, the monarchy has consistently made the Western Sahara issue its highest priority on the foreign policy agenda, and has shown that it is willing to expend whatever political capital is necessary to ensure the retention of the territory.[7] Despite facing opposition in the international community for Morocco's policy in the Sahara, the kings since independence have skillfully used other foreign policy matters, such as Morocco's

relationship with Israel, as a means of cultivating US and international support and deflecting attention from its Sahara policy.[8]

Morocco's position in the greater Arab world and the Middle East in general is the product of its long and deep identification with greater Arab aspirations, including calls for Arab unity, opposition to Zionism, and pride in common linguistic, cultural, religious, and historical heritage. Although Mohammed V maintained good relations with Nasser during the anticolonial struggle, Hassan II was at odds with Arab nationalist leaders as a result of his close ties with the West and his willingness to negotiate a settlement on the Arab–Israeli conflict.[9] For this reason, King Hassan leaned increasingly toward the conservative Gulf monarchies during the era of pan-Arabism, which proved beneficial, as the Gulf countries—Saudi Arabia in particular—sent considerable amounts of financial aid to Morocco during the war over the Western Sahara. While Nasser's relationship with Morocco was strained, despite Morocco's role in founding the radical Casablanca Group in 1961 to promote unity on African issues, Sadat's peace initiative with Israel (in which Morocco served as an intermediary) led to improved relations with Egypt.

Its policy toward the state of Israel exemplified Morocco's independent stance on many issues in the international arena. Hassan II had a confident—what some described as "arrogant"—approach that broke boundaries established by other Arab leaders with regard to the conflict.[10] In 1986, the king invited then-prime minister of Israel Shimon Peres to Morocco for talks, becoming the second-ever Arab leader to host an Israeli leader. In 1994, Morocco and Israel agreed to open liaison offices in Rabat and Tel Aviv, respectively. Morocco's role as a moderate force in the peace process has enabled the king to retain his prominent position as a US ally.[11]

The unique relationship with Israel stems largely from Morocco's historical relationship with its own Jewish community. The monarchy has long cultivated the Moroccan Jewish community, which historically played an important role in the national economy, and also participated in the political arena. Despite King Hassan's close relationship with the Jewish community, he was always careful to affirm his deep-rooted concern for the Palestinian community. By sending Moroccan forces to fight alongside other Arab armies in various wars against Israel, and by chairing the al-Quds Committee of the OIC, King Hassan highlighted his Islamic credentials and sense of responsibility as a Muslim leader.

Geopolitical and strategic factors have linked Morocco to Europe politically, commercially, and colonially, for over a thousand years. Arab influence and historical ties between European and Arab civilizations are conspicuous in Europe—particularly in Spain, where the Muslims from Morocco left an indelible mark after ruling for over five hundred years. The patterns of power and influence were reversed in the colonial era under the protectorates, and Europe has held a central place in Morocco's foreign policy agenda since independence. The adoption of French and Spanish as second languages by many Moroccans combined with high levels of trade and increasing emigration toward Europe further link the country to the European continent. Morocco sought to continue its special economic relationship with France through trade agreements with the European Union and its members, beginning with an association agreement in 1969, a cooperation agreement in 1976, and a new cooperation agreement as part of the Euro-Mediterranean initiative in 1995; Morocco even presented its candidacy for the European Economic Community in 1987, which was rejected. European nations have repeatedly stymied Morocco's attempts to obtain European concessions, due to their unwillingness to lift restrictions on Moroccan agricultural exports, out of fear that they would undermine Europe's own agricultural sector.

To date, it seems that the legacy of Hassan II has had a profound influence on the policies of his successor, King Mohammed VI, who seeks to uphold and strengthen Morocco's relationships in the Arab and Islamic worlds, the African continent, Europe, and the US. "Like Hassan II, Mohamed VI has declared his top priority to be 'the defense of the nation's territorial integrity,' a code phrase for the drive to win recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara."[12] In his first speech to the Moroccan public, King Mohammed VI announced that he would follow his father's policies, as they were characterized by "openness, dialogue and strengthening ties with African nations and friends in Europe and the U.S."[13] He also pledged to focus on the relationship of Morocco with its neighbors in the Arab Maghreb Union, as well as to encourage "stability and prosperity" in the Middle East with regards to the peace process.[14]

Population

Morocco's population of approximately 30 million (with a third under the age of fourteen) is concentrated primarily in the region north and west of the Atlas mountain range, which separates the country from the

Sahara. The people are an ethnic blend of indigenous Berbers and Arab conquerors that first arrived in the eighth century, while the culture is a mosaic of Arab, African, and European influences. A dramatic shift in population toward the coast has been brought about by rapid urbanization since independence and the corresponding neglect of the rural, mountain, and desert regions. More than half of the population lives in the cities. In *bidonvilles* (urban slums) on the urban peripheries, poverty and the inadequacy of infrastructure to handle rural in-migration have become major sources of instability. As early as 1948, the slums were considered "excellent breeding grounds for agitators, both nationalist and Communist."[15] More recently, the slums have remained a recruiting area for Islamist agitators. While the government has launched initiatives to improve the insalubrious housing crisis of the *bidonvilles* (which were accelerated in the aftermath of the 2003 terrorist attacks in Casablanca), economic stagnation and unemployment remain a real threat to the government. Overcrowded urban areas, lack of economic opportunity, and corruption have made Morocco a major source of illegal immigration to Europe, with both Moroccan and other African immigrants viewing the country as a jumping-off point to the West. The involvement of Moroccan citizens in international terrorist incidents, in addition to domestic incidents, has also brought much international attention to the country's struggling economy, particularly in light of the May 2003 terrorist attacks in Casablanca.

Economic Capabilities

Morocco's GDP was about $45 billion in 2005, or about $1,500 per capita, with an annual growth rate of around 5 percent in the preceding decade. Since 2001, Morocco has maintained a low inflation rate, less than 2 percent, enjoyed a current account surplus since 2001, and reduced its government debt to GDP ratio. The economy is dependent on foreign oil imports and its growth rate remains closely related to agriclimatic conditions such as rainfall, making the prominent agricultural sector highly vulnerable. Agriculture accounts for 15–20 percent of GDP, and its products include citrus fruits, wheat, barley, vegetables, olives, wine, livestock, and fish. Industry accounts for almost a third of GDP, and includes phosphate mining and processing, manufacturing and handicrafts, construction, and energy. Morocco's status as the world's largest phosphate exporter has served as a catalyst for its growing industrial sector, even

though the country suffers from a lack of oil and gas resources, with which so many Arab states—including Algeria—are endowed. Other natural resources besides phosphates include iron ore, manganese, lead, zinc, fish, and salt. The service sector accounts for almost half of the Moroccan GDP, with tourism as its mainstay. Morocco's status as a relatively moderate Arab state has favored tourism, which recovered in 2004 after slowing in the aftermath of the 2003 Casablanca bombings. Remittances from Moroccan workers abroad, counted in the service sector, also account for about 7 percent of the national GDP.

Despite intensive efforts to energize the economy and break the cycle of weak growth, unemployment, poverty, and migration, Morocco has been unable, to date, to achieve the growth it so badly needs. The new king's vigorous efforts toward democratization and the elimination of corruption have led to increasing foreign direct investment in Morocco, and will likely continue to do so. While red tape, rising real wages, and a constrained judiciary are impediments to greater foreign direct investment, the king has been making efforts to streamline and stimulate new activity. Morocco is largely dependent on Europe as a source of external financing for its development needs and its external debt.

Trade liberalization is a priority for the new king, and free trade agreements with the European Union (EU) and the US have prodded the country to modernize its business practices. Despite the promise it holds for the future, liberalization has inflicted damage on Moroccan industries, particularly textiles, which have come under increasing pressure from other developing countries with lower labor costs. In addition, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (the 'Barcelona Process') is hoped to boost Morocco's economy (see Relations with Europe section), but Morocco has been forced to accept significant restrictions on its exports of agricultural products, placing it at a relative disadvantage. An additional agreement has been signed with Turkey in 2004 and with Tunisia, Egypt, and Jordan to set up a free trade area by 2006. Despite efforts to develop multilateral trading relationships with other Arab Maghreb Union neighbors, plans for a common market and open frontiers have not materialized.

Morocco's principal exports include clothing, fish, inorganic chemicals, transistors, crude materials (including phosphates), petroleum products, fruits, and vegetables. Major export partners include France, Spain, the UK, Italy, and the US. Imports are significantly higher than exports, at $15.63 billion. Major import commodities include crude

petroleum, textile fabric, telecommunications equipment, wheat, gas and electricity, transistors, and plastics. Major import partners are France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Russia, Saudi Arabia, China, and the US. Morocco received $218 million of official development assistance in 2002.

Morocco is still considered a lower middle income country that suffers from a host of socioeconomic problems including widespread poverty, high unemployment, burgeoning urban slums, and one of the highest illiteracy rates in the Arab world. There are countless obstacles that Morocco must overcome in order to ensure the kind of economic growth necessary for stability. First, the economy must become less reliant on the agricultural sector. Forty percent of the populace is dependent on agriculture as a livelihood, which means that a major crop failure can have a potentially destabilizing effect on domestic demand and consequently the entire economy. Second, as trade is becoming liberalized by free trade initiatives, such as those signed with Europe and the US, Moroccan industries are coming under increasing competition from other developing nations. For example, the Moroccan textile industry, which includes over 1,500 textile firms and employs approximately two hundred thousand people, will have difficulty competing against countries with relatively lower labor costs, such as India and China. Third, the service sector includes the bloated bureaucracy of the public sector and a tourism industry that is vulnerable to terrorist attacks, as well as domestic or regional instability.

Military Capabilities

The Moroccan Royal Armed Forces (FAR) number about two hundred thousand. They form a major source of support and stability for the political system. In the early 1970s, two (and perhaps three) military coup attempts shook the system but were overcome by King Hassan's vigilance and charisma; while coup attempts always remain a possibility and there are always potential sources of conflict, relations between King Mohammed VI and his army are solid and the military is closely controlled from within. The FAR constitutes a strong, well-trained and well-disciplined fighting force, and it keeps in shape by participating in UN peacekeeping operations and by maintaining its readiness in the Western Sahara.

The Moroccan military in the early 2000s deployed about 2,500 troops as peacekeeping forces: about eight hundred troops served as Special Forces (SFOR II) in Bosnia, about seven hundred in each

UN peacekeeping operation in the Ivory Coast (UNOCI) and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), and about three hundred as Kosovo Forces (KFOR) in Serbia. A large portion of the FAR is also stationed along the thousand kilometer sand wall (or 'berm') that follows close to the border of the Sahara, or in reserves in southern Morocco, or within the Western Saharan territory.

Facing the FAR are the Sahrawi People's Liberation Army of the Peoples Front for the Liberation of Saqiet al-Hamra and the Rio de Oro (Polisario Front), numbering some three to six thousand troops. They are largely cantoned in Tindouf and other smaller bases in western Algeria, and roam along the border from time to time. Their ideological commitment is high, but military activity has been minimal since the mid-1980s and the formal truce in 1991. Behind the Polisario stands its host, the Algerian National People's Army (ANP) of 125,000, half of them conscripts, a better armed but not necessarily a better fighting force. The Algerian army has been weakened by inconclusive internal policing against Islamist terrorists. It was beaten in its last clash with the Moroccan army, in 1976, after a larger conflict that ended in a stalemate in 1963. The inconclusiveness of the confrontations has left both armies somewhat itching for a final confrontation, which each claims it will win.

The Moroccan army fought hard after some years of initial defeats in the late 1970s to assert Moroccan control and claim Moroccan sovereignty over the Saharan territory, and the irredentist issue is a popular national cause. Defeat or withdrawal from the Sahara would be a destabilizing move of enormous consequences for the political system. The army would feel betrayed and the palace and political parties alike would be caught undoing their own programs. Military overthrow of the monarchy would be foreseeable (just as in Egypt in 1952, Algeria in 1965, Libya in 1969, among others), not because the military is anti-monarchical but because it would feel betrayed.

Political Structures

The king is the hereditary monarch by primogeniture. He is head of state and also religious head of the Moroccan Muslim community *(umma)* as commander of the faithful *(amir al-mu'minin)*; prayers are said in his name, and his position is, constitutionally, sacred and inviolable. The Alawi dynasty, which claims descent from the son-in-law of the Prophet

Muhammad, is the widely accepted institution of stability and continuity for the Moroccan population and political system. As with other monarchies, notably in Europe, the powers—including the treasury—that were traditionally held in the palace *(makhzen)*, gradually became modernized, institutionalized, and separated from the person of the king. However, the evolution to constitutional monarchy that took European monarchies centuries has occurred much more rapidly in Morocco, beginning in the early 1900s under the protectorate, and still going on; the monarch's challenge is to stay the course, in all senses of the word. The king retains central authority, with overriding legislative and executive powers. He can approve and dismiss the government, call elections, decree laws *(dahir)*, veto bills (though his veto can be overriden), declare a state of emergency, and appoint judges. He is also the central politician, with an ability to manipulate behind the official scenes, backed not only by his position and personality, but also by huge resources in land, positions, and money; he is the richest businessman in the country, with the most extensive business interests.

Under the 1996 constitution, the king is expected to produce an heir, which King Mohammed VI did in 2004 in the person of Crown Prince Moulay Hassan III. In case of succession before the age of sixteen, the crown prince is supported by a regency council. Traditionally the crown prince, upon coming of age, is put in charge of the army; he also serves in ceremonial functions. Other princes and princesses of the realm also perform ceremonial duties. Mohammed VI's younger brother, Moulay Rachid, second in line of succession, is a close advisor.

Around the king are a number of bodies and informal groups comprising the royal household or palace, loosely known as the *makhzen*. Most broadly, the *makhzen* refers to the king's close associates, in and out of government, as well as official bodies and officeholders within the palace. Most narrowly, it includes other executive institutions beside the king himself: the Royal Cabinet, the Constitutional Council, the Economic and Social Council, and possibly the Regency Council, all the outgrowth of previous institutions. The Royal Cabinet contains a variable number of close advisors to the king in various areas of activity, as existed throughout the monarchy. The Constitutional Council, established in 1996, is the successor to the constitutional chamber of the Supreme Court; half of its twelve members are appointed and the rest elected by the two houses of Parliament. It gives final and binding

judgments on elections and referenda, organic laws, and constitutional matters. The Economic and Social Council, also created in 1996 as successor to the High Council of the Plan (itself established in 1957), advises the king and Parliament on economic and social policy.

Since the reign of Hassan II, Morocco has undergone a shift toward increasing democratization, and a growing role for parliamentary institutions, while simultaneously preserving the monarchy's position, a shift that has accelerated under Mohammed VI. Morocco is currently on its third constitution, which has been amended three times since it was adopted in 1972. The revision of 1996 created a bicameral legislature. Morocco has a multiparty system, wherein parties are forced to work together to form coalition governments. According to Article 3 of the constitution: "Political parties, unions, district councils and trade chambers shall participate in the organization and representation of the citizens. There shall be no one-party system." Major parties include the social-democratic Socialist Union of Popular Forces (Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires, USFP), and the Independence (Istiqlal) Party, as well as the Islamist Justice and Development Party (Parti de la Justice et du Developpement, PJD). The resounding success of the PJD in the 2002 elections is a noteworthy development, reflecting the process of democratization and transparent elections. Moreover, recognizing the widespread support for the PJD, the king must skilfully demonstrate sensitivity to Islamist demands in foreign policy, while not compromising the authority of the monarchy or its traditionally Western-oriented foreign policy agenda.

Foreign Policy Orientation

Morocco's view of its place in international relations is pluralist; possibly because of its long history and monarchial system, it does not have any small state complex. While it prefers good relations throughout its region, it values its autonomy as a regional player, is wary of others' pretensions at regional leadership, is prepared to break ranks to sustain its own initiatives, gives and takes no lessons to or from anyone, and is quite ready to risk the dangers of isolation inherent in an independent policy, defensive or offensive. Intermediation between Israel and Egypt, advanced status with the EU, personal relations with the US, and resignation from the OAU are some of the outcomes of Morocco's independent policy, which has had its costs as well as its benefits.

The "three concentric circles" of Mohammed VI's foreign policy—neighborliness, solidarity, and partnership—are functional, not geographic, but they all have specific geographical referents as well as indications of a style and approach in foreign relations. As foreign policy values, they are pragmatic, related to specific policies and relations, and aimed at protecting the territorial integrity of the country and enhancing its economic welfare. Any state's foreign policy is first of all designed to protect the state's independence and integrity, but this has special importance in Morocco's case because of the Saharan question. Not only is the Western Sahara seen as an integral part of the nation but the issue itself is recognized as an existential question for the state, a matter of political stability, and a popular cause as well as the basis of the monarchical system. On the welfare side, another theme that is repeated in Moroccan foreign policy is regional cooperation through free trade agreements.

"Neighborliness" means cooperation within the North African region, alternating between bypassing and confronting the Saharan issue, continuing the line set down under Hassan II. The neighborhood also includes Spain, France, and the western Euro-Mediterranean region. Relations with the former protector states remain crucial for Morocco, both as a key to the developed market in Europe and as a source of support for its Saharan policy (variable in the case of Spain according to the party in power and the counterbalancing activation of Morocco's suspended claims on the Spanish Mediterranean islands and enclaves). It is significant that in Moroccan eyes, the neighborhood covers both shores of the western Mediterranean, but not the rest of its littoral.

"Solidarity," however, refers to Middle Eastern and African issues. Palestine liberation and the protection of the Islamic holy places are important goals, but Morocco's role, though militant when the occasion requires, is primarily geared to fostering mutual recognition and peace through negotiation between Muslims and Jews, on the model of its own domestic relations. African solidarity, with the end of colonialism, has meant primarily the pursuit of historic economic ties with the continent, particularly West Africa.

"Partnership" concerns relations with the US, France, and when possible with Spain, and global ties more broadly. Morocco is strongly committed to nurturing a special relationship with the last remaining superpower, based on its historical ties and on a succession of personal relations between Mohammed V, Hassan II, and now Mohammed VI

and a series of American presidents. Despite some disagreements in the past, notably on human rights, Morocco works to maintain the solid support of France, which is crucial on the Western Saharan dispute and important on immigration matters. The same applies to Spain, with less constancy depending on the Spanish party in power, the conservatives tending to be less supportive than the socialists.

Decision-Making Process

The king's predominance in the realm of foreign policy is much more pronounced than in domestic policy, where the government and parliament also play important roles. As in other Arab and African states, Morocco's foreign policy is highly personalized through the head of state. The Moroccan monarchy has a historic and religious legitimacy that is deeply rooted in the Moroccan identity.The primacy of the king in shaping and implementing foreign policy is reflected by the constant publicity his meetings with other heads of state receive in the press, consolidating his leadership role in the minds of the populace. The foreign minister is directly appointed by the king; ambassadors and foreign representatives, also appointed by him, serve as his personal envoys abroad, and he also receives personal representatives of heads of major powers in his capital and deals with those heads of state directly. The king is also the sole individual who may sign and ratify treaties on behalf of the country. The royal dominance probably explains in large measure why Morocco has not contributed international statesmen to world diplomacy as have some other global south countries.

In personal style, Mohammed VI is inclined to dialogue and tolerance, slow to react, concerned with public welfare, interested in the reform and modernization of his country, and deeply committed to the Saharan issue. There is a close symbiosis between the foreign policy establishment and the royal decision maker. The king's close advisors formulate policy, narrowing down several options that they feel to be closest to King Mohammed's orientation, and presenting these to him for approval or adjustment, according to his inclination. This semicollegial policymaking system discourages bold initiatives and has led to a conservative policy bent, and also to some missed opportunities.

The leading foreign policy official since the late 1990s has been the minister-delegate for foreign affairs, Taieb Fassi-Fihri, recruited by Hassan II, who overshadows the foreign minister, Mohammed Ben Aissa,

also inherited from Hassan II. Fassi-Fihri oversees the important aspects of foreign relations—relations with the US, France, and the Sahara. Ben Aissa handles the administration and finances of the foreign ministry and is its senior roving diplomat, particularly well-known in the Gulf, where he handles Arab and financial relations. On the crucial issue of the Sahara, a quadumvirate prepares policy for the king to approve—Fassi-Fihri, Interior Minister Chakib ben Moussa, former Interior Minister Fouad Ali al-Himma, and the head of the intelligence services. This has been the group that has met with the Polisario in Manhasset in July and August 2007 and January and March 2008 under UN auspices.

Despite royal dominance over foreign affairs, political parties are significant forces in terms of influencing general foreign orientations. They can support or constrain foreign policy, strengthening official positions and limiting their latitude. They have no role in decision making but they provide an ambiance in which official decision making operates.

Foreign Policy Behavior

Morocco in the Maghrib

The Arabic name for Morocco, *al-maghrib* or 'the west' (literally, 'the place where the sun sets'), is also applied to the North African region, in the context of which Morocco is called the Far West *(al-maghrib al-aqsa)*. Morocco lives within a series of circles: its immediate regional system, the two larger Arab and African worlds in which it is a peripheral member, the two halves of the Western world north across the Mediterranean and west across the Atlantic, as well as the global institutional world.[16]

In addition to Morocco, North Africa comprises Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, to the east, and Mauritania to the south—all five members of the Arab Maghrib Union, established in 1989 but suspended since 1995. Since their independence from colonial rule (French in the case of all but Libya, which was an Italian colony), the Maghrib states have tried in various ways to turn their common insular position into formal cooperation but to no lasting avail; the best they can achieve is an evolving pattern of interdependent relations. The five countries and their peoples view themselves as brothers as well as neighbors, hemmed in as an island by the Mediterranean and the Atlantic to the north and west and by the Sahara to the south and east. In this region, Morocco has had the longest existence as a historical, independent monarchy; Tunisia has long enjoyed

coherence and autonomy as state, albeit within larger empires—Ottoman, then French—whereas Algeria, Libya and Mauritania are new nations. In the middle of their first century of newfound independence, the Maghrib states are governed in their regional policy by a search for a clear sense of rank and relations among themselves, as occurs among any new kids in the neighborhood and as occurred—for a much longer period—among the states of Europe.

The search for unity has been a cyclical process taking a number of forms, with divisive interludes.[17] In 1958, the nationalist movements of newly independent Morocco and Tunisia joined the Algerian movement to coordinate their support for Algerian independence. In 1961, Morocco, Libya, and the Algerian nationalists formed the radical Casablanca Group (with Egypt, Ghana and Mali), precursor of the moderate, continental Organization of African Unity that was formed two years later. In 1964–1965, the four Mediterranean states created some functional institutions with only superficial effect. In 1983–1984, an Algerian-led attempt at regional leadership became an alliance with Tunisia and Mauritania, provoking a counteralliance between Morocco and Libya. Finally, in 1989, the Arab Maghreb Union was formed, only to founder on the most specific dispute of the region, Morocco's occupation of the formerly Spanish Western Sahara in 1975 against the claim of the Algerian-backed Polisario Front for an independent Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). The bitter conflict between Morocco and Algeria has never come close to resolution but the two states have vacillated between focusing on the dispute to the exclusion of any cooperation (including even open borders) and putting the unresolved dispute aside in order to proceed with cooperation in other areas of mutual interest. It is striking, nonetheless, that although the conflict between the two states has given rise to Algerian support for Islamist and leftist infiltration into Morocco and Moroccan support for Algeria's fundamentalists, the two states have not engaged each other militarily since their border war of 1963 (with the exception of one lesson-teaching battle at Amgala in the Western Sahara in 1976).

Morocco's pluralist view of regional relations puts it on a collision course with Algeria, which has a hegemonic or leadership view of regional relations. Fragile and newly established in its identity, proud of its defeat of a NATO colonial power and its leadership of the New International Economic Order movement in the 1970s, distinguished from its traditionalist neighbors by its revolutionary history, rich in its oil revenues,

and strategically placed in a keystone position in the region bordering all member states, Algeria feels a calling to lead the region. It sees the most specific expression of this role in its support and sponsorship of the Polisario, but the Western Saharan issue is only the tip of the iceberg and even without it relations between Algeria and Morocco would be testy.[18] The most tangible problem, that of borders between the two countries, was solved formally by the establishment of an official border for the first time ever in 1972, ratified on both sides the following year and reaffirmed on occasion thereafter; however, each sides doubts the other's acceptance of the border. When Morocco introduced a visa requirement in 1998, Algeria closed the border; when Morocco removed its requirement in 2005, Algeria was in no hurry to reciprocate.

The other members of the Arab Maghreb Union have different views of regional relations that fit better with Morocco's views. Both Tunisia and Libya have an integrationist view, from different angles. Tunisia, squeezed between two regional heavyweights, is built into the role of mediator and peacemaker in the region; its moderate policies make it a natural ally of Morocco but the weight of its two neighbors and the internal security concerns that it shares with Algeria have prevented it from getting too far ahead of its radical neighbors. Libya's integrationist policy is visionary: Qaddafi wishes to see boundaries disappear in a united Arab space. His antipathy to states has meant that Libya has not recognized the SADR, although it once supported the Polisario, and his boundary problems with Algeria and rivalry with Algeria over influence among the Saharan-Sahelian states has kept the two neighbors from as close a cooperation as their common radicalism might otherwise suggest. Both factors have led Libya to partner with Morocco on occasion, despite the enormous philosophical difference between the leaders.

Finally, Mauritania's policy is one of balancing and survival as a state whose weakness invites external interference. When it was born in 1960, Mauritania was the major target of Moroccan irredentism and was not recognized by its northern neighbor until 1969. Then, half a decade later, Morocco and Mauritania split the Western Sahara between them, in the Tripartite Agreement with Spain on decolonizing the area. The Polisario's strategy was to concentrate on Mauritania and knock it out of the war, which it did in 1978. Morocco took over the southern Mauritanian third of the Western Sahara, and a succession of military regimes in Mauritania since then have tried to resist Moroccan, Algerian, Libyan, and Iraqi

attempts to dominate the government. Mauritania found little protection in its postcolonial membership in West African groupings and joined the Arab League and then the Arab Maghreb Union, where the competition among would-be dominators might keep them in check and assure Mauritania some security. Current relations with Morocco are good.

To the Polisario, there is a sixth country in the region—the Western Sahara. Its formal recognition was excluded in the compromise of 1989 that created the Arab Maghreb Union and the problem was handed to the UN. Following a number of proposals by the UN Secretary General, the Security Council set up a UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) in 2005 with twenty-seven troops and 203 military observers from twenty-five countries and proceeded to organize the referendum. The process got stuck on the competing claims of the two sides over voter registration lists. In 1997, former US Secretary of State James Baker was appointed Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, but in the subsequent years he was unable to break the deadlock. The matter is an existential issue for both sides, and each wants to be assured that the list of eligible voters is favorable to it, as any type of referendum provides a winner-take-all outcome. In 2001, Algeria proposed a division of the territory which would give a microstate to the Polisario, generally rejected as an unstable solution. Then in 2002, Baker proposed an election for a government—likely to be Polisario—for a five-year period of autonomy to be followed by a final referendum, and when this was not accepted, he resigned. Morocco countered with a proposal for autonomy as an immediate and permanent solution and developed the idea into a full-fledged proposition, the first to occupy the space between the two sides' maximalist positions, in 2007. The Moroccan (and Algerian) proposals are the only solutions that avoid a zero-sum type of outcome with a winner and a loser. Morocco's proposal of full autonomy still needs further negotiation but is the only proposal on the table (and probably the only proposal conceivable) that moves toward a solution midway between the two parties' positions. Morocco's strongest backers in the UN are France and the US, supported by Spain under the socialists and Britain.

The Western End of the Arab World

Morocco is and identifies as an Arab country, with Arabic as its language and Islam as its religion. It is a member of the Arab League and a regular

participant in the Arab Summit Conferences, the successor institution to the less active League. Fez, Casablanca, and Rabat were the sites of Arab Summits in 1981, 1989, and 1996. The League has long been behind Morocco on the Saharan issue and so Morocco has a freer hand in Arab politics. The king is chair of the al-Quds (Jerusalem) Committee of the Islamic Conference Organization. He enjoys close relations with the other monarchical families of the Arab world but above all with the Saudis, many of whom have vacation palaces on the Moroccan coast and sponsor economic ventures in Morocco, in addition to financing the Saharan war for many years in the 1970s and 1980s.

As the only Arab state with a Mediterranean and Atlantic coast and thus the extreme western extension of the Arab world, Morocco has exerted active moderate leadership among its peers, supporting negotiation and rejecting rejectionism, and at times taking unconventional positions ahead of the pack. Moroccan troops were in position on the Golan Heights when the October 1973 Arab–Israeli war broke out, and were sent to Saudi Arabia to protect the holy places (but not to join the coalition against Iraq) in January 1991. Morocco has been out in front in working to resolve the Arab–Israeli conflict. It was host to the initial secret Dayan-Touhami meetings that opened the way for President Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, and has been hospitable to Israeli and Jewish delegations at other meetings since then; Ifrane was host to the first World Congress of Imams and Rabbis for Peace in 2004. Morocco has been very protective of its Jewish population, since the wartime days when King Mohammed V protected Moroccan Jews against the Vichy colonial government.

The Northwest Corner of Africa

Morocco belongs to two worlds, which gives it two stages to play on to further its foreign policy aims. Morocco has long had historical ties with sub-Saharan Africa, and under the Saadis in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, extended its empire to the Niger river. Moroccan traders are still active along the West African coast. Morocco was the host member of the Casablanca Group in 1961 and a founding member of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) two years later; it expressed its reservations, however, on the OAU's acceptance of colonial frontiers, in the light of Morocco's irredentist claims and its then-nonexistent boundary with Algeria. Morocco then left the organization in 1981 when the SADR

was admitted as a member; since then, it has worked diplomatically to convince some OAU members to reverse their recognition of the SADR, with some significant but not sufficient success—half a dozen states have changed their minds, but the greatest reversal occurred in 2005 when South Africa recognized the SADR.

Beyond the Saharan issue, Morocco's position in Africa has been one of moderate leadership and involvement in various security operations. Its closest relations are with the French-speaking states of west and central Africa. The FAR was sent to Congo as part of ONUC in the early 1960s, as part of a multilateral force in Katanga in the late 1970s, and again as part of MONUC in the early 2000s. Moroccan troops provided presidential bodyguards in Gabon, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea and Togo, and Zairean (Congolese) president Mobutu Sese Seko went in exile in Morocco to die in 1998.

The Bridge to Europe

Morocco is tied across the Mediterranean to Europe, not only by its colonial past (in both directions) but also current commerce, affinities, and common destiny that bind the countries bordering the western Mediterranean ever closer together. Over two million Moroccans live abroad, most of them in Europe and a third in France. Millions more out of a population of some thirty million, perhaps 20 percent of whom are unemployed, aspire to follow them. Europe is the safety valve for the explosive race between demography and economy, and if the demographic growth rate has been brought down to 1.9 percent, the Moroccan economy still has to sprint fast to catch up. Emigration helps bridge the gap: since 1990, remittances have brought in 30 percent more foreign exchange than either tourism or phosphate sales, the next two most important sources. But Europe is more than money: it is the land of opportunity in young Moroccan eyes (America is too far away), and so the shortfall in aspirations upon crossing the Mediterranean is a major contributor to Islamist recruiting of Moroccans abroad. This mixture of elements captures much of the complex relationship between the two shores of the western Mediterranean.

With 60 percent of its trade going to and from Europe, Morocco's primary partner is the European Union (EU), and France within it. Morocco began its association with the then-EEC in 1969, after five years of negotiations. After being rejected in its application for EEC membership in

1987, Morocco renegotiated an expanded association agreement with the EU in 1995 providing for a free trade zone in industrial goods in twelve years, but some protection on European agricultural imports. The agreement opens Morocco to serious competition in the development sectors and puts pressure on the country to modernize its commerce and industry. The failure to obtain sufficient concessions in trade associations with the EU has exacerbated the economic situation in Morocco, which in turn has led to increased immigration to Europe. This increased (and frequently illegal) immigration has strained Morocco's relationship with the European community, which criticizes Morocco for not doing enough to stop illegal immigration. Meanwhile, dozens of Moroccans and other African would-be immigrants perish each year attempting to cross the Straits of Gibraltar unlawfully. Morocco continues to aspire to 'advanced status,' between association and membership, in the EU.

Morocco is an important player in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), the Western Mediterranean 5+5 process, and Middle East and North Africa (MENA) policies of the EU, a result of the Barcelona Conference in 1995, which aimed to promote economic development on the southern shore in cooperation with the northern shore. The Barcelona Process, or Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, is an ambitious plan to build peace and stability through political and security dialogue, gradually establish a free-trade area to achieve economic gains for Euro-Mediterranean countries, reduce migration pressures by building the economies along the southern shore, and encourage cultural understanding through education and civil society exchanges. In the economic arena, Morocco has been forced to accept conditions formulated in Brussels that protect European farmers by imposing restrictions on Moroccan agricultural exports. Morocco has been unable to challenge or successfully renegotiate European protectionist policies because of Europe's heavyweight status as Morocco's main trading partner, in addition to the fact that Europe remains Morocco's main source of external finance, in the form of both loans and aid. Thus far the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership has been unable to help Morocco break the vicious cycle wherein insufficient growth leads to unemployment, poverty, migration, and a host of political and social problems. It is hard to affirm that much has come out of this effort in its initial decade, except that institutionalized dialogue has prevented the Mediterranean from becoming a moat between the two areas.

Beyond the major issues of trade and migration (and, of course, the Sahara), there are some bilateral issues of contention. For France, the civil rights conditions under Hassan II provided a provocative target for left-wing groups, particularly under the Socialist government, and the lavish splendor of the palace has also drawn criticism. However, the Moroccan lobby has been able to hold the upper hand over the Algerian lobby within the Elysée regardless of the party that occupies it, providing Morocco with a sympathetic ear in court, and French liberal circles have appreciated the serious reduction in civil rights abuses in Morocco. For Spain, an agreement for fishing in Moroccan waters is crucial; Morocco reminds Spain from time to time of the Moroccan claim over the five Spanish islands and enclaves on the Mediterranean coast, which flared up most recently in the armed confrontation on a seagull-inhabited rock in 2004. Morocco and Spain plan to build a tunnel under the Straits of Gibraltar by 2010.

America's Historical Ally

Morocco has a historical relationship with the US since it was the first country to recognize the new republic and has had the longest uninterrupted treaty of friendship with the US since 1987. The US won a significant ruling from the International Court of Justice asserting the continuity of the Sherifian empire underneath the French Protectorate, and then-Sultan Mohammed V received important encouragement in the quest for independence from President Roosevelt in Anfa in 1942. After independence, however, the presence of US air bases under a NATO agreement with France (but not with Morocco) proved a contentious issue until 1962 when they were evacuated. Another tense period came in the late 1970s when the US withheld the shipment of aircraft intended for use in the Sahara. These incidents aside, US relations with Morocco have been close and often personal between king and president. Morocco's willingness to engage in security operations in Africa during the cold war and to foster the peace process in the Middle East was appreciated in Washington, and the US's benevolent neutrality on the Saharan issue was appreciated in Rabat. At the same time, Morocco never had bad relations with the Soviet Union, and signed a $2 billion phosphate and $300 million fishing agreement with the Soviet Union that implicitly recognized Morocco's Saharan claim as a counterbalance to the USSR's warm relations with Algeria.

After the end of the cold war and the opening of the 'war on terror,' Morocco has gained added importance to the US. King Mohammed VI presided over a mass service in support of the victims of the September 11, 2001 attack and has cooperated with US intelligence and security officials in preventing terrorist attacks in the Straits of Gibraltar and elsewhere. Morocco cooperates in the Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative to contain Salafist groups in the Sahara and Sahel of West Africa, and security cooperation is well developed. On the economic front, the two countries joined in a deep-cutting free trade agreement in 2005, which would eliminate most tariffs on most products. Trade between Morocco and the US, however, is small; US aid is about 4 percent of total aid to Morocco, and the US share of investment is about 7 percent of total foreign direct investment in Morocco.

Conclusion

Morocco faces difficult foreign policy challenges. Saddled with serious security and territorial integrity concerns, it faces an uphill task to ensure that its existence is not threatened—the starting position for most states. That the problem is of Morocco's—or of history's—own making is beside the point; already having "nine-tenths of the law" in its unchallengeable possession of the Western Saharan territory only confirms Morocco's belief in the righteousness of its cause. Turning de facto into de jure possession is Morocco's challenge, and as long as the current stalemate is comfortable for both sides—Morocco in its possession and its protection by France and the US within the UN, the Polisario in its partially legitimized claims and its comfortable refuge in Algeria's protective cover—neither has any incentive to budge.[19] Morocco has made the only viable step toward the middle, between the two parties' positions, in its offer of autonomy, which makes it vulnerable to an offer from the other side to split the remaining difference; it is up to Algeria to join it in the middle, unblocking Maghribi cooperation, and enabling a joint focus on absolute, welfare gains rather than relative, security gains.

But rather than getting stuck in the security issue, Morocco also casts a wide net to rein in welfare gains for itself. This too is a daring venture, since the development of free trade agreements with its principal trade and security partners—the EU and US respectively—opens its own frequently inefficient business and agriculture to lower-cost competition, challenging them to "reform or else." Yet it is only by such ventures that

the kingdom can accelerate its leap into modernity and well-being for its population. Tunisia, in a similar position, is accomplishing the same goal but at the enormous cost of political suffocation; Morocco seeks economic liberalization parallel to liberalization in the political field.

Morocco's strong historical tradition as a monarchy is helpful in, and inextricably linked to, facing such policy challenges. Morocco can afford political pluralism and free competition because it has a monarchy that holds the political system together; the national integrity issue is the base on which the monarchy stands. Morocco can decree economic reform because the monarchy is the ultimate and unaccountable authority, but a failure in the returns on economic liberalization—as any faltering on the issue of national integrity—would suddenly make the monarchy dramatically accountable. More than in many countries, foreign policy and domestic stability are mutually dependent.

Notes

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10

Irreconcilable Role-Partners? Saudi Foreign Policy between the Ulama and the US[1]

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Introduction

In the month of Ramadan 2003, when television programming was at its height after *iftar* (breaking the fast at sunset), viewers were glued to their screens to watch Egypt's popular soap opera about Hajj Mutwalli, a middle-aged businessman who lived happily with his four wives. This soap opera was so successful not only in Egypt but also across the Middle East, that there was talk of a sequel in Ramadan 2004. An important element in the debate is that the polygamous Hajj Mutwalli was acting according to assumed Islamic rules. Many feminists, however, protested at its falsely idyllic portrayal of polygamy, asserting that polygamy provokes much more conflict than harmony.

In the language of role theory,[2] when relationships with all role partners cannot be managed concurrently, role conflict or even role crisis ensues. Torn between orthodox ulama domestically and the privileged ally, the US, externally, Saudi Arabia demonstrates at present the epitome of 'role conflict.' In contrast to the cold war years when the Saudi government, bin Ladenists, and the US were in role harmony or on the same wavelength (for example, in the fight against atheist Soviet troops in Muslim Afghanistan), the acuteness of the present role conflict is very much related to the aftermath of 9/11.

The 1991 edition of this chapter identified coping with change as the biggest challenge for such a traditional system as Saudi Arabia. The specific

dilemma was represented then by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the necessity of a quick decision to accept foreign forces on its soil, not very far from Islam's holiest places Mecca and Medina. After some agonizing intra-family debates, a fatwa from influential ulama was obtained to support the decision. The post-9/11 context was certainly a bigger challenge for Saudi foreign policy, for it endangered two bases of its politics: partnership with the US, the main security provider, and the ulama, the main legitimizing agent. The dilemma of coping is thus more present than ever.

In this post-9/11 context, three new characteristics strike the visitor to Saudi Arabia. Firstly, heightened security precautions are very visible. For example, on arriving at a hotel, one's car—even an official one—is thoroughly searched, including the trunk and the hood. Such displays of security are not limited to the capital, Riyadh. Indeed, armored cars are conspicuous even in the hills around Mecca where the Prophet preached Islam less than eight centuries ago.

Secondly, the religious police, whose role it is to "command the good and prevent the forbidden" *(al-amr bi-l-ma'aruf wa-l-nahi 'an al-munkar)*, are much less in evidence and less threatening in behavior than previously. It becomes apparent only later that the relationship between religion and politics is very much a current agenda item, since the religious police are closely associated with the most orthodox component of the ulama. This relationship is a central element of the legitimacy process of Saudi rule.

Thirdly, given the increasing challenges to the royal family from both inside and outside the country, decision making is becoming more complex. Contrary to widespread stereotypes, society and politics in this 'traditional' kingdom have never been simple, but only looked so. Not only has policymaking been marked by the multiplicity of groups, but these groups are not monolithic, and their behavior is characterized by a mixture of rivalry and alliances both within and between them. What is new is the increasing institutional complexity of the political arena. For instance, after insisting that no better constitution could exist than the Qur'an, King Fahd (1982–2003) issued in 1992 the Basic Law of Government, a quasi-constitution. Then followed a series of institutions from the Majlis al-Shura or Consultative Council (1992), to the Royal Family Council (2000). The institutionalization process greatly accelerated after 9/11, with the setting up of bodies like King Abdullah's Center for National Dialogue where previously taboo issues could be discussed, and the National Security Council (2005) where the younger generation

of royals were given leadership positions. Group dynamics, whether formal or informal, are the key to policymaking, in the past as well as in the face of present pressures for change.

Methodologically, one cannot explain a constant with a variable or a variable with a constant. Thus, explaining Saudi foreign policy behavior at the beginning of the twenty-first century requires an examination of the elements of continuity and change, constants and variables, and, most importantly, the tensions between them.

Continuity in Saudi Arabia has manifested itself in the traditional reliance of the royal family on the ulama for domestic control and legitimacy, and on the US for international security. However, al-Qaeda's terrorist attacks in the United States and the ensuing diplomatic and media reactions created structural shocks in Saudi–US relations. Keeping both these allies of the royal family loyal was perceived to be impossible. A commentator stated that "House of Saud could not have both as allies anymore . . . [and that] . . . the House of Saud has chosen America over Wahhabism."[3]

We are not sure that such a stark sacrifice was made. We will discuss the adaptive changes taken by the Saudi royal family to keep its partnership with both allies. These adaptive changes included some foreign policy adjustments to accommodate the challenges following the September 11 attacks, both regionally and internationally. This assimilation and adjustment was not easy under mounting and conflicting domestic, regional, and international demands and encumbrances. Four important features will help us discern some unique aspects of Saudi politics and its foreign policy.

Saudi Arabia was founded by a man, named after his family, and ruled by his offspring. This statement is not only a vivid historical characterization, but it underscores the fact that when it comes to politics, "it is 'all in the family.'"[4] Any public opposition simply means *fitna* (schism) that subverts not only the authority of the leader, the top Saud figure, but also the legitimacy of the regime (the right of the royal family to remain in power), and the unity of the state, under the logic of a country named after and run by a family. That is why respect and obedience to the ruler *(wali al-amr)* is not only a Wahhabi-Islamic tradition but a rational, self-serving strategy for all members of the family.

The Saudi state, in an era of globalization, functions as the intermediary between two types of communities: on the one hand the domestic tradition keepers, the ulama, who give the royal family its stature and

prestige; and on the other, the foreign oil buyers and arms sellers who guarantee the kingdom the flow of petrodollars and regional immunity against its neighbors.[5] Thus, it is extremely risky for the house of Saud to sacrifice either of its allies, the ulama or the US. However, if forced, it will make parallel concessions to maintain the balance. This strategy was clear in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks.

Domestically, the ulama have been the main supporting constituency for the Saud family. Practically, if the princes *(umara)* and ulama agree, then there is little room for generalized dissent. This has guaranteed the kingdom's stability for the past seventy-five years, albeit stability without democracy. That is why, in Saudi Arabia, the word 'democracy' has no tradition of being officially used, misused, or abused. Even the Westernized intellectual elite that look to Europe and the United States as models of liberal democracy, do not think of achieving many liberal developments in the near future, mainly because of the illiberal Wahhabi religious establishment that holds up its generally nonpluralistic interpretation of Islam as a guide.[6]

The Saudi political system has embraced adaptive changes in order to avoid bigger structural ones. These adaptive changes are not aimed at restructuring, but rather at maintaining the near status quo. The Saudi elite recognize that there is a demand for reform inherent within the Saudi population and that a process of reform in response to that demand is necessary, but they tend to be blind to any parallels between these demands and similar versions in other countries or at other times, and they express deep skepticism that any foreign experience, even from other Arab countries, is transferable. The insistence on Saudi uniqueness persists despite the fact that the outcome of the first Saudi municipal elections, held in early 2005, closely paralleled that of the Iraqi parliamentary elections being conducted at about the same time. Both demonstrated a strong showing by Islamist groups among both Sunnis and Shi'a, and a clear assertion of sectarian identity in the Shi'a majority areas of both countries. The example that Saudis usually point to is the relative ease with which the monarchy survived the family coup that led to the ousting of King Saud bin Abd al-Aziz in 1964, but one might also mention the family crisis over the 'Free Princes' in 1961, the assassination of King Faisal in 1975, and the radical takeover of the Grand Mosque in Mecca in 1979.

To reiterate, current role conflict in Saudi foreign policy is a function of the tensions between constants and variables. The elements of change

come from three directions: global, regional, and domestic. Globally, Saudi Arabia has found itself facing pressure from the United States following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. These attacks triggered the swiftest and most dramatic diplomatic and media attacks on Saudi Arabia from its closest Western ally, the US. One day earlier, there was no hint that the United States was about to embark on an all-out "crusade" against the enemies of the United States, as President George W. Bush put it.

Regionally, turmoil in the Middle East is not new but the current magnitude of tensions in Afghanistan, Iran, Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, Somalia, and the Sudan puts the kingdom at a pivotal conjuncture; it must either keep a low profile and let others determine the future of the region, or participate using its religious allure and 'riyalpolitik' to help shape its sphere of influence.

The path chosen by Saudi Arabia is not only a function of objective factors determined by geopolitics and economic interests, but also the effect of a new king taking office, the current King Abdullah. From 1996 till his death in 2005, former strongman King Fahd was paralyzed by a serious stroke, a period that gave then-Crown Prince Abdullah ample opportunity to prepare an active agenda and a clear vision of the regional role of Saudi Arabia. This chapter focuses on how domestic and international changes are forcing Saudi Arabia to redefine its foreign policy role.

The chapter applies the general framework and starts by tracing the components of the domestic environment from the evolution of population and social structure to economic and military capabilities. It emphasizes especially the multiplicity of groups and their dynamics, the pressures for reform and the recent additions in political structure. In the analysis of foreign policy proper, the characteristics of both general orientation and specific behavior are sorted out, at the regional or global policy level. Special emphasis is put on the still obscure decision-making process, with Saudi reaction toward the 2006 Israel–Hizbullah war as a case in point.

The Domestic Environment

Geography and Geopolitics

The dominant historiography accounting for the rise of the Saudi state is highly personalized and romanticized: the brave Abdel-Aziz (known

as 'al-Saud') and an equally brave group of tribesmen captured the principal huts and tents of Riyadh in the middle of the night and founded present-day Saudi Arabia. An alternative thesis might emphasize the role of 'objective' or ecological factors such as geography. These factors provide the parameters and the context, which limit the range of individual decisions.

Saudi Arabia, about one quarter the size of the United States, is spread over 2,150,000 square kilometers (830,000 square miles), occupying almost 80 percent of the Arabian Peninsula. Geopolitically, Saudi Arabia is located in the southwest corner of Asia, which places it at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa. This location has its assets and its liabilities. Saudi Arabia is surrounded by the Red Sea to the west, by Yemen and Oman to the south, by the Arabian Gulf, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar to the east, and by Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait to the north. Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coastline stretches for about 1,760 kilometers (1,100 miles) while its Arabian Gulf coastline runs roughly 560 kilometers (350 miles). Surrounded by eight neighbors with differing degrees of stability and capabilities, the kingdom has found itself in a defensive position most of the time.

Desert covers more than half the total area of Saudi Arabia. A narrow coastal plain runs along the kingdom's western coast while a range of mountains runs parallel to the coastal plain along the Red Sea. Along the Arabian Gulf in the east is a low-lying region called al-Hasa. The mountains in the west of the kingdom are rich in minerals, with large deposits of limestone and gypsum. The eastern region has the richest reservoirs of oil in the world. The land of Saudi Arabia is barren, and its climatic conditions are harsh. Because of the aridity and relatively cloudless skies, the extremes of temperature range from 50°C in the summer to severe frost and even weeks of snow in winter. Near the coast (the Gulf and the Red Sea), high atmospheric humidity makes living conditions extremely unpleasant. Several sociopolitical and geopolitical consequences follow from these geographical 'givens.'

Thus *al-badya*, the Bedouins or nomads, currently make up 25 percent of the estimated 27 million-strong population, which includes 6 million nonnational hired workers.[7] Moreover, Saudi Arabia finds itself surrounded by a set of active neighbors that either compete with it for regional dominance (for example, Iran or Iraq), or manifest an alternative pattern of governance (for example, Bahrain or Kuwait).

The Social Structure of Population

The total Saudi population as of September 2006 is estimated at 26.7 million, compared with 13 million in 1985 and 21 million in 1999. The population growth rate in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) stands at 3.24 percent, which falls between the lowest (Kuwait, 2 percent) and highest (the UAE, 5.84 percent) growth rates in the Gulf region. However, growth rates in the KSA are above the general average of 2.37 percent, registered across the Arab world. The higher birth rate and the low mortality rate are the result of dedicated and intensive efforts toward better health care.

Foreigners form 27.1 percent of the population, and 69.5 percent of them are male.[8] The growing number of foreign inhabitants is a result of increased foreign interest in the Saudi investment sectors. Furthermore, this is a result of the Saudi government policy of using its oil revenues to expand general services and build a solid infrastructure. The Egyptian work force makes up the largest number of expatriates: 16 percent, followed by Indians, Pakistanis, Yemenis, and Filipinos.

The social structure of the Saudi population poses four challenges that need to be kept in mind when understanding Saudi foreign policy. The first involves the gerontocracy inside the royal family and the generation gap between old rulers and the young Saudi population overall, who are a definite majority as the result of the recent relatively high population growth. Over 40 percent of Saudis are now under sixteen years of age, and they will not necessarily have the historical memories of their ancestors. Thus, Saudi foreign policymakers need to be prepared for a growing generation with different ambitions and capacities to know and learn about other societies, as we will demonstrate in the 'technology challenge' section.[9]

Second, though the estimated literacy rate in 2007 is around 78 percent, the Saudi government still depends on foreign manpower to carry out the country's development projects. In sharp contrast to the 1980s when foreign manpower—especially at the high managerial level—still outnumbered Saudis, there is a clear tendency toward Saudiization. 'Saudiization' is the term used to describe the Kingdom's program to train Saudi citizens in a myriad of professions, with the goal of eventual self-sufficiency in all aspects of the modern work place.[10]

Thirdly, the Shi'a challenge has been a constant determinant of Saudi policy toward its neighbors. The Shi'a, who constitute 10–15 percent

of the 27 million Saudis, are centered in the eastern area of the kingdom, the area that holds around 25 percent of the world's oil and gas reserves. Geopolitically and culturally, these Shi'a families identify with other families with the same names in Bahrain, UAE, Kuwait, Iraq, Iran, and elsewhere. However, these associations have not resulted in political affiliations or the adoption of foreign political agendas. Suffice it to say that the Shi'a of Saudi Arabia are nine hundred years older than the Safavids of Iran. They had their own madrassas and *hawza*s (religious schools) before the Shi'a became established in most of the neighboring countries. However, the establishment of the Saudi-Wahhabi rule put severe constraints on their religious activities.

Fourthly, two factors underlie the Saudi social structure and offset each other: the tribal system based on kinship and *asabiya* (sense of tribal solidarity), and Islam of the strict Hanbali type. Whereas tribal organization constituted a formidable barrier to the constitution of a centralized state, Islam was the raison d'être of the impressive army, al-Ikhwan (literally 'the Muslim Brothers'), who fought until central political authority was achieved in the late 1920s.

The Islamic identity is indeed the basis of Saudi social structure, state formation, and political culture. This is clear in the privileged status of the ulama, as we shall see in the discussion of political structure and decision making. Similarly, the tribal system is usually emphasized in major official documents as an integral part of Saudi authenticity and faithfulness to roots. Thus, Article 1 of the Basic Rule document—the equivalent of the constitution—defines the kingdom as an Arab Islamic state. By 'Arab,' the emphasis is put on the tribal basis (a hundred tribes are estimated to exist at present). While the national government aims to underscore its central power, tribal heads still enjoy considerable local authority in conflict resolution and the maintenance of basic social norms, thus cementing social order in the face of change.

Economic Capability

Though Saudi Arabia has benefited enormously from being the world's largest exporter of crude oil and its products, it remains captive to the market value of this primary resource. Oil bought the rentier or rather 'bakshish' state some legitimacy from the 1970s through the 1990s.[11] In the 1970s, much of this vulnerability was concealed because the kingdom's rise to world prominence in the global economy was so fast and impressive. In

the span of nine years, its revenue rose thirty-eight times from $2.7 billion in 1972 to $102 billion in 1981, and from $39 billion in 1998 to $153 billion in 2005 (in constant 2005 US dollars). Important domestic and global changes, however, are making these resources less relevant. Drastic increases in the population have effectively served to reduce the perks that any given citizen will receive from the rentier state. Data show that in spite of the surge in its oil income in the early 2000s, the Saudi government continues to face serious long-term economic challenges, including high rates of unemployment (17 percent), one of the world's fastest population growth rates (3.2 percent per year), and a consequent need for increased government spending. In addition to this, there is an increased demand on the part of new generations for free education, health care, and jobs. With mass expectations exceeding what the government can deliver, the rentier formula of producing economic supercitizens who are content to be political nobodies cannot work in the future. Thus, recent Saudi foreign policy behavior already reflects awareness of the need to diversify allies and sources of national income.

In fairness to the economic policy of the kingdom, it has achieved remarkable success in building and diversifying its economic base to decrease dependence on oil through the enhancement of its productive capabilities in other sectors. Gross Domestic Product, growing at 6 percent per year, saw a much higher increase in nonoil production—from 53 percent of GDP in early 1990 to 67 percent in 2006. Income from nonoil sectors increased from 16 percent to 22 percent of total government revenue over the same period. This is due to the remarkable growth of petrochemical exports, which managed to penetrate world markets.

Another dimension of Saudi economic capability is represented by the new business class. Even though it is generally accepted that Saudi Arabia is a Bedouin state par excellence, there is an important role played by commercial interests in sustaining the state. Put succinctly, this thesis holds that business interests provide revenue to the Saud and link the whole area to the world economic system, thus making the major powers of the period (Britain, then the US) concerned for the survival of the Saud. The present socioeconomic conditions empower the business class, whether through the Supreme Economic Council or the different chambers of commerce where younger bloods have gained entry through elections, notably in Jeddah.[12] We will see a clear example of their impact in the section on decision making.

Though the petroleum sector accounts for roughly 75 percent of budget revenues, 45 percent of GDP, and 90 percent of export earnings, about 40 percent of GDP comes from the private sector, which has an interest in ensuring the free flow of labor and commodities. Roughly 5.5 million foreign workers play an important role in the Saudi economy, particularly in the oil and service sectors. The government is encouraging private sector growth to lessen the kingdom's dependence on oil and increase employment opportunities for the swelling Saudi population. It has begun to permit private sector and foreign investor participation in the power generation and telecom sectors. As part of its effort to attract foreign investment and diversify the economy, Saudi Arabia acceded to the World Trade Organization in 2005 after many years of negotiation. Saudi businessmen and women have been urging the government to substantially boost spending on job training and education, infrastructure development, and government salaries. Thanks to high oil revenues producing large budget surpluses, the kingdom should be able to achieve such developments in the coming decade.

The present context, however, is quite different, for the rise of oil economy has decreased the dependence of the Saud on the financial support of the business class. This does not mean that the partnership between the ruling family and the business class has ended, but that the partnership has changed. Despite the fact that large traditional families continue to dominate commerce in the kingdom, their composition, orientation, and relationship with the ruling family have changed. The influx of oil revenues has led to the rise of a new class of businessmen, a second generation of naturalized Saudis, like billionaires Adnan Khashoggi and Ghaith Pharaon.[13] This second generation capitalizes on its international business connections and partnership with Najdi aristocrats or members of the royal family. As Luciani says:

> The Saudi bourgeoisie consists not just of the very large families, each worth several billion dollars, and whose names are easily recognized, but also of a myriad of smaller entrepreneurs, businessmen and women, of considerable weight. The number of families whose net worth is above $100 million certainly runs into several thousand, and smaller entrepreneurs are very numerous indeed. The Saudi bourgeoisie as a class may now be estimated at well over 500,000, or 3–4 percent of the population at the very least. . . . (A)ccording to Abd

al-Rahman Al-Jeraisy, chairman of the Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce and Industry, 'Saudi investments abroad are estimated at between $800 billion and $1 trillion, and most of these funds are concentrated in the United States and Europe.' In 2003 I estimated that Saudi accumulated wealth abroad was probably at least $600 billion. All such estimates probably undervalue real estate holdings, or ignore them altogether.[14]

With so many government contracts in circulation, and with the government policy of prohibiting wholly foreign firms and banks from engaging in business, a bonanza of joint ventures has linked the royal family and the commercial class.[15] The business class thus has effective supporters at the highest echelons of the decision-making process, and as long as the business class is receiving windfall profits from oil wealth, it is supportive of both the system and its foreign policy. Part of the Saudi interest in consolidating bilateral relations with Asian giants (for example, China and India) is to make use of the unprecedented oil boom of the mid-2006 that has attracted Asian business to Saudi Arabia and sent Saudi investors looking for opportunities in the Indian and Chinese markets.

Whether it affects decision making directly or by proxy, this business class is in favor of the present economic policy, the free market mechanism, and the consolidation of the private sector. It supports resistance to any 'socialist' contagion and favors the continuation of relations with Western and 'moderate' countries, even at the expense of a militant nationalist line. Many of this class still resist the incitement to exert pressure on the US by transferring a part of their huge dollar wealth into other currencies.

Military Capability

The Saud family has ambiguous feelings about the armed forces. On the one hand, increased ambitions and threats from the outside are factors pushing the government to strengthen the armed forces. On the other hand, global south and Arab experience shows that the armed forces are usually serious contenders for political power: Syria had three coups d'état in 1949; the military took power in Egypt in 1952, in Iraq in 1958, in neighboring Yemen in 1962, in Algeria in 1965, and in Libya and the Sudan in 1969. Even in countries where the military is not formally in power, a few violent attempts have occurred (for example, Morocco in 1970–1971).

Is it coincidence that in 1934, after the brief war with Yemen and Saudi Arabia's acquisition of Najran, the army was disbanded entirely?[16]

The acceleration of internal threats coincided with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and the American invasion of Iraq proved the country's vulnerability. Saudi Arabia has been very dependent on Western military assistance for its security needs. When Iraq invaded Saudi Arabia's northern neighbor, Kuwait, triggering the Gulf war, Saudia Arabia immediately requested the deployment of US troops within the country to deter further aggression. Additionally, the country's oil exports through the shipping lanes of the Gulf are protected by the US Fifth Fleet, based in Bahrain. In 2005, Saudi Arabia was the foremost purchaser of US armaments in the world, with over $1.1 billion in purchases.[17] Military expenditure in 2005 was around $25.4 billion (10 percent of GDP). Besides, the military is a major employer, and so it provides some relief to the nation's huge unemployment problem by recruiting many young men into the defense of the country.

To counterbalance any potential danger from the military to the present structure of decision making in the kingdom, the royal family has adopted three 'insurance policies.' The first is the presence of members of the royal family within the army, not only at the top but also at lower levels of command. Second, the training of military personnel has been entrusted to 'safe' hands. As a final protection, the government maintains other autonomous military institutions. Prominent among these are the National Guard, and, to a lesser extent, the Coast Guard and Frontier Force. Estimates of the National Guard's strength vary from twenty to thirty-five thousand men.[18]

Historically, the National Guard has served both as a defense force against external threats and as a security force against internal threats. Its duties include protecting the royal family, guarding against coups, protecting strategic facilities and resources, and protecting the holy places of Mecca and Medina. It consists of a mobile force of two mechanized brigades and four motorized infantry brigades. The militia portion consists of around 24 battalions of *fowj*, or tribal warriors. The force performed well in the Gulf war/Operation Desert Storm, especially in the battle for Khafji.

Though still largely dependent on the US for security, weapons acquisition, and military training, Saudi Arabia is pushing forward in its diversification strategy. The kingdom's recent arms purchases reflect this.

During 1996–2000, it placed new orders worth $4.6 billion for US arms, and $1,400 million for arms from European powers. During 2001–2003, it placed new orders for US arms worth $2.7 billion, and for arms from European powers worth $700 million. During 1996–2000, it took delivery of $16.6 billion worth of US arms, and $20.6 billion worth of arms from European powers. During 2001–2003, it took delivery of $6.3 billion worth of US arms, and $17.6 billion worth of arms from European powers.[19] In August 2006, Saudi Arabia and Britain signed an agreement for the purchase of 72 Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft in a deal analysts have estimated could be worth more than $11.4 billion.[20]

Political Structure and the Legitimizing Function of Islam

Formally, Saudi Arabia is modeled on the original Islamic state of the seventh century. It has no legal political parties. Its constitution is still supposed to be the Qur'an, and its source of laws and regulations is the sharia or Islamic law. But more modern institutions have multiplied in the last two decades. Thus it has recently adopted some forms of modern mediation structures such as local elections, a Majlis al-Shura (the consultative body established in 1992 by King Fahd), and some public forums for debating and discussing issues of national interest (for example, the recent Baya'a Council) as we will see later in the chapter. But in all these aspects of institutional adaptation or political modernization, Saudi authorities are at pains to show they are holding on to traditional roots, as the very name of the Shura Council indicates.

Thus the Saud insist that the present Majlis is a continuation of the Islamic tradition and of the policy of the founder of the state, King Abdel-Aziz, who maintained the preexisting shura councils in the Hegaz of the 1920s and 1930s. Moreover, Article 2 of the document establishing the council refers to Qur'anic verses supporting *shura* (consultation) and the unity of the *umma*. The other articles state that the Majlis is established by the king who appoints the majority of its members and can dissolve it almost at will. Consequently, much less than a representative, democratic institution, the Majlis is a transition stage and an aspect of the slow evolution so characteristic of the Saud's mode of governance.

Regarding the Majlis al-Shura, the royal decree of 1992 that founded it states that it "shall consist of a Speaker and one hundred and fifty members chosen by the King from amongst scholars, those of knowledge, expertise and specialists."[21] This body was established initially with sixty

members appointed by the king, in 1992. The membership was increased to ninety appointees in 1997, and to 120 in 2001, and currently stands at 150. The duration of each council is four years. According to Article 14 of the decree, this Majlis "shall express its opinion on the State's general policies referred by the Prime Minister." Then it specifies that the Majlis has the right to:

Discuss the general plan for economic and social development and give its view;

Revise laws and regulations, international treaties and agreements, concessions, and provide whatever suggestions it deems appropriate;

Analyze laws; and

Discuss government agencies' annual reports and attach new proposals when it deems them appropriate.

A first observation regarding this Majlis is that it has no real "check and balance" impact. It is purely consultative on issues determined by the king. A second notable observation is that it is at present appointed entirely by the king. Thus, the king is its constituency. Thirdly, this Majlis was founded after the second Gulf war and the liberation of Kuwait. It was perceived as a tactical move on the part of the royal family to avoid the anger of religious figures who opposed calling for US help to defend the kingdom against invading Iraqi forces.[22] Fourthly, the Majlis does not have much leverage in the eyes of ordinary Saudis, and does not appear to serve any purpose except that of legitimizing unpopular decisions which the cabinet does not want to be solely responsible for.[23] Fifthly, despite the expertise it contains, with around 65 percent of its members holding PhDs from the best universities in the world,[24] Saudi foreign policy has not really been influenced, positively or negatively, by any discussion in the Majlis—a strong indication of its purely ceremonial or decorative nature.

Despite its lack of any political autonomy, the Majlis allowed Saudi Arabia to be accepted as a member in the International Parliamentary Union. It contains a group of highly skilled individuals from many fields and is an important panel for discussing public affairs. The king, or his deputy, must give an annual speech to the council, elaborating the country's internal and external policies. Despite its limitations, the Majlis is a step in the right direction since it widens the circle of policymaking and capitalizes on the knowledge of some of its members among the new technocrats and businessmen.

Indeed the technocrats are the representatives par excellence of what M. Halpern[25] dubbed "the new middle class." The influence of this class does not depend on family origin, tribal convictions, religious support, or other traditional qualifications. The influence and upward mobility of technocrats depends, above all, on education, training, expertise, skill, and talent. These qualifications have been in demand since the establishment of the kingdom's first Council of Ministers in 1953 and the subsequent establishment of technical ministries. Abdullah Tariki was oil minister until 1965,[26] followed by Zaki Yamani, and Hisham Nazer, a PhD from UCLA, who moved in 2006 to be the kingdom's ambassador to Cairo. The influence of this class was increasingly felt with the rush to development that followed the oil boom.

Technocrats receive most of their education and training outside the kingdom, in secular, mainly Western, universities. Egyptian universities used to receive many Saudi students, but to avoid contamination by Nasserist ideology, students were increasingly sent during the 1960s to Western universities. Though they are not a homogeneous group and lack the institutional base of the ulama or the military, Saudi technocrats "nonetheless represent a serious group with an impact on economic and financial decisions," but not yet on "high politics" across the board.[27] Their political hopes were raised during the 1958–1960 period of fighting within the royal family between King Saud and his brother Faisal. To regain his influence, Saud used the technocrats' support and established a cabinet where they made up the majority. This was a short-lived tactical move on Saud's part. But the technocrats' participation in government has continued and even accelerated. In 1965, the Saudi Council of Ministers was composed of fourteen ministers: five princes, three representatives of the al-Sheikh family, and six technocrats in the fields of oil, agriculture, communications, information, health, and labor. In the last cabinet of August 2006, among the twenty-four ministers as many as eighteen were non-al-Saud, and among the six ministers of state there was only one prince. On foreign policy issues, members of this group are generally nationalistic, insisting on an "evenhanded" US foreign policy in the Arab–Israeli conflict. Cooperation has grown between them and relatively young members of the royal family such as Saud al-Faisal, the foreign minister. Moreover, their resistance to waste and undisciplined consumerism could appeal to some members of the religious establishment. Even without an independent institutional base, the impact of Saudi technocrats will be

increasingly felt in the various sectors of decision making. Though still subordinate in impact to members of the royal family, their influence is much greater than before, especially with the increasing pace of industrialization, bureaucratization, and pressures for political reform. An analysis of their participation in Majlis al-Shura shows this continuing influence, at least at the formal level.

The university educated were also overrepresented: 65 percent of members hold PhDs, 13 percent more hold MAs, and 22 percent more hold BAs or BScs. As many as 75 percent of these council members obtained their degrees from foreign universities, principally from the US and Western Europe, but also from Arab countries such as Lebanon and Egypt, and only 14 percent from Saudi universities. As for previous work experience, most members had worked for more than twenty years in public administration or in the private sector: 49 percent in higher education, 14 percent in the military, and 11 percent in business. Technocrats, as we will note in the decision-making section, play an increasingly important role in filtering data, formulating options, and implementing Saudi policies.[28]

The municipal elections in 2005 produced half-elected, half-appointed bodies that concentrated on budget projects, contracts, undertakings, system studies, and cost evaluations. Apart from elections in some chambers of commerce, these elections, taking place for the first time in the history of the kingdom, have been the only chance for people to participate in decision making at the local level.

At the informal level, there is a traditional part played by some notables of principal tribes who want to keep their influence amid calls for reform from some young Islamists, professionals, and liberal voices. The main resistance to reform and change, formally and informally, is raised by the mainstream, government-appointed ulama.

Due to its historical legacy, Saudi Arabia considers itself the guardian of Islam and Islamic values throughout the world. Islam is more than a religion; it is a way of life in the kingdom. As a result, the influence of the religious establishment or ulama is all-pervasive.[29] They participate directly in decision making, but more importantly, they shape the social values and the frame of reference of those who judge issues, determine political priorities, and decree legal practices. The views of the ulama form the basis of the social fabric and the regime's legitimacy. Are they not called the '*ahl al-hal wa-l-'aqd*,' the final arbiters and definitive decision makers?

The ulama's direct influence in decision making follows three channels: direct and privileged access to the highest locus of decision making, monopoly over some ministries and areas of policy, and popular mobilization.

Traditionally, the religious establishment has monopolized the ministries of education, justice, pilgrimage affairs, and *awqaf* (religious endowments), the departments of missionary activities, religious research, and *ifta* (verdicts), and the Committee for Commanding the Good and Forbidding the Evil (a form of religious police).[30] The influence of these institutions far exceeds that of their secular counterparts. If the ulama have not managed to monopolize the Saudi government, they have at least created a parallel one.

Through the regular Friday sermon, usually well attended, the ulama have a public forum to question or support not only religious issues but also social values and political and economic practices. As a result, their views on Arab and Muslim affairs are very influential. The ulama establishment that had guaranteed the house of Saud's legitimacy and stability since its inception became its main source of opposition and tension in the 1990s due to the emergence of the *ulama al-sahwa* or 'awakening clerics.' A new generation of ulama from a different educational and socioeconomic background than its predecessors has been critical of the royal family's domestic and foreign policies. Its members are neither lower class nor tribally identified, but members of the new middle class, as graduates of higher education working as professionals or administrators.[31]

Since their release from prison in the late 1990s as a benevolent gesture from Crown Prince Abdullah, the *sahwa* clerics have seemed ready to work with, rather than undermine, the Saudi government. In 2003, they clearly denounced the terrorist bombings inside the kingdom; however they supported the same mechanisms used in Iraq against occupying troops. In November 2004, key figures of the *sahwa* ulama and others signed an open letter to the Iraqi people, urging a jihad against the occupying troops till independence was achieved.[32] This open letter contradicted the edict of the grand mufti (the top official cleric) demanding that all ulama avoid discussing or taking any stance on the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq during Friday sermons or in their public fatwas.[33] The Saudi government is definitely facing a new pressure group that did not exist thirty years ago. The unofficial ulama are the biggest beneficiaries from the revolution in communication technology. One Web site lists over 160 Web sites for Saudi clerics, with their books, booklets, audio and video

sermons saved and often visited. Besides, they are often the preferred guests of satellite television stations.[34] The official ulama can no longer monopolize the position of Allah's spokesmen. Others, whose audiences are growing, especially among the educated youth, make the same claim.

Pressures for Political Reform

Saudi Arabia is experiencing a wave of introspective thinking, from the lowest level of society to the highest levels of policymaking, including the royal family itself, whose first generation is now old and ailing.

Regarding the gerontocracy problem within the royal family, Saudi Arabia was known for its horizontal succession based on the founding father, King Ibn Saud's decree that his sons should continue to rule, beginning with the eldest. Recognizing the problems of horizontal succession and the aspirations of the next generation, King Fahd promulgated the Basic Law of Government in 1992, which opened up the succession chain to the grandsons as well. The law allows the king to nominate his heir apparent and relieve him of the post. This, of course, introduces some political unpredictability. In late 2006, King Abdullah surprised most commentators with a new system of succession to ensure the preservation of the Saudi family whenever the monarchy was vacated due to the death of the king, the simultaneous deaths of the king and crown prince, their temporary incapacity because of illness, and/or long-term disability. The wording of the new rules does not give the Saudi people much say in selecting their government; rather it fortifies the royal family's grip on the Saudi state by codifying informal praxis. It has been argued that "[t]he new procedure is more like the selection of a Roman Catholic pope, chosen in a secret conclave by princes of the church, than it is like any democratic system."[35] The issue of succession is a major concern given the fact that the king (born in 1923) and his crown prince, Sultan (born in 1924), are over eighty years old. Sultan has reportedly been treated for cancer, and no one has been selected to become ruler after him. King Abdullah has established a committee of princes called the Allegiance Institution, to designate future crown princes. Because Sultan has already been chosen as next in line after Abdullah, the new system will take effect only after Sultan becomes king. Once that happens, and in all future cases, the new king is to nominate one, two, or three candidates to be his successor. Committee members may accept a nominee or reject all three. If the committee rejects all the nominees, it will name a crown prince whom it considers suitable.

Traditionally, the Saud family has been surrounded by the populist ideologies adopted by the first generation of liberators in the Arab and Muslim world. Common denominators among these ideologies included various forms of socialism, one-party systems, autocratic secularism, and pan-Arabism. Most of these ideologies lost their allure and credibility after decades of formal independence, widespread corruption, and the collapse of the Soviet model. However, in an era of globalization with its threats to identity as well as increasing symbols of Islamophobia in most Western countries, these populist worldviews are recovering much of their appeal.

In post-September 11 Saudi Arabia, "the word *islah* (reform) has been on all lips."[36] Saudi officials declared specific steps toward allowing public participation in the kingdom. Prince Sultan bin Abdel-Aziz, deputy prime minister of Saudi Arabia, promises real political reforms. He refused the notorious 99 percent election results of other Arab countries; according to him, "manipulating elections is the easiest thing the kingdom can do." His brother, then-Crown Prince Abdullah, promised to expand the role of the Shura Council and to raise the bar of accountability and transparency. He renewed this promise after becoming king in 2005. The Saudi royal family promised and held the first local elections in early 2005. A 'National Dialogue' under the auspices of the crown prince has started in response to many written and oral petitions by Saudi academicians, modernist Islamists, liberal intellectuals, businessmen and women, and leaders of tribes. Two famous petitions, signed by a hundred and 450 Saudi public figures in January and April 2003 respectively, specifically asked for political, bureaucratic, and economic reforms, including the crafting of a written constitution for the kingdom, and rejected the claim that the Qur'an should be the constitution.

Seemingly in a desire to accommodate domestic as well as US pressure for the introduction of a more accountable process of decision making, in October 2003 a royal decree announced that the Majlis al-Shura would be able to author legislation of its own as well as have input into legislation over which it disagreed with the government. Elections for one-half of the Majlis's members also began to look more likely, depending on the success of municipal elections originally planned for October 2004 but finally started in February 2005. Whether it is elected or not, a test of the Majlis al-Shura's real strength will be the extent of its power to scrutinize or alter the annual state budget. Questions about state fiscal policy and

the appropriation of oil revenue are a source of contention between technocrats, Islamist and liberal reformers, and the government.

The local elections of 2005 did not represent a drastic departure from authoritarian rule, as women were not allowed to participate, and half of the local council seats were appointed. Thus the elections and other promised reforms did not result in any redistribution of political power in the kingdom, and seemed unlikely to pose any drastic change in the Saudi matrix of foreign policy. They were adaptive changes made in order to avoid structural changes.

The most important indicator of the strain that besets the kingdom at present is the raging debate on the role of the 'religious police,' a pillar of the country's belief system and government's legitimacy. Saudi mass media now emphasize its excesses and abuses of authority, discussing why presumably innocent people have been tortured or even killed because of it. One of the stories is that of a mother and her child who allegedly perished in fire because the mother was prevented from running for her life as she was not 'properly dressed.' The status of the religious police reanimates old debates such as those centering on the right of women to be on their own in chauffeur-driven cars or even to drive their own cars. The 'demonstration effect' of women in similar and neighboring emirates and kingdoms like Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, or Qatar having the right to vote and occupying executive positions adds to the pressure for reform, and accelerates it.

All my interviewees implied that these debates are part of the current dynamics of intergroup conflict, including conflict within the royal family itself. They form part of the effort to curb the influence of orthodox ulama. Indeed, the most important indicator of strain is the diffusion of explicit political opposition and even terrorist activities. Even though examples of both nonviolent and violent opposition existed previously in the kingdom (for example, the early 1960s liberal princes[37] and the 1979 occupation of the Grand Mosque), opposition is now a recognized phenomenon per se, rather than consisting of mere dispersed occurrences. Both Meijer and Sager provide excellent data about the different opposition movements and some of their activities. Sager's data show that whereas only three petitions were presented in the three-year period from 1990–92, in the single year of 2003, there were four and with an increasing number of signatories (around thirty-one organizations).[38] Amid these reform demands, in the twenty-one-month period from March 2003–November 2004,

there were as many as 116 violent attacks leading to a total of 463 dead or injured, including a large number of foreigners, principally Americans.[39] It is little wonder that security precautions are everywhere to be seen by the visitor, even in the holy sites. It is still too early to judge whether King Abdullah's newly instituted Center for National Dialogue, where many of the taboo issues are debated, will pacify the emerging opposition forces and save the regime.

Foreign Policy Orientation: An Islamic Belief System

The analyst is struck by the prevalence of Islamic symbols in Saudi social values, political culture, state apparatus, and leadership declarations. Does domestic Islamism extend to the international scene through Saudi foreign policy? If so, to what degree, and in what form? This question touches on one of the basic debates in foreign policy analysis: the importance of ideology or religion versus national political interest in determining a country's foreign policy.

Even though the Qur'an contains no explicit theory of international relations, there is an Islamic view of the international system. This view developed with the establishment of the first Islamic state and its transformation into an empire. This Islamic world view spanned the spectrum of *dar al-Islam* ('territory of Islam'), *dar al-'ahd* ('territory of covenant') and *dar al-harb* ('territory of war'). According to many ancient Islamic ulama, in order to propagate Islam through jihad (holy strife and not necessarily war), Muslims were permitted to break covenants with any nation.

The then-crown prince Abdullah would not have been able to extend his 2002 offer for full peace with Israel in exchange for full withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967 without the famous fatwa of Sheikh Ibn Baz, the grand mufti of Saudi Arabia, a fatwa that declared that a Muslim ruler could sign a temporary or a permanent peace treaty with Israel. The mufti used the languge of Islamic *fiqh* (jurisprudence) to put Israel in the category of *dar al-'ahd* rather than *dar al-harb*.

The fragmentation of the Islamic empire and the realities of international politics led to the decline of this classical (bipolar) Islamic view of the world. Even in the heart of the Arab world, many countries replaced the concept of *umma,* with its emphasis on religious identification, with the secular concept of 'people,' with its emphasis on citizenship. The latter was the basis of the Arab nationalist ideology of both Nasserism and Baathism. The Saudis reacted to this trend by emphasizing its foreignness

to the Arab-Islamic tradition and by promoting even more vigorously a pan-Islamic view of the world. They lobbied to establish pan-Islamic organizations such as the Muslim League and the Organization of Islamic Countries and funded them generously. In addition they lavishly financed various Islamic groups in Afghanistan or the Sudan, a very controversial issue in Saudi–US relations after 9/11.

Does this mean, then, that the kingdom's policymakers give priority to the Muslim world[40] rather than the Arab region?[41] For many Saudis no such distinction is feasible, since Arabs are part of the *umma*. Geography and history play a part in determining this worldview, for Arabia was both the cradle of Islam and of the Arabs, and thus the two are hardly separable or even distinguishable.

As for the non-Muslim world, it is seen as a potential threat to the essence of the *umma* and its norms. The West, however, was preferred to the erstwhile Communist East, both out of necessity and moral choice. Close cooperation with the West and not the East was justified by the kingdom's policymakers on the grounds that the East's Communist, revolutionary doctrine, its materialistic theory of history, and its atheism were more morally abhorrent and dangerous to the kingdom. Thus during this period of the cold war there was a close 'fit' among the various components of Saudi foreign policy. In the language of role theory, there was role congruence or role harmony. The fight against the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan from the late seventies to the late eighties is a paradigmatic case of this role congruence. The US, the Saudi government, and jihadists under bin Laden pooled their resources, both ideological and material, to work effectively to defeat 'godless Communism' and prevent it from having a base in *dar al-Islam*. They succeeded.

On the surface, important assets seem to promote Saudi Arabia's status in the global system, and give it considerable influence and freedom of maneuver. At the spiritual level, it is the birthplace of Islam and 'Arabness,' and Saudi Arabia can justifiably pride itself on keeping both of them 'uncontaminated' since the kingdom has never been colonized. It is to Mecca that the faithful among the 1.2 billion Muslims of this world turn five times a day for their prayers. Thus what Saudi religious authorities say and do can have a huge mobilizational effect on these masses, even above the heads of their governments. Visiting Mecca, and seeing how crowded it is at almost any hour of the day or night, I was assured by all I talked to that the Kaaba is busy at all times. During the

pilgrimage period it is prodigiously overcrowded, and incidents of stampeding occur despite enormous Saudi efforts at better management of the ceaseless waves of humanity.

At the economic and financial level, Saudi Arabia's impact is different but no less influential. It is by all standards an oil giant, the leading international exporter and largest possessor of world oil reserves. Saudi Arabia has an oil-based economy with strong government controls over major economic activities. It possesses 262.1 billion barrels of oil reserves as of 2005, about 24 percent of the world's proven total petroleum reserves.[42] It ranks as the largest exporter of petroleum and plays a leading role in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Moreover, its proven reserves are increasing gradually as more oil fields are discovered, unlike most other oil-producing countries. The petroleum sector accounts for roughly 75 percent of budget revenues, 40 percent of the GDP, and 90 percent of export earnings, according to World Bank indicators for 2005.

Islam and oil, then, are two bases of the country's foreign policy. Many countries would like to be in Saudi Arabia's position, combining the soft power of the word (Islam) with physical power (since a barrel of oil can easily be transformed into the barrel of a gun). But there is another side to the coin. Once a country is so much at centerstage, it is envied, can be contested and even overpowered if it does not have the necessary means—internally and externally—to deter covetousness. Thus proponents of revolutionary Islam (for example, Khomeini's Iran, Lebanon's Hizbullah, Egypt's Jihad and al-Qaeda) contest Saudi Arabia's right to speak in the name of Islam or even to represent "the right Islam," an attack against the kingdom's very basis of legitimacy. This hypersensitivity to the world market of ideas reveals a structural liability.

Moreover, the country's economy is still highly dependent on one commodity—oil—for its functioning, and even for the state's survival. Yet both the demand and price levels for this commodity are beyond the kingdom's control, as the experiences of the 1980s, when the price of crude oil hovered around ten dollars a barrel, amply show. The result is an acute Saudi vulnerability, increased—rather than reduced—by being too influential to be ignored, and by being pressed to offer concessions and/or give aid to help weaker actors. Thus an overabundance of some capabilities does empower in foreign policy, but paradoxically, it can also challenge and constrain.

Saudi Arabia's immediate geopolitical situation adds to this feeling of vulnerability. It is terribly close to Iran and shares borders with Iraq. Iran since 1979 and Iraq under the Baathist regime, professed historical missions, whether Islamic revolution or pan-Arab unification, and thus have adopted messianic foreign policies. Iran's lack of change since the 1979 revolution, and Iraq's unpredictable changes since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003, both pose threats to the conservative Saudi royal family. Saudi Arabia's behavior or budget allocations (whether for aid or defense) cannot be explained without reference to this foreign policy matrix and the main features of the Saudi state: cradle of Islam, oil giant, poor in non-oil resources, absolutely dependent on the vagaries of the world market, and the geopolitical characteristics of its immediate environment.

Decision Making

Even an orthodox, personalized, and traditional system such as Saudi Arabia disproves some established theories of foreign policymaking, whether those of the hard-power Realist school or of the psychological-idiosyncratic one. Saudi Arabia, somewhat limited in the effective use of hard military power, counts on soft power to attain foreign policy objectives, whether it is Islam or oil revenue; Saudi Arabia uses both *moralpolitik* and *riyalpolitik*.

The Saudi pattern of decision making also disproves the psychological-idiosyncratic approach. Either because of Bedouin political culture, or the internal politics of the royal family, the king is surrounded by quasi equals (his brothers), and his status is almost that of *primus inter pares*. The royal family is not at all monolithic, and even its present ruling generation is divided among three or five circles, each with its clients and networks. In addition, the family's need to count on religious legitimization brings into the decision-making process some members of al-Sheikh family as well as some prominent ulama and occasionally notables of important tribes. The decision-making circle can get even bigger if differences among prime members spill over, necessitating a search for allies.

Four institutions govern the making of decisions in the kingdom. They are, in descending order of importance, the royal family, the *ahl al-hal wa-l-'aqd* ('those who solve and bind'), the cabinet, and the Majlis al-Shura. At the heart of all three are the royal family and its tribal–religious partners by marriage and/or social alliance. At the top of the pyramid is the king, who presides over the cabinet in his ex officio role as prime minister.

The king's influence is felt in the case of dissension in the decision-making group. But if he does not manage to put an end to this dissension or build consensus around his person and policies, he loses—as in systems of basic tribal democracy—this legitimacy of his position and is deposed forthwith, as King Saud learned the hard way in 1964.

Thus, rather than being based on one individual, the decision-making process is hierarchical. The hierarchy is a reflection of the social structure, with its tribal organization and political culture, and a direct consequence of Saudi state formation. At the extreme top of the pyramid are the members of the royal family monopolizing the highest positions of internal and external security, such as the ministries of defense, interior, foreign affairs, and the National Guard, assisted by members of the influential families or tribes with whom they have intermarried and/or contracted alliances. These families include the al-Sheikh and the Sudairis—the powerful Bedouin dynasty from northern Najd that intermarried with all branches of al-Saud and to which the late King Fahd and Princes Sultan and Nayef, the crown prince and the minister of interior respectively, belong. These influential individuals number about twenty thousand. If we add nonroyal partners, such as members of the religious establishment, the top elite may number as much as a hundred thousand.[43] Only a fraction of these are in the three decision-making institutions mentioned above.

That is why the king's persona and vision (or lack thereof) are important determinants of Saudi foreign policy. King Abdullah provides an excellent case study of both the impact of a change of leadership and how to handle old problems in innovative ways. Since taking office in August 2005, King Abdullah has raised the expectations of many commentators as a potential regional leader of the same caliber as Nasser or King Faisal. His stances on conflicts in the region such as those in Palestine, Somalia, Lebanon, the Sudan, and Iraq have reflected his eagerness to play an active role in a troubled region. Most notably, the Arab Summit in Riyadh in March 2007 presented a clear view of "how Saudi Arabia is reviving not only its regional role and power, but also becoming the only Arab country capable of challenging Iranian ambitions in Iraq and Lebanon. With Egypt lagging behind owing to critical domestic problems, Saudi Arabia appears the single player in Arab affairs."[44]

This might explain why Washington patiently swallowed King Abdullah's description of the American presence in Iraq as an "illegal

occupation." Some might say that America has come to realize that he no longer speaks for himself alone but rather as a leader of the Arab states. During 2006, Saudi Arabia received twenty-five visits from dignitaries and heads of state, excluding those that accompanied the Arab Summit in Riyadh, more than any other country in the Middle East. This centrality is an empirical manifestation of how eager King Abdullah is to make use of the soft and hard sources of power available to the richest country in the region.

The *ahl al-hal wa-l-'aqd* can be considered a group of trustees and patrons who are called upon in time of need rather than a permanent institution with a clear structure. This loose structure is part of a long tradition that dates back to the tribal praxis of early Muslims. The membership of the *ahl al-hal wa-l-'aqd* is supposed to be between 100 and 160, of whom the majority are said to be descendants of Abdel-Aziz.

As for the cabinet, though its membership is clear, its importance lies in its being the locus par excellence of the new middle class and their participation in decision making. What strikes the observer of the Saudi cabinet is its relative longevity and stability: a very small number of cabinets have governed the country for the last two decades or so, and the system works by cabinet reshuffle. This is true even after the alleged reforms since September 11. In essence, the decision-making process is within the royal family and is still a discreet affair, with senior princes discussing issues in private with the aim of eventually reaching a consensus. Such disagreements as may exist are never aired in public.

This informal consultation process appeared to be given a more formal structure with the formation in June 2000 of a family council chaired by the crown prince and comprising eighteen princes. Yet, decisions affecting daily life in Saudi Arabia are still taken by the cabinet—where the royal family is still predominant—without much transparency or accountability.

The country's name, Saudi Arabia, indicates who, in theory and in practice, has the final power to decide. To understand Saudi decision making, one must understand Saud family politics: the structure of relations between brothers from different mothers, between senior and junior princes, and between traditional and Western-educated family members, and the techniques of consensus building that ensure the family's survival.

This 'family politics' structure is the direct result of the formation of the Saudi state. Very few leadership patterns in the Arab world mirror the state of their society as well as that of the Saud of the Najd region.

To achieve primacy Abdel-Aziz al-Saud formed an alliance with Sheikh Abdel-Wahab and used religion to offset tribal affiliation and social segmentation. To consolidate the Saud's overall and hereditary control, Abdel-Aziz formed strong marriage alliances with the Sudairi, Ibn Jelawi, and Shammar tribes.

Though intertribal marriage guaranteed allegiance, it also created disunity and tension among royal family members with different maternal/tribal affiliations.[45] Competition and tension increased when seniority was not followed as the basis of accession to the throne. Tension within the family was also created when a strong individual or clan attempted to accumulate maximum power and hence threatened the share of the others.

The Royal Family and the Foreign Ministry

Whether a member of the royal family joins the inner circle of decision makers depends on several factors: age, clan affiliation, and the balance of power within the family.[46] A case in point is the latent competition between Princes Saud al-Faisal and Bandar bin Sultan. Both of them are grandsons of the founder of the kingdom, King Abdel-Aziz; Saud is the son of former King Faisal (1964–1975), and Bandar is the son of the present defense minister and crown prince, Sultan, a pillar of the strong 'Sudairi seven.' As members of the second generation (both born in Ta'if, Faisal in 1940, and Bandar nine years later), they are in line for the succession. Both are US educated, Faisal at Princeton and Bandar at Johns Hopkins. Both are very involved in the conduct of Saudi foreign policy; both have a long hold on their official positions. Faisal has been foreign minister since 1975, and Bandar was ambassador to the key site of Washington for twenty-two years (1983–2005). Not only are they cousins, but Bandar is also married to Saud's sister, Princess Haifa bint Faisal. Even before his appointment as secretary general of the newly established National Security Council in October 2005, Bandar had acted as a "super" foreign minister. He maintained close connections in different Washington circles, from Dick Cheney and his wife, to the Bush family (earning the nickname 'Bandar Bush'). He has been a master planner from the start, not only of Saudi–US foreign relations, but also of wider international politics (for example, his presumed part in Nicaragua's Contra affair in the mid-1980s). Even after leaving his Washington ambassadorship, he made secret visits to the US—ostensibly to check on his $135 million mansion in Aspen, Colorado—that provoked the resignation of his successor, Prince Turki.

In the US, where the institution of the National Security Council was first established, its head is usually in competition with the head of the State Department, and often in fact moves on to that post, as in the cases of Henry Kissinger and Condoleezza Rice. Is this pattern to be repeated in Riyadh. or is Bandar happy to work from within this post to have an even bigger impact? As in any system of shifting alliances, relations of rivalry and cooperation can change at short notice.

Since the establishment of the Saudi kingdom, the Foreign Ministry has evolved very slowly. When first established in 1926, it was called the Directorate of Foreign Affairs, and consisted of four departments: legal, political, administrative, and consular. A royal decree stipulated that Abdel-Aziz would be responsible for the first two departments and Faisal for the others. The work of the ministry has since increased in scope and complexity. At the bureaucratic level, it has grown from a few departments into a complicated structure with a permanent undersecretary and deputy and assistant deputy ministers to head the six major departments and desks: diplomatic missions abroad, Western, Afro-Asian, Islamic, petroleum, and Arab affairs. Additional functional, or technical, desks were established to deal with commercial, financial, and cultural affairs.[47] Supporting these departments are the offices of protocol, consular affairs, administration, cables and wireless, and public relations and press.[48] The technical, nondiplomatic support staff for this bureaucratic structure numbered about five hundred civil servants in 1982 but the total has now reached 1600.[49] A diplomatic institute on the model of institutions such as Vienna's Diplomatic Academy or Cairo's Diplomatic Institute was established in the late 1970s to give young diplomats proper training.[50]

At the level of diplomatic representations, the ministry's work expanded to keep pace with Saudi Arabia's growing international status. In 2006, the total number of Saudi embassies reached seventy-seven, with thirteen consulates, three resident delegations, and commercial offices. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia is home to 157 foreign missions, with ninety-eight embassies in Riyadh, and fifty-nine consulates in Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dhahran.[51] A major decree authorized the ministry to hire local female employees in its diplomatic missions abroad, and some are already on the job in places such as London and Washington.

As foreign minister, Saud al-Faisal has worked with three kings: Khaled, Fahd and Abdullah. Khaled was very different from his predecessor, King Faisal. Frequently described as a "man of the desert," he was interested in

the society's traditional groups and in practicing the time-honored sport of falconry. Khaled's poor health forced him to delegate authority, and consequently the number of participants in decision making increased. Press reports talked of the Khaled–Fahd "diarchy"[52] as a decision-making system. Other influential princes were also increasingly involved in the decision-making process at the time. Sultan, the defense minister, Nayef, the interior minister, and Abdullah, then head of the National Guard, negotiated agreements of international cooperation or arms deals. But Saud al-Faisal increasingly counts on technocrats to conduct his ministry's business.

Technocrats have been assuming more foreign policy responsibilities recently, the result especially of a greater connectedness between Saudi Arabia and the rest of the globe. For instance, on December 11, 2005, Saudi Arabia joined the World Trade Organization (WTO). This membership has immediate and long-term effects on foreign companies engaged in business in Saudi Arabia. While the kingdom will likely take several months to establish rules and procedures for implementing many of its commitments, as a WTO member, Saudi Arabia is now required to abide by the relevant agreements, covering three areas: services, goods, and intellectual property. In addition, Saudi Arabia has reached a compromise with the trading partners of the WTO on the issue of dual pricing of gas and natural gas liquids. Admission requires reform of the legal system and of a tradition of protectionism. Long criticized by outside governments and organizations over its treatment of women and non-Muslims, Saudi Arabia has also signed a number of human rights conventions and treaties that oblige it to follow international norms.

Negotiations with the WTO and its other key members were conducted mainly by Western-educated Saudi technocrats. A typical example is Nizar Ben 'Ebaid Madani (born in Medina in 1941), the assistant to Saud al-Faisal, the foreign minister. Madani received his first degree from the newly established Faculty of Economics and Political Science of Cairo University in 1964, and his MA (1971) and PhD (1977) in international relations from the American University in Washington, DC. He started his professional career as a diplomatic attaché in 1965, before moving to Washington in 1968 as chargé d'affaires. In 1978 he moved back to ministry headquarters as deputy secretary general, then to other sections until he was appointed a member of the Majlis al-Shura by royal decree in 1992. He has remained in his present position of minister of state for foreign affairs since 1995 and has published a few books on Saudi foreign

policy. A more recent example is Raed Krimly, who holds a PhD from the American University in Washington. He worked as a professor of political science in King Abdul-Aziz University before being 'imported' to beef up the Foreign Ministry after September 11, 2001. He is at present deputy director of the section on Western affairs.[53]

Many of these technocrats belong to the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the Majlis al-Shura. Most of them are professors or researchers in academic institutions, principally King Saud University in Riyadh. In addition, one member each from oil companies, the Foreign Ministry, and the National Guard attends sittings of the committee. It is noticeable that this committee does not include any ulama or members of the royal family. All its members have PhDs, with six specializing in international relations. Four of these members come from Hejaz, three from Najd (Riyadh), one from Aseer, another from Ihsa, and one was born in Damascus. This committee's work concentrates on the analysis of bilateral relations but also issues of world politics such as 'extremism' at the regional and global levels.[54]

Between the direct impact of the royal family and the supportive presence of the technocrats lies the pervasive weight of the ulama. There are no precise figures about the number of official ulama, but in the mid-1990s those working in the mosques numbered 54,000 and expenditure of the ulama was about $1 billion.[55] Obviously they are not a monolithic group and they vary in rank, but as a reference group what they say is basic for the regime's legitimacy and its major decisions. All milestone and controversial decisions have been taken on the basis of a fatwa (ulama's Islamic verdict or ruling).[56] These include the 1979 decision to attack the rebellious group barricaded in the Grand Mosque with the help of French special forces expertise, the decision to participate in the 1991 international coalition to oust Iraqi forces from Kuwait and to station foreign, mostly American, forces around the holy places, and the 2001 decision to condemn officially the 9/11 attacks against targets in New York and Washington.

Because of the contemporary and historical importance of this ulama institution, the question of who is in control of it is essential for the running of the kingdom, including its security and foreign policies. Thus, in 1971 the Council of Senior Ulama was established by a royal decree as part of the governmental bureaucracy. Moreover, in 1975, and again at the beginning of 1990, the royal palace took steps to regulate the judicial

system, usually the monopoly of al-Sheikh family. The objective was to bring this system in line with the management rules of the state rather than leaving it to the religious establishment. The royal family's emphasis at present, since the invasion of Iraq, is on ensuring that mosque sermons are brief and avoid "any form of extremism." Though much more diffuse than embodied, ulama power can certainly tip the balance in times of crisis as they become decisive arbitrators. With the increasing number of royal family members (almost seven thousand now) and the possibility of their discord spilling over into political arenas, the power of the ulama, if they remain united, is bound to increase.

In terms of decision making, it is important to think of all these groups as overlapping and connected in a network of what we can term revolving doors. Let us consider the case of Prince al-Walid bin Talal:

> [I]ndividually the most powerful and visible businessman in the country, and one of the richest men on earth. Al-Walid is in theory in the line of succession to the throne, but in practice his chances of getting there by virtue of simple seniority are very small. He is number five on *Forbes*' list of global billionaires in 2005, with an estimated net worth of $42.37 billion. Al-Walid has called his business group 'Kingdom.' He has built the tallest tower in Riyadh, visible from all sides of town, and has called it Kingdom Centre (the Arabic may just as well be understood to mean 'the centre of the kingdom') from where he conducts his business as the 'CEO of the kingdom.' In addition to such obvious symbolism, he is constantly in the news with his activities and political meetings. He visits heads of state and government abroad and receives those that call on him in Riyadh—and the news is announced just as if he were a high government official. He displays royal behavior, primarily by being generous and giving publicly to several worthy causes.[57]

As a case in decision making, we will focus on some of the considerations that shaped the shifts in Saudi position toward the thirty-four-day Lebanese–Israeli war of summer 2006 and its aftermath. Indeed the revolving door between business and politics is even clearer when we know that al-Walid wished to replace the assassinated Rafiq al-Hariri as prime minister of Lebanon (al-Walid is half Lebanese on his mother's side, as is indeed his father Prince Talal whose mother was an Armenian Lebanese).

When Hizbullah captured two Israeli soldiers and killed eight others, many people expected full support of its actions from all Arab countries including Saudi Arabia. However, the Saudi position went in the opposite direction by stating that there should be "differentiation between legitimate resistance and the uncalculated adventures of some elements within the State and overseas, who without recourse to the legitimate authority in its country, and without consultation or coordination with the Arab states, trigger an extremely serious situation which could subject all Arab nations and their achievements to destruction, without taking into consideration the opinion of these states."[58]

The Saudi statement went on to say, "The Kingdom sees that it is time for these elements to single-handedly shoulder full responsibility for this irresponsible behavior, and that the burden of ending the crisis it has created falls on them alone." This statement was issued on July 13, 2007, only one day after the capture and killing of the soldiers. These clear and swift words of condemnation made many observers think that Saudi Arabia, like Egypt and Jordan, had decided to side with the US–Israeli plan to eliminate the sources of threat and instability in the region.

However, Saudi diplomacy managed to combine two seemingly contradictory positions: sending a clear message to Hizbullah blaming it for taking reckless unilateral steps, and sending a clear message to the Lebanese government that the kingdom was in full support of its right to defend itself against the Israeli aggression. The Saudi statement bore the tone of censure and blame for the actions of elements that stumble into uncalculated and irresponsible adventures, without coordination or consultation with the legitimate authorities in their respective states.

The Saudi statement and all the ensuing declarations, including the speech given by Saud al-Faisal in the Arab Foreign Ministers' meeting in Cairo on July 15, 2006 were driven by a number of factors:

1. Given that the Lebanese cabinet declared it was not aware of Hizbullah's plan, Hizbullah did not estimate the price that would be paid for the capture of two Israeli soldiers and the killing of eight others, without recourse to its legitimate authority.
2. Hizbullah's act exacerbated the domestic tension in Lebanon and scuttled the inter-Lebanese negotiations.
3. Hizbullah's actions served Syrian-Iranian interests at the expense of the Lebanese ones.
4. Hizbullah did not estimate the consequences of what it did,

including the possibility of pushing Lebanon decades back in its postwar recovery.

However, the Saudi foreign minister made it clear in his visit to the US that Israel's acts did not aid deescalation. Indeed, Israel had deliberately targeted civilian populations and buildings, actions which risked destroying the whole peace process. However, the US position was not in tandem with the Saudi vision. The US secretary of state was not ready to push for a ceasefire till a real solution would emerge on the ground. Of course, its goal was to give Israel time to uproot Hizbullah. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia made it formally clear that it was "disappointed" in the US and international community position toward the Israeli aggression on the Lebanese people. This shift in the Saudi position triggered questions as to why Saudi Arabia had started by condemning Hizbullah and ended up more sympathetic to it.

Commentators attributed the change in Saudi foreign behavior toward the Lebanese crisis to several factors:

1. A stable Lebanon has always been a Saudi goal since the Ta'if accords in 1989. The Saudi government believes that the only way to achieve stability in Lebanon is through full control by the Lebanese government over its territory. This goal cannot be achieved without disarming Hizbullah, an issue of contention between Hizbullah and Saudi Arabia for the past fifteen years.[59]
2. Saudi Arabia's discomfort with Hizbullah is not really aimed against Hizbullah, but rather against the role played by Iran in the region. A war by proxy between the US and Iran over the vacuum in the Lebanese battlefield seems to describe a major aspect of this 2006 round in the eternal Arab–Israeli military confrontation. Iran and Saudi Arabia have been in strategic competition since the Iranian Revolution in 1979. The extended role of Iran in Iraq has created further complications, given the fact that it is Saudi Arabia now, not Iraq, that has to protect the Arab backyard. Iran has also been active in supporting Hamas, which threatens the Saudi role in the region. That is why it was not bizarre to hear some Saudi ulama warn Sunni Muslims against supporting a Hizbullah that functioned as an Iranian arm in the Sunni Arab countries.[60] This position was echoed by the Saudi foreign minister when he warned the Arab world against being "captive of regional and international powers who have their own agendas."[61]

3. Saudi Arabia's position toward the Israeli–Lebanese conflict reflected the growing tension between Saudi Arabia and Syria since the assassination of Rafiq al-Hariri in February 2005. This tension had many manifestations; its starkest face came when the Syrian president described the leaders of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan as "half men."[62] Moreover, Saudi Arabia finds the withdrawal of Syria from Lebanon incomplete, since Hizbullah is still armed and functions in full coordination with Damascus and Tehran.
4. The Shi'a question has become an exceedingly important issue in Saudi foreign policy, given the kingdom's social structure and the increasing emphasis on minority rights for minority self-determination. Strategic competition between Iran and Saudi Arabia is present, despite the mutual agreement to refrain from escalation. Demographically, the Saudi population is slightly more than one third of the Iranian population. The Iranian army is much stronger than the Saudi army even if Saudi Arabia is economically more powerful with a 60 percent higher GNP than Iran.
5. Saudi economic interests in Lebanon are another important and often overlooked factor. It has been stated that Saudis have invested up to $2.4 billion in Lebanon since the 1960s, leaving aside Saudi tourist activities in Lebanon and the position of Saudi Arabia as the primary importer from Lebanon.[63] That is why the Saudi government has established an office in Beirut to calculate the negative impact of the 2006 war with Israel on Saudi business in Lebanon.
6. However, the Lebanon that had been a battlefield between different actors was the site of collaboration between Iran and Saudi Arabia when their interests converged. Leaders of Hizbullah, the Iranian-backed party trying to overthrow the Lebanese government, visited the Saudi king in Riyadh in January 2007. Prince Bandar Ibn Sultan, the Saudi chief security adviser, has met with his Iranian counterpart, Ali Larijani, in Riyadh and Tehran to try to stop Lebanon's slide into civil war. "The only hope is for the Iranians and Saudis to go further in easing the situation and bringing people back to the negotiating table," said Radwan al-Sayyed, an adviser to Prime Minister Fu'ad Saniora.[64] These Saudi-Iranian efforts have put Washington in an awkward position, since it is trying to reduce Iran's regional influence. But since a stable Lebanon is also an American priority, American officials watched the efforts without interfering.

The Saudi position on the Israeli war on Lebanon is a good case study. It shows different actors' influence and mode of participation in the decision-making process. Four characteristics of participation in decision making could be reiterated. Firstly, there is an organic link between domestic and foreign policies because of the historical legacy of the state. As a result, foreign policy decision making is not limited to the ministers of defense, oil, or the head of intelligence, but includes other members of the elite (the royal family or religious establishment) whose primary concerns might be domestic.

Secondly, although the power of the Saud family is paramount, other groups do participate and wield differing degrees of influence depending on the issue area. For instance, in the field of relations with foreign Islamic groups, the role of the ulama is substantial.

Thirdly in Saudi decision making much bargaining occurs before an important decision is announced. In some cases, there can be an ambiguous decision or a 'nondecision' because of the necessities of compromise or the need to avoid serious dissension. The tendency is to defer and delay issues, especially when they are unduly divisive or difficult to cope with.

This points to the fourth characteristic—the slow and improvised process of Saudi decision making. Saudi leadership often feels 'lost' in crisis situations (for example, the 1979 Mecca incident, the Iran–Iraq war, and the US demands after September 11). Unable to cope, the leadership usually turns to outside powers to settle the problem. French expertise in 'counterterrorist' activities was sought during the Mecca incident, US AWACS planes were invited in at the beginning of the Iran–Iraq war, and defense treaties were signed with the coalition forces after Saddam's troops were forced out of Kuwait.

These four characteristics are influenced by the increasing complexity of Saudi Arabia's regional and global environment, and by the growing demand on the country to perform an active role in both. More importantly, these characteristics reflect the multiplicity and overlapping of groups—including provincial councils of Shi'a or oil-rich areas—participating in the decision-making process.

Foreign Policy Behavior

Though Saudi foreign policy behavior manifested some noticeable changes in the 1980s, especially in relation to the Eastern bloc, the pattern was still guided by the three constants: one, emphasis on the primacy of Islam (Jeddah

is still the headquarters of the Organization of the Islamic Conference); two, close strategic alliances with the dominant Western powers; and three, the promotion of moderate or pro-Western regimes in the Arab-Islamic world.

One way of looking at Saudi foreign policy is to differentiate three phases:[65]

1. When the kingdom was first established, it showed no inclination to extend beyond the Gulf. Saudi policy focused on self-preservation in this era. When the Arab nationalist wave spread across the Middle East and several monarchies were overthrown in a series of revolutions and military coups, the Saudis faced a major challenge. Consequently, until the end of the sixties, Saudi resistance to Nasserism pushed the monarchy toward reliance on its Western allies.
2. The second phase witnessed opportunities for foreign policy activism as a result of the Arab defeat in 1967 by Israel, the demise of the Arab nationalist movement of Nasser, the rise of oil prices in the early seventies, which enabled the kingdom to practice its riyal diplomacy, the convergence of US interest with Saudi and Iranian interests to fight radical regimes, and then the fall of the Shah's regime in Iran. All these events gave the kingdom the opportunity to be an important regional player, brokering monumental peace treaties such as the Ta'if Accord (1989) and the Afghan peace talks (1993).

   This activism declined in the nineties due to various developments: the first Gulf war (1991), and the Saudi invitation to Western troops to station on its soil, which triggered anti-Saudi sentiment among the Arab nationalists and Islamists. The role of Saudi Arabia declined even further when King Fahd suffered a debilitating stroke in 1995. Although Saudi foreign policy remained the same, the weakness of the ruling Saudi king had an effect on the country. "The immediate outcome was that Saudi policymakers found themselves more reluctant to interfere in regional affairs unless they were driven to it."[66]
3. Two major developments created a paradigmatic shift in Saudi foreign policy behavior: the September 11 attacks in 2001 and the accession of King Abdullah to the throne in August 2005. Soon after 9/11, the Saudis faced American pressure to initiate changes in the social and education system, an increased terrorism threat within the country, as well as several domestic problems such as calls for reform, poverty and unemployment, and increasing regional tensions, all of which required serious attention.

Regional Diplomacy

A quick look at the course of regional alliances of Middle Eastern countries reveals their shifting nature. Saudi Arabia is no exception. Yet, during the past two decades, it has managed to keep close relationships with most of its neighbors, particularly the tiny states of the Arab Gulf, Yemen, Jordan, and most notably Egypt. The focus on the West at the global level is matched by Saudi opposition to 'radical' regimes at the regional level. These 'radical' regimes often shifted course during the past three decades. Saudi diplomacy of the post-1973 era was predominantly characterized by the rise of 'riyalpolitik,' the use of Saudi petropower and riyals or dollars to consolidate pro-Western regimes or to induce previously pro-Moscow ones such as Egypt and Libya to change course.

For example, the gap between the Saudis' conservative version of Islam and Libya's radical revolutionary pan-Arabism and later pan-African ideologies, has kept the two countries' world views far apart. But during the 1980s, the two countries tried to keep this basic divergence from spilling over into open conflict. Saudi Arabia did not want to fight an ideological war on two fronts at the same time with both Libya and Iran, and did not want to help their alliance against the kingdom. Saudi–Libyan relations took a sharp downturn in December 2004 when the kingdom recalled its ambassador to Libya and asked Tripoli to follow suit. Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal indicated at the time that the move related to the "Libyan plot to which the kingdom was subjected"—a reference to a Libyan conspiracy to assassinate Crown Prince Abdullah.

Khomeini's Iran, though not Arab, is a major power in the Gulf, Saudi Arabia's strategic underbelly. Before Khomeini's rise to power Saudi relations with Iran followed contradictory lines. On the one hand there was competition and mutual fear, as shown by the arms flowing to the two countries. On the other hand, they shared a common interest in preventing the political upheavals of radical ideologies (from Iraq or Yemen) from upsetting either their traditional domestic political structure, or the balance within the peninsula and the Gulf region. When serious resistance developed against the shah's regime in 1978–1979, the official Saudi reaction was that the events were an "internal Iranian affair."[67] Nevertheless, official Saudi statements tilted in favor of the shah's regime "based on legitimacy." Several Saudi commentators denounced the alliance between "religious extremists in favor of the subversive ideologies" and the "Communist Tudeh party" that undermined the rule of the "legitimate

authority." As for Khomeini, they condemned him and his "clique" for advocating "these wrong subversive ideologies" and criticized Khomeini's "involvement" with and "trust" of the Communists.[68] Once the shah's demise and Khomeini's rise were accomplished, the serious threat to the kingdom became more concrete and immediate.

Yet when war broke out between Iran and Iraq in September 1980, Riyadh had difficulty choosing between two radicals. Instead, it maintained its adherence to the principle of Islamic solidarity. Saudi Arabia's siding with Iraq in the continuing Gulf war was facilitated by what appeared to be an Iranian threat. Khomeini repeatedly declared the Islamic Republic's intention to export its revolutionary model and to extend the war to the conservative Gulf states.

Diplomatic relations were restored between Saudi Arabia and Iran in 1991 and relations between the two Gulf neighbors have warmed since the 1997 election of the reformist Iranian President, Muhammad Khatami. Khatami made a historic visit to Saudi Arabia in 1999.

Saudi Arabia used to be extremely wary of Iran's stated policy of exporting its Islamic revolution. Tehran was known to want signed defense pacts with its Gulf neighbors, but cooperation has been difficult because Iran opposes the deployment of US and Western forces in the region. Instead, in 2001, Iran and Saudi Arabia signed a "major security accord to combat terrorism, drug trafficking and organised crime." In June 2006, Prince Saud paid an important visit to Tehran during which the Saudi foreign minister said "the enemies know very well that unity in the Islamic world, especially between Iran and Saudi Arabia, has an important effect on settling and solving Islamic world problems." For his part, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad described Iran–Saudi Arabia ties as "excellent, brotherly and sustained, adding the existing high potentials of mutual cooperation in bilateral, regional, and international issues should be used well."[69] Regarding the nuclear ambitions of Iran, Saudi Arabia finds itself in a complex situation to say the least. The best scenario, from a Saudi perspective, is to free the Middle East of nuclear weapons. However, this is not attainable given the fact that Israel will not give up its nuclear arsenal. "I think the West allowing Israel to establish its nuclear capability has done the damage that we are all suffering from now. There are other countries that now are perhaps pursuing the same role," said Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal. At the same time, Saudi Arabia fears sparking a regional nuclear race

without being able to be part of it if Iran should acquire nuclear weapons.[70] That is why Saudi Arabia appealed to Iran to uphold its promise not to develop nuclear weapons, while blaming the West for allowing Israel to build its own nuclear arsenal.

Regarding the war on Iraq, Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal told reporters two months before the US invaded Iraq that "[i]f the United Nations asks Saudi Arabia to join [a coalition against Iraq], depending on the material breach that they show and depending on the proof that they show, Saudi Arabia will decide." He added that "even if the United Nations decides on war, we want them to give us a last chance to exert efforts for peace."[71] In an attempt to shoulder its responsibility toward Iraq and to control the possible damage of civil war there, the historic Makkah Pact was signed in the Islamic world's holiest city by prominent Shi'a and Sunni scholars under the auspices of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in late 2006. Yet this pact proved to be just another missed opportunity due to the escalating violence in Iraq.

Israel: The Foe Allied with Friends

Israel has been the privileged ally of the West, especially of the United States. It is with the United States that Saudi Arabia maintains the highest level of cooperation, and hence Saudi Arabia and Israel end up being objectively in the same camp. Saudi policymakers have reacted to this dilemma by emphasizing Zionism's early association with socialists and the Communist political backing it received in the initial stages of Israel's creation. Moreover, to show that they are not soft, Saudis emphasize the pan-Islamic dimension of the Arab–Israeli conflict. The 1967 occupation of Jerusalem—the third holiest city in Islam—helped them to promote this pan-Islamic dimension, and thus placed Saudi Arabia at the forefront of the anti-Israel coalition.

Several statements by Saudi officials throughout the 1980s and 1990s referred to jihad as the only means of confronting Israel, but these statements made clear that jihad does not mean outright war, but rather the mobilization of all resources for a concentrated effort in the political diplomatic, economic, and military fields.[72]

On March 28, 2002, a summit of the twenty-two-member League of Arab States in Beirut unanimously endorsed an Arab–Israeli peace initiative submitted by Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Abdullah. The proposal required that Israel withdraw from all Arab territories it had occupied

since June 4, 1967, that it recognize an independent state of Palestine with its capital in East Jerusalem, and that it agree to a just resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem through repatriation, compensation, or a combination of the two.

In exchange, the proposal included everything Israel has asked for. Included were normal diplomatic and commercial ties with the Jewish state, pan-Arab recognition of Israel's right to exist and to security, and a guarantee of regional defense in which there would be no attacks of any kind against Israel, or by Israel against an Arab country. The Saudi Arabian initiative, in the eyes of innumerable analysts far and wide, was the most momentous and far-reaching one ever offered Israel.

The Global Pattern

As in the discussion of the Israeli issue, the discussion of OPEC and Saudi impact on it provides a good linkage between the regional and global levels. For OPEC empowers the kingdom to practice its riyalpolitik regionally and also globally. Saudi dominance in this organization and what course it actually takes determines the evolution of the energy market, of the world economy, as well as bilateral relations with other countries, Western or non-Western, the US or China or Japan.

Faced with the crisis of a world oil glut and lower prices in the 1980s, OPEC's thirteen members were in danger of undercutting each other on the world market.[73] Increasing oil supplies from the North Sea, Alaska, and Mexico led to the decline of OPEC's world share from 68 percent in 1976 to only 46 percent at the end of 1982, and a decline in its financial resources from a peak of $109 billion in 1980 to a deficit of $18 billion two years later.[74] OPEC members currently supply around 40 percent of the world's oil production and half of all oil exports. Thanks to OPEC, member nations receive considerably more for the oil they export. In 2004, OPEC's eleven members received $338 billion in revenue from oil exports, a 42 percent increase from 2003, according to figures compiled by the US Federal Energy Information Administration.[75]

Unlike many other cartels, OPEC has been successful in increasing the price of oil for extended periods. Much of OPEC's success can be attributed to Saudi Arabia's flexibility and role as 'swing producer.' It has tolerated cheating on the part of other cartel members, and cut its own production to compensate for other members having exceeded their production quotas. This actually gives it valuable leverage, because with most

members at full production, Saudi Arabia is the only member with spare capacity, and the ability to increase supply, if needed.

The pattern of acting as 'swing producer' was also practiced during the much more serious crisis of 1986. This crisis continued on and off till 2002, when Saudi Arabia had to lead OPEC in reacting to a global economic crisis, which caused the price of oil to fall below $20 per barrel, by reducing production for six months in the hope of forcing the price up. In late 2003, OPEC ministers decided to reintegrate Iraq into the organization. During the period 2004–2006, increasing oil demand in the US and China sent the price soaring to a historic high of more than $50 per barrel. It reached $106 in March 2008. Saudi Arabia definitely has no complaints about these soaring prices especially with the return of Iraq to the market, otherwise Saudi Arabia will be called upon to make huge investments required to increase its own output.

At this global level, the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of the 'godless' USSR certainly represented a milestone. It affected the unity of the belief system that had glued the US and Saudi Arabia together at both the state and civil society levels. However, September 11 was certainly an even bigger milestone; not only did it hit the US–Saudi special relationship hard, but especially it brought to the fore their conflicting views on state and society. How could a country that did not permit women to drive, and practiced—at least formally—public whipping and beheading, communicate with a secular democracy with a cult of individualism that sometimes permitted homosexual marriage? Since foreign policy cannot be completely separated from its domestic underpinnings, Saudi–American differences did occasionally arise. They arose often on the Arab–Israeli conflict; in 1996 and 1998 over US operations in Iraq; and over post-Soviet Taliban Afghanistan. Even with the 2000 al-Aqsa intifada, when the then-Crown Prince Abdullah had to threaten "separation" from the US, differences scratched the infrastructure of bilateral relations but did not as yet cause serious cracks. Many elements had the potential to widen the rift. The Saudi relationship with the US has evolved since Crown Prince Faisal told President Kennedy in 1962, "After Allah we trust the U.S."[76] Yet Saudi Arabia continues to rely on the US security umbrella, especially after the invasion of neighboring Kuwait, and the presence of a proselytizing revolutionary regime in Tehran. Similarly, the US has continued to need Saudi Arabia's stabalizing oil policy, both in terms of price and as a swing producer to regulate the level of production. Both Saudi

Arabia and the US had common interest in petrodollar circulation, either for arms purchases (almost $25 billion in the 1990s alone) or investment inside the US.

With September 11, the cracks became too wide to be papered over, and the role of Saudis in the terrorist attacks touched on Saudi Arabia's basis of the Saudi regime's legitimacy both domestically and internationally. The events of 9/11 called Saudi Arabia's founding principles, domestic regime, and role in the world into question. Calls for the defeat of 'evil' Wahhabism ranged from demands for the restructuring of the political system and its cultural basis, to demands for modifications in the educational system and its textbooks. Internationally, the fight against money laundering and the need to dry up the financial sources of terrorism were all-encompassing and indiscriminate enough to hit hard at the basis of Saudi soft power and 'riyalpolitik.' To survive, the special relationship[77] had to be restructured; and to continue as 'special,' it had to be glued around a meeting point other than godless Communism. The fight against terror seems to be that new meeting point, since the kingdom itself also suffers from its threat. There is also a concomitant effort to rid the relationship of irritating points—for example, the visible presence of US troops, so capitalized upon by jihadists and other Saudis.[78]

> The FBI now has teams located inside the kingdom and the two sides are cooperating through a joint task force on terrorist financing in which American law enforcement officials are working alongside Saudi security personnel. Such bilateral cooperation is unprecedented. [Thus] Saudi officials announced they intended to freeze the assets of al-Haramain, a charitable organization responsible for dispersing $40 to $50 million per year, and associated with the Saudi Arabian government. The Saudi government instituted a series of laws that made it much harder for its citizens to move money. It has put all charities, especially ones with an international mandate, under the watchful eye of state regulators. The crown prince urged Saudis to keep charitable support at home. Accordingly, Saudi citizens are now giving more money to local causes than to ones farther afield. In 2004, since new legislation was put in place and Crown Prince Abdullah urged Saudi citizens to give locally, Saudi domestic giving is up approximately 300 percent.[79]

Indicators such as the exchange of visits, the pattern of diplomatic representation, trade transactions, or arms purchases, do confirm these behavioral characteristics. Formal Saudi diplomatic representation with Moscow and other members of the East European and Central Asian countries is relatively new and still in its early stages. Saudi diplomatic visits (despite some notable signs of change that we will mention soon) were highly skewed in favor of the West (the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, and France).[80] Several indicators show that Japan, China, and Singapore are now doing business with Saudi Arabia, importing and exporting more than some of the traditional west European partners. It is in the field of arms purchases that confrontation has intensified between the kingdom and its major Western partner, the United States, threatening their 'special relationship.' It was in anticipation of such public censorship and unreliability of US arms sources that the kingdom started in the early 1980s its diversification efforts, first buying arms from France, then in September 1985, from Britain.

Besides diversifying its sources of arms, Saudi Arabia is diversifying its global allies, as we will see in the relevance of the emerging economic ties between Saudi Arabia and Russia. Growing oil demand from newly industrializing countries such as China and India indicates that there is demand for a strategic relationship with the kingdom. A clear indication of this demand was Chinese President Hu Jintao's flight from Washington to Riyadh in April 2006, despite Bush administration protests that China was "locking up long-term oil deals" with oil-rich countries.[81]

In 2005, Prince Saud al-Faisal, the Saudi foreign minister, described the relationship between Saudi Arabia and China as a "strategic relationship," because Saudi Arabia is the largest supplier of crude oil to China. As it was aptly stated, "Beijing will not replace Washington as the Saudis' key global partner. But growing oil demand elsewhere radically alters the options at Saudi Arabia's disposal."[82]

However, it is not new for Saudi Arabia to exploit any possible room for maneuver, even against US interests.

The US and the West: Escaping the Monopoly and the Ensuing Pressure

As the 'war on terror' has dominated the US foreign policy agenda in recent years, Saudi Arabia has been one of the targets of the war on terror. The Bush administration rapidly traced the September 11 attacks

to al-Qaeda—the network of extremists led and funded by Saudi exile Osama bin Laden—whose leaders had been operating from Afghanistan since 1996. Soon it was known that out of the nineteen Muslims who had perpetrated the attacks, fifteen were Saudis.

The United States began a sustained diplomatic campaign to enlist foreign help and mount pressure against countries that funded, supported, or harbored terrorists. Atop the list of targeted countries was Saudi Arabia, a close ally to the US in the region, providing the US with access to oil at affordable prices. The US found itself in an ironic position: it was spending oil dollars to fund both its supposed allies (the Saud family) and its fervent enemies (al-Qaeda); it was a friend of the Saudi elite and a foe of the masses; it was endorsed in palaces and cursed in mosques.

The royal family of Saudi Arabia found itself under bitter attack in many Western circles, in the media and even in academia. Titles such as "The House of Bush and the House of Saud,"[83] "Al-Qaeda and the House of Saud: Eternal Enemies, Secret Bedfellows?"[84] "U.S. Calls Saudis 'Significant Source' of Terror Funding,"[85] "Saudis Paid Bin Laden 200 Million Pounds,"[86] "Saudis Offer Amnesty to Militants,"[87] "Once Indifferent, Saudis Allied With U.S. in Fighting Al-Qaeda,"[88] "New Saudi Aide is in Terror-Fund Probe,"[89] "Saudi Islamic Doctrine Hard to Control,"[90] and "The Saudi Hate Machine,"[91] have become common in Western publications. Any visitor to the kingdom or even someone speaking casually with its residents—national or expatriate—could easily see the disappointment and even hurt produced by such attacks on the country and its basic identity across the board.

King Abdullah found the Middle East deteriorating under even more tension: Arabs shedding Arab blood, and American policies contributing to the problems rather than solving them. A commentator observed that "[t]he Americans have failed to stabilize Iraq, failed to contain Iranian influence, failed to bring peace to the Palestinians and Israel, failed to relieve the suffering in Darfur, failed to rectify Syrian behavior, failed to protect Lebanon against Israeli attack and failed to resolve the ensuing Lebanese power struggle."[92] Collectively, these failures threaten the security of Saudi Arabia, but more than that, in the king's perception, they threaten the security of the entire Arab world.

Thus, Saudi Arabia saw no alternative but to break away from the Bush administration's grand orientations. Contrary to the US initiatives to isolate Iran, Syria, Hamas and Hizbullah, King Abdullah brokered

the Mecca agreement between the Palestinian factions, met with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, received Iranian President Ahmadinejad in Riyadh. Additionally, Saudi Arabia refused the NATO appeal to consider joining the Istanbul Initiative of 2004, when the twenty-six-nation alliance launched a drive to establish closer links with Middle East and North African countries. Saudi Arabia is certainly interested in stopping nuclear weapon proliferation. Yet the initiative received a cool response because it was seen as part of the US administration's drive to impose democratic reforms in the region after the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Russia and Asia: A New Dimension in Saudi Foreign Policy

One of the basic components of Saudi foreign policy orientation during the cold war was nonalignment. Yet for the major part of this cold war period, Saudi Arabia had no diplomatic relations with the Soviet bloc (Riyadh severed diplomatic relations with Moscow as early as 1938). Consequently, all its relations were with the West. Besides, the kingdom was not enthusiastic about finding allies elsewhere. The Soviet Union was, however, one of the very first countries to recognize Abdel-Aziz al-Saud's new authority and to establish diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia in the 1930s. Moreover, the Soviet bloc has been at the forefront in supporting the Arab cause, whether against the old colonial empires or against Israel since 1954. Because of the US tilt in favor of Israel and the impact of the Jewish lobby inside and outside Congress concerning Saudi purchases of US weapons (for example, the 1982 Congressional opposition to the 1982 AWACS deal), Riyadh started thinking seriously about diversification. In December 1982, Saud al-Faisal visited Moscow as a member of an Arab League delegation, and again in February 1988, accompanied by Prince Bandar bin Sultan, the then-ambassador to Washington, as an emissary of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to follow up on UN Resolution 598 on the Iran–Iraq War. Amid other high level contacts, Assistant Foreign Minister Vladimir Polyakov became the first Soviet official of this rank to visit the kingdom since 1938 and was received by no less than Crown Prince Abdullah. Further in 1988, Yuli Voronstov, the first deputy foreign minister and ambassador to Afghanistan led a Soviet delegation to peace talks with Afghan mujahideen in the city of Ta'if. Finally, full diplomatic relations were resumed on September 9, 1990, after fifty-two years of rupture.[93]

The collapse of the Soviet bloc and the decline of Communism as a global trend were bound to encourage Riyadh to restructure its relations with Moscow and Eastern Europe even further. This restructuring was accelerated by developments nearer home and the Soviet reactions toward them (for example, Soviet support of all Security Council resolutions condemning Iraq during the 1990–1991 Gulf crisis and lack of support for Saddam Hussain's regime).

However, March 2003 witnessed a huge shift in the Saudi–Russian relationship with Abdullah's visit to Moscow—the most high-profile visit to Russia ever by a Saudi leader. The visit came at a time when analysts were questioning the centrality of Saudi Arabia to US foreign policy and when Washington was looking to Moscow to reduce its dependence on Saudi oil. But with the collapse of the Soviet Union and, more intensively after the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington in 2001 and the regime change in Iraq in 2003, it seemed that Saudi foreign policymakers had begun looking for friends elsewhere.

Saudi Arabia—home to two of Islam's holiest sites—was hesitant to forge close ties with this former Communist country. However, two factors convinced Riyadh to open up to Moscow. Firstly, the scathing US anti-Saudi campaign over the presence of al-Qaeda sympathizers in the kingdom together with the allegations of terror financing and links between Saudi officials and some of the September 11 hijackers convinced Riyadh to look to balance US influence in the Gulf. The Saudis also hope to diversify their sources of imported weapons. They have signaled to Washington that they want to keep all geopolitical options open.[94] Secondly, the Russian stand against the US-led war on Iraq reflected the kingdom's own position.

In 2001, the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) supplied the US with 25.3 percent of its total oil imports. Russia's oil exports to the US were insignificant in comparison.[95] However, 2002–2005 saw Russia quietly but persistently increasing its annual oil output at a rate of nearly half a million barrels per day—the largest single increment by any country in the world. With Saudi Arabia as the balancing force for the OPEC, which accounts for some 50 percent of the world's oil reserves, and Russia boasting a further 14 percent, cooperation between the two countries holds the key to oil prices and world economic growth. As both depend on oil exports as a key source of national revenue—70 to 80 percent of Saudi Arabia's overall revenues and between 25 and 30 percent of

Russia's—active collaboration could have substantial economic rewards for both. Oil is helping Russia to the forefront of world politics once again, and oil will also help Saudi Arabia tidy up its economic problems, stabilize its domestic political scene as a result, and keep its importance in international economic circles.

In 2006, the Saudi king made a strategic trip to Asia: China, India, Malaysia, and Pakistan. It was King Abdullah's first trip outside the Middle East since taking the throne in August 2005, and it was also the first trip by a Saudi ruler to China since the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1990.

Some commentators have suggested that the "royal family wishes to engage China and India in order to create a political alternative to its relationship with the United States."[96] Saudi Arabia supplies China with about 14 percent of its oil needs, and it is the source of 25 percent of Indian oil imports.[97] Saudi Arabia is China's biggest trading partner in the Middle East, and China is Saudi Arabia's fourth largest importer and fifth largest exporter while Saudi Arabia is China's tenth largest importer and largest crude oil supplier.[98] China's president, Hu Jintao, visited Riyadh in April 2006 and addressed the Shura Council, the consultative body appointed by the king.

For India too, this visit was the first by a Saudi monarch since King Saud's brief visit to the subcontinent in 1955. Riyadh has agreed to support New Delhi's petition for observer status at the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It has also been supportive of Indian moves to reduce tension in Kashmir and has tried to move beyond its traditional approach of looking at India through a Pakistani prism. Riyadh is the chief supplier of oil to India's booming economy, and India is now the fourth largest recipient of Saudi oil after China, the United States, and Japan. India's crude oil imports from the Saudi kingdom will likely double in the next twenty years. During his visit to India, the Saudi king emphasized his country's commitment to uninterrupted supplies to a friendly country such as India, regardless of global price trends.

However, there is no indication that Saudi Arabia is really trying to replace an old friend with a new one. It might want to keep its options open, but not at the expense of its long alliance with the United States. In this respect, the basis of Saudi foreign policy remains relatively consistent. The growing relationship between the kingdom and non-Western countries is akin to Saudi Arabia taking a second wife without divorcing the US.[99]

Conclusion

Saudi Arabia's foreign policy is currently suffering from role-conflict; contradictory pressures from both inside and outside are creating dilemmas and tough choices. To capture this role-conflict dilemma, an alternative title for this chapter might be: "Unavoidable change in the face of deep-rooted traditions and interests." Change should occur but it should not be radical. Threat exists in domestic tensions (such as calls for reform), in regional tensions (from Iraq, Iran, nonstate actors and minorities) and in unstable alliances (especially with the Bush administration). Yet there are elements of continuity that cannot and should not be ignored; notable among them is the Saudi ruling family's alliance with ulama and their self-perceived and promulgated role as the guardians of Islam's teachings and principles. Thus, the matrix of Saudi foreign policy—the elements shaping Saudi international orientation and behavior—is closely related to the Saudi pattern of state-formation, its geopolitical context, the personal characteristics of its leaders and the dialectics of its state-society relations. Despite the magnitude of its assets, both spiritual and material, Saudi Arabia has many challenging decisions to make both domestically and in terms of its foreign policy.

Domestically, there is still the open file of political reform in an era of globalization. Satellite dishes and the Internet show Saudis what is happening in Georgia, Ukraine, or Egypt, where women are now appointed judges, or even in its backyard in the Gulf, where in Qatar a woman was appointed in August 2007 as a colonel in the armed forces (for medical services). Advances in communication technology have facilitated a demonstration effect. The US secretary of state described it this way: "Once you have populations that are looking around—and one of the really remarkable impacts out there has been satellite TV where people watch Afghans vote or they watch Iraqis vote or they watch the Lebanese in the streets or they watch as far away as Ukraine or Georgia, today Kyrgyzstan—and they say 'well, why not us?'"[100] But in fact Saudis need look no further than neighboring Kuwait, Bahrain, or even Qatar—all tribally based emirates or kingdoms—to ask that question. Consequently, a form of demonstration or contagion effect is having its impact as many liberal voices in a very conservative society are airing their demands for more reform. So far the adaptive changes have functioned well to avert basic structural changes.

Regionally and globally, Saudi Arabia is surrounded by giant actors with agendas that run contrary to its regional plans, actors that include

the Bush administration, Israel, Iran, and Syria. The causes for continuity are deeply rooted but the factors pushing for change are increasing. This is creating tension in the mindset of the Saudi decision makers. However, it is clear that King Abdullah has decided to play an independent role in the region. This was clear in his references to the violence among the Palestinians and in Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, and Lebanon during the Arab Summit in Riyadh in March 2007. He clearly stated that "the real blame should fall on us: the leaders of the Arab nations. Our permanent differences, our refusal to take the path of unity—all of that led the nations to lose their confidence in our credibility and to lose hope in our present and future." This assessment, and his call for "a new beginning aimed at uniting our hearts and closing our ranks," signaled a continued willingness to cut pragmatic deals that could end some of the region's divisions, a vision Washington would do well to share. As one analyst acutely observed:

> Unlike many of his subjects and their neighbors, King Abdullah did not blame Mossad, the CIA or the "crusaders." He did not even blame Bush. He blamed Arab leaders, not excluding himself.[101]

The new leadership has apparently made its choice for an active diplomacy and proactive role both regionally and globally, yet with a full appreciation of the assets and liabilities of its domestic dynamics and regional tensions.

Notes

1 Very special thanks to both Gerd Nonneman and Giacomo Luciani, who sent Bahgat Korany some of their writings that were very helpful with some aspects of the analysis on Saudi Arabia. In fact, the most recent book edited by Paul Aarts and Gerd Nonneman, *Saudi Arabia in the Balance* (London, Hurst and Company, 2005), might well be at present the most complete collective volume on this country. Equally useful is Tim Niblock, *Saudi Arabia: Power, Legitimacy and Survival* (London: Routledge, 2006). Bahgat Korany is also grateful to Dr. Abdel-Karim al-Dekhayyal, Ambassador Saad A. al-Ammar, director of the Saudi Diplomatic Institute and its personnel for being so helpful in arranging interviews at the kingdom's Foreign Ministry in early June 2007.

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11

From Fragmentation to Fragmentation?: Sudan's Foreign Policy

Ann M. Lesch

This volume proposes to assess the foreign policy of countries in the Middle East and North Africa according to two fundamental dimensions: role conception and role performance. Role conception encompasses the general objectives, orientation, and strategy of a country. Role performance focuses on the specific behaviors of the country in relation to its policies. Thus, it becomes possible to assess the 'fit' or the disparity between declared objectives and actual behavior and to examine why a disparity exists. Presumably a country in which there is a close fit between conception and performance has the potential for a relatively effective foreign policy orientation. In contrast, a country whose objectives exceed its capabilities or are not viewed as legitimate by its own people will experience foreign policy failures and even trigger crises that could lead to the fall of the regime and/or to significant changes in objectives and strategies.

The Sudan presents a case of a country with a fragmented society, a political system that has little legitimacy, an impoverished and skewed economy, and internal actors who challenge the regime's right to rule and seek to transform the political system by force. Some political movements challenge the legitimacy of the geographic contours of the country and seek 'self-determination' that would most likely take the form of secession. Fragmentation and instability result in sharply fluctuating and highly contested foreign policy orientations and continual challenges to governments' foreign policy objectives. Most importantly, foreign policy is crafted and executed in the context of global and regional forces that provide both

opportunities and constraints. Those powerful forces—whether the cold war context, the current unipolar world, or the pressures exerted by neighboring countries—limit the possibility of an independent foreign policy and deepen the challenges facing Sudanese regimes. Thus, it is difficult for any government to maintain a consistent foreign policy orientation and to mobilize the resources necessary to implement its policy preferences. In sum, Sudanese governments tend to experience a sharp disjunction between role conception and role performance. Indeed, without coming to grips with the internal political and economic problems and without understanding and reacting effectively to the global and regional forces, governments cannot craft and implement effective foreign policies.

The Domestic Environment: Opportunities and Constraints

Geography

The Sudan is the largest country in Africa and the Middle East, covering 2.5 million square kilometers (one million square miles). This might seem to present Sudanese governments with an advantage over their neighbors and enable the Sudan to be a major regional player. However, its governments have not been able to utilize or mobilize that size advantage in order to exert power either internally or externally.

One reason for that inability is that the communications and transportation infrastructures are minimal. Railway lines that extend north from Khartoum to Egypt, east to Port Sudan on the Red Sea, and west to Kordofan are in chronic disrepair and debt. The only paved highway—from Khartoum to Port Sudan via Wad Medani, Gedaref, and Kassala—was completed in the early 1980s and has already undergone extensive rehabilitation. The Nile is blocked by cataracts in its northern reaches, dense reed marshes in the south along the White Nile, and dams on the Blue Nile. Other rivers are seasonal and therefore not usable for transportation. Although there are airports in key towns, the national airline offers only sporadic service. Thus, it is very difficult to travel inside the Sudan except on the route from Khartoum to Port Sudan. Large areas of the country are accessible only by dirt tracks that turn to thick mud during the summer rains. This severely hampers the central government's ability to control the vast terrain and manage relations with neighboring countries. The Sudan's immense size becomes a distinct liability.

The sharp climatic division between north and south reinforces the geographic constraints. Most of the north is covered by desert and savannah, necessitating a seminomadic lifestyle with pockets of cultivation in hills in Darfur and the Nuba Mountains and also in the Tokar Delta on the Red Sea. The only significant cultivated areas in the north are along the Nile, where agricultural schemes near Wad Medani and grain cultivation near Gedaref provide livelihoods for settled populations. The south has a variety of topographical features, ranging from extensive swamps, in which cattle herding predominates, to mountains, where vegetable and fruit cultivation are possible. The Sudd (a huge swamp formed by the White Nile) serves as a barrier between north and south.

In the west and the east, lack of rainfall and accelerating desertification exert extreme pressure on resources. Nomadic camel herders searching for water encroach on other tribes' lands and seize resources from settled villagers who live on the hillsides. Many people move entirely out of these areas in search of employment in the Nile Valley agricultural schemes or in the capital city. These population movements exacerbate intra- and interregional tensions among diverse ethnic groups and groups with differing lifestyles and languages. This tension has been particularly notable in Kordofan and Darfur, where intense drought in the mid-1980s forced seminomadic tribes to move southward with their herds toward Dinka territory in the south and sedentary African village lands in Darfur. This population pressure became quickly politicized and has been manipulated by the government to heighten political differences and to lead, by the 2000s, to ethnic cleansing of African peoples by government-backed Arab tribesmen.

The Sudan's shared borders with nine countries create their own opportunities and constraints. Egypt and Libya lie to the north; Chad and the Central African Republic to the west; the Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Eritrea to the south and southeast. Saudi Arabia and Yemen are directly east across the Red Sea, a major artery for international trade. Another important feature involves the Nile River, which originates in Uganda (White Nile) and Ethiopia (Blue Nile) and passes through the Sudan and Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea. Sudan'sgovernment needs to manage its river resources and prevent conflicts over those vital waters from impeding relations with neighbors to the north and south. Moreover, for neighboring Egypt, the Nile is its most important resource—the sole source of water for agriculture, hydroelectric power, and basic human needs. Egypt maintains a vigilant concern for access to the river and

monitors its use by upstream states, fearing that they will divert its water for their own use.[1]

All the Sudan's borders are arbitrary in the sense that they were established by British imperial design after the conquest of 1898 and the establishment of the Anglo-Egyptian condominium. Ruling the Sudan enabled Britain to ward off the French (in central Africa) and the Italians (in Ethiopia) and to control the entire length of the Nile, since it already ruled Uganda and Egypt. However, the borders lacked any geographic logic. Most importantly, they divided distinct peoples, especially in the south and far west, where groups straddled the new national borders. For example, Beja live in both the Sudan and Eritrea; Anuak cross into Ethiopia; and al-Zaghawa live in Chad as well as Darfur. The British created a forced union of African and Arab peoples who had no common language, culture, or political interest.

These porous borders have provided opportunities for Sudanese governments to impact on their neighbors. Islamist militants infiltrated from the Sudan into Egypt in the 1990s to wreak terror on the vital tourist area around Luxor, and used Khartoum as the basis for the attempt to assassinate the Egyptian president when he arrived in Ethiopia in 1995 for an African summit. Militias based in Darfur participated in attempts to overthrow governments in Chad from the 1980s on. The Sudanese government aided Eritrean and Ethiopian militias, based in refugee camps in the east, in order to overthrow the Ethiopian government in 1991. The government employs the violent Lord's Resistance Army to destabilize Uganda. However, the porosity of the borders also enables neighbors to destabilize Sudan, as has been demonstrated by the support provided by Ethiopia and Uganda for the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in the south and Libyan support for northern dissidents in the mid-1970s.

Porous borders not only make the Sudan vulnerable to incursion but also mean that it provides sanctuary (willingly or unwillingly) to citizens of neighboring countries when famine and warfare force them to flee their homes.[2] Thousands of refugees from conflicts in Zaire, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Chad have found haven in the Sudan and, as noted above, have used Sudanese territory as a base from which to attack their homelands. Likewise, thousands of Sudanese flee to neighboring territories when they face political or economic hardship at home.

Social Structure and Population

The current population of over forty million people is small for such a large country, but is appropriate for Sudan's meager resources and limited economic development. Due to civil strife and rural poverty, the population is heavily concentrated in the sprawling capital city (Khartoum/Omdurman), where perhaps six million people live.[3] Half are migrants from the west or south, who live in shantytowns adjacent to the capital and who have no sources of steady income. In the early 1980s, the government frequently attempted to deport them en masse from the capital, but recent governments have given up on that effort. Instead, they try to push them far away from the city into mud-built slums, where they can be monitored and provided with a few services by aid agencies.

The lack of educational opportunities and prevalence of diseases weaken the capabilities of the population. School systems are minimal or nonexistent in outlying rural areas and rudimentary in the cities. Nearly all schools in the south and Nuba Mountains closed down during the decades-long civil war; they are just beginning to be rebuilt. Not surprisingly, adult illiteracy remains at least 60 percent. The university system has crumbled since the military coup in 1989, which established numerous pseudouniversities of dubious standards in northern towns. Quality universities such as the universities of Khartoum and Gezira have been undermined by the severe brain drain of professors, overcrowding, and the loss of financial support. Arabization of the university curriculum since the late 1980s has also hampered opportunities for graduates to enter the global economy.

Indeed, the Sudan—like much of the Middle East and Africa—is marginal on the map of the world information system.[4] Although Internet access and the use of mobile phones and personal computers increased markedly from 2000 (when these were virtually inaccessible) to 2005, they remain limited: according to the World Bank, 77 of every 1000 people are Internet users; 99 per 1000 have personal computers; and 50 per 1000 are mobile subscribers. No schools are connected to the Internet, there are only two Internet providers, and these services remain costly as well as limited to a few urban areas. Thus, the Sudan ranks as one of the least wired countries in the world, a ranking that significantly affects its development potential.

Compounding these problems, the population of the Sudan derives from an extraordinarily complex mix of more than fifty ethnic groups,

subdivided into at least 570 peoples.[5] The largest groups are self-defined as Arab (40 percent), Dinka (10 percent), Beja (6 percent), West African or termed pejoratively 'fallata' (6 percent, many of whom are not citizens), Nuer (6 percent), Nuba (5 percent), Nubian (3 percent), Fur (2 percent), Bari-speakers (2 percent), Azande (2 percent), Moru (1 percent), and Shilluk (1 percent). Many self-identified Arabs are really African peoples who have adopted the Arabic language and culture, along with Islam, over many centuries. Religious diversity is less extreme, as some 70 percent are Muslim, one quarter adhere to traditional African religions, and about 5 percent are Christian.

Sudan's multiple religious, linguistic, and ethnic divisions could be the basis for a tolerant society but the fact that these differences reinforce each other (rather than being crosscutting), together with their intense politicization, has meant that they exacerbate conflicts and deepen internal factionalization. The south is overwhelmingly African and non-Muslim. While there are sharp differences among the southern peoples, their principal conflict is with the Muslim, largely Arab north. Similarly, Arab–African clashes bedevil the west, where many Muslim African peoples live (for example, Fur, Masalit, Zaghawa), as well as the Nuba-populated mountains in the center, the mountainous eastern desert inhabited by Beja, and along the Nile in the far north, which is the ancestral home of Nubians. Many Nubians were forced to move to agricultural schemes in the central Nile Valley when their lands were flooded by the Aswan High Dam, built on the Egyptian side of the Nile in the early 1960s. A new displacement of Nubians is taking place as a result of the construction of the Merowe Dam on the Sudanese side of the border. The conflicts in the north do not involve religious differences in as much as virtually all the groups (except some Nuba) are nominally Muslim. However, even among Muslims there are important differences: Sufi religious orders such as al-Khatmiya and al-Mahdiya align themselves with different political movements, Muslims in the far west and east include many traditional customs in their religious practices, and urban Islamist movements oppose Sufi and 'traditional' syncretist practices.

Political and economic power lies in the hands of riverain Muslim Arabs who live along the Khartoum–Gezira–Gedaref axis, where industry, commerce, and commercial agriculture are concentrated. This means that a relatively small subset of Muslim Arabs has dominated the government and the 'modern' economic sectors since independence was

achieved in 1956. They also hold the senior positions in the armed forces and lead the educational institutions. It is not surprising, therefore, that they try to shape the country in their own Arab and Muslim image.[6] In fact, the emphasis on the superiority of the 'Arab' has become increasingly pronounced, particularly in the far western region of Darfur, leading to a kind of racial hatred that did not exist in the past.[7] The exclusion of peoples living in the outlying provinces has led to their demand to restructure power or even to secede. Meanwhile, a huge number of poor people stream into the Nile valley in search of livelihood. Although they provide cheap labor, their presence threatens the power elite and leads to class cum ethnic conflicts in the urban and rural areas. Given the weakness of the central government, non-Arab nodes of alternative political power have emerged in the south, west, and east. These struggles, in turn, exacerbate and reinforce the overlapping religious, linguistic, and ethnic divisions. Thus, although the Sudan could serve as the *terra media* linking the Arab and African worlds,[8] it is, instead, torn apart by those divisions.

Economic Capability

The presence of oil, minerals, cultivable land, and Nile water resources provides the potential for economic development. However, the scarce and unpredictable rainfall (outside the south), harsh climate, long distances over which goods must be transported, and geographic inaccessibility of much of the oil and mineral resources place constraints on people's ability to utilize those resources. Thus, there is a limited ability to access natural resources. The small and heterogeneous population negatively affects the people's (and the government's) ability to mobilize resources for sustained development. Fighting in the south and the Nuba Mountains has limited the government's ability to develop oil and mineral resources and has led to harsh military campaigns to depopulate those regions. Furthermore, fighting in the west and east has exacerbated aridity-related problems and created large numbers of internally displaced peoples (IDPs), as happened when troops and militias forced non-Arab villagers in Darfur off their land and burned their villages and crops. Overall, nearly six million Sudanese are internally displaced, fleeing fighting in the far west as well as the Nuba Mountains, the east, and the south.

The Sudan has proven oil reserves of 1.6 billion barrels, which were discovered in 1979 but only accessed in the late 1990s. Oil exports via an Italian-built pipeline to the Red Sea began in mid-1999, and totaled

275,000 barrels per day by early 2006.[9] Refineries enable the country to produce enough oil for its armed forces and for basic civilian use in urban areas, a drastic contrast with previous years, when oil had to be purchased from Libya and Saudi Arabia, usually at reduced prices but bearing heavy political price tags. The dramatic impact of oil is indicated by the contrast between 1994–1995, when exports totaled only $419 million, and 2005, when exports swelled to $7 billion.[10] Oil exports have also reversed the previous trade imbalance: Whereas exports were only a third of imports through the 1980s and 1990s, there was a $2 billion trade balance surplus in 2005, which has helped to keep a lid on the country's external debt. Traditional trading partners like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which import food stuffs and livestock, have been dwarfed in importance by oil-hungry China, Japan, and India. And Khartoum has achieved the status of observer in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), a major boost to its global position.

The Sudan has natural gas reserves (as yet untapped) and potentially valuable copper resources. However, agriculture and pastoralism are the backbone of the economy, employing 80 percent of the population. Traditional produce such as grains and gum Arabic and livestock exports continue to be vital. In contrast, the British-established cotton schemes, which provided raw cotton for the Lancashire mills, lost their cost effectiveness a long time ago. Large-scale mechanized grain-growing schemes grew rapidly in the 1980s and 1990s, taking over land from non-Arab peoples such as the Nuba and Anuak. These schemes often exacerbated desertification by using farming techniques that accelerated soil erosion.

Industrialization never really took off, aside from processing such agricultural products as sugar, oilseeds, and flour, and producing textiles and leather footwear. Factories have operated at a fraction of their capacity, lacking capital, trained labor and management, transportation, paved roads, reliable electricity, and (until the 2000s) diesel power. Privatization has not, as yet, enhanced efficiency and productivity. And, as noted above, Sudan's limited information technology capacity further inhibits the development of the industrial and service sectors.

The Sudan's economic needs are closely intertwined with its foreign policy orientations. It has required stable external markets for its agricultural exports, begged for oil from its Arab neighbors, and depended on massive doses of foreign aid to underwrite development projects, reduce the trade deficit, and ensure its people's survival in times of famine. Aid has become

increasingly difficult to obtain given the costly war in the south, making the government cater to whichever global or regional power can supply it with armaments, petroleum, and cash. Today, oil provides an economic cushion, but the structural dependence on exports and imports remains in place.

Defense Capability

The composition of the armed forces and militias provides opportunities for the government to take aggressive action internally and externally, but also acts as a constraint on its operations. The armed forces have historically consisted of Arab officers with largely non-Arab foot soldiers. The politicization of the Nuba, Fur, and southerners has made them less reliable soldiers; indeed, the army has waged major battles against their compatriots. Therefore, by the 1990s the government came to rely heavily on northern Arab conscripts, who died in large numbers in the south. This was a significant factor in the increasing antiwar feeling in the north. Employing the army to fight internal conflicts also weakened its capacity to control the borders and ward off potential attacks from Chad and countries along its southern flank. As the government has 'privatized' the armed forces by forming a semimilitary Popular Defense Force and arming local warlords in the west and south, the regular army has been further weakened. The warlords and army battle with rebel militias to control land and other resources (notably oil). This in turn politicizes the armed forces, making the government want to limit their strength and access to power.

Until the onset of oil exports, the weak and indebted economy made it difficult for the government to develop the armed forces. Just as Sudan relied on its neighbors to provide oil and on the international community to provide aid, it had to beg to get advanced weaponry (notably Antonov bombers) from Arab states and elsewhere (such as outmoded weapons from the former Soviet bloc). Tanks were effective operating in many parts of the south but not in the south's swamps and to only a limited extent in hilly Nuba and Beja areas. Often, swift horseback-riding Arab militias were more efficient to employ in the south and Darfur, as they could swoop down on unsuspecting villages. The lumbering Antonovs (from which makeshift bombs were rolled out the bay) terrified civilians and made aid agency personnel flee from vulnerable villages.[11]

The governments of Egypt and Libya 'loaned' aircraft to Sudan at certain times. For example, Libya supplied four MiG-23s in 1987, three of which were shot down while bombing SPLA positions in the south.[12] In the

mid-1990s, when supplies from Arab governments dried up, former Soviet bloc countries unloaded used equipment on the Sudan, presumably for a handsome profit; this included tanks, combat helicopters, self-propelled and towed guns, and infantry fighting and reconnaissance vehicles.[13]

The export of oil, starting in 1999, enabled the government to import much larger quantities of sophisticated weaponry. Whereas the Sudanese government bought 134 major conventional weapons systems in the five years from 1995 to 1999, it purchased 146 weapons systems in 2001 alone from Russia and Belarus. In 2004, all the 270 major weapons systems obtained by Sudan were sold to it by Russia.[14] These included twelve MiG jets as well as an array of weapons similar to those listed above. The government also established military industry factories in a special zone near Khartoum, utilizing know-how and inputs from Asian and European countries. These efforts were unlikely to lead to large scale (much less sophisticated) production. Moreover, they diverted funds and attention from economic and social development.

Political Structure

The Sudan has alternated sharply between military rule and (brief) democratic periods. Neither system acquired legitimacy: the former lost support for being brutally repressive and the latter for ineffectiveness in crafting socioeconomic policies and for debilitating political factionalization.[15] Rivalries among northern politicians immobilized democratic governments.

During the brief periods of democratic rule, large numbers of political parties have flourished and competed vigorously.[16] The two most important parties—the Umma and Democratic Unionist parties—have their power base in religious orders and have managed, between them, to command at least two-thirds of the seats in elected parliaments. Small ideological parties such as the National Islamic Front (NIF) and the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP) oppose each other bitterly: the NIF steadily grew in strength from the 1960s and consolidated its power after the 1989 coup; in contrast, the SCP, which had dominated key labor unions in the 1950s, was decimated in the 1970s and remained marginal. Regional parties in the East (the Beja Congress) and the Nuba Mountains (Sudan National Party) articulated the claims of marginalized groups. Since the 1989 coup d'état, when all political parties except the NIF were banned, these parties have gone underground or into exile. Parliamentary elections held in 1996 were

entirely controlled by the military regime. Only in 2000 did a few politicians, such as the leader of the Umma Party, return to Khartoum; even then, they remained excluded from the government.

Compounding the political problems are the tensions between north and south. When the Sudan achieved independence from British rule in 1956, the British (and their Egyptian partners) acceded to the demand by northern politicians that the country remain geographically united under a highly centralized political system. This forced unification alienated southern politicians and scared the African population in the south, which had historic memories of Arab slave raids and attempts to convert them to Islam. Thus, a third of the population questioned the legitimacy of not only the northern-dominated political structure but the very fact of geographic unity. Southerners fought for independence until 1972, when they accepted autonomy for their huge region. When the government canceled that autonomy in 1983, the south rose in rebellion again. Most southerners sought to secede but the SPLM/A supported unity as long as there could be genuine power sharing among all the peoples. The 2005 peace accord prioritized unity while retaining the option of secession, should the south support that in a referendum. Meanwhile, militarized ethnic political movements emerged in the north, notably among the Nuba, the Beja, and the African peoples of Darfur.

The north–south peace agreement signed in January 2005 represented a significant departure, at least on paper.[17] Although General Omar Hasan Ahmed al-Bashir (a previously unknown military officer who emerged at the time of the coup d'état in 1989) ensured that his governing party retained 52 percent of the positions in the central government and legislature as well as 90 percent of the seats in the state and local governments in the North, the SPLM did manage to be guaranteed 28 percent of the national assembly seats, 20 percent of the government portfolios, and 70 percent of the seats in the regional assembly in the South. Other northern and southern political groups occupy the balance. Bashir remains president, with SPLM head Salva Kiir as first vice president and a key Islamist ally of Bashir—Ali Osman Mohamed Taha—as second vice president. The SPLM's charismatic leader John Garang died in a plane crash in July 2005, and renegade SPLM leader, Lam Akol, became foreign minister. In reality, Bashir and Taha keep power firmly in their hands, Akol acts as their lackey (as he had already been for the previous decade) and Kiir remains in the south in order to

manage the daunting tasks of reconstruction and to hold together the fractious southern forces. Meanwhile, the democratic forces in the north are frustrated and isolated, southerners' desire to secede remains strong, and the militarization of the Beja and Darfur conflicts spills over into Eritrea and Chad, respectively.

Foreign Policy Orientation

The Sudan has witnessed sharply contrasting foreign policy orientations, related to its changing global, regional, and internal situation. The way the government articulates its foreign policy shifts in reaction to changes in those environments, while retaining certain core orientations.

At the global level, Sudanese foreign policy has sought to benefit from or ward off pressures from the major powers. The bipolar system during the cold war forced the government to choose between Washington and Moscow, insofar as the preferred route, nonalignment, proved impossible to sustain. Thus, the mid-1950s nonaligned orientation shifted toward anti-Americanism, in the bipolar world and in the context of US support for Israel against neighboring Egypt. That policy changed in the 1970s, when newly close relations between Washington and Cairo provided Khartoum with the opportunity to restore relations with the US. Riding on Egypt's coattails benefited Sudan but also hurt its relations with pro-Soviet Ethiopia, thereby exacerbating schisms in the Horn of Africa. Aligning with Washington brought in substantial military and economic aid, but hardened tensions with pro-Soviet neighbors.

As the cold war waned in the mid and late 1980s, the Sudan lost its strategic importance to the United States. The post-Numeiri governments sought a new form of nonalignment, reaching out to Asia and Europe as counterweights to the United States. The attraction of oil lured Asia and Russia, but most of Western Europe joined Washington in isolating Khartoum due to the post-1989 military government's domestic and regional policies. The Sudan remained isolated in the post-9/11 global order, despite some reduction in international sanctions. In this case, the government failed to take advantage of the end of the cold war to establish constructive international relationships. Its own policies toward its citizens and, at times, in support of military Islamist groups that sought to destabilize the regional and global orders, triggered its isolation. Absent those policies, the Sudan could have benefited from the end of the cold war and from its stronger, oil-based economy.

At the regional level, Arab nationalism is an enduring theme, central to Sudanese governments' foreign policy orientation. Islamism became an important element in the 1990s, whereas Africanism remained distinctly secondary. Having Arab nationalism as a core orientation exacerbated internal tensions between the government and the majority of the population, which is not Arab in language or culture. Arab nationalism only weakened as an orientation in the period from 1979 to the mid-1980s, when the government aligned with Egypt against the Arab consensus that opposed the Egyptian peace treaty with Israel. Since then, the concept of Arabism has become increasingly racialized inside the Sudan, as self-identified Arab citizens are encouraged by the regime to attack African citizens. When the government has adopted a militant Islamism it has taken actions that destabilized neighboring countries and reinforced global jihadist movements. Those internal orientations interacted with contrasting Egyptian/Arab and sub-Saharan African efforts to resolve the conflicts inside the Sudan. They also exacerbated tensions between the Arab world and the US over resolving those conflicts, as Arab regimes (and the Khartoum government) view sympathy toward the African-led movements in southern and western Sudan as part of an anti-Arab and anti-Islamic orientation on the part of Washington. Thus, the cultural/religious orientations of the Khartoum government have had serious ramifications for its foreign policy and have conditioned relations (favorably or negatively) with its neighbors as well as with global powers.

Foreign Policy Decision Making

The presidency serves as the primary unit for foreign policymaking, with the foreign ministry as its instrument. In prior democratic governments, this authority was often divided. For example, when Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi was prime minister as well as head of the Umma Party from 1986 to 1989, the Democratic Unionist (DUP) foreign minister developed policies and alliances that contradicted al-Mahdi's policies and alliances. Al-Mahdi's stance in support of Libya and Iran was countered by the DUP's orientation in favor of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq. As a result, at the same time that al-Mahdi pressured Egypt to extradite Numeiri to stand trial on political and corruption charges and also ended the integration accord with Egypt, the foreign minister visited Cairo to smooth relations and prevent a serious rupture. Indeed, after the Egyptian government retaliated against al-Mahdi by cutting bilateral trade, he had to make a penitent

trip to Cairo in order to relaunch trade talks. He even agreed to a nebulously worded 'brotherhood charter,' promoted by the rival (DUP) party. Under these circumstances, it was impossible to comprehend the government's foreign policy: Was it that of the prime minister or of the foreign minister? This incoherence in decision making resulted in contradictory articulations of policy and contradictory actions. Incoherence was the norm during periods of fractured democratic regimes.

Even under the Islamist regime that seized power in 1989, there were periods of incoherence. These were most acute in the mid and late 1990s when President Bashir began to question the wisdom of the violent actions endorsed by Islamist leader Hasan al-Turabi, which undermined relations with most Arab and African regimes as well as with the West. Bashir resolved that schism by ousting al-Turabi's ally Osama bin Laden from the Sudan in 1996 and removing al-Turabi from power in 1999. None of the other opposition parties, which were marginalized and suppressed, had the capacity then to challenge the president's policies. The peace accord with the SPLM has renewed the potential for divided policies since foreign minister Lam Akol, is a southern politician. However, Akol has supported Khartoum against the SPLM in the past, is politically dependent on the northern regime, and is therefore unlikely to challenge regime policies.

Foreign Policy Behavior

As noted above, from independence in 1956 through 1971, Sudanese governments were strongly Arab nationalist and officially neutral in the cold war, which in effect meant tilting toward the Soviet Union. They were closely aligned to the stances adopted by the Arab League toward Israel, the West, and regional issues. The Arab cultural and political orientations held by the first government (1956–1958), by General Ibrahim Abboud (1958–1964), and during the early Numeiri period (1969–1971) antagonized southern politicians, who did not view Sudan as primarily Arab and sought closer ties to newly independent sub-Saharan African states.

Numeiri, in particular, initially saw himself as a disciple of Egypt's Gamal Abd al-Nasser and sought a close alignment (and even unity) with Egypt and Libya, where Muammar al-Qaddafi had also come to power in 1969, just a few months after Numeiri's own coup d'état. Numeiri obtained arms from the Soviet Union and distanced himself from the conservative monarchies in the Gulf and Ethiopia.

However, after an abortive Communist coup in 1971, Numeiri enlisted the pro-Western Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie to help to end the civil war in the south in 1972. Numeiri then aligned with Washington and the oil-rich Gulf states. This had immediate benefits in the form of large-scale developmental and technological assistance from the West and funds from the Gulf, in support of his claims that the Sudan was the future breadbasket of the Arab world. This shift solidified following the Arab–Israeli war of October 1973, in the wake of which Egyptian President Anwar Sadat linked his fate to the shuttle diplomacy of US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Numeiri endorsed Sadat's moves and was one of only two Arab rulers who retained diplomatic relations with Egypt after Sadat made peace with Israel in 1979.

Numeiri's alienation from the Soviet Union deepened after the pro-Soviet military coup in Ethiopia by Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1974, which ousted Emperor Selassie. That coup caused a sea change in Numeiri's policy toward his southern neighbor, leading overnight to tension on the border and compelling the Sudan to host thousands of refugees who had fled Ethiopia. The US government, in turn, needed the Sudan as its ally, having lost its military bases in Ethiopia in 1974 and in Iran in 1979, when the shah was deposed by a strongly anti-American Islamist regime. The Sudan thus became an important forward base on the Red Sea, guarding the petroleum-transport lanes that passed by pro-Soviet Ethiopia and South Yemen, in addition to guarding Egypt's strategic rear. In return for according US troops special air and naval rights and participating in joint military maneuvers with American and Egyptian forces in the early 1980s, the Sudan obtained the largest military and economic aid package of any African country, aside from Egypt itself.[18]

In contrast to Numeiri's shift from the Eastern bloc to the West, other rulers adopted a 'good neighbor' approach toward the international community and the Sudan's immediate neighbors. Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi attempted that during the brief democratic period from 1986 to 1989—but ended up being distrusted by everyone. Thus, his embrace of Libya, from which Khartoum received substantial arms shipments and oil supplies, alienated Egypt and Saudi Arabia. His expression of pan-Islamic sympathy for Iran angered Iraq, which was fighting a bitter war with Iran. Efforts to patch up relations with those countries were of limited success.

Bashir's post-1989 government immediately adopted an activist Islamist foreign policy that antagonized all its neighbors as well as the

West. The government aligned with Iraq during the 1990–1991 crisis.[19] It facilitated the overthrow of Hissene Habre's government in Chad in December 1990 by Idris Deby (who had taken sanctuary in Darfur in April 1989), backed by large numbers of Libyan troops. Most importantly, the government opened its doors to mujahideen, primarily Arab fighters who had fought the Soviets in Afghanistan, many of whom were linked to radical Islamist underground movements that sought to overthrow the governments in Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and neighboring East African states. The government even proclaimed that its long-term goal was to spread Islam throughout Africa.

Osama bin Laden settled in Khartoum in December 1991, from where he financed training camps for those mujahideen and coordinated financial networks that spread across Europe and Asia.[20] The reach of these groups apparently extended to the United States, where Sudanese were implicated in plots to blow up the World Trade Center and the United Nations in 1993, to Bosnia,[21] and to the Philippines, notably the plot to blow up US airliners over the Pacific Ocean in 1993. Some actions were closer to home, such as the attacks on the Saudi National Guard headquarters in Riyadh in November 1995 and on US military barracks in Khobar in June 1996.[22] The most dramatic Sudan-based attack came in June 1995 with the attempt by a bin Laden-linked Egyptian Islamist group to assassinate Egypt's President Mubarak in Addis Ababa, as his motorcade traveled from the airport to the site of an African summit conference.

The resulting partial UN sanctions (imposed in January 1996), coming on top of more severe US economic sanctions that had been in place since 1993, induced the government to expel bin Laden in May 1996 to Afghanistan and to start to restrict the activities of the mujahideen groups. Relations with Washington reached a low point in August 1998, when the US Air Force bombed a pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum (whose owner was alleged to be connected to bin Laden) after the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar al-Salam were blown up by commando teams dispatched by bin Laden's newly formed, Afghan-based al-Qaeda organization. Only after September 11 were there serious efforts to ameliorate relations with the immediate neighbors and with the United States. The government shared intelligence with Washington concerning the groups that it had once hosted and succeeded in getting the UN's partial sanctions lifted in late September 2001 (with Washington abstaining in the vote). Even Egypt and Ethiopia agreed to lift sanctions. These steps also facilitated

regional and international efforts to reach a ceasefire in the south, which were successful in 2005. Nonetheless, Washington retained its separate set of sanctions against Khartoum, which it relaxed somewhat after the ceasefire, only to tighten again as fighting escalated in Darfur.

The foreign policies of consecutive Sudanese governments have been influenced by the alliances adopted by rebel groups inside the country, resulting in alignments that seek to counteract the rebels' allies. Thus, the SPLM's close ties with (and reliance on) Ethiopia's Mengistu Haile Mariam—who allowed the movement to have political offices in Addis Ababa, bases along the border, and a powerful radio transmitter that beamed political messages into the Sudan—propelled the Khartoum government to improve relations with neighboring Kenya and to arm Tigre and Eritrean dissidents who overthrew Mengistu in 2001. When Mengistu's demise compelled SPLA forces and southern Sudanese civilians to flee to Kenya, relations between Nairobi and Khartoum cooled noticeably. Subsequently, Uganda replaced Ethiopia as the supply base and sanctuary for the SPLA.

The weakness of the government has enabled outside actors to manipulate it to meet their own objectives. This has been particularly the case for Egypt and Libya. Egypt observes the Sudan from the perspective of a former colonial power and considers it, from strategic and economic perspectives, as its vital southern flank. Sudanese governments are therefore rarely able to free themselves from Egyptian influence, if not dominance, as al-Sadiq al-Mahdi discovered to his dismay.

Somewhat similarly, Sudanese governments have often tolerated Libyan ideological campaigns and even large-scale military incursions into western Darfur as the price for obtaining Libyan oil and arms. The Transitional Military Council signed a defense accord with Tripoli in August 1985 that permitted large Libyan military convoys (disguised as humanitarian missions) to enter and occupy key areas in Darfur. A convoy of 350 trucks rolled into al-Fashir in March 1986, armed Libya's Baggara Arab tribal allies, and linked up with Chadian dissidents who sought to overthrow the (Christian) Chad government.[23] The incoming prime minister Sadiq al-Mahdi, who had relied on Libya while in exile in the mid-1970s, received urgently needed subventions and arms from Qaddafi. He turned a blind eye to the presence of more than two thousand Libyan troops in Darfur, even though that risked the de facto incorporation of that huge region into Libya's Kufra province. By the end of his rule in 1989,

Darfur was thoroughly enmeshed in the Chad civil war, with Darfurian ethnic groups armed by both Chad and Libya, as those governments pursued their conflicting political and geostrategic interests.[24]

The Relationship between Orientations and Actions

The impact of foreign policy orientations on objectives and strategies was most dramatic in the cases of Numeiri and the current Islamist military government. Given the constraints imposed by the cold war, Numeiri's objective of maximizing his military and financial/economic resources in order to stay in power had to be realized by aligning with one of the two superpowers. He also needed to maintain the support of Egypt, his powerful northern neighbor, and to ally or balance with his neighbors to the south (notably Ethiopia) and west (notably Chad and Libya). As noted above, from 1969 to 1971 this meant aligning with the Soviet Union in tandem with Egyptian President Nasser. From 1971 to 1979, he shifted (also in tandem with the Egyptian shift) to the side of the United States. He did not waiver from that strategic alliance until he was overthrown in 1985, at a point when both Washington and Cairo criticized his divisive Islamizing policies for propelling the country back into civil war and were not inclined to prop him up any more.

Under the current Islamist military government, the thrust during its first decade in power was to promote Islamism regionally and internationally as well as to defeat the SPLM/A by opposing African governments that supported that political-military movement. The regime was taking advantage of the end of the cold war and the weakening of inter-Arab ties to inject a new ideology and new activism that it expected to help it play a leading role both regionally and globally. The Islamist objective led to the strategy of aligning with the government of Iran and actively supporting radical Islamist groups that sought to weaken and topple the Egyptian, Libyan, Tunisian, Algerian, and Moroccan governments. It also pushed Sudan to oppose and seek to destabilize the governments of Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda and try to win over to its side the governments of Kenya, the Congo, and South Africa.

But Sudan was, after all, a poor, weak, and conflict-ridden country, whose revolutionary ambitions greatly exceeded its capacity. It also misjudged the outcome of the post-cold war era—the emergence of the United States as the sole superpower, ready to use its power to crush ideological opponents. The resulting isolation of the Sudanese government

internationally and the imposition of UN and US sanctions forced a reorientation of foreign policy tactics, if not fundamental objectives, compelling it to end its (explicit) support for radical Islamist groups in North Africa. But hostility remained pronounced toward pro-SPLM African regimes, particularly when those governments joined together through Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to promote negotiations that would restore a secular democracy in the Sudan and accord the south the right to self-determination.

However, the signing of peace accords with the SPLM in 2005 led the government to seek marginally better relations with neighboring African countries and seek global support for its economic (that is, oil) development. Nonetheless, the fighting in Darfur severely complicated that 'good neighbor' policy and led to continued hostility with neighboring Chad as well as the United States. Ideologically based actions continued to work against the interest in developing the economy and establishing pragmatic ties with potential economic partners.

These examples indicate that while the objective of maintaining regime power remains constant, the path chosen to achieve it (whether left leaning, US oriented, or Islamist) shifts with the regional and global environment. A change of regime also means a change in alliances. Numeiri was more left leaning, initially, than the government that preceded him. The successor governments to Numeiri tried to rely on nonalignment in the waning years of the cold war. And the Islamist government, coming to power just as the cold war ended, rejected the orientation and approach of the preceding Mahdi government. The Islamist government sought to not only maintain power but spread its influence across the region through actions that proved hugely counterproductive. Its threats and subversion resulted, instead, in extreme isolation, both within the region and globally.

Finally, policies sometimes, but not always, change when the regime fails to meet its objectives. If they do not change, the regime is likely to face a major crisis (for example, the imposition of sanctions, or renewed civil war) and even fall from power. This was evident with Numeiri (who lost power after alienating the US and Egypt), Mahdi (whose incoherent diplomacy helped to exacerbate internal tensions), and Bashir (whose extreme policies led to sanctions).

Nonetheless, an initially defiant position has tended to be tempered by a sense of realism, after varying lengths of time, leading to changes in foreign policy choices (if not in long-term objectives). Thus, Numeiri's

tempering of his pan-Arabism came at the same time as he became receptive to a resolution of the long-running civil war in the south, thereby helping him strengthen his hold on power. In contrast, the Islamizing measures in 1983 that caused civil war to resume also undermined his alliances with the US and Egypt and caused Ethiopia to actively subvert his regime, thereby accelerating his fall from power two years later. Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi found that he could not maintain his nonaligned policy and had to moderate his criticism of Egypt. The Bashir government had to disengage from its embrace of bin Laden's extreme Islamism after the UN slapped sanctions on it in 1996, and had to agree to peace with the SPLM as a result of concerted international pressure. Nonetheless, the government escalated its confrontations in Darfur, supporting the ethnic cleansing of non-Arab villages by combined army/Janjaweed militia forces.[25] Moreover, antagonism with African neighbors remains high due to the tensions in the south, west, and east, which impact on these governments and on their citizens. The peace agreement with the SPLM mitigated differences with Uganda and Kenya, but not with Chad and Eritrea. One potentially important breakthrough is the Nile Basin Initiative, launched in 2001, through which the riparian states seek to improve water management and reduce political tensions.[26] However, overall, serious questions remain as to the seriousness—and genuineness—of government intentions to reorient its policies and to stabilize regional relations. This calls into doubt the assumption that policy reorientation will always occur when a given policy not only fails to achieve its objective but also damages and isolates the government.

In conclusion, it is evident that, in the Sudan, internal conflicts, regional relations, and global orientations are closely interwoven. They feed on each other, heighten each other, and constrain each other. A shift in one of the three levels impacts the other levels.

In some instances, policies lead to contradictions that spell the government's own demise. Thus, although Numeiri was heavily dependent on his global (US) and regional (Egypt) alignments, his internal actions in 1983 (namely, the implementation of Islamic law, alienating the south) angered his global and regional partners and meant that they did not support him against the popular uprising, backed by the senior military officers. Al-Mahdi alienated potential global allies and weakened his regional support structure by becoming overly dependent on Libya and Iran, at that time relatively isolated in the region, while failing to end the civil war in the south and starting to stir up antagonisms in the far west. He had

no real international partners by the time the Islamists overthrew him. Bashir completed the alienation at the global and regional (both Arab and African) levels by his radical actions and orientation. By sharply changing course (that is, ousting bin Laden and ending the fighting in the south), he was able to save his regime, use the country's newly tapped oil resources to extend international ties, and negotiate an end to the war in the south. Whether the fighting in Darfur and the resulting reisolation of the government internationally will trigger another policy shift remains to be seen.

Thus, there remains a sharp disjunction between role conception and role performance. Governments' ambitions tend to be far more grandiose than their ability to realize those ambitions. If role conception and role performance are not brought into alignment, this leads to severe crises that can lead to prolonged instability, bring down the government, or compel it to drastically alter its objectives.

Without resolution of the deep-set internal problems, no coherent and stable foreign policy is possible. Governments' dependence on outside powers for arms and strategic support remains pronounced, dissident groups are able to play off foreign powers against the government, and cross-border conflicts continue to undermine sociopolitical stability. The conclusion that I came to fifteen years ago remains relevant today: "The vicious circle of domestic instability and external penetration has yet to be broken."[27]

Notes

1 Ann M. Lesch, "Sudan's Foreign Policy: In Search of Arms, Aid, and Allies," in *Sudan: State and Society in Crisis*, John O. Voll, ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 44.

2 Ibid. In 2005, 111,000 Eritreans and 15,000 Ethiopians still lived in Sudan, as did 5,000 who fled Chad and 8,000 Ugandans; http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factobook/geos/su.html (accessed June 13, 2006). The number of Chad citizens in Sudan is harder to estimate, as they move back and forth across the unmarked border as tensions ebb and flow.

3 In contrast, Port Sudan and Kassala each have half a million residents; http://www.tradeinvest.gov.uk (accessed February 5, 2006).

4 Phrase used by Dr. Ali Dessouki at seminar, Cairo, June 5, 2007. Statistics on Sudan's IT from http://devdata.worldbank.org./ict/sdn_oct.

5 Ann M. Lesch, *The Sudan: Contested National Identities* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 15–18, 20. Gerard Prunier provides a subtle analysis of

the complex interweaving and movement of peoples in Darfur in *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 5–7.

6 Lesch, *The Sudan*, 15.

7 Prunier, *Darfur*, 58.

8 See Mohammed Omer Beshir, *Terramedia* (London and Khartoum: Ithaca Press, 1982).

9 *CIA World Factbook*, http://www.cia.gov./cia/publications/factbook/geos/su.html (accessed June 13, 2006).

10 Figures from 1996 and 2006 *CIA World Factbook*. In 2005 China was Sudan's principal trading partner, accounting for 67 percent of Sudan's exports and thirteen percent of its imports.

11 Prunier provides a vivid description of the air war in Darfur, which combines helicopter gunships and Antonovs from which oil drums stuffed with explosives and metallic debris are dropped out the rear ramp as "primitive free-falling cluster bombs" that have no military value but terrorize civilians (*Darfur*, 99–100). For details on the crisis in Darfur, see Human Rights Watch, *Darfur Bleeds* (February 2006) and Physicians for Human Rights, *Darfur: An Assault on Survival* (2006).

12 One pilot survived; the Red Cross returned him to Libya. Lesch, *Sudan*, 251, fn 9. On the Libyan MiGs, see also Prunier, *Darfur*, 60.

13 SIPRI's Arms Transfer Project reported that Belarus sold six combat helicopters and nine T-55 tanks in 1996 and that Sudan received sixty-six major conventional weapons from China in 1997 (including six F-7M fighter aircraft). Ukraine also sent thirty-six infantry fighting vehicles (IFV) in 1996 and Kyrgyzstan transferred three (unnamed) weapons systems in 1995. Twenty tanks that Poland had sold to Yemen were diverted by Yemen to Sudan, causing Poland to stop selling tanks to Yemen, http://www.sipri.org/contents/armstrad/atsud_data/html (updated March 10, 2005).

14 Russia supplied 549 weapons systems from 2001 to 2004, most notably the deal in 2000 (with the weapons delivered in 2001–2002) for seventeen combat helicopters and the $120 million deal in 2002 (with the weapons delivered in 2003–2004) for twelve MiG-29 aircraft. Belarus sold many weapons from 2001 to 2003, including ten self-propelled guns, twelve MRL, twenty-four towed-guns, nine IFVs, and thirty-nine reconnaissance vehicles. Ibid.

15 The democratic regime established in 1956 was supplanted by General Ibrahim Abboud in 1958. A popular uprising in 1964 overthrew Abboud and established a parliamentary system in the north, while the civil war in the south continued unabated. Colonel Ja'afar Numeiri overthrew that parliament in 1969 and ruled until the popular uprising in 1985. The subsequent democratic system was overthrown by an Islamist coup d'état led by General Omar al-Bashir in 1989, which remains in power.

16 See Lesch, *Sudan*, 72, for the results of the last free elections, held in 1986. For details on each political party, see ibid., 66–70.

17 Text of the agreement on the United States Institute of Peace Web site, http://www.usip.org.

18 Lesch, "Sudan's Foreign Policy," 47.
19 Sudan abstained from Arab League resolutions that denounced the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, but then increasingly tilted toward Baghdad during the crisis. Gulf countries retaliated by deporting Sudanese (many of whom were teachers and administrators), thereby disrupting thousands of peoples' lives and eliminating valuable remittances. After Kuwait was liberated, some Sudanese were killed by Kuwaitis, angry at Khartoum's support for Saddam Hussein.
20 Lesch, "Osama bin Laden's 'Business' in Sudan," *Current History* 101, no. 655 (May 2002): 204–208.
21 The Third World Relief Agency, founded in Vienna in 1987 by a leading member of Sudan's National Islamic Front (NIF), was a key financier for bin Laden and a vital arms broker for Arab mujahideen in Bosnia. This role became particularly pronounced when that NIF official became the Sudan embassy's cultural attaché in Vienna in March 1992. Evan F. Kohlmann, *Al-Qaida's Jihad in Europe: The Afghan-Bosnian Network* (New York: Berg, 2004), 45.
22 Mary Anne Weaver, *A Portrait of Egypt* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 188–89; Yossef Bodansky, *Bin Laden* (Roseville: Prima Publishing, 2001), 104.
23 Prunier, *Darfur*, 55.
24 Prunier, *Darfur*, 61.
25 In addition to the human rights reports noted in note 12, see Prunier, *Darfur*,81–123, on the 2003–2005 fighting (including 97–98 on the Janjaweed forces).
26 Participants are Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, and the Congo. Abdel Salam Sidahmed and Alsir Sidahmed, *Sudan* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 81.
27 Lesch, "Sudan's Foreign Policy," 66.

12

The Challenge of Restructuring: Syrian Foreign Policy

Hazem Kandil

Introduction

Syrian foreign policy has remained markedly consistent throughout the rule of the al-Assad family (1970–present). While other Arab countries undertook major foreign policy restructuring, Syria managed to survive far-reaching transformations in its external environment with only a few cosmetic changes. Its foreign policy constants have outlived the cold war, the 9/11 attacks, three devastating Gulf wars, a handful of Arab civil wars, and the protracted Arab–Israeli struggle. Neither the loss of allies nor the ever-increasing list of enemies seemed to impinge on Syria's decision makers. Three factors today make it difficult for Syria to continue resisting change: first, global changes triggered by the end of the cold war and culminating in what can be described as a post-9/11 world order, particularly the rearranging of the balance of power in the Middle East; second, the disintegration of Arab unity following the collapse of the peace process and the ongoing confrontations in Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine; and thirdly, Syria's economic stagnation due to the failure of structural reforms, corruption, inflated military spending, and the sharp reduction in foreign aid and investment opportunities. But despite the above, Syria will most likely remain adamantly opposed to comprehensive changes in its rhetoric. This can be mainly attributed—as this chapter argues to the fact that the Syrian regime perceives foreign policy, for the most part, as a tool for offsetting the domestic crisis of legitimacy it has been suffering from, not as a means for achieving national goals.

This chapter emphasizes the interplay between three conjunctural structures: the state, the regional setting, and the international system. Structuralism perceives international relations as the sum of systematic interactions within and around the main behavioral unit in international relations, that is, the state. Foreign policy, according to this approach, is the result of the interaction of "a number of interdependent structures."[1] This chapter focuses on the historical and sociological development of these structural dynamics and how they contributed to the current stalemate. Accordingly, it begins by examining the domestic factors that have mainly influenced Syria's foreign policy orientation; highlighting the personalistic-sectarian nature of the regime, the suppression of organized opposition, and the deinstitutionalization of decision making. This is followed by a review of the country's foreign policy behavior on the regional and international levels. The chapter highlights how, contrary to Rosenau's depiction of foreign policy as "a mechanism for adaptation to changes," Syria has not experienced fundamental foreign policy changes even though its external environment has been full of changes during the last three decades. Foreign policy restructuring, defined by Holsti as "the dramatic, wholesale alteration of a nation's pattern of external relations,"[2] remains a far objective. In interpreting this rigidity, the chapter dismisses cognitive and strategic causes, concluding that the crisis of legitimacy is the major constraint. The regime is compelled to maintain its Arab nationalist credentials because these constitute the sole common ground between the ruling elite and the prevailing popular sentiment. Hence, paying allegiance to long-held pan-Arab commitments is a political survival strategy. This rigidity will evidently continue as long as the regime fails to secure legitimacy by other means, possibly through sweeping socioeconomic and political reforms. Needless to say, this "inability to act," spurred by preoccupation with domestic stability, will "amplify the propensity to incur commitments and take risks on the international level, leading to the overextension of the state's capabilities."[3] This in itself is equally threatening and destabilizing to the regime.

The Domestic Environment

Sociopolitical Structures: Personality Cult, Sectarianism, Opposition

Present-day Syria is the "legitimate heir to the historical Sham," which also includes Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine. Geographically located at the

heart of the Arab world, Syria was the ideological birthplace of Arab nationalism.[4] Syria's population, an estimated nineteen million, is composed of diverse ethnic and religious groups, including Armenians, Assyrians, Kurds, Druze, Christians, and Shiite Alawites; but the majority are Arab Sunnis. One of the peculiarities of the Syrian political system is that, from the 1960s onward, the more than 75 percent Arab Sunnis have been ruled by members of the 11 percent Alawite minority. The Alawites, who were historically hostile toward the 'Sunni oppressors,' strove for autonomous rule when the country was still colonized by the French. Later, they rose to the top echelons of power under Hafiz al-Assad.[5] In terms of class, the great majority of Syrian society is considered lower middle class with an average annual income of $1,200; more than five million Syrians are below the poverty line.[6]

Geddes classifies the Syrian regime since 1949 as a military regime; from 1963 as a military/single-party regime, and from 1970 onward as a personalist regime dominated by the al-Assad family. After making two important distinctions; one between a collegial military regime and a personalist regime led by a military officer; and another between single-party rule and that of a nominal-party rule where the party is no more than a tool for extending the leader's control, Geddes describes the current Syrian regime as a personalist regime where a single leader dominates the military, state apparatus, and the ruling party. Such regimes typically rely on personal networks, usually based on kinship, ethnicity, or region, instead of proper state institutions.[7] Zisser similarly highlights the "clearly personal character" of the Syrian regime and how it revolves "completely around the personality and image of the man who created it";[8] Nicholas coins the term 'Assadism' to express how the "Assad leadership cult" dominates Syrian politics;[9] and Cleveland stresses how this personalization, aimed at "raising the image of the president to the level of one whose wisdom was beyond the comprehension of the average citizen," is the most distinctive character of the Syrian regime.[10]

Assad relied heavily on family members; his brothers and sons were all active party members.[11] Other family members were placed in charge of security organs and an array of paramilitary troops, such as the "elite praetorian guard"—the Defense Companies—that was commanded by his brother.[12] Following the death of Basil al-Assad, who was being groomed to succeed his father, al-Assad marketed his other son, Bashar, to the public as an "honest, sincere, hardworking, and highly active" young man.

And despite assurances that his successor would be chosen by the people, and the frequent denials of Bashar's candidacy, Bashar did in fact succeed his father in 2000, thus marking the continuation of the al-Assad dynasty. In a referendum in 2007, in which he was the only candidate, Bashar was endorsed as president for another seven years. Syria's current regime is, therefore, dominated by Bashar, his family, and their loyal subordinates. The president's brother, Mahir, is a key figure in the security apparatus; his brother-in-law, Assef Shawkat, is head of military security; and other relatives and confidants occupy senior government positions.[13] This personalist-familial nature is reinforced by a strong sectarian bond. The Military Committee that orchestrated the March 8, 1963 Baathist coup was commanded by three Alawites who managed to pack the Syrian government and armed forces with members of their own community. But, as Nicholas explains, full-scale 'Alawisation' began under Hafiz al-Assad, who was also Syria's first Alawite president: "More than half of the officers dismissed were replaced by Alawis, and more than 90 percent of the newly appointed officers were also Alawis."[14] Sunnis were hardly ever accepted into the military, intelligence, or other Baathist-dominated institutions. Favoritism also extended to civil education; "Alawis were awarded scholarships and traveled abroad for higher degrees, becoming doctors, engineers, lawyers, and university professors, so that in the 1990s they were strongly represented in the cadres of the state."[15] Through such favoritism, Hafiz al-Assad helped the Alawites "consolidate their control over Syria's political life."[16]

As for the opposition, the Baathist regime aborted numerous coups since its ascendance to power; there were four attempted coups between July 1963 and February 1969, in addition to three more, between June 1971 and April 1976, after Hafiz al-Assad became president.[17] The last attempted coup was orchestrated by the president's own brother Rif'at; the ensuing showdown extended from November 1983 to January 1985.[18] The next serious challenge came from the Muslim Brothers in Syria who were held responsible by the regime for "countrywide bloody civil disturbances" from 1976 to 1982. Confrontations with the Islamic movement reached a violent climax at Hama in February 1982, where the bloodiest showdown in modern Syrian history resulted in the killing of at least ten thousand people. The Islamist opposition regrouped in Europe in 1990, forming the National Front for the Salvation of Syria under the leadership of Muslim Brothers' Supreme Guide Ali al-Bayanouni,[19] and coordinating

with secular opposition figures, such as former vice president Abdel Halim Khaddam, who had turned against the regime in 2006 and escaped to Paris to plot its overthrow.[20] Unlike the nationalists, leftists, and Islamists, the liberals did not give the Syrian regime sleepless nights. Liberalism "remained shelved . . . in the public debates and among Syrian public opinion," partly because its identification with America deterred many "from climbing on the liberal bandwagon."[21] Liberals who, during the 'Damascus Spring' of 2001, formed civil forums and wrote petitions demanding the liberalization of politics and the economy, as well as those who established liberal opposition groups outside Syria, such as the Syria Reform Party in 2003, and the Democratic Awakening Party in 2005, were all elderly intellectuals or businessmen with "no real foothold in Syria."[22] Compared to other opposition groups, Syrian liberals were co-opted with relative ease.

Economic Performance: Stagnation and Its Likely Effects

"[T]he current stagnation cannot persist." This is how Haddad summarized his assessment of the economic situation in Syria.[23] Apparently, the declared growth rate of 6 percent in the early 1990s was "temporary and numerical, not structural and enduring." It was rather an "illusionary economic growth." So after growth had peaked in 1994, it declined thereafter. If the current deterioration persists, it could bring Syria to a standstill.[24] The 2 percent growth rate over the past few years falls short of the country's 2.4 percent annual birth rate. Unemployment is soaring at 25 percent, with over 73 percent of the work force employed in the public sector, underpaid and unmotivated. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that among the unemployed, 30 percent are qualified university graduates, and that there are an estimated 300,000 new entrants to the job market annually in a country that cannot provide more than 140,000 job opportunities every year. The external debt of $21 billion—one of the highest in the Middle East—is another huge burden. And oil revenue, an estimated 50 percent of state revenue, and 25 percent of its GDP, is unreliable since Syria has one of the smallest reserves in the Middle East and most energy experts believe that they will be exhausted within a decade. Even before that occurs, Syria is expected to become a net oil importer. Its oil exports have already declined from 70.3 percent of its total exports in 2002 to 48.3 percent in 2007. All other economic indicators are similarly problematic. Inflation has exceeded 8 percent in 2006; the export growth rate is less than 3 percent, with a trade balance deficit of $816 million in 2006

and a projected deficit of $ 2,343 million in 2008. The GDP has remained stagnant for over four years (2002–2006) at around $24 billion.[25] Several factors are responsible for these dire conditions: the failure of structural adjustment in the 1990s, mainly because of corruption and increased military spending; reduction in Russian, European, and Arab aid; US-imposed sanctions; the loss of oil revenue from Iraq; Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon; in addition to the domestic and regional instability that prevents Syria from providing a favorable climate for investment.

Hafiz al-Assad tried to diversify the economy by shifting it toward industry and allowing for private sector participation. But the ensuing economic boom was short-lived.[26] From 1982 to 1984, the government authorized a series of structural reforms, which included currency devaluation and reduction in subsidies; and in 1991 it passed new investment and tax laws eliminating impediments to capitalist investments. Economic growth reached 10 percent in 1993. Al-Assad's economic survival strategy aimed at enacting enough changes to draw foreign and domestic private investments without undermining the position of those whose interests were tied to the state. This proved to be impossible, and therefore the reform program was terminated by 1994.

In Syria, military officers, leftist intellectuals, the mostly poor Alawite community, the subordinated peasants and working class, and also public sector employees, represent the backbone of the rulers. The urban bourgeoisie of the private sector are not really accounted for. The regime soon discovered that it had little social space to carry forward its privatization policies without alienating its real constituency. Economic reforms were socially disruptive and threatening to the regime.[27] This is further complicated by the fact that half of the population lives on government income; whether directly through receiving wages and pension, or indirectly through relying on family members who are direct recipients of government income.[28]

Besides this class-based sketch of Syria's economic reform dilemma, many analysts insist that it is Syria's endemic corruption, costing an estimated $4 billion annually, which represents the real challenge. "Corruption is so embedded in the political system that any meaningful change is difficult."[29] Haddad highlights how with the first signs of growth, "corruption and back-door deals between public officials and members of Syria's business community grew even faster, turning developmental opportunities into rent-seeking."[30] Reforms benefited mainly

"a growing rentier stratum interested in making short-term commercial investments." Syrian citizens became prey to what Haddad refers to as 'sharks and dinosaurs': "well-connected business tycoons and their official protectors."[31] This is why the president insists on keeping the economy under his personal control. In the words of Prime Minister Muhammad Naji al-Utri: "there is no public sector or private sector" in Syria; there is only a "national sector" that is run "in accordance with the directions of Mr. President Bashar al-Assad."[32]

Syria's domestic problems were combined with the loss of Arab aid to which Syria has been entitled as a frontline state in the struggle against Israel. Growing budget deficits in the Gulf states and the Arab–Israeli peace process reduced aid from $1.8 billion in 1981 to $500 million in 1986, causing "high deficit spending, trade deficits, and persistent foreign exchange crises."[33] Syria also suffered economically because of US-imposed sanctions in 2001, the loss of Iraqi oil in 2003, and Lebanese labor and consumer markets in 2004.[34] Syria had prospered for a while by helping export Iraqi oil and having its workers employed in Lebanon, which also represented a close market for its products.

The current economic situation threatens Syria's stability. Brumberg explains how the 'democratic bargain' by which populist authoritarian regimes promise their citizens "social justice and economic security in return for the latter's political quiescence" is crucial for the survival of those regimes.[35] The Syrian regime continues to ignore the conditions of that bargain. Its "uncommon prioritization of expenditures" leads the country to devote 32.1 percent of its budget to national security, an unstated but presumably large amount to costs of running the president's office, and only a meager 1.7 percent to social affairs.[36] Moreover, the situation is likely to worsen in light of the fact that two of the country's main revenue streams—oil production and public industries and services—are crumbling, and the government will be forced to rely more and more on taxation. Adding more economic burdens to a politically repressed population is a recipe for revolt.

Hinnebusch adds that Syria's economic development also "requires incorporation into the world capitalist economy."[37] This in turn necessitates a comprehensive restructuring in Syria's foreign policy and the creation of a favorable climate for foreign direct investment. But in addition to political instability, corruption also prevents Syria from opening up globally. The ruling elite realizes that such a step would force its members

to loosen their grip and give up certain privileges, such as the tobacco monopoly run by the al-Assad family, as well as other monopolies and oligarchic arrangements. All the above leads Raphaeli to conclude that:

> Syria's authoritarian regime, heavily regulated economy, inadequate infrastructure, outmoded technological base, a blotted public sector, and weak economic institutions combined with declining oil revenues, make the country vulnerable to future shocks while hampering its ability to compete at the regional and international levels.[38]

Military Capability: Burdens of Overextension

Syria's economic problems were further complicated by the country's towering military budget. Hafiz al-Assad's insistence on achieving military parity with Israel triggered a huge military buildup. As a result of al-Assad's "unprecedented expansion of the military," the Syrian army—mainly a conscripted force—grew from 50,000 in 1967 to 225,000 in 1973 and to a little more than 350,000 by the 1990s. Today, Syria has a standing army of 215,000; and over 400,000 upon mobilization. The country devotes over 20 percent of its GNP to military expenditures;[39] and in 2005 about 50 percent of Syria's national budget was directed to military and intelligence spending.[40] In addition to personnel, Syria's eight armored divisions are equipped with 4,700 tanks, 4,500 personnel carriers, 850 surface-to-air missiles, and 4000 antiaircraft guns; its air force currently has 611 combat planes.[41]

This makes the Syrian army supposedly one of the biggest and best-equipped armies in the region. According to Kaplan, however, the Syrian army seems formidable only on paper. Its Soviet-modeled tanks, for instance, are to a great extent defective; two thousand of these tanks are the 1960s-vintage T-55s, and another thousand are the slightly newer T-62s; the remaining 1,700 tanks are T-72s from the 1980s in dire need of maintenance and spare parts. All in all, these tanks are not really useful in modern warfare. The state of the Syrian air force presents a more glaring example. In 1982, Syria sent ninety of its outdated Soviet MiGs and Sukhois to intercept an Israeli raid over Lebanon. Israeli planes shot down all ninety fighter jets within hours; Syria shot down zero.

Can Syria replenish its military capability? Following the collapse of the Eastern bloc, Syria's main supplier of military equipment, and the loss of the little aid Arab countries provided following the 1991 Gulf war, the

Syrian army has become almost isolated. During the period from 1994 to 2001, Syria received less than $700 million worth of arms deliveries, in comparison to Israel's $6.9 billion. This forced Hafiz al-Assad to substitute his policy of 'strategic parity' with Israel with one aimed at achieving the more humble goal of 'strategic deterrence.' To that end, military observers claim, Syria obtained stockpiles of chemical weapons. Syria reportedly received its first batch from the USSR through Czechoslovakia in the late eighties. In the post-cold war era, the Syrian regime turned toward China and North Korea, in addition to private companies in France, Germany, Austria, Holland, and Switzerland. Experts estimate that the Syrian army has around a thousand tons of chemical agents, mostly VX nerve gas and sarin, in addition to a hundred chemically tipped ballistic missiles—Soviet SS-21s, Scud-Bs, and the longer range Scud-Cs and Ds. Yet Syria is struggling against tightening export controls. It also remains incapable of establishing its own production facilities. Moreover, it is inconceivable for Syria to put these unconventional weapons to use against Israel, for fear of the latter's retaliatory measures.[42]

This has all led the Tel Aviv-based Jaffe Center for Strategic Studies to conclude that as of the year 2000, the strategic balance between Syria and Israel has become so tilted that one can safely conclude that Syria has no military option. Nonetheless, the Syrian regime maintains high levels of military spending, neglecting concerns that not allocating enough funds to social welfare could cause wide-ranging protests and possible destabilization,[43] thus making the country vulnerable to military attacks and external intervention.

Foreign Policy Orientation

Ideological Nature of the Regime

Hagan argues against the common notion that unelected regimes are not compelled to appeal to the public at large.[44] Brumberg concurs that the political survival of an authoritarian regime is dependent on its ability to embrace the opinions of a wide array of social forces.[45] So in Syria, the ruling class has to pay attention to popular sentiments. This, in Rubin's view, keeps Syria's attempt to develop a pragmatic foreign policy hostage to the "traditional hardline stances" of its people.[46] Political wisdom forces the president to "take account of the domestic consequences of [his] foreign policy decisions."[47] The Syrian public is "the most politicized in the Arab

world."[48] But because state nationalism is not yet well formulated, as in Egypt and Jordan for instance, Syrian nationalism does not serve as a substitute for Arab nationalism. Hence, Syrians are primarily committed to Arab nationalism.[49] And it is because of Syrians' "well-formulated views" on Arab unity, the US, and Israel that the government is compelled to present itself as an ideological regime "genuinely committed to [the Arab nationalist] worldview and vision."[50] Since his first days in power, Hafiz al-Assad was portrayed as "a possible successor to Nasser in the drive for pan-Arab unity."[51] Bashar is similarly described as the "clearest and most explicit national voice . . . articulating the goals of the Arab nation.[52]" Bashar publicly stated, in *al-Hayat*, that he considers Syria the heart of the Arab world, and that his main goal is to reinvigorate Arab unity.[53] This proclaimed role as the guardian of pan-Arabism was reflected in a speech delivered by Faruq al-Shar' before the Arab Writer's Union conference in Damascus on January 27, 2000. The then Foreign Minister boasted: "I am not exaggerating when I say that the Corrective Movement, which took place in 1970 under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Assad . . . has crystallized for the first time in modern Arab history a mature and realistic pan-Arab ideology."[54]

In Syria, like in most Arab countries, the conflict with Israel takes precedence over other foreign policy considerations. Syrians feel "more keenly about the loss of Palestine than other Arabs" because during the Ottoman era "the territory that eventually became the Palestine mandate was regarded as part of southern Syria, and its transformation into the state of Israel stirred strong emotions among the Syrians."[55] That is why when the regime decided to negotiate with Israel it had to reaffirm its anti-Zionist orientation by presenting negotiations as nothing more than a new phase in a perennial struggle. In the speech referred to above, al-Shar' explained: "There is no balance of power between the Arabs and Israel when it comes to military confrontation. But what if we turned this military confrontation into political, economic, commercial, and cultural competition with all its dimensions? We could [then] succeed."[56] Again, like other Arab countries, Syria's position toward the United States is an extension of its position toward Israel. The US is perceived as a country that mainly "supports and strengthens Israel, while trying to weaken the Arabs."[57] In a speech before the Arab lawyers' conference in Damascus on January 21, 2006, Bashar maintained that American policy is meant to "undermine the region's identity and reshape it under different names

that finally meet Israel's ambitions to dominate the region." He emphasized that targeting Arabs is "part of a big conspiracy . . . starting from the Sykes-Picot Agreements, to the occupation of Palestine in 1948, to the invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and the occupation of Iraq, and the intervening events and what is happening now."[58] In short, the Syrian regime, accounting for popular sentiments, has oriented its foreign policy to ideologically represent Arab nationalism and has based its legitimacy on playing this role.

The Decision-Making Process

Deinstitutionalizing Foreign Policy Decision Making

Volgy and Schwarz describe how decision making is usually influenced by "the complex interplay of several actors" within the state; institutions such as the military, the foreign ministry, the parliament, and political parties.[59] But in Syria, decision making lies solely in the hands of the president, who has deprived the country's primary institution—the Baath party—as well as other institutions of that role. According to Hinnebusch, the Baath has been "downgraded, deideologized, and turned into a patronage machine with little capacity for independent action." The party no longer influences key decisions, "above all in the foreign policy field." Similarly, the contribution of other domestic institutions has been reduced to approving and justifying the president's policies.[60]

Originally founded on a strong ideological base, the Baath gradually lost ground during the reign of Hafiz al-Assad. Party founders and ideologues were exiled and their intellectual works were banned. Al-Assad appropriated the party apparatus through a series of structural changes. In 1980, he established a Central Committee whose ninety members would be appointed by the president, and would then elect a twenty-one-member Regional Command. These two bodies—tightly controlled by the president—constituted the party's supreme decision-making organs.[61] Moreover, the president unified the roles of head of state and the head of party for the first time in Syria.[62] The party's expansion in terms of size and logistical capacity was meant to further extend presidential control. An increase in membership from 65,398 in 1970 to 1.8 million members in 2006 meant only that the party had become a "convenient and readily available instrument" for "enlisting broad public support." That is why Zisser concludes that the Baath is presently nothing more than "a

necessary cloak for the regime."[63] The Baath was transformed into a 'rallying post' with an "elaborate hierarchy . . . network of affiliated popular organizations . . . [and] branches in the armed forces," making it a suitable "instrument of political control and indoctrination."[64] In short, the Baath today became "more an instrument for the execution of policy than an originator of policy."[65]

Other important structural changes affecting other institutions include constitutional amendments to the 1973 constitution providing the president "with sweeping powers, especially in the field of foreign policy." Institutions, like the foreign ministry and the military, became "little more than a display of a modern state apparatus."[66] According to Prados and Sharp, power became "concentrated in the office of the presidency and a few key aides . . . sensitive issues such as defense and foreign affairs are exclusively within the president's domain."[67] Hinnebusch reaffirms this "virtual presidential monopoly over foreign policymaking."[68] The role of the foreign ministry was summarized by al-Shar' in the speech referred to above. Al-Shar' asserted that as foreign minister, he merely represents the "thoughts and policy of President al-Assad."[69] This was later confirmed by a similar statement by Walid al-Moallem, Syria's current foreign minister, where he completely dismissed the role of the foreign ministry and described his relationship to Bashar al-Assad as follows: "He is the leader. I am expressing his ideas."[70]

Foreign Policy Behavior

International Environment: Sticks without Carrots

The international order at any given point places constraints on the foreign policy of developing nations. Small states usually alter their foreign policy behavior in order to meet the conditions dictated by international hegemons. When a state refuses to fall in line, insisting on pursuing an independent policy, it has two options: allying with one hegemon against the others or, alternatively, forming an independent bloc of like-minded states, that is, compensating strength with unity. Both scenarios are only conceivable in a multipolar or at least a bipolar international system. In other words, the kind of unipolarity that presently dominates world affairs deprives developing states of either option. In the Syrian case, losing the Soviet Union as a strategic ally has not been compensated for by either developing closer ties with Europe or forming a strong regional

bloc. On the contrary, the setback caused by the collapse of Syria's patron, the Soviet Union, has been exacerbated by Europe's decision to turn its back on Syria. Accordingly, the country has become vulnerable to the threats imposed by America's new preemptive strategy; particularly the declared intention of the 'world's sole superpower' to bring down the regime in Damascus.[71]

Russia

Up until the 1980s, Syria was among Russia's closest allies in the region. Ideologically, the Baathist regime was more socialist in orientation than most Arab regimes and more readily identified with the Eastern bloc than with other members of the Nonaligned Movement (NAM). Syria was also considered an important geostrategic asset because its Tartus port was Russia's only naval base on the Mediterranean. Syria therefore obtained most of its military equipment in the 1970s from the Soviet Union; and, following the signing of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in 1980, Leonid Brezhnev supplied the country with 13,000 military advisors. The downturn in relations began with Mikhail Gorbachev's ascendance to power in 1985. Syria's hostility toward Iraq and the PLO, two valuable USSR allies, coupled with Gorbachev's desire to reduce the burdens Moscow had incurred during the cold war, led to a Soviet reassessment of its relationship with Damascus. By 1990, Russia significantly scaled back military and economic aid to the al-Assad regime.[72] Furthermore, under Boris Yeltsin, Russia began pressuring Damascus to settle its $12 billion economic and military debt, and all forms of cooperation were frozen. The death of Hafiz al-Assad made it easier for Russia to further abandon its former ally.[73]

In 2005, Bashar al-Assad traveled to Moscow hoping to turn things around. Aware of Russia's economic problems, he offered a 'cold cash' sum of $2 billion in return for new air defense systems. He also offered Russian companies lucrative investment opportunities in order to win Moscow back. Russia's Tatneft signed an agreement to explore oil deposits in Syria; Stroytransgaz began building a gas processing plant; and the Russian government itself was contracted to establish a petrochemical complex. Prospects for improved relations were diminished, however, sooner than Bashar expected. Vladimir Putin's insistence on maintaining good relations with Israel was the main stumbling block. Supporting Syria militarily without offending Israel was clearly impossible. Russian–Israeli relations

had become quite intimate after Ariel Sharon's wholehearted encouragement of Putin's ironfisted policy in Chechnya, which he likened to his own approach vis-à-vis the Palestinians. Security cooperation between the two countries proved invaluable. Trade between the two countries increased significantly, more than that between Russia and Syria. Even on the cultural level, Israel's large Russian-speaking population played an important role in bringing the two countries closer. So in response to Sharon's plea, Russia denied Syria the antiaircraft systems it had requested claiming that short-range air defense missiles and man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS) might fall into the hands of Hizbullah. Even with the temptation of cash payment, Syria received nothing more than outdated Strelets missiles. In April 2005, Putin visited Israel to reassure its leaders that Russia would not help Israel's enemies. Notably, the Russian president did not pass by Damascus on his way back. Moscow also pressured Syria to withdraw from Lebanon and disarm Hizbullah following the 2004 debacle over the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri.[74] Russia's sensitivity to Israel's security limits the extent to which it is willing to associate itself with Syria. The most Syria can count on is diplomatic support expressed in the form of sympathetic declarations.

Europe

In world politics, Europe and the United States generally promote their goals through different means. Syria has counted on Europe's inclination toward dialogue, especially as the EU is Syria's major trading partner and both sides have been involved, since 1995, in lengthy negotiations within the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership program. Also, France and Germany are harsh critics of American designs for the region. Syrian hopes, however, have been frustrated. Europe has expressed skepticism about Syria's commitment to political and economic reforms. The Association Agreement, which was drafted after arduous five-year negotiations and numerous delays, was initialed in October 2004, but has not yet been signed and ratified because European countries believe Syria is in violation of the stipulated provisions on human rights and good governance. The EU has warned Syria that failure to comply could lead to economic sanctions.[75] During his March 2007 visit to Damascus, Javier Solana, the EU foreign policy chief, relayed to the Syrian president these European concerns; affirming that the agreement would be "unlocked" only if Syria eased tensions with Western countries and pro-Western governments in

the Arab world.[76] On the bilateral level, several European governments, including Germany and France, have toughened their stance toward Damascus. Germany presented Israel with a gift of three submarines equipped to carry nuclear warheads; and France has become excessively vocal in its criticism of Syria's destabilizing influence in Lebanon, and it therefore cosponsored, in September 2004, Security Council Resolution 1559 demanding an immediate Syrian withdrawal from Lebanese territories.[77] Seemingly, when it comes to Syria, the EU echoes US demands, to the extent that some have come to believe that Syria has provided the Europeans and the American with a common ground to work on.[78]

China

In its quest to break out of its international isolation, Syria sought to extend its diplomacy by opening new frontiers and forging new alliances. China was an obvious candidate. As a growing economic and military power, and the world's most populated country, China's support can prove invaluable to a country in dire need of financial aid, new export markets, and arms and other forms of military aid like Syria. To help consolidate Syrian–Chinese relations, Bashar al-Assad paid a visit to Beijing in 2004 and met with several key leaders. Syria also helped establish the Arab–Chinese Cooperation Forum, which focuses on issues of trade, economic exchange, and coordination on the political level. When the Syrian foreign minister visited China in May 2006, he was received by the Chinese president, Hu Jintao, a gesture signalling China's receptiveness to Syrian efforts.[79] But the extent to which Syria can count on Chinese support on the international arena remains limited. This has less to do with Syria than with the role that China has chosen for itself in the current stage. A country that usually prefers to abstain, rather than approve or veto, most Security Council decisions relating to the Middle East, China is evidently not yet willing to contend with, or even confront the United States and Europe over this troubled area.

United States

In the past, Syrian–American relations were marked by pragmatism and compromise. In 1990, the US overlooked Syria's virtual takeover of Lebanon in return for enlisting al-Assad in its campaign against Saddam Hussein. But more recently, Bashar failed to secure a similar bargain, which entailed cooperation in post-Saddam Iraq in return for ignoring Syria's continued

influence in Lebanese politics.[80] The reason why Syria was turned down is because post-9/11 America has become overtly antagonistic in dealing with regimes perceived as being on the wrong side of the 'war on terror.' The Bush administration and its neoconservative supporters hardly accept bargains. "Half-measures taken by Damascus to placate the U.S. no longer suffice. . . . Syria's steps in one area are no longer viewed as compensating for negative steps elsewhere."[81] For example, Syria's provision of what former CIA Director George Tenet, described as "first-rate intelligence" on al-Qaeda did not make up for its support for Hamas and Hizbullah; nor did Syria's shutting down of the press offices of Palestinian organizations prove satisfactory. The change in US attitude took Damascus by surprise. The rules of the game have changed and the US is now pursuing a policy of "sticks without carrots."[82] A quick review of the list of American accusations against Syria conveys the extent of changes required of Syria if it is to stay out of harm's way. The list covers Syrian support for Palestinian, Lebanese, and most recently, Iraqi militant groups, its attempts to develop and deploy weapons of mass destruction, its undermining of the Arab–Israeli peace process and US designs for 'reforming' the Middle East, and finally, its failure to carry out domestic reforms.

Since the 1970s, Syria has provided sanctuary to radical leftist Palestinian groups, such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) and Black September. Following the conclusion of the Oslo Accords, these were joined by Islamic groups, such as Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Syria has also been associated with the Lebanese Hizbullah since the mid-1980s. Recently, it was accused of harboring former Iraqi Baathists and fostering the infiltration of armed volunteers into Iraq. On April 13, 2003, US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld charged that "busloads of Syrian fighters entered Iraq with hundreds of thousands of dollars and leaflets offering rewards for dead American soldiers."[83] In August 2003, Paul Bremer, the then American administrator in Iraq, stated that 123 of the 248 foreign fighters that had been captured there were Syrian. Expectedly, Syria has appeared regularly on the State Department's 'State Sponsors of Terrorism' list.[84] Another critical issue has been Syria's military capability. US reports claim that Syria has developed an arsenal of chemical weapons, the nerve agent sarin and the more toxic VX, and that it is pursuing a nuclear program. On May 6, 2002, John Bolton, former US undersecretary of state for arms control, stated that Syria had a chemical program and biological warfare agents.

These accusations allowed Washington to declare its intention to depose the al-Assad regime. On November 20, 2003, Congress passed the Syria Accountability and Lebanon Sovereignty Restoration Act (SALSA) banning all exports to Syria of military and dual-use items and authorizing the imposition of economic sanctions. The US also began funding exiled anti-Assad groups through the State Department's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the American-based National Endowment for Democracy.[85]

Prospects for improving relations are dim. Syria blames the US for "failing to understand the Arab predicament and for its unwavering support of Israel."[86] In an interview with *al-Hayat*, the Syrian president pinpointed America's incapacity to engage in dialogue with its own European and regional allies. "They are not sincere in their intentions. They require the impossible. They want us to support Iraq's invasion, to disarm Hizbullah . . . to support the Road Map and Israel. . . . They want dialogue to fail."[87] Evidently, Syria and the US are locked in a dialogue of the deaf, and Damascus will continue facing American pressures.

To sum up, Syria has no real international allies. Although it is one of the primary targets of America's aggressive foreign policy in the Middle East, it has not managed to secure its sovereignty and territorial integrity by winning the favor of any other world power. One might therefore expect Syria to have turned to regional alliances in an attempt to compensate for its international isolation and in order to shield itself from possible American–Israeli belligerence; and so the chapter turns next to Syria's regional situation.

Regional Environment: Withstanding Disintegration

Syria's primary foreign policy goal has been to place itself at the center of regional politics; and because this role is clearly beyond its military, economic, and political capacities, the regime has had to pursue skillful and, to a great extent, unorthodox tactics to secure its bid for hegemony. That is why Hafiz al-Assad backed dissident Palestinian groups against Arafat, Iraqi Kurds against Saddam, Maronites against Muslims in Lebanon—and at times vice versa—Persian Iran against Arab Iraq in the first Gulf war, and Americans against Iraq in the second war.[88] To make Syria "the most powerful state in the Arab world," al-Assad established his legitimacy at home by subscribing to Arab nationalism, then worked on dominating "states that fell naturally within Syria's orbit—Lebanon, Jordan, and the

Palestinians."[89] In dealing with regional rivals, Syria compensated for its relative weakness by using proxies. "Assad managed to keep his enemies in the region at bay only by . . . destabilization campaigns."[90] Bashar tried to follow in his father's footsteps. Lacking the same capacity for maneuver, he focused instead on winning the heart of the 'Arab street' by stressing his pan-Arabist credentials at all times, and portraying Syria as the "throbbing heart of Arabism."[91]

But the shifting sands of Middle East politics still threaten Syria's aspirations. During the eighties and nineties, the Arab world "increased its subordination by being more fragmented and hence less effective at the international level."[92] According to Korany, "Arab power levels have declined in both relative and absolute terms" resulting in "a higher level of Arab insecurity and multiplicity of threats." The need to balance off threats against each other has created what Korany refers to as "a new balance of threats" leading to a reorientation of regional politics.[93] Following the 9/11 attacks, Middle East politics became even more tied to the unfavorable realities of world politics.[94] At these confusing times Syria appears "perplexed by the turn of events . . . unable to adjust to the new regional situation."[95]

Iran

The Syrian-Iranian axis has been described as "one of the most intriguing developments in modern Middle East politics."[96] The alliance between the Islamic theocracy and the pan-Arab secular regime was initially dismissed as "an opportunistic, short-term, marriage of convenience."[97] It began when Hafiz al-Assad decided to support the Iranian revolution as a sign of protest against the US-imposed order.[98] As Syrian hopes to become part of an Arab Triangle that included Saudi Arabia and Egypt became increasingly unlikely, Damascus moved closer to Tehran.[99] In other words, Syria's alliance with Iran was "an ideal opportunity to redress the imbalances of its intra-Arab relations."[100]

The rapprochement with Iran was relatively easy. Syria was critical of the shah, and cultivated links with the Islamist opposition through Imam Musa al-Sadr of Lebanon.[101] In February 1979, al-Assad sent a telegram congratulating Khomeini for the blessed movement, and dispatched his brother, Rif'at, to discuss future cooperation. Early on during the Iran–Iraq war of the 1980s, Syria proclaimed its unwavering support for Tehran. It airlifted food, medical supplies, and weapons like SAM-7 missiles and

RPG rockets for Iran. The Syrian ambassador to Tehran, Ibrahim Yunis, passed on first-rate intelligence on Iraq.[102] But Syria's most significant contribution was cutting off the Banias pipeline through which Iraq exported oil in April 1982, depriving Iraq of over $5 billion annually.[103] Syria also mediated between Tehran and the Gulf states before and after the war, most notably with the United Arab Emirates over the Abu Musa and Tunb islands in 1992, and with Bahrain following Sunni–Shi'a tensions in 1995.[104] The pendulum then swung in the opposite direction as the Iranians helped Syria fend off Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon. Through its ambassador to Damascus, Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, Iran established training camps in the Beqa' Valley, where an elite Pasdaran unit of 1500 troops helped recruit, arm, and mobilize Lebanese Shi'a against the invading army.[105] Syria and Iran also cooperated in diversifying their sources of military equipment—relying primarily on the Russian Federation, Ukraine, China, and North Korea—and developing an indigenous arms industry. They collaborated in developing surface-to-surface and Cruise missiles, and established production facilities for manufacturing Scuds in Aleppo and Hama. The two countries agreed, in 1982, to exchange Iranian oil for Syrian phosphates, necessary for Tehran's petrochemical industry; and then later bilateral relations were institutionalized through the establishment of the Syrian–Iranian Higher Cooperation Committee in 1990.[106] Relations remained close under Bashar. Between 2000 and 2006, the Syrian president visited Tehran five times. Iranian President Ahmadinejad's visit to Damascus in January 2006 was his first official visit after assuming office.[107] Syria has remained, throughout the years, a strong defender of Iran's regional role against increasing criticism among the Arab countries. In his interview with *al-Hayat*, Bashar described the Iranian role as "vital to regional stability," and insisted that "it does not contradict, but rather reinforces an Arab role."[108] In response to international threats, the two countries forged a 'united front' in February 2005; vowing to support each other diplomatically and militarily in the case of an American or Israeli attack.[109]

Nonetheless, an overall assessment of Syrian–Iranian cooperation reveals how the asymmetrical nature of the relationship raises questions. Both countries are aware not only of the irreconcilable differences in their ideological natures and regional aspirations, but also of their differences regarding the means they follow in pursuit of their political goals. Syria, for example, was disillusioned by Iran's backdoor dealings with the Americans, such as in the Iran Contra affair. Iran, in turn, was

vehemently opposed—and still is—to Syria's participation in the Middle East peace process and its willingness to compromise its territorial integrity. Consequently, Ranstrop and others perceive the Iranian–Syrian nexus as "a marriage of convenience against common enemies in an atmosphere of crisis and political isolation in the Middle East,"[110] a mere working alliance that can hardly develop into a full-fledged partnership. This lack of potential can be attributed less to Syria's reluctance to accommodate Iran's confrontational foreign policy, than to the fact that Iran's horizons are simply wider. As Ajami points out: "For all their strident revolutionary poses, the Iranians are shrewd, unsentimental practitioners of realpolitik," and it is, therefore, highly unlikely that they would ever "ride to the rescue of Damascus."[111]

Lebanon

The Lebanese civil war (1975–1991) was an ideal pretext for Syria to extend its influence over Lebanon and assume a leadership role in the Arab world. The exploitation of the war, "through continuous realignment with an array of Lebanese confessional factions," helped maintain a "Syrian-controlled balance between the warring factions."[112] When the Sunni-dominated Lebanese National Movement (LNM) threatened Maronite rule, Syria feared the formation of a Palestinian-influenced radical regime in Lebanon. So despite its prior affiliation with the Palestinians, it intervened with forty thousand troops on the Maronite side in June 1976, upon the invitation of Lebanese President Suleiman Franjieh. But following the 1982 alliance between Phalangist leader, Bashir Gemayel, and Israel, Syria simply switched sides and began working with the Palestinians to disrupt the Lebanese–Israeli agreement of May 17, 1983.[113] Following Gemayel's assassination and Israel's withdrawal to the south, Syria switched sides yet again; allying this time with Shi'a against Lebanese leftists, Palestinians, and Druze. In 1989, the Arab League helped conclude the Ta'if Agreement, entrusting Syria with overseeing its implementation. Syria's final large-scale confrontation, therefore, was with Maronite General Michel 'Awn who refused the terms of the agreement and declared a 'war of liberation' against Damascus. By October 1990, Syria managed to occupy Beirut and force 'Awn into exile.[114]

In the aftermath of the Lebanese civil war, Syria profited immensely from Lebanon's supercharged reconstruction frenzy. Over one million Syrian laborers were given work permits in Lebanon; Syrian farmers

flooded the Lebanese market with tariff-free products; and Lebanese banks functioned as banking systems for Syrians. The politician/businessman responsible for most of the construction was Rafiq al-Hariri, Lebanon's first post-civil war prime minister. Al-Hariri formed lucrative business partnerships with Syrian senior officials and their offspring. Among his partners were head of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon, Ghazi Kan'aan, and Chief of Staff Hikmat Shihabi. Problems began with Bashar's bid to consolidate his own position in Lebanon following his father's death. Bashar forced Shihabi to retire and strengthened Kan'aan's immediate underling, Rustom Ghazaleh. He also engineered the presidency of Emile Lahoud and ousted al-Hariri from the premiership. These efforts failed miserably when al-Hariri's lavishly funded electoral coalition trounced pro-Lahoud candidates in the fall 2000 parliamentary elections and brought al-Hariri back to office. Syria's insistence on supporting Lahoud against the popularly elected al-Hariri paralyzed the country's political system.[115] In September 2004, Syria pressured the Lebanese parliament to extend Lahoud's term by an additional three years. Al-Hariri resigned in protest; vowing to remove Lahoud from the presidency following the 2005 parliamentary elections.[116] That is why it was only natural that Syria would be blamed for al-Hariri's assassination on February 14, 2005. Outrage in the Lebanese street over al-Hariri's assassination and the killing of several other anti-Syrian politicians and journalists corresponded with the preset agenda of two international powers, the United States and France. Under immense pressure, Syria had to withdraw from the country it had dominated for twenty-nine years, weeks after al-Hariri's death.[117] The new Lebanese cabinet was expectedly unsympathetic toward Damascus, especially after the United Nations Independent Investigation Committee (UNIIC) presented an interim report implicating high-ranking Syrian officials, most notably Bashar's brother Mahir and his brother-in-law Assef Shawkat in the assassination.[118] Today, Bashar's claim that "Syria offered the blood of its youth to restore peace to Lebanon and did not benefit one bit,"[119] along with his offer to exchange embassies and demarcate borders with Lebanon, is not likely to win back Lebanese support. Even Hizbullah, Syria's long-time ally, has fallen in line with the national consensus and begun distancing itself gradually and subtly from Damascus.[120] So even with the 2006–2007 political turmoil and polarization in Lebanon, it is clear that Syria has lost its strategic foothold there for a long time to come.

Israel

The hope of achieving 'military parity' with Israel diminished with the termination of large-scale Soviet support and the deterioration of Syrian economy. The erosion of its defensive capacity worsened Syria's limited offensive capabilities. Damascus was forced into a "gradual acceptance of Israel's reality, if not its legitimacy."[121] Syria's hopes were thus reduced to reclaiming the Golan Heights. But its task appeared more difficult than that of Egypt, or even the Palestinians for that matter. Unlike other occupied populations, the Arabs of the Golan and their estimated 300,000 descendents were expelled to Syria and more than 15,000 Israeli settlers managed to seize the territory, which Israel later annexed officially in 1981.[122] The Golan is especially important to Israel because of its topography. The plateau constitutes a geostrategic defensive buffer against Israel and threatens Damascus directly. The Golan is also rich in water resources and fertile farmland—both scarce in Israel.[123] The Syrian-Israeli negotiations, which began with the Madrid Peace Conference in 1991, were soon interrupted by the 1996 election of Benjamin Netanyahu who refused to honor Rabin's pledge to withdraw to the June 4, 1967 borders. Ehud Barak resumed talks in January 2000 at Shepardstown, but then retreated after polls showed broad Israeli opposition to a full withdrawal from the Golan. Negotiations collapsed after the failed Clinton-Assad summit in Geneva in March 2000, followed by the election of Ariel Sharon in 2001. Subsequently, Israel led a fierce campaign against Syria's support of the Lebanese and Palestinian resistance movements. Israel's withdrawal from south Lebanon in May 2000 was partly meant to impel the Syrians to act likewise. When Syria stalled, Israel heightened its pressure by launching an air strike against the Syrian village of 'Ayn Sahib, on October 5, 2003, claiming that it harbored 'terrorists.' The attack was the first of its kind in thirty years.[124]

Today, Syria faces a difficult choice. On the one hand, accepting Israeli demands—"access to Lake Tiberias, sharing water resources, security guarantees including the dismantling of Syria's chemical weapons, a radical reduction by one-half in the Syrian standing army, a limited forces zone requiring a virtual Syrian pullback to Damascus, and the demilitarization of the Golan"—would destabilize the regime.[125] But, on the other hand, prolonging the 'no war, no peace' situation is becoming less and less a viable option in light of Israeli escalations, like its June 2006 attack on Lebanon. In short, Syria can neither afford to accommodate nor reject

Israel's conditions for 'peace.' The regime appears to be stuck; lacking either the domestic legitimacy to undertake painful political and territorial compromises, or the economic and military capacity to challenge Israel and keep its hegemonic aspirations in check. Worse still, the current stagnation seems almost impossible to maintain; Syria is being dragged by the stir of events into a quagmire it is not yet ready for.

Turkey

Syrian–Turkish tensions extend back to the Ottoman era. For the longest time, both countries appeared to be locked in a relationship shaped by historical enmity. Geography also played a part in straining Syrian–Turkish relations; mainly because of the dispute over Alexandretta, and the appointment of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers' water reserves.[126] Tensions increased in 1996 with the Turkish–Israeli military cooperation pact, which was "perceived as a step to isolate Syria and cow it into submission,"[127] in addition to the Turkish pressure on Syria to deliver Abdullah Ocalan, leader of the separatist Kurdistan's Workers' Party (PKK). Crises almost led to a full-scale war in 1997 before Egyptian shuttle diplomacy helped deescalate matters.[128] Relations grew relatively warmer with the election of Islamist Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The new prime minister and Bashar exchanged visits in 2004 and signed a free trade agreement.[129] This should not, however, obscure the fact that Turkey, an already staunch Western ally, had become also allied to Israel, contributing to the deterioration of Syria's already disadvantaged geostrategic and military position in the region.

Iraq

Syria's "regional hegemonic ambitions" have always been perceived as "inherently threatening" in Baghdad.[130] Iraq's post-1968 rival Baathist regime represented a faction that was deposed from Syria in 1966.[131] Although each faction accused the other of deviating from true Baathist principles, it was personal struggles for power rather than ideological factors that ignited enmity between the two countries. Rivalry intensified in the 1970s over the quest for regional dominance. "The propaganda machines of Damascus and Baghdad hurled vitriolic insults across the airwaves" leading to a breaking of diplomatic relations.[132] Damascus criticized Iraq's 1980 attack on Iran; accusing Baghdad of intentionally trying to detract funds and support from the Arab–Israeli conflict to other, less

important confrontations.[133] Iraq, in turn, denounced Syria's participation in the peace process, claiming that the Syrian regime had turned its back on the most sacred Arab cause. Both countries resorted to proxy wars. "Syria backed Iraqi Kurds . . . the communists, a faction of the Islamist Da'wa Party and several military defectors. Iraq gave refuge to dissident Syrian Baathists and members of the Muslim Brotherhood." Baghdad supported 'Awn's "war of liberation" against Syria, and Damascus, in turn, supported the American-led 1991 Gulf war "to prevent Iraq from emerging as the dominant regional power."[134]

The warming of relations in 1997 was "motivated mainly by economic benefits," and, more importantly, by Syria's perception of Iraq under sanctions as "weak and not threatening."[135] Economic cooperation began during the life of Hafiz al-Assad, and was later boosted under Bashar. Iraq gave Syria the status of privileged economic partner. The Kirkuk–Banias pipeline was reopened; Syria earned profits of $1 billion annually by reexporting Iraqi oil. Commercial relations also grew with the opening of Iraqi markets to Syrian products. And in 2002, a Syrian-Iraqi holding company was established to finance joint industrial projects.[136] This was all disrupted by the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. Despite its approval of the November 2002 Security Council Resolution 1441, demanding that Iraq accept international inspection of its suspected arsenal of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), Syria denounced US plans for invading Iraq and overthrowing Saddam Hussein's regime. Moreover, the Syrian government, in unusually harsh tones, denounced other Arab regimes for what it called their hypocritical stance of public rejection of the war coupled with logistical and military support for it.[137] This certainly reduced the possibility for future cooperation with Iraq's new government. In spite of the restoration of Syrian–Iraqi diplomatic relations in 2004, Syria has often been cited criticizing the Iraqi authority's dependence on the US, and Iraqi leaders, in response, have warned Syria repeatedly against destabilizing their country through facilitating the infiltration of militants.[138] Currently, the prospects for improving Syrian-Iraqi relations seem quite dim; and thus Syria lost yet another important regional ally.

Saudi Arabia

As an Islamist monarchy allied with the US, Saudi Arabia recognized early on that Syria posses the ideological arsenal to make life difficult for it and decided to counter that threat by throwing money at it.

Accordingly, throughout the 1970s, Saudi Arabia provided Syria with $1.6 billion annually. During the 1980s, it exchanged support for Syrian control over Lebanon for assurances regarding Saudi economic interests. Although Syria's ambition to play a role in regional security, through the 1991 Damascus Declaration, was firmly rebuffed by Riyadh, the Syrians continued to cooperate with the Saudis in Lebanon; al-Assad desperately needed their help rebuilding his war-battered prize. That is why Syria submitted to the Saudi demand to appoint Rafiq al-Hariri prime minister. Al-Hariri, who had served as the kingdom's emissary in Lebanon, was not only a close friend of late King Fahd; he also had Saudi citizenship and was married to a Saudi. Following al-Hariri's appointment in 1992, the Saudis "lavished money on Syrian-occupied Lebanon."[139] The kingdom invested more money in the country than all other Arab states combined ($595 million in 2003; constituting 70 percent of total Arab investment). In effect, the Saudis were subsidizing an economy that earned the Syrians billions of dollars annually. Financial aid was later reduced partly because of Saudi budget problems, but also because of Syria's implicit rejection of King Abdullah's Arab–Israeli peace initiative proposed to the 2002 Arab Summit in Beirut. But relations took a definitive downturn after al-Hariri's assassination. This became quite evident in the present Saudi diplomatic rhetoric. For example, when asked on the sidelines of the Islamic Summit in Mecca on December 7, 2005, about the threats that "states like Syria are being subjected to," the Saudi foreign minister responded: "If a particular state adopts a reckless policy and causes trouble, then runs to the Islamic states and asks them to solve these problems, this is not solidarity. These are the policies that lead the Islamic world in trouble."[140]

Egypt

Following the October War in 1973, Hafiz al-Assad tried to build up a unified front against Israel, hoping that in time an Arab coalition could recover the Israeli-held territories. Egypt's decision to revoke the 'military option' diminished al-Assad's aspirations. In his view, "Sadat had betrayed the Arab cause by becoming a participant in the imposition of a US–Israeli order on the Middle East."[141] But the Syrian-led campaign to isolate Egypt failed by the mid-1980s. Still, "Syria's formerly very close relationship with Egypt was greatly reduced."[142] While Egypt would like to preserve the current regime in Damascus because the "collapse of Syria's hereditary republic would almost certainly be followed by the return of the Muslim

Brotherhood to political life,"[143] it is unlikely to intervene on Syria's behalf. As American pressures on the Egyptian regime intensify, Egypt is becoming less and less in a position to help others, let alone help itself.[144]

Jordan

Syria has always been antagonistic toward the Hashmite monarchy, and plotted with Arab 'progressive forces' in the 1960s against Amman's 'reactionary' regime. In September 1970, commonly known as 'Black September,' Syria interfered in the Jordanian civil war on behalf of the Palestinians.[145] The Syrian role in the Black September events led to long-lasting, mutually hostile propaganda campaigns. There was some improvement in relations before the 1973 October War, when Jordan sent a brigade to help secure Golan, and also in 1975, when the two countries established a joint committee for economic cooperation—the first of its kind in the Arab world. But shortly afterward, Syria resumed its attacks against Jordan, especially when the latter sided with Iraq in the first and second Gulf wars against Iran and Kuwait, respectively, and with the Americans against Iraq during the third Gulf war in 2003. In other words, Syria and Jordan were always on opposite sides of these wars. Relations were further strained when King Hussein attempted to form a united negotiation front with late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. Al-Assad supported the ultraradical Palestinian organizations, such as Abu Nidal's group, in targeting Jordanian politicians; and has repeatedly accused Amman of treason.[146] Jordan's intimate ties with the US reduce the possibility of improved Syrian–Jordanian relations in the foreseeable future.

Palestine

Syria had a markedly problematic relation with the Fatah leadership of the PLO. Syria rejected Arafat's self-proclaimed role as the sole representative of the Palestinians, and supported radical leftist Palestinian groups, who believed in Maoist-style popular liberation wars and were weary of Arafat's endless— and mostly ineffective—political maneuvers. Organizations like the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and Ahmed Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) had broken off with Fatah over Arafat's two-state solution, proposed to the Palestinian National Council (PNC) in 1974. With Syria's encouragement, they formed the Palestinian Rejectionist Front

in Damascus, and along with more militant groups, like Black September and the Abu Nidal faction, they managed to undermine Arafat's camp. Following the 1993 Oslo Accords, these groups were joined by Hamas and Islamic Jihad in establishing the Palestinian National Salvation Front, also based in Damascus. There was some hope that the Hamas electoral victory in 2006 might help improve Syrian–Palestinian relations,[147] but the Hamas–Fatah confrontation in 2007 has contributed to the deterioration of Syrian–Palestinian relations; a trend that is unlikely to shift any time soon.

Conclusion: Explaining the Rigidity in Syria's Foreign Policy

We may conclude that Syrian foreign policy is currently marked by considerable rigidity and that it is thus incapable of responding to the rapid and far-reaching transformation in its external environment with comprehensive restructuring comparable to other Arab states. There are three possible explanations for this rigidity in Syria's international behavior. One relates to the cognitive factors influencing the regime; another attributes the apparent inflexibility to a wait-and-see policy; and the third explanation argues that Syria's foreign policy stagnation is propelled by a domestic crisis of legitimacy.

Cognitive factors include the mental resistance faced by decision makers in trying to adapt to changes in the external environment. Leaders usually "process incoming information in a way that makes it consistent with their set beliefs;"[148] they use mental constructions to "perpetuate and sustain international conflict."[149] Accordingly, Syria's foreign policy might be determined by the points of view of the governing elite, making it unable to cope with changes. Worldviews characterized by "paranoia based on the notion that [a] country is surrounded by enemies and constantly faces danger" can make a state "less sensitive to change and less flexible."[150] This explanation, however, is quite implausible in Syria's case. Hafiz al-Assad was described by various writers as a calculating and pragmatic politician;[151] also, differences in age, professional background, and experience would make it difficult to assume that the president's son would adopt an identically confrontational worldview. Another possible explanation is that Syria is pursuing a conscious, albeit risky, strategy. In this view, "[b]y not formulating a coherent foreign policy and responding to various pressures piecemeal, Syria is hoping to weather the storm by making episodic gestures, and hoping to gain some breathing space."[152]

Syria is betting on the notion that "the present condition of international politics is unnatural," and that states will eventually revolt against "both the predominance of America and . . . the militarization of international affairs."[153] But what makes this explanation a bit dubious is that Syria is far from being a peripheral state that can afford to wait for a more favorable climate; it is essentially at the core of the battle to reshape Middle East politics. The third and final explanation builds on Syria's crisis of legitimacy, and on the idea that authoritarian regimes realize that "the cost of disengaging from regional arrangements involves high risk" for those who initiate it.[154] The rulers of Syria seem to believe that abandoning Syria's self-proclaimed role as defender of Arab nationalism would threaten their legitimacy. It is quite natural in authoritarian settings for members of the ruling elite to "aggressively manipulate foreign policy in order to save themselves from being overthrown"; upholding ideologically confrontational positions appear to them less risky than appearing submissive in the eyes of their citizens. Here foreign policy is reduced to an instrument for mobilization and legitimization. Leaders appeal to nationalism and imperialist themes in order to divert attention away from domestic crises. Such a strategy typically involves, however, "amplified risk taking in the conduct of international affairs."[155]

There are three reasons why this is probably the most plausible explanation for Syria's failure to carry out foreign policy restructuring. First, observers report that the Syrian president strongly believes that manifesting "defiance toward the Americans" will guarantee the support of the Syrian people, and thus "ensure the survival of his regime."[156] Second, as Geddes points out, personalist regimes are the least likely candidates to institute fundamental changes in policy because they are the most intimidated by the consequences of their possible overthrow. Unlike other types of authoritarian regimes, where old cadres can conceivably find a way to resume their political careers, "allies of a personalist leader . . . find it hard to continue to enjoy the benefits to which they have been accustomed."[157] Not only that, but those associated with personalist regimes are usually subject to the harshest forms of popular retaliation following their deposition. That is why personalist regimes prefer stability, even stagnation, over change. A third reason is that authoritarian Arab regimes that have initiated foreign policy shifts have done so at the expense of their popularity at home. The depletion of their legitimacy is a good reason why Syria is not likely to follow suit. Syrian foreign policy is thus caught up in

the trappings of internal politics. For authoritarian regimes that have little more to offer their people than ideology, foreign policy remains one of the most important instruments for securing legitimacy. So we can conclude, along with Raphaeli, that "under the weight of its own repressive practices and its adventures outside the country, the Syrian regime has become stultified, frozen in time, and incapable of change."[158] This conclusion confirms, to a great extent, the thesis that because "in the developing world the most frequent threats to states are internal challenges to the ruler or ruling group, not threats from abroad at the state level," the most powerful determinant of foreign policy there is the "leader's drive to ensure his political and physical survival."[159]

Still, Syria cannot maintain its current hardline policy in an increasingly hostile and aggressive external environment. The fact that the regime has consolidated its position on the domestic front does not rule out the possibility of being eventually overthrown as a result of the mounting American–Israeli pressures. As outlined in this chapter, Syria is isolated on the regional and international levels, and its almost-failing economy deprives it of an internal source of strength. So the question becomes: is Syria doomed to remain in this lose-lose situation where it can neither restructure its foreign policy nor afford to continue being stagnant? In an article in *al-Ahram*, Ahmad Kamal Abul Magd noted:

> Arab regimes are lodged between domestic pressures, regional challenges, and a global political order that compels them to revisit their . . . attitude toward both their citizens and the world at large. Only comprehensive changes would enable them to function and survive. . . . There is an undeniable link between the internal policies of Arab regimes and their ability to act on the external front. . . . Initiating domestic reforms is the only path for succeeding on the foreign level. . . . The winds of change are blowing. . . . Allowing the people a role in shaping their destiny is the Arab world's only option.[160]

Opening up the political system and allowing people to participate in the decision-making process might help Syria transcend the present stagnation in its foreign policy. In this case, preserving the regime's legitimacy will no longer be the most vital determinant of Syria's international behavior. Whether Syria becomes more actively confrontational, like Iran, or

more readily complacent, like its Arab neighbors, the current stall will not persist. Syria will rise above bare rhetoric and become more effectively engaged in its regional and international contexts. It will no longer remain on the receiving end of world politics.

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13

Politics of Constructive Engagement: The Foreign Policy of the United Arab Emirates

Abdul-Monem al-Mashat

Introduction

A microstate established only on December 2, 1971, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the only federal state in the Arab and Middle East region, was quickly required to make foreign policy decisions in a troubled region. With its valuable natural resource, oil, its unique historical and charismatic leadership, in Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan, and its strategic location along the southern approaches to the Strait of Hormuz, a critical transit point for world crude oil, was it able to make and implement constructive foreign policy? The analysis of the UAE's foreign policy decisions reveals that from the outset of the federation in December 1971, there has always been a balance between the national attributes and capabilities of the seven Emirates which formed the UAE and the direction of these decisions. In fact, the UAE has managed in the last thirty-five years to utilize both the regional and international settings to serve its domestic needs. This approach has led to a great degree of flexibility from the UAE in looking at critical issues, a cautious management of its disputes with external powers,[1] and constructive engagement in both regional and international situations for the sake of achieving its foreign policy goals.

The analysis of UAE national attributes and capabilities shows how much it lacks conventional sources of power. However, its foreign policy presents an interesting and rather an exciting example of how a vulnerable ministate is able not only to survive, but also to have an active role in both

regional and international politics. Through constructive engagement, the UAE has been able to achieve its major foreign policy goals, that is, the survival of the state and the welfare of its citizens, in spite of major crises that occurred in both the Arab, Gulf, and Middle East subregions. Crises such as the October 1973 Arab–Israeli war and oil embargo, Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977 and the Camp David Accords in 1978, the Iraq–Iran war (1980–1988), the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (1990–1991), the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, and, most of all, Iranian occupation of the three UAE islands in 1971; Tunb Islands and Abu Musa Island, might easily have crushed a vulnerable state such as the UAE. But a foreign policy of constructive engagement, based on compromises, direct negotiations, reasonable propositions, and delicate balance helped the UAE to creatively avoid uncalculated and damaging decisions even in cases of regional turmoil. In addition, the UAE was able to utilize its oil resources in the form of foreign aid and assistance to Arab and developing states in order to promote its status and maintain cooperative interactions.

Our analysis of UAE foreign policy starts by discussing its determinants: domestic, regional, and international. It examines foreign policy orientation, foreign policy goals, and strategies, and asks whether they are of a dogmatic or flexible nature. Due to the federal nature of UAE and the centrality of its ruler, an analysis of the foreign policy decision-making process will no doubt reveal the powerful role of the ruler in foreign policy decisions and the impact of his personality on its orientation. There is no doubt that the charismatic leadership of Sheikh Zayed played a crucial role in UAE foreign policymaking and implementation. He was essentially a conservative and conscious leader who favored conciliation, neighborliness, amicable relations with other countries, and the peaceful settlement of disputes.[2]

Contrary to unified states in the region such as Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia, the UAE's foreign policy decision-making process takes into account the interests of each member emirate. This means that such decisions are a reflection of national consensus concerning major foreign policy orientations. The analysis of UAE foreign policy reveals a high level of continuity in both orientation and tools. Many analysts were betting on a major change in foreign policy orientation, a shift in commitments and an interruption of its basics after the death of Sheikh Zayed, the founder of the federation, in 2004. Nonetheless, under the leadership of Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed, major foreign policy orientations, commitments, and

tools have remained almost the same. Foreign policy decisions regarding major regional crises reveal a clear use of constructive engagement in achieving UAE national goals. However, one might argue that since 2004 the level of engagement as well as the ability and willingness to take initiatives in foreign policy is declining. Many reasons might be cited here on the top of which is the absence of the charismatic leadership of Sheikh Zayed.

Meanwhile, close attention to recent UAE foreign policy moves reveals that it is remerging as an active regional actor regarding Arab issues. An example of such moves is its active role within the 'Arab quartet' which includes, in addition to the UAE foreign minister, the foreign ministers of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. The function of the Arab quartet, which is a recent collaborative effort, is to set the Arab regional agenda and priorities for summit conferences and the bases for regional discussions regarding major sociopolitical and economic issues of Arab concern including negotiating peace with Israel.

Domestic Environment

This refers to geographic determinants, population and social structure, economic resources, military capability, and political structure. These combined tangible and intangible elements, natural and human, determine how the UAE envisions its role, how it perceives its status, and to what extent it is capable of engagement in regional and international politics.

Geographical Determinants

The UAE is located in the mid of the richest oil producing countries with 644 kilometers of shores on the Arabian Gulf. It borders the Gulf of Oman between Oman and Saudi Arabia. Its location is highly strategic along the southern approaches to the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global transit point for crude oil.[3] Its covers an area of 84,000 square kilometers, more than 86 percent of which is occupied by Abu Dhabi. In addition, there are tens of tiny islands under the state's sovereignty, excluding the Tunb Islands and Abu Musa Island, occupied by Iran since 1971.

The UAE is composed mainly of desert, and arable land does not exceed 0.77 percent of its territory. This characteristic as well as its long borders and small population size have become a major source of vulnerability. Thus geography, which does not offer the UAE much security, might push its foreign policy decision makers to adopt a cautious and low-profile stand to avoid antagonizing neighboring countries.

The Gulf countries, including the UAE, were subject to Portuguese, Dutch, and British occupation long before the discovery of oil due to their location as a transit area on the way to East Asia and India. The UK decided to leave the area by December 1971. As a result, the emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai led a political movement toward the establishment of the only federal state in the region.

Population and Social Structure

Population size as well as ethnic composition form another major source of UAE vulnerability. There are 4.22 million residents in the UAE. However the percentage of nationals is only 10–15%. Moreover, the expatriates make up most of the labor force, about 90 percent.[4] The majority of foreigners belong to South Asia, Arab countries, and Iran. The insufficient number of nationals has had two major results. On the one hand, the UAE has to design a balanced foreign policy toward countries of origin such as India and Pakistan; and on the other it has not been able to build a reliable national army. Thus the majority of the rank and file of its army consists of nonnationals especially Omanis. It should also be noted that the federal system among the seven emirates (Abu Dhabi, Dubai, al-Shariqah, Ajman, al-Fujayrah, Um al-Qaywayn and Ra's al-Khaymah) established in December 2, 1971 was based on an alliance of ruling families and tribes. One major sign of political success is the transfer of legitimacy from tribes to modern institutions and shared economic gains. Abu Dhabi with its oil wealth and generosity played a significant role in building up allegiance among UAE population to the federal state.

It might be important to indicate that over 96 percent of the population is Muslim, out of which only 19 percent are Shi'a. The percentage of Shi'a might not seem significant unless put in the context of Gulf politics, the conflict in Iraq, and the increasing role of Iran in the entire region. In fact, the emerging regional sectarian cleavage has begun to cast doubts on the genuine loyalty and affiliation of Shi'a engaged in commercial and trade activities in the UAE.[5]

Economic Capabilities

The UAE occupies the third position in oil reserves globally, with 97 billion barrels; this is equivalent to 10 percent of world oil reserves. These reserves match those of Iran and Iraq and are four times the size of reserves in North America.[6] The UAE is the ninth largest oil-producing

country and the sixth largest oil exporting country. In addition, its natural gas reserves exceed 6 trillion cubic meters. Oil and gas reserves are expected to last a hundred years.[7] This gives UAE decision makers some confidence and flexibility in reaching critical decisions that require large expenditures.

The GDP of the UAE is about $48 billion and its per capita GDP is $43,400.[8] In this regard, the UAE is a good example of a rentier state where resources come from the ground, are owned by the state, and are distributed by the central government to citizens with the goal of drawing their support through satisfying their needs.

It is worth mentioning that oil and gas outputs form only 30 percent of the UAE's GDP. The rest comes from industry, services, commercial activities, its role as transit area, and reexport trade with Gulf states. The unique economic performance of the UAE, especially in Dubai, has led international organizations to rank it positively in the Middle East. The World Bank highly approves of Dubai's move toward a knowledge economy and considers it a creative and visionary model for the region.[9] In fact, the UAE has topped other Arab countries in attracting foreign direct investment. The UAE and four other Arab countries, Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, and Lebanon, attracted more than 73 percent of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the region in 2006. The volume of FDI in the UAE in 2006 was about $37 billion.[10] Both oil wealth and dynamic trade activities led external powers, especially major oil importers, to closely watch regional as well as local developments. In the meantime, these factors led the UAE to adopt a cautious and balanced foreign policy in order to achieve its goals of security and stability in the Gulf as well as close political affinity with Arab countries.[11]

Military Power

Due to the small size of the national population, the UAE army numbers only 61,000, some of whom were recruited from Oman.[12] The UAE's military power is based on imported weapons from the US and Europe. Military expenditures are around $3 billion a year.[13] In light of serious regional threats, especially from Iran, which exceed the capacity of the UAE's small army, it has become imperative to depend on external powers, especially the US, in maintaining national security. Some consider security resulting from this dependency an 'imported security.'[14] An analysis of the UAE's foreign policy orientation, indicates that the inability to build

a large army and effective military power have led the UAE leadership to emphasize peaceful settlements of regional conflicts and legal disputes.

Political Structure

The UAE is a federal and oil-producing microstate. It is based on a delicate balance between the seven member emirates, especially between Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Article 45 of the 1971 constitution specified federal agencies as follows:

The Supreme Council of the Federation, that is, the rulers of the seven emirates.

The president and his deputy, that is, the rulers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai respectively.

The Federal Cabinet, headed by the prime minister from Dubai who is also deputy president, and his deputy from Abu Dhabi.

The Federal National Assembly, whose structure reflects the relative weight of each emirate. It is composed of forty members distributed as follows: Abu Dhabi and Dubai have eight each; al-Shariqah and Ra's al-Khaymah have six each; and Ajman, al-Fujayrah and Um al-Qaywayn four each.

In selecting representatives to the Federal National Assembly, each emirate considers tribal balances as well as the relative power of businessmen. Recently the structure and the selection of members to the Federal National Assembly witnessed two impressive developments based on a change in the law governing the National Assembly; on one hand, half of its members would be directly elected, and on the other hand, Sheikh Khalifa decided to give women nine seats in the assembly. Thus female representation now exceeds 22 percent of the total membership of the assembly, among the highest levels in the entire region and the world. The emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai are represented by two female members each while al-Shariqah, Ajman, al-Fujayrah, Um al-Qaywayn and Ra's al-Khaymah are represented by one female member each.[15]

The Federal Judiciary,[16] whose members are apointed by the head of the state, plays a meaningful oversight role. Political parties and pressure groups, except some professional syndicates, are not allowed. However, there is a role played by interest groups, especially the business community, in the economic domain.

Political legitimacy was based on the charismatic leadership of Sheikh Zayed, the founder of the federal state, as well as oil wealth and the state's

ability to generously distribute economic gains and rewards. There are those who believe that legitimacy is still based on political tribalism, with the authoritarian state as its tool for political control.[17] This view has become debatable in light of recent socioeconomic developments, institution building in the country, and the vested interests of citizens in maintaining, sustaining, and developing their federal state.

However, it is true that the decision-making process is left to the seven rulers, especially to the president and his deputy. One might argue that the social contract is based on the delegation of power to this small number of individuals in return for generous economic and social rewards including free modern public services such as education, health care, public transportation, etcetera. In effect, it also means that foreign policymaking is smoothly handled by a federal agency on the top of which is the president of the UAE.

External Setting

For a micro and vulnerable state such as the UAE, the external setting, both regional and international, plays an invaluable role in foreign policymaking. The UAE witnessed the shift in international system from bipolarity to an evolving multipolarity, with the US on top. This setting leaves almost no room for micro and vulnerable states to maneuver. It is true that there are other great powers such as the EU, China, and Japan; however recent international crises have seen both the EU and Japan coordinate foreign policy positions with the US, while China is not open yet to a major political role in world politics.

In addition, the regional setting both in the Gulf and the Middle East is a challenging one. During the thirty-five years since the establishment of the UAE, the region has gone through a number of severe crises and devastating wars such as the 1973 war between Egypt and Syria on one hand and Israel on the other, the civil war in Lebanon in 1975, the war between Iraq and Iran in 1980, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the subsequent war against Iraq in 1991, the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, and the peace process between Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, the Palestinians, and Israel, and of course the Israeli war against Lebanon in 2006. We should also add two major regional events: the emergence of al-Qaeda and subsequent American invasion of Afghanistan after the September 11, 2001 attacks against the US, and the Iranian nuclear build up.

Both regional and international settings pushed the UAE closer to, and made it almost dependent on the US for its security. Would the UAE be capable of utilizing these developments to serve its national goals? It seems that UAE foreign policymakers were able to survive without risking their core values and autonomous foreign policy decisions.

The combination of a mostly unfavorable domestic environment and challenging external setting put heavy pressure on foreign policymaking authorities to creatively adapt their options to the UAE's limited power and be cautiously selective in choosing positions. This, as we will discuss later, has been the rule of thumb in regional and international crises. However, due to the unique character of the late Sheikh Zayed and the utilization of the diplomacy of the purse, the UAE was able to take initiatives in its foreign policy. One of its core objectives was to restore balance in inter-Arab relations after each regional crisis.

Foreign Policy Orientation

Due to the lack of essential elements of power, the supremacy of international politics, and a genuine commitment to the success of the federal system, the UAE's foreign policy is geared toward the peaceful settlement of disputes, open dialogue with strategic partners, and the priority of joint economic interests over political divisions and differences.[18] The UAE leadership has always been ready to present initiatives in critical situations whether in the Arab region or in the Middle East with the objective of reducing conflicts and building confidence. The potential positive impact of such initiatives would add to the UAE's regional and international stature.

One might argue that the UAE's foreign policy runs in four circles: the Gulf, the Arab world, the Muslim world, and the world at large, with greater interest in Arab affairs. Article 6 of the constitution states that "the UAE is an independent and sovereign state, and the federation is a part of the greater Arab world, and its people are part of the Arab nation." Moreover, the same article invites other Arab states to join the federation: "[T]he gate of the federation is open to all Arab countries."[19] However, no additional Arab state has been permitted to join the federation since its establishment.To reiterate its commitment to Arab and Muslim circles, Article 12 of the constitution defines the main goal of foreign policy as follows: "[T]he UAE foreign policy aims at the support of Arab and Islamic issues and interests and strengthening ties of friendship and cooperation

with all countries and peoples on the basis of the UN Charter and international ideal ethics."[20] It is committed to nonintervention in the domestic affairs of any country, equity and equality among different countries, and respect for the right of self-determination and human rights. It calls for the peaceful settlement of disputes, freedom of investment, and utilizing investment opportunities in the service of economic development for Arab, Islamic, and friendly nations. In addition, it works for solid cooperation among members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), as well as Arab and Islamic solidarity.[21]

Sheikh Zayed summarized the foreign policy orientation of UAE in an important statement: "We, in the Gulf, build our foreign policy in two parallel lines. Our relation with Arab and Islamic countries is a brotherly relationship within the Islamic context, and we deal with these countries in the way as brothers deal with each other. Our second line deals with non-Islamic countries on purely humane criteria. We treat them as humans, respect them as humans, as much as they have friendship and kindness for us."[22] He also defined four goals of foreign policy orientation which included the peaceful settlement of disputes with neighboring countries, support for Arab issues and coordination of foreign policy with other Arab states. He also advocated the UAE's commitment to the UN Charter, and the promotion of the status of Muslims in the world. In addition, he reiterated that the gates of the federation were open for neighboring countries.[23]

These characteristics helped the UAE to establish diplomatic relations with more than 143 countries, where it has forty embassies abroad and hosts around sixty-two embassies.[24] This led the UAE to constructively engage itself in critical regional and international situations, especially those related to Islamic countries, and natural disasters. However, the UAE was unable to maintain such balanced foreign policy positions toward two devastating regional crises which almost threatened the survival of the Gulf states—the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990–1991 and the American invasion of Iraq in 2003. It has become obvious that the threat of Saddam Hussein against these small and rich countries was imminent and tangible. In the meantime, the American decision to invade Iraq, topple the regime, and establish a more friendly one was irresistible.

The death of Sheikh Zayed and the emergence of Sheikh Khalifa as the ruler of the UAE didn't have a great impact on foreign policy orientation. However, it seems that constructive engagement is becoming less of

a priority than before. Sheikh Zayed, with his experience, seniority, and wisdom, with his unique personality and generosity as well as his commitment to the Arab cause, was able to make constructive initiatives. He was able to utilize the UAE's human and oil resources to serve his foreign policy goals. The new global and regional economic role of Dubai requires a more cautious foreign policy orientation which limits the leadership's willingness to come up with initiatives that might affect international economic partners. It also seems that the Gulf circle has been given priority over Arab and Islamic circles.[25] This might mean that the UAE's perception of international dynamics coincides with the prevailing image that the US is the sole and dominant international actor.

The UAE has utilized a number of tools in its foreign policy, at the top of which are oil resources. The UAE used an oil embargo as leverage in 1974 against countries that supported Israel in the 1973 war. It also used oil resources as foreign assistance and development tools given to friendly countries. In fact, the UAE actively and generously utilizes its financial resources to win friendship and cooperation with recipient countries. The UAE has provided huge financial assistance to friendly states through official channels and through its Red Crescent Authority. Arab and Muslim states received most of this aid. Between 1974 and 2006 the volume of foreign assistance reached about $28 billion, and more than fifty-one countries benefited from it. The UAE has provided foreign assistance, in the form of both grants and loans, through the Abu Dhabi Investment Fund. In addition, between 1999 and 2006, the UAE Red Crescent provided more than $600 million in assistance to the needy in different countries.[26] Moreover, despite its limited military capabilities, it was keen to participate in a number of peacekeeping missions by dispatching symbolic troops to a number of conflict situations. In its critical conflict with Iran over the three islands, it pursued negotiations and decided to stick to international law and legal discussions at the UN General Assembly and called for arbitration.

As we will see later, the UAE has utilized a combination of tools, including military agreements, for achieving its foreign policy goals, including the peaceful settlement of its dispute with other actors.

Decision-Making Process

Being a federal state, the UAE left a good number of foreign policy issues to member emirates in order to encourage them to join the federation. However, foreign policy is a federal jurisdiction. According to Article 123

of the 1971 Constitution and given the fact that some emirates such as Dubai were members in a number of international organizations, each emirate was allowed to independently sign limited and administrative foreign agreements. In addition, each emirate had the right to maintain membership in a number of international organizations.[27] The status of Dubai, for example, is similar to that of the province of Quebec in Canada which has the right to sign some international agreements and have a limited cultural and trade representation abroad. Moreover, the federation should, according to Article 124, consult with any emirate before concluding an international agreement which might affect the special status and interests of that emirate.

Nonetheless, the federation has full authority in conducting the UAE's foreign policy. It is the only legitimate authority permitted to negotiate international treaties and agreements, to appoint UAE ambassadors, and receive foreign ambassadors. It is fully empowered to declare defensive wars, to protect the state and its people abroad. Hence, all foreign policy interactions have become the exclusive right of the federal government as stated in Article 120 of the constitution.[28] Though the president is the final authority in foreign policy decision making, he consults the six other rulers in order to reach a consensus. In fact, the rulers of the emirates who form the Supreme Council of the Federation delegated full authority to the late Sheikh Zayed regarding foreign policy issues.

Foreign policy implementation is left to Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In fact, the principal advisor of the president in foreign policy is the minister of foreign affairs. He is required to run day-to-day foreign policy matters. However, he presents recommendations to the president concerning important subjects and issues. This role has given the Ministry of Foreign Affairs great influence in shaping UAE positions regarding vital regional and international questions. From the outset of the federation, the minister of foreign affairs has always been close to the president. Ahmed Khalifa al-Sweedy, educated at Cairo University in the 1960s and the founder of the UAE Foreign Ministry occupied the position of the minister of foreign affairs for more than a decade, followed by Mr. al-Naiemi. Since mid-1980s, Sheikh Zayed's young and promising sons have been running the ministry. Sheikh Abdullah, the recent foreign minister, is well trained both in political science and mass communications, with a genuine commitment to Arab and Gulf interests. This visible and high-level presence at the top of the foreign ministry is an indicator of the

desire of the federal government to give the foreign ministry a fundamental role in achieving UAE national goals.

According to cabinet decree number six (2001) the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in charge of foreign policy activities such as managing interactions with all states and arranging for diplomatic and consulate relations, participation in all negotiations, and arranging for UAE participation in international organizations, conferences, exhibitions. In addition, the ministry is in charge of protecting its citizens abroad as well as arranging for diplomatic and consulate affairs with different countries and nationalities. In this regard, the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs manages a wide range of responsibilities, despite the fact that it lacks a sufficient number of diplomats.[29]

In his role as the principal advisor to the president for foreign affairs, the minister of foreign affairs presents propositions regarding major foreign issues to the cabinet for endorsement. These are then presented to the Supreme Council of the Federation for approval. Once a foreign policy decision is approved by the council, the president issues a decree authorizing it. This is the case regarding most critical foreign policy issues. However, in highly critical situations, especially crises, the president, as the principal foreign policymaker, must come up with initiatives which reflect the UAE core values and aim at achieving its national interests. In so doing, the president reflects national consensus and the endorsement of the rulers of the other six emirates. Such initiatives are not issued unless the president is confident that the concerned parties will accept and abide by them. In order to achieve this, he utilizes all foreign policy tools including financial resources. The UAE involves itself in a wide range of issues with both regional and international actors in a mode of constructive engagement. This might also explain why the UAE's foreign policy has drawn widespread acceptance and respect by many international actors including UAE adversaries.

Foreign Policy Behavior

In this section, examples of foreign policy decisions and means will be examined within the framework of the four circles: the Gulf area, the Arab world, the Islamic countries, and the world at large. However, all these circles are closely intertwined—for example, Iran is an integral part of the Gulf and an active member in the Islamic world. One might argue that the UAE's foreign policy maintains a consistency between foreign policy

orientation and foreign policy behavior. In the meantime, it is interesting to also see a strong consistency among different foreign policy decisions. It seems reasonable to conclude that consistency in foreign policy behavior is a major characteristic of small states where options are limited and pressures are mounting. In addition, there is continuity in both the orientation and tools utilized to achieve foreign policy goals.

The Gulf Security Circle

The security of the Persian Gulf is vital to the industrialized world as it contains no less than 70 percent of global energy reserves (both oil and natural gas), and its oil production stabilizes world oil prices. It is also an important market for basic and luxury goods and commodities as well as military equipment. However, it is one of most exposed areas in the world due to the fact that Arab Gulf oil producing countries, except Iraq, are weak and incapable of protecting themselves against both regional and international threats. It is a fact that there is high level of asymmetry between oil wealth, a source for external competition and threat, and indigenous ability to protect it. As Table 1 shows, national armies are so small at they are incapable of confronting any source of threat to the Gulf security.

Table 1: Military Expenditures and the Size of the Army 2004[30]

	Military Expenditures (US$, in millions)	Size of the Army
Bahrain	441	11,000
Kuwait	3,275	15,300
Oman	1,631	43,500
Qatar	1,468	12,330
Saudi Arabia	21,876	201,800
UAE	3,187	61,000

In light of these facts and regional challenges starting with the Iranian Islamic revolution in 1979 and the Iraqi war against Iran in 1980, the six Gulf states, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, decided in 1981 to join forces in a subregional organization, the Gulf Corporation Council (GCC). The UAE, through its president, played a prominent and a catalytic role in harnessing their political will and moving the integrative process forward.

The UAE has achieved a number of gains through the GCC. On one hand, it was able to peacefully solve its border disputes with Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. On the other hand, the GCC members supported UAE claims against Iran's occupation of its three islands. In addition, the UAE was able, up to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, to delay all attempts by the US to sign military accords with all GCC members.

During the cold war era, the Gulf region had been the focus of competing superpower policies and initiatives to an alarming degree, especially on the part of the US. In the seventies, the US announced the Nixon Doctrine which based on a 'two pillar' policy, that is, Iran and Saudi Arabia. After the Iranian Islamic revolution took place in 1979, the US adopted Carter's doctrine, which established a Rapid Deployment Force to protect the Gulf countries.[31] Moreover, in 1991 the US used its forces to liberate Kuwait from the Iraqi military occupation, and finally invaded Iraq in 2003. Up to 1991, the UAE advocated free passage in the Gulf waters and retained its neutrality in international conflicts. It considered Gulf security the responsibility of Gulf countries. Sheikh Zayed reiterated this policy on a number of occasions: "The protection of the Arab Gulf is the responsibility of its people. Great powers should take their hands off this region for the good and the interest of the entire world."[32] Moreover, the UAE was a leading voice in establishing a regional organization among Arab Gulf states aimed at protecting their security long before the establishment of the GCC. In July 1981, during his negotiations with Margaret Thatcher, the then British prime minister, Sheikh Zayed reiterated the UAE understanding of Gulf security: "Our concept of Gulf security is that its states should be left alone to live in stability and security without any dependence on external forces and without any intervention by great powers or others to determine the destiny of the area and its people."[33]

The UAE pushed for genuine integrative policies in security, economic, and political domains. In spite of establishing the Peninsula Shield as a joint force under GCC command, the Gulf States continued to suffer from vulnerability; the forces were limited in number relative to regional threats, and ill-organized, with no joint command. Though member states ratified the Gulf Joint Defense Treaty in 2000, the level of cooperation in security arrangements continued to be low due to, among other factors, weak military capabilities and alternatively dependence on Western military powers. It is worth mentioning that in 1991 the UAE, as well as other members, contributed military forces, symbolic in number, as part of the

international alliance to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation. However, each member opted for bilateral security agreements with external powers, especially the US.

Unlike in the area of security, the UAE and other member states had some success in the area of economic cooperation. However, the achievement of a free trade area, the free movement of persons and goods, and the abolition of customs did not lead to a common market, notwithstanding the objective of economic union.[34]

It should be noted that the UAE considers the establishment of the GCC a positive step in the direction of strengthening the Arab regional system. Sheikh Zayed emphasized that "the Council doesn't represent a new or independent regional organization. It adds a new protective shield to the Arab nation and a support to one of the wings of the great Arab world."[35]

The Arab Circle

Right after its establishment in December 1971, the UAE joined the Arab League and all its specialized agencies. One could argue that the UAE played a significant role in sustaining the Arab regional system through its constructive engagement policies in critical situations and regional crises that threatened the very existence of the Arab system.[36] Sheikh Zayed laid the basis for those constructive engagement policies in 1971 when he said that "[w]e, here, state, people and country are an integral part of the united Arab world. We and our Arab brothers are united by the common past, present, and joint destiny. We and they form one hand on the path to liberation, development, and construction; committed to what they are committed for and participate with them as they participate."[37] The Arab orientation in UAE foreign policy is clear especially when it comes to the sustainability of the Arab regional system, the Palestinian–Israeli conflict and other regional conflicts such as the Iraq–Iran war (1980–1988), the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (1990), the American invasion of Iraq (2003), and the Israeli–Lebanese war (2006).

At the outset of the federation, a major foreign policy decision regarding the use of oil as a weapon was made in support of Egypt and Syria in their war against Israel in October 1973. The UAE cut the flow of oil to the US because of its full support for Israel during the war. Sheikh Zayed explained both the rationale behind the decision and the extent to which he was willing to take it: "The measures taken by Arab oil-producing

countries do not intend to punish the peoples; rather they are directed against governments which support Israel. When we cut off the flow of oil to the USA, we were trying to declare our support to the Arab military and political battle. Oil is one of the weapons of the battle and it is not more precious than Arab blood. We try to utilize it in favor of the battle. We will use all weapons in the battle." He added: "I issued that decision and I did not expect all this support, and I did not look for it at all. I issued the decision to cut off Abu Dhabi oil because I was confident that I was doing my duty, in full, toward my people and my nation."[38]

The UAE has supported Arab issues, at the top of which is the Palestinian question. For the UAE, the Palestinian question is the core of the conflict in the Middle East. It holds that there will not be permanent peace without reaching a just and comprehensive peace that guarantees the rights of the Palestinians for self-determination and the withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories.

In the meantime the UAE supported the first and second Palestinian intifadas. The UAE utilized its financial resources in support of the Palestinians and their struggle against the Israeli occupation of their land. By some accounts, the UAE has provided the Palestinians with more than $20 billion since the establishment of the federation.[39] This position sheds light on the UAE's opposition to the Camp David Accords of 1978 and the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel in March 1979. Sheikh Zayed strongly believed that "bilateral treaties with Israel will not guarantee [the] legitimate rights of the Palestinians and will not help them liberate their land. Such treaties are part of a Zionist plan to start normalization with Arab states."[40] The UAE joined other Arab states in severing diplomatic relations with Egypt for at least ten years (1979–1989) as an expression of its rejection of bilateral agreements with Israel.

This does not imply that the UAE's position is against a peaceful settlement of the Palestinian–Israeli conflict. In fact, it has supported all peace initiatives including those from Arab and international partners such as that of Crown Prince Fahd in 1981, of the Madrid conference in 1991, the Damascus Declaration in 1991, the Oslo Accords in 1993, the plan of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia in 2003 and, the US-sponsored road map. The acceptance of these initiatives was based on the premise that they called for the establishment of a Palestinian state.

The UAE also supported Iraq in its war against Iran in spite of the fact that the UAE was the first state to recognize the Islamic state in Iran in

1979. However, and due to its commitment to Arab issues and the fear of exporting the Shi'a revolution to the Arab Gulf states, it fully supported Iraq politically and financially. In addition, the UAE tried, in vain, to mediate between the two parties. It is interesting to know that Sheikh Zayed was personally involved by initiating proposals for the settlement of the war. Even when Iran attacked two oil fields in Abu Dhabi and al-Shariqah in 1986 and 1988 respectively, he continued his efforts to stop the war. For instance, at the Amman Summit conference in 1987, he initiated the idea that three Arab leaders would mediate between both parties in order to withdraw troops, cease fire, and then begin arbitration. Thus the UAE welcomed Iran's decision to accept the Security Council Resolution 598 which, in effect, put an end to the war.[41]

This position which was in support of Iraq did not continue for long as Iraq occupied Kuwait in August 1990 and claimed that the UAE participated in harming Iraq by increasing its oil production which led to lower oil prices. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the threat to invade the UAE dramatically changed UAE foreign policy, which had, till then, always been known to be against a foreign military presence in the Gulf. In 1990, the UAE received American and Arab troops in preparation for any Iraqi military attack. It no longer opposes military cooperation or security arrangements with the US in order to protect its territory and people. In fact, the security of the UAE and other GCC countries has become totally dependent on a US military presence in the Gulf, to the degree that some have called it 'imported security' as distinct from 'national security,' which is based on indigenous capabilities.[42]

In spite of these shocking events, the UAE in all international forums called for the reintegration of Iraq in both the Arab and international systems. Moreover, in the Arab Summit of March 2003 held in Sharm al-Sheikh, one month before the American invasion of Iraq, the UAE presented an initiative to foil the potential attack. It invited Saddam Hussein to resign and live in the UAE, and proposed a gradual transfer of authority under the supervision of the UN and the League of Arab states. The initiative did not receive the support of any of the Arab states or of the League of Arab States.

The Islamic Circle

The UAE was a founding member of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1972, which aimed at creating solidarity regarding

Islamic issues and problems.[43] The Islamic orientation of the UAE's foreign policy led it to particularly emphasize the peaceful settlement of conflicts between Muslim countries.[44] The UAE hoped to use Islamic ties to resolve critical issues such as the Iranian occupation of the three islands and the Iraq–Iran war through peaceful means.

Sheikh Zayed expressed optimism when the Islamic revolution succeeded in Iran by saying that "when the new authority took place in Iran after the Shah, it was based on Islam and the call for Islam. We were happy to hear this. The call for Islam, alone, is sufficient for optimism as Islam is justice and it offers man his value and dignity. . . . Confirming Islam by the new authority in Iran has in it all the good for the region."[45] He added that "the new regime expressed genuine willingness for cooperation with all friendly states especially its neighbors. In addition, the tone and action in Iran are honest and real Islamic ones."[46]

The UAE hoped, with the new Islamic regime in place, for a peaceful settlement of the dispute over the Iranian occupation of the three UAE islands. In spite of a series of meetings and negotiations which gave the impression that a solution might be imminent, the new Islamic regime proved to be more arrogant in defending the Iranian occupation of the islands, resisted any calls for giving up its authority over them, and started many projects on the islands including plans to annex them as national territories under Iranian sovereignty.[47]

It is true that the UAE was able, through creative diplomatic efforts, to get the support of the League of Arab States, the OIC, and the GCC for its efforts to resolve the issue peacefully and was successful in putting the issue on the UN General Assembly agenda. However, no progress has been achieved, and the UAE continues to use diplomacy to solve the issue with Iran.[48] It has not taken further steps such as arbitration, as Iran opposes any multilateral jurisdiction and insists on bilateral efforts only. In addition, the UAE, as a member of the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) since September 1995, has expressed its concern over the Iranian nuclear enrichment program which would shake the delicate military balance in the region.

As for the Iraq–Iran war, the UAE looked at it as a conflict between two Islamic neighbors who should get together, negotiate and reach a peaceful settlement. Therefore, the UAE in the OIC summit conferences in 1981 and 1984 called on Muslim leaders to stand up for their responsibilities in order to end the war that spilled the blood of Muslims.[49]

We should mention the UAE decisions to dispatch military forces outside its borders either to Islamic territories or within Islamic forces as part of international peacekeeping forces, such as its contribution to forces to Kosovo in 1996, Lebanon in 1977 with the Arab deterrence forces, Kuwait in 1991, and Somalia in 1993 as part of multinational forces. One might add that the UAE was among the early three Arab and Islamic states to recognize the Taliban government in Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal. The support of the Taliban continued until the American invasion of Afghanistan after the attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001. These attacks and the following events such as the American invasion of Iraq in April 2003 reduced the significance of this circle in UAE foreign policymaking.

The UAE utilized its oil resources in assisting Arab and Islamic countries through aid and loans from the Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Development and a number of NGOs and charities such as the Zayed Foundation for Charities, the Red Crescent, the Islamic Solidarity Fund, and the Abu Dhabi Charity Society. Arab countries received the bulk of financial assistance because of the high cost of the Arab–Israeli conflict and the harsh impact of oil price increases on poor Arab countries. The Islamic countries in Africa and Asia were the next largest recipients of financial aid. The latest example is the establishment in October 2001 of an Islamic fund to help the Afghan people after the US military intervention that same month. The UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Qatar contributed generously to that fund.

The International Circle

This is the weakest dimension in UAE foreign policy. It reflects its inability to have a more positive role in world affairs and to come up with acceptable initiatives to other international actors. Though Sheikh Zayed advocated a neutral stand between the two superpowers since the UAE joined the UN on December 9, 1971, the war of liberation of Kuwait in 1991 led by the US changed dramatically this position. Since 1990, the UAE's foreign policy has supported Western powers, especially the US, UK, and France. In July 1990, the UAE authorized joint military exercises with US Air Force units to demonstrate to Iraq that the UAE had the powerful US on its side, and could not be intimidated. During the 1990 crisis the UAE permitted the US Air Force's KC-10 refueling tankers to fly out of its main air base.[50] The political discourse in the UAE has

changed from criticizing US policies on Arab and Islamic issues to sympathy with the US, especially after 9/11. In 1998, Sheikh Zayed observed that "America is a friendly state . . . but we, as friends of the USA, would not have liked to see such policies; bias toward Israel. . . . We hoped to see its policies based on such principles as right and justice."[51] After 9/11, he announced that "the UAE condemns clearly without reservation the criminal acts which took place in New York and Washington and led to the death and injury of thousands, " and added that "Islam rejects terrorism."[52] In spite of this criticism, Sheikh Zayed emphasized that the condemnation of terrorism also included Israeli terrorism against the Palestinian people.[53] The UAE cooperated with the US by freezing the accounts of any organization identified by it as terrorist. In the meantime, the UAE supported US plans in Afghanistan by severing its diplomatic relations with the Taliban, by supporting the newly established government, and by reopening its embassy in Kabul in March 2002.[54]

However, it is worth mentioning that the UAE did not support the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. In fact, as mentioned earlier, the UAE came up with an initiative urging Saddam Hussein to resign and stay in the UAE in order to avoid an American invasion of Iraq.[55] When the American invasion took place, the UAE was the first Arab state to receive members of the Iraqi Transitional Council.[56] The UAE also called for the unity of Iraq and warned against any sectarian conflict.[57] It is also closely cooperating with other Arab states for the sake of maintaining the unity of Iraq.

On another front, the UAE joined the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) which seeks to enhance security and regional stability through a trans-Mediterranean engagement between the EU and the GCC. Though the initiative is directed at the GCC as a subregional organization, some analysts believe that it is primarily aimed at individual members of the council.[58] The UAE, along with Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar, joined ICI, contrary to both Oman and Saudi Arabia, who decided not to join it. The UAE decision to join ICI reveals that its foreign policy is open to new opportunities which would enhance the security regime in the Gulf. What increases the importance of this decision is that ICI is part of the Mediterranean Dialogue[59] between the EU and Mediterranean countries, especially Arab states. This means for the UAE that the Gulf has become an integral part of a larger security area for Europe and the Mediterranean, with the prospect that NATO might get involved in sustaining Gulf security.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that UAE foreign policy has been able, through constructive engagement, quiet diplomacy, the power of the purse, and commitment to the peaceful settlement of conflicts, to achieve its national goals (except for the liberation of the three occupied islands). The UAE has utilized all means including military, economic, diplomatic, and media to advocate its positions and commitments and achieve its objectives. It has been able to extend its relations to all UN member states and to engage itself in many international issues, including humanitarian causes. In implementing foreign policy orientations it is clear that the four circles—Gulf, Arab, Islamic, and international—are tightly connected and inseparable, though there is more concentration on the Gulf subregion. However, as a microstate with limited military and human resources confronted by mounting regional threats, it has ended up depending heavily on the US for its security.

In the meantime, it seems that the peaceful succession of power to Sheikh Khalifa did not affect the direction of UAE foreign policy. We have not seen any interruption or major changes in foreign policy orientation or commitments and it seems that the consensus among the seven member emirates regarding external issues will continue for years to come.

Notes

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14

Conclusion: Foreign Policy, Globalization, and the Arab Dilemma of Change

Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki

After this journey through thirteen chapters concerning Foreign Policies of Arab States in the global era, where are we?

The four general chapters and the nine case studies offer us a wealth of information. This information deals not only with relatively underresearched foreign policies of some countries (for example, al-Mashat's study of the UAE, or Rosenblum and Zartman's study of Morocco) but also with underresearched aspects like the making of foreign policy. For instance, Salloukh's table documenting the eighty-four entries to the post of Lebanon's foreign minister from 1944–2007 raises relevant questions about the dynamics of the Lebanese system and which sect occupied the position when and for how long. It shows that members of the Shi'a community occupied the position only twice, with the first time in 1968 and only for ten days. But the Greek Catholic community dominated this post, with one of its members, Philippe Taqla, holding it seven times during the thirty-year period 1946–1976.

At the heart of the analysis in this third edition is the question of how Arab countries cope with the accelerated and multidimensional change characteristic of increasing global interconnectedness. This interconnectedness is no longer primarily interstate but intersocietal, ranging from the flow of tourists and international capital (in both directions, thanks to the pileup of petrodollars) to the influx of ideas (for example, the pressure to "democratize" and in a certain way). How did these foreign policies respond—or fail to respond—to globalization? How did governing elites

respond or fail to respond to the twin challenges of globalization—lack of national control and crisis of governance? How can the established body of social science theory help us capture—or not—this Arab reality and its complexity?

When we subtitled the second edition of this volume "The Challenge of Change" in 1991, we identified the problem and reiterated its centrality in the concluding chapter. But frankly, we did not think that the problem would continue and become even more acute seventeen years later. While many aspects of change have made huge inroads, such as the number of internet users, satellite information, the privatization of the economy, liberalization, and the rise of civil society organizations as well as political parties, rigid belief systems concerning modes of political governance continue to prevail. As a result, the foreign policies of many Arab states failed to restructure in response to new internal and external contexts, (see, for example, Chapter 3 concerning some aspects of resistance to globalization, and Kandil's chapter on Syria). There are lots of movements but little progress. The Arab political agenda continues to be overcrowded. To the eternal Arab–Israeli conflict are added the quagmire of Iraq and the issue of fragmentation of political authority, of ethnic wars and of civil society, democratization, human rights, poverty, and unemployment. In a conflict-ridden region still conceptually dominated by a Realist lens, the analysis of foreign policy of Arab countries, however, cannot be separated from its domestic context. As Lesch in Chapter 11 puts it in the case of the Sudan, "internal conflicts, regional relations, and global orientations are closely interwoven. They feed on each other, heighten each other, and constrain each other. A shift in one of the three levels impacts the other levels."

The Primacy of a Holistic Approach to Foreign Policy

The interconnectedness of policy levels explains why, from the start, we insisted on a holistic approach to the analysis of foreign policy. This holistic approach incorporated political economy and historical sociology, to attract attention to both current issues as well as historical patterns of state formation (Chapters 1 and 2). We shunned the trap of single-variable deterministic explanations like 'global dependency' or 'international anarchy' at the macro level or 'psychologistic reductionism' at the unit/state level. These are relevant phenomena and certainly impact the making of foreign policies in these countries, but neither a

country's general orientation nor its patterns of behavior can be reduced to either of them.

As Chapter 3 shows, we attach great importance to the conditioning global/regional contexts, and Paul Noble in Chapter 4 masterfully links the two levels conceptually and empirically. As for idiosyncratic variables, it is of course absurd, as we have said before, to imagine the fate of contemporary Iraq without giving due weight to the personality of Saddam Hussein. The question is whether the intricacies of the Gulf crises, for example, or the eight-year Iraq–Iran war, Kuwait's invasion, and Iraq's occupation could be reduced to the personalities of Ayatollah Khomeini, Saddam Hussein, or Sheikh Jaber al-Sabah without analyzing in depth the oil factor, or US objectives in a unipolar system. In our analytical framework, we have tried to balance this one-sidedness and obsession with idiosyncratic factors by attracting attention to global-systemic constraints, domestic structures, geopolitical context, and characteristics of state formation, whether we are talking of Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, or Sudan. Our message is that the leader at the top is to be analyzed not as a psychological atom but rather as a social phenomenon, part and parcel of the wider context. (Dessouki and Abul Kheir talk in their chapter on Jordan about Hussein's "monarchic pluralism.") The leader's disproportionate influence is not due to his exceptional personal qualities as much as to the specific social context that allows him great latitude. Like most developing countries, Arab countries are still characterized by weak formal interest groups, a high level of illiteracy, a relatively low level of bureaucratic development and communication facilities, modest resources at the disposal of civil society, and a personalized political culture.

This preeminence itself varies. The leader could be an agenda setter, arbiter, or final decision maker, which indicates that his greatest influence is not primarily in determining foreign policy in general but in *taking*—as distinct from *making*—decisions. Making decisions is a more involved process whereby various factors interfere[1]. His preeminence is part of the country's social dynamics and not a substitute for them. Given its influence as a hegemonic conceptual lens, this psychologism was submitted to serious critical evaluation in Chapter 2 in order to pave the way for a less skewed analysis of foreign policy and its multidimensional manifestations.

Holism, Yes, But Also Distinguishing Between the Common and Specific in Arab Foreign Policies

To promote this holistic approach, we attached special importance to a dualistic definition of foreign policy *output* as both *role conception,* or general foreign policy objectives and orientation, as well as the translation of this overall verbal role enunciation into action as *role performance* or specific behavior. This distinction between role conception and role performance allows us to deal with the variety of foreign policy, both vision and specific action, without lumping them together. It also allows us to identify what is common in the policies of these countries (such as the insistence on pan-Arabism) as well as what is specific (such as Qatar's or Morocco's interactions with Israel). For instance, all the Arab countries share major aspects of state formation (for example, the role of colonial powers), state functioning (for example, the predominant role of the military and/or other segments of the new middle class, increasingly at present businessmen), problems of economic development and their social consequences, and Arab-Islamic political culture.

But Arab countries also differ, whether in their specific geopolitical aspects (for example, Morocco and Algeria are not frontline states with Israel as are Jordan or Syria), level and quality of resources (the 'haves/have-nots' division between rich oil-exporting and poor labor-exporting countries), specific social structures and organization (for example, peasant versus Bedouin), elite composition (for example, veteran politicians versus technocrats, Islamist groups versus secular managers), and of course the types of specific problems faced (for example, the problem of the south or Darfur in the Sudan, the status of foreign labor in many Gulf monarchies, sociopolitical consequences of privatization in Egypt, Jordan or Morocco). This mix of common and specific components impacting on Arab foreign policymaking indicates why Arab countries historically share some aspects of foreign policy and differ on others. In this respect, the common aspects have appeared most at the level of foreign policy orientation, or role conception, and the differentiating elements in foreign policy behavior, or role performance.

At the regional level, the insistence has been on Arab unity or at least a certain form of pan-Arabism. While this pattern was most apparent in the 1950s and 1960s, the story is different at the beginning of the twenty-first century. With the end of East–West bipolarity and of the cold war (but not the end of history!), the issue of nonalignment was bound to lose much of

its value. Similarly, the issue of Arab unity has also ceased to be a war cry affecting the legitimacy of different political regimes. Since all Arab states declared their adherence to the principle of a pragmatic approach, pan-Arabism lost its salience as a controversial dividing issue. Since the late 1980s and even more at present, there has been a consensus on accommodation with Israel—a sharp contrast with the late 1970s. An example is the 1988 Palestinian National Council (PNC) acceptance of a Palestinian state in coexistence with Israel. Similarly, with the passage of time, the Arab states' approach to Arab unity changed to emphasize not the 'one Arab state' conception but a strategy of phases around subgroups (for example, the 1981 Gulf Cooperation Council, the 1988 Maghreb Union, and the 1989 Arab Cooperation Council). Moreover, the emphasis is no longer on ideological purity, but rather on material and pragmatic interests such as relations between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' within the 'Arab family.'

Briefly, global-systemic constraints and historical-regional patterns, such as the belief in one Arab nation, clustered Arab foreign policy around a similar identity orientation, whether in the form of formal disengagement from cold war blocs or insistence on the oneness of the 'Arab nation.' It is revealing that even during the 1990–1991 Gulf crisis, supporters and opponents of Saddam Hussein's actions did not question the principle of settling Arab affairs among Arabs. Rather, it is how this principle is interpreted, respected, or violated that has divided the Arab countries. Hence the importance of dealing with how the consensual foreign policy orientation or role conception is actually enacted in specific foreign policy behavior.

It is indeed by dealing with the foreign policy behavior of Arab countries that we realize the complexity of this subject matter. A first discrepancy is that most Arab countries have insisted on *raison de la nation* or *umma* (Arab nationalism) in justifying their (regional) foreign policy orientation, but have, more often than not, conducted their foreign policy in terms of *raison d'état*. For example, Egypt's intervention in the Yemeni civil war of 1962–1967 was officially in the name of *raison de la nation* or *umma* and the promotion of Arab revolution and liberation, but it was equally, if not primarily, in defense of Egyptian regional leadership. Similarly, Saddam Hussein conducted both the war against Khomeini's Iran and the invasion of Kuwait in the name of the defense of basic Arab interests. But Iraq's moves were equally, if not primarily, the result of specific Iraqi needs and motivations, whether the perception of a threat from Khomeini's Iran, or the necessity of invading

Kuwait to "correct" colonial history and Baghdad's economic conjuncture. A similar mix of explanation and motivation of foreign policy moves exists in Syria's 1976 military intervention in Lebanon, its present relations with Iran, and Morocco's actions toward the Western Sahara.

While foreign policy orientation is mostly consensual in nature (even in an acutely fragmented Lebanon), foreign policy behavior can and does put Arab countries at cross-purposes—as, for example, in Morocco's rivalry with Algeria, Lebanon's tensions with Syria, and lingering border disputes among some Gulf countries. This is the case because foreign policy behavior, much more than orientation, brings out differences between Arab actors—their varieties of political regimes, geopolitical characteristics, and resource bases. In its behavior, Kuwait, for instance, is bound, because of its size and Iraqi claims, to emphasize the threats to its political independence and survival, whereas these issues are much less at stake in the case of Iraq itself, Morocco, or Egypt. In these last two cases, if survival is an issue at all, it is mainly at the domestic, economic level, in the form of democratization pressures, and the maintenance of subsidies and the welfare state. The chapters on Jordan and the Sudan show that the threats to an actor's survival may, in fact, be both political and economic.

As we can see, such differences are not a function of, or even primarily associated with, the leader at the top. Thus Saudi Arabia practiced its nonalignment in a very peculiar way: not having diplomatic relations with the erstwhile Communist bloc countries on the ground that they were atheist, but then, in the context of the Gulf crisis, deciding to reestablish diplomatic relations with Moscow. Indeed, before the end of the cold war, Saudi Arabia purchased missiles from 'Communist' China and severed diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

Regional issues, too, bring into the open behavioral differences among Arab states. Thus the greatest contrast between orientation and behavior in the late 1970s was in relation to the Arab–Israeli conflict. Egypt practiced a 'go it alone' policy, whereas the majority of Arab countries opposed this policy. Though the 1980s saw the continuation of the Egyptian–Israeli peace treaty, the issue did not prevent Egypt's reintegration into the Arab regional system and the appearance of an Arab behavioral consensus in accepting the state of Israel, especially after the 1988 Palestine National Council acceptance of the idea of an independent Palestinian state, the 1993 Oslo Accords, and the 1994 Jordanian–Israeli Peace Treaty. Similarly, the eight-year Iran–Iraq war manifested Arab differences.

Whereas the majority of Arab countries—especially in the Gulf region—took Baghdad's side, Libya, Syria, South Yemen, and Algeria sided with Tehran. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the issue of Iran's nuclear program still puts the Arab consensus to the test.

Related to incongruence in role conception and performance are sudden changes, zigzagging, and improvisation in foreign policy behavior. In some cases, this is caused by despair at the gap between capabilities and objectives. In others, the cause is the complexity of global politics and the confusion between national dreams (which are by definition of a long-range nature) and objectives that depend on operational capabilities.

The Arab world also provides examples of states with acute foreign policy dilemmas. The Lebanese case is striking—a sovereign state, and member of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, it finds its territory the battleground of combating forces. Lebanon has become an arena for the foreign policies of other actors, rather than being able to choose a foreign policy of its own. To the extent that Lebanon has a foreign policy, it is the 'art of the impossible.' The diffusion of the impact of globalization and crises of governance could generalize this problem of serious fragmentation to areas beyond Lebanon. A factionalization of the many parts of the Arab world could take place. Foreign policy is handcuffed to domestic developments. Hence the imperative of going beyond the study of foreign policy determinants and their outcome to zoom in on the analysis of policymaking, the serious difficulty of accessing the relevant data notwithstanding.

The Necessity of Opening the Black Box

If a focus on foreign policy inputs emphasizes the sorting out and classification of factors determining such a policy, an analysis of decision making is concerned with the chemistry of these factors, of their dynamic nature, and their interaction to produce the outcome: decision. In the case of the UAE, al-Mashat realizes the importance of the personality of the leader but the top imperative is the maintenance of the UAE federal structure, hence the necessity for a minimum of coordination in a collective decision-making process.

The various chapters reflect two main patterns of the decision-making process in Arab countries: prevalent oligarchic presidentialism/royalism, and a collegial-collective pattern. The first emphasizes the presidential/royal center, which includes 'the president/king as a person' and 'the

presidency/royal palace as institution' with its advisers, offices, etcetera. Nasser's and Sadat's Egypt comes closest to the oligarchic-presidential pattern of decision making, which is characterized by an authoritarian decision maker who can act alone, without consultation with any political institutions other than a small group of subordinate advisers, typically appointed by the leader and lacking an autonomous power base of their own. Usually these advisers have no independent sources of formal information other than those available to the leader.

This oligarchical pattern is characterized by fragmentation of responsibility on the part of the staff group, reliance on direct negotiation and personal diplomacy with foreign heads of state, and the ability to respond quickly to events and to make unconventional and bold decisions. Leaders often repeat their past behavior in similar situations, make important decisions without consulting their foreign ministers or even prime ministers, and frequently use presidential emissaries (not necessarily career diplomats) in foreign policy assignments. This type of decision making provides the opportunity for nonofficials to perform important roles due to their personal relations with the leader.

At the other end of the spectrum is the collegial or delegate assembly type of decision making, characterized by consultation, bargaining, and a search for consensus. Though formally accepted, in reality it is much less prevalent than the previous kind. This pattern of decision making was followed, for instance, by the PLO even before Yasser Arafat's death, and Lebanon, despite its presidential hierarchy, came close to it for most of its history. This pattern may lead to immobility and an inability to innovate or adapt adequately to changing circumstances. When the pressure for change is no longer avoidable, the resulting decision could be improvised or hesitant. Yasser Arafat's decision not to condemn Iraq's occupation of Kuwait during the August 1990 Arab League summit in Cairo comes closest to this pattern. Lahoud's paralysis after withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon is another example.

Like almost all developing countries, we see that Arab states are characterized by the primacy of the executive and especially the personalized nature of the decision-making process, due mainly to lack of independent checks, weak legislative structures, or independently-based political groups. The result is the prevalence of a neopatrimonial pattern of decision making in which the distinction between public and private issues and their relationship is highly blurred. Consequently, it

is not an individual's official position that could indicate relative status and influence in the making of decisions but rather his or her proximity to the top executive. This proximity could be physical (principal private secretary) or social (friends, relatives, wives, or sons). Thus, an acceptance of the leader as the final decision *taker* characterizes all Arab countries, though the *making* of decisions—formal or informal—could be a group activity. Korany and Fattah demonstrate this aspect extensively even in a relatively secretive and closed system like Saudi Arabia's. In a "hydraulic centralized" system like Mubarak's Egypt, Dessouki emphasizes the presidential center and its staff as the locus of decision making rather than the president alone.

But differences still exist in the types of groups surrounding this leader. In Saudi Arabia, they are influential members of the royal family, tribal heads, ulama, or members of influential commercial families. In Egypt, they are less likely to be ex-military revolutionaries and more likely technocrats or businessmen. In Syria, they are a mixture of military and/or Baathist apparatchiks. Moreover, the type of leader may differ, as between the leader with the historical mission and hence a 'mover,' or the leader as purely a 'manager.' Mubarak of Egypt symbolizes this last type, whereas Nasser, Sadat, Qaddafi, Saddam Hussein, or Tunisia's Bourguiba symbolize the former. The mover type does not necessarily and invariably take radical-nationalist foreign policy decisions, as the cases of Sadat and especially Bourguiba show. These two leaders befriended the dominant powers in their respective regions (whether the United States or France), and both proposed a political settlement with Israel (Bourguiba in a public statement in 1965, while Sadat went beyond words to action by signing the 1979 peace treaty).

In addition, the presence of a historical mission for the leader is not a guarantee of his automatic monopoly of effective decision-making powers. There may even be checks on the leader to impose on him the necessity of consultation, bargaining, and search for consensus. On some occasions, this seems to be the case in Syria, and especially Palestine. The main point is that contrary to the simplistic notion of a domineering leader or "commander of the faithful," with unchecked and unrestricted powers, the case studies of this book present a more sophisticated image of the decision-making process. In most cases, the leader is confronted by a complex situation of sociopolitical and economic constraints, military vulnerabilities, and a number of domestic political demands (on

religious, national, or ethnic grounds). Since information is fragmented, personalized, and diffuse, this prevents its free circulation and effective function. Important decisions could be based on incomplete and even misleading information, a serious handicap in a complex context of accelerated globalization. This brings us to the most difficult problem facing Arab foreign policies in the twenty-first century: the unavoidability of vertiginous change.

The Crisis of Adaptation to Change

This dilemma became clear in the early 1990s with a first major global change in the form of the disappearance of the USSR and the end of bipolarity. The impact was most acute on pro-Soviet allies like Syria, the PLO, or even Libya or Saddam's Iraq. What is revealing about the inability to factor in change and hence adapt to it is that, more than many other powers, these pro-Soviet allies seemed to ignore what was going on in the Eastern bloc. When the collapse finally happened it was—as veteran Egyptian journalist Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal called it—a "political earthquake." Reactions were haphazard and general foreign policy, or role conception, continued for years as if the old world still existed. Reactions to the change in international politics following 9/11 were less slow and more consensual, especially when some regimes (for example, Algeria) could associate their battle against local Islamic opposition groups with the world campaign against terrorism. This antiterrorism campaign was even used to abort external efforts to impose political reform (for example, the Algeria or Tunisia regime's self-interested logic is that the conduct of fair elections could lead to the victory of Islamists like Hamas).

Soffar quotes in his chapter on Iraq the Web site of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of that country, where the main entry emphasizes a "new Iraq." But this is an extreme case in a state's political evolution through invasion. The general norm in the Arab countries is a lack of foreign policy adaptability as part and parcel of the limited ability of most Arab political systems to open up and initiate real elite circulation. King Abdullah II succeeded his father in Jordan as did Mohammed VI in Morocco. But Bashar also succeeded his father Hafiz al-Assad in Syria—though Syria is a republic. Such a pattern of presidential monarchies gave rise to a new term in Arab political thought: 'Gomlaka.' It is a creative amalgamation of parts of the Arabic word *gom*huriya ('republic') and mam*laka* ('kingdom'). Thus political elite circulation—especially at the top—is limited, while

Arab society itself is drastically changing, if only at the demographic level with the bulging number of its youth. Chronic lack of adaptability could produce a crisis of governance and could lead to a breakdown.

This discrepancy in the level of change between the top of the political system and its base has led to the fragmentation of political authority and of foreign policy itself. Sudan might be an extreme case, but it is not unique. With the dominance of the 'Washington consensus' and the increasing influence of businessmen, foreign policy moves are increasingly 'privatized.' With the rise of ethnic or religious sectarian groups, foreign policy is similarly ethnicized. Kurds in Iraq tend to have their own foreign policy. It was Hizbullah, rather than the Lebanese state, that faced Israel in the thirty-six-day war of summer 2006. Darfur is another example of state factionalization. As Chapter 2 attempted to show in its evaluation of dominant paradigms of foreign policy analysis, these examples of fragmentation demonstrate once more how complex the conduct of foreign policy is in the present Arab context. They do demonstrate how misleading it is to define foreign policy as simply "the defense of national interest."

In the face of such complexity of both global and domestic environments, most foreign policymakers stuck to minimum-level objectives or showed risk aversion. When major foreign policy shifts have taken place– such as Libya's volte face in 2005–2006- it has been to join the mainstream and carry out rapprochement with the US and major European powers. Otherwise, many foreign policies muddled through amid sea changes. For instance, the Saudi-initiated Arab peace plan for settlement of the Arab–Israeli conflict in 2007 has already been submitted to the Arab summit back in the early 1980s.

Despite the mushrooming of satellite television channels like al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya, the governing elite's belief systems showed a surprising rigidity, a static tendency, and an inclination to do business as usual. Kandil's chapter on Syria is full of supporting examples. Adaptation to globalization and crises of governance was selective, emphasizing mostly aspects of economic reform rather than political ones. With the exceptions of such cases as Hamas gaining power, elections seemed to maintain the political status quo.

Moreover, the increasing instance of Islamophobia following 9/11 (as, for example, in the Danish cartoons controversy) confirmed many Muslims' 'siege mentality' and reinforced polarization and religiopolitics. Despite repeated talks and meetings concerning the "dialogue of cultures,"

effective political bridge building did not materialize. Tension—latent or bubbling to the surface—seemed to dominate over accommodation at both the domestic and global levels

The absence of a new social contract between governors and governed as well as the failure to find the magic formula to cope effectively with the hazards of globalization reflected the failure to elaborate a regional post-cold war vision and reinforced foreign policy improvisation and a piecemeal approach. Arab 'deficits' in good governance emphasized by the much-cited annual Arab Human Development Reports published since 2003 are now coupled with a major *adaptability deficit* to global sea changes. As a result, instead of overall Arab foreign policy frameworks, the foreign policies of many states are concerned only with managing immediate problems and concentrate on the extremely short term, even in mastering their assets. This piecemeal approach explains why oil—despite increasing global needs and accumulated petrodollars—is no longer a serious Arab bargaining card. This lack of overall regional vision, even in dealing with Iran's nuclear issue, explains why we can talk at present of 'foreign policies of Arab states' rather than 'Arab foreign policies.' Hopefully, despite the emphasis on specifities, the wealth of data in the analysis of these nine cases, together with the four general chapters can reinforce the bridge established between Middle East studies and comparative foreign policy theory-building in the global era.

Notes

1 For an explanation of this distinction, see Bahgat Korant et al., *How Foreign Policy Decisions Are Made in the Third World* (Boulder: Westview Pess, 1986), 55–59. The many writings, even in the press, about lobbies or 'invisible government' compel us to give more attention to this distinction between the easily identifiable 'decision-taking' and the much more complex process of decision-making.

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