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THE DYNAMICS OF THE ARAB REGIONAL ORDER SINCE THE  
KUWAIT CRISIS 1990-91: IS THERE AN ARAB SYSTEM THAT  
GOVERNS INTER-ARAB RELATIONS?

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Doctor of Philosophy

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2003

University of Durham



7 NOV 2003

## ABSTRACT

This thesis identifies that there has been a change within inter-Arab relations since the Kuwait Crisis in 1990-91. It asserts that the ensuing crisis unravelled the Arab system and brought about an end to the discourse of pan-Arab nationalism. Moreover, this crisis served to bring out the real discourse within inter-Arab relations: only the state's self-interest determines the foreign policy of Arab states, not their belonging to Arab institutions or an Arab nation.

However, as I shall argue, despite the continuous presence of the Arab League, the Arab system was diminished by the KC. In this context, two parallel issues demonstrate the diminishing of the system: one is the marginalisation of Iraq, and the other is the peace process between the Arab states and Israel. In both cases, the United States has acted as the 'powerful regulator' which has determined the *Stand der Dinge* (order of things) of the region.

This thesis will also argue that Arab states in both cases had no choice but to conform to regional mechanisms determining the dynamics of the two aforementioned developments. The presence of the United States in the region was demonstrated by the ousting of Iraq from Kuwait, since which time the United States has become the main actor and a regional unit in the emerging system. However, for the US to remain so and to keep its interest in the region safe, it has had to rely solely on force.

This thesis, therefore, will illustrate the nature of the new Middle East regional system, showing that the structure of the emerging Middle East system since 1990 has been dominated by the use of force. Iraq invaded Kuwait by force, it was ousted from there by force; the sanctions on Iraq were kept in place by force, and the Israeli occupation of Arab lands remains by force. Finally, the system was brought into full consolidation by force demonstrated by the Operation Iraqi Freedom in March-April 2003.

## **DECLARATION**

I, Natheer Abduh, the author of this research declare that the content of this thesis is my original work. None of the material contained in this study has previously been submitted by me for a degree in this or any other University. All the material, in this thesis, which is not my own work, has been appropriately cited.

Natheer Abduh

March 2003

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I finished this piece of research, I would like to extend my gratitude towards the following:

Anoushiravan Ehteshami, my professor and my supervisor: thank you Sir for your guidance, patience and decisive insight which made it easy to get over the research, loosing belongings, and getting over loosing the house keys over the days until I became a regular customer in the B&B. Thank you Sir for your kind attention.

Many thanks go to the community of Oakenshaw, Crook, Co. Durham in the beautiful English countryside, where I spent a great time being integrated in that community as a member of the Golf Society, member of the football team, and most importantly, member of their kind community.

Natheer Abduh  
University of Durham

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to *Dagmar* the lady who made the difference in my life.

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# INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

The first issue the student encounters while conducting research on the Middle East is the voluminous works on the region. The problem then is where to start, to determine what is relevant and what is not. Once it has been decided what is relevant to the subject, the student remains hostage to any abrupt changes in the region which could affect the steering of the research.

The issues examined in this study are directed at filling a gap in the knowledge within the academic discipline which focuses on the Middle East. However, this study does not offer a 'where we are now' perspective on the ME, nor does it offer one of 'where we are going'; instead, it offers a critique constituted in the form a question – that is, whether there is an Arab system that governs inter-Arab relations since the Kuwait Crisis. The answer offered to this question will be a resounding 'no' and, although the primary discussion focuses on the 'system', the concept of 'order' is also frequently underlined because, as I will argue, a system can be said to be in full formation only when an order has been formed.

However, the subject I have chosen to write on is primarily dependent on the entire regional order. This means that unforeseen events such as the death, or illness, or assassination of a leader would not have an effect on the conduct of my study. The war on Iraq, which occurred whilst I was conducting the last weeks of my research, was fully anticipated in my study, however. Even at the very onset of the research, the basic premise of my argument was that conflict and the use of force are the main mechanisms for viewing Middle East politics. The war on Iraq therefore slipped easily into this paradigm.

The contribution of this thesis is, therefore, its attempt to offer a better understanding of how the Arab states in the ME have been fitting into a wider Middle East system whilst their 'Arab' system was diminishing.

## **Hypothesis**

The central hypothesis of this research is that the Arab system began to diminish after the KC. Inter-Arab relations were affected by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait as Arab states were divided into two camps – those for and those against the invasion. This rift continued throughout the 1990s. I argue that after the Second Gulf War, however, the ME became galvanised by the United States' powerful presence in the region. Within this galvanisation, a wider ME system was in the process of consolidation. It was fully consolidated by the war on Iraq, which has demonstrated the American strong hand in this region. Nevertheless, since the onset of the crisis, *Realpolitik* directed Arab states' foreign policies, which helped their integration in the wider ME system.

## **Organisation of the Thesis**

This thesis has been organised into five chapters, the first four chapters of which build the ground for the fifth and last chapter of the thesis.

Chapter one unveils the tools of analysis upon which the entire study is built in order to define its terms. Theories of international relations are offered in order to define the variety of approaches to the study of the international system. Specifically, however, Pluralism, Globalism, Realism and Neo-Realism are the theories taken into consideration here, since each of these theories has a vision of the International System. Following this, the concept of power is defined, since this concept constitutes the corner stone of the entire study.

Another concept defined in this chapter is that of 'region'. The ME is not taken merely to be an abstract concept. Rather, it is considered in terms of a specific political framework and interactions across the units in the region branch from this framework. The concept of Foreign Policy is therefore also defined in order to reach an understanding of the environment within which foreign policy is conducted.

Finally, the chapter defines basic concepts that are used repeatedly throughout this study, such as that of the state, the Arab state, nationalism and the leader of the state.

In the final section of the chapter, there is provided a broad theoretical background to the driving force behind Arab states' interactions. The framework for analysis offered in this chapter is therefore one which promotes Neo-Realism as the theory which provides the founding stone of this research.

Chapter two supports this theoretical framework by providing a literature survey and forming a background to facilitate an understanding of inter-Arab relations. To this end, it takes the concept system as a measuring stick, examining literature produced in the context of the period before the Kuwait Crisis. It was deemed appropriate to look at the period from the end of the Second World War to the Kuwait Crisis.

### **The Impact of the Kuwait Crisis on the Arab Region Order**

My research has suggested that the crisis left an impact on the regional order in the ME in which it shaped the whole period of the 1990s and beyond. Chapter Three, therefore, is designed to identify the full impact of the crisis on this regional order. However, as this study is based on theoretical premises, it is also appropriate to question the impact of this crisis on the international order. A section of this chapter is therefore set out for this specific purpose, added to by another in which I discuss the United States' role and profit from the crisis.

The first question posed in this chapter is whether there has been a change in the Arab order or not. It asks whether the crisis constituted a cut-off point in inter-Arab relations or whether it was merely a part of a continuing pattern of Arab behaviour? In this context, the concept of order is taken into consideration when questioning the causes and circumstances that could trigger change in an existing order.

However, the ultimate issue of concern in this chapter is whether the crisis created a new Arab regional order or helped to prolong an existing order. The chapter deals with pan-Arabism and Arab security in order to answer the question. The hypothesis of this research proffers that the crisis further prolonged an existing order because it further fragmented the Arabs. What happened on security matters is that it took Arab security

out of their own hands and placed it into the hands of the United States. It is therefore argued that galvanisation guarantees security – in specific terms, the American presence in the region hindered further attacks of an Arab state against another. Furthermore, it helped to stop the Arab *Muzayadah* (outbidding), by putting the ultimate decision on regional matters firmly into the hands of the United States.

### **The Nature of Inter-Arab Politics since 1990**

Three issues are discussed in further detail in this chapter: first, the marginalisation of Iraq throughout the 1990s and how Arab states dealt with it; secondly, the peace process and finally, the al-Aqsa Intifada.

Following Iraq's ousting from Kuwait, its future fell into the hands of the United States. The sanctions imposed upon Iraq were both economic and political. Their political significance lies in the demonstration of how the United States continues to increase its grip on the region. It is true that just as economic sanctions have had a hugely negative impact on the Iraqi people and on the Iraqi regime, so too political sanctions have had an effect upon the entire Arab states in the region. The hypothesis of this thesis is that while marginalising Iraq, the United States' foreign policy orientation in the region took a firm track. This chapter demonstrates that the fact that other Arab states obeyed the will of the United States not to approach Iraq at any cost, gave the United States' role a discursive meaning.

Furthermore, parallel to the marginalisation of Iraq, the peace process was initiated. Arab states now had no choice but to scramble to make peace deals with Israel since within peace with Israel, Arab states found political refuge. Israel is a strong regional power; the United States is the faithful ally of Israel, and the main profit from peacemaking is that those regimes that make peace with Israel are likely to be considered as moderate and non-reactionary. Arab states, therefore, were getting weaker and weaker everyday. Within the emerging system they were put on the periphery of that system, based on their regional political performance. Arab states no longer demonstrated any power; therefore, their regional role was marginal.

As I argue in this chapter, the increasingly marginal role of the Arab states was clearly demonstrated when the al-Aqsa Intifada broke out. The imbalance of power in the

region led to the failure of the peace process. The al-Aqsa Intifada was a symptom of the failure of the peace process, which in turn was the outcome of the imbalance of power. Arab states were helpless in the face of Israeli force and the re-invasion of Palestinian lands. Trying to rescue what remained from their static status, Arab states gathered in a summit in Beirut to denounce the Israeli action against the Palestinians. This however was marked by a new peace initiative which was presented by the Saudi Crown Prince offering Israel full normalisation of relations with Israel when Israel withdraws from Arab lands. However, as this chapter also maintains, the *normal* relation between Israel and Arab states is conflictual; therefore, it is not *normal* to have peace based on the terms of the regional order which is governed by the certain balance of power.

### **The New Middle East System**

Chapter Five discusses the absence of an Arab system which could govern inter-Arab relations. It also examines the newly emerged wider Middle East system within which Arab states have become integrated.

The absence of an Arab political weight in the region has left Arab states marginalised and helpless in the face of the regional challenges. Arab states can no longer act as a body *politique*: the Arab League is weak. The peace process has failed to bring any peaceful changes to the participating parties, and the al-Aqsa Intifada has been reduced to scattered actions. Israeli forces have re-occupied the Palestinian land, marginalised the Palestinian leader and carried on with the building of settlements. Finally, the war on Iraq took place and brought to a conclusion the KC.

In this chapter, however, I will assert that the actual conclusion of the KC is the emerged Middle East system which was initiated at the onset of the crisis within a process of consolidation. The political developments which were discussed in the first section of the thesis therefore serve to demonstrate this process.

The most salient features of the new emerging system are, however, in the form of the security dilemma that has come to be the feature of the system; inter-Arab states' rivalry for regional hegemony has been reduced. The galvanisation of the region has levelled Egypt with Kuwait and Jordan with Syria. The power of an Arab state is irrelevant in

the face of the American powerful presence in the region. I argue, therefore, that the security dilemma for Arab states, although within galvanisation, is that they feel protected. However, as the system is based on self-help mechanisms, Arab states become concerned about how to cope with the overall power of the United States and Israel.

The chapter then proceeds to demonstrate how this concern has dominated Arab states' foreign policy since 1990. Therefore, while Arab states were automatically amalgamating within the new emerging wider Middle East system, they kept part of their pre-Kuwait Crisis heritage, which is their Arabism – more precisely, the fact of their being Arab states. With the remaining Palestinian problem unsolved, and the breakout of al-Aqsa Intifada, the failure of the peace process was confirmed. As a result, the Arab states kept holding Arab League conferences to condemn Israel for its continuous occupation of Arab land and to push for inter-Arab cooperation.

The events of 9/11 served to reinforce the American grip on the region. The United States declared its war on terrorism and George W Bush declared that those who are not with the United States are against it. Arab states, however, were already with the United States, based on the systemic settings of the region. The United States is a regional player with the status of being an 'absolute' power. Therefore, the behaviour of Arab states was based on self-interest – mainly the survival of the regime. In this way, the war on Iraq confirmed to Arab states that there is no possibility of 'messing around' with Washington. Thus, force became the most salient feature of the structure of the new system. This chapter therefore culminates with demonstration of how the Middle East system came to the point of consolidation with the war on Iraq in March-April 2003.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **The Tools of Analysis**

#### **Introduction**

An examination of the regional politics of the Arab states of the ME requires a consideration of the type and behaviour of those states and the dynamics of the system within which they operate. As the ME evolved, increased attention has been given to the regional dynamics that have shaped the behaviour of the units of that region. However, Arab states of the ME operate on two levels of interaction: regional and global. In order to identify the attributes of these interactions, it will first be necessary to clarify the conceptual tools which will be used throughout this study. This first chapter, therefore, will aim to identify and theorise the primary concepts utilised in the main body of this study.

The first concept needing to be defined in order to build up a definite theoretical and conceptual framework is that of 'system'. This will entail an analysis of the main schools of thought which consider or discuss the system. The primary focus, therefore, will be on Globalism, Pluralism, and Realism. These schools of thought have now received widespread acceptance within the study and teaching of international relations. Michael Banks (1985) claims that the study of international relations has become focused on three main paradigmatic approaches: Realism (and its adjunct, Neo-Realism), Pluralism and Structuralism (alternatively known as Globalism).<sup>1</sup> However, this will be followed by an examination of the neo-Realist approach to the study of the system. The second step will be to define the concept of 'region' and its relationship with the concept of 'system'.

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in Marysia Zalewski and Cynthia Enole as promoted in "Questions about Identity in International Relations," in K. Booth, & S. Smith (eds.), *International Relations Theory Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), p. 294.



The concept 'order' is also considered. This study sees a difference between the concept system and the concept 'order'. In this chapter, I shall clarify the difference which will help explaining my study.

### **Defining the concept of 'galvanisation'**

'Galvanisation' is a key concept that is applied throughout this study. It is borrowed from physics where it means a galvanised iron or steel which has been *coated* with a layer of zinc to protect it from corrosion. Galvanising is an effective method of protecting steel, because even if the surface is scratched, the zinc still protects the underlying metal.<sup>2</sup> The concept of 'galvanisation', therefore, is used in this study to indicate how Arab states have become *coated* by the American presence and American power in the region. The thesis is to emphasise how Arab states are encapsulated by the influence which the United States exerts on the region.

### **Defining the International System**

In international relations the 'system' refers to a set of interactions and interrelations across the units which make up the system. Therefore, perspectives alter according to views on what constitutes 'the system'. A group of states form an international system when the behaviour of each is a necessary factor in the calculations of the others.<sup>3</sup> S. Hoffman notes that the international system is a pattern of relations among the basic units of world politics.<sup>4</sup> An international system as a whole represents the premise that the 'whole' comes first and then the parts. This approach, therefore, assumes that the whole is more than the sum of its parts, and that the behaviour and even the construction of the parts are shaped and moulded by structures embodied within the system itself.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Definition is borrowed from *Dictionary of Physics*, edited by Alan Isaacs, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996)p, 160

<sup>3</sup> Bull, H. & Watson, A., (eds.) *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 26-45.

<sup>4</sup> See Stanley Hoffmann, "International System and International Law," in Klaus Knorr and Sidney Verba, (eds.), *The International System* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 207-211.

<sup>5</sup> Buzan, B., "The Levels of Analysis: Problems in International Relations Reconsidered," in K. Booth & S. Smith (eds.), *International Relations Theory Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), p. 200.

For Bull, the international system is formed when two or more states have sufficient contact between them, and have sufficient impact on one another's decisions, to cause them to behave - at least in some measure - as parts of a whole.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Raymond Aron defines the international system as the ensemble constituted by political units which maintain regular relations with each other and which are all capable of being implicated in a generalised war.<sup>7</sup> Thus, it is considered to be a *system* because it is the sum of these interactions which is most crucial to the concept itself.

However, interactions among the units are also stipulative because they are international; states that behave contradictory to the rules of the system are therefore rejected from its structure.<sup>8</sup> Thus, interactions between units are not based on values founded on moral norms or religious faith: they are based on the structure of the system itself.<sup>9</sup> In sum, Waltz defines the system as "...composed of a structure and of interacting units. The structure is the system-wide component that makes it possible to think of the system as a whole."<sup>10</sup>

### **Defining the concept of 'order': the 'Arab Order'**

This study defines of order as a pattern of behaviour. A study by R. D. McKinlay and Richard Little suggests that order is seen as a combination of what they call 'pattern' and 'goal satisfaction'. "If order is a pattern then disorder is a deviation from a pattern, of course".<sup>11</sup> Similar to this argument is that of Bull, whose work is the most influential on the concept of order, he wrote:

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<sup>6</sup> Bull, H., *The Anarchic Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1977), pp. 9-10.

<sup>7</sup> Aron, R., *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, trans. R. Howard & A. Baker (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1962), p. 49.

<sup>8</sup> The best example of a state whose behaviour was considered as not adhering to the rules of the international system was Iraq which had sanctions imposed on it in order to bring it back to what is called the international order.

<sup>9</sup> One might think of inter-churches' relations as religious system. The structure of these relations must be religious. There must be enough religious ground on which interactions take place, and the outcomes of these interactions must be religious.

<sup>10</sup> Waltz, K., *Theory of International Politics*, (Reading MA.: 1979), p. 79.

<sup>11</sup> Cited in Rengger, N. J., *International Relations, Political Theory and the Problem of Order: Beyond International Relations Theory*, (London, New York: Routledge 2000), p. 18. See R. D. McKinlay & Richard Little, *Global Problems and World Order* (London: Frances Pinter, 1986).

By world order I mean those patterns of dispositions of human activity that sustain the elementary or primary goals of social life among mankind as a whole. International order is order among states: but states are simply groupings of men, and men may be grouped in such a way that they do not form states at all.<sup>12</sup>

Remarkably, Bull separated the 'international order' from the 'world order'. The international order for Bull is a *pattern* of behaviour supportive of the society of states, and the world order is a pattern of behaviour supportive of human social life. My study is concerned with the concept of the international order. The definition of concept of 'order' is thus relevant in understanding the concept Arab order.

However, Bull extends the discussion by maintaining that in all societies, order is a pattern of behaviour that sustains the elementary or primary goals of social life. Order in this context is maintained by a sense of common interests in those elementary or primary goals, rules by which prescribe the pattern of behaviour that sustains them, and by institutions which make these rules effective.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the maintenance of order in any society presupposes that among its members, or at least among those of its members who are politically active, there should be a sense of *common interests* in the elementary goals of social life.<sup>14</sup>

In this case, the difference between the 'concept system' and that of 'order' is obvious in the way in which there is no *common* interest in the international system to be seen, but there is an *interest*. Each unit of the system seeks to secure its *own* interest, which in turn, negates the idea of a *common* interest.

It must therefore be understood then that there are two views on order: firstly, that order refers to a relationship between states, and secondly, that order refers to a condition of humanity as a whole. I shall argue in my study that 'order' is a condition of the relationship between states when it is a pattern of behaviour which ultimately is governed by a common interest in a given region. Within order, there is a certain degree of common interest. Furthermore, as Hall and Paul put it, 'order' is a term that carries

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<sup>12</sup> Bull, H., *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Palgrave, 1977), p. 19.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51

normative and ideological connotations, as it bears particular conceptions about how social, political, and economic systems are and ought to be structured.<sup>15</sup>

The system is therefore buttressed by anarchy, where an order is reinforced by the pattern of behaviour which states share. The reason Arab states make the most poignant example of this is:

Since the KC, the Arab system ended, but an Arab 'order' remained as the common character by which to distinguish a collective Arab politics in the ME. The Arab 'order' means the pattern of behaviour which characterises Arab states. Arab states are members of the Arab league. They tend to hold the same summits, and these summits have almost the same framework over again. Arab states also have rivalry with an unchanging character of the relationship between these states. Therefore, based on what is discussed in this section, there is a condition in the relationship between Arab states: they are states with the same cultural heritage and their co-operation in the political sphere results in a regional Arab political order. This condition became a political practice over time. That is the Arab 'order'.

### **Theoretical Approaches to the Study of the System in International Relations**

It is a difficult task to place the great diversity of analytical approaches within international politics into neat categories. Within this diversity lies what I will refer to as the 'critical point'- that is, what can be considered as the 'saturation' point or the limit to which a school of thought has been able to provide the ultimate and the best configuration of analyses of international politics. However, the more the study of international politics develops, the less likely there is to be a 'saturation' point, simply because theories change and develop along with international political developments themselves.

Having said this, there are nevertheless some fundamental ideas within the study of international politics, and it remains the case that all schools of thought have had something to contribute to the understanding of international relations. It is therefore expedient at this point to define some of the basic tenets of the approaches represented

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<sup>15</sup> T.V. Paul and J. Hall, "Introduction," in T.V. Paul and J. Hall, (eds.), *International Order and the Future of World Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999), p. 2

by these schools of thought and the ways in which they help to clarify a better understanding of the system.

### *Pluralism*

Lying at the heart of the Pluralist approach to the study of international relations is the *liberal* political philosophy, which emphasises co-operation and peace rather than conflict. Liberalism holds that human nature is essentially good, something which helps to make progress possible. In Pluralism, the causes of war lie in corrupt social institutions and the misunderstandings among leaders. It holds that war or any other aggressive actions can be moderated through institutional reforms and inter-state co-operation.

In the case of co-operation across states, liberals are more optimistic than the Realists. Liberals see in the spread of democratic political systems, the expanded range of international economy, extensive scope of international organisations reasons for harmony in inter-state relations. They also render war an unacceptable form of interstate relations.

In Pluralist thinking, the state-as-actor plays a *minimal* role. Pluralists have adopted an interest-group approach to decision-making that reveals the procedures by which foreign policy is made: decisions are the outcome of a complex inter-play between different agencies of government, organisations, pressure groups and sub-state actors. Therefore, the interactions across these units do not constitute a structure but a *process*. Nye and Keohane<sup>16</sup> have described the international system as an interdependent system in which the different actors are sensitive and vulnerable to the actions of others.<sup>17</sup> Pluralists, however, regard the system a process by which the actors learn from their interactions. Pluralists, therefore, conceptualise the system in three different ways.

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<sup>16</sup> Robert Keohane developed the idea of Neo-liberal institutionalism, which is a theory that shares concepts with liberal and neo-Realist approaches. Neo-liberal institutionalism attempts to understand the nature of international co-operation and stresses the importance of institutions which are constructed by states to facilitate mutually beneficial policy co-ordination among governments. See Robert O. Keohane, *International Institutions and State Power* (Colorado & Oxford: Westview Press, 1989), p. 10.

<sup>17</sup> Keohane, R.O. and J.S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence, World Politics in Transition* (Boston & Toronto: Little Brown, 1977), pp. 20-25.

- (i) For some of them, the International System is merely the sum of the foreign policies of all states -- and they tend to emphasise the role of specific bureaucracies and pressure groups in the formulation of foreign policy.
- (ii) Other Pluralists view the system as the sum of foreign policies plus the activities of non-state actors, such as multinational corporations, international banks, and transitional interest groups.
- (iii) Certain Pluralists include all the previously mentioned elements in their definition of a system but add all other types of transactions such as ideas, values, communications, trade patterns, and financial flows.<sup>18</sup>

Realists, for example, would argue that there is no complete analysis of world politics unless the anarchical structure of the international system is taken into account. For Pluralists, however, regimes, international organisations, and other organisations serve to alleviate the effects of anarchy. That is to say, they behave to create mutual restraint and to create trust amongst states. Therefore, the more these organisations are engaged, the more the trust will prevail amongst states and the greater the overall level of stability<sup>19</sup> will be in international relations.

In sum, the Pluralist image of international relations is based on four main assumptions:<sup>20</sup>

- i) Non-state actors are important;
- ii) The state is not a unitary actor;
- iii) The state is not a rational actor;
- iv) The agenda of intentional politics is extensive.

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<sup>18</sup> Viotti, P. R. & M. V. Kauppi, *International Relations Theory: Realism, Pluralism, Globalism*, 2d ed. (Toronto and New York: Macmillan, 1993), pp. 245-246.

<sup>19</sup> Deutsch and Signer defined 'stability' as the probability that the system retains all of its essential characteristics, that no single nation becomes dominant, that most of its members continue to survive, and that large-scale war does not occur. And from the more limited perspective of the individual nations, stability would refer to the probability of their continued political independence and territorial integrity without any significant probability of becoming engaged in a 'war of survival'. Karl Deutsch and David Singer, 'Multiple Power Systems and International Stability', *World Politics* 16 (April, 1964), 390-91.

## *Globalism*

The Globalist perspective of international relations is embodied in the Marxist analysis of world politics, which is preoccupied particularly with the analysis of the global political economy. For Globalists, to understand the international system is to understand the development of global economic, political and social processes. Viotti and Kauppi, for example, have identified four essential assumptions of the literature of Globalism.<sup>21</sup> The first is about the understanding of the global context within which states and other national and international actors function. As I have pointed out, the behaviour of individual states can be understood only by understanding the structure of the international system. In this context, whereas Neo-Realists define the international system in terms of structure and the political power of interacting states, Globalists seek to explain the structure itself. They claim that the central regulating force within and behind the system is not anarchy but the existing capitalist world-economy. Therefore, the second assumption of the Globalist vision is guided by the importance of historical analysis: that is, of course, a focus on the rise of capitalism.

These two assumptions are central to Wallerstein's analysis of 'world system's theory'. For example, for Wallerstein, 'the absence of a single political authority makes it impossible for anyone to legislate the general will of the world-system and hence to curtail the capitalist mode of production.'<sup>22</sup> Consequently, the central site of effect of the system is the structure of world economy. Wallerstein's analysis examines a three-layered structure -- a core, a periphery and semi-periphery<sup>23</sup>-- in which the countries of the core are the dominant forces which undertake an appropriation of the surplus of the whole world-economy and reinforce their dominance by means of their military advantage within the interstate system.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Quilliam, Neil, *Syria and the New World Order* (London, Ithaca Press, 1999), p. 10.

<sup>21</sup> Viotti & Kauppi, *International Relations Theory*, 1993, pp. 449-50.

<sup>22</sup> Wallerstein, I., *The Capitalist World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 69.

<sup>23</sup> For more on the semi-periphery, see I. Wallerstein' *The Capitalist World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 30-35; 115-116; I. Wallerstein, *The Modern Capitalist World-System*, 3 vols. (New York, 1974-89).

<sup>24</sup> Wallerstein, I., *The Capitalist World Economy*, 1979, pp. 16-17.

The third assumption of the Globalist perspective refers to the mechanisms of domination which keep Third World states from developing and which contribute to the uneven worldwide development. The understanding of these mechanisms requires an examination of dependency relations between the northern industrialised states (Europe, Japan, and North America) and the poorer states in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, something that will be examined below.

Finally, the fourth assumption concludes that Globalists consider economic factors as being absolutely critical in explaining the evolution and functioning of the world capitalist system and the relegation of Third World states to a subordinate position. These two latter assumptions are particularly evident in the work of Wallerstein and the dependency theorists.<sup>25</sup> The dependence of the countries of the South on the countries of the North, which has resulted from unequal terms of trade, and which also in turn is translated to action through the operation of multinational organisations, international banks etc. (that is to say trans-national coalitions), perpetuates the permanent stratification of world classes. Put simply, the alliance of the international bourgeoisie with the 'comprador' (or the national bourgeoisie) in the Third World is detrimental to the proletariat of the 'South'.

For Globalists, therefore, this stratification *is* the system, which, in turn, is capitalism: without stratification, capitalism would not exist in the international system. Therefore, to quote Wallerstein, 'there are today no socialist systems in the world economy any more than there are feudal systems because there is only one world system. It is a world-economy and it is by definition capitalist in form.'<sup>26</sup>

In summary, Globalists, in their analysis of international relations, adhere to four main assumptions:<sup>27</sup>

(i) Economic Globalism defines the international system ;

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<sup>25</sup> This school of thought emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in response to what was considered as discredited American analyses of development. For more on this see, for example, W.W. Rostow, *The Stage of Economic Growth. A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

<sup>26</sup> Wallerstein, I., *The Capitalist World Economy*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979), p 401, and *The Politics of World Economy*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984).

<sup>27</sup> Quilliam, N., *Syria and the New World Order*, 1999, p. 11.



- (ii) The international system defines the level of analysis;
- (iii) Historical analysis is relevant;
- (iv) Dependency is perpetuated by mechanisms of economic domination.

### ***Realism***

In the post-war period, Realism has dominated Western approaches to the study of international politics. 'Classical' Realism is the early version of its formulation, and structural or 'Neo'-Realism is the more contemporary version.

Following World War II, Realism emerged as a reaction to what was regarded as the failure of the assumptions of political 'idealism'<sup>28</sup>. The latter, with its belief that the human nature is good and that war is a senseless action which can be prevented by the utility of international law and organisations such as media, was rejected as utopian.<sup>29</sup> Realism, therefore, constituted an attack on this ideal vision of international politics, to the degree that Kegley and Wittkopf believe that Idealism underestimated the 'realities' of power politics and was thus partly responsible for the slide to war in 1939.<sup>30</sup> In contrast, the Realists held that human nature is essentially bad and is motivated by the striving for power.<sup>31</sup> This point is aptly summed up by Hans Morgenthau who concludes that political *Anschauungen* involves either the 'desire to keep power, to increase power, or to demonstrate power.'<sup>32</sup>

Realism also views the state as the most important actor in the making of international politics. Unlike idealists or liberal internationalists, the Realists deem conflict to be

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<sup>28</sup> Smith & Hollis, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, 1991, pp. 45-68.

<sup>29</sup> E. H. Carr (1939) called this the neglecting of the harsh realities of power politics and power logic. See Kegley, C. W. Jr., and E.R. Wittkopf, E.R., *World Politics: Trend and Transformation*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed., (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001), p. 31.

<sup>30</sup> Kegley & Wittkopf, *World Politics: Trend and Transformation*, 2001 pp. 20-22.

<sup>31</sup> E.H. Carr produced the most sustained attack on the assumptions of Idealism. He proposed an approach that saw international relations as they were, rather than as they might be. This approach had to be able to explain the way in which events since 1930 had unfolded - a matter, said Carr, of analysis rather than normative commitment. See Smith & Hollis, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, pp. 20-22.

<sup>32</sup> Morgenthau, H., *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (New York: A. Knopf, 1960), p. 38.

inevitable, considering it to be a natural state of affairs rather than a consequence that can be attributed to socio-political systems or historical circumstances.<sup>33</sup> As a result, the anarchical nature of international politics dictates the policymaking of the state in a permanently hostile environment. Security, as an end for the state, requires the acquisition of power. Thus, for Realists, it is the nature of anarchy and power which is crucial to an understanding of the international system.

Anarchy is about the absence of an overriding authority above the state authority. Under the logic of anarchy, 'survival dictates that units of the system are subject to the pressure of competition.'<sup>34</sup> Therefore, with 'power as the crucial variable, the attempt to maximise it being what drives actions and its distribution being what determines the interactions of states,'<sup>35</sup> anarchy causes a security dilemma from which there is no escape but to have a system. On the premise of this Realist vision of international politics, the system is the outcome of the inevitable need for a system. It is not created or invented, but it exists along with the interactions across its own units because anarchy dominates the making of international relations.

Under the conditions of anarchy, therefore, states resort to different strategies of self-help. The main action that states employ is the building up of their military arsenals. Whilst continuing to build their military power, however, they are still confronted with the 'security dilemma': the more a state increases its military capability, the more it poses a threat to other states, and within the continuation of that threat, the security dilemma continues to exist. Another option open to states, of course, is to ally with other states to face the threat of others. Pooling the capabilities of states is to balance the power of another state or a group of states. In other words, the two above-mentioned choices to which states resort are mainly for purposes of balancing power. Viotti and Kauppi have argued that stability and the avoidance of war result from the maintenance of a balance of power among states. Thus, they add, 'the need to maintain a balance of

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<sup>33</sup> For a comparison of Realism and Liberalism, see Joseph Grieco, 'Anarchy and the Limits of Co-operation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism', *International Organisation* 42 (1988), pp. 485-507; and Joseph S. Nye Jr., "NeoRealism, and Neoliberalism", *World Politics*, 40 (1988), pp. 235-51.

<sup>34</sup> Waltz, K., *Theory of International Politics*, 1979, p. 67.

<sup>35</sup> Viotti, & Kauppi, *International Relations Theory*, 1993, p. 101.

power to avoid the triumph of a dominant power is a Realist concern dating back to the works of Thucydides.<sup>36</sup>

It can be seen therefore, that the traditional paradigm in Realist theory is based upon the following assumptions:

- (i) That nation-states, in a 'state-centric' system, are the key actors,
- (ii) That domestic politics can be clearly separated from foreign policy,
- (iii) That international politics is a struggle for power in an anarchic environment.<sup>37</sup>

In short, the six assumptions in the Realist paradigm can be summarised as follows:

- (i) The state is the principal actor in international relations;
- (ii) The state is unitary;
- (iii) The state is a rational actor;
- (iv) The state is preoccupied with national security;<sup>38</sup>
- (v) Power is defined in terms of military capability;
- (vi) National security is the main concern of the state as 'high politics'.<sup>39</sup>

This demonstrates that Realism promoted a static vision of the international system, which shapes the behaviour of the state itself as the main part of that system.

### ***Neo-Realism***

Neo-Realism (or structural Realism) is a variant of Realism. The development of neo-Realist thought has been powerfully represented by Kenneth Waltz in his book *Theory of International Politics*<sup>40</sup>. The essence of neo-Realism, as Smith and Hollis argue, 'is a

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<sup>36</sup> Viotti & Kauppi, *International Relations Theory*, 1993, p. 50. On this argument, see also M. Wight, *Power Politics* (Harmondsworth: Pelican Books, 1979).

<sup>37</sup> Dougherty, J. E., & R.L. Pflatzgraff Jr., *Contending Theories of International Relations*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (New York: Harper Collins, 1990), p. 81.

<sup>38</sup> Quilliam, N., *Syria and the New World Order*, 1999, p. 8.

<sup>39</sup> Viotti & Kauppi, *International Relations Theory*, 1993, p. 36.

<sup>40</sup> See Waltz, K., *Theory of International Politics*, 1979.

more theoretically refined systemic or structural account of international relations',<sup>41</sup> that is, the emphasis on the 'structure' of the international system as a determinant in the behaviour of the state. Whereas for Realists, the state is a unitary rational actor, Neo-Realists emphasise the structure of the international system over the state. Realists often focus on national foreign policies in the belief that they hold the key to the dominant forces in world politics. In this context, the Realist Raymond Aron maintains that the realm of international politics is impossible to theorise because it is shaped by diverse economic, political and ideological forces.<sup>42</sup> The Realist error, however, was to suppose that no clear distinction between the system of states and the nature of the sovereign units could be drawn.

However, Waltz acknowledges that economics, politics and culture are intertwined, but adds that a theory of international relations can be developed by abstracting the international system from other domains. Neo-Realism, therefore, begins with the premise that a theory of international relations and a theory of foreign policy are not the same.<sup>43</sup>

In spite of this stance, the main 'neo' argument of the Neo-Realists is about the structure of the international system. Waltz has laid down a three-tier definition of the structure of the international system, distinguishing it from the structure of domestic political system. These are firstly, the organising principle of the international system, secondly, the functional differentiation of units, and finally, the distribution of capabilities across units. In domestic political systems, the ordering principle is hierarchy, and in the international system the ordering principle is anarchy.<sup>44</sup> Consequently, he defines the system as:

...a set of interacting units having behavioural regularities and identity over time. Its structure defines the ordering of its parts. Structure involves an ordering principle, specification of the function of different parts, and the distribution of capabilities. In international

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<sup>41</sup> Smith & Hollis, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, 1993, p. 36.

<sup>42</sup> Aron, R., *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, 1962, pp. 44-60.

<sup>43</sup> Linklater, A., "Neo-Realism in Theory and Practice," in Booth & Smith, *International Relations Theory Today*, p. 143 For more on Waltz's argument see Waltz, K., "Realist Thought and Neo-Realist Theory", *Journal of International Affairs* 44 (1990), 21-37.

<sup>44</sup> Waltz, K., *Theory of International Politics*, 1979, pp. 100-104.

politics, the ordering principle is anarchy, interpreted as the absence of a higher government above state.<sup>45</sup>

From this, it can be seen that under the conditions of anarchy, the struggle for power is inherent within the backbone of the system. Thus, the nature of the *system* in which all the states exist is, as mentioned above, a determining factor in their behaviour, forcing these states to focus on the balance of power if they are to survive. Moreover, 'for a balance of power to come into being there must exist an international system; that is, a community of states in regular contact with each other.'<sup>46</sup> However, before the discussion about the balance of power proceeds, it is first necessary to define power.

### **Defining Power**

Power is considered to be the main dynamic within any analysis of the interactions and interrelations among states in the international system. Thus, all definitions of power focus on influence and competition within certain interactions across actors. For Robert Dahl, for example, power amounts to the control of behaviour: 'A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do.'<sup>47</sup> Therefore, within the course of influence lies the capacity of A over B. What links them both together is not their independent entities, but rather that power-influence within which 'respond' takes place. M. Weber insists that:

Power is the probability that an actor in a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests.<sup>48</sup>

However, when A and B are engaged in a power struggle, resistance is the key word to understand the capacity of B if B is influenced by A. This means that alliances or bandwagoning indicate the probability of B, for example, trying to maximise power in the face of A's capacity. For this reason, power is the springboard for the understanding of states' interrelations.

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<sup>45</sup> In Nye, J. S. Jr., "NeoRealism and Neoliberalism," *World Politics*, 40 (1988), pp. 241, 235-251.

<sup>46</sup> Sheehan, Michael, *The Balance of Power: History and Theory* (London & New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 11.

<sup>47</sup> Lukes, S., *Power* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), p 1.

<sup>48</sup> Lukes, S., *Power*, 1987, p. 2.

To pursue this further, there is therefore a *balance* of power which is associated with the intention of each unit of the system to pursue power for the sake of security. Morgenthau concludes that the balance of power refers to an actual state of affairs in which power is distributed among several nations with approximate equality.<sup>49</sup> To achieve the maximum from this equilibrium, the task of state leaders is to equalise the national interest of their states and the nature of any change that could occur on the international level. Waltz, too, has asserted that the balance of power may be defined quite simply as the distribution of power in the international political system.<sup>50</sup> The concept 'balance of power' is therefore important to the degree that it interprets all kinds of states' interaction on the international level. It is the Neo-Realists, therefore, who are the most emphatic about the balance of power as being central to an understanding of international relations.

Alliances are also important for an understanding of states' behaviour within the enterprise of *seeking* power.<sup>51</sup> States try to pool their capabilities together to form a greater weight of power. That action referred to as 'alliance' is in most, if not in all, cases of international relations, the backbone of the process of maintaining the balance of power. J. Goldstein, for example, has argued, 'Alliance is as original an event in politics as is conflict. It associates like-minded actors in the hope of overcoming their rivals.'<sup>52</sup> Threat, therefore, is also a vital 'concept' for the understanding of alliances. Stephen Walt poses the question; 'Do states seek allies in order to balance a threatening power, or are they more likely to bandwagon with the most threatening state?'<sup>53</sup> Further, he suggests, states ally to balance against threats rather than against power alone.

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<sup>49</sup> Sheehan, *The Balance of Power: History and Theory*, p. 3.

<sup>50</sup> Waltz, K., "Anarchic Order and Balance of Power," in Keohane, R. (ed.), *Neo-Realism and its Critics*, 1986, p. 117.

<sup>51</sup> I adapt the definition of alliance by S. Walt 'Alliance is a formal or informal relationship of security co-operation between two or more sovereign states. This definition assumes some level of commitment and an exchange of benefits for both parties; severing the relationship or failing to honour the agreement would presumably cost something, even if it were compensated in other ways'. In Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 1. See also H. Morgenthau, "Alliances in Theory and Practice," in Arnold Wolfers, (ed.), *Alliance Policy in the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959).

<sup>52</sup> Goldstein, J., *Dynamics of Middle East Conflict and US Influence 1979-1997*, [www.american.edu/me.papr.htm](http://www.american.edu/me.papr.htm).

<sup>53</sup> Walt, S., *The Origins of Alliances*, (New York: Cornell University Press 1987), p. 3.

Although the distribution of power is an extremely important factor, nevertheless Walt proposes that the balance of threat theory is a better alternative to the balance of power theory.<sup>54</sup> That, however, is another argument in the context of the study of power in the ME, but I would assert that threat could not exist without a powerful capacity for the threat to be considered a threat. States ally or bandwagon to face a threat that is generated by the possession of power.<sup>55</sup> Consequently, alliance and bandwagoning are seeds that grow in the field of the imbalance of power. To sum up this definition, it is correct to say that 'it follows that the real issue of international politics can be understood in terms of the rational analysis of competing interests defined as power.'<sup>56</sup>

The distribution of power illustrates how capable various actors are. However, there is a difference in opinion amongst students of international relations about which capabilities are important.<sup>57</sup> Some scholars emphasise military, or economic, or ideological, while some focus on population. For the purpose of this study, military and political capabilities are the standard reference of the states' power.

### **Region and Regionalism**

The concepts of region and regional order also provide a central analytical and conceptual framework within this study, and in order to utilise them effectively, it will be necessary at this point to define my use of them precisely. Defining regionalism, I draw upon the useful distinction provided by Hurrell. As co-editor with L. Fawcett of *Regionalism in World Politics: Regional Organisation and International Order*<sup>58</sup>,

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>55</sup> Walt maintained that 'power and threat overlap, but are not identical.' There is a philosophical sense in this sentence. Behind each threat there is a certain power, whether military, economic, or any other source of powerful capability that causes the threat. But to take a threat as an abstract matter does not fit in international relations theory. However, Christopher Layne disagrees with Walt by asserting that "in unipolar systems there is no clear-cut distinction between balance of threat and balance of power...in a unipolar world, others must worry about the hegemon's capabilities, not its intentions. For more on the overlapping of threat and power see Walt, *Origins of Alliances*, 1987, p. 21. For more on Layne's argument see C. Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security* Vol. 17, no. 4, (Spring 1993), pp. 5-51.

<sup>56</sup> Rengger, N. J., *International Relations, Political Theory and the Problem of Order: Beyond International Relations Theory*, (London, New York: Routledge 2000), p. 41.

<sup>57</sup> Taber, C. S., "Power Capabilities Indexes in the Third World," in R. Stoll & M. Ward (eds.) *Power in World Politics*, (Boulder, Col. Lynne Rienner 1989), p. 32.

<sup>58</sup> L. Fawcett, & A. Hurrell (eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics: Regional Organisation and International Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Hurrell concludes that both regionalism and region are ambiguous terms.<sup>59</sup> He holds that regionalism was (in the late 1960s and 1970s) often analysed in terms of the degree of social cohesiveness (ethnicity, race, language religion, culture, history, of a common heritage); economic cohesiveness (trade patterns, economic complementarity), political cohesiveness (regime type, ideology), and organisational cohesiveness (existence of formal regional institutions).<sup>60</sup> Recent debates, however, suggest that the broad term regionalism has been used to cover a variety of distinct phenomena. Thus, Hurrell breaks up the notion of regionalism into five different categories. Although worthy of mention here, it will not be necessary for me to detail them further since my study is more concerned with the term region than the concept of regionalism.<sup>61</sup>

- (i) Regionalisation
- (ii) Regional awareness and identity
- (iii) Regional interstate co-operation
- (iv) State-promoted regional integration<sup>62</sup>
- (v) Regional cohesion.<sup>63</sup>

Similarly, Michael Smith has concluded that regionalism is often linked very strongly with regional organisation and institutions. He examines why these institutions arise, how they have developed, and how they relate to other, more global institutions. More importantly, he questions how they relate to the nation-state.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> A recent study by Albert Fishlow and Stephan Haggard, distinguish between regionalisation, which refers to the regional concentration of economic flows, and regionalism, which they define as a political process characterised by economic policy co-operation and co-ordination among countries. Cited in Edward Mansfield and Helen V. Milner, "The New Wave of Regionalism," *International Organisation* 53, 3 (Summer 1999), pp. 589-627 p. (591).

<sup>60</sup> See, for example, Bruce Russett, 'International Regimes and the Study of Regions', *International Studies Quarterly* 13/4 (Dec. 1969). Cited in Hurrell, A., "Regionalism in Theoretical Perspective," in L. Fawcett, & A. Hurrell (eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics*, 1995, p. 38.

<sup>61</sup> I refer to the whole paragraph due to its importance - as written by Hurrell, *Regionalism in World Politics*, 1995, p. 38.

<sup>62</sup> On regional integration see Leon N. Lindberg & Stuart A. Sheingold, (eds.), *Regional Integration; Theory and Research* (Cambridge, MA, 1971). Ernest Haas, *The Obsolescence of Regional Integration Theory* (Berkeley, 1975).

<sup>63</sup> Hurrell & Fawcett (eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics*, 1995, pp. 39-45.

<sup>64</sup> Michael Smith, "Regions and Regionalism," in Brian, W., R. Little, & M. Smith (eds.), *Issues in World Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1997), pp. 69-70. Notably, Smith adds that perhaps the most salient form of regionalism in the contemporary world arena is that of regional integration predominantly based on the intensification and organisation of economic interdependence. This form of regionalism becomes part of the economic orthodoxy of the 1990s (p. 74).



For Hurrell, in most cases, geographic proximity characterises the primary definition of region: without some geographical limits, the term 'regionalism' becomes diffuse and unmanageable.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, in the modern world, there can be no wholly self-contained regions immune from outside pressures.<sup>66</sup> This points towards difficulties in defining the term 'region'. Therefore, my concern here is to define what a region constitutes within the international order.

In his study, *International Regions and the International System: a Study in Political Ecology*,<sup>67</sup> Russet has shown that definitions of region vary depending on the methods and aims employed by regionalists. He identifies five criteria for delineating regions:<sup>68</sup>

- (i) Regions of *social and cultural homogeneity*, that is, regions composed of states which are similar with respect to several kinds of internal attributes.
- (ii) Regions of states which share similar *political attitudes or external behaviour*, as identified by the voting positions of national governments in the United Nations
- (iii) Regions of political independence; where the countries are joined together by a network of supranational or intergovernmental *political institutions*.
- (iv) Regions of *economic interdependence*, as identified by intra-regional trade as a proportion of the nations' national income
- (v) Regions of geographical *proximity*.<sup>69</sup>

Another definition of region can be added here, which is a region with shared 'political destiny'. The outcome of the political life of the region is recurrent to the degree that it becomes its historical mould. The Arab-Israeli conflict shaped almost the entire thinking about the ME. Apart from oil and Petro-Sheikhs in the region, one would think

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<sup>65</sup> As cited in Hurrell, "Regionalism in Theoretical Perspective," in L. Fawcett, & A. Hurrell (eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics: Regional Organisation and International Order* 1995, p 38.

<sup>66</sup> Hurrell, "Regionalism in Theoretical Perspective", in L. Fawcett, & A. Hurrell (eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics: Regional Organisation and International Order* 1995 p. 46.

<sup>67</sup> Russet, B., *International Regions and the International System: A study in Political Ecology* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1967).

<sup>68</sup> Russet, B., *International Regions and the International System*, p. 11.

<sup>69</sup> Original Italics.

of the ME as a conflict between the Arabs and Israel. Therefore, the definition of the region is tied to the fact that there is a conflict that governs the entire political mood in that region.

Equally useful as an attempt to define 'region' is Riemer's assumption that the 'criteria must not be chosen by chance, but in close relation to the definition of the region as a functional unit'.<sup>70</sup> Thus, we must return to the idea of '*function*' before taking size into consideration. In my study, I shall therefore be concerned with the political function of the Middle East as a region, although as Russett has concluded, there is a 'sticky' problem in attempting to identify the boundaries of various regions. If, however, one uses separateness or isolation as a major element in the definition of a region, this problem may not be difficult to overcome.<sup>71</sup> That means that the ME region is defined by the dynamics of its own creation as a region. The borders of the region are often known by the political life the region has witnessed since the end of the Second World War.

This, perhaps, is self-evident. Politically speaking, the boundaries of a region *are* its political function – that is to say, its relations to the international arena are channelled through its political performance. The position that regions hold in international policy-making depends on the influence they have on the making of these policies. On the other hand, the 'great powers who dominate the international order try to sustain order by policing the relations between states of their particular sphere or region.'<sup>72</sup> Put simply, then, Finch correctly argues that 'the characteristics of a region should be most pronounced in its interior - regions end in transition, seldom in definite boundaries. The aerial complex is substantial; it is only its boundary that is inclined to be capricious'.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Svend, Riemer, "Theoretical Aspects of Regionalism," *Social Forces* 21, 3 (1943), 279, Cited in Russett, *International Regions and the International System*, 1967, p.6.

<sup>71</sup> Russett, *International Regions and the International System*, 1967, p.6.

<sup>72</sup> See Fawcett, & Hurrell, *Regionalism in World Politics*, 1995, p 318. Here, Fawcett and Hurrell give an example of Churchill's advocacy of regionalism and the role of spheres of influence in Kissinger's thinking of *détente*.

<sup>73</sup> Finch, V. C., "Geographical Science and Social Philosophy," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 29, 1 (1939), cited in Russett, *International Regions and the International System*, p. 7.

## **The Middle East as a Political Region**

The Middle East regional system is taken in this study to be comprised of Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Palestinians,<sup>74</sup> Lebanon, Iran, Turkey, Israel, and the United States of America. The degree of interactions across these units of the system determines the political outcomes in the region.

As it will be explained later, the United States is taken to be a member of the system because of the impact it has on the making of regional politics. This impact, however, is not only by means of its financial support to regional states like those of Israel, Egypt, or Jordan, but is represented by the amount of power the United States wields in the region.

Therefore, as a primary conceptual tool for this study, I will consider the ME region as a *political* entity. This stance is based on the fact that the term ME was an invention arising from a *political* need for international forces to be present in that region. When colonialism ended, there was no simultaneous termination of the foreign presence there. On the contrary, the United States and the Soviet Union replaced Britain and France as the dominant powers in the region, which resulted in the transformation of power relations between new outside powers and regional ones. Thus, the region remained at the periphery: in effect, it became the theatre where power relations and power distribution reflected the change of power relations at the centre.

However, the permanent existence of external powers dominating the region caused lack of cohesion and integration amongst its members. According to Hurrell, cohesion can be understood in two senses:

- (i) When the region plays a defining role in the relations between the states (and other major actors) of that region and the rest of the world.

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<sup>74</sup> The Palestinian people are taken into this study only because of the impact they have on the interactions between other states in the region. The Palestinian Authority is considered here to be largely irrelevant: the authority has no impact on the making or unmaking of the regional system.

- (ii) When the region forms the organising basis for policy within the region across a range of issues.<sup>75</sup>

Cohesion is absent in the ME because there is a huge degree of *hegemony* represented by a form of “galvanisation”.<sup>76</sup> The Middle East has become paradigmatic of the type of interactions and the ‘togetherness’ predominant in it. Hurrell offers examples of this in his discussion of hegemony. He argues that “the existence of a powerful hegemon within a region may undermine efforts to construct inclusive regional arrangements involving all or most of the states within a region”.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, what inclines Arab states in the ME to conduct foreign policy is the degree of the foreign “forces” which are present in the region. There are no ‘pure’ Arab politics for example which is mainly conducted as Arab in both forms: output and input, if the input of Arab politics were Arab, the output of that politics would not necessarily be so.

### **The Relationship between Regional Order and the International One**<sup>78</sup>

The end of the Cold War represented a definite return to regionalism.<sup>79</sup> This was accompanied by what Barry Buzan has referred to as the removal of the old ‘superpower overlay’ which encouraged multi-polarity and contributed to an

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<sup>75</sup> Hurrell, A., “Regionalism in Theoretical Perspective,” in L. Fawcett, & A. Hurrell (eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics*, 1995, p. 44.

<sup>76</sup> One might ask the question: if there were no hegemony in the ME, would it be possible that cohesion could predominate? The answer to this question will be included in my thesis, from chapter 4 onwards.

<sup>77</sup> Hurrell, “Regionalism in Theoretical Perspective,” in Fawcett, & Hurrell (eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics*, p. 50.

<sup>78</sup> I adapt the definition of ‘order’ by Hedley Bull: ‘a pattern of activity that sustains the elementary or primary goals of the society of states, or international society’. Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 1977, p. 8. I also use the definition by Young: ‘A broad framework of arrangements governing the activities of all, or almost all, the members of international society over a wide range of specific issues. We speak of an international political order, for example, as a system of territorially based and sovereign states that interact with one another in the absence of any central government.’ Young, Oran, *International Co-operation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 13. Also, for more on this, see Young, Oran, ‘System and Society in World Affairs: Implications for International Organisations’, *International Social Science Journal* 144 (June), pp. 197-212. For more definitions of the concept order, see S. Smith, “Is the Truth out there? Eight questions about international order,” in T.V. Paul and J. Hall (eds.), *International Order and the Future of World Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999) pp.99-121.

<sup>79</sup> Fawcett, L., “Regionalism in Historical Perspective,” in Fawcett, & Hurrell (eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics*, 1995, p. 17.

international system in which regional arrangements could be expected to assume greater importance.<sup>80</sup>

On the one hand, however, the mediator between regional and global orders is primarily the state. On the other hand, the relationship between the two orders dictates, to some extent, the behaviour of the states in regions. Yet what comes first? The international order or the regional order? Within this question lies a definitional dilemma; as Smith has identified: 'both are inseparable; by dealing with them separately, one becomes more aware of the linkages and tensions between them'.<sup>81</sup> The defining structural factor within the relationship between the two orders is, however, embedded in the degree of subordination of the regional subsystem to the international one.<sup>82</sup> Intra-states relations are not separate from their subordination to the wider system; as Tibi has asserted, 'All regional subsystems are at the same time integrated both into the global system (the international system) and subordinate to dominant world order';<sup>83</sup>

During the Cold War, bipolarity dominated the degree of subordination of subsystems to each pole of the dominating superpowers in the international order. However, after the Cold War ended, the shape of this domination changed, based on the change in power distribution. This points towards the fact that the centre of power changed from resting in the hands of two superpowers to being the preserve of only one of them -- something which had a severe impact on the making of the New World Order itself. This means - and this is crucial to the theorising of the ME regional order in the coming pages - that the degree of subordination of certain regions did not change. In consequence, for these regions the relationship between the international order and the regional one also remained the same.

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<sup>80</sup> Buzan, B., *People, State and Fear* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), p. 208.

<sup>81</sup> Smith, M., "Regions and Regionalism", In W. Brian, R. Little, & M. Smith (eds.), *Issues in World Politics* 1997, p. 79.

<sup>82</sup> Robert Cox and Timothy J. Sinclair argue that international relations imply the Westphalian state system as its basic framework, and this may no longer be an entirely adequate basis since there are forms of power other than state power that enter into global relations. 'World Order' is neutral as regards the nature of the entities that constitute power; it designates an historically specific configuration of power of whatever kind. Cox, R., & Sinclair, T., *Approaches to World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 494.

<sup>83</sup> Tibi, B., *Conflict and War in the Middle East: From Interstate War to New Security*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Macmillan, 1998), p. 37.

To broaden the argument it is necessary here to offer an examination of the term 'New World Order'. Chubin, for example, asked, 'What is the new order?' suggesting: 'From the South, it looks like a new form of Western dominance, only more explicit and interventionist than in the past'.<sup>84</sup> This perspective, which takes the whole of the south as an issue, is mainly about power as being a tool of domination. In this context, S. Hoffman argues that a New World Order occurs when there is a fundamental redistribution of power in the international system,<sup>85</sup> illustrating that in order to understand the relations between the regional and international orders, we must simply look at the structure which governs these relations. Consequently, the structure of the international system can be seen as the 'lid', which when removed unveils the degree of harmony or tensions between the two orders.<sup>86</sup>

Considering the 'structure', either in its narrowly neo-Realist version, or in its wider but still substantially Realist form, the relationship between these two orders is based on the distribution of power within a frame called the international system. Simply, the superpower *rivalry* was in itself a power existing within regional orders. Thus, it was the regulator, which guaranteed the stable nature of the international system. After the Cold War ended, the international system became governed by a single power: subsystems had either to continue their subordination to this superpower or other subsystems had to adapt new policies to enter the new order. To illustrate this point, the end of the Cold War liberated regional actors from superpower constraints, which led to what Snow has called the 'second tier regional countries', mainly those who aspired to fill the power vacuum left behind.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Chubin, S., "The South and the New World Order", in B. Roberts, *Order and Disorder after the Cold War: A Washington Quarterly Reader* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), p. 435.

<sup>85</sup> Hoffman, S., "A New World and its Troubles", *Foreign Affairs* 69, 4 (1990) pp. 115-122.

<sup>86</sup> For more on the controversies on the discussion of the concepts order and system see H. Bull, *The Anarchical Society; A Study of Order in World Politics*, New York: Macmillan, 1977); S. Hoffmann, *World Disorders: Troubled Peace in the Post-Cold War Era* (Lanham, MD. 1998); S. Smith, "Is there Truth out There? Eight Questions about International Order", in T. V., Paul and J. A., Hall, (eds.), *International Order and the Future of World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>87</sup> Snow, D. M., *Distant Thunder: Partners of Conflict in the Developing World*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Armonk Press, 1997), pp. 19-23.

## The State and Arab Nationalism

Pan-Arabism (the term is used interchangeably here with Arabism and Arab nationalism to describe (*al-qawmiya al-Arabiyya*), is based on the concept of the Arab nation (*al-Umma al-Arabiyya*), which first appeared late in the nineteenth century.<sup>88</sup> The Arab nation is defined as the people of one language and one culture, i.e. the Arab people who inhabit the so-called Arab World. Yet, this single *Umma* has no one State that could be called the Arab nation-state. Nevertheless, Arab nationalism assumes uniqueness to the collectivity of Arab states and a trans-state identity within the Arab World.<sup>89</sup>

There is, however, a reverse side to the impact of Arab nationalism on the Arab states: the requirement that [Arab] regimes should represent a corporate national identity that expresses the relationship between population and territory.<sup>90</sup> Furthermore, as Illia Harik asserts, Arab Nationalism as an ideology, even more so than Islam, denies legitimacy to the [political] state system. According to Harik too, the true and natural state is considered to be the national state whose authority is coterminous with the nation, the nation being defined as the people of one language and culture *i. e.* the Arab people.<sup>91</sup> Now, as a conceptual tool, the relationship between the Arab state and Arab nationalism is problematic simply because Arab nationalism affects the sovereignty of the state and does not necessarily integrate the territory and the people. How this impacts upon the unmaking of the Arab system will be dealt with at a later stage in this study.

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<sup>88</sup> Fauour M., *The Arab World After the Desert Storm*, (Washington D.C.: The United States Institute of Peace Press 1993), p 56.

<sup>89</sup> Murphy, E. C., 'Legitimacy and Economic Reform in the Arab World', *The Journal of North African Studies*.3, 3 (Autumn 1998) 71-92, (74). On the impact of Islam on the Arab State System, see for example, Nazih, Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World*, (London & New York: Routledge, 1991); Sami Zubaida, *Islam, the People and the State*, (London, New York: Routledge 1989).

<sup>90</sup> Murphy, E., 'Legitimacy and Economic Reform in the Arab World', p. 74.

<sup>91</sup> Harik, 'The Origins of the Arab State, 16-20.

## The State and Islam

The basic association between the state and religion, if religion is involved in the constitution of the state, is authority. The traditional view of sovereignty in the Islamic world is that it is unitary and divine in nature.<sup>92</sup> It is primarily concerned with *power* and *authority* over the community and not over territory as such. Sovereignty within the ME is therefore completely unlike the European concept of territorial sovereignty,<sup>93</sup> something which contradicts the idea of the sovereign state which is politically recognisable by its territorial borders.

Islam, therefore, plays a vital role in reducing and hindering the authority and sovereignty of the state. In his full-length study of the relationship between Islam and the state, P. J. Vatikiotis argues that Islam rejects the idea of the nation-state and its secular conceptions of nationalism. He concludes that

Islam and nationalism are mutually exclusive terms. As a constructive loyalty to a territorially defined national group, nationalism has been incompatible with Islam in which the state is not ethnically or territorially defined, but is itself ideological and religious... the loyalties of the masses, as we can witness today from Iran to North Africa and from Central Asia to the Sudan, remain religious and local.<sup>94</sup>

However, my study is not interested in the relationship between the state and religion. This study treats the state, when Arab states are involved, as a political entity, which means that the state exists when it does not believe in moral or ethical rules. This however, prolongs the life of the state which in turn legitimises the existence of the state to become the authoritative decision-making institution with legitimate sovereignty.

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<sup>92</sup> Kurdi, A. A., *The Islamic State: a Study Based on the Islamic Holy Constitution* (London: Mansell, 1984) as cited in, Joffé, G. H., "Disputes Over State Boundaries in the Middle East and North Africa," in, Guazzone, L., (ed.), *The Middle East in Global Change: The Politics and Economics of interdependence versus Fragmentation* (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 60.

<sup>93</sup> Joffé, 'Disputes Over State Boundaries in the Middle East and North Africa' p.60.

<sup>94</sup> Vatikiotis, P. J., *Islam and the State*, (London: Routledge, 1987), pp. 42-44.



## **The Leader of the State**

I have focused initially on the concept of the state because this study is fundamentally concerned with the state's performance within a system. However, the nature of that system is dependent to a huge degree on personal politics: in the history of the Arab state, the leader is the main and primary actor in the making of political order and the International relations of the state. In this study, I shall argue that the leader of the state is the individual who not only makes the politics, but is also the centre of policymaking. The speech is mainly about leaders such as Hussein, Assad, Saddam, Mubarak, etc., leaders who have shaped the making of politics in the region – something which justifies my focus on individuals within this study.

## **The Driving Forces Behind Arab States Interactions**

Focusing on the argument of penetration and the invention of the ME, Roger Owen observes:

As far as the Middle East was concerned, it was generally the dominant colonial power that first created the essential features of a state, by giving it a capital, a legal system, a flag and internationally recognised boundaries. ...This gave many of the new states a somewhat artificial appearance.<sup>95</sup>

Apparent in Owen's argument is the idea of creation. Similarly, according to Bill and Springborg, the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire opened the door for a 'replacement' under French or British control. For them, 'the more artificial the country, the more difficult are the challenges of nation-and state-building.'<sup>96</sup> Therefore, along with the creation of Israel in the region, Arab states existed during the whole post-colonial period in terms of two opposite concepts: 'penetration' and 'pan-Arabism'. These, therefore, made up the structure or the 'ordering principles' on which the units interacted.

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<sup>95</sup> Owen, R., *State, Power, and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 13.

<sup>96</sup> Bill, J. & Springborg, R., *Politics in the Middle East*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., (New York: Harper Collins College Publishers, 1994), p. 39.

Up until the KC, two major issues influenced inter-Arab relations—Arabism and bipolarity. Arabism formed the basis on which Arab states interacted. Arabism, however, generated imbalance and conflict between Arab states. Viotti and Kauppi argue: ‘there is hierarchy of power in international politics, but there is not a hierarchy of authority’.<sup>97</sup> In the ME, there was a struggle for a hierarchy of *authority* until the early 1990s, which illustrates the absence of anarchy in the ME.<sup>98</sup>

Thus, there was a crucial and superior ‘above-state’ authority. The ‘problématique’ of the Arab state is the state itself as it seeks survival. Unstable and apprehensive relations between Arab states have dictated the scene since 1945. The more ‘*Arab*’ a leader was, the closer to the prophet he was considered to be.<sup>99</sup> On the other hand, when Arab states selectively came closer to each other, this had the effect of triggering more backing of Israel by the superpower(s) that were originally part of the policymaking in the region. By the same token, ‘when one Arab state’s power, vis-à-vis other Arab states, was ‘relatively’ on the rise, the shape of alliances changed in the region’.<sup>100</sup>

To pursue this further, the belief that Arab *states* in the ME derived their authority and legitimacy from the Arab *nation* is not fully justified.<sup>101</sup> There is no place to define the nation here, but most notably Odum and Moore have argued that ‘regionalism provides an economy for the decentralisation of political power’.<sup>102</sup> Yet, if Arab states had derived their power from Arabism, Arabism would simply have been a driving force towards unity, and the ME would not have been ‘politically’ invented. I suggest here that Arabism preceded insecurity in the region; according to Hudson, an ‘integrated

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<sup>97</sup> Viotti & Kauppi, *International Relations Theory*, 1993, p. 48.

<sup>98</sup> Giving an example of this argument, R. Hinnebusch argues that Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait was part of a bid to organise a new Iraq-led system based on a revival of pan-Arab nationalism, in Hinnebusch, Raymond, ‘Egypt, Syria and the Arab State System in the New World Order’, in H. A. Jawad, *The Middle East in the New World Order*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 165.

<sup>99</sup> Or he considered himself to be so.

<sup>100</sup> Walt, *The Origin of Alliances*, 1987, p. 87. In this context, Walt gave an example of the unity talks of the mid-1960s between Egypt, Syria, and Iraq and how these talks resulted in a new pattern of inter-Arab alignments.

<sup>101</sup> See Michael Barnett, ‘Institutions, Role, and Disorder: The Case of the Arab State System’, *International Studies Quarterly* 37 (September 1993), 271-96.

<sup>102</sup> Quoted in Russett B., *International Regions and the International System: A Study in Political Ecology* (Chicago: Rand and McNally & Company, second printing, 1969), p. 5.

group of people within a given territory were said to form a 'security-community'.<sup>103</sup> Arabism as an *ideology* failed to create the 'Arab security community' and failed to form an independent political *system*. However, Arabism had created a regional order of conflict within which the dominant type of interactions was a system. This system was in itself the ordering principle of the Arab regional order. In this context, Gregory Gause III argues:

It is a challenge to the very organising principle of the system- the sovereign state system bequeathed by European colonialism is at the heart of the instability and fractiousness that has characterised the interstate politics of the region since the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Most of the conflicts in the region-Arab-Israeli, inter-Arab, Arab-Iranian- can be understood only in the context of the incentives of powerful local leaders who have to appeal to such transitional platforms to advance their interests.<sup>104</sup>

In the same context, Ehteshami and Hinnebusch conclude that:

Global penetration and local subordination constitute a long-term cause of regional instability because they tend to de-legitimise local states and the regional state system generally. Popular resistance movements against foreign intervention have generated periodic waves of instability and given rise to revisionist states, which have threatened to upset the power balance.<sup>105</sup>

Both global penetration and local subordination in the ME were entirely formed and shaped within what Buzan has called 'regional security dynamics' during the era of the Cold War.<sup>106</sup> On the international level, however, bipolarity was considered a source of stability. Waltz emphasised that 'the bipolar structure of the international system was the reason for the absence of great power conflict since 1945.'<sup>107</sup> In the ME, bipolarity

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<sup>103</sup> Hudson, M., (ed.), *Middle East Dilemma: The Politics and Economics of Arab Integration* (London & New York: I. B. Taurus & Co. Ltd., 1999), p. 5. In the 1950s, Carl Deutsch underlined the importance of a core state in the development of what he termed "security community".

<sup>104</sup> Gause, G. III, *Systemic Approach to Middle East International Relations*, p. 27. For more on this see Bahgat Korany, 'The Arab World and the New Balance of Power in the New Middle East', in Hudson Michael, *Middle East Dilemma: the Politics and Economics of Arab Integration* (New York: I B Taurus, 1999).

<sup>105</sup> Ehteshami, A. & Hinnebusch, R., *Syria and Iran; Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System* (London & New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 10.

<sup>106</sup> Buzan, B., *People, States & Fear*, 1991, p. 204.

<sup>107</sup> Waltz, K., 'The Stability of Bipolar World', *Daedalus* 93 (1964) 881-909.

had a specific impact on the international politics of the ME. Two exegeses demonstrate that impact:

- (i) Bipolarity has hindered the establishment of a full integrated ME independent system within which interactions and relations of its units can be analysed as 'the' units of a system. The states in the ME from 1945, although participating in the non-alignment movement, tended to veer towards one of the superpowers. This had divided the ideologies and the alliances of these states, preventing them from having an independent attitude towards their own collective issues. From 1945-1991, however, the ME witnessed several wars. That is because it had no system of its own that could enforce constraint upon the states' behaviour in that region. Therefore, the end of the Cold war along with the KC brought change to the region by triggering the incentives for a Middle East System to generate.
- (ii) Bipolarity helped to uphold Israel in terms of alliances. Alliances in bipolarity 'seem to be held together by ideological glue, and are hierarchical, with each dominated by one superpower'.<sup>108</sup> As a result, some of the Middle Eastern states found in the ideologies of either superpower a driving force towards hegemonic orientation in the region.<sup>109</sup>

What one can conclude from this illustration is that no matter what the situation dictated, the final shape of interactions across Arab states had to emerge from one of the dimensions of regional order, which is characterised by the global penetration.

That being said, an analysis of the type of system existing in the ME necessitates a focus on issues of security, as this is the most notable feature of those interactions within the system. One of the main security dilemmas in the ME is at the state level. Put simply, the ME is a region whose states in the 1990s comprised different ideologies and different attitudes towards the West, specifically the USA, mostly having one religious and national background, which consideration has made the states themselves the

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<sup>108</sup> Smith & Hollis, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations*, p. 103.

<sup>109</sup> On the impact of bipolarity on the Middle East see Taylor, Alan, R., *The Superpowers and the Middle East* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1991); Garthoff, Raymond L., *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Regan* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1985).

source of their own insecurity. This means that some definitions of security<sup>110</sup> overlook the evidence suggesting that in some cases, national security is enforced first when security is a fundamental subject of the regime itself. The primary objective of regimes within Arab states is simply their own survival and continuity. Therefore, the Arab regimes typically associate themselves with the United States in order to ensure their own survival, on account of the political, military and economic backing which Washington provides. Thus, it is only appropriate to equate these regimes' primary national strategic objective as being pro-American, and subsequently, their co-operation and commitment to a common Arab cause is relegated to a secondary concern.

Consequently, interactions among states in the ME depend upon who first invented whom. That necessarily leads to a consideration of who allies with whom. Security in the region, therefore, does not depend upon the balance of power of the ME in the first stage, but on the external powers which helped to invent these states in the first place. Thus, 'much in the ME depends on the role of those outside powers.'<sup>111</sup> Similarly, the most sophisticated issue in the context of power distribution in the ME is not the question of who is the most powerful, but alternatively, who makes whom powerful? Here we are reminded of Britain at the onset of its colonisation enterprise. When the British found no Emirs or Shaikhs who could ally with them, they invented them.

### **Framework of Analysis**

During the course of this study I will be adopting a Neo-Realist approach to my study. There is a strong theoretical element within Neo-Realism, which is particularly pertinent to the study of Arab ME states, namely:

- i. Neo-Realism suggests that in order to understand the behaviour of the units, it is necessary to identify what units comprise the system, and to indicate the

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<sup>110</sup> Wheeler and Booth defined security dilemma as: ' A security dilemma exists when the military preparations of one state create an irresolvable uncertainty in the mind of another as to whether those preparations are for 'defensive' purposes only (to enhance its security in an uncertain world) or whether they are for offensive purposes (to change the status quo to its advantage). Nicholas J. W., & K. Booth, "The Security Dilemma," in J. Baylis & N. J. Rengger (eds.) *Dilemmas of World Politics; International Issues in a Changing World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p 29-32.

<sup>111</sup> Ehteshami, A., 'Security Structure in the Middle East: An Overview', in H. Jawad, *The Middle East in the New World Order*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 98.

comparative weight of systemic and sub-systemic causes.<sup>112</sup> This enables progression beyond a description of the system in order to investigate the relationship between the system as a whole and the units that make it up. Regarding the Arab ME states, this kind of analysis will enable this study to construct a coherent understanding of the relationship between the collective behaviour of the states and the system within which they exist. In this sense, Neo-Realism concludes that all units of the system function alike. This means that we do not have to study the behaviour of each unit to understand the system, but the so-called 'comparative weight of systemic and sub-systemic causes' helps us to understand the mechanisms of the relationship between the units themselves.

- ii. Neo-Realism considers the state as the principal actor in the system. It is true to say that the Arab state in the ME is the principal actor in shaping both the policies of the region and of the international relations of the region.
- iii. Neo-Realism contends that the behaviour of the state is determined by the structure of the system. The structure is the regional order itself in which Arab states operate and behave. Therefore, it will be clear, from Chapter Three onwards that an understanding of the behaviour of one or all of the actors collectively in the region is bound up with the understanding the structure itself. Neo-Realism contends that we are concerned not with the function of the units themselves because they all function the same, but that we are concerned with the distribution of the capabilities of these units. Therefore, any change in the relationship between one Arab Middle Eastern state with the outside world inherently affects the behaviour of other Arab states in the region.
- iv. Neo-Realism accepts all assumptions made by the Realists. One of these is that power is defined in terms of military capability only. And the ME is the highest or the most armed region in the world.

I shall not consider the other schools of thought in this study as a framework for analysis because of the evidential relevance of Neo-Realism to the analysis. It is only power that determines outcomes. The war on Iraq and the pressure on Syria and Iran in

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<sup>112</sup> See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 40-41.

the aftermath of the war demonstrate this. Pluralism is not relevant to my study because non-states actors in the ME play marginal roles where the state is the primary actor in policy-making. Therefore, from the beginning, Pluralist thinking does not serve the analysis of this study because it mainly focuses on the state as a unitary and primary actor in the international relations of the ME.

Globalism also does not serve my analysis. It is not economy that defines the relations between Arab states and the United States. It is also not economical factors on which inter-Arab relations are based. Regime survival is a critical issue in Arab politics and these regimes are Realists in a way in which they ally and/or bandwagon with the United States to survive. Therefore, historical analysis, as Globalists assume, is irrelevant to thinking of these states.

## **Summary**

An examination of the system of the Arab states of the ME in the period post-Kuwait Crisis cannot be undertaken using an historical lens, because events are still unfolding. This chapter, therefore, has been designed primarily to provide the appropriate tools of analysis, which will be used throughout this investigation. In it, I have aimed to provide a sound theoretical framework, which will prove invaluable as a means of constructing my argument in the coming chapters of the study. Explaining, for example, what constitutes the international system will shed light, as a theoretical foundation, on the discussion of the making or unmaking of the Arab system after the Kuwait Crisis. In this context, the Arab regional order in the post Kuwait Crisis was marked by major events like the peace process in the ME and the exclusion of Iraq from collective Arab policymaking. These major issues, however, are not ones I have chosen to theorise here, but will be amongst those which I will take into consideration in Chapter Three, using the theoretical concepts I have discussed above to shed light on the outcomes of the Kuwait Crisis.

Similarly, in my discussion of the constitution of the state and the form of interactions across Arab states in the ME, I have not attempted to theorise the issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Again, this is something that will be examined later in the study of the context of the dynamics of the peace process in the ME.

Finally, this chapter has been designed in order to provide all the building blocks upon which the entire thesis will rest. Its aim has been to provide a firm structure which will facilitate an analysis of all of the major issues pertaining to the period from the post-Kuwait Crisis, and will therefore serve to underpin the entire study.



## CHAPTER TWO

### Was There an Arab Regional System 1945-1990?

#### Literature Survey

##### Introduction

The formation of Arab regional politics in the ME since the end of Second World War plays an important role within the understanding of the regional politics of the 1990s. In view of this and as my thesis is mainly concerned with the Arab regional system after the KC, this chapter will provide a literature review of the period between 1945 and 1990. Although some of this literature offers an explicit discussion of the concept of 'system' and some does not, I will nevertheless consider it in the context of system analysis within this period. I will first offer an overview of the most pertinent literature, following which I will provide a hypothesis, which will facilitate access to the third chapter of this study.

In the context of the ME regional system, there are various works which have proved useful for an understanding of the concept, and I will outline their importance to my own thesis in greater detail below. Primarily, these are:

Leonard Binder (1958), *"The Middle East as a Subordinate Intentional System"*<sup>1</sup>

Bruce Maddy-Weitzmann (1993), *The "Crystallisation of the Arab State System 1945-1954"*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Binder, L., "The Middle East as a Subordinate International System", *World Politics* 10, 3, (April, 1958), 408-29.

<sup>2</sup> Maddy-Weitzmann, B., *The Crystallisation of the Arab State System 1945-1954*, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1993).

Malcolm Kerr's (1971), *The Arab Cold War: Gamal Abd Al-Nasser and his Rivals 1958-1970*<sup>3</sup>

Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki (eds.) (1984), *The Foreign Policy of Arab States: the Challenge of Change*.<sup>4</sup> Particularly vital to my study is Chapter Two, 'The Global System and Arab Foreign Policies: the Primacy of Constraints', by Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hillal Dessouki [et al]; and Chapter Three, 'The Arab State System: Pressures, Constraints, and Opportunities', by Paul Noble.

Fawaz Gerges (1994), *The Superpowers and the Middle East: Regional and International Politics 1955-1967*.<sup>5</sup>

Alan R. Taylor (1982), *The Arab Balance of Power*.<sup>6</sup>

P.J. Vatikiotis (1984), *Arab Regional Politics in the Middle East*.<sup>7</sup>

Carl L. Brown, (1984), '*International Politics of the Middle East*'<sup>8</sup>

Stephen Walt (1987), *The Origins of Alliances*.<sup>9</sup>

Bassam Tibi (1987), '*Regional Subsystems and World Order: The case of Inter-Arab State Relations 1967-1982*',<sup>10</sup>

Michael Barnett (1998), *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order*.<sup>11</sup>

Leonard Binder (1958), *The Middle East as a Subordinate International System*, published in the World Politics series.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Kerr, M., *The Arab Cold War: Gamal Abd Al-Nasser and His Rivals, 1958-1970*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

<sup>4</sup> Korany, B., & A. E. Dessouki, *The Foreign Policy of Arab States: the Challenge of Change* (Colorado & Oxford: Westview Press, 1991).

<sup>5</sup> Gerges, F., *The Superpowers and the Middle East: Regional and International Politics 1955-1967*, (Colorado & Oxford: Westview Press, 1994).

<sup>6</sup> Taylor, R. A., *The Arab Balance of Power* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1982).

<sup>7</sup> Vatikiotis, P.J., *Arab Regional Politics in the Middle East* (London & Sydney: Croom Helm, 1984).

<sup>8</sup> Brown, L. C., *International Politics of the Middle East*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press 1984).

<sup>9</sup> Walt, S., *The Origin of Alliances* (London & Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987).

<sup>10</sup> Tibi, B., *Regional Subsystems and World Order: The case of Inter-Arab State Relations 1967-1982*, British Society of Middle East Studies (BRISMES), Annual Meeting (Exeter, July, 1987).

<sup>11</sup> Barnett, M. N., *Dialogue in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

<sup>12</sup> Binder, L., The Middle East as a Subordinate International System, *World Politics* 10, 3 (April, 1958), 408-429.

## Was There an Arab Regional System 1945-90?

Binder defines the ME as the area from Libya to Iran, fringed by Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Maghreb. For Binder, the 'ingredients' of the system are the common membership of Arab states and Turkey in the Ottoman Empire, which had left these states with similar institutions.

Bruce Maddy-Weitzman (1993), *The Crystallisation of the Arab State System 1945-1954*<sup>13</sup> covers the period of 1945-54. This book is vital to my study inasmuch as it discusses the concept 'system' in a specific period. However, this also constitutes its downside, as the period it chooses to cover (1945-54) is relatively limited. Although the title of the book alludes to the 'crystallisation' of a system, Maddy-Weitzman does not offer a theoretical framework within his book to show the dynamic-theoretical process of system formation. Rather, he is very attentive to questions of historical specificity. Only at the end of the book, namely in the conclusion, does he mention that the Arab state system consisted of five central 'players' in the inter-Arab game during the first decade of the Arab League's existence.<sup>14</sup> For Maddy-Weitzman, the emergence of the Arab League in 1945 represents a watershed in the history of the ME. Concurrently, taking two points in one, he considers Arab nationalism as a factor that delegitimised the newly established Arab states of the League.<sup>15</sup>

For Maddy-Weitzman, the formative years of the Arab system are represented by the Arab League that came to be made up of sovereign independent states.<sup>16</sup> But, the crux of his argument lies at the heart of a dispute within the League<sup>17</sup> during the formative

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<sup>13</sup> Maddy-Weitzmann, *The Crystallisation of the Arab State System 1945-1954* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1993).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 180.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>17</sup> On political alliances and blocs formations within the Arab League, see Robert MacDonald, *The League of the Arab States: A Study of the Dynamics of Regional Organisation* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965).

years -- the rivalry between Iraq and Egypt.<sup>18</sup> Taking the balance of power as a norm to illustrate his argument, Maddy-Weitzman suggests that inter-Arab rivalry was first tested by the establishment of the state of Israel, a new state which emerged within the regional body and with which Arab states had to deal. This meant that there appeared a different dimension within conflictual relations.

The main 'test', as he calls it, to the conflictual nature of the Arab ME was represented by the Arab-Israeli conflict; as the author asserts, 'the struggle for Palestine thus served as a mobilising factor in inter-Arab politics.' Therefore, it is essential to consider the role of Israel, 'whose presence is necessary to a comprehension of the politics of the region in general'.<sup>19</sup> In this sense, it is worth mentioning at this point the argument of Malcolm Kerr, whose book, the *Arab Cold War*, will be discussed below. Kerr maintains that Arab rulers used the Arab-Israeli conflict as a stick with which to beat one another.<sup>20</sup> Hence it would be misleading to argue that the Palestine cause united the Arab states when they were divided on all else. As Kerr puts it:

It would be more accurate to say that when the Arabs are in a mood to co-operate, this tends to find expression in an agreement to avoid action on Palestine, but that when they choose to quarrel, Palestine policy really becomes a subject of dispute.<sup>21</sup>

However, for Maddy-Weitzman, within this conflictual environment, balance of power is similar to that of balance of interest in making the Arab system. But Maddy-Weitzman does not bring up the term 'interest' in a frame which could be directly understood as the interest of the state; instead, he brings it up by referring to a *raison d'individual*, which ultimately leads to the interest of the state.

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<sup>18</sup> Maddy-Weitzman offers a historical elaboration of the events in this period. He examines the relationship between Iraq and Transjordan on one hand and that between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria on the other. See Chapter Two, pp 25-55.

<sup>19</sup> Gerges, *The Superpowers and the Middle East*, p 11, 175-205. see also F. Gerges, "The Study of Middle East International Relations: A Critique", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 18, 2 (1992), pp. 208-220. In this context, Gerges is citing William Zartman, 'The Composition of Subordinate Systems', a paper presented at the annual meeting of the *American Political Science Association*, Chicago, 1974.

<sup>20</sup> Kerr, M., *The Arab Cold War*, 1971, p 61. Cited in Gerges, *The Superpowers and the Middle East*, p 11.

<sup>21</sup> Kerr, *The Arab Cold War*, p. 114, as cited in Gerges, *The Superpowers and the Middle East*, p 11.

From this point, he proceeds to argue that although the Arab League promoted Arab solidarity, it institutionalised Arab divisions,<sup>22</sup> using as an example of the formative years of rivalry between Iraq and Egypt. He points out how Nuri al-Sa'ed of Iraq in early December of 1945 threatened to withdraw, pulling with him the Hashemite Transjordan, from the Arab League due to the monopolisation of the League by Azzam and by Egypt.<sup>23</sup> This rivalry within the Arab regional order and within the Arab League was a character of the crystallising Arab system.

Maddy-Weitzman makes clear, however, that it was the absence of a central regional Arab power in the region, which led to the fluctuation of coalitions. What had crystallised in this period was a system that was state-centric. However, he does observe that the ideology of Arabism was the background to which all states subscribed. This, for example, had caused Jordan not to make a separate peace with Israel, had caused Iraq not to forge a collective security system with the Western powers, and had led to the formation of a grand coalition against Israel in 1948.<sup>24</sup>

Malcolm Kerr's (1971), *The Arab Cold War: Gamal Abd Al-Nasser and his Rivals 1958-1970*<sup>25</sup> constitutes one of the most important references for an understanding Arab politics. Here, Kerr admits that he does not expect there will be ever a 4<sup>th</sup> edition of his book since Nasser's disappearance removes the main character from a story which [he] relates in terms of personalities.<sup>26</sup>

As the title of this book suggests, it deals with the nature of the inter-Arab relations in the aforementioned period and shows the interplay of ideology and politics in Arab political affairs. Kerr announces in the preface of the book that his work has been undertaken to dispel two notions: the first is to refute the suggestion that Arab politics is a projection of decisions made in Washington, London, Moscow and Jerusalem. This is due, in Kerr's view, to the fact that the Arab State's political life has its own vitality. He

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<sup>22</sup> Maddy-Weitzmann, *The Crystallisation of the Arab System*, pp. 55-90, 175-181.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p 28.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 175-181.

<sup>25</sup> Kerr, M., *The Arab Cold War*. The first edition of this book was entitled *The Arab Cold War, 1958-1964: A Study of Ideology in Politics*.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. V.

also seeks to dispel another notion based on the conceptions of 'revolutionary' and 'conservative' ideologies, which account for inter-Arab politics. These concepts, for Kerr are mixed with personal ambitions, tactical convenience, and a capacity for worldly realism which the Arabs have often preferred to obscure behind their outward words and actions.<sup>27</sup>

However, the main issue within Kerr's agenda is his conclusion that since the end of the Second World War, there was an Arab popular political sentiment which was dominated by urgent appeals for Arab unity. He describes the rivalry between governments and parties as a political reality.<sup>28</sup> However, in the aforementioned period of study, he refers to Nasser as a pan-Arab leader whose leadership shaped the making of Arab politics in this period.

Kerr does not offer an analysis of the concept of system. The Arab Cold War for him explicitly represents what can be termed as an Arab system. Yet, Kerr's discussion is that the simple definition of an Arab Cold War is Arab rivalry in the Arab League -- the symbol of the system -- which was also the forum in which inter-Arab battles of that Arab Cold War were fought.

In sum, Kerr's argument focuses on the polarisation between conservative states (like Saudi Arabia, Libya until 1969, and Jordan) and reforming or radical states (like Egypt and Syria). There were no structural similarities between these states either, because the influence they left on the making of Arab politics was different. In other words, the Arab balance of power tends to follow ideological lines, which affected the making of the system itself.

The subsequent period is studied by Fawaz Gerges (1994), *The Superpowers and the Middle East: Regional and International Politics 1955-1967*<sup>29</sup> and covers, in his view, a period of conflict. This work focuses on relations between the superpowers and the Middle East from 1955 through 1967. To illuminate the nature of that relationship, Gerges analyses the major influential events of this period such as the Baghdad pact, the

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., pp. 1-23

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 41, 68-73.

<sup>29</sup> Gerges, *The Superpowers and the Middle East, 1994.*

Suez crisis, and the U.S. intervention in Lebanon ending with the Arab-Israeli war of June 1967. Gerges's main focus is the Cold War and its impact on Arab politics.

Gerges begins by discussing the international relations of the eastern Arab states with the United States and the Soviet Union, noting that the ME, as all other regions of the world, was unable to escape the power struggle between these two superpowers.

As far as the Arab states in the ME are concerned, Gerges considers the existing of a strong pattern of linkages and interactions between Arab states in the period between 1950 and 1960. He considers these to form a core in the Arab Mashriq - Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Lebanon, Yemen, and the Palestinian people.<sup>30</sup>

In the first chapter of his book, Gerges considers the Arab world as a regional 'subsystem'; in other words, he does not refer to inter-Arab interactions as an independent 'Arab system'. By restricting his study to the ME, he considers two criteria which contribute to an understanding of the making of the Arab ME subsystem: first the term 'communality' as a means of examining the ME as an entity. For Gerges, Mauritania, for example, has not much in common with Lebanon or with Jordan; similarly he questions what kinds of relationships exist between North Africa and the Arab east. Tenuous ones at best, he suggests. Thus, the key to the delineation of a Middle Eastern or an Arab subsystem is the pattern of close linkages and interactions among members.<sup>31</sup>

The second criterion Gerges follows to delineate the Arab subsystem is to consider regional subsystem definitions. Drawing from several analysts, he argues that the requirements of 'necessary and sufficient conditions' to the existence of subsystem include four common elements or criteria:<sup>32</sup>

- (i) There are at least two and probably more actors.
- (ii) These units share common attributes and properties, and they interact regularly and intensively, thus establishing a pattern of relationships and linkages among

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 1994, p 8.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 1994, p 7-8.

<sup>32</sup> Gerges, *The Superpowers and the Middle East*, p 6. See Chapter One, p 18, n. 19.

themselves. As a result, changes in some parts of the subsystem produce changes in other parts.

- (iii) The subsystem is recognised by internal and external players as a distinctive theatre of operation.
- (iv) The actors are generally proximate.

Gerges considers the first and the second criteria as having been fulfilled as far as the making of an Arab regional subsystem is concerned. Yet, in the context of the latter two elements, he draws upon the argument of Paul Noble to support his view. Noble noted that a sense of community encouraged the growth not only of translational social groups and cross-frontier political alliances, but also of translational political associations, such as the Ba'ath party and the Moslem brotherhood. Because of these links, Noble adds, the political system of Arab states has been closely interconnected and permeable.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, in the context of proximity, Gerges considers the level of interactions among the Arab members of the core as very high. Notably, this interaction was not exclusively positive and co-operative: on the contrary, it was often negative and conflictual.<sup>34</sup> In addition to this, like Maddy-Weitzman and Korany and Dessouki, Gerges also considers the Arab-Israeli conflict as being a standard norm within an understanding of inter-Arab politics and thus, to coin Gerges's argument, the form of their 'sub'-system.

For Gerges, the Baghdad pact is a test of the relationship between Arab members of the core. His assumption in this regard is that the creation of a regional power in the region in this period was a 'mark' of the system. For example, Iraq, as an Arab country, signed a treaty with Turkey, which was seen by Cairo and Saudi Arabia as a challenge to their security. Gerges identifies this as a political and ideological 'showdown' in the Arab subsystem. Subsequently, Gerges points out that by signing the pact, Nuri of Iraq hoped not only to cement his traditional alignment with the British but also to establish a productive relationship with the United States, the new superpower of the Western world. He also planned to obtain Western aid and use the new partnership with Turkey,

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<sup>33</sup> Gerges, *The Superpowers and the Middle East*, p 8. See also Paul Noble, *Regional Arrangements and the Management of Conflict under the United Nations: the Case of the Arab System*, PhD thesis, McGill University, 1972. In my thesis, discussed below, I will also refer to Paul Noble, 'The Arab State System: Pressures, Constraints, and Opportunities', in Korany, B., & Dessouki, A. E., *The Foreign Policy of Arab States: the Challenge of Change* (Boulder, San Francisco & Oxford: Westview Press, 1991).

<sup>34</sup> Gerges, *The Superpowers and the Middle East*, p. 30.



Britain, and the United States to create a new regional order in which Iraq would play the key role. The absence of Egypt from this proposed order would have enabled Nuri to assume a leadership position.<sup>35</sup> Egyptian-Iraqi rivalry over the pact should be seen as a struggle for the soul of the Arab world, because the relationship of Arab states with the outside world was determined, to a large extent, by their positions within the regional subsystem and by the necessities of local alliances.<sup>36</sup> This for Gerges illustrates the form of the Arab regional subsystem during that period during which time Nasser was the centre of gravity in the making of the regional order.<sup>37</sup>

Alan R. Taylor's *The Arab Balance of Power*<sup>38</sup> (1982) presents an account of the Arab system and the course of inter-Arab politics from the foundation of the Arab League in 1945 to 1982, the year of publishing the book. Here Taylor defines the 'balance of power' as referring to the patterns of equilibrium, dislocation, and readjustment which unfolded in the context of interdependence among the Arab states following the foundation of the Arab League. The term 'Arab system' is to be understood as an interactive relationship in which the component countries became intensely involved with each other in terms of alignment, rivalry, or the perception of common goals. Because the system was highly diversified, the evolution of inter-Arab politics was inevitably accompanied by a preoccupation with the balance of respective interests.<sup>39</sup>

Taylor, however, does concede that there is an autonomous Arab system. Similar to Maddy-Weitzman's approach, Taylor considers the historical events which shaped the making of an Arab system. However, Taylor does not directly conclude that it is the 'countries' that make up the system, but the 'regions'-- the Fertile Crescent, the Arabian Peninsula, the Nile Valley, and the Maghreb. Consequently, he argues that 'regionalism...had been the basic orientation of Arab politics for the past sixty years.'<sup>40</sup> In his book, which consists of eight chapters and twenty-one appendices, his study of

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 29-30.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 30, pp. 101-135.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 101-112.

<sup>38</sup> Taylor, R. A., *The Arab Balance of Power*, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1982).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., pp. XI-XII.

<sup>40</sup> Taylor, *The Arab Balance of Power*, p 109.

the system is based on the notion -- although he does not make use of the *term* 'notion' -  
- of regional order.

Taylor divides the *origins* of the Arab system based on regions into two -- namely, Egypt and the Fertile Crescent. When considering Egypt, he goes back to the doctrine of Islamic reform, based on the idea of using the first Muslim generation or the Salafiyya<sup>41</sup> movement.<sup>42</sup> Concurrently, he considers the emergence of Egyptian nationalism on the eve of the British occupation in 1882. This movement, argues Taylor, was another pillar of the formation of the Arab system. However, what was distinctive about it was its focus on a 'mystical attachment' to the land of Egypt, and Islam was subordinated to the status of a facet of national culture.<sup>43</sup> In the Fertile Crescent, the rise of Syrian nationalism as a reaction to the Young Turks and to the 'Ottomanisation' of regional politics in the Fertile Crescent is the other part of the emerging Arab system.<sup>44</sup>

For Taylor, the establishment of the Arab League in 1945 also represented the victory of regionalism over universalism in the dynamics of inter-Arab politics. Although the League was intended to provide the institutional basis of a comprehensive system of inter-Arab co-operation, it actually became a vehicle through which latent rivalries were brought to the surface.<sup>45</sup> On the other hand, it was viewed as a means of achieving mutually beneficial modes of co-operation, whilst at the same time maintaining the stability of the established political structure and creating the facade of a movement toward unity.<sup>46</sup>

Considering the system as comprised of rival tensions, specifically between the Fertile Crescent and Egypt, the regional structure of the Arab world lay at the root of the

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<sup>41</sup> Salafiyya refers to the *al-Salaf al-Salih* (the venerable ancestors). Fundamental to this thought was a belief that modern Islam was capable of reconstructing the solidarity that characterised the age of the *Salf*. In this respect, the movement was pan-Islamist.

<sup>42</sup> Taylor, *The Arab Balance of Power*, p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> The leading figures of this movement were for example, Ahmad Urabi Pasha, Mustafa Kamil, who who believed that Egyptian nationality predated Islam and that there was a bond of peoplehood between the Muslims and the Coptic Christians. On this see Taylor, *The Arab Balance of Power*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 10-13.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24. This argument is similar to that of Malcolm Kerr. See Kerr's argument offered above.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21-23.

emerging struggle for power.<sup>47</sup> This had a major impact on the formation of the Arab League, specifically on the founding countries of the League, and thus on the formation of the system. Another factor which contributes to the making of the system, in Taylor's view, is the rise of the Saudi factor in Arab politics. These factors, along with their rivalry with the Hashemites in Transjordan and Iraq, affected the early formation of the Arab regional system. Consequently, 'soon after the formation of the league, two competitive blocs were established within the Arab system'.<sup>48</sup> Further, Taylor argues that the emergence of Abd al-Nassir as a charismatic leader after he moved from the arms deal with the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia in 1955 to the Suez crisis in 1956, and, of major concern, the Arab policies he adopted, ultimately transformed the structure of the Arab system.<sup>49</sup>

However, the rivalry between the Fertile Crescent and the Nile Valley surfaced when the Baghdad pact was in the process of formation. The rally for Syria as the key to the Arab balance of power in that period, led to a new balance of power in the region, symbolised by the establishment of the United Arab Republic (UAR) 1958-1961.<sup>50</sup>

The watershed in the Arab system, however, was the 1967 war because it enlarged the scope of the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>51</sup> Drawing on Kerr here, Taylor argues that the war raised the question of whether a military solution to the problem of Israel was still valid. Both Abd al-Nassir and King Hussein in particular began to think in terms of political settlement with Israel.<sup>52</sup> Thus, the war altered the structure and character of the Arab system, which had been in the process of disintegration since the beginning of the decade. In this context, he concludes that the June 1967 war changed the shape of Arab politics:

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 25. Taylor further argument is that the other establishing countries of the Arab League -- Lebanon and Yemen -- did not play significant role in inter-Arab relations at this stage. See pp. 25-26.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>50</sup> Taylor, on the argument about the establishment of the United Arab Republic draws from Kerr's *The Arab Cold War*, 1971.

<sup>51</sup> Taylor, *The Arab Balance of Power*, p 43.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p.43. Kerr, *The Arab Cold War*, pp. 129-155.

By 1970 Egypt had abandoned revolutionism in favour of a working relationship with Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Syria under al-Asad was moving toward a rapprochement with Cairo, as was Qadhafi's Libya. Iraq retained a revolutionary orientation but was still isolated from the main currents of inter-Arab politics. South Yemen was even more radical; North Yemen was drawing closer to Saudi Arabia. Of the other states that had joined the system, Morocco and the Gulf sheikhdoms were conservative, Tunisia and Mauritania moderate, and the Sudan and Algeria to the left. Finally, the PLO had become an entity in its own right and posed a challenge to virtually all Arab regimes in its basic rejection of the status quo.<sup>53</sup>

At this point, it is useful to introduce the argument of Raymond Hinnebusch, who considers that the Arab system first emerged as an autonomous entity in the 1950s under Egyptian leadership. Hinnebusch argues that the 1967 war destroyed the Egypt-centred Arab system, but that in the early 1970s, a new system, which Ajami called the 'Arab triangle', emerged from the crucible of the 1973 war.<sup>54</sup> This system, however, Hinnebusch maintains, collapsed when Sadat broke Arab lines in pursuit of peace with Israel, setting Egypt and Syria at odds.<sup>55</sup> Similarly, using the term 'new pragmatism', Taylor focuses on this 'trilateral alliance' as the product of a pragmatic trend in Arab politics which comprises the key grouping within the Arab system. The states of this alliance remained the dominant force in the system from 1971 until al-Sadat concluded the interim Sinai agreement with Israel in September 1975.<sup>56</sup>

At this point the Arab system entered a new phase; in the view of Taylor, the Egyptian unilateral peace agreement with Israel instituted the 'polarisation' of Arab politics. The Arab system was split into several blocs with differing positions on the new thrust of

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<sup>53</sup> Taylor, *The Arab Balance of Power*, p. 47.

<sup>54</sup> The Arab triangle for Ajami is Egypt and Syria plus Saudi Arabia. Egypt and Syria, had a common need to capture their territories from Israel, launched the war of 1973 backed up by Saudi Arabia orchestrating the oil weapon. On this see F. Ajami, "Stress in the Arab Triangle", *Foreign Policy* (winter, 1977-78); For an analysis of the evolution of the Middle East Regional System see Raymond Hinnebusch, "The Middle East Regional System," in Hinnebusch and Ehteshami (eds.) *The Foreign Policies of the Middle Eastern States*, (London, New York: Lynne Rienner 2002).

<sup>55</sup> Hinnebusch, R., "Egypt, Syria and the Arab State System in the New World Order," in H. Jawad, *The Middle East in the New World Order*, 2d ed. (London: McMillan Press, 1997), pp. 162-81. B. Tibi, "Structural and Ideological Change in the Arab subsystem Since the Six Day War," in L. Yehuda & A. M. Battah, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Two Decades of Change*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998), pp. 147-63.

<sup>56</sup> Taylor, *The Arab Balance of Power*, pp. 67-74.

Egyptian policy.<sup>57</sup> Most pointedly, at this stage Taylor considers Egypt as being out of the system -- something which disrupts the whole understanding of the system:

The idea of Iraqi-Syrian unity<sup>58</sup> is logical in terms of geographic and economic affinities, but it had always been opposed by Egypt because such a state would have rivalled Egypt for hegemony in the Arab world. Once al-Sadat has withdrawn his country from the Arab system, however, it was natural that Iraq and Syria gravitated toward each other.<sup>59</sup>

Here, Taylor refutes the concept of the hostility and rivalry in Arab politics as forming a system. In turn, this explodes the whole idea of a system as he includes the Maghreb within the system without explaining the impact of that region upon the making of the system itself. Yet, a consideration of Egypt's peace with Israel as a withdrawal from the Arab system poses the idea that the Arab system for Taylor merely means Arab cooperation. The truth is, however, that although Egypt signed that peace deal with Israel, it nevertheless remained central to the making of Arab politics because there was an anti-Egyptian bloc formed with Syria playing a leading role. This serves to exhibit the major impact of Egypt's role in the making or unmaking of the system.

Meanwhile, for Taylor, the outcome and the major shape of Arab politics was polarisation, as suggested above. There was an Iraq-Saudi-Jordanian axis, Syrian-Libyan Counter-axis, which was followed by the Iraq-Iran war. This, in turn, exacerbated the polarisation of the Arab system, which had commenced with al-Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977.<sup>60</sup>

The seventh chapter of Taylor's book briefly discusses the regional disputes considering the Western Sahara dispute, the North and South Yemen dispute, and The Red Sea and the Horn of Africa. Taylor's justification for considering the latter (the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa) and Somalia which was admitted to membership in 1974, is mainly

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., pp. 73-76.

<sup>58</sup> This refers to the Iraqi-Syrian rapprochement in the aftermath of al-Sadat's peace deal with Israel.

<sup>59</sup> Taylor, *The Arab Balance of Power*, p 78.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., pp. 73-96.

because they are predominantly Arab, except for Ethiopia. Consequently, Taylor argues, international developments in the region affected the Arab balance of power.<sup>61</sup>

Thus, for Taylor, regionalism is the source of Arab disunity.<sup>62</sup> The Arab system became operative in 1945, since when the member states have been involved in a series of rivalries over the question of leadership. The most prominent of these was the struggle for hegemony between Egypt and the Fertile Crescent. In the 1970s, a variety of trans-regional alignments emerged because of the diffusion of assets and influence. However, the competitive nature of inter-Arab politics remained unchanged.<sup>63</sup>

Finally, in the last chapter of the book entitled *The Arab Dilemma*, Taylor considers the Iranian revolution as having had a destabilising effect on the Arab system. For Taylor, this constitutes a domestic pressure represented by fundamental Islam, writing as he was in 1982 at the height of the impact of the revolution.

Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hilal Dessouki *et al.* (1984)<sup>64</sup>, *The Foreign Policy of Arab States: the Challenge of Change*. This study also provides a useful insight into Arab politics during this period. Of particular help is Chapter Two, 'The Global System and Arab Foreign Policies: the Primacy of Constraints', written by Bahgat Korany and Ali E. Hilal Dessouki.

The emphasis of Korany and Dessouki in studying the Arab system is on the dialectics between the global system on the one hand and the Arab regional system on the other. At the onset of Chapter Two, 'The Global System and Arab Foreign Policies: the Primacy of Constraints', they argue that the Arab system is subordinated to the global one. This subordination has increased remarkably because the Arab system is fragmented and less effective at the international level.<sup>65</sup> Before proceeding further with

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<sup>61</sup> Taylor considers the primary destabilising factors during the 1960s and 1970s had been the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia and the involvement of the Soviet Union in the affairs of these two countries, *The Arab Balance of Power*, p 105.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 113-115.

<sup>64</sup> Korany, B., & , A. E. Dessouki, "The Global System and Arab Foreign Policies: the Primacy of Constraints," in Korany and Dessouki (eds.), *The Foreign Policy of Arab States: the Challenge of Change* (Boulder, San Francisco & Oxford: Westview Press, 1991).

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

their discussion, however, they offer a definition of the global system: 'we mean the pattern of interactions among international actors, which take place according to an identifiable set of rules.'<sup>66</sup> However, unlike other respected scholars in this chapter, by international actors they mean both states and non-state actors; OPEC for example is considered as an actor.<sup>67</sup>

Korany and Dessouki consider the Arab world as part of the Third world. The Arab world possesses several common elements that predominate over inter-Arab variations and make this group distinct entity within the larger Third World. These features, they conclude, include an Islamic component, cultural homogeneity, concentration of relevant resources, and the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>68</sup>

Yet, the impact of the Islamic component on the foreign policy of the Arab states and thus on the making of their system is that some governments might be pushed by Islamic groups to adopt 'Islamic foreign policy'.<sup>69</sup> It is the same with cultural homogeneity which is embedded in pan-Arab ideology. This ideology considers the division of the Arab world into separate states as an aberration resulting from 'foreign designs'. Therefore, they see 'enthusiasm' of Arab masses about the UAR (1958-1961) as the confirmation of both the intense role of the masses in the making of Arab politics and the degree of homogeneity in the Arab system. In this context they argue that 'almost, inter-Arab relations are not really foreign relations but part of the extended family instead. Thus Arab leaders tend to talk directly to the citizens of other Arab states'.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, 'Arab homogeneity has led to occasional confrontation with the big powers because the latter are concerned over the potential emergence of a unified Arab state that could constitute an effective barrier to their influence in the region and their desire to control Arab resources'.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>69</sup> Korany and Dessouki gives an example of the secularist Saddam Hussein's emphasis on jihad against the coalition forces following the invasion of Kuwait, *ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp. 30-32.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., pp. 33-34.

For these authors, too, the Arab system is unified on the issue of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. 'The perception of the Palestinian problem and of Western policy towards the Arabs is the major reason that Arab nationalists in the mid-1950s refused participation in Western alliances and adopted a policy of nonalignment.'<sup>72</sup> However, the huge degree of intervention by big powers affected the Arab system; to the majority of international actors, the global system presents an arena of both constraints and opportunities. In the case of the Arab countries, the constraints outnumbered the opportunities. Korany and Dessouki illustrate this point using the Arab-Israeli conflict. They argue that Arab-Israeli relations in the last thirty-five years have cost the Arab Middle East six wars. This led to militarised Arab-Arab relations.<sup>73</sup> The issue of militarization of the system affected the making of alliances in the ME. For example, by the early 1970s, Egypt had changed its dominant international partner by establishing close military and economic co-operation with the Soviets.

In sum, Korany and Dessouki's argument is based on hegemony, which is rooted in the system itself: "nothing other than the system counts in the making of a country's foreign policy." As they consider examples of the forming process of the Arab system since the late 1940s, they argue that interactions between national capabilities and dispositions on the one hand, and existing systemic structures on the other, determine a country's foreign policy. From this angle, the Arab system, to the date of writing their book, is a product of the global constraints and certain internal Arab dynamics which made that system.<sup>74</sup>

Paul Noble, 'The Arab State System: Pressures, Constraints, and Opportunities',<sup>75</sup> Chapter Three in Korany and Dessouki, *The Foreign Policy of Arab States*. Here Noble focuses on the Arab regional system in what he called the 'core area' or the 'eastern Arab world'. In a footnote, he concludes that the eastern Arab world includes Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the Palestinian community, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>73</sup> Paul Noble in the same sense, in the same book, describes this as the militarization of Arab foreign policy. See Noble "The Arab system, Pressure, Constraints, and Opportunities," in Korany B., & A. E Dessouki (eds.), *et al. The Foreign Policy of Arab States: The Challenge of Change* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1991), pp. 49-102.

<sup>74</sup> Korany and Dessouki, *The Global System*, pp.30-36.

<sup>75</sup> Noble, "The Arab System", in Korany B., & A. E Dessouki (eds.), *et al. The Foreign Policy of Arab States: The Challenge of Change*, 1991, pp 49-102.



remaining states of the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>76</sup> Notably, he divides these states to two flanks: the east flank, which he associates with the Arab-Iranian relations, and the west flank, which he associates with Arab-Israeli relations.

The norms he sets to delineate an Arab system are twofold: there are domestic settings - what he calls 'unit properties' -- and 'relational properties', or the degree of homogeneity and interconnectedness. For Noble, the unit properties are the domestic developments within Arab states, which are similar. These developments are first the increasing domestic political awareness amongst the peoples of these countries, which resulted in the emergence of sharp ideological cleavages during the 1950s and 1960s. As Noble asserts: 'These developments altered the international position and behaviour of members of the Arab system'.<sup>77</sup> He also suggests that the impact of these issues on the making of the system is that they influenced the state legitimacy in the early years of system's formation.

The sense of Arab identity was strong throughout the 1950s and 1960s. This was represented by Arab cultural homogeneity. Noble attributes this to the intensity of the links between system members, which helped to form the system as a 'body'; linguistic and cultural homogeneity contributed to the development of strong political links at both state and societal level.<sup>78</sup>

Notably during this period, power was not diffused but concentrated. Egypt's vast superiority, compared with the other members of the system, represented the pronounced power in the regional order. Therefore, the Arab system in the 1950s and 1960s stood between an unbalanced multipower system and a one-power system.<sup>79</sup> In this sense, Noble alludes to the high degree of political shape of the regional power and thus the regional order. For the decade prior to 1967, inter-Arab relations had been marked by the conflict between progressive regimes with strong anti-Western bias and conservative regimes with close ties to the Western powers.<sup>80</sup> Nasser's presence in the

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p 93, n. 3.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p 50.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., pp. 52-56, 56.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., pp. 80-81.

political arena ensured that the conservative regimes did not manage to form a cohesive bloc.

At the same time, however, Egypt's military and economic capabilities provided only a limited basis of power. Yet, in the 1970s and 1980s, important changes took place in both the basis and distribution of power. With regard to the basis of power, as Noble argues, there was an increase in the importance of economic power, provided primarily by means of the Arab oil. In turn, this changed the international relations of the system itself. This became the new capacity to exert pressure on the Western powers in support of Arab interest.<sup>81</sup> The most striking fact provided by Noble about the system is that while the material capabilities were becoming more significant, political capabilities declined in importance.<sup>82</sup>

Noble argues that what distinguishes the Arab system is the huge intensity of interaction among its members. During the 1950s and 1960s, 'the Arab world constituted a revolutionary intentional system'.<sup>83</sup> The leader in the system in this period -- Egypt -- posed a threat to other members of the system, which led to a conflict of status and influence. Therefore, Noble argues that Egypt was by far the greatest source of disturbance in this sphere; from 1955 on Nasser openly sought hegemony.<sup>84</sup>

The nature of conflict amongst members of the system affected their inter-relations and affected their relations with the outside major powers. On one hand, from the mid 1950s on, the differences between Arab states over their relations with the Western powers intensified as the Western powers sought to strengthen their presence in the face of growing Soviet involvement in the ME. On the other hand, the opening conflict, or the Cold War impact, between the superpowers towards regional conflicts (e.g. the Arab-

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>82</sup> Similar to this argument is that of F. Ajami, *End of Arabism*, pp 359-368. Also similar is that of Dessouki, "New Arab Order," in Kerr, *Rich and Poor States*. Korany discusses the shift of power taking Saudi Arabia as a case study: Korany, *Petro-puissance et système mondial. Le cas de l'Arabie Saoudite*, *Etudes Internationales* 10, 4 (1979).

<sup>83</sup> Noble, Paul, The Arab System, in Korany & Dessouki, (eds.), *The Arab Foreign Policy of Arab States*, 1991, p. 73.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., pp. 73-74.

Israeli conflict and Lebanese conflict) led to the increase in polarisation between regional states.<sup>85</sup>

Added to this environment is the impact of Iran on the Arab system. Noble tends to focus on the impact of Iran on the making of the system only after the 1979 revolution. This new dimension of conflict added to the pressure already imposed upon the Arab system by the Arab-Israeli one. In particular, Israel posed a territorial and military-security threat and Iran constituted an ideological and internal-security threat. This type of threat led to the militarization of foreign policy.<sup>86</sup>

The shift from political warfare to diplomacy during the 1970s was a result of the existing of a sole regional power in the system. Diplomacy means for Noble, in this context, the hardening of the Arab state. As the system became less revolutionary, rigid lines of division were softened in the system.

From the late 1970s on situations worsened. Members of the system on the western flank of the core area were confronted with an overtly expansionist Israel. Israeli policies and behaviour not only endangered the security, territorial integrity, and even national integrity of these states but also threatened to reduce them to a subordinate and dependent position. The members lying on the eastern flank faced the threat of a new revolutionary Iran. This tended to accentuate the fragmentation of the system which persisted and became intensified.<sup>87</sup>

In sum, Noble's argument considers that the events of specific periods affected the making of the system itself, and that there is in existence an independent Arab system with specific dynamics.

P.J. Vatikiotis's *Arab Regional Politics in the Middle East (1984)*,<sup>88</sup> is divided into three parts: Part Two of the book focuses on inter-Arab relations. Regional politics are sub-sectioned within this part.

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., pp. 75-76.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., pp. 88-89.

<sup>88</sup> Vatikiotis, P.J., *Arab Regional Politics in the Middle East* (London & Sydney: Croom Helm, 1984).

Vatikiotis, along with many other scholars, emphasises the rivalry in Arab politics. He divides inter-Arab relations after the Second World War into four periods of study: 1948-58; 1958-67; 1967-73; from 1973.<sup>89</sup> In studying the actors in these periods, he considers the Fertile Crescent, The Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf, and Egypt.

Vatikiotis argues that in the 1950s and 1960s, inter-Arab relations oscillated from consensus to disagreement, especially under Nasser's Pan-Arab or radical Arab leadership. This period was characterised by a flexible system of short-lived alliances. These shifts personalised foreign policies. Equally significant was the penetration of inter-Arab politics by external influences.

The war of 1967 undermined Egypt's role in Arab politics. Vatikiotis argues that the Khartoum Arab Summit Conference of that year signalled a historic compromise between radicals and conservatives (Egypt and Saudi Arabia).<sup>90</sup> Similar to the argument of Kerr, Vatikiotis considers that the death of Nasser in 1970 left a vacuum in the leadership in Arab politics.

Alongside this remarkable change in Arab politics, Vatikiotis argues that there was a devaluation of ideological Arabism and the promotion of state interest. There emerged an Arab solidarity and Arab co-operation to replace Arab unity. Therefore, this new situation itself explains the Arab Cold War, a new pragmatic Arabism and the de-ideologisation of Arab relations.<sup>91</sup>

In addition to this, the 1973 war marked the emergence of oil-producing countries as a new variable in the making of Arab regional order. This made the Gulf a new centre of political gravity. However, most noticeably from 1973-1977, the Arab world was under the umbrella of Cairo-Riyadh axis. The significance of this in making the Arab system an international system was the continuous role that Egypt played in governing the making of Arab politics.

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p. 161.

New arrangements in the shifting of Arab alliances emerged after 1979, where there was a brief triangular relationship between Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Algeria. There was an Arab alliance between Iraq and Saudi Arabia which was occasioned by their common interest in the security of the Gulf and the threat from the Iranian revolution.<sup>92</sup>

It can be seen, therefore, that Vatikiotis concedes the existence of an Arab system. However, his study follows a traditional methodological approach of offering the events and their causes, and fails to provide a theoretical framework to understand the mechanisms of the existing system. The historical listing of events gives a broad framework to the book.

Carl L. Brown, (1984), *International Politics of the Middle East*,<sup>93</sup> includes all the states whose territory was once under Ottoman control and all the great powers. Brown's explanation of the functions of the system is based on what he terms as an 'Ottoman political culture' inherited by those states. Therefore, Turkey and Israel are in the system, but Iran and Morocco are not.<sup>94</sup>

The 'rules of the Eastern Question game' is a diplomatic issue for Brown: he notices that Middle East system is highly penetrated by outside great powers, that there is an emphasis on reactive politics, and a zero-sum mentality occupies the players' outlook. Brown 'diagnoses' this issue as 'homeostasis', which means the ability of any one actor to impose its will on the region.<sup>95</sup> This, in his view, is due to the fact that there is no single power to achieve hegemony in the region. However, the springboard of Brown's argument is that diplomatic political culture inherited from the Ottoman Empire.<sup>96</sup>

Bassam Tibi (1987), *Regional Subsystems and World Order: The case of Inter-Arab State Relations 1967-1982*.<sup>97</sup> Tibi considers the concept 'subsystem' as a viable

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 163.

<sup>93</sup> Brown, L. C., *International Politics of the Middle East*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press 1984).

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., pp. 7-11.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-18.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., pp. 11-14, 18.

<sup>97</sup> Tibi, B., *Regional Subsystems and World Order: The case of Inter-Arab State Relations 1967-1982*, British Society of Middle East Studies (BRISMES), Annual Meeting (Exeter, July, 1987).

methodological option for analysing political changes in world regions. As a consequence, he employs this concept in the study of the historical period of the ME between 1967 and 1982.<sup>98</sup> Here, Tibi argues that the war of 1967 launched a new period, which had ended, however, by 1982, because that year “marks the end of the oil age in the Arab subsystem of world order.”<sup>99</sup>

However, Tibi concludes that the regional order in the ME cannot be understood as an outcome inter-state interaction within a regional subsystem. There is no such Arab Society, or Arab World in his view; he argues that

It is simply wrong to talk about a single ‘Arab society as many Arab writers do or about an Arab world of its own, as Western analysts mostly do. We rather talk about a system of states with a regional setting, a system with great exposure to those external powers seeking for allies or proxies for imposing and promoting their interests with the assistance of local actors.<sup>100</sup>

The criteria he employs for defining and delimiting the ME as a regional subsystem are “structural interconnectedness” and the “density of interaction” (co-operation, integration, as well as discord). He considers the Arab states of the ME plus Iran, Turkey, and Israel as making up the members of the system.

Tibi considers that the June war of 1967 led to the destruction of Egyptian military power and the Nasserite experiment as well. Thereafter, a new regional order emerged, in which the core of the Arab system shifted from the centre of the revolution to the centre of wealth. Saudi Arabia thus started to replace Egypt in the system of Arab inter-state relations.<sup>101</sup>

Tibi argues that the rise of political Islam, which culminated in the Iranian revolution in 1979, characterised the 1970s. For him, the emergence of political Islam has become a salient feature in the domestic policies and in the regional inter-state relations in the ME.

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>101</sup> Tibi, *Regional Subsystems and World Order*, p. 6.

Finally, Tibi characterises the system in this period as diffuse, which in turn destabilised the region during the period of study. For him, it was a system without a centre. The 'age of oil' during the period of 1967-1982 was characterised by the lack of hope, which is why there was a resort to political Islam, and this has had an impact on the regional order as a whole.<sup>102</sup>

The first outstanding Arabic contribution on the subject was of Jamil Matar and Ali al-Din Hilal Dessouki, *al-Nizam al-iqlimi al-Arabi [The Arab Regional System]*.<sup>103</sup> This book analyses inter-Arab relations from a regional system perspective. In defining an Arab system, the authors base their argument on the understanding of the Arab nation. This leads them to reject the inclusion of Israel because of its status as a non-Arab state and as an enemy to the Arabs within the system. They also deny the inclusion of both Turkey and Iran since they are non-Arab states.

The main argument of Matar and Dessouki is that the ME is of Eurocentric and colonial origin.<sup>104</sup> Subsequently, their definition of the ME is based on the components of the ME, which are its states that comprise its system, *i.e.* the 'Arab' states extending from Mauritania to the Gulf region.<sup>105</sup> Yet, when they speak of an Arab nation, they mainly speak of Arab nationalism as a structurally-binding *political* factor in making the system. Thus, they define the system as a regional order, which is Arab order, which in turn is the structure of the system.

It is important at this point to return to the notion of the period of the study. The third edition of their book was published in 1983, which is the temporal end-point to this particular study -- the starting point being 1945. During this period, the authors consider the Arab system as being nationally 'closed', which means that the states that share geographic proximity within the system do not share its political characteristics. From

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., pp. 7-9.

<sup>103</sup> Matar, Jamil & Hilal, Ali al-Din, *al-Nizam al-iqlimi al-Arabi Dirasat if al- Alaqaat Al-Arabiah al-Siyasih* [The Arab Regional System: A study in inter-Arab relations], 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Beirut: Dar al Mustaqbal al- Arabi, 1983).

<sup>104</sup> Matar & Dessouki, pp. 28-38. These authors offer some conclusions on page 33 about the definition of the ME. In their opinion, the term ME does not indicate a geographic area or complex, but it is a political term in its origin and usage. The second conclusion is drawn by their questioning of the terms 'East' and 'Middle'. The Middle of where, they ask, and east of where? The usage of these terms for Matar and Dessouki tends to affect the unity of the Arab nation whilst entering non-Arab states in its system.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p. 30, 33.

this point, they deny interaction as integration but apply certain criteria to the mode of interaction, which is Arab nationalism.<sup>106</sup> All in all, they consider that an Arab system has been in existence from the time of the establishment of the Arab League.

Itamar Rabinovich, *The Politics of Fragmentation and Anticipation: Inter-Arab Relations in the Early 1980s* (1984).<sup>107</sup> Rabinovich considers the establishment of the Arab League in 1945 as the start of the Arab system. At the beginning of his work, he takes the founding states of the Arab League as members of the system. Later, he tends to incorporate the countries of North Africa into the system.

However, he considers the main characteristics of the system as being the absence of cohesion and the presence of a conflictual relationship. The Arab League, he argues, represented a compromise between the quest for union and unity and its members' particular interests.<sup>108</sup>

Rabinovich tends to introduce to the period of the 1980s by explaining the impact of the emergence of Arab summit meetings of 1964 to reflect the capacity of the system, which he refers to as 'anticipation'. Notably, for him, the Arab summits represent the single important all-Arab forum.<sup>109</sup>

After 1967, the decline of Egypt's role in the Arab world, the rise of the influence of the conservative Arab regimes, and the emergence of new radical ones, resulted in a new multi-polarity of Arab regional politics.<sup>110</sup> Thus, it seemed for a while that towards the mid-1970s, a new period had begun in Arab regional politics. The October War, the oil embargo, and the accumulation of huge oil revenues seemed to have generated a 'new

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<sup>106</sup> Matar & Dessouki, [The Arab Regional System: A study in inter-Arab relations], pp. 80-82, 92, 275-278.

<sup>107</sup> Rabinovich, I., *The Politics of Fragmentation and Anticipation: Inter-Arab Relations in the Early 1980s*, (Tel Aviv, Occasional Papers, The Dayan Centre for Middle Eastern and African Studies: The Shiloah Institute, 1984).

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., pp.2-3.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 3.



Arab order.'<sup>111</sup> But, by the end of the 1970s, fragmentation had surfaced in the making of Arab politics and this fragmentation was marked by four elements:

- (i) Egypt's defiance of the system, referring to al-Sadat's peace with Israel.
- (ii) The political frailty of most oil producing states. Saudi Arabia is an example; it was unable to contend with the demands and responsibilities created by its new position of leadership in the Arab world.
- (iii) The Iranian revolution and the war between Iran and Iraq. The revolution affected the Arab regional order in which, for example, the Arab oil-producing states in the Gulf were largely preoccupied with the combined danger of subversive ideas and military invasion coming from Iran. The war between Iraq and Iran divided the alliances among Arab states towards Iraq.
- (iv) The impact of international alignment. This refers to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Although Islam at this stage reached a level of political force, the Soviet Union's allies in the region—Syria, Libya, Algeria, and the PDRY and the P.L.O.—were willing to incur the opprobrium of Muslims and Arabs and refused to denounce the Soviet actions.

Therefore, for Rabinovich, the Arab system of the 1980s bears the imprint of the older and more recent developments described above.<sup>112</sup>

Based on all this, Rabinovich considers the Arab system of the early 1980s as an unusual disorder. It became increasingly difficult to mobilise the whole system for positive action and thus the system became an instrument in the hands of those who could manipulate it for their own ends.<sup>113</sup>

Notably, and most importantly, Rabinovich alludes to the increasing impact of non-Arab states upon the making of Arab politics. The decline of pan-Arab nationalism changed the normal Arab political business, and as a result, non-Arab actors began to

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p.4. There are various Arab writers who described this period as the 'new Arab regional order'; See S'aad Al-Din Ibrahim, *The New Arab Social Order*, (in Arabic), Beirut, 1982); Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, "The New Arab Political Order: Implications for the 1980s," in M. H. Kerr & El Sayed Yassin (eds.), *Rich and Poor States in the Middle East* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1982), pp. 319-347.

<sup>112</sup> Rabinovich, *The Politics of Fragmentation and Anticipation*, pp. 5-8.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p.25.

play a new role. The Israeli impact on inter-Arab relations was present in Arab politics through conflict since the 1940s, but, in the early 1980s, it became present through political interaction with the Arab system. Israel's new relationship with Egypt and Lebanon afforded it a measure of subtler political influence.<sup>114</sup>

Iran's role too became more direct and explicit, something which has generated a heated ideological debate. Syria and Libya extended their support to Iran during the war between Iraq and Iran, even attempting to integrate Iran into a new pattern of regional politics.<sup>115</sup>

To sum up, the structure of the system for Rabinovich in the early 1980s was both conflictual and fragmented. However, he defines an independent system as taking into account all Arab states as members of that system.<sup>116</sup>

Stephen Walt<sup>117</sup>, *The Origins of Alliances*<sup>118</sup>, first published (1987). I will be using the latest print of 1995 in this study. Here Walt examines the theory and practice of alliances, taking the ME as evidence to contextualise his study. His book comprises of eight chapters. Notably, as many other scholars mentioned below, he focuses on the Baghdad pact<sup>119</sup> as a starting point to his book. In addition, he discusses the impact of period from the Six day War to the Camp David Accords. In Chapter Five, which comprises the crux of his book, he discusses balancing and bandwagoning, again taking the ME as the core case. In short, he discusses the period from 1955 to 1979 taking the alliances in this period as the standard measure for his study.

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid, p. 9.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p.10. In September 1981, Iran's foreign Minister appeared at a Benghazi meeting of the Arab Steadfastness Front, of which Syria and Libya were the core members. In January 1982, a tripartite meeting of the Syrian, Libyan and Iranian foreign ministers took place in Damascus.

<sup>116</sup> Rabinovich, *The Politics of Fragmentation and Anticipation*, pp. 14-30.

<sup>117</sup> See Walt, S., *The Origin of Alliances*, (1987).

<sup>118</sup> Walt defines alliance as 'a formal or informal relationship of security co-operation between two or more sovereign states. This definition assumes some level of commitment and an exchange of benefits for both parties; severing the relationship or failing to honour the agreement would presumably cost something, even if it were compensated in other ways'. Ibid, p. 1.

<sup>119</sup> The actual title of the Baghdad Pact was the Pact of Mutual Co-operation. For full text, see Jacob C. Hrewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record, 1914-1956* (Princeton, New Jersey: Van Nostrand, 1956).

Walt associates the formation of the system in the Arab ME with the security environment which dominated the region after the Second World War. He argues that there were four developments after the end of the war:<sup>120</sup>

- (i) The decline in British and French influence was accompanied by an Arab awakening in the region.
- (ii) The division of the Arabs, as it resulted from foreign domination. Thus a desire to restore the political unity of the Arab world became an influential factor in making Arab politics.
- (iii) The establishment of Israel created an enduring source of conflict.
- (iv) Soviet and U.S. interests in the region were growing rapidly.

Within this environment, Walt lists the states which he considers define the Middle East System, incorporating Israel and extra regional great powers into the system, but excluding Iran, Turkey and North Africa from his calculation.<sup>121</sup> Walt places great weight on the demonstrable influence on the balance of power in the ME. The central issue in his book therefore is the question of whether states are more likely to balance against states that pose a threat, or else bandwagon with those threatening states.<sup>122</sup>

Walt sees both anarchy and multipolarity as the driving force behind alliances in the ME. As evidence he draws on the fact that each state is able to develop its form of alliance against existing threats to its existence. For Walt, therefore this concept-threat theoretically replaces that of power. Thus he views the balance of threat theory as a refinement of traditional balance of power theory,<sup>123</sup> suggesting that Arab states in the ME were seeking to balance threat rather than power. Consequently, the suggested system for Walt is that based on the insecure environment which generated that system.

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<sup>120</sup> Walt, *The Origin of Alliances*, p 52.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 53-57.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-5.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263.

Michael Barnett (1998), in his book *Dialogues in Arab politics*,<sup>124</sup> limits his investigation of the system only to Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. His justification for choosing these states is that they are the “original members of the league of Arab states, they were at the forefront of and defined the debate about regional order”.<sup>125</sup> He considers the Palestinian Liberation Organisation as a unit in the system based on the vital role it played in Arab politics.<sup>126</sup> He argues that even before the creation of the PLO in 1964, various leaders from the Palestinian community were important to the making of Arab politics ‘particularly as [they] pertained to the confrontation of Zionism.’<sup>127</sup>

Barnett’s study covers the period from the end of the Second World War to 1998, the year in which the book was first published. The moments during this period of Arab politics which he recognises as constituting the system are referred to as ‘dialogue’. Dialogue for him is represented through the Baghdad Pact of 1955, the establishment of the United Arab Republic in 1958, the Arab Summit meeting of 1964, the Camp David Accords of 1979, and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

For Barnett, however, the Arab dialogue is embedded in a structure or what he termed as the ‘Game’:

That the structure in which actors are embedded shapes their public pursuits and that actors can be expected to appropriate these norms for their private interests. Arabism shaped the social interests of Arab leaders, and Arab leaders used these norms to further their personal objective of regime survival.<sup>128</sup>

This structure of the dialogue in Arab politics represents the period under study, thus characterising the system. Barnett’s characterisation is mainly a ‘normative fragmentation’ of Arab politics. In this context, he concludes:

a central claim of this book is that there is new environment to Arab politics, one largely created by and through the actions of Arab states;

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<sup>124</sup> Barnett, *Dialogue in Arab Politics*, 1998.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

this environment can be characterised as normative fragmentation because Arab states are no longer as pressed toward mutual orientation because of the decline of underlying shared values and identities.<sup>129</sup>

For Barnett, then, the structure of inter-Arab politics constitutes a system. The engine of that system is first, state sovereignty; second, the capacity of Arab leaders and their desire to remain in power; third, Arabism which is that normative fragmentation.<sup>130</sup> These three variables organise the system. In Barnett's view, this is the game and thus the dialogue of Arab politics.

Although the view of the system differs from one scholar to another, the notable consensus of the respective readings documented above is that there has been a system in existence since the inception of the Arab League in 1945. This assumption is based on two factors: first, the evidence provided within the above works, and second, the definition of the concept 'system'. As asserted in Chapter One of this study, the system is the sum of interactions across the units. Therefore, it cannot be argued that a system existed from, for example 1945 to 1967 or between 1958 and 1967 because interactions, or more precisely, Arab interactions, did not cease to exist in the intervening periods. Even as al-Sadat made his peace with Israel, there remained a degree of interaction between Egypt and other Arab states. Accordingly, the readings above acknowledge that there was a system during this entire period.

In the discussion of the type of system, and the moulding of the theories of international relations with those pertaining to the system, it is Walt who most directly applies a Neo-Realist approach to the study of the system. In other words, Walt takes the balance of threat theory as the mechanism by which to examine whether states are to balance against other states that pose a threat, or else to bandwagon with those threatening states.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>130</sup> Barnett brings up the concept 'game' of Arab politics in many occasions in the book. He concludes that there is a constructivist approaches to the game of Arab politics, which means the social and strategic interactions within Arab politics. See Ibid., pp., 6-8, 26-29.

<sup>131</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, pp.3-4.

Kerr and Gerges, at least, define the period of their study, and as a result their examination of the existence of a system lies within specific parameters. This gives their definition more solidity. On the other hand, the literature provided by Matar and Hilal leads to no specific definition of what the system is. This results in a tendency for them to lose their 'grip' when discussing the transformation of the system. In his evaluation of Matar and Hilal's work, Gregory Gause III expresses it thus: 'Matar and Hilal provide no guidance for identifying just what kind of changes in the distribution of regional power are "fundamental" when alliance changes become the "formation of new axes on ideological or economic bases," or when ideology becomes a "major doctrine"'.<sup>132</sup> In this respect, Matar and Hilal cannot be included within the paradigm of systemic analysis.

In his writing, as we have seen, Barnett explains what he regards as the 'normative fragmentation' of Arab politics. The wide guideline in his work is his understanding of Arabism and its impact on alliance formation, specifically in its zenith. Although he succeeds in providing guidelines for how dialogue within Arab politics is constructed, the main problem lies in his periodic measurement. He contends that the widely shared understanding of Arabism prohibited open alignment with Western powers, and yet, as we know, Iraq joined the Baghdad Pact, Saudi Arabia supported the Eisenhower doctrine, and Lebanon and Jordan invited American and British forces into their countries. The question as to how many exceptions would constitute a challenge to Barnett's classification of some periods as characterised by strong normative consensus, and others by normative fragmentation, remain unanswered.<sup>133</sup>

Despite differing methodologies in the study of Arab politics as they existed between 1945 and 1990, the common focus of all the respected scholars documented above is essentially on inter-Arab conflict and rivalry. Having therefore inferred that there is evidence for the existence of a system during the period covered by this chapter of my study, nevertheless, for the sake of coherence the remaining section of this chapter will concentrate on delineating the specific properties inherent within that system.

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<sup>132</sup> Gause, G. F., III, *Systemic Approach to Middle East International Relations*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), p. 17.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

The properties of the system were:

- Inter-Arab Conflict
- The Arab-Israeli conflict

### **Inter-Arab conflict**

#### *Internal factors*

In actual fact, the scholars identified above who focus on the nature of Arab conflict do not regard these conflicts in a context outside that of the Arab League. They discuss, for instance, *the* conflictual nature of Arab states within the League and *the* challenges to the League's institutional role. For Kerr, for example, the main challenge to the Arab League came from Arab states or members of the League themselves. Kerr refers to this as the Arab Cold War -- terminology which reflects the degree of conflictual complexity within Arab politics.

Maddy-Weitzmann too considers the Arab League as the first step in the crystallisation of the system. But in his account, rivalry between the Arab 'sovereign' states in the League crippled Arab states and thus prevented them from dealing with the newly established non-Arab state-- Israel. For Maddy-Weitzmann then, the League served to institutionalise Arab divisions.

Similarly, Rabinovich considers the League as the grounds for its members to achieve their interests within a conflictual environment. In the same context, Ghassan Salamé recognises the frustration which accompanied the foundation of the League: in his view 'this frustration...was born with the Arab League itself. The League has survived, and so has the frustration.'<sup>134</sup> For Barnett, as we have seen, the dialogue of rivalry within Arab politics which this frustration represents comprises the mechanisms of an Arab 'game' in which one Arab state vies for authority over the others. In this context, it is fair to say

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<sup>134</sup> Salamé, G., 'Integration in the Arab World: The Institutional Framework', in G. Luciani & G. Salamé (eds.), *The Politics of Arab Integration* (London, New York: Croom Helm, 1988), p. 275. For a useful survey study on the efficiency of the Arab League See S. E. Ibrahim, *Itijahat ar-Ra'i al-Am al-Arabi nahwa Mas'alat al-Wahda* [Trends of Arab public opinion toward the issue of unity], (Beirut: Centre for Arab Unity 1980).

that inter-Arab conflict makes up one of the major characteristics of the system. This latter point will reverberate throughout the coming chapter as I discuss the causes and consequences of the Kuwait crisis.

### *External Factors*

Identifying in their study the constraints and pressures of the system, Korany and Dessouki focus clearly on its hegemony. In their view, the hegemony of the world system *à la dependencia*, put pressure on the making of Arab politics. In a similar vein to this argument, Jamil Matar and Hilal Dessouki also identify external factors as putting pressure on the making of the Arab system. Specifically, they cite the way in which the Arab system has increasingly seen intrusions from both the world system and even from the states peripheral to the system—namely, Iran and Israel. However, these authors characterise the influence of such external pressures upon the making of the system within the context of the specific period of their study -- which is mainly the period of Cold War.

### **The Arab-Israeli Conflict**

All scholars place this issue at the forefront of the making of Arab politics, and they all concur that this is a determinant factor in shaping the Arab system. Explicitly, Maddy-Weitzmann considers the crystallisation of the Arab system as having come about as a result of the Arab states' going along with the existence of Israel. In this context he views the issue of balance of power as determining the shape of the Arab system after the establishment of the state of Israel. Thus, one of the characteristics of the Arab system, during the period or research within this chapter is that the system was influenced and affected by an Israeli factorial dimension.



## Hypothesis

This chapter has set out to demonstrate that there existed an Arab system based on different types of Arab interactions dominated by Arab conflict and rivalry during the period in question.<sup>135</sup> My hypothesis is therefore mainly derived from those readings documented above, and will expand upon them primarily within the scope of discussion. Based on the nature of Middle Eastern political interactions and the huge degree of change that affects the academic arena, the absence of futurology studies should therefore be seen as justified. Thus, the hypothesis presented at this stage will serve to access the coming chapter, which will discuss the causes and consequences of the Kuwait Crisis and its impact on the form of system delineated above.

In conclusion, it was inter-Arab rivalry which marked the making of their politics between 1945 and 1990. The Kuwait Crisis, which many regarded as a time of turmoil, brought about a change to the structural constraints of the existing conflict. My thesis regards this event on the one hand as a natural expansion of the existing regional order, so it does not define the Crisis as a period of turmoil. On the other hand, it considers that it is not the Kuwait Crisis *itself* which explains the relationship between Arab states and the superpower(s), but its *aftermath*. Put simply, the above paradigm of the Arab system as being the sum of Arab interactions flows naturally into the larger arena of the Kuwait Crisis. The failure of Arab 'diplomatic' capability to prevent the war in 1991 has shown that there was an Arab system already in existence. The system itself, as a representative of the regional order, was equally responsible for the conflict in the region, because Saddam himself was operating within that system.

From this hypothesis, I will proceed onto a discussion of the causes and consequences of the Kuwait Crisis.

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<sup>135</sup> Between 1949 and 1967 Arab states had roughly ten militarised disputes (three of those coming in the Maghreb); they had nineteen militarised disputes between 1967 and 1989. In Barnett, M, N. *Dialogue in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order*, 1998, p. 203.

## Summary

This chapter was designed to provide a comprehensive overview of the existing and relevant literature that discusses the background of the Arab system between 1945-1990. The findings of the chapter are that there was an Arab system in existence during this period.

The literature discussed in this chapter is the most relevant to the study of the Arab system. In some cases, the concept "Arab System" was not mentioned, but the study of a given author revolve around this concept. However, critically enough, the concept identity—or Arab Identity- is clearly the dominant term in the period of study. The sense of Arab identity was strong throughout the 1950s and 1960s, especially during Nasser's leadership. This was represented by a sense of common cultural identity and a common political goal which was, at that time, to solve the Palestinian problem. During this period, power was not diffused but concentrated in Egypt's powerful political and military position in the Arab.

In the early 1950s, a form of balance of power emerged in the newly independent Arab states' system. Egypt and Saudi Arabia were opposing every aspect of system reconstruction attempted by the Hashemites in Jordan and Iraq. Both King Abdallah of Jordan and Nuri Assaid of Iraq were proposing aspects of Arab unity that could change the existing balance of power.

The late 1950s witnessed the emergence of Nasser's political status and power. Nasser tried to re-structure the Arab system according to the norms of non-alignment in which neither East nor West could interfere in Arab regional politics. During the 1960s, he introduced a new structural framework by which he could control and regulate the foreign policies of other Arab states. At this time, however, there was no diffusion of power in the Arab system.

The 1967 war diffused Arab power, and a new regional balance of power emerged. This was represented by the shift from military power to diplomacy during the 1970s. The Arab system became less revolutionary. However, fragmentation in Arab politics had surfaced by the late 1970s, when Egypt signed its peace with Israel. During this period, a new power struggle emerged between Syria, dragging Lebanon and Libya from one

side, and Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan from the other. The system then became highly polarised to the extent at which diplomatic ties were broken between Syria and Iraq. Syria supported Iran in the Iran-Iraq war, and Jordan, for example, supported Iraq.

At the end of the Iran-Iraq war, Iraq emerged stronger, a factor which, by political and military calculations, has changed the political face of the region. The ambitions of Saddam Hussein to play an Arab regional role, similar to that of Nasser, prompted him to establish the Arab Co-operation Council (ACC) after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the change in the international balance of power.

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 has brought the Arab system to an end. A new phase of Arab politics has emerged. I shall use the coming chapter to demonstrate the changes and developments in Arab politics as this is the main concern of this study.

## CHAPTER THREE

### The Impact of the Kuwait Crisis on the Arab Regional Order

#### Introduction

The Kuwait Crisis<sup>1</sup> (KC) has undoubtedly had a huge impact on inter-Arab relations. The question is, however, whether the crisis created a new Arab regional order, or did it merely further the already existing type of inter-Arab relations? In answer to these questions, this chapter will argue that the most salient feature of the impact of the crisis was that it further fragmented the Arabs. In so doing, it furthered an existing order; moreover, it fully legitimised the American presence on 'Arab' soil and put an end to the Arab system to allow Arab states to integrate in a wider Middle East system.

The aim of this chapter is twofold: primarily, it will offer an examination of the relationship between the concept 'order' and the KC in order to investigate whether the KC ushered in an Arab regional order. Before that, however, it will examine whether the crisis had an impact on the making of the new international order. In so doing, it will draw upon the concept 'galvanisation' as defined in the early pages of this thesis. The discussion of inter-Arab relations and the structure of Arab politics in the region after the crisis will be subject to this concept. The main focus of this chapter will be as follows: firstly, that the crisis led to a direct, legitimate, uncontested, Arab-supported American presence in the ME, which automatically led to the galvanisation of the region; and secondly, that galvanisation of the regional political order was in itself an order within which Arab states had to operate. In turn, this led to the most immediate impact of the crisis, which was the triggering of the Arab-Israeli dialogue. This is

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<sup>1</sup> On the concept crisis, definitions, debates, and arguments see Charles Hermann, *International Crisis: Insights from Behavioural Research*, (New York: The Free Press 1976). Phil Williams, *Crisis Management: Confrontation and Diplomacy in the Nuclear Age*, (London: Martin Robertson, 1976); Oran Young, *The Politics of Force*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1968). Michael Brecher, "Towards a Theory of International Crisis Behaviour", *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 21, no. 1, (March 1977); Stanley Hoffmann, *The State of War: Essays of the Theory and Practice of International Politics*, (London: Pall Mall, 1965).

something which will be discussed independently in Chapter Four, although it will also be alluded to in the conclusion of this chapter.

### **The Concept Order between Change and Continuity**

In order for an existing order to be called a new order, *fundamental* changes should take place within that existing order. The question remains, however, how can we tell when, and whether, one order has replaced another.<sup>2</sup> More specifically, how can we discern whether the Gulf War caused the generation of a new regional order? To answer such questions we are confronted with the issue of change and discontinuity.<sup>3</sup>

In this context, Olson argues that a new order occurs when there is a fundamental redistribution of power in the international system.<sup>4</sup> For Hoffman, for a new order to occur, there must be new practices and new rules of play in the international system.<sup>5</sup> Bull's conception of order is based on the existence of states as the starting point for relations within the system they constitute. Therefore, the contact between states constitutes the order: for Bull, contact means the goals behind the contact, which are survival, security, and stability.<sup>6</sup> To this concept, Hoffmann has added the suggestion that order should be thought of as 'a construct and a condition'.<sup>7</sup> This reflects the ambivalent degrees of conscious intention, as opposed to incidental by-product, that might characterise any particular order.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, speaking of a new world order,

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<sup>2</sup> This form of 'question' is borrowed from Ian Clark, *The Post-Cold War Order: The Spoils of Peace*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001), p 17.

<sup>3</sup> For Holsti, the concept of world order has as often muddled understanding of intentional politics as clarified it. The most common usage in diplomatic rhetoric is the idea that typical patterns of power, conflict, domination, and subordination are changing. But since *change* is a constant of most social contexts, difference is hardly an indicator of a new order. If difference is the only criterion, then we can hardly expect to generate any sort of consensus, for one person's significant change can be someone else's marginal alteration. One sensible way to think of an international order is to identify the foundational principles upon which it rests. K. J. Holsti, "The Coming Chaos: Armed Conflict in the Periphery," in T.V. Paul, & Hall, A. John (eds.), *International Order and the Future of World Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999), pp. 283-84.

<sup>4</sup> Olson, W., *International Relations, Then and Now: Origins and Trends in Interpretation*, (New York: Routledge, 1992) p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Hoffman, S., "A New World Order and its Troubles", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 69, no 4, 1990, p. 115-116.

<sup>6</sup> Bull, H., (1977), p. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Cited in Clark, I., *The Post-Cold War Order: The Spoils of Peace*, 2001, p. 20.

<sup>8</sup> Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 20.

Keale argues that '[it] would require a shift from a great power preferred order to one that reflects the interests of international society as a whole and which has regard for the justice due to individuals'.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, Clark poses the question: what are the interests of international society as a whole?<sup>10</sup> The basic dilemma, as Hoffmann has argued, is that once we move beyond minimum conceptions of order, we are confronted by the stark reality of conflicting choices.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, we may ask, does change occur based on given choices, based on conflicting choices, or based on both?<sup>12</sup> Change is the main mechanism by which the new faces of a new order may be distinguished: the call for a new world order by George Bush senior coincided with or was part of the end of the Cold War's mechanisms. Thus, Clark maintains, for example, that the end of the Cold War created the necessary universal conditions, originally initiated in 1945 but stultified by the ensuing rivalry between the superpowers that would make this possible.<sup>13</sup> However, since there is no consent on a conceptual framework for an evaluation of the multiplicity of ideas about a new order, it is impossible to say that one is correct and the other incorrect. One author's order is another author's disorder.<sup>14</sup>

Nevertheless, for this study, the call by the United States for a New World Order was in itself a 'change': according to Clark, 'this applies above all the central question of the

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<sup>9</sup> Cited in *Ibid.*, p 21.

<sup>10</sup> Clark, I., *The Post-Cold War Order: The Spoils of Peace*, 2001, p 21.

<sup>11</sup> Cited in Clark, I., *The Post-Cold War Order: The Spoils of Peace*, 2001, p 21.

<sup>12</sup> The difference between given choices and conflicting choices in this thesis is based on the existing order. During the Cold War era, choices conflicted between the two superpowers – that is to say that each choice given to each superpower was in conflict, in that the other superpower would contest the choice. At the end of the Cold War, the only remaining superpower has led to choices being uncontested and therefore there was no conflict of choice. The end of the Cold War itself was a given choice not a conflicting one because it did not end by means of war dynamics and conflicting conditions. This distinction is useful because it explains the US decisions in the post-Cold War era. Regarding the ME, all choices the US has there are given ones. The reason behind that is that there is no coercion practiced on American diplomacy making, where 'power and deterrence' are coupled with the American presence in the region.

<sup>13</sup> Clark, I., *The Post-Cold War Order: The Spoils of Peace*, 2001, p 19.

<sup>14</sup> Holsti, K. J., "Armed Conflict in the Periphery," in T.V. Paul, & Hall, A. John (eds.), *International Order and the Future of World Politics*, 1999, p. 289. On the controversy about the world order, see Fukuyama, F., 'The End of History?', *The National Interest*, 1989; Kaplan, R., 'The Coming Anarchy', *The Atlantic Monthly*, 1994; Armstrong, D., *Revolution and World Order*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1993).

relationship between the end of the Cold War, and the shifts in the distribution of power'.<sup>15</sup> Put simply, the overarching framework of power distribution after the Cold War ended was channelled through an order, which itself was a regulator of relations between both the remaining superpower and the rest of the world. It is, therefore, all about power distribution: the US remained as the only superpower and this in itself constituted an order. This had two dimensions, first, there was a change in the structure of power, which is the 'new-ness' of the new order. Second, the continuation of one of the superpowers as the only superpower was part of a previously existing order and these are the mechanisms of change and continuity of the new order.

### **The Kuwait Crisis and the New World Order**

Wars and crises are often seen to be transitions between one type of international system and another or a turning point or watershed in relations between states.<sup>16</sup> This introduces the question of the impact of the KC on the international order: was it a watershed or a turning point on an international level? Did it cause a New World Order or was it its symptom? Although this question is not central to this study, to offer a brief discussion of it will facilitate a coherent understanding of the impact of the KC on the regional order.

Clark argues that 'the Gulf War was both symptom, and further cause, of the changes under way [...] it seems reasonable to regard the war as evidence, and further confirmation, of Washington's unrivalled dominance as external power'.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Karsh suggests that it was not the end of the Cold War that shaped the New World Order, but the Gulf War. He describes the war in terms of a 'cataclysmic indigenous event'. He also argues, for example, that the [intended] Palestinian-Israeli peace was not a result of the Cold War but it was triggered by the Gulf War.<sup>18</sup> That means for Karsh

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<sup>15</sup> Clark, I., *The Post-Cold War Order: The Spoils of Peace*, 2001, p 33.

<sup>16</sup> Mathew, K., *The Gulf Conflict and International Relations*, (London: New York, Routledge, 1993), p. 252.

<sup>17</sup> Clark, I., *The Post-Cold War Order: The Spoils of Peace*, 2001, p 127.

<sup>18</sup> Karsh, E., "Cold War, Post-Cold War: Does it Make a Difference for the Middle East?" *Review of International Studies*, 23, 3, 1997, pp. 288-291. The Palestinian-Israeli peace process, by the time of his article, probably had meant peace for Karsh.

that the KC was the main force behind the change on both regional and international levels.

Niblock concludes that the KC introduced a dynamic of its own but, equally crucially, it also helped to highlight the changes wrought by a transformed global order.<sup>19</sup> Gow considers the invasion of Kuwait as a far-reaching question of international order, concluding that the big question raised by the Iraqi-Kuwaiti dispute was how much of the energy released, as disorder replaced the old Cold War order, could be harnessed in the creation of a new and better order.<sup>20</sup> Andre Gunder Frank terms the [Gulf War] as the first war that aligned the rich North, the rich oil emirates and Kingdoms, and some bribed regional oligarchies against a poor third world country.<sup>21</sup> Cantori, however, considers the crisis as an interruption in an already ongoing process.<sup>22</sup>

One could argue that the Gulf War would not have broken out under the old world order. In this context, Starkey asserts that the end of the Cold War<sup>23</sup> had tempted Iraq to embark on invading Kuwait. The calculation of the Iraqi leader was that United States, no longer beset by Soviet power, would be that much less inclined to exercise itself robustly in the region.<sup>24</sup> Garrity argues that 'the KC, contrary to speculation at the time, did not lead to the creation of a New World Order, but the Gulf War remains the first real data point in the post-Cold War era.'<sup>25</sup> He proceeds to argue that the Gulf War

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<sup>19</sup> Niblock, T., "A Framework for Renewal in the Middle East?", in Jawad, H. (ed.), *The Middle East in the New World Order*, 1994, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> Gow, J., (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict and the World Community*, Centre for Defence Studies, (London, New York: Brassey's 1993), pp. 3-4.

<sup>21</sup> Frank, G. A., *Third World War: A Political Economy of the Gulf War and The New World Order*, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 1992, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> The process for Cantori is that U.S. diplomatic and military activities have increased rather than declined (after the Cold War) as policy has been focused on access to oil and oil pricing and the value of regional stability in maintaining the free flow of oil. In the last months of the Reagan administration, a peace process was initiated and was pursued even more vigorously by the Bush administration. Cantori, L., "Unipolarity and Egyptian Hegemony," in, Freedman, R., (ed.), *The Middle East after Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait*, (Florida: University Press of Florida, 1993), p. 339.

<sup>23</sup> For an assessment of the Arab perception and interpretation of the Cold War, see Shibly Telhami, 'Middle East Politics in the Post-Cold War Era' in George W. Breslauer, Harry Kreisler, and Benjamin War (eds.), *Beyond the Cold War: Conflict and Co-operation in the Third World* (Berkeley: University of California at Berkeley, 1992).

<sup>24</sup> cited in Clark, I., *The Post-Cold War Order: The Spoils of Peace*, 2001, p 127.

<sup>25</sup> Garrity, P., "Implications of the Persian Gulf War for Regional Powers", *The Washington Quarterly*, (Summer 1993), p. 166.



revealed to regional powers the essential irrelevance of the (then) Soviet Union.<sup>26</sup> In any event, in the international tinderbox the 1990-91, the KC is usually treated as a watershed.<sup>27</sup>

This study maintains that the crisis was an Arab crisis and was a blunt consequence of inter-Arab rivalry and mistrust between Arab states. Therefore, it was neither the symptom nor the cause of a new world order. It also was not a turning point on an international level. It merely helped the United States to demonstrate an asset of power, in practical terms, it already had. But, its impact on Arab politics is that it brought the Arab system into a definite end.

### **The Kuwait Crisis and the United States**

The United States played the main role in the ousting of the Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. On the one hand, as a superpower, the United States was in a position to do so: and having done so, the first reward gained by the United States was an international approval. On the other hand, as Garrity poses, 'what do the reactions of regional powers to the Gulf War imply for United States policymaking? First and foremost, it is essential to recognise the importance that regional powers continue to accord the United States as the organising force in international relations.'<sup>28</sup>

At the global level, the crisis increased the prominence of the United States in the Persian Gulf region and in world politics. This illustrates how the United States sought to continue to play its role in both world politics and in the ME. A role reflects a claim on the international system, recognition by international actors, and a conception of national identity.<sup>29</sup> Role definition can help explain the general direction of foreign

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 54-155.

<sup>27</sup> Korany, B., "The Arab World and the New Balance of Power in the New Middle East," in Hudson, M., (ed.), *Middle East Dilemma: The Politics and Economics of Arab Integration* (London, New York: I. B. Tauris 1998), p 35.

<sup>28</sup> Garrity P., "Implications of the Persian Gulf War for Regional Powers," 1993, p. 166. On the United States and the Arab Middle East since 1945, see Douglas Little, Gideon's Band: America and the Middle East Since 1945, *Diplomatic History* 18, (Fall 1994), pp. 513-40; Leon T. Harder, Quagmire: America in the Middle East (Washington, D.C.: Cato Institute, 1992).

<sup>29</sup> Le Prestre, Ph., G., "Defining Foreign Policy Roles," in, Le Prestre, Ph., G., (ed.), *Role Quests in the Post-Cold War Era: Foreign Policies in Transition*, (London, Montreal: McGill University Press 1997), p. 5.

policy choices,<sup>30</sup> and one of the main and effective potentials the United States possessed after the Cold War was/is its discursive belief in its own power. This is one of the factors which lead the United States to continue developing its power. In 1989, for example, James Baker claimed that the United States had a special role<sup>31</sup> to play in the world because it still represented the 'last, best hope of earth'.<sup>32</sup>

George Bush senior identified the role of the United States as that of *stabiliser*: 'the United States is determined to take an active role in settling regional conflicts.'<sup>33</sup>

Similarly, James Baker stated:

We seek a stable Gulf in which the nations of this region and their peoples can live in peace and can live free of the fear of coercion. We seek a region in which change can occur and legitimate security concerns can be preserved peacefully.<sup>34</sup>

In explaining the United States' global power interests, and in taking the KC as an example, Gowan explains why the United States administration repudiated both the offer to Iraqi forces to withdraw from Kuwait ten days before the ground war started and the subsequent Soviet peace plan. He maintains that the need for a 'demonstration war', in which the United States had to demonstrate that it was no longer just a nuclear super-state with feet of clay when it came to fighting a conventional war against an enemy in the South. It had to show the will and the military capacity on the ground as well as in the air. This was to make America's main power asset, its military capacity, once again central to world politics.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, as Krauthammer maintains, the Gulf War marked the beginning of a *Pax Americana* in which the world would acquiesce to a

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., pp. 4-6.

<sup>31</sup> According to Holsti, 'Roles' refer to the 'policymakers own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules, and actions suitable to their states, and of the functions, if any, their states should perform on a continuing basis in the international system.' Cited in Le Prestre, Ph., G., "Defining Foreign Policy Roles," in Le Prestre, Ph., G., (ed.), *Role Quests in the Post-Cold War Era: Foreign Policies in Transition*, (London, Montreal: McGill University Press 1997), p. 4.

<sup>32</sup> Le Prestre, Ph., G., "The United States: An Elusive Role Quest after the Cold War," in Le Prestre Ph., (ed.), *Role Quests in the Post-Cold War Era: Foreign Policies in Transition*, (London, Montreal: McGill University Press 1997), p. 72.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>34</sup> Secretary of State James Baker as he addressed the senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, September 4-October 18, 1990; See US government Printing Office, H38116, p. 10.

<sup>35</sup> Gowan, P., *The Global Gamble: Washington's Faustian Bid for World Dominance*, (London, New York: Verso 1999), pp. 160-161.

benign American hegemony.<sup>36</sup> The impact of the end of the Cold War reached far beyond the European settings within which the war began and ended. Thus, the *Pax Americana* remains a product of the Cold War years, and American global presence can be measured by the same yardstick as that which gauges the extent to which the Cold War infiltrated and influenced the world. Put more succinctly, the globalisation of the American presence is part of that globalisation of the Cold War. Consequently, a New World Order must necessarily be a new American Order.<sup>37</sup>

Of the various types of interests of the United States has in the ME, two have consistently been deemed major or vital since at least 1973 – security and economic interests. Remarkably, these interests have remained paramount despite the dramatic changes throughout the globe.<sup>38</sup> Subsequently, according to Ehteshami and Hinnebusch, the KC ushered in a new era of United States hegemony in the ME region.<sup>39</sup> In the 1990s the ME regional system was subject to a new magnitude of penetration by the United States as the world hegemon. Although justified in the name of a ‘NWO’ or *Pax Americana*, its effects were far more ambiguous.<sup>40</sup> Hudson concludes that ‘the Iraq-Kuwait crisis created a moment of opportunity for the United States to deepen western hegemony over the Gulf in particular and the ME in general.’<sup>41</sup> Ghareeb and Khadduri conclude that the United States intervened in the KC on three grounds. First, she sought

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<sup>36</sup> Krauthammer, Ch., “The Unipolar Moment”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, 1, no. 1, 1991, pp: 23-34. See also Kapstein, Ethan B., & Mastanduno, M., (eds.) *Unipolar Politics: Realism and State Strategies After the Cold War*, (New York: Columbia University Press 1999); Nye J., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, (New York: Basic Books 1990). One of the important works that discusses the dialectics of hegemony is that of Gramsci in his Prison Notebook. See A. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebook*, (New York: International Publishers 1971). See also His ‘*The Modern Prince and Other Writings*’, (New York: International Publishers 1972).

<sup>37</sup> The US power reached its higher limits in the 1990s. The heightened power asymmetry between the United States and the other major states during the 1990s is reflected in various economic and military indicators. Between 1990 and 1998, United States’ economic growth (27 percent) was almost twice that of the European Union (15 percent) and three times that of Japan (11 percent). In Ikenberry, J., *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2001), footnote 59, p. 233.

<sup>38</sup> See O’Neill B., & Kass I., “The Gulf War: a Political-Military Assessment,” in Freedman, R., (ed.), *The Middle East after Iraq’s Invasion of Kuwait*, (Florida: University Press of Florida, 1993), p.18, similar argument is provided by Valerie Seward, *The Middle East: Internal and External Responses to Change* (London: HMSO, 1993), p.30.

<sup>39</sup> Ehteshami, A., & Hinnebusch R., Conclusion. In Hinnebusch, R. & Ehteshami (eds.) *Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States*, (London, Boulder: Lynne Rienner 2002), p. 72.

<sup>40</sup> Hinnebusch, R. & El-Shazly, N., “The Challenge of Security in the Post-Gulf War Middle East System,” in Hinnebusch and Ehteshami (eds.) *Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States*, (London, Boulder: Lynne Rienner 2002), p. 72.

<sup>41</sup> Hudson in Ibrahim, (ed.), *The Gulf Crisis: Background and Consequences*, 1992, p. 64.

to protect its own national interests in the Gulf region which appeared to have been threatened by Iraq. Second, the United States had certain commitments to a number of countries in the region whose security seemed to have been threatened by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Thirdly, as Iraq had declared the jihad against Western intervention in Islamic lands, a number of American writers sought to rationalise Western intervention as a form of just war (*justum bellum*), in defence of Western (Christian) values.<sup>42</sup> Garrity concludes that "for virtually every regional state, a central lesson of the Gulf War is that the United States is the only superpower; the Gulf War thus represented something of a turning point in foreign perceptions of the United States."<sup>43</sup> Most importantly, according to Murphy, in 1991, the United States was in a position to develop new and existing ties in the Arab world, unhindered by prior considerations of superpower competition. Equally, the Arab states no longer had a choice of patrons and were forced to come to terms with a new global balance of power in which confrontation with the United States would be a lonely venture.<sup>44</sup>

The crisis provided the United States with the opportunity to lead a coalition to oust Iraq from Kuwait. succeeding in managing such a huge coalition, the United States was able to confirm its future 'role' in the making of international politics as a 'given'. Not many states would then contest the American role on an international level or regional levels, taking the ME as a case in point.

However, whether the crisis generated or helped to generate or even was a consequence of a New World Order, the main question is how much impact it left on the Arab regional order. Before discussing this impact in detail, I will first offer a backdrop to the crisis, which will facilitate an understanding of the regional dynamics, specifically those which concentrate on Iraq's emergence as a regional power.

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<sup>42</sup> Kadduri, M., & Ghareeb, E., *War in the Gulf 1990-91: The Iraq-Kuwait Conflict and its Implications*, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1997), p. 252. The authors did not refer to any of those American writers and did not offer any content of such arguments.

<sup>43</sup> Garrity, P., "Implications of the Persian Gulf War for Regional Powers," *The Washington Quarterly*, (Summer 1993), p. 154.

<sup>44</sup> Murphy E. C., "The Arab-Israeli Conflict and the New World Order," in, Jawad, H. (ed.), *The Middle East in the New World Order* 1994, p. 84.

## Backdrop to the Kuwait Crisis

One remarkable aspect of the crisis is that it was an *Arab* crisis; that is to say, the most salient feature of the crisis was its 'Arabness'. The Arab regional order, however, is not an enigma. In Chapter Two, I offered readings of the Arab system from 1945-90, the findings of which have shown that the main character of inter-Arab relations is conflict. However, prior to the crisis, the main actor of the KC – that is, Iraq – was engaged in a war with Iran, a non-Arab regional unit. This had its impact on the making of the crisis. Therefore, I will begin this discussion firstly by considering the impact of the Iran-Iraq war and its aftermath as a trigger for the KC, and subsequently, I will examine the period between the end of the Iran-Iraq war and the KC.

### *The Iran-Iraq War*

The dynamics and connotations of the concept of 'war' in the modern history of the Arab world imply or define the enemy of the Arabs as Israel. However, the Iran-Iraq war left a different impression on the making of politics and altered the implications of the political term 'war' in the ME region.

Arab-Israeli wars have tended to be intensive but brief,<sup>45</sup> but the Iran-Iraq war had become part of the political and strategic landscape of the ME throughout the decade, establishing or accelerating new alignments and forcing new priorities.<sup>46</sup> The war caused the Islamic, Arab and Israeli spheres to overlap. During the war, it is widely known that the Israeli state supplied the Islamic state of Iran with American weapons,<sup>47</sup> enabling Iran to fight the Arab state of Iraq, which was armed with Soviet weapons' systems. Pro-American Egypt supplied Iraq with Soviet weapons and spare parts, while Arab Syria, allied with the Soviet Union, supported non-Arab Iran against Arab Iraq.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Rabinovich, I., "The Impact on the Arab World," in, Karsh, E. (ed.), *The Iran Iraq War: Impact and Implications*, (London: Macmillan 1987), p. 101.

<sup>46</sup> Chubin, S., "Iran and the War: From Stalemate to Cease-Fire," in, Karsh E., (ed.), *The Iran Iraq War: Impact and Implications*, (London, Macmillan 1987), p. 13. Also Rabinovich, I., "The Impact on the Arab World," in Karsh E., (ed.), *The Iran Iraq War: Impact and Implications*, p. 101.

<sup>47</sup> Tibi, B., *Conflict and War in the Middle East: From Interstate War to New Security*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Macmillan, 1998), p. 41.

<sup>48</sup> Tibi, B., *Conflict and War in the Middle East*, 1998, p. 41.

Moreover, the Iran-Iraq war shifted the 'order of conflict' from 'the Arab-Israeli conflict to a bi-focal conflict system'.<sup>49</sup>

In the opinion of Joffe, 'One of the most striking consequences of the Gulf War ha[d] been the way in which the Ba'ath regime in Iraq ha[d] been able to emerge from the conflict apparently strengthened and more stable than it was in 1979.'<sup>50</sup> The war had the effect of reinforcing Saddam's autocracy in Iraq, by allowing him to demand complete submission to his will as the means of ensuring effective mass mobilisation to prevent an Iranian invasion.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, shortly after the cease-fire, Iraq was seeking to emphasise the war's importance to the new Arab order and the solidity of its new alliances.<sup>52</sup>

Nevertheless, inter-Arab relations during and after the war were governed by the dynamics of the war itself. This is because the war was not a brief event, but eight years of conflict. Therefore, the impact of the war on Arab regional order was multi-dimensional. Ehteshami summarises four consequences:

First, it marked the end of the collective pursuit of the radical agenda and its landmark, the steadfastness front. Secondly, their unambiguous support for the Iraqi war effort facilitated the transformation of the conservative-moderate states into the Arab nationalist pretenders. Thirdly, with the convergence of superpower views (on the Iraqi side) the ties with the 'client' states were relaxed to such an extent that Arab actors were able to pursue their objectives without overriding external considerations. And lastly, the conduct and outcome of the war enabled Iraq to emerge as the champion of the Palestinian cause and the main ally of the PLO. This, by extension gave Saddam Hussein *de facto* 'leadership' of the Arab world.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Sela, A., "The Decline of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Middle East Politics and the Quest for Regional Order," (New York, State University of New York Press, 1998), p.217.

<sup>50</sup> Joffé, G., "Developments in Iraq since The Cease Fire," in Davis, C., (ed.), *After the War: Iran, Iraq and the Arab Gulf*, (West Sussex: Carden Publications Ltd. 1990), p. 217. Also Dannreuther, R., *The Gulf Conflict: A Political and Strategic Analysis*, Adelphi Papers, 264, Brassey, International Institute for Strategic Studies, (Winter 1991/92), p. 8, p. 9.

<sup>51</sup> Tripp, C., "The Iran-Iraq War and Iraqi Politics," In Karsh, E. (ed.), *The Iran Iraq War: Impact and Implications*, (London: Macmillan, 1987), p. 72.

<sup>52</sup> Ehteshami, A., "The Arab States and the Middle East Balance of Power," in Gow (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict and he World Community*, 1993, p. 58.

<sup>53</sup> Ehteshami in Gow, (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict andt he World Community*, 1993, pp. 57-58.

Examining the relationship between the Iran-Iraq war and the KC, we find that many scholars, to some degree, promote the KC as a consequence of that war. Sela, for example, argues that 'the origins of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait were rooted in the conditions under which the Iran-Iraq war had ended.'<sup>54</sup> Chubin concludes that 'Iraq's war with Iran was a major underlying "cause" of the second Gulf War'.<sup>55</sup>

The Iran-Iraq war had conditioned the behaviour of all the major regional actors. In the absence of Egyptian hegemony, the war accelerated the scramble of the new alliances in the Arab world.<sup>56</sup> By virtue of not having lost his mantle, the Iraqi leader had come to dominate the emerging Arab order. But the end of the war had changed the rubric of intra-Arab and Inter-Arab state relations. With hegemony no longer guaranteed, Iraq sought to impose its own will on the shifting Middle East landscape.<sup>57</sup>

### *From Cease-fire to Crisis*

Whether Iraq had achieved any of its own war aims sufficiently to warrant a victory call was a moot point.<sup>58</sup> The jubilation surrounding the end to hostilities overshadowed the discussion of a number of serious outstanding problems regarding the virtues of the campaign in the first place, its costs to Iraq, and the multitude of difficulties its war had in fact created for the Arab world in general.<sup>59</sup> When the war came to an end, basic questions of security in the Gulf remained unresolved, a more permanent peace was elusive, and the actors were heavily armed.<sup>60</sup> On top of that, 'Iraq [found] itself

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<sup>54</sup> Sela, A., *The Decline of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Middle East Politics and the Quest for Regional Order*. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1998), p. 321.

<sup>55</sup> Chubin, S., "Regional Politics and the Conflict," in Danchev, A., & Keohane, D. (eds.), *International Perspectives on the Gulf Conflict, 1990-91*, (London: St. Martin Press, 1994), p 5.

<sup>56</sup> Ehteshami, "The Arab States and the Middle East Balance of Power," in Gow, (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict and the World Community*, 1993, p. 60.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>60</sup> Murden, S., *Emergent Regional Powers and International Relations in the Gulf: 1988-1991*, (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1995), p. 195.

burdened with a heavy debt to foreign countries estimated then at seventy to eighty billion dollars.’<sup>61</sup>

For Saddam, however, the war was won. He ‘transformed what was essentially a restoration of the *status quo antebellum* into a victory. Furthermore, he emphasised that this glorious victory was a resounding vindication of his leadership and personal legitimacy.’<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the more forcefully Saddam believed that he won the war, the more threat he posed to his neighbours. That was mainly because Arab leaders in neighbouring countries were aware of the fact that ‘dramatic change in the local arena is often the result of a charismatic leader’s attempt to challenge the status quo through a platform that appeals to a large segment of the commonality.’<sup>63</sup> Therefore, reading the policies of Nasser of Egypt, and those of Saddam of Iraq, the outcome was that leaders stressed Arab national sentiments. At the end of the Iran-Iraq war, Saddam ‘began to consider returning to his earlier attempt to establish himself as the new hero of Arab nationalism.’<sup>64</sup> In the same period and in the same context, most Arab leaders were ‘allergic’ to the term ‘Arab nationalism’ because of the impact the Iran-Iraq war itself had had on the making of their political order. The circumstances that dictated the scene at the end of the war did not encourage such sentiments.

These circumstances are evidenced in alliances and groupings that emerged after the war to further divide the Arabs. The birth of Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) is a point in case. Ehteshami concludes that the birth of such a grouping is a direct result of the war.<sup>65</sup> Hinnebusch considers the ACC as ‘a new moderate bloc of non-oil states that seemed poised to become the centre of gravity in inter-Arab politics.’<sup>66</sup> Chubin considers

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<sup>61</sup> Kadduri, M., & Ghareeb, E., *War in the Gulf 1990-91: The Iraq-Kuwait Conflict and its Implications*, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 80.

<sup>62</sup> Dannreuther, R., “The Gulf Conflict: A Political and Strategic Analysis,” *Adelphi Papers*, 264, Brassey, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Winter 1991/92, p. 8, p. 11. Also Kadduri, M., & Ghareeb, E., *War in the Gulf 1990-91: The Iraq-Kuwait Conflict and its Implications*, (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1997), pp. 80-81.

<sup>63</sup> Taylor, A., “Political Currents in the Arab World before the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait,” in Helms II, R. & Dorff, R., (eds.), *The Persian Gulf Crisis: Power in the Post-Cold War World*, (London: Praeger, 1993), p.85.

<sup>64</sup> Taylor, In, & Dorff, (eds.), *The Persian Gulf Crisis: Power in the Post-Cold War World*, 1993, p. 88.

<sup>65</sup> Ehteshami in Gow, (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict and he World Community*, 1993, p. 58.

<sup>66</sup> Hinnebusch R., ‘The Foreign Policy of Egypt’. In Hinnebusch, R., & Ehteshami, A., (eds.) *The Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), p. 107.



it as 'to some degree, competitive with the Saudi-led GCC. The ACC was designed as a vehicle for the extension of Iraq's new leading regional role and to Egyptian acquiescence in the fact.'<sup>67</sup> Similarly, Tibi argues that within the ACC, Iraq was hoping to reintegrate Egypt into Arab politics under its own leadership. However, Egypt did return to the council without laying claim to a leading role.<sup>68</sup> In this context, Chubin's term *acquiescence* is telling. Otherwise Mubarak would have told Saddam: 'brother', there is no need for such grouping; we have our Arab League.<sup>69</sup>

In any case, the ACC was characterised by the political diversity of its membership. The Hashemite kingdom of Jordan, for instance, provided the territorial bond between Ba'thist Iraq and Pluralist Egypt. The geographical and political diversity of the ACC served as a strengthening feature of the organisation.<sup>70</sup> The ACC also increased Iraqi options and reduced those of Syria and Iran.<sup>71</sup> However, Syria restored its diplomatic ties with Iraq's close wartime ally, Egypt, in December 1989.<sup>72</sup> But the establishment of the ACC on the ground did not lead Arab politics anywhere new. In fact, the crisis revealed intra-Arab differences in regional alliances. Although two of the ACC's members took Iraq's side, Egypt's anti-Iraq stance ensured its ineffectiveness.<sup>73</sup>

Saddam Hussein was seeking supremacy over the Arab world. The atmosphere was inspiring, and two factors justify mention in this context. The first is Jewish immigration to Israel and the second is the Intifada. The region's problems were compounded by the remarkable political transformations in Eastern Europe in 1989 and the rapid erosion of the world 'progressive camp' upon which radical and nationalist

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<sup>67</sup> Chubin, S., 'Regional Politics and the Conflict', In, Danchev, A., & Keohane, D. (eds.), *International Perspectives on the Gulf Conflict, 1990-91*, (London: St. Martin Press, 1994), p. 9.

<sup>68</sup> Tibi, B., *Conflict and War in the Middle East 1998*, p. 170.

<sup>69</sup> Functionally, the ACC was primarily economic, though Iraq subsequently attempted to promote military co-operation, something Cairo politically rejected as incompatible with Arab League commitments. In Chubin, S., 'Regional Politics and the Conflict', In, Danchev, A., & Keohane, D. (eds.), *International Perspectives on the Gulf Conflict, 1990-91* p. 9.

<sup>70</sup> Ehteshami in Gow, (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict and the World Community*, 1993, p. 59.

<sup>71</sup> Chubin, S., 'Regional Politics and the Conflict', In, Danchev, A., & Keohane, D. (eds.), *International Perspectives on the Gulf Conflict, 1990-91*, 1994, p. 10.

<sup>72</sup> Ehteshami in Gow, (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict and the World Community*, 1993, p. 59.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

Third World regimes had become so reliant.<sup>74</sup> The removal of pro-Moscow regimes in Eastern Europe had dramatic consequences for the foreign relations of those countries *vis-à-vis* the Middle East.<sup>75</sup> At the same time as re-examining their close ties with the radical Arab states, they began to improve their relations with Israel, effectively still the enemy of all but one of the Arab states. Improvements in Israel's bilateral relations with Moscow's former European allies followed the same pattern already established between the Jewish state and the Soviet Union. Technical exchanges accelerated Jewish emigration to Israel.<sup>76</sup>

Accelerated Jewish immigration to Israel (and the Occupied Territories) and the 'changing international environment' afforded the Iraqi president the right atmosphere in which to launch his most pronounced bid yet for Arab supremacy.<sup>77</sup> Within the ACC, Saddam sought to dominate Middle East politics: he exploited both rising anxieties in the Arab world about Israel's immigration policy and sympathies concerning the West's 'aggressive' campaign against his country.<sup>78</sup> In a major policy speech in April 1990, he put Iraq on the front-line of the Arab-Israeli conflict, declaring that his country's missiles were deployed 'in the direction of Israel'.<sup>79</sup>

### **Did the KC Create a New Arab Regional Order?**

#### ***Pan-Arabism***

The KC brought change to the political structure of the Arab ME. The most salient impact of the crisis on the structure of Arab political order was its impact on the concept 'Pan-Arabism'.<sup>80</sup> This assumes that this term possessed political connotations before the

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 60-61.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., P. 62.

<sup>80</sup> See Fouad Ajami, 'The End of Pan-Arabism', *Foreign Affairs*, 57, (Winter 1978/79): 355-73; G. Salamé, 'Inter-Arab Politics: The Return to Geography'. In William Qwandt (ed.), *The Middle East Ten Years After Camp David*, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1988).

crisis. Indeed, Barnett argues that the structure of Arab politics is comprised of both sovereignty and Arabism.<sup>81</sup> Arab states were formally sovereign states, but they were also Arab states.<sup>82</sup> An Arab state that attempted to claim a sovereign prerogative when it sought a strategic alliance with the West was quickly reminded by other Arab states that such an alliance was a public and not a private matter because it concerned the Arab nation.<sup>83</sup> In this context, Tibi considers the concept 'Arabness' as an ideological background to the understanding of Arab interactions. He argues that the main change that took place in the Arab order was 'the recognition of the strength of a policy-oriented, rather than an ideology-oriented redefinition of Arabness.'<sup>84</sup> Moreover, it can be said that 'the defining idea of 'Arab unity' seems to have been the first major casualty of the war.'<sup>85</sup> Until the KC, the basic belief underlying Pan-Arab rhetoric was that all Arabs, being an 'imagined community',<sup>86</sup> shared everything on all levels. Thus, the common assumption was that they only needed to be unified in one centrally governed nation-state.<sup>87</sup>

However, the crisis proved that Arabs shared everything except their Arabism and demonstrated that this is exactly what Arab states did not want to have as a common bond between them. The concepts Pan-Arabism, Arab nationalism, and Arabism point towards the existence of an Arab nation. However, the more discussions were formulated or actions taken in the name of these terms, the less an Arab consensus existed. To illuminate this point one only has to look, on one hand, at the impact of Nasser of Egypt on the making of the concept of Arabism, and on the other hand, at the impact of the KC on the making of this concept. Sirriyeh concludes that 'the most central doctrine of the Nasserist version of Pan-Arabism (which was also advocated by

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<sup>81</sup> Barnett, M, N. *Dialogue in Arab Politics*, 1998, p. 29.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32. See also Noble, P., "The Arab System," in Kornay & Dessouki, (eds.), *The Arab Foreign Policy of Arab States*, p. 48-50.

<sup>84</sup> Tibi, B., "From Pan-Arabism to the Community of Sovereign Arab States: Redefining the Arab and Arabism in the Aftermath of the Second Gulf War," in Hudson, M., (ed.), *Middle East Dilemma: The Politics and Economics of Arab Integration* (London, New York: I. B. Tauris 1998), p. 94.

<sup>85</sup> Matthews, K., *The Gulf Conflict and International Relations*, (London, New York: Routledge 1993), p.261.

<sup>86</sup> On this theme see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, (London, revised ed. 1993), Tibi, *Conflict and War*, Footnote, 15, Ch. 11, p. 274.

<sup>87</sup> Tibi, *Conflict and War in the Middle East*, 1998, p. 197.

the Ba'ath Party and the Arab nationalist movement) was the equating of Pan-Arabism with Arab nationalism and Arab unity.<sup>88</sup> Nasser had turned Pan-Arabism into an ideology.<sup>89</sup> Nasser's problem was that none of the Arab leaders on the ground wanted to be an ideologue. Sirriyeh adds that since the "Nasserist aspiration of transforming Arab nationalism into a unitary state entailed a most destabilising element in regional Arab politics in the 1950s and 1960s in view of implicit threat to state sovereignty"<sup>90</sup> However, what heightened the perception of threat by other Arab states regarding Nasserism was the convergence of these concepts of Arab sovereignty with the provocative approaches pursued by Nasserism to achieve Arab unity.<sup>91</sup> These approaches were called the Bismarckian (that is, employing coercive methods to achieve the goal of unity) and the revolutionary (seeking to promote Arab unity through internal upheavals in the other Arab country concerned), thus rendering the idea of Arab unity as a threatening and negative element in the eyes of the Arab states.<sup>92</sup> At the same time the major weakness of Pan-Arab movement was that 'even states ruled by nationalists advanced narrow state interests that were competitive with each other.'<sup>93</sup>

The case of the KC is similar, although the impact of the crisis on the course of Pan-Arabism has been interpreted in different ways. One argument is that the crisis had revived the collective Arab feelings and sentiments. The division, according to this argument, was between the people and the regimes.<sup>94</sup> Another critical view of Arabism indicated that the crisis had delivered the *coup de grace* to the idea of a transnational Arab society.<sup>95</sup> Barnett, however, maintains that the crisis stressed that state sovereignty

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<sup>88</sup> Sirriyeh, H., "A New Version of Pan-Arabism?" *International Relations*, Vol. XV, no. 3, (December 2000), p. 54.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55 .

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>93</sup> Ibrahim, I., "Sovereign States and Borders in the Gulf Region", in Ibrahim, I. (ed.), *The Gulf Crisis: Background and Consequences*, (Washington DC: Centre For Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University 1992), p. 13.

<sup>94</sup> See As'ad Abu Khalil, "A New Arab Ideology? The Rejuvenation of Arab Nationalism", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 46, no. 1 (Winter 1992), pp. 36-27. in Sirriyeh, p. 59.

<sup>95</sup> See Mahmud, A. Faksh, "Withered Arab Nationalism", *Orbis*, vol. 37, no. 3 (summer 1993), p 434. In Sirriyeh, p. 59-60.

and the Arab nationalist language is still to be heard.<sup>96</sup> Sirriyeh, too, insists on the idea of the 'multi-state Pan-Arab order'. He maintains that 'despite the shocking consequences of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the ensuing inter Arab war, the Gulf states, rather than abandoning the concept of Pan-Arabism, were still committing themselves to operating within a more flexible pan-Arab framework.'<sup>97</sup> For Sirriyeh, there was a new Arab form of consensus which emerged after the KC. Using the positions of Arab states which participated in the Damascus declaration as a basic example to illustrate the Arab consensus, he maintains that:

The Arab positions suggest an increasing Arab agreement on a new concept of Arab consensus that is different from the earlier concept and that reconciles individualism and collectivism. It is possible to envisage this concept as consisting of two levels. One of general principles of parameters that the states are willing to commit themselves to as principles commanding consensus, and the other whereby Arab states would tend to fulfil their individual national requirements, but without violating the general parameters. For example, the general principle of boycotting Israel in the old version of Pan-Arabism has been replaced in the new version by the principle of not normalising relations with Israel until a satisfactory Arab-Israeli settlement or significant progress towards it has been achieved. Such a parameter can now be maintained, while allowing Arab states to follow their own individual economic or security interests.<sup>98</sup>

Pan-Arabism was, in one way or another, affected by the KC. The most salient feature of this effect was that the crisis itself was, to some extent, conducted in the name of Arabism. Saddam Hussein used Pan-Arab sentiment within the course of the crisis, which made it not only a crisis of invasion, but also a crisis of legitimising the invasion. In the text of the annexation of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein, he highlights the Pan-Arab perception that the 'major crime' the West has committed against the Arabs has been the division of their lands. Saddam reminded his fellow Arabs that the region was 'one entity when it was ruled by Baghdad'.<sup>99</sup> Saddam Hussein's rhetoric on the one hand attracted many in the Arab Street, although the Arab Street had no weight in making

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<sup>96</sup> Barnett, M., *Dialogues in Arab Politics*, 1998, p. 163-4.

<sup>97</sup> Sirriyeh, H., "A New Version of Pan-Arabism?" p. 61.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>99</sup> Tibi, *Conflict and War in the Middle East*, 1998, p. 198. See also Ibrahim, I., (ed.), *The Gulf Crisis: Background and Consequences*, 1992, pp. 10-16.

politics.<sup>100</sup> On the other hand, his rhetoric left the question open: in the name of Arab brotherhood, in the name of Arabness, one Arab country could overnight swallow another Arab country. What could happen if these putative (i.e. so-called or debatable) 'Arab-brotherhood' feelings did not exist? However, the failure of Arab states to find an Arab solution to the crisis is telling of how the order was, and how it remained. Ehteshami frames it this way:

the inability of the Arab states to present a united front in the face of the new crisis was not surprising... the divided Arab League's response to this crisis epitomised the paralysis of the organisation as a forum of Arab opinion and a vehicle for its action. More fundamentally, it illustrated the deep divisions within the Arab order as a whole.<sup>101</sup>

Some scholars have argued that the crisis underlined or gave emphasis to the sovereignty of the Arab State. Barnett, for example, concludes that 'Sovereignty demanded that Arab states recognise each other's legitimacy, border, and the principle of non-interference. But Arabism held that Arab states were to defend the Arab nation, to uphold regional standards of legitimacy, to deny the very distinction between the international and the domestic.'<sup>102</sup> After the crisis, he concludes, 'Arab states have generally converged on sovereignty to organise their relations and no longer deny each other's legitimacy: this in turn fostered regional order by encouraging them to limit their behaviour in a continuous and predictable manner.'<sup>103</sup>

The above arguments maintain that there occurred a change or an impact upon pan-Arabism. Although it is valid to say that there was an impact, nevertheless the degree of the impact of the crisis on the state persona is overstated. Tibi maintains that 'one of the lessons of the [KC] is that existing Arab nation-states—regardless of their historical

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<sup>100</sup> The Arab public opinion neither prevented the invasion from taking place nor the war. On public reactions to the KC and the Gulf War see Shibly Telhami, "Arab Public Opinion and the Gulf War", *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 108, Issue, 3 (Autumn, 1993), 437-452.

<sup>101</sup> Ehteshami, in Gow, (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict and the World Community*, 1993, pp. 64-65.

<sup>102</sup> Barnett, M., "Regional Security after the Gulf War", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 111, issue 4, (winter 1996-1997, p 600.

<sup>103</sup> Barnett, M., "Regional Security after the Gulf War", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 111, issue 4, (winter 1996-1997, p. 602; See also, Michael Barnett, "Nationalism, Sovereignty, and Regional Order in the Arab State System", *International Organisation*, 49, (Summer 1995): 479-510; Michael Barnett, "Institutions, Roles, and Disorder: The Case of the Arab State System", *International Studies Quarterly*, 37, (September 1993), 271-296.

background—are here to stay.’<sup>104</sup> But Arab states were ‘staying here’ and since their emergence after World War II, they had always been sovereign states. The KC did not change how Arab states perceived their Arabness. Arab states are aware of the degree of existing conflict across their states because they have other Arab states as neighbouring states. However, although Arab states wished otherwise, Arabism was not totally annihilated.

The evidence is that some sources of the ‘Arabness’ of the Arab states continued to exist after the crisis. The Arab League for example, is the institutional source of *Arab* states. At the same time, however, the league is the source of the failure of the Arab states to be ‘entirely’ free from the restraint of Arabism because the league emphasises the Arabness of the state. The KC did not lead to the abolition of the Arab League: both Kuwait and Iraq remain members of the same league and both attend the same summits held by the league.<sup>105</sup> The league’s charter focuses mainly on the Arabness of the Arab states and of the Arab nation. But the division and fragmentation had reached the minds of those who believed that there would be a nation, a community which could be called Arab. Therefore, the crisis was a source of damage to pan-Arabism but did not abolish the shape and structure of the state as an Arab state, something which has had a severe impact on the unmaking of an Arab system, as will be explained in Chapter Five of this study. In conclusion, the notion of change within the degree of sovereignty of the state is dependent upon the concept of galvanisation, in that galvanisation simultaneously protects the state and restricts its actions and its decision-making ability. This is something which will be illustrated below in the discussion concerning the Arab balance of power.

### ***New Version of Arab Security: ‘Galvanisation’ Guarantees Security***

Two complementary elements form the order of security for Arab states following the KC. First, the impact of the surprise Iraqi attack on Kuwait left the Arab states and other units in the region insecure. Secondly, the counter actions to this attack restored calm to the region, but not total security. The American intervention in the forcing of Iraq out of

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<sup>104</sup> Tibi, In Hudson, (ed.), *Middle East Dilemma* 1998, p. 97.

<sup>105</sup> Iraq was first invited to an Arab summit only in March 2002, in Beirut. For more details on the outcomes of the summit regarding Iraq see, *Al-Hayat* (London), issue no. 14253, March 29, 2002; [www.daralhayat.com](http://www.daralhayat.com).

Kuwait created the ground for new security mechanisms in the region. Galvanisation provides security, but when galvanisation becomes absolute hegemony, there emerges a new dimension of security dilemma. In the following pages, I will discuss first how the crisis had an effect on the security dynamics in the ME and then I will offer a discussion of the new shape of security dilemma in the region.

This question of a new version of security for Arab states in the ME and for the entire region was initiated when, on August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1990, all of the region's members were first apprised of the 'dimension' of the invasion. The first post-crisis security move on an Arab level was the Damascus Declaration (DD) convened in March 1991.<sup>106</sup> The Gulf States, Egypt and Syria agreed on strategic and military co-operation which involved 'subsidies for Egypt and Syria versus security for the Gulf states.'<sup>107</sup> Egypt and Syria argued, 'but not persuasively', that the 'invasion showed the dangers of too much Western reliance and that a pan-Arab military force and greater economic<sup>108</sup> integration should be the foundations of Arab security.'<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, the declared plans of the DD were not translated into action for two reasons. First, it was the shock of the invasion that had led the Gulf States to seek help from the Egyptian and Syrian forces. Since the origin of the threat was an 'Arab' state, the resort of the Gulf States to other Arab states seeking support and protection did not seem to correspond to the existing order, which was made up in part by the source of the threat – an Arab state. Therefore, this declaration did not live up to the factual expectations. In this context, Hinnebusch argues that 'once the Iraqi threat was reduced, the Gulf States' distrust of other Arabs surfaced.'<sup>110</sup> By the summer of 1991, it had become clear to all the parties that the original ambitious interpretations of the DD were dead and that security cooperation rather than actual military alliance was what the Gulf States wanted.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> See Agha, H., & A., Khalidi, *Syria and Iran: Rivalry and Cooperation* (London: Pinter, 1995).

<sup>107</sup> Ajami, F., "Shooting an Elephant: The Expedition and its Aftermath," in Nye, J., Jr., & Smith, R., (eds.), *After the Storm: Lessons from the Gulf War* (London, New York: The Aspen Institute, Madison Books, 1992), p. 124.

<sup>108</sup> The Gulf States agreed that Egypt and Syria would station 65 000 troops in the Gulf, while the Gulf States provide \$15 billion Arab development fund. Hinnebusch, "Egypt, Syria and the Arab System," in Jawad (ed.), *The Middle East in the New World Order*, 1994, p. 122.

<sup>109</sup> Hinnebusch, R., "Egypt, Syria and the Arab State System in the New World Order," in Jawad, H., (ed.), *The Middle East in the New World Order*, 1994, p. 122.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>111</sup> Gause, G., "Saudi Arabia: Desert Storm and After". In Freedman, R., (ed.), *The Middle East after Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait*, (Florida: University Press of Florida, 1993), pp. 215-216.



The second reason for the failure of the DD lies in the elegant description given by Maoz observing that the ME is 'a high-crime neighbourhood'.<sup>112</sup> It was therefore a risky environment for the states of the Gulf Region to put trust in other Arab states to guard their security. Thus, the new major dimension of new security arrangements in the region was that Saudi Arabia invited the United States forces to station on the its soil. The Saudis abandoned their historical position of keeping their United States military connection 'over the horizon' and at arms' length.<sup>113</sup> On the domestic level, there was hardly a substantial opposition within the ruling elite. Even the religious establishment, which might also have been expected to oppose the deployment of the United States troops, officially approved that policy line in a *fatwa* (religious judgement).<sup>114</sup>

The American presence on the Saudi soil had a far-reaching impact on the new face of regional security. Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs) focus specifically on the psychological aspect of mutual suspicions and distrust between adversaries.<sup>115</sup> CSBMs serve to reduce surprise attacks.<sup>116</sup> But CSBMs cannot be imposed from the outside, and while they may benefit from a skilled and mutually trusted mediator, they require a measure of understanding and co-ordination between the concerned parties themselves.<sup>117</sup> Nevertheless, the American presence after the Iraqi surprise attack on Kuwait constituted in itself a CSBM between the Arab states in that this presence reduced the possibility of further surprise attacks. Moreover, the fact that for the first time in history American forces had also to be stationed on Israeli soil to

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<sup>112</sup> Maoz, Z., "Regional Security in the Middle East: Past Trends, Present Realities and Future Challenges," in Maoz, Z., (ed.), *Regional Security in the Middle East*, (London: Portland, Frank Cass, 1997), p. 26; for more on regional Security in the Middle East see Ephraim Inbar (ed.), *Regional Security Regimes: Israel and Its Neighbours* (Albany: State University of New York Press 1995).

<sup>113</sup> Gause, G., "Saudi Arabia: Desert Storm and After," in Freedman, R., (ed.), *The Middle East after Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait*, 1993, p., 209.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, pp. 209-210.

<sup>115</sup> Levite, A., & Landau, E., "Confidence and Security Building Measures in the Middle East," in Maoz, Z., (ed.), *Regional Security in the Middle East*, (London: Portland, Frank Cass, 1997), p. 144.

<sup>116</sup> On this issue regarding the ME see David B. Dewitt, "Confidence and Security Building Measures in the Middle East: Is there a Role?," in Ben-Dor and Dewitt, *Conflict Management in the Middle East* pp. 241-59.

<sup>117</sup> Levite, A., & Landau, E., "Confidence and Security Building Measures in the Middle East," in Maoz, Z., (ed.), *Regional Security in the Middle East*, 1997, p. 144.

protect the Jewish state from Arab attack, as Ehteshami argues, will have far-reaching consequences for the future of the Arab-Israeli balance of power.<sup>118</sup>

It also remains the case that Saddam's continuation in power had far-reaching effects upon regional security calculations. His ongoing presence served in some degree to occupy a great deal of the Arab states' foreign policies' capacities. This is illustrated by the way in which the United States maximised the situation in every context, reminding the leaders of the Gulf States that Saddam Hussein still existed and that any morning he could 'jump in their faces'. The reaction of the Gulf States was to attach themselves further to the United States in order to gain more protection. At the same time, Saddam's retention of power had an impact on the reverberations surrounding the invasion itself. Since Arab states associated the Iraqi leader with the invasion of Kuwait, the longer Saddam remained in power, the deeper the perception of the invasion remained in Arab minds – and specifically those of the Gulf State.

In light of these considerations, it followed that the US emerged as 'redeemer' or 'saviour' within the region, its presence being legitimised by the KC, and the arguments of the above scholars concerning American presence in the region as hegemonic are therefore justified.<sup>119</sup> This state of affairs continued until September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, which has shown that absolute power, no matter to whom it belongs, is not a welcome presence in the region. However, based on Gramsci's definition, hegemony is power achieved through a combination of coercion and consent.<sup>120</sup> The American presence in the region was not to enforce promises but to perform the role which the United States had set for itself. The resultant galvanisation of the region secured both the American interest in the region and the security of the Arab states. Galvanisation also facilitated, to some degree, those weak and powerful states to exist side-by-side. However, in the long run, galvanisation rendered the security of the region dependent on the American presence, which in turn was also productive of negative effects,<sup>121</sup> such as the transformation of the American presence in the region into absolute hegemony.

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<sup>118</sup> Ehteshami in Gow, (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict and the World Community*, 1993, p. 66.

<sup>119</sup> See footnotes 28, 36, 37, and 39 of this chapter.

<sup>120</sup> Gramsci draws upon Machiavelli as the latter suggested that power can be achieved through force and fraud.

<sup>121</sup> The American presence in the region is absolute when all, to use Ehteshami's expression, 'strategic interdependence[s]' within the region is dependent on the presence of the U.S., However, the

It is a commonplace, Clark argues, 'to suggest that US policy interests in the Middle East have, for decades, suffered from a serious contradiction. These interests centre upon oil, and Western access to it, and upon the support of Israel. Repeatedly, the latter dimension has threatened to impede the attainment of the former goal.'<sup>122</sup> The KC, however, helped the United States to overcome this issue. It created the ground upon which the United States could still support Israel and at the same time have access to oil. The relationship between this issue and security in the ME is explained in the intensification of the American power in the region.<sup>123</sup> This leads again to the circle of galvanisation; the order which had developed dictated that whatever happened in the region, the first priority of the regional order would be the security of the individual units rather than the security of the region itself.

Based on this, two characteristics of the Arab regional security order emerged. First, although after the end of the Cold War there was an intensification of regionalism and 'regional behaviour' (i.e. trends towards regionalisation), the ME steered clear of this tendency. According to Hurrell and Fawcett, 'these trends towards regionalisation ha[d] been reinforced by the nature of security challenges.'<sup>124</sup> Notably, although there is a multiplicity of security challenges in the ME, the region does not tend to have collective security measures and a tendency towards regionalisation. This is mainly due to the fact that the KC led to an absolute hegemony by the United States and this in turn led regional actors to seek more individual-state-oriented security rather than collective regional security. That means that as long as the United States was protecting Saudi Arabia for example, Saudi Arabia would not seek security alliances with Egypt or with Syria. Therefore, because the United States is the absolute power in the region, it is less

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American presence also is absolute when the states that invited the U.S. to come to the region can no longer invite the U.S. to leave. On the concept 'strategic interdependence', see A. Ehteshami, "The New World Order: The Middle East," in Jawad, (ed.), *The Middle East in the New World Order*, 1994, pp. 70-73.

<sup>122</sup> Clark, I., *The Post-Cold War Order: The Spoils of Peace*, 2001, p. 129.

<sup>123</sup> On the intensification of the American power in the world arena, see the Neo-Realist version: Robert Gilpin, "American Policy in the Post-Regan Era", *Daedalus*, Vol. 116, No., 3, (Summer 1987), pp. 33-67; Also Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict form 1500-2000* (New York: Random House, 1987).

<sup>124</sup> See Hurrell & Fawcett, "conclusion," in Hurrell & Fawcett (eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics*, 1995.

likely for inter-regional units to go for security agreements or security pacts apart from the United States being a main player.

### **The Arab Balance of Power**

The primary effect of the crisis was that it rendered Arab power and capability, to varying degrees according to the validity of that capability, null and void. Arab power, in realistic-*militaristic* terms and in institutional terms (as represented by, for example, the GCC), neither managed to prevent the invasion nor to drive Iraq out of Kuwait. The crisis pushed Arab states to maximise their power, but within a galvanised region they no longer could use this power to balance with. That is because – in Neo-Realist terms of analysis – the ‘regularities and repetitions’ provide a clue to the operation of deep structural constraints.<sup>125</sup> The main form of structural constraint on Arab states, however, was Arabism, and this form of constraint did not fade away. The relationship between Arabism and Arab power meant that Arab states were unable to rid themselves of their form and shape as Arab states, something which was exacerbated by the KC rather than reduced by it. The more Arab states feared other Arab states because they were Arab and because they use(d) Arabism as a pretext in interfering or manipulating other states’ political businesses, the more the concept of Arabism became strongly present in the Arab states’ political orientations.

States balance their power so as to reach an order within which to function<sup>126</sup> The order in this sense is not given but constructed.<sup>127</sup> The construction of order is complete when interactions across units make up the system. In any event, when discussing the Arab balance of power, we do not measure that power in order to gauge the degree of a

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<sup>125</sup> On the regularities in World Politics see, Linklater, “Neo-Realism in Theory and Practice,” in Booth and Smith, (eds.), *International Relations Theory Today*, 1997, pp. 241-263.

<sup>126</sup> The standard functioning of states is that they ‘function’ using diplomacy, deterrence, or means available to survive. The Realist standard is to use power as an asset in order to survive. However, the order could be that of war or ‘state of war’ like that between Arab states and Israel before the peace process was initiated. The ‘state of war’ between Jordan and Israel, for example, was ended after a peace treaty between them was signed in 1994. Therefore, a new order, *i.e.* a ‘state of peace’ between these two countries emerged. I am trying to bring out the notion that functioning within an order is not necessarily that of peace. That would then render relations between states to a ‘naive’ form.

<sup>127</sup> See S. Smith “Is the truth out there? Eight questions about international order,” in, T. V. Paul & J. Hall (eds.), *International Order and the Future of World Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999), pp. 101-104.

definite balance, as we might do, for example, in assessing the power of the United States according to the size of its nuclear arsenals in comparison with Russia or China. Instead, we seek to unveil inter-relations between 'actors' under one single umbrella of power *i.e.* the United States. One issue is clear, however:<sup>128</sup> a 'key component of a regional order is the distribution of *military* power among its members and the crisis was a decisive effect on this dimension of regional politics'.<sup>129</sup>

The main feature of the new power structure in the ME was that Iraq's military capability was eliminated and it was politically isolated.<sup>130</sup> After Iraq's power was severely destroyed, the question was how much power did other members of the region have? In answer, the Arab balance of power – or more precisely, inter-Arab balance of power – could not be shaped and formed in isolation from a consideration of the other non-Arab players in the region.

For Iran,<sup>131</sup> the crisis was a mixed blessing. On one hand, it raised Iran's profile and highlighted its significance as a regional player (the crisis helped in opening up all the frozen channels of communications with Iran's Arab neighbours). On the other, the crisis raised regional tensions and provided the catalyst for the return of Western powers to the Gulf sub-region,<sup>132</sup> thus weakening Tehran's ability to influence the policies of the GCC and to forge ties with the Gulf sheikhdoms aiming at collective security in the Persian Gulf.<sup>133</sup> For Iran, the main expectation of the war was that it expected it to weaken significantly its most stubborn regional competitor.<sup>134</sup> Most important of all, as

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<sup>128</sup> See Taher, A., *L'Irak aux origines du régime militaire*, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1989).

<sup>129</sup> Hart, J., "The Arab Sub-system in crisis," in Ibrahim, I., (ed.), *The Gulf Crisis: Background and Consequences*, (Washington DC: Centre For Contemporary Arab Studies, George Town University, 1992), p. 192.

<sup>130</sup> On the dynamics and assets of the military capability of Iraq see A. H. Cordesman, *Iraq and the War of Sanctions: Conventional Threats and Weapons of Mass Destruction*, (Westport, Connecticut, London: Praeger, 1999).

<sup>131</sup> For more on Iran and the Kuwait Crisis see A. Ehteshami & M. Varasteh, (eds.), *Iran and the International Community*, (London: Routledge, 1991); G. Fuller, *The Centre of the Universe: The Geopolitics of Iran*, (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1991).

<sup>132</sup> See Michael Palmer, *Guardians of the Gulf: A History of America's Expanding Role in the Persian Gulf, 1833-1992* (New York: Free Press, 1992); Willard A. Beling, (ed.), *The Middle East: Quest for an American Policy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1973).

<sup>133</sup> Ehteshami, A., The Foreign Policy of Iran. In Hinnebusch, R. & Ehteshami (eds.) *Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States*, (London, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002), p. 300-301.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 301.

a consequence of the crisis Iran was to win the victory over Iraq that had eluded it on the battlefield. Iraq capitulated to Iran fully and accepted the full implementation of SCR 598 and the 1975 Algiers Treaty concerning their border dispute.<sup>135</sup> Despite Iran's efforts to limit Western military presence in the Gulf sub-region, in the aftermath of the war, a series of bilateral defence pacts between the main Western players and a number of GCC states paved the way for a permanent Western military presence in the Persian Gulf— something Iran had thought its acceptance of SCR 598 would have avoided. Moreover, the creation in March 1991 of the "6+2" Gulf security pact between the GCC and Egypt and Syria worried Tehran that its backyard was being developed as an exclusively Arab area.<sup>136</sup>

The crisis, however, was of huge benefit to Turkey.<sup>137</sup> As Korany points out, "After the end of the Cold War, Turkey was in danger of losing its strategic importance between the East and West. The Gulf War gave Turkey a new strategic role at the expense of its Arab neighbours."<sup>138</sup> Robins too considers the crisis as being of help to Turkey in that Turkey gained substantial amounts of modern hardware for its armed forces.<sup>139</sup> In this context, Chubin recognises that the war served to underscore the return of Turkey to the Middle East in a militarily significant way: the now weak Iraq would no longer present a threat to Turkey.<sup>140</sup>

The overall beneficiary of the crisis was Israel. It used the crisis to improve further its military power. It did not feel compelled to make compromises on the Palestinian issue, and any concessions made in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict could not result in real losses for Israel, since the Arab side was expected to sacrifice much more than

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., p. 302.

<sup>137</sup> For more on Turkey and the Kuwait Crisis see M. Aydin, *Turkish foreign policy during the Gulf war of 1990-1991*, (Cairo: American University in Cairo, 1998).

<sup>138</sup> Korany, B., "The Arab World and the New Balance of Power in the New Middle East," in Hudson, M., (ed.), *Middle East Dilemma: The Politics and Economics of Arab Integration* (London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 1998), p. 52.

<sup>139</sup> Robins, P., *Turkey and the Middle East* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1991), p. 70.

<sup>140</sup> Chubin, S., "Post-war Gulf Security", *Survival* 33, (March-April 1991), p. 145. For more see Gresh, A., & Vidal, D., *Golfe: Clefs pour une guerre annoncée*, Paris, Collection "La mémoire du monde" Le monde-Edetion, 1991; Graz, L., *Le Golfe des turbulences*, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1990).

merely 'an extra mile' for the few inches that Tel Aviv was prepared to travel.<sup>141</sup> Moreover, by destroying Iraqi military power, the challenge to Israel's military superiority was removed. In terms of regional balance of power, Arab divisions thus enhanced Israel's position. Paradoxically, Iraq's rapid military collapse in the war helped to cement Israeli-US relations, an unexpected development, given the coolness between the two countries in the pre-Kuwait crisis period.<sup>142</sup>

Regarding Arab states, for Egypt, the crisis provided an economic outlet, and on the political level it was simultaneously a blessing and a setback.<sup>143</sup> Aftandilian maintains that the defeat of Iraq allowed Egypt to emerge as the strongest Arab military power,<sup>144</sup> and it certainly remains true that the return of the Arab League to Cairo symbolised Egypt's renewed centrality. The centrepiece of Egypt's bid was the Damascus Declaration,<sup>145</sup> but when the Gulf states, led by Kuwait, concluded security agreements with the United States and invited Egyptian and Syrian troops to leave, the post-war vulnerabilities of Egypt's bridging strategy were exposed. The United States was now better positioned to bypass Cairo in securing its vital oil interests, and the Gulf States could rely on American guarantees which they were previously too timid to enlist openly.<sup>146</sup> This, of course, represented in long run a setback for Egypt. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait hired Egyptian and Syrian soldiers but did not call upon the power of these states. Egypt's power, for example was no longer seriously calculated. One of the reasons for that is that Egypt had for a long time secured its peace with Israel, which automatically led to the belief that its power could not be deployed against Israel, the sworn enemy of the Arabs. Subsequently, it was not logical to consider Egyptian power strong enough to be deployed to resolve an inter-Arab matter. According to Aftandilian, 'The Iran-Iraq war helped to accelerate Egypt's rapprochement with the Arab world.'<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Ehteshami in Gow (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict and the World Community*, 1993, p. 70.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., p. 70-71. For more on this see La Guardia, Anton, "Jerusalem Seeks Economic Reward for Restraint", *The Daily Telegraph*, UK, January 22, 1991, p. 5.

<sup>143</sup> Saudi Arabia gave Egypt \$800 million in economic aid after Egypt decided to stand against Iraq. See "The Arab World Chooses Sides"; *Newsweek*, USA, 17, September 1990, p. 14; see also Freed Kenneth, "Egypt and Syria in Cash Security Deal", *The Guardian*, UK, February 18, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>144</sup> Aftandilian, G. L., *Egypt's Bid for Arab Leadership: Implications for US Policy*, 1993, p. 30.

<sup>145</sup> Hinnebusch, "Egypt, Syria and the Arab System," in Jawad (ed.), *The Middle East in the New World Order*, 1994, p. 126.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>147</sup> Aftandilian, G. L., *Egypt's Bid for Arab Leadership*, 1993, p. 27.

But, as mentioned above, by causing intensive American presence in the region, the KC hindered Egypt from fully recovering its central position in the Arab world.

For Syria,<sup>148</sup> the crisis served politically as a bridge for its political existence between the end of the Cold War (when its patron protector and arms supplier was no longer to be relied upon) and the new order which recognised the United States as sole superpower, or as Hinnebusch puts it, to gain United States recognition as a responsible power whose interests should be accommodated in any settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>149</sup> On the regional level, the crisis gave Syria the chance to see its arch-rival – Iraq – destroyed, and at the same time to gain subsidies for its faltering economy. Most importantly, ‘assured there were no plans for permanent United States presence in the region and that postwar security would be in the hands of Arab forces, Assad gambled that participation in the coalition would give Syria a role in filling the power-vacuum once American forces withdrew.’<sup>150</sup>

For Saudi Arabia, the crisis was not a blessing. The crisis reduced the ‘*Ansehen*’ or the status of Saudi Arabia within the GCC member states. ‘While Saudi Arabia’s policy with the world at large is generally pacifistic, its policy vis-à-vis its neighbours on the Arabian peninsula is hegemonic.’<sup>151</sup> Thus, the KC rendered the Saudi position weak because the Saudi power could not match or provide a direct reaction to the Iraqi threat. Although helping Saudi Arabia to top up its military arsenals, the Saudi petrodollars proved irrelevant to the power structure in the region. On the ground, the Saudi power was not operative, which is why after the crisis all Saudi roads led to Washington. Wilson and Graham conclude that the American link proved in the final analysis to be

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<sup>148</sup> On the impact of the crisis on Syria, see Ehteshami, A. & Hinnebusch, R., *Syria and Iran; Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System* 1997, and Quilliam, Neil, *Syria and the New World Order* (London, Ithaca Press, 1999). On economic benefits for Syria, see “The Arab World Chooses Sides”; *Newsweek*, USA, 17, September 1990; Fred Kenneth, “Egypt and Syria in Cash Security Deal”, *The Guardian*, UK, February 18, 1991, p. 3.

<sup>149</sup> Cited in Hinnebusch, R., ‘The Middle East Regional System’. In Hinnebusch, R. & Ehteshami (eds.) *Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States*, 2002, p. 48. See also Ahamd Abdalla, ‘Mubarak’s Gamble’, *Middle East Report*, January-February 1991, pp. 18-21; Raymond Hinnebusch, ‘Syria’s Role in the Gulf War Coalition’, in Andrew Bennett, Joseph Lepgold, and Danny Unger, (eds.), *Friends in Need: Burden Sharing in the Gulf War*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), pp. 219-240.

<sup>150</sup> Hinnebusch, in Jawad, H. (ed.), *The Middle East in the New World Order*, 1994, p. 129.

<sup>151</sup> Wilson, p. & Graham, D., ‘Saudi Arabia: the Coming Storm’, (New York, M. E. Sharp 1994), pp. 125-126.



the only reliable thread in Saudi foreign policy.<sup>152</sup> But this in turn affected Riyadh's post-invasion calculation. Prior to Operation Desert Storm, the Kingdom seemed unwilling to countenance any break in the facade of Arab unity. Now, Saudi Arabia, again with the American backing, has adopted a policy of almost intentional confrontation with its former close allies. Possibly this is a result of great bitterness towards those nations and groups that eagerly lined up to take Saudi money but did little when the Kingdom was in danger.<sup>153</sup>

The crisis for Jordan,<sup>154</sup> as Hamarneh maintains, created severe economic hardships but also had some positive impacts too. The first was that it triggered the longest, most open and democratic period in the history of Jordan. The second was that the crisis furnished the ground-work for a genuine rebuilding of Jordanian-Palestinian communities within Jordan. For decades, the majority of the Palestinians had been under the impression that the Hashemite policies concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict were formulated in collusion with the Zionists. The king's stand during the crisis has been the most important factor in contributing to better relations between the two communities.<sup>155</sup>

Having considered the impact on individual actors in the region, the main impact of the crisis on the Arab balance of power was that "it provided *further* fragmentation in the Arab world and the prospect of the largest Arab force in the modern history being drastically reduced."<sup>156</sup> This refers mainly to the order which Arab balance of power serves to organise. If "[b]alance of power is the dominant way of securing order,"<sup>157</sup> the

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>154</sup> For an eloquent analysis of Jordan's response to the KC, see M. B. Hamarneh, "Jordan's Response to the Gulf Crisis," in Bennis & Mushabeck (eds.), *Beyond the Storm*, 1992, pp. 228-241. On the relationship between Jordan and the Gulf see, Stanley Reed, "Jordan and the Gulf", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 69, no. 5, (Winter 1990-91), pp. 20-35; See also A. Garfinkle, "Jordanian Policy from the Intifada to the Madrid Conference," in Freedman, R., (ed.), *The Middle East after Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait*, 1993, pp. 297-335.

<sup>155</sup> Hamarneh, M. B., "Jordan's Response to the Gulf Crisis". In Bennis & Mushabeck (eds.), *Beyond the Storm*, 1992, pp. 237,238,239.

<sup>156</sup> Ehteshami in Gow, (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict and the World Community*, 1993, pp. 65-66 (my italics); See also Yezid Sayigh, "Globalisation Manqué: Regional Fragmentation and Authoritarian-Liberalism in the Middle East," in L. Fawcett and Y. Sayigh (eds.) *The Third World Beyond The Cold War: Continuity and Change*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1999), pp. 201-234.

<sup>157</sup> See Rengger, N. J., *International Relations, Political Theory and the Problem of Order*, 2000, p. 37.

crux of the question when using this analysis is whether Arab power was used during and after the crisis to balance Arab affairs and counter power.

In fact, the balance of power was/is no longer a central tool of Arab statecraft. The crisis affected Arab states to the degree that Arab states could possess the power, but they could not balance with it. This was/is due to the restraint imposed upon their order. Egypt's and Syria's power(s) were deemed or denounced as unnecessary to be deployed to balance the Iraqi threat or that of Iran after the crisis, because the Arab 'order' – that is the governing style of relations between Arab states – was no longer purely an Arab matter. In effect, Arab states were no longer able to manage their own affairs, something which can be considered not only as one impact of the crisis, but also as an impact of the interrelations between Arab states. To illustrate this point, as Hinnebusch suggests, "The formation of the anti-Iraq coalition showed that decision-making in the Arab states was, by this time, driven almost exclusively by such factors as individual geopolitical interest and/or Western dependency."<sup>158</sup>

Bull maintains that the primary goal of international order is the protection of the sovereignty of the state.<sup>159</sup> The question, therefore, is whether an 'Arab' order was able to protect the sovereignty of Arab state operating in this order. The KC proved that this was not the case. The Arab order could no longer provide the 'ordering' or the overall patterning of inter-Arab relations because within inter-Arab relations 'balance' is not a solution, but a problem.<sup>160</sup> This illustrates the complex relationship which lies between

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<sup>158</sup> Hinnebusch, R., "The Middle East Regional System," in Hinnebusch, R. & Ehteshami (eds.) *Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States*, (London, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002), p. 48.

<sup>159</sup> Cited in Smith, "Is the Truth out There?", in Paul and Hall, *International Order and the Future*. Remarkably, Smith is critical of Bull's argument. He argues that why should the state be privileged in a constructed order? "Critically, if order is constructed why should we accept the state as the analytical unit for our analysis and sovereignty as the primary goal to be protected? There could well be a host of other goals that we should advance, such as human rights, economic wellbeing, life chances, opposition to genocide, female genital mutilation, and so on". However, I defend the argument of Bull as my study considers the state as the core of order analysis. Smith seems to have overlooked the fact that all the goals he suggested were primary goals of advancement are mainly advanced within entirely sovereign states and within sovereign societies. States do not only reach their status as sovereign states when their borders are demarcated, but when the primary goal of states is those issues, and in the same time when states are able to imply sovereign solutions to these issues. That is why, although this is not my concern in this study, cultural boundaries still have an impact on the making of international relations.

<sup>160</sup> In Europe, balance was the solution to the problem of order that the European states system believed itself to have evolved, once the practices of sovereignty became embedded in European life and it became the central pivot of discussion about international affairs well into the twentieth century. For more on this argument see N. J., Rengger, *International Relations, Political Theory and the Problem of Order*, 2000, pp. 21-24.

power and security. With which powers should the Arab states balance? Israel, Iran, Turkey? Or should they balance with each other? The crisis placed the Arab states within a dilemma about how and what type of an option they should choose. The solution proved to lie in the galvanisation of the region by the United States. For Arab states, the American power is a *sine qua non* to maintain an 'order' in balance.

The Arab state's *problematique*, as theorised in chapter one, is the Arab state itself. The survival of the Arab state had to be predicated on the cost to other Arab states because the existing Arab order could not guarantee the state's survival, something which the KC served to exacerbate. Also examined in Chapter One was the idea of the creation or invention of the Arab states as discussed by Owen and Springborg. Such an idea is exemplified by the rivalry between Egypt and Syria, as discussed in Chapter Two, a rivalry which culminated during and after the crisis. Hinnebusch expresses it thus:

Egypt's paramount concern for its bridging strategy can be seen in Mubarak's choices during the crisis. Had Arab autonomy and security been a central concern, he would have sought a diplomatic solution and demurred at the destruction of Iraqi power needed in the balance with Israel and Iran. But Mubarak short-circuited Arab diplomacy in favour of US intervention and sent Egyptian troops to give it legitimizing cover. At the decisive 10 August 1990 Arab summit, where the issue was the Saudi request for US help, Mubarak, as chairman, refused to allow discussion, amendments or votes for alternatives. The evidence is strong that Mubarak subsequently favoured a military solution over a negotiated one. This not only pleased his American patron but was a bid to fully re-establish the Egypt-Saudi alliance which had been enervated by Camp David. Mubarak also aimed to assume responsibility for post-war Gulf security, to sell the protective services of his large army to the Gulf rulers for petrodollars. In fact, Egypt won massive, globally unprecedented debt relief and a promise of aid from the Gulf, but was rebuffed in its bid to play Gulf *gendarme*.<sup>161</sup>

From this, it can be seen that what made or could make an Arab order more stable is simply for that order to be less *Arab*. Consequently, the term 'balance' remains hostage to what had changed in Arab power formation after the crisis. Iraq's power, as pointed out earlier, was destroyed, but the Iraqi leadership remained in power; thus, the source of the 'threat' also remained. It has been argued that "the pattern of regional alliances has been characterised by the same pliability as it had been before."<sup>162</sup> The crisis "did

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<sup>161</sup> Hinnebusch, R., "The Foreign Policy of Egypt," in Hinnebusch, R. & Ehteshami (eds.) *Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States*, 2002, pp. 91-112.

<sup>162</sup> Niblock, 'A Framework for Renewal in the Middle East?', in Jawad, *The Middle East in the New World Order*, (ed.) 1994, p. 3.

not reduce the ongoing competition between Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia, but in absolute terms, Iraq was weakened to the benefit of the other two."<sup>163</sup> The Kuwaiti leadership was brought back to govern as before, Egypt and Syria profited mainly economically, and Syria and Iran [temporarily] moved quickly from being international pariahs to valued partners in the Western-orchestrated coalition.<sup>164</sup>

There were no impacts, however, on changing regimes.<sup>165</sup> Only the 'Durchsetzungsvermoegen' of the Arab state became governed by galvanisation, which affected the performance of the state as a state. Almost all Arab states wanted to make peace with Israel. This confirms the dimensions of my discussion: part of Arab states history is that they are Arab states opposite to Israel. Once they have made their peace with Israel, they have lost one of the main mechanisms by which they operate on regional level; that is their opposition to Israel which gives them more legitimacy and *Ansehen* (respect) by their peoples. But still, Arab states had/ve no choices to make or unmake peace with Israel.

### Summary

The KC constitutes a watershed in inter-Arab relations. The Arab regional order changed from being part of the dynamics of the impacts of the Cold War and from the dynamics of dominating Arabism, to the dynamics of galvanisation by the United States. The sum result of the KC was that all Arab states became coated by the American presence in the region.

Nevertheless, the crisis left several types of impacts on the Arab regional order. First and foremost, it furthered the fragmentation of the Arabs. Secondly, the crisis helped Arab states to enter into an open dialogue with Israel. The crisis was a reason behind the creation of the order within which Arab-Israeli dialogue took place. However, this does not necessarily lead to peace in the region because the dynamics of the existing 'system'

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<sup>163</sup> Ehteshami in Gow, (ed.), *Iraq, the Gulf Conflict and the World Community*, 1993, p. 67.

<sup>164</sup> Niblock, 'A Framework for Renewal in the Middle East?', in Jawad *The Middle East in the New World Order*, (ed.), 1994, p. 1.

<sup>165</sup> For more details on the study of the Arab regimes see Maurice Flory, et al., *Les régimes politiques arabes*, (Press Universitaires de France: Paris 1990).



prevent the making of a peaceful order. Therefore, one of the major setbacks as a result of the crisis was that it strengthened the Israeli position in the Arab world through the peace process in the region. Thirdly, the crisis did not cause the death of Arabism as some scholars have argued. Had the crisis done so, there would have not been a process of peace between 'all' the Arabs and Israel. Fourthly, the crisis proved that it was specifically an Arab crisis. All non-Arab parties in the region in one way or another profited from the crisis. The sole losers were the Arabs. And finally, the crisis legitimised the American presence in the region, which led to its galvanisation. It can therefore be concluded that the change in the Arab regional order which was brought about by the KC served mainly to further fragment the Arabs – and thus further strengthen the grip of Israel in the region.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### The Shape of Inter-Arab Politics in the 1990s and Beyond

#### Introduction

The concept of 'conflict' is a landmark within the ME and there are no considerable ambiguities surrounding the concept when it is connected to that region.<sup>1</sup> The main features of this conflict in the ME are first of all Israel, which is taken into account because of its continuing occupation of Arab land. The second is the Palestinians, who are taken into account because they are occupied by Israel and they do not cease by their own means to resist occupation. Iraq is also taken into consideration because President Saddam Hussein, who has remained in power since the KC, has, whether he likes it or not, become synonymous with conflict and war in the ME. Therefore, when speaking of the ME, one implies the degree of conflict in the region and in many ways the implications flow back to refer to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Meanwhile, at the regional level, the United States is a regional player. Thus, it would be to fall short academically not to calculate the American impact in the region as comprehensive. This chapter, however, apart from the section on Iraq, and in order to maintain the balance between the events and their makers, will not put the United States in the centre of each political measure in the region in order to avoid changing the focus to that of 'American domination'. Instead, this chapter will automatically recognise the American presence in the region and in the same time illustrate those events which are outlined below, to help achieve an understanding of the theoretical argument of Chapter Five.

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<sup>1</sup> In everyday use, it is often taken to mean some dispute in which two or more parties are using violence as a means of winning, or more usually (as they perceive it) 'in self-defence'. Violence is normally used in the sense of damage, although it is becoming increasingly acknowledged that it is possible to speak of using *psychological* violence and causing *psychological* damage to an adversary. For more on this subject see C.R. Mitchell, *The Structure of International Conflict*, London, Macmillan, 1981 from which this footnote is taken p. 15.

Since the end of the KC, the academic and political debates in the ME have revolved around two issues: the first is the peace process and the second is the isolation of Iraq from collective Arab, regional, and international policymaking. These two parallel issues made the political headlines in the ME until September 2000 when the al-Aqsa Intifada broke out. The al-Aqsa Intifada, particularly in its early days, occupied the headlines and constructed a new face of the peace process in the ME. Therefore, I shall take these events, marked as following, as signposts for this chapter

The marginalisation of Iraq;

The peace process;

The al-Aqsa Intifada

The marginalisation of Iraq was formed throughout economic sanctions and political isolation of Iraq from collective Arab policymaking. This chapter will not discuss the philosophy and the impact of sanctions on Iraq, since this is not the concern of this study. It is taken for granted that sanctions have helped to weaken and isolate Iraq from the political order in the region and on an international level.<sup>2</sup> This chapter will illustrate how Iraq became isolated and marginalised, which automatically indicates the strong hold of the United States on the region. The fate of Iraq could not be discussed without taking the United States into account. Thus, this section of this chapter will illustrate how the United States' political presence in the region impacted Iraq to the degree of its marginalisation.

The peace process started between 'the' Arabs and Israel and ended up between Israel and the Palestinians while the Arabs took on the role of mediators. This chapter will elaborate on the relationship between making peace and the regional order and examine why each country including Israel chose to make peace. The question to be answered in this section is whether peace was a collective interest of the ME states or whether it was based on merely individual motivations of each party in the region.

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<sup>2</sup> See Douglas M. Englund 'Lessons for Disarmament from the Experience of UNSCOM,' in Steven Mataija and J. Marshall Beier, (eds.), *Multilateral Verification and the Post-Gulf Environment: Learning from the UNSCOM Experience* (Toronto: Centre for International and Strategic Studies, York University, 1992); Ian Johnstone, *Aftermath of the Gulf War: An Assessment of UN Action*, International Peace Academy Occasional Papers (Boulder, Colorado, Lynne Rienner, 1994).

This study considers the al-Aqsa Intifada as an inherent part of the peace process. The main structure of political order in the ME is conflict and violence. However, the peace process, as an *ad hoc* event, mitigated the perception of Israeli violence in the region which imbued the concept 'Israel' with more friendly connotations - being in a peace process with the Arabs rather than being *the* occupier of the Arab land. Consequently, when the al-Aqsa Intifada broke out, although it represents the counter-violence to the occupation, it is seen as *the* Palestinian violence. This chapter will elaborate on this point; the main issue here is that this chapter in its entirety is to facilitate the discussion in Chapter Five which comprises the main body of the entire study.

### **The Regional Order and the Marginalisation of Iraq**

The subject formation about Iraqi politics is not similar to that concerning the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. There are various factors which intervene when discussing the Arab-Israeli conflict. There are, for instance, two parties in conflict: the Palestinians and the Israelis. There are also Arab states involved, and there is the role of mediation by the United States. There are also factors which count in analysing the events which are the events themselves: the peace process, the succession of different governments in Israel, Arafat's continued role at the forefront of Palestinian politics. Such factors, however, are not applicable when discussing the case of Iraq within Arab politics. There is only Saddam Hussein the Iraqi president. The future of Iraq after the KC was tied to the fact that Saddam Hussein remained in power. Therefore, Saddam Hussein was the main figure to 'talk' about when discussing Iraqi politics. This study therefore treats Iraq as Saddam and Saddam as Iraq.

The American insistence that Saddam was a threat gave him the position before Iraq. that says that the concern of the United States was that Saddam Hussein was a threat to his neighbours and he was still worthy of containment. This, however, gave the person of Saddam the weight over the actual Iraqi power. Iraq, however, did not possess the power to deter the American forces which marched into Baghdad.

It was suggested in western debate that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction: even if Iraq had possessed the required power to claim a position in the region, Iraqi power could no longer shape the regional order. The American presence in the region was the yardstick by which to measure the Iraqi actions and behaviour and this does not require



deep analysis because the relationship between the United States and Iraq was identical to their relationship with Saddam as president of Iraq. In light of this consideration, this section of this chapter will describe the Iraqi position within the regional order in the ME and in Chapter Five, relating this to the absence of an Arab system, more analysis will be embarked upon.

Security Council Resolution 687,<sup>3</sup> which was passed at the end of the Gulf war in 1991, sought to involve Iraq cooperatively in the post-war measures to build lasting peace and stability in the region.<sup>4</sup> More than [twelve] years after the initial sanctions were imposed on Iraq, it is clear that this objective has not been fulfilled.<sup>5</sup> What was fulfilled primarily was the marginalisation or, in other words, the banning of Iraq from collective Arab and international policymaking.

Iraq's location in the ME and on an international level was set with the outcome of the second Gulf War. President Bush, in his personal diary, stated that he had "no feeling of euphoria" over the outcome of the crisis: "it has not been a clean end; there is no battleship *Missouri* surrender. This is what's missing to make this akin to WWII, to separate Kuwait from Korea and Vietnam."<sup>6</sup> National Security Advisor of Bush, Brent Scowcroft, viewed Iraq as a regional counterweight to a potentially resurgent Iran.<sup>7</sup> Clinton administration's stance towards Iraq was not clear in the beginning. In an interview in mid-January 1993, Clinton stated that if Saddam Hussein "wants a different relationship with the United States and the United Nations, all he has to do is to change

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<sup>3</sup> For reference to economic sanctions before the KC see Margaret Doxey, *International Sanctions in Contemporary Perspective*, (London: Macmillan Press 1987). For an analysis of the security council resolutions against Iraq, see Tim Niblock, "*Pariah States*" & *Sanctions in the Middle East: Iraq, Libya, Sudan* (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner 2001). On sanctions and their effectiveness see Alan Dowty, 'Sanctioning Iraq: The Limits of the New World Order', *Washington Quarterly*, (Summer 1994), Vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 179-198. On sanctions and international law see Christopher Joyner, Sanctions, 'Compliance and International Law: Reflections on the United Nations' Experience Against Iraq', *Virginia Journal of International Law*, (Fall 1991), vol. 32, no. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Niblock, *Pariah States*, 2001, p. 97.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>6</sup> Walter Pincus, "Bush Says He Hoped Saddam Would Flee Iraq," *Washington Post*, September 2, 1998, p. A2. See Robert S. Litwak, *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy: Containment After the Cold War*, (Washington D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson Centre Press 2000), p. 123.

<sup>7</sup> Litwak, R. S., *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 2000, p. 124.

his behaviour.”<sup>8</sup> But when this interview triggered a barrage of criticism, Clinton denied that there would be no fundamental differences between Bush and Clinton administration policies toward Iraq and that the new White House would not “do business” with Saddam Hussein.<sup>9</sup> Dee Dee Mayrs, the presidential spokesman, [then] stated that the Clinton administration did not believe that Iraq could come into full compliance with Security Council resolutions while Saddam Hussein remained in power. Therefore, he stated, “there are no practical differences” between the Bush and Clinton policies.<sup>10</sup>

On May 1993, Martin Indyk, the special assistant to the President for Near East and South Asian affairs at the National Security Council, outlined the dual containment policy in a speech to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He said that the United States would no longer play the game of balancing Iran against Iraq. The strength of the United States and its friends in the region—Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the GCC— would allow Washington to “counter both the Iraqi and Iranian regimes; we will not need to depend on one to counter the other.”<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, he stated that the administration’s goal is “to establish clearly and unequivocally that the current regime in Iraq is a criminal regime, beyond the pale of the international society and, in our judgment, irredeemable.”<sup>12</sup>

It is clear from the above discussion that after the KC, the future of Iraq was in the hands of the United States. Iraq’s problem was that the United States acted more as a regional player making the order. This gave it a greater role than a superpower on the world stage:<sup>13</sup> the United States in the ME has the role of what is termed here as the

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<sup>8</sup> Thomas L. Friedman, “The New Presidency”, *New York Times*, January 14, 1993, p. A1. See Litwak, *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 2000, p. 126.

<sup>9</sup> This sentence is borrowed from Litwak, *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 2000, p. 126.

<sup>10</sup> R. Jeffrey Smith, “U. S. Drops Demand for Saddam’s Ouster”, *Washington Post*, March 30, 1993, p. A17. See Litwak, *Rogue States and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 2000, pp. 126-127.

<sup>11</sup> Sentence and citation taken from F. G. Gause III, *The Illogic of Dual Containment*, *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1994, p. 57.

<sup>12</sup> Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>13</sup> See Philip Robins, *The Middle East: Current Trends – Future Realities*, in Philip Robins, *et al.*, *The Middle East in the Post Peace Process: The Emerging Regional Order and its International Implications*, (Tokyo, Institute of Developing Economics 1996), p. 26. Notably, Robins rightly concluded that there are two areas which have seen remarkable consistency in the United States’ position [since early 1990s]; namely, its military presence in the Gulf and its commitment to the

'absolute unipolarity'. Consequently, the decisiveness of the political achievement of the KC is far stronger than the military one: for the United States, Saddam was Iraq, and Iraq was Saddam and Saddam was a threat.<sup>14</sup> Yet, categorising Saddam as a threat was a mandate for the United States to translate the already existing power into a powerful entity and this was the outcome of the crisis which is to be considered in this study as the long-term outcome. Authors like Lesch whose work entitled '*Inter-Arab Relations in the Post Peace Era*' (1995),<sup>15</sup> regarding Iraq, focuses mainly on the immediate and direct outcomes of the KC, ignoring in the first place the political order which emerged after the crisis. However, for Lesch, the military outcome [of the KC] was decisive, but the political outcome was ambiguous.<sup>16</sup>

The marginalisation of Iraq from regional politics with Saddam's continuance in power gave a further dimension to a mode of politics which existed for a long time amongst Arab states—that is the dimension of 'personalised politics'. The shape of inter-Arab relations since the KC is the deepening of 'personalised politics'. Inter-Arab relations are more of inter-leaders relations. What is notable in this case is that the United States as a new regional actor followed this pattern of regional behaviour. Bush's versus Saddam Hussein, Clinton versus Saddam Hussein and then Bush II against Saddam. So, as Robins observed,

Since the UN partition of historic Palestine and the creation of the state of Israel, the Arab-Israeli conflict has been a single most important issue in the political dynamics of the region. Considering the extensive nature of its effect, political leaders as Nasser, Anwar Sadat, Moshe Dayan, Yitzhak

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state of Israel. Moreover, he maintains that there is no reason to believe that these priorities will change in the future. See pp. 26-32.

<sup>14</sup> For a study of threats in the new world order see John Mueller and Karl Mueller, 'The Methodology of Mass Destruction: Assessing Threats in the New World Order', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 23, no. 1, March 2000. pp. 163-187.

<sup>15</sup> Lesch considers the events that took place after the crisis without deep analysis. The title of the book, *Inter-Arab Relations in the Post-Peace Era*, does not really suggest any specific arguments about how inter-Arab relations had changed. My interest in the book was based on its title because of my interest in discussing inter-Arab politics in the era of the post KC. However, disappointingly, the book however has almost no relevance to the discussion of the post-peace era.

<sup>16</sup> Anne M. Lesch, *Inter-Arab Relations in the Post-Peace Era*, (Abu Dhabi, UAE: The Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research, 1995), p. 25. Lesch maintains that Kuwaiti sovereignty was restored, but the Iraqi president remained in power. The uprisings in the north and south failed to unseat the regime; foreign no-fly zones provided limited—and temporary—protection for those peoples from the government's wrath. Iraqi opposition groups remain divided, functioning largely in exile or in the Kurdish zone, and unable to unseat the government. For these reasons, Lesch considers the outcome of the KC as ambiguous.

Rabin and Ariel Sharon were built on diplomatic and military success connected to the conflict, rather than on their ability as domestic politicians.<sup>17</sup>

It is the same case with Iraq: the phenomenon of Saddam Hussein's presence deepened the order of personalised politics. The United States was dragged into this profile of political order. However, the longer personalised politics exist in a region, the less the opportunity for a stable system to exist. Therefore, inter-states political agendas depend mainly on leaders' political settings. The evidence to support this argument can be found in the time since George Bush II was elected to the White House.

The Iraqi position in the region, the American policy towards Iraq, and the United Nations position towards Iraq could be seen in Bush's summary to his nation on Iraq. In Cincinnati, Bush addressed the Americans, he said:

Tonight I want to take few minutes to discuss a grave threat to peace, and America's determination to lead the world in confronting that threat. The threat comes from Iraq... understanding the threat of our time, knowing the designs and deceptions of the Iraqi regime, we have every reason to assume the worst, and we have an urgent duty to prevent the worst from occurring... some believe we can address this danger by simply resuming the old approach to inspections, and applying diplomatic and economic pressures.... The world has also tried economic sanctions... the world has tried limited military strikes to destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction capabilities... the world has tried no-fly zones to keep Saddam from terrorising his own people, and in the last year alone, the Iraqi military has fired upon American and British pilots more than 750 times. Eleven years during which we have tried containment, sanctions, inspections, even selected military action, the end result is that Saddam Hussein still has chemical and biological weapons and is increasing his capabilities to make more. Clearly, to actually work, any new inspections, sanctions, or enforcement mechanisms will have to be very different. America wants the U.N. to be an effective organisation that helps keep the peace.<sup>18</sup>

The above remarks by President Bush outlined the process which, in his words, the world dealt with Iraq. More specifically, the United States and its ally, the United Kingdom, had been dealing with Iraq. The issue of dealing with Iraq culminated not in the bombs that were dropped on it, but on the political agenda set for Iraq and for the region in its entirety. The case of Iraq represents the true nature of the ME political

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<sup>17</sup> Philip Robins, *The Middle East: Current Trends – Future Realities*, in Philip Robins, *et al.*, *The Middle East in the Post Peace Process*, 1996, pp.7-8.

<sup>18</sup> Excerpts are taken from Bush's speech to Cincinnati Museum Centre, Cincinnati Union Terminal Cincinnati, Ohio. October 7, 2002. For more on the speech see White House Press Office, <http://www.whitehouse.gov>.

order— conflict. During the war that began on 16 January and lasted until 27 February, Iraq was subjected to the equivalent of one atomic bomb a week. The dropping of some 88,000 tons of ordinance, an explosive tonnage equivalent to seven Hiroshima-size atomic bombs, and which makes a scale of destruction that has no parallels in the history of warfare,<sup>19</sup> represents the achievement of almost eliminating the entity of Iraq. But Iraq remained present in the regional political order in a manner determined by the United States.

Iraq was meant to embody the continuation of the structural bases on which ME politics are made: namely coercion and conflict. In this context, Abd al-Rahman Munif expressed the view that the United States' motive for using such overwhelming force against Iraq was more than just the liberation of Kuwait, or even the destruction of Iraq. "Iraq was hit with this mercilessness in order to make it an example to others, including friends, and to demonstrate the extent of the power of the United States at the present time and under conditions called the new world order. Therefore, all people must be aware of the dangers that await them in the future [in case of challenging the American power in the region]."<sup>20</sup>

However, the political situation imposed upon Iraq by the United States through the United Nations also necessitated compliance by Iraq's Arab neighbouring states. For example, throughout the 1990s, Iraq and Egypt kept their diplomatic ties under the auspices of the Indian embassy. However, in September 2000, diplomatic ties were restored, but these did not amount to full embassy status with full diplomatic representation.<sup>21</sup> However, Mubarak voiced hope that Iraq would eventually return to the Arab fold: 'it is only a matter of time, nothing more.'<sup>22</sup> But the fact was that Egypt's position towards Iraq throughout the 1990s remained similar to its position towards Iraq during the war 1990-1991. The historical rivalry between Egypt and Iraq was the main

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<sup>19</sup> See Geoff Simons, *Iraq – Primus Inter Pariah: A Crisis Chronology, 1997-98*, (London, New York, Macmillan 1999), p. 53; See also Geoff Simons, *The Scourging of Iraq: Sanctions, Law and Natural Justice* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1998).

<sup>20</sup> Munif Cited in Muslih, M., *Palestinian and Other Arab Perspectives on the Peace Process*. In R. Freedman (ed.), *The Middle East and the Peace Process: The Impact of the Oslo Accords, 1998*, p. 82.

<sup>21</sup> Cited in Gulf News, online ed., <http://gulf-news.com/articl/print.asp?articleID=2239>, September 09, 2000.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

character of the relationship between these two countries. Saddam's mistakes helped Mubarak's political agenda; Saddam's invasion of Kuwait helped Mubarak to achieve a gradual reintegration of Egypt into the Arab world without prejudice to Cairo's Israeli links.<sup>23</sup> Iraq had criticised the peace process since its inception. Saddam Hussein criticised the Arab Summit, which was hosted by Mubarak, which denounced the excessive use of force against Palestinians, but left the door open to peace talks. Baghdad said that the summit should have taken a strong stand, calling for a jihad (*holy war*) against the Jewish state to liberate occupied Palestinian land.<sup>24</sup> Even when the example of the 2003 invasion of Iraq by the United States is examined, it is clear that despite rhetorical opposition to it by Saudi Arabia and Egypt, these countries still provided strategic military assistance to the United States in the war. Therefore, this clearly shows that the relations between Iraq and its key Arab neighbours were not rehabilitated to an extent that relegated their strategic co-operation with the United States. This conjecture shows a historical parallel with the 1991 liberation of Kuwait, where Saudi Arabia and Egypt provided strategic and military co-operation with the United States against a fellow Arab nation. Therefore, it is only appropriate to conclude that although moves were made towards a rapprochement between Iraq and its neighbours, this was only on a rhetorical level and thus was superficial.

Jordan reversed its policies toward Iraq from 1995 and bandwagoned with the ascendant Israeli-American pole. Jordan was not balancing against an Iraqi threat or Iraqi power by moving closer to Israel; incremental shifts in Iraqi power were only marginally relevant for Jordanian policy.<sup>25</sup> As the peace process developed, the payoffs of aligning with the Israeli-American coalition seemed to outweigh the dangers of the policy change. Abandonment of Iraq stood as the price of admission to an alignment with Israel and the United States. The goals of Jordanian policy were widely understood, both in Jordan and abroad, as a move to cement Jordan's position with Israel and the United States and to secure reconciliation with the Gulf States.<sup>26</sup> Saudi Arabia and Kuwait announced their position in April 1993 - that a normalisation of relationship

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<sup>23</sup> Raymond Hinnebusch, The Foreign Policy of Egypt, in Hinnebusch and Ehteshami (eds.) *The Foreign Policies of the Middle Eastern States*, 2002, p. 107.

<sup>24</sup> Gulf News, online ed., <http://gulf-news.com/articl/print.asp?articleID=2239>, September 09. 2000.

<sup>25</sup> Lynch, M., *Abandoning Iraq: Jordan's Alliances and the Politics of State Identity*.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

with Jordan needed more time.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, only in the late 1995, when Jordan's rupture with Saddam's Iraq had become more pronounced, did relations with Saudi Arabia begin to show signs of real improvement.<sup>28</sup>

The Syrian position towards Iraq has become a well-known political discourse in the region since 1980. The Arab-Israeli conflict is the main priority in Syria's political calculations. Therefore, when Iraq was an effective power in this field, then strong Syrian-Iraqi ties could emerge. Bashar al-Assad, since his accession, cautiously, opened more channels with Iraq. But these ties did not reach to full diplomatic ties. Diplomatic representations were opened in the Algerian embassies in Damascus and Baghdad in 2000 and 2001 respectively.<sup>29</sup> The relationship between Syria and Iraq, however, was governed by the galvanisation theory. The United States' policies towards Syria decided Syria's stance towards Iraq. George W. Bush put Syria within the 'Axis of Evil', Syria then found no choice, knowing that it was sitting in the same boat with Iraq, but to denounce the American policy in the region by coming, slightly, closer to Iraq.

Regarding Saudi Arabia, Prince Bandar Bin Sultan, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to the United States, has been reported as saying that the reason Iraq did not invade the Kingdom was the presence [in Saudi Arabia] by October 1990 of more than 200,000 American troops and more than 1,000 American airplanes. Throughout the 1990s, American troops remained present in the kingdom, based on the assumption that Saddam Hussein still represented a threat to the kingdom. Nonetheless, during the Arab summit in Beirut, which was convened in March 2002, it seemed that there was a Saudi-Iraqi rapprochement symbolised by an embrace between Crown Prince Abdullah and Iraq's Vice President Izzat Ibrahim Al-Douri. Moreover, Prince Abdullah said that "we are against an [American] attack on Iraq and we hope that the situation will not come to

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<sup>27</sup> *Middle East International*, 16 April 1993.

<sup>28</sup> Susser, A., *The Jordanian-Israeli Peace Negotiations: The Geopolitical Rationale of a Bilateral Relationship*, (Jerusalem, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999), p. 8. For more on the Jordanian-Iraqi relations since the Kuwait Crisis see L. Brand, *Jordan's Inter-Arab Relations: The Political Economy of Alliance Making*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); See J. Nevo, "Jordan's Relations with Iraq: Ally or Victim?" In A. Baram & B. Rubin (eds.) *Iraq's Road to War*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

<sup>29</sup> For more on Syria's foreign policy see Volker Perthes, 'The Political Economy of the Syrian Succession', *Survival* 43, no. 1 (Spring 2001); Raymond Hinnebusch, 'The Foreign Policy of Syria', in Hinnebusch and Ehteshami (eds.) *The Foreign Policy of the Middle Eastern States 2002*.

that.”<sup>30</sup> To be sure, the Saudi-Iraqi relations could not be governed by any other mechanism rather than that of the presence of the American troops on Saudi soil.

The Palestinians’ position towards Iraq and even towards the entire outside world depended on how their peace process went and recently depended on the course of the al-Aqsa Intifada. It is said that ‘if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch’. The Palestinian minister of work stated that “contacts between Arafat and Saddam Hussein have not ceased, not even for a moment.”<sup>31</sup> The sum result for Arafat was a similar isolation as that which Saddam Hussein was subjected to. Thus, no matter how close the relations between these two parts, it does not affect the course of Arab politics in the region. At the Islamic Summit in Tehran in December 1997, Arafat “called for lifting the cruel UN sanctions against Iraq and Libya and the Sudan.”<sup>32</sup> In the same vein, Saddam Hussein continuously called for Arab collective action to liberate the Palestinian land.<sup>33</sup>

In conclusion, Iraq’s location in the ME throughout the 1990s was illustrated by its marginalisation. The main point is that, alongside the marginalisation of Iraq, the peace process was initiated, which caused further marginalisation to Iraq. Since 1980, Iraq had been at war with its neighbours. Yet, when Arab states got engaged in the peace process, they had little to do with the ‘worrier’ Iraq. But, because the United States treated Iraq as a threat, which meant certain power, Iraq remained in the calculation of the regional actors. On top of that, it remained in the calculations of the United States which ultimately became a priority in Bush II’s administration, a matter which culminated by the war on Iraq in 2003.

### **The Arab Regional Order and the Peace Process**

Since the peace process started, Arab politics had changed; however, the main change was not the inclination of these states towards peace with Israel since this existed before the initiation of the peace process. In fact, it was the collective Arab scramble for

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<sup>30</sup> *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* (London), May 11, 2002.

<sup>31</sup> *Al-Ayyam*, December 6, 1997.

<sup>32</sup> *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, (Palestine), December 10, 1997.

<sup>33</sup> See, *In the shadow of war: Iraq, Israel, Palestine*, *MERIP* (Washington, D.C: Middle East Research & Information Project, 2002).



making peace with Israel. This is unprecedented in Arab politics since the establishment of the Jewish state in the region. The degree of scramble affected the peace substance. The main substance of peace in the region should be to regulate the relationship between Arab states on the one hand and between Israel on the other, including regulating this relationship between Israel and the Palestinians. The scholarly debate, as will be displayed below, is that the Palestinian question lies at the core of the Arab Israeli 'relations'.

However, the peace process that was initiated in Madrid was not a consequence of a war between the Arabs and Israel. Since the establishment of Israel, the relationship between these two parties had been structured by a state of war. Nonetheless, these parties had decided to make peace without fighting the 'big fight'. Therefore, there had been no certain political order for peace to endure in the region because the 'state of war' between these two parties forms the structure of political order in the region.<sup>34</sup> Arab states gave up the idea of knocking Israel down for the sake of Palestine: from this point the Palestinian issue ceased to form a major conflictual link between Arab states and Israel.<sup>35</sup> That, however, does not mean that the conflictual structure is ended between the Arabs and Israel.

The peace process started as the Arabs and Israel decided to stop playing enemies. They had decided: we have played enough hostility, let us from now on play 'good friends' and 'good neighbours' - in some senses, they wanted to play good relatives. But to understand the mechanisms of the peace process in the ME, one could not take it out of the environment in which it was born. Arab states found themselves coated within an order and acting, only acting, within this order could guarantee further survival for

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<sup>34</sup> Yitzhak Rabin put it to the Labour Knesset faction: 'You don't make peace with friends. You make peace with enemies who are not at all nice. I will not try to prettify the PLO; the PLO was an enemy, it is still an enemy, but you negotiate with the enemy.' Address by Yitzhak Rabin to Labour Party Knesset faction on 9 September 1993.

<sup>35</sup> There is much literature written about the peace process. Prominent amongst those who have written about it is Edward Said. See, for example, *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination 1969-1994*, (London: Vintage 1995); *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After*, (London: Granta Publications 2000). This book consists of various articles which were published in different newspapers and journals. William Quandt, *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1967*, (Washington D. C.: Brooking Institution Press 2001). This book does not offer analytical perspective of the American involvement in mediating between the Arabs and Israel; it rather gives a historical account of events regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict since Johnson presidency until Bill Clinton's. I sought not to cite from this book because of the lack of analytical framework; therefore, I found it irrelevant to my study.

many regimes in the region. On March 6, 1991, George Bush addressed the American congress saying: 'we must do all that we can to close the gap between Israel and the Arab states and between Israelis and Palestinians... A comprehensive peace must be grounded in United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of territory for peace. This principle must be elaborated to provide for Israel's security and recognition, and at the same time for legitimate Palestinian political rights. Anything else would fail the twin tests of fairness and security. The time has come to put an end to Arab-Israeli conflict.'<sup>36</sup>

On October 30, 1991, the Middle East Peace Conference in Madrid was opened.<sup>37</sup> The parties of the conference were a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, Syria, Lebanon, and Israel. From that time on, an open dialogue between Arabs and Israel was initiated, which became known as the peace process. In 1993, the Israelis and the Palestinians signed the Declaration of Principles (DOP). After the DOP was signed, a series of agreements known as Oslo agreements such as the 1994 Gaza-Jericho agreement (Oslo I), the 1995 Interim agreement on the West Bank and Gaza strip (Oslo II, or Taba agreement), the January 1997 Hebron Protocol, the October 1998 Wye River Memorandum, and The September 1999 Sharm el-Sheik Memorandum were signed. More notably, within a year of the signing of the DOP was, Jordan became the second Arab state to sign a full peace treaty with Israel and exchange diplomatic relations. "The willingness of North African countries and the Gulf states to openly engage in dialogue with Israel and the progressive withering away of anti-Israel economic boycott is further evidence that a major turning point in the history of the conflict has been reached."<sup>38</sup>

After the initiation of the peace process, the scholarly discussion was of a new ME. Tibi, for example, considered the Arab-Israeli conflict as part of the shape of the regional, *i.e.* the ME system. He maintained that two conflicts, one regional and the other international, gave the Middle Eastern state system its shape: a subsystem of the international system. These were the regional Arab-Israeli conflict and the global East-

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<sup>36</sup> For full text of Bush's speech see [www.brookings.edu/press/appendix/peace process.htm](http://www.brookings.edu/press/appendix/peace%20process.htm).

<sup>37</sup> There were many trips conducted by Baker, the then foreign secretary of the United States, to the ME where he met with the parties involved. On these diplomatic efforts and the preparations for the Madrid conference see J. A. Baker, with T. M. De Frank, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War and Peace 1989-1992*, (Putnam, 1995).

<sup>38</sup> Peters, J. 'The Multilateral Arab-Israeli Talks and the Emergence of Regional Co-operation' in Philip Robins, *et al.*, *The Middle East in the Post Peace Process*, 1996, p. 76.

West conflict.<sup>39</sup> However, he maintains that the end of the bipolar and the end of the Arab-Israeli conflicts, the latter combined with the Oslo Peace Declaration, had changed the character of conflict in the politics of the ME. Markedly, Tibi argues then that with the Oslo peace declaration, Arab-Israeli wars were part of a past era.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, the shape of the regional order for Tibi is bound by the making of peace in the region. Therefore, he maintained that if the Palestinians make peace with Israel, then the Arab states have no legitimacy to wage wars against Israel any longer.<sup>41</sup> Joel Peters maintained that direct face-to-face talks between Israel and the Arab became the norm and not the exception. While the peace process still has a long way to travel, and its successful completion is not guaranteed, one irreversible consequence of the developments [the dialogue between the Arabs and Israel] is that the Arab-Israeli conflict will never again be the central issue around which much of the international politics of the Middle East has revolved.<sup>42</sup>

Tibi makes peace in the ME an order and not a symptom or an outcome of an order. Based on the argument of change and continuity in order which was promoted in Chapter Three of this study, there must be a change in power structures to decide that an order has changed, but the peace process did not lead to such shift in power structures. The shift of power had generated the peace process.<sup>43</sup> The notable change was further fragmentation of the Arab states after the KC. But, although there was a great Arab participation in the conference, and it was blessed by those who did not attend, Sela noted that there was absence of an ideological debate or collective Arab fora to hammer out coordinated strategy toward Israel.<sup>44</sup> The process, adds Sela, was marked by mutual suspicion between each of the Arab participants and everyone else, revealing each party's thrust to advance its own interests independently of other Arab partners.<sup>45</sup> The

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<sup>39</sup> Tibi, B., *Conflict and War in the Middle East: From Interstate War to New Security* 1998, p. 190.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 189, 191-193. Tibi maintains that the primacy of interstate conflict leading to interstate war in the ME is a past phenomenon. The Gulf War in 1991, he also maintained, was the last interstate war in that region for the foreseeable future. See pages 190-191.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>42</sup> Peters, J. *The Multilateral Arab-Israeli Talks and the Emergence of Regional Co-operation*, in Philip Robins, *et al.*, *The Middle East in the Post Peace Process: The Emerging Regional Order and its International Implications*, (Tokyo, Institute of Developing Economics 1996), p. 76.

<sup>43</sup> See Ajami, F. *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, (New York: Pantheon Books), 1998, pp. 253-312.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 335-336 .

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 336.

impact of the initiation of the peace process on the collective Arab behaviour, particularly on the Arab states in the ME is, as Sela concludes:

It confirmed the significance of the Palestinian issue as the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict, regardless of its ever-declining weight in shaping Arab states' behaviour. Yet it also revealed the vast gaps of interest and attitude regarding Israel between the Arab states on the periphery, to whom the Palestine cause had been mainly a moral commitment, and those directly entangled in the Palestine conflict, to whom it still entailed real political stakes—by Israel's very existence as a neighbour—on both regional and domestic levels.<sup>46</sup>

Sela's argument begs the question, if Arabs were not to stand all together in a war against Israel, then they could have formed a common Arab front for peace in order to achieve some of the goals aspired for the Arab nation. However, Arab states lacked a mechanism by which to resolve their own conflicts and thus they lacked at the same time a mechanism which could organise their peace with Israel.<sup>47</sup> Giving an example, Ehteshami and Hinnebusch conclude that [Syria] still had some chance of achieving a full Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 lines if it could [have] orchestrate[d] a common Arab front and demonstrate[d] that Israel could not have peace without it.<sup>48</sup> That means Arab states would have said to Israel: either you make peace with us all or with none. But the problem with Syria, or any other Arab state seeking such a stance from other Arab states, is that they are all *Arab* states. Put bluntly, because they are *Arab* states,<sup>49</sup> they could not form a united front. That is a basic 'thing' in Arab politics, and this issue became significant since the KC. Murden concludes that the peace process did much to

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<sup>46</sup> Sela, A., *The Decline of The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 1998, pp. 338-339.

<sup>47</sup> There was Arab mediation within inter-Arab conflicts such as that in 1963 between Morocco and Algeria, the disputes between the two Yemens in 1972 and 1978, and between Libya and Egypt in 1977. But still these mediations were yet to solve inter-Arab conflicts, since the mediator is an Arab within an Arab conflict and subject to the Arab norm of conflict and rivalry.

<sup>48</sup> Ehteshami, A., & Hinnebusch, R., *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a penetrated regional system*, 1997, p. 159.

<sup>49</sup> Chapter Two of this study had shown how fragmentation and rivalry ruled inter-Arab politics since the establishment of these states after World War II. This could be more explained by bringing the classic argument of Kerr. Kerr maintained that "It would be more accurate to say that when the Arabs are in a mood to co-operate, this tends to find expression in an agreement to avoid action on Palestine, but that when they choose to quarrel, Palestine policy really becomes a subject of dispute." See Kerr, *The Arab Cold War*, p. 114.

diffuse the constant pressure on Arab states to do something about Israel and made closer relations with the United States less difficult to explain.<sup>50</sup>

There is definitely a significant degree of consent amongst scholars that Israel and the United States benefited from the peace process but not the Arab states. Brecher, cited in Lesch, concludes that the ME is a highly penetrated region, which made governments dependent on external military and economic aids.<sup>51</sup> Lesch argues, therefore, foreign powers have imposed arms control regimes on the Arab states (but not Israel).<sup>52</sup> Mohammed Mulsih states that some Arab scholars speak of a '*realpolitik*' argument.<sup>53</sup> The *realpolitik* argument was that superiority of Israel's vis-à-vis the Arabs had significant implications for the negotiating process. He maintains that wide sectors of the Arab intelligentsia and Arab public opinion conclude that not only were the Arabs at a dangerous disadvantage in the peace process, but also that the United States aimed at exploiting the Arab weakness to achieve certain long-term regional objectives for itself as well as for Israel. According to Arab analysis, these included the tightening of U.S. control over the Gulf, the intimidation of the Arabs, and the integration of Israel into the region, not as an equal partner but as a hegemonic actor in the political, economic, and military fields.<sup>54</sup>

However, the significance of such arguments is twofold: first, such arguments bring out the issue of balance of power in the region, which these scholars do not accept. Power is the only mechanism when maximising, states seek survival. As defined in Chapter One of this study, the system in international relations is not based on moral issues, but on the power distribution. Each unit functions based on its own power or based on alliances

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<sup>50</sup> Murden, S. W., *Islam, The Middle East, and the New Global Hegemony*, (Boulder, Colorado, London: Lynne Rienner, 2002), pp. 50-51.

<sup>51</sup> Brecher, M., *The Foreign Policy System of Israel*, (London & New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 137, cited Anne M. Lesch, *Inter-Arab Relations in the Post-Peace Era*, (Abu Dhabi, UAE: The Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research, 1995), p. 13.

<sup>52</sup> Lesch, *Inter-Arab Relations in the Post-Peace Era*, 1995, p. 13.

<sup>53</sup> Mulsih cited some scholars who deal with the *realpolitik* issue; Khayriyya Qasimiyya, *al-watan al-arabi wal-nidham al-alami, awda ila al-madi wa-waqfa inda al-hadir* [The Arab Homeland and the world order, a retrospect and a look at the present] (Damascus: al-Dawudi Press, 1994); Shafiq al-Masri, *al-nidham al-alami al-jadid, malamih wa-makhatir* [The New World Order, characteristics and dangers] (Beirut: Dar al-Ilm Lil-malayin, 1992).

<sup>54</sup> Mulsih, M., "Palestinian and Other Arab Perspectives on the Peace Process," in R. Freedman (ed.), *The Middle East and the Peace Process: 1998*, p. 86.

with other units. Thus, it is legitimate for the United States and Israel, as states, to do what benefits their national interests without taking those of Arab nations into consideration. This study does not defend the interests of the United States or Israel; it rather shows that it is legitimate for any state to seek to further and defend its own interests. Secondly, they show how some scholars still insist that there is a united Arab entity, which must be treated as a whole. In some sense, this is a dilemma for academics and politicians because since the emergence of the state of Israel, it has been treated as the traditional enemy of the Arabs. Therefore, the Palestinian issue was taken as the path through which Arab-Israeli relations were channelled.

However, since each Arab state was seeking its own peace-deal with Israel, peace was no longer a collective concern, but was a focus of individual states. Therefore, the issue of Palestine ceased to be the axis of Arab politics. Despite this, Arab states have not washed themselves clear from the issue of Palestine because the impact of that issue is represented in the coercive and conflictual environment which creates tension in the whole region. Examining each state's intentions and interest in making peace in the region will show that peace is an individual matter rather than a collective one. However, Arab states collectively also have a common interest in solving the problem of Palestine, because they all belong to the Arab order.

Zartman concludes that Israel and the PLO engaged in the Madrid Process in November 1991 half-heartedly and for entirely different reasons. For Israel, it was clearly a matter of improving relations with the United States, which played a very specific role as a manipulator by withholding loan guarantees in connection with settlements in the occupied territories as a pressure on the Likud government of Yizhak Shamir to join the talks.<sup>55</sup> There was no Israeli intention of joining or producing any movement toward the process, only to register a presence. For the Palestinians, Madrid offered a golden opportunity for recognition and status improvement.<sup>56</sup> The PLO itself was also interested in progress in the talks, given the squeeze of its current position and the fact that it was *demandeur* in the process.<sup>57</sup> However, the Israeli leader gave his conditional

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<sup>55</sup> For an aspect on the relationship between the United States and Israel within the framework of the peace process, see N. Aruri, "The Road to Madrid and Beyond," *MEI*, November 8, 1991, pp. 16-17.

<sup>56</sup> On the Palestinian thinking within the framework of the peace process see, M. Muslih, "The Shift in the Palestinian Thinking", *Current History*, (January 1992), pp. 22-27.

<sup>57</sup> Zartman, W, p. 6 See also Paul Noble, "The Prospects of Arab Cooperation in a Changing Regional and Global System," in Michael Hudson (ed.), *Middle East Dilemma*, 1998, p. 63.

consent to the meeting because he did not want to antagonise Washington and because he concluded that Israel's interests would be better protected by being involved in the peace process than by being outside of it.<sup>58</sup>

In the peace process, and diplomatically in general, the Israelis have made their own peace with Jordan and, until the cooling of the peace process after March 1997, had established their own working relationships with Morocco, Qatar, and even indirectly with Saudi Arabia.<sup>59</sup>

Taking Arab states individually, in discussing Egypt's foreign policy under Mubarak, Hinnebusch maintains that Mubarak sought to establish Egypt as the pivotal Arab country positioned to deliver an equitable settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, something which was widely desired by all Arab states. It presented its U.S. alliance as a conduit for securing U.S. pressure on Israel and promoted itself as an indispensable facilitator of peace negotiations by virtue of its status as the only Arab country having good relations with Israel.<sup>60</sup> However, one could not overlook the fact that inter-Arab relations are governed by rivalry. The galvanisation of the region reduced this mode of interaction to the minimum. Also, because traditionally this rivalry had been between Egypt and Iraq, the destruction of the Iraqi power boosted Egypt's role amongst Arab states. But that could not last for long. The peace process did not boost Egypt's role in the region, but reduced it to the minimum.

This argument is based on the following points: the first is the inability of Egypt to further defend Arab security. In this context, Hinnebusch maintains that "Egypt promoted its large well armed army as a deterrent force, part of the Arab balance of power, against potential threats from Israel and Iran."<sup>61</sup> But, he adds, "Israel's heightened military activism exposed the hollowness of Egypt's pretension to defend

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<sup>58</sup> Kaufman, *The Arab Middle East and the United States: Inter-Arab Rivalry and Superpower Diplomacy* (New York, Twayne Publishers 1996), p. 171.

<sup>59</sup> L. Cantori in Robert Freedman, p 162. All GCC countries supported the Arab-Israeli peace process. In September 1994 they agreed to lift the secondary and tertiary boycotts on economic dealings with Israeli companies until the Syrian and Lebanese negotiations are completed.

<sup>60</sup> Hinnebusch, R., 'Egypt's Foreign Policy,' in Hinnebusch and Ehteshami (eds.) *The foreign policies of the Middle Eastern States 2002*, pp. 107-108.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 107.

Arab security.”<sup>62</sup> Therefore, Arab states then believed: once we have peace with Israel, there is no need then for the Egyptian ‘shield’. The second point is embedded within the concept of galvanisation; all actors in the region are equally coated by the American presence in the region. Thus, Cantori maintained that Egypt’s role has receded from important interlocutor to useful facilitator.<sup>63</sup> But, as Sontag put it, “in actuality, the “peace process” involved considerably more process than peace.”<sup>64</sup> Thus, Cantori proved correct in suggesting that the deterioration of the peace process in 1997 has given Egypt new diplomatic opportunities, but that it has been losing its ability to do so.<sup>65</sup> The reason for Egypt no longer being able to do so is because neither in the time of war nor in the time of peace could Egypt have delivered to the Arab cause.<sup>66</sup>

Saudi Arabia is ‘famous’ for its peace plans. The first Arab peace plan, which became known as the Fahd plan, was made public by Saudi Arabia in August 1981. “It proposed: the Israeli withdrawal from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, including Arab Jerusalem, the dismantling of Israeli settlements established on Arab lands since 1967 etc.”<sup>67</sup> The taste of the peace process for Saudi Arabia is different from that of Syria, for example, because Israel does not occupy any Saudi lands: therefore, it is easy for Saudi Arabia to keep putting forward plans (see below for Prince Abdullah’s plan) and when it wishes, to play a role as mediator. However, the galvanisation of the region gave Saudi Arabia a safe haven. “The close ties with the United States have led some analysts to depict Saudi Arabia’s role in the international system as one of classical dependence.”<sup>68</sup> In this view, Saudi Arabia has very little autonomy in terms of its foreign and economic policy choices. It is forced to follow the lead of the United States because its economic

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>63</sup> L. Cantori, in Robert Freedman, p. 161.

<sup>64</sup> Sontag, D., ‘Quest for Middle East Peace: How and Why it Failed’, *New York Times*, 26 July 2001. Citation here from *Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol. 31, no. 1, Autumn 2001, pp. 75-86, 78.

<sup>65</sup> L. Cantori, in Robert Freedman, p. 163.

<sup>66</sup> See Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Al Madfai, M. R., *Jordan, The United States and the Middle East Peace Process, 1974-1991*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 121.

<sup>68</sup> See for example, Helen Lackner, *A House Built on Sand: A Political Economy of Saudi Arabia*, (London: Ithaca Press, 1978); Fred Halliday, *Arabia Without Sultans*, (New York: Vintage Press, 1974). Cited in Gregory Gause III, “The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia” in Hinnebusch and Ehteshami (eds.), *The foreign policies of the Middle Eastern States*, 2002, pp. 194, footnote page 209.



and political stability is dependent upon U. S. support and goodwill.<sup>69</sup> This means that it is then simply possible to read Saudi Arabia's position towards the peace process from an angle to its relations to the United States. The KC brought Saudi Arabia to a closer relationship with the United States than it enjoyed before, leading the kingdom to vigorously follow its particular interests in cultivating this relationship.<sup>70</sup>

The Saudis played a central role in persuading Syria to accept the Madrid framework and attend the conference. They also made a salient effort to appear as strongly involved in, and willing to cooperate with, the Madrid peace process. In mid-July 1991, the Saudis announced that they were willing to lift the Arab boycott on Israel in return for Israel's consent to stop all new settlement activity in the occupied territories. Such a gesture, offered without linkage to the issue of East Jerusalem and its Muslim shrines, was an obvious shift from established Arab and Islamic attitudes and a clear message of assurance to the United States and Israel about the peace process. The Saudis continued to provide support for the negotiations in Washington through their ambassador to the United States, Emir Bandar Bin Sultan, and were apparently helpful, along with Egypt, in convincing the PLO to accept Israel's "Gaza-Jericho first" scheme.<sup>71</sup>

A consideration of Syria's behaviour towards peacemaking in the region shows that Syria lacked choices since the state of Israel was founded. UN resolutions 242 and 338 were the 'window of options' for Syria and all other Arab states. There were really no more options available for Syria but to cling to these resolutions or, as Arab states would put it, as a 'condition' to negotiate with Israel. Assad had long insisted, as 'conditions' for a peace conference, (a) on a united Arab delegation so Israel could not divide the Arabs, (b) on UN sponsorship which could make 242/338 the basis of a settlement and (c) mobilise global pressures on Israel. However, since Israel occupied Arab lands, these UN Resolutions did not help in pushing Israel out of this occupied land, on the contrary these resolutions became only part of the political rhetoric of Arab states. Syria, while entering the peace process, accepted direct unconditional bilateral

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<sup>69</sup> Gause, G. III, "The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia," in Hinnebusch and Ehteshami (eds.) *The foreign policies of the Middle Eastern States*, 2002, pp. 194.

<sup>70</sup> Sela, A., *The Decline of The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 1998, p. 334. See also *Economist Intelligence Unit*, Saudi Arabia, Country Report, 3, 1991, pp. 10-12.

<sup>71</sup> See Sela, A., *The Decline of The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 1998, pp. 333-340, 334.

negotiations without an Israeli commitment that UN Resolutions required full withdrawal from the occupied territories.<sup>72</sup>

Syria's entry into the Madrid peace process was determined by the advent of the New World Order.<sup>73</sup> As the Soviet Union's influence declined, so did the prospects a true international conference would bring pressure on Israel: increasingly, only American pressure seemed likely to count. Assad, therefore, attempted to get prior US commitment to require a full Israeli withdrawal, but neither George Bush nor James Baker explicitly promised a return of the Golan, only that the USA would abide by its commitments on UN Resolutions made over several presidencies.<sup>74</sup>

Therefore, the first unsettled outcome of the peace process for Syria was the imbalance between the Syrian demands and the Israeli offers. When the UN Security Council enunciated the equivalence formula of "territory for security" for the Middle East in Resolution 242 in 1967, it only started the process of determining what was territory and what was security in each of the occupied territories along the Israeli border, which was in turn the necessary prelude to the detail question of how much territory for how much security. Recent negotiations between Israel and Syria illustrate the concept: whereas one side wanted to gain total territory for partial normalisation (security), the other wanted to total normalisation as security in exchange for part of the territory.<sup>75</sup>

It is true, as Drysdale and Hinnebusch conclude in examining the Assad regime, that championship of the Palestine issue, which is considered to be the heart of the Arab cause, is a major component of regime legitimacy.<sup>76</sup> The regime's Arab credentials, obtained from its vociferous defence of Arab territories, have served to justify foreign policy and unpopular domestic policies. Deviation from the Palestinian agenda, therefore, could be deemed to be betraying pan-Arabism, thereby risking regime

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<sup>72</sup> Ehteshami, A., & Hinnebusch, R., *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a penetrated regional system*, 1997, p. 158.

<sup>73</sup> Quilliam, N., *Syria: Adjusting to the New World Order*, (London: Ithaca Press, 1999), p. 175.

<sup>74</sup> Ehteshami, A., & Hinnebusch, R., *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System*, 1997, p. 159.

<sup>75</sup> Zartman, W., p. 11-12

<sup>76</sup> Drysdale, A., & R., Hinnebusch, *Syria and the Middle East Peace Process*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1991), p. 73. See also Quilliam, N., *Syria: Adjusting to the New World Order*, (London: Ithaca Press, 1999), pp. 175-228.

legitimacy.<sup>77</sup> But, after the peace process was initiated, the rhetoric for the sake of Palestine or the sake of Arab nation declined, because there was no more the enemy at whose cost rhetoric could be made.

After the Palestinian-Israeli agreement was reached at Oslo, Assad conceded that the Palestinians had the right to adopt any agreement they considered beneficial to themselves.<sup>78</sup> But still Assad told President Clinton in January 1994: "to me, there is no difference between the Golan, south Lebanon and the occupied parts of Palestine or Jordan... it is all one Arab land as far as I am concerned."<sup>79</sup> On 1 September 1994, Assad also told the Syria Parliament that Syria had been surprised by the Palestinian and Jordanian agreements with Israel. Although he would not discuss their results, he declared that "immense damage" had been done to the Arab cause by the pursuit of separate solutions to the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, there was little Syria could do about the Palestine issue. It had been excluded from negotiations over Palestine by the PLO as much as by Israel.<sup>81</sup> Having said that, Syria then had to 'believe' that Israel 's occupation of the Golan should be its prime concern. In this context, therefore, this study agrees with the argument of Quilliam:

The Syrian population has carried the burden of Palestine for the last fifty years; furthermore, it attributes the absence of democracy within Syrian society to the omnipresent threat of the Israelis. Peace with Israel, irrespective of the Palestinians, would liberate Syria from its security dilemma and decompress the domestic political system. From this perspective, it is more likely that the Syrian population perceives the separate PLO-Israel deal as an opportunity to pursue state or domestic interests over Arab interests.<sup>82</sup>

The issue of peace with Israel became then an issue of Syrian interest rather than an Arab collective interest. Vice-president Abd al-Halim Khaddam had left no doubt that,

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<sup>77</sup> Quilliam, N., *Syria: Adjusting to the New World Order*, 1999, p. 176.

<sup>78</sup> Ehteshami, A., & Hinnebusch, R., *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System*, 1997, p. 162.

<sup>79</sup> Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 163.

<sup>80</sup> Cited in Maddy-Weitzman, Inter-Arab relations, in A., Ayalon & B., Maddy-Weitzman (eds), *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, Vol. XVIII 1994, London: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 86-87.

<sup>81</sup> Ehteshami, A., & Hinnebusch, R., *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System*, 1997, p. 163.

<sup>82</sup> Quilliam, N., *Syria: Adjusting to the New World Order*, 1999, p. 176.

for Syria, the conflict with Israel would be over once peace treaties had been concluded between Israel and Syria as well as between Israel and Lebanon.<sup>83</sup>

Jordan's stance in the peace process represents a realist political undertaking. Based on its geographic position as squeezed between Israel, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Syria and, on top of that, the West Bank, the calculations of the Jordanian peacemakers must reflect its regional location. One of the most remarkable characters of Jordanian foreign policy is that there are no abrupt shifts in this policy but rather realistic, prepared and oriented steps. However, after the KC, choices were few for Jordan. A senior Jordanian official reported that "we [the Jordanians] should not be surprised if the Americans attempted to keep up the pressure on us until we have agreed to sign a peace treaty."<sup>84</sup> Moreover, in a speech in October 1991, King Hussein stated that there were no alternatives to attending the peace conference. Jordan could not oppose the United States in its drive to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>85</sup>

The peace process gave Jordan self assurance and proved that its location could help in the making of its politics.<sup>86</sup> The support of the Israeli Knesset to the Jordan-Israeli declaration was larger than for the peace treaty with Egypt.<sup>87</sup> A member of the Likud government admitted that peace with Jordan meant the end of the "Jordan is Palestine" line.<sup>88</sup> "This line is no longer a political principle... and we have to accept it."<sup>89</sup> Therefore, the gain for Jordan was big enough for it to embark on a role as mediator between the United States and other Arab states to such a degree that it has replaced the Egyptians' role in this sense.

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<sup>83</sup> *Al-Hayat*, June 10, 2001.

<sup>84</sup> *Middle East International*, April, 15<sup>th</sup>, 1994.

<sup>85</sup> *Middle East International*, 27 September and 25 October 1991.

<sup>86</sup> For more on Jordan in the peace process see Y. Lukas, Israel, *Jordan, and the Peace Process*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997).

<sup>87</sup> Haberman, C., "Ceremony Will Be Hot, Windy, and Made for TV," *New York Times*, October 26, 1994.

<sup>88</sup> Arnoff, J., & Arnoff, Y. S., "Domestic Determinants of Israeli Foreign Policy: The Peace Process from the Declaration of Principles to the Oslo II Interim Agreement," in Freedman (ed.), *The Middle East and the Peace Process: The Impact of the Oslo Accords*, (Florida, The University Press of Florida: 1998), p. 23.

<sup>89</sup> Haberman, C., "Ceremony Will Be Hot, Windy, and Made for TV," *New York Times*, October 26, 1994.

The conclusion of the peace treaty with Israel, however, dismayed Syria, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.<sup>90</sup> Syria considered its bargaining position to have been weakened both by the substance of the agreement and its conclusion without prior coordination with it. Saudi Arabia, which still had harboured antipathy toward Jordan from the 1990-91 KC, was both concerned with the implications for Syria and offended by the explicit reference in the agreement to Jordan's special status regarding the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. Egypt was unsupportive not only because it had been left out of the negotiations, and out of respect for Syria's concerns, but because it perceived its centrality in Arab affairs as jeopardised.<sup>91</sup>

However, the bottom line of the Jordanian policy regarding the peace process was that Jordan was doing what the Egyptians and the Palestinians had already done.<sup>92</sup> Jordan had endured more than any Arab state in the conflict with Israel and was therefore fully entitled to protect its own special interests.<sup>93</sup> Therefore, Prince Hasan told the *London Observer*, "The world is going to turn around and say 'bugger you' unless you get your act together."<sup>94</sup> On 25 July 1994 at the White House in Washington D. C., King Hussein and Prime Minister Rabin signed the Washington Declaration.<sup>95</sup>

It can be seen that self-interest has dictated the foreign policy of each Arab states to negotiate its own peace-deal with Israel. Such calculation was ultimately to 'secure' the state survival. That means to reduce and eliminate threats to pillars of the state like sovereignty, territorial integrity, etc. Nevertheless, the state is secure only when the structure of the political order which leads to the formation of the system in a given

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<sup>90</sup> Gera, G., "The Middle East in Perspective," in A., Ayalon & B., Maddy-Weitzman (eds.), *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, 1996, p. 9.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Susser, A., Jordan: (Al-Mamlaka Arab League-Urdunniyya Al-Hashimiyya), in A., Ayalon & B., Maddy-Weitzman (eds.), *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, 1996, p. 416.

<sup>93</sup> E.g., King Hussein on Jordan TV, 1, 25, January, 15 August — Dr, 3, 26 January, 16 August; R. Amman, 4 January — Dr, 5 January 1994. See Asher Susser, Footnote 61, page 444, in A., Ayalon & B., Maddy-Weitzman (eds.), *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, 1996), p. 444.

<sup>94</sup> Cited in Susser, A., *The Jordanian-Israeli Peace Negotiations: The Geopolitical Rationale of a Bilateral Relationship*, (Jerusalem, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1999), p. 13.

<sup>95</sup> See M. Bouillon & O. Koendgen, *Jordaniens Friedensdividende 1994-1998, Eine Bestandaufnahme*, KAS-Auslandsinformationen, 9, 1998.

region is organised and governed by the anarchy of the system itself.<sup>96</sup> The scramble for peace, however, resulted from the lack of options on a collective 'Arab' conduct. Arab states, based on the weakness of their military power to win a war against Israel sought peace because they felt that it would represent a security factor to the state. However, using the term 'peace' is not simple as it sounds; the concept 'peace' is not simply a pedantic semantics. It should simply have shifted the region to an entirely new era or a new frame within which inter-Arab relations as well as Arab-Israeli relations are organised.

The peace process did not shift the region to such new era because there was/is no basis for a new era. The ME did not enter into peace; it rather had witnessed peace-deals.<sup>97</sup> The peace process was an *ad hoc* event symptomatic of the KC. The degree of intensity reached its peak after the war against Iraq. Therefore, a counterbalance would be a peace deal between Arabs and Israel. Nevertheless, inter-Arab relations were based on rivalry over the past fifty years and this rivalry 'aborted' the KC. The Arab-Israeli relations were conflictual over the last fifty years, and thus these relations, rationally and based on the dynamics of the regional order, would not have 'aborted' peace. As Gilpin writes: "throughout history the primary means of resolving the disequilibrium between the structure of the international system and the redistribution of power has been war, more particularly, what we shall call a hegemonic war".<sup>98</sup> He elaborates,

The great points in world history have been provided by these hegemonic struggles among political rivals; these periodic conflicts have reordered the international system and propelled history in new and uncharted directions. They resolved the question of which state will govern the system, as well as what ideas and values will predominate, thereby determining the ethos of succeeding ages. The outcomes of these wars affect the economic, social, and ideological structures of individual societies as well as the structure of the larger international system.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> On this see R. Jervis, 'Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma', *World Politics* 30/2 January 1978); K. Waltz, *Man, State, and War*, (New York: Colombia University Press 1954).

<sup>97</sup> The difference is that if peace was signed at whole regional level, this would be an absolute end to the Israeli occupation of Arab land. But, peaces deals mean that some regional countries like Jordan for example, have signed peace with Israel and that does not equal peace on a regional level.

<sup>98</sup> Cited in Clark, *The Post Cold War Order*, 2001, p. 56.

<sup>99</sup> Cited in *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

This statement by Gilpin leaves us with the question of what is specifically the normative force of the Arab states to make peace with Israel rather than of waging war against it. The main source of peacemaking was the norms which governed Arab regional order at the beginning of the 1990s. Therefore, making peace is not a regional order, but waging war is the order. Within such an environment, peace is an unpopular 'thing'. Put in simple terms, conflict is a 'daily business' in the ME.

### **The Arab Regional Order and al-Aqsa Intifada**

When Arafat learned that right-wing leader Ariel Sharon was planning a deliberately provocative visit to what Muslims refer to as the Haram Al-Sharif (Noble Sanctuary), which Jews call the (Temple Mount), he pleaded with Barak to block Sharon's plans.<sup>100</sup> Although this was in East Jerusalem which is Israeli-occupied Palestinian territory, Barak insisted it was an internal Israeli matter. To support Sharon's move, Barak brought in hundreds of Israeli troops to accompany him, resulting in violent demonstrations by Palestinians, which were brutally suppressed by Israeli occupation forces- with no public objection being made by the U.S. government.<sup>101</sup>

Al-Aqsa Intifada therefore posed the question on the ground as to whether peace in the ME would be possible at all. The Intifada posed the question that if peace was possible in the region, then who would to enter into peace with Israel? The Arabs, individual Arab states, or the Palestinians? Remarkably, the Intifada, this time differing from the first Intifada, which was triggered from 1989-1993, presents a problem of terminology: is it to be referred to as Intifada, violence, war, low-intensity war, or terrorism? One could identify al-Aqsa Intifada as the peace process under Sharon and Bush. It gives the Intifada a more physical meaning and it broadens its dimensions. It gives the Intifada a genuine meaning because it shows the greater relationship between violence and

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<sup>100</sup> Zunes, S., "The United States and the Breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process", *Middle East Policy*, Vol. VIII, no., 4, December 2001, p. 71; See also 'Palestinians Warn of Consequences of Sharon's Visit to al-Aqsa', *Al-Ayyam*, September 27, 2000, FBIS-NES-2000-0927.

<sup>101</sup> Zunes, S., "The United States and the Breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process", p. 71. Notably, Zunes further concluded that to this day, despite subsequent investigations reporting to the contrary, leading members of the Congress in both parties insist that these spontaneous demonstrations were actually pre-planned by Arafat and other Palestinian leaders to destroy the peace process. This accusation is particularly absurd since the demonstrators were primarily Islamists and young people, the two groups most alienated from Arafat's leadership and least likely to obey his requests.

counter violence. Different scholarly opinions have been promoted about the causes of the Intifada, and fewer about its end. This study considers the Intifada as the second part of the peace process.

In the Palestinian submission to the Mitchell Commission, a huge part of the document was devoted to the roots of the Intifada, and was entitled, 'Why did Barak Instigate the Crisis?' Great emphasis was placed on the condemnation of the violent Israeli reaction to the Intifada after the day of September 29. One observer concluded that "the Intifada was not just a reaction to a provocative incident; it is a declared, unequivocal position by the Palestinian people on the bankruptcy of the negotiations and the full rejection of the overall Israeli conducts."<sup>102</sup> However, the perception of the Intifada and; therefore, of its causes, is similar to that of the perception of the peace process: "the Palestinians saw the peace process as a means to end the occupation and establish a Palestinian mini-state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. By contrast, the United States and Israel saw it as a way of maintaining an Israeli occupation of major sections of these territories with the Palestinians."<sup>103</sup> Yet, the Intifada is viewed in the same way: the Palestinians see the Intifada as a tool to end the occupation and the Israelis see it as a tool to keep and extend the occupation.

The Israelis insisted/insist – with the American support – that there be a total end to Palestinian violence for an extended period before they resume talks. This gave extremist groups beyond the control of the Palestinian Authority and opposed to the peace process an incentive to use violence to make sure that the talks would not resume.<sup>104</sup> Similarly, it bought time for the Israelis to further expand settlements.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Qub'ah, T., 'Protection and Continuation of the Blessed Intifada is a Top Priority of All Palestinian Forces', *Al-Ayyam*, October 6, 2000. FBIS-NES-2000-1006. For more on the roots and causes of the Intifada see Hanan Ashrawi (Summary of Briefing: Briefing of Leaders of Palestinian Civil Society Institutions for the Members of the Sharm Al Sheik Fact Finding Committee, Palestinian Media Centre, March 23 2002, <http://www.pna.org/minifo>, by Mahmoud Abbas (official Palestinian Radio Authority PBC Broadcast, December 6, 2000, IRR, December 6, 2000), and Hussam Khadr, MEMRI, Special Dispatch No. 154, November 20, 2000.

<sup>103</sup> Zunes, S., *The United States and the Breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Talks*, *Middle East Policy*, vol. VIII, no. 4, (December 2001), p. 67.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 71-74.

<sup>105</sup> A review of the various Oslo agreements clearly demonstrate that Israel successfully established itself as the sole authority that would determine which land areas it would yield to the Palestinian Authority. The major confirmation of the Israeli position was the Hebron Protocol. When Arafat signed the protocol in 1997 he conceded the Palestinian interpretation of 242 forever since the protocol gave Israel the right, supported explicitly by the United States, to decide for itself from



Even if the negotiations were to recommence, the Israeli government had made it clear that they would take an even more uncompromising position than the previous government of Ehud Barak. However, despite all this, the United States administration, Congress, and media, plus the Israelis themselves, placed the bulk of the blame of the breakdown of the peace process on the Palestinians.<sup>106</sup>

Theoretically, international law recognises the right of people under foreign military occupation to armed resistance against the occupier. The United States government repeatedly condemned the Palestinians for their violence while refusing to call for an end of the Israeli occupation. The Bush administration has spoken only of stopping “the cycle of violence”.<sup>107</sup> However, much of Israel’s violence against the Palestinians has been justified as necessary to protect the settlers who have no legal right to be in the occupied territories. But, as Zunes puts it, leading democrats, such as Gary Ackerman, the ranking democrat on the House of Subcommittee on the ME, have criticised the administration from the right, claiming “it is not a cycle of violence. It is Palestinian violence and Israeli response.”<sup>108</sup>

A cornerstone of the U.S.-led peace process has been to keep the United Nations out. A 1991 Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Israel explicitly stated that the United Nations would not have a role. Then-US ambassador to the United Nations, Richard Holbrook, claimed that a U.N. Security Council resolution from October 2000 criticising the excessive use of force by Israeli occupation forces put the United Nations “out of the running” in terms of any contributions to the peace process.<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, the United States has continued the policy of the previous administration of undercutting the legitimacy of any entity – such as the European

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which of the occupied territories it would withdraw and from which it would not. Moreover, as long as Oslo and closure remains the defining policy framework for achieving a settlement, Israeli control over Palestine is assured. For more details on this statement see Sara Roy, *Current History*, (January 2002), p. 10.

<sup>106</sup> Zunes, S., *The United States and the Breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Talks*, p. 74.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>109</sup> Cited in Zunes, S., *The United States and the Breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Talks*, p. 82; see also Sigmund Siignatuur, ‘The UN – Irrelevant?’ *Jordan Times*, Friday-Saturday, October 4-5, 2002.

Union – which might take a more even-handed approach and challenge the legitimacy of the Israeli occupation.<sup>110</sup>

Therefore, it can be understood that the Palestinians and their Intifada became trapped within the regional borders. There is no longer any impact from the outside. Ironically, the major Palestinian compromises – ending the armed struggle and recognising Israel – were made up-front in the 1993 Oslo accords, with the naïve assumption that the United States would pressure Israel to make needed compromises later.<sup>111</sup> However, within the course of the 1990s, or rather within the course of the peace process, the term ‘occupation’ lost its violent connotations simply because there was what was called a peace process going on. In reality, Israel has continued to extend its settlements, and not much has changed.<sup>112</sup> Therefore, when the Palestinians have no bargaining chips left but their violence, this violence will *not* move them in the direction which they wish. This is simply because they are trapped within the regional borders and within the regional order.

One of the main regional order markers since the initiation of the peace process is the peace process itself. The peace process mitigated confrontation lines between the Palestinians and Israelis. It created an environment, although a false one, in which there appeared to be peace, or hope for peace and, on top of that, negotiations. The hardest part of the reality which has driven the Palestinians to deeper frustration is that there are continuing negotiations; the process and myth of negotiations invented Arafat as the pillar of the Palestinian cause. He is always in the forefront of any ‘Palestinian’ action. Oslo accords were security-oriented and security-driven for Israel. It is as if the United States and Israel had told Arafat: you are the ‘guardian’ of the future of the Israeli security. Therefore, “the repeated calls for Arafat by the United States and Israel to ‘stop the violence’ not only implied Arafat’s responsibility for starting it but were premised on the assumption that he was in violation of the fundamental role assigned to

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<sup>110</sup> Zunes, S., *The United States and the Breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Talks*, p. 74.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>112</sup> See Sara Roy, *Why Peace Failed: An Oslo Autopsy Current History* (January 2002) pp. 8-16; S. Dajani, ‘What Are the Terms of the Oslo Peace Process?’ *Fact Sheet No. 3* (Boston, Mass.: Grassroots International, All, 2000).

him by Oslo.”<sup>113</sup> Nevertheless, because Oslo mainly created Arafat, the Intifada, in the eyes of the Israelis, the Americans, and many others, is less legitimate than the first one. That is simply because Arafat represented the institutional order within the Palestinian territories.<sup>114</sup> Arafat did not start the current wave of protests, but it is clear that he has encouraged them by, among other things, standing back and allowing them to escalate.<sup>115</sup> On the other hand, “Arafat knows that since the 1996 Tunnel Intifada, the street will never again allow him to trade Palestinian lives for a mere resumption of negotiations.”<sup>116</sup> From that point, Arafat could not do more than repeat what he always said: negotiations, negotiations and peace of the brave.

On broader level, Arab attitudes towards the Intifada are channelled through the Palestinian leadership. There is no direct speech between Arab governments and Palestinian people based on the lack of Palestinian institutions which could encourage such partnership. Everything must go through the Palestinian Authority. Therefore, as Al-Shiryani rightly observes, “the Palestinian people are the victim of the lack of trust between the Arab regimes and the Palestinian Authority.”<sup>117</sup> Furthermore, the Palestinians are the victim of their Intifada as well. Al-Fanek concluded that “the Intifada with its costs in human lives and in economic price, is not a goal in itself, but rather an expression of the national opposition to the continuation of the occupation, as well as means of pressuring Israel to hand over greater part of the Palestinian people”

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<sup>113</sup> Hammami, R., & T., Salim, The Second Uprising: End or New Beginning? *Journal of Palestinian Studies* XXX, no. 2 (Winter 2001), p. 18.

<sup>114</sup> This study agrees with what Professor Hamid Dabashi of Columbia University once stated that ‘Arafat sold out the aspiration of his nation to the pathetic cause of being called a “president”’. Interview with H. Dabashi, September 30, 2002. On <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article747.shtml>. On August 2, 1999, Syrian Defence Minister, Tlass, in a speech to a military audience, attacked Yasser Arafat: “Oh, son of the sixty thousand whores, you should not have chickened out at the white house. You should have insisted that Jerusalem is the united capital of future Palestinian state. But you stood there like a black cat not daring to open your mouth with a single word about Palestine and Jerusalem. Yasser Arafat in his concessions to Israel “is like a striptease dancer who takes off another piece of clothes each time she gets on the stage. The difference between Arafat and the striptease dancer is that whenever she takes off her clothes her beauty shows, but whenever Arafat takes his clothes, his ugliness shows’. For full details see *Al-Quds al-Arabi* (London), August 3, 1999. For a good laugh, one could see responses by the Palestinians in *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, (London), August 5, 1999; *Al-Quds Al-Arab* (London), August 4, 1999; *Al-Ayyam*, August 3, 1999; *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida* (PA), August 4, 5, 1999. *Ma’ariv*, August 5, 1999.

<sup>115</sup> Hammami, R., & Salim T., The Second Uprising: End or New Beginning, *Journal of Palestinian Studies*, p. 18.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>117</sup> *Al-Hayat* (London), December 13, 2000.

rights to the Palestinian leadership [PLO].<sup>118</sup> But, the Intifada, adds Al-Fanek, has not succeeded in expelling the Israeli occupation by force. It undermined the security of Arabs on both sides of the Green Line instead of undermining Israeli security. The Intifada helped to topple a government that was willing to reach an agreement with the government of Sharon— with its ideas of transfer.<sup>119</sup>

Having said that, one could come to the question; what is the location of the Intifada in the Arab regional order? This question can be answered in two interrelated parts; the first part is to look at the Saudi Prince Abdullah plan and the second is to look at the Arab summit which was convened in Beirut March 28-30, 2002.

***Prince Abdullah's Initiative:***

The Saudi Crown Prince, Abdullah, thought of solving the problem between the Israelis and the Arabs once and for all. He then brought a plan offering Israel normal relations with the Arab world in return for full withdrawal from the land which Israel occupied in 1967.<sup>120</sup> However, Saudi Arabia, as mentioned above, is not a confrontation or bordering state and, remarkably, Saudi Arabia had always complained about countries rushing to establish 'normal' relations with Tel Aviv.<sup>121</sup> But, in times of crisis, such as the one the Palestinians have under both the combination of occupation and under Sharon's brutal grip, initiatives or plans are seen as solutions. If the Security Council Resolution 242 had not brought a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, then the Saudi plan might, which was the context in which the Palestinians and Arab states viewed the plan.

The first reaction of the Palestinians (as the main concern) to the plan was flirting with the Arab 'collectiveness' of decision making; Palestinian International Planning and Coordination Minister Nabil Sha'ath explained:

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<sup>118</sup> See F. Al-Fanek, *Al-Rai* (Jordan), February 20, 2001; *Al-Rai*, (Jordan), February 28, 2001.

<sup>119</sup> F. Al-Fanek, *Al-Rai*, (Jordan), February 28, 2001.

<sup>120</sup> See *The New York Times*, February 17, 2002; *The New York Times*, February 21, 2002.

<sup>121</sup> See *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* (London), February 16, 2002; *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, (London), February 27, 2002.

the initiative should be viewed as an Arab attempt to persuade the Americans that if the Israelis cease their aggression, if they comply with President Arafat and Bashar Assad and implement all their demands beginning with the demand for withdrawal from occupied Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese lands, and if solutions are found for all the problems stemming from the Palestinian cause, first and foremost the refugees issue and Jerusalem – then and only then will the Arabs be willing to maintain natural relations with Israel. The proposal is absolutely compatible with our positions. We want to bring about an end to the occupation, and we want to solve all problems, and then as far as we are concerned there will be no hindrance to establishing a comprehensive peace, if Israel meets all its obligations.<sup>122</sup>

The demands of Sha'th explain the dilemma in which the Palestinians find themselves and explain the deviation from the existing Arab regional order. The fact is that the Saudi initiative was nothing more than an attempt to get the Palestinians -- and only the Palestinians -- out of the increasing misery inflicted upon them by Sharon's rule. Atwan observes that the Saudi initiative deviated from the parameters of Resolution 242: 'Prince Abdullah was overgenerous in his initiative, the [UN] resolutions do not demand normalisation, do not demand the establishment of diplomatic ties, and do not demand that all Arab countries should sign peace deals with the Hebrew state.'<sup>123</sup> Remarkably, the initiative was an offer not a demand; within the existing and the previous balance of power in the region, Saudi Arabia is unable to make demands from an Israel which is absolutely supported by the United States. However, for more understanding of the Saudi initiative, one should look at the Egyptian view of the Intifada.

Immediately after the Intifada broke out, Egypt's stance towards Israel was stronger than a mediator between the Israelis and the Palestinians. It was the recalling of its ambassador to Israel in November 2000. However, Amr Moussa maintains that the agreements with Israel seem to be void. He said that 'Israel is still stuck to the Sharm-Al-Sheik agreement and to its security article...but this matter has fallen apart; even the Oslo accords have become obsolete. This is what Israel must understand.'<sup>124</sup> Moreover, following his recall, Ambassador Bassyuni put three conditions for his return to Israel:

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<sup>122</sup> *Al-Ayyam* (Palestinian Authority, Palestine), February 26, 2002.

<sup>123</sup> *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* (London), February 19, 2002.

<sup>124</sup> *Al-Ahram* (Egypt), November 29, 2000.

Israel should stop using force, Israel should resume negotiations based on 242 and 338, and Israel must implement on the ground the principles of land for peace.<sup>125</sup>

However, Egypt viewed its role in the ME as necessary and the most vital for any solution on the ground. Before President Mubarak was due to visit the United States to discuss with the Americans the crisis in the ME, Ibrahim Nafie, of *Al-Ahram* weekly wrote: 'besides reaffirming the strengths inherent within Egyptian-American relations, it is widely anticipated that President Mubarak's upcoming visit to Washington will give rise to significant developments on the Palestinian Front.'<sup>126</sup> Nafie, sees the consequences of Mubarak's visit to the United States as the end of the misery of the Palestinians: he asserts that

Palestinian president Arafat has no doubt commenced on the groundwork necessary to undertake the reforms in question, and it is expected that he will hold elections within six months. Reliable Egyptian sources indicate that Israel will immediately withdraw to the 28 September, i. e. pre-Intifada borders, whereupon negotiations for a final settlement will commence. These negotiations should last no longer than two years. It is absolutely essential that they avoid the open-ended agreements that have allowed Israel to elude its obligations in the past. The same source indicates that a Palestinian state will be declared prior to 2003. Following elections that Palestinian legislative council will draft a constitution, while the state's institutions will undertake the task of negotiating such issues as Jerusalem, the refugees, settlements and borders, in the light of the UN Resolutions 242 and 338. It is likely that, following Israel's withdrawal, security reforms will be undertaken immediately and in the wake of these reforms, probably next year, the independent state will be declared – following which negotiations will be undertaken between two independent states, UN members, rather than an occupier and a representative national authority – in the hope of securing a final agreement... *another positive consequence*<sup>127</sup> of President Mubarak's visit to Washington is that it will contribute significantly to engineering an improvement in the image of the United States in the region... in seizing the chance offered by the President Mubarak's visit, Washington will not only promoting Middle East security and stability but protecting its own interests.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> For more details, see *Al-Ahram* (Egypt), November 29, 2000.

<sup>126</sup> Ibrahim Nafie, 'Measuring the Steps: President Mubarak's U.S. visit will be essential in kick-starting the peace process and securing regional and international stability,' *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 30 May – 5 June 2002, issue no. 588, <http://www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/2002/588/op1.htm> .

<sup>127</sup> My italics.

<sup>128</sup> Ibrahim Nafie, Measuring the Steps <http://www.ahram.org.eg/weekly/2002/588/op1.htm>.

Nafie's statement is based on the fact that there are no hard lines between Egypt and Israel. The first reactions towards Israel after the Intifada broke out faded away quickly. In an interview with Mubarak, he stated that "the Egyptian army has no interest or goal except defending its country, safeguarding its borders, and deterring any aggression against Egypt."<sup>129</sup> "...we do not regret our sacrifice, and we make sacrifices and will continue to make sacrifices for our Palestinian brethren, and we will continue to invest faithful efforts in order to eliminate their suffering and help them, as best we can, to regain their rights and their sovereignty over their territory, which is internationally recognised."<sup>130</sup>

The president's view of the situation and the help he is able to offer the Palestinians is an initiative rather similar to that of the Saudi prince. This is mainly part of the Arab regime's political culture. As Quandt observes, "the Palestinian cause has always been manipulated by Arab regimes. Each Arab leader who has made a bid for regional influence has presented himself as defender of the Palestinians."<sup>131</sup> However, as the Intifada is a reaction to the failure of the peace process, the term 'defending' no longer applies to the Palestinian cause because the regional order does not allow it. The Intifada is not an Arab issue but a Palestinian one. Therefore, the concept of defence became confined to the Palestinians in their own way.

The Saudi initiative is similar to the Egyptian vision of events and vice versa: it is Arab in its shape and making. More to this point, as Atwan puts it, "if Mubarak does not want to fight to defend the honour of the Arab nation, it is better if he refrain from declaring it morning and evening. By doing so, he reassures Sharon that his southern borders with Egypt are safe, and he can go on with his massacres without fear."<sup>132</sup> Therefore, the Arab perception of *occupation* is no different from that of the Israelis. That is why the Saudi initiative, as with many other Arab initiatives, is no longer relevant. When the concept *occupation* in its immoral application is used in any context, it immediately indicates to brutality, injustice and illegal use of force. But it became, regular to the ear,

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<sup>129</sup> For full view of the interview, see *Akhbar Al Youm* (Egypt), April 13, 2002, see also <http://ahram.org.eg>.

<sup>130</sup> *Akhbar Al Youm* (Egypt), April 13, 2002. For more details on the Egyptian stance towards the Palestinian cause, see *Al-Gumhuriya* (Egypt), April 10 2000; *Al-Ahram* (Egypt), April 12, 13, 2000.

<sup>131</sup> Quandt, W., 'The Middle East in 1990', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 7, No., 1, 1991, p. 53.

<sup>132</sup> *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* (London), April 15, 2002.

to hear the concept occupation in the context of the Israeli occupation to Arab land. This is mainly due to the fact that Israel, after the peace process was initiated, lives alongside its Arab neighbours in the shadow of its *peace* with *the* Arab neighbours rather than in the shadow of its occupation to *the* Arab land.

All Arab states were/are ready to go down to the negotiations table. Even the Palestinians put that clearly: Marwan Bargouthi, Fatah Secretary and head of the Tanzim in the West bank, who was captured by the Israeli troops and put to trial, stated that 'the goal of the Intifada is not to destroy the peace process, but rather to rebuild it on new foundations which include the UN resolutions and ending the United States monopoly on the peace process and to include international forces such as china, the EU, Russia and Arab parties.'<sup>133</sup>

Understanding the approach of the Palestinians to the Intifada makes it easy to understand the Arab approach to it. All parties are confirming that at the end of the road, peace is the ultimate choice, but can only come by ending the occupation. But the peace process taken as Arab-Israeli peace process was peace while Israel was still occupying Arab land.

When Amr Moussa, as Egypt's foreign minister, for example, was asked, "might relations deteriorate to the extent that Egypt would sever all relations with Israel?" his answer was: "this is not the point. The point is: is Israel ready to change its policy and present to the Palestinians an offer they cannot refuse, by returning to the basic tenet of the process of peace, land for peace?"<sup>134</sup> Moussa's answer stemmed from norms in Arab politics. Put straightforwardly, that is, as discussed in Chapter Three of this study, the Arabness of the Arab states. Even academics working on the ME use the same familiar rhetoric as Arab regimes would use, especially when Israel is involved. As G. Fuller concludes,

The fact that Jerusalem is now at stake gives it not only a local flavour or even an Arab flavour, but also a Muslim world flavour. We are seeing pressures and concerns on that issue. We have a more candid Saudi Arabia

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<sup>133</sup> *Al-Quds* (Palestine), November 2, 2000.

<sup>134</sup> *Middle East Insight*, January 2001, [http://www.mideastinsight.org/1\\_01/mousa\\_interview.htm](http://www.mideastinsight.org/1_01/mousa_interview.htm). See also an interview with Lebanon's Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri; here he states that he still believes in peace. See [http://www.mideastinsight.org/1\\_01/hariri\\_interveiw.htm](http://www.mideastinsight.org/1_01/hariri_interveiw.htm).



than we have ever seen before. It is fascinating to see Crown Prince Abdullah speak out on these issues, and I suspect he will grow more candid rather than less. His perspective is more pan-Arab than have seen from Saudi Arabia for a very long time... Egypt is very uncomfortable and unhappy. So I think we are going to see a somewhat more forceful voice from all these states as well, which may encourage others to come into this game. I do not think any of the Arab states are happy or comfortable with the American monopoly of the peace process.<sup>135</sup>

Considering Fuller's expectations and confident comments, one can understand that the perception of 'initiative(s)' in Arab politics as solutions is due to the lack of structural bases on which Arab politics could operate. In the coming chapter of this study, I shall extend this argument. However, the key point is that while the Intifada is continuing, Arab regimes keep reminding their societies that there is no affordable military solution to the conflict with Israel.<sup>136</sup> M. H. Heikal points out that there is neither a purely military option (*hal askari*), because of the severe asymmetry of power, nor a purely diplomatic solution (*hal diplomasi*), which could not succeed for the exact same reason. It is not simply a case of sending able diplomats to a meeting or skilled generals to the battlefield: it is the relative power capability that a state or a group of states can put behind them. In between these two courses of action, as Heikal stresses, is a political solution (*hal siyasi*), a complex and prudent utilisation of a blend of power capabilities to reach attainable objectives.<sup>137</sup>

### ***The Arab Summit in Beirut 2002***

In October 2000, an extra-ordinary Arab summit was held in Cairo after the outbreak of the Intifada at which it was decided that Arab summits to be convened annually in March. Then an ordinary summit was held in Amman on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2001, and then in Beirut on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2002. It is this latter summit which is of concern to this study.

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<sup>135</sup> Fuller, G., 'The Future of the Peace Process', in *Al-Aqsa Intifada: Causes & Implications for U.S. Interest*, Centre for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, October 25, 2000); source for this paper from <http://www.ccasoline.org>. Remarkably, this was before Prince Abdullah announced his plan. However, Fuller was right, Prince Abdullah grew more candid and announced his initiative in 2002.

<sup>136</sup> Karawan, I., "Implications for the Arab World: The Intellectuals and the Street," in *Al-Aqsa Intifada: causes & implications for U.S. Interest*, (Centre for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, October 25, 2000), pp. 8-9. Source for this paper from <http://www.ccasoline.org>.

<sup>137</sup> Cited in Karwan, "Implications for the Arab World: The Intellectuals and the Street," in *Ibid.*, p. 9.

The first characteristic of the Arab summit in Beirut, which was held in March 2002, was that many Arab leaders decided not to attend. The second characteristic of the summit was the invitation of Iraq to the summit, (see above), and the third characteristic was the support of the Saudi initiative which was called 'the Arab peace initiative'.

As at the previous summit, which was held in Amman in March 2001, this summit concentrated on al-Aqsa Intifada, but did not result in many changes in the ongoing political events. The declaration of the summit will help to analyse inter-Arab politics within the regional order:

We the kings, presidents, and emirs of Arab states meeting in the Council of Arab League Summit in Beirut, have conducted a thorough assessment of the development and challenges... relating to the Arab region and more specifically to the occupied Palestinian territory. With great pride, we followed the Palestinian people's Intifada and valiant resistance. We discussed the Arab initiative that aim to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region... based on the pan-Arab responsibility... we announce that we will continue to protect the pan-Arab security and fend off the foreign schemes that aim to encroach on Arab territorial integrity. We address a greeting of pride and honour to the Palestinian people's steadfastness and valiant Intifada against the Israeli occupation and its destructive war machine. We greet with honour and pride the valiant martyrs of the Intifada...<sup>138</sup>

It was mainly the Intifada which brought about the convening of the summit; the direct link, however, between the Intifada and the summit was mainly the Saudi plan which the summit unanimously endorsed. As argued above, the Saudi plan was seen as a solution. That is because there were/are no other options for Arab states. Yet, the United States was the country which the Prince thought could put pressure on Israel to accept his plan. The Prince maintained that "the United States is the one that supports Israel militarily, economically and politically. It is the only country that can wield influence on Israel." He said, urging the United States to lean on Israel Prime Minister Ariel Sharon: "this is the time where sense must be talked into Sharon. War and conflict now are in his head. This has to be removed from his mind and only the United States can do that."<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> All quotations and citations from the Summit Declaration are taken from [www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/league.htm](http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/league.htm). Issued in March 28, 2002.

<sup>139</sup> See [www.arabic.news.com](http://www.arabic.news.com). March 2002.

Since the idea of Arab summits came to existence, and since the idea of *extra-ordinary* summits was put to summits, the many extra-ordinary Arab summits became the ordinary. In the 2002 summit, thirteen Arab presidents did not attend. Amr Moussa, the Secretary General of the Arab League, briefed the summit about the situation of the Arab world:

It is a privilege to introduce to you my first report about the situation which the Arab world reached in the year between March 2001 and March 2002. I do not think the Arab world was in its best situation. From the collapse of the peace opportunities on all tracks, to an aggressive attack on the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, to the threat of using force against Arab states, to many other political, economic, social and human problems which our Arab societies face. Adding to that is what we faced and we are facing of an attack on the Arab and Islamic culture, and the cultural sanctions which some try to impose on us.<sup>140</sup>

Yet, after the summit was convened, the declaration had denounced Israeli actions and asked Israel to deal 'just' with the Palestinians and that was all. Ironically, the vision of the future delineated by Ibrahim Nafie, mentioned above, is more confident concerning the Palestinian people's future than the Arab summit. Moussa's description of the situation of the Arabs is stated in the shadow of peace with Israel. The situation which the Arab world reached is that the Arab league is still in existence and still convening summits. The student of international relations is left with one choice when studying Moussa's comments; that is to question where they are made! The convening of the Arab summits is part and parcel of the failure of the Arab states.

The Arab summits fail to result in any concrete action because there is no coercion in the Arab League resolutions, and also because Arab meetings in Arab summits are a heritage of a past era where rhetoric was the 'norm' in Arab politics. Sadly enough, this norm will still exist as long as the Arab League exists. Arab summits are seen by Israel as directed against it. Therefore, once an Arab summit is convened, it sends the message that Arab states are forming a hostile environment against Israel.

In conclusion, the al-Aqsa Intifada revealed that Arab states, although weak to react to the Israeli violence against the Palestinians, and the Arab leaders, or put more moderately, some of them, still believe that convening summits help to resolve the

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<sup>140</sup> *Al-Hayat* (London), March 28 2002, issues no 14252. for more details see [www.daralhayat.com/ALHAYAT/Data/2002/3/28/art\\_26465.XML](http://www.daralhayat.com/ALHAYAT/Data/2002/3/28/art_26465.XML) .

misery of the Palestinians. This would form the minimum of Arab reactions to the Israeli occupation, mainly by denouncing Israel again.

## **Summary**

In this chapter, I have examined the events that make Arab politics since the KC. I considered the marginalisation of Iraq from regional politics as important because this will facilitate the framing of my argument in the coming chapter.

However, I also illustrated how Iraq became marginalised or banned from Arab policymaking. Iraq did not constitute any weight in the making of the regional order in the 1990s because Iraq and all other Arab states in the region became coated within the American presence. The United States became a regional player more than ever before, Iraq could not escape the political 'design' that the United States set for it. This was represented mainly by the economic sanctions, which I did not refer to as a main theme due to their economic rather than political significance in the case of Iraq. This says that, within the American presence in the region, countries who were not even economically sanctioned by the UN still could not challenge the American domination in the region. Therefore, sanctions ultimately have political significance of demonstrating a dimension of the U.S. power.

The peace process occupied the main body of this chapter. It was illustrated that the peace process has no grounds for success because conflict is the main structure on which Middle East politics are based. Israel, although it has signed a peace deal with Jordan, negotiated with Syria, and made various forms of ties or contacts with other Arab countries, did not end the occupation of Arab land. But still, there was a belief that the peace process was going on which ultimately would lead to the full Israeli withdrawal from the Arab land. This, however, did not happen. What happened was that the al-Aqsa Intifada broke out and served to bring out the ordinary structure of political order in the region - which is conflict. The al-Aqsa Intifada is not the conflict itself, but it is dimension of the broader conflictual structure that governs the region in its entirety.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### The Absence of an Arab System and the New Middle East System

#### Introduction

The academic work about the ME in the 1990s ends by focusing on the American presence in the region. It is galvanisation that explains inter-Arab relations. The sum of this study is that there has been no Arab system that governs inter-Arab relations since the KC. This is due to the fact that Arab states are fully galvanised; the initiation of the peace process, the al-Aqsa Intifada, and the war on Iraq are indicators to the absence of a consolidated Arab regional system that could govern political agendas of the Arab states.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the scholarly debate on the ME focused on a new concept— 'the new Middle East'. Scholars such as Hinnebusch<sup>1</sup>, Barnett<sup>2</sup>, and Tibi<sup>3</sup> recognised an end to the Arab system and the emergence of a wider ME system.<sup>4</sup>

In this chapter, I intend to show that there is no Arab system that governs inter-Arab relations. My study agrees with Hinnebusch's argument in particular because of his

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<sup>1</sup> Hinnebusch, R., "The Middle East Regional System," in Hinnebusch R. & Ehteshami A., (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Barnett, M., *Dialogue in Arab Politics, Negotiations in Regional Order* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> Tibi, B., *Conflict and War in the Middle East: From Interstate War to New Security*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Macmillan, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> Tibi, B., "From Pan-Arabism to the Community of Sovereign Arab States: Redefining the Arab and Arabism in the Aftermath of the Second Gulf War," in Hudson, M., (ed.), *Middle East Dilemma: The Politics and Economics of Arab Integration* (London, New York: I. B. Tauris 1998).

clear conclusion that the *process* of consolidation constitutes a wider ME system.<sup>5</sup> My study however concludes further that consolidation is also dependent upon the United States as being a regional player.

Arabism constitutes a main body on its own because of its importance to the study of Arab politics. The actual conflictual character of the concept lies in the question of whether Arabism is dead or is still alive. Arab states are still called Arab states, they are still members of the Arab League, and they still hold Arab summits. On top of that, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which is the heritage of an era during which Arabism constituted the high of political rhetoric, is not yet solved so that one could say it is over, or there is no longer any need to hold Arab summits to denounce Israel and/or to support the Palestinians. Therefore, Arabism still exists not as an ideology, but as a political refuge for Arab states.

However, despite the fact that Arab states are members of the Arab League, of which Iran, Turkey, and Israel are not members, their policies have come to be governed by the newly emerging ME system. The war on Iraq, alongside the continuing Israeli occupation of the Arab land demonstrates this.

This chapter is divided into two interrelated parts: in the first part, I shall offer the scholarly debate about the making or unmaking of an Arab system in the 1990s and beyond. From this I shall proceed onto the second section which will discuss two issues. The first will be focusing on how galvanisation—U.S.-Arab relations determine the absence of an Arab system and create an insecure environment for Arab states. This will mainly discuss the security dilemma in the ME. The second will focus on Arabism assuming that this concept did not fade away, something which causes severe confusion for Arab states. The sum of these two sections will focus on the regional order again, offering a description of the consolidation of the system which was enhanced by the war on Iraq.

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<sup>5</sup> Hinnebusch, "Introduction: The Analytical Framework," in Hinnebusch R. & Ehteshami A. (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002, p. 1.

## The Absence of the Arab System since 1990

The main change that took place in Arab politics in the aftermath of the KC was that these politics were no longer characterised mainly by the Arabness of the state but of wider regional mechanisms. In other words, there were no longer 'Arab' politics, but a wider range of politics, which are neither completely Arab nor completely Middle Eastern. What remained of the 'Arabness of Arab politics' were the titles of the states, the Arab League, and Arab summits, which all in all, on the one hand proved ineffective, and on the other remain a cause of confusion in Arab politics.

The change in Arab politics was structural, once and for all. It was structural because the units' (i.e. Arab states') stand toward each other in the region had changed, operating, as just mentioned, on a new basis. This discussion is based on two interrelated elements; the first one is that the ordering principles of Arab politics had changed from being articulated by Arabness to being ruled by galvanisation. Secondly, compared to other non-Arab states in the region, the capabilities of Arab states are weaker.

Before advancing to offer the form of security dilemma in the ME in the light of the events discussed in the previous chapter, it is important to offer the scholarly debate on the Arab system since the crisis. The scholarly debate about the new political thinking of Arab states is characterised by their collective acknowledgment of Arabism's dysfunctional qualities, which led to the contemplation of new policies based on 'interests' and realism.<sup>6</sup> None of the studies, however, apart from that of Hinnebusch

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<sup>6</sup> Barnett, *Dialogue in Arab Politics*, 1998; Tibi, B., "From Pan-Arabism to the Community of Sovereign Arab States: Redefining the Arab and Arabism in the Aftermath of the Second Gulf War," in Hudson, *Middle East Dilemma*, 1998, pp. 92-107. There are various scholarly works in which the concept of the Arab system was mentioned. But it was mentioned neither in analytical nor in a broad frame which could cause me to headline it in this chapter. Still, I will use this literature where I see relevant and vital. Y. Sayigh mentioned the concept Arab system but did not elaborate on it. He concludes that little time has passed since the end of the Cold War and the defeat of Iraq in the second Gulf War, but one of the most important regional consequences of this is the introduction of Israel as a full member of the ME state system, as distinct from the strategic system of which it was always a member due to geographic location and active, albeit negative, interaction with its neighbours. See Y. Sayigh, "Structural Crisis in the Middle East," in Philip Robins, *et al.*, *The Middle East in the Post Peace Process: The Emerging Regional Order and its International Implications*, (Tokyo, Institute of Developing Economics 1996); Paul Noble, "The Prospects of Arab Cooperation in a Changing Regional and Global System," in Michael Hudson (ed.), *Middle East Dilemma*, (London; I. B. Taurus, 1999); L. Cantori, also mentioned the Arab system but as Sayigh, she did not discuss the concept but

and Ehteshami (eds.) *The Foreign Policies of the Middle Eastern States* (2002) had offered the combination of theoretical and empirical analysis using the concept of system to explain the change in the behaviour of Arab states since the KC. Their focus on the concept system in an analytical manner is an unprecedented step in writing about the ME politics.<sup>7</sup>

Hinnebusch's argument is that the Gulf War further enervated the remnants of Arab solidarity giving an example of how Saddam Hussein used Arabism to justify his invasion of Kuwait while anti-Iraq regimes manipulated the Arab League to engineer Western intervention against another member of the League and abort an Arab solution to the crisis. Furthermore, he showed how the crisis weakened Arab institutions, mainly the Arab League. The lack of an agreement about enabling an Arab summit to be held in 1990-96 showed the degree of paralysis inter-Arab coordination reached.<sup>8</sup> The collapse of Pan-Arab solidarity and institutions left little restraint on the *realpolitik* of individual

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offered it as it is. She maintained that 'the Arab state system had already been raven by the 1967, 1980, and 1982 wars'. The Gulf War of 1991 fundamentally ended the usefulness of the concept "Arab state system" even Arab observers now have noted that the concept has been replaced by that of the Middle East (and possibly North African) state system. The non-Arab states of Turkey and Iran are now active international players, and the peace process has now accomplished the same thing for Israel. The ME is now a system of conventional international relations. See L. Cantori, "Egypt at the Crossroads: Domestic, Economic, and Political Stagnation and Foreign policy Constraints," in R. Freedman, (ed.), *The Middle East after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait*, (Florida: University Press of Florida 1993); Roger Owen mentions the concept system in which he asked 'A new post-cold war system? The Middle East in a realigned world'. R. Owen in *Middle East Report*, (September-October 1993), pp. 3-7; Maddy-Weitzman mentions Arab system as crystallised in the 1990s, on which see *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, 1994, pp. 81-83. See also G. Krämer, "Order and Interest: The Kuwait War and the Arab State System," in, Danspeckgruber W., & C. Tripp, (eds.), *The Iraqi Aggression Against Kuwait: Strategic Lessons and Implications for Europe* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press 1996).

<sup>7</sup> Hinnebusch in explaining the emergence of Arab system discussed issues like foreign policy determinants, the foreign policy making, and the foreign policy behaviour. Chapter Two of his book entitled as *The Middle East Regional System* is more relevant to the analysis I shall embark upon later. He concluded that the ME regional system is taken in the book to be comprised of the Arab League members, Turkey, Iran, and Israel. Arab states with shared identity, intense interactions, and membership in a regional organisation make the core of the system The non-Arab states - Turkey, Iran, and Israel - comprise, by virtue of their relative exclusion from the core community, the periphery of the system, but they are, nonetheless, members by virtue of their geographic contiguity and intimate involvement in the region's conflict. This makes them integral parts of the regional balance of power; in particular, they have tended either to constitute threats to the weaker Arab core or have acted to contain its instability in alliance with external powers. See Hinnebusch, "The Middle East Regional System", in Hinnebusch R. & A., Ehteshami (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002, pp. 29-53.

<sup>8</sup> Hinnebusch, "The Middle East Regional System," in Hinnebusch R. & A. Ehteshami (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002, p. 49.



actors, which, however, only made it easier for hostile periphery states to exploit Arab divisions.<sup>9</sup> Subsequently, Hinnebusch observed that

In the wake of the Second Gulf War, there was much talk about the dissolution of the Arab core in a wider ME system embracing the none-Arab periphery as full members. No such formal or institutionalised new system emerged, but the enhanced postwar fragmentation of the Arab core meant that reference to an "Arab world" sharing interests and identity appeared obsolete for much of the 1990s. No Arab concert existed to provide leadership and the Arab League rarely met, and never effectively. U.S. penetration of the region reached levels comparable to the Western presence of the pre-Nasser age. While U.S. stewardship of the Arab-Israeli peace negotiation was sharply biased in Israel's favour, and although U.S. force was regularly directed at Arab targets, above all Iraq, Washington's influence was not seriously jeopardised in Arab capitals. At the same time, Israel and Turkey, though continuing to employ military superiority against Arab states and interests, were nevertheless increasingly accepted as players—even partners—in regional politics. Only at the turn of the millennium were there some tentative signs that Arab institutions were reviving. But, as no new Arab or "Middle Eastern" security system emerged, states continued to rely on realist self-help manifest in unrestrained arms races and/or on U.S. protection.<sup>10</sup>

The sum result of the weakening of Arab autonomy over their own issues caused a security situation which served western interests. The quasi-permanent U.S. military presence in the Gulf, the devastation and siege by which Iraq's power was destroyed and its revival prevented, the neutralisation, through economic and security dependency, of Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and the Israeli-Turkish encirclement of Syria, all keep any regional state or coalition that might seek to reorganise the regional system for collective indigenous purposes effectively hobbled. The notion of an autonomous Arab system has been virtually nullified.<sup>11</sup>

Hinnebusch argues that in the ME the state is the main actor in foreign policy and that state elites have an interest in maximising the autonomy and security of the state.<sup>12</sup> The

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p. 50.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. p. 50.

<sup>11</sup> Hinnebusch, R. & El-Shazly N., "The Challenge of Security in the Post-Gulf War Middle East System," in Hinnebusch R. & Ehteshami A., (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002, p. 87.

<sup>12</sup> Hinnebusch, R., "Introduction: The Analytical Framework," in Hinnebusch R. & Ehteshami A., (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002, p. 1. It is important to differentiate between the theory of international relations and theory of foreign policy so that my study will not do violence to Hinnebusch's argument. K Waltz, divided theories of international relations up into two

book accepts the realist claim that a built-in feature of a state system, anarchy, has generated profound insecurity and a pervasive struggle for power.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, he maintains that the ME is one of the regional subsystems where this anarchy appears most in evidence: it holds two of the world's most durable and intense conflict centres, the Arab-Israeli and the Gulf arenas; its states are still contesting borders and rank among themselves; and there is not a single one that does not feel threatened by one or more of its neighbours. Finally, the book accepts that states seek to counter these threats through "reason of state," notably power accumulation and balancing, and that the latter is a key to regional order.<sup>14</sup>

Barnett mainly focuses on the impact of the Gulf War on inter-Arab relations. He concludes that the post-Gulf War policies are characterised by fragmentation of the Arab states. After the war the conversation between Arabs was dominated by pleas to alter their conduct, free themselves of sentimentality, and base their politics on "realism". The retreat to the state was unmistakable.<sup>15</sup> He emphasises the death of Arabism: 'Arabism had encouraged Arab leaders to coordinate and harmonise their policies, sometimes against their better judgment and personal preferences, but now [after the second Gulf War] their collective acknowledgment of Arabism's

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types, those which see causes operating primarily at the 'state' (second-image) level, which he terms 'reductionist' theories and those which see causes operating primarily at the systemic (third-image) level, which he terms 'systemic'. The former group, which Waltz thinks have been dominated in IR theory, explains international politics, therefore, in terms of the interactions and characteristics of the major units which make it up, that is states. He further argues that reductionist theories do not just, as a matter of fact, mistake or ignore certain aspects of international politics – the systemic aspects – they must do so. For reductionist theories to be true, Waltz famously says, 'we would have to believe that no important causes intervene between the aims and actions of states and results their actions produce. In the history of international relations, however, results achieved seldom correspond to the intentions of actors. The result of this argument, of course, is that there must be a set of factors which are properties of the system, not of the units, and which represent the 'structural', 'constraining' factors that make international politics what it is. It is these factors, Waltz thinks that a systemic theory should address. A theory of international politics, Waltz says, should be systemic; theories of foreign policy, in contrast, must be reductionist. It follows, then, that a theory of international politics as such is different from a theory of foreign policy. The problem is that virtually all previous theories of international politics (he specifically discusses Aron, Morgenthau, Morton Kaplan, and Richard Rosecrance) have been reductionist in that they have failed to appreciate this distinction and its implication. For more on this distinction see the elegant book by N. J. Rengger, *International Relations, Political Theory and the Problem of Order*, 2001 (op.cited) from which this observation is taken. Pages pp. 41-47.

<sup>13</sup> Hinnebusch, R., 'Introduction: The Analytical Framework', in Hinnebusch R. & A. Ehteshami, (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Barnett, *Dialogue in Arab Politics*, 1998, p. 212-216.

dysfunctional qualities led to a wholesale contemplation of new policies based on “interests” and realism.<sup>16</sup>

Moreover, Barnett observed that ‘because Arabism seemingly brokered only hostility and suspicions, Arab officials began to publicly confess their exhaustion from its demands and its unfulfilled promises.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, ‘all this [the end of Arabism] suggests the end of the Arab states system.’ By “Arab politics”, he adds,

I have meant the existence of certain core issues— the Arab Israeli conflict, autonomy from the West, and unity among Arab states— that are expressive of the Arab political identity, that help to define the Arab state’s interests and the legitimate means to pursue those interest. A dominant concern of the 1990s has been the need for Arab reconciliation, the possibility and timing of Israel’s integration into the region, and even the possibility of closing the Arab League. To be sure, Israel’s place in the region remains in dispute pending a final treaty with the Palestinians, but the retreat on these “Arab” issues as they directly pertain to inter-Arab action has been impressive, calling into question the organisation—indeed, the existence— of Arab politics. This conversation was produced by the insult of Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, the indifference that marked the 1980s, and the decades of an Arabism whose most memorable contribution were injury and rivalry.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, Barnett focuses on the reorganisation of Arab-Israeli politics starting in Madrid talks as a turning point in these politics: the Madrid conference and its subsequent events reflected a shift from Arabism to realism, from an ideological to an interstate struggle.<sup>19</sup> Then he focuses on the changing security order, where he concludes that the changes in the Arab-Israeli conflict parallel a change that has occurred in Inter-Arab security relations since 1990.<sup>20</sup> Security for Arab states became an emphasis on sovereignty.<sup>21</sup> However, Barnett concludes that any notion of Arab collective security lay in ruins after the Gulf War as Arab states began emphasising individual over Arab security and began demonstrating a strong preference for bilateral

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 213.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 214-215.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 221-226.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 227-228.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 227.

security pacts with Western states.<sup>22</sup> The apparent consensus was that Arabism had long outlived its usefulness, that the region should sober up and embrace sovereignty, and that Arab states should be allowed, within reason, to consort with whom they wanted.<sup>23</sup>

The future of Arab order occupies a space in Barnett's discussion; this future is bound to the fact that the ability of Arab states to develop and further their interest in the future depends on reaching agreement and cooperation with the non-Arab regional states. The future regional order should embrace Arab and non-Arab states including Turkey, Iran, and, most controversially, Israel.<sup>24</sup>

Similar argument came from Tibi: the vision of a pan-Arab state, as it had prevailed until the Gulf crisis, was related to the ideology and rhetoric of pan-Arab nationalism, but not to an existing citizenship pattern nor to a model of integration of regional states.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, Tibi argues that

Pan-Arab ideology was directed against the existing institution of the nation-state, along whose lines all discrete states of the region are organised. In the political language of pan-Arab ideology, existing Arab states were not accepted as nations-states. They were downgraded and labelled *al-dawla al-qitriyya* (the domestic state). The term meaning "the Arab nations-state" (*al-dawla al-qawmiyya*), was used only to refer to the visionary pan-Arab state aimed at, and allegedly hitherto impeded by, Western conspiracies. Thus, pan-Arab ideology, even though it negates the existing Arab nation-states, remains imprisoned in the nation-state idea. It simply aspires to a larger pan-Arab state that unites all Arabs. In fact, harmony and brotherhood were the central rhetorical theme of pan-Arab ideology, while real interstate Arab politics, as with any other politics, has been characterised by sever conflict.<sup>26</sup>

Therefore, for Tibi, considering the Arab system, the first lesson of the KC was that any effort to induce the boundary change in the existing Arab state system will erupt in violent conflict.<sup>27</sup> That is why Tibi suggests that redefining Arabness must be aimed at

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 228. See also B. Korany, "National Security in the Arab World: The Persistence of Dualism," in D. Tschirgi, (ed.), *The Arab World Today* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994).

<sup>23</sup> Barnett, *Dialogue in Arab Politics*, 1998, p. 228.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 230.

<sup>25</sup> Tibi, "From Pan-Arabism to the Community of Sovereign Arab States: Redefining the Arab and Arabism in the Aftermath of the Second Gulf War," in Hudson, *Middle East Dilemma*, p. 93.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 93-94.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 94.

developing a new design for inter-Arab relations: an interstate structure of sovereign states based on mutual respect.<sup>28</sup> Tibi, however, considers the ME to be a regional state system and a part of the international system.<sup>29</sup>

## The Security Dilemma

The above discussions beg the question that if there is no Arab system that governs inter-Arab relations, what then is the system that governs these relations? Based on Hinnebusch, there is a ME system in consolidation.<sup>30</sup> However, the main character of this system within consolidation is that Arab states are shifting from being the core of the pre-KC system to being on the periphery of the emerging new system. Hinnebusch maintains that

In the wake of the second Gulf War, there was much talk about the dissolution of the Arab core in a wider Middle East system embracing the non-Arab periphery as full members. No such formal or institutionalised new system emerged, but the enhanced post war fragmentation of the Arab core meant that reference to an “Arab world” sharing interests and identity appeared obsolete from much of the 1990s. No Arab concert existed to provide leadership and the Arab League rarely met, and never effectively. U.S. penetration of the region reached levels comparable to the Western presence of the pre-Nasser age. While U.S. stewardship of the Arab-Israeli peace negotiation was sharply biased in Israel’s favour, and although U.S. force was regularly directed at Arab targets, above all Iraq, Washington’s influence was not seriously jeopardised in Arab capitals. At the same time, Israel and Turkey, though continuing to employ military superiority against Arab states and interests, were nevertheless increasingly accepted as players—even partners—in regional politics.<sup>31</sup>

It is, as Hinnebusch concludes above, the American presence in the region which dictates the discussion about the regional political shape. A discussion of the security dilemma in the region starts from there. Hinnebusch further concludes that ‘as no new Arab or “Middle Eastern” security system emerged, states continued to rely on realist self-help manifest in unrestrained arms races and/or on U.S. protection.’<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>29</sup> Tibi, *War and Conflict in the Middle East*, 1998, p. 190.

<sup>30</sup> Hinnebusch, R., “Introduction,” in Hinnebusch R. & Ehteshami A. (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> Hinnebusch, ‘The Middle East Regional System’, in Hinnebusch R. & Ehteshami A. (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002, p. 50.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

The security dilemma for Arab states in the ME differs from the commonly understood concept of security dilemma. What characterises this dilemma is the absence of a coherent Arab system within which Arab policies could be channelled, and which could back up the foreign policy capacity of Arab states. The second is the generated order from the KC, or what could be termed here as the absolute order. The 'absolute order implies no change; and where there is no allowance for change there is unlikely to be justice, and without justice there is the potential for conflict.'<sup>33</sup>

The relationship between these two factors is interlocked: security complexes, in theoretical terms, can be derived from both the state and the system levels. Security complexes result from interactions between individual states.<sup>34</sup> Arab states' interactions became channelled through or blocked within the orbit of galvanisation, which determines their behaviour more than merely being locked into geographical proximity. Each state relied on the fact that the United States is present in the region which could hinder an attack on one of the states by another.<sup>35</sup> To be sure, this has hindered the emergence of an independent regional security complex. In the same time, the emergence of a wider ME system, which Hinnebusch describes as 'in consolidation', is emerging with the United States as a regional player.

The 1990s and beyond are characterised by the collapse of what is termed as 'Arab security'. The then Egyptian foreign minister, Boutros Ghali, stated that "the painful realities resulting from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and its usurpation of the territory of a fraternal Arab state include the collapse of the traditional concept of pan-Arab security."<sup>36</sup> The concept of pan-Arab security was not replaced by a pan-middle eastern one, for example, because the American strong hand in the region after the KC was quick to form itself as an 'institutional reference'. That means that other than the Arab

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<sup>33</sup> Booth, K., "Security in Anarchy", *International Affairs* 67, 3 (1991) p. 539.

<sup>34</sup> Buzan, *People, States, And Fear*, p. 191.

<sup>35</sup> See Geoffrey Kemp, "The Middle East Arms Race: Can it be Controlled?", *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 3 (Summer 1991), pp. 441-456.

<sup>36</sup> Cited in *FBIS-NES-91-095*, March 27, 1991, pp. 9-10.

League no strictly indigenous security-related institutions existed in the ME.<sup>37</sup> Subsequently, it is the regional dynamics that guided American foreign policy in the region.<sup>38</sup> The more the United States is needed in the region, the more its role becomes institutionalised; it is no longer only oil, or Israel, that drags the United States into the region, but the United States' security became part of the region, which ultimately makes the form or type of Arab security.<sup>39</sup>

Neo-Realism contends that capabilities rather than intentions are what determine the way states seek to help themselves.<sup>40</sup> Arab states' capabilities are measured by their *Leistung* (efficiency) as Arab states in defending their interest as Arab states. But in the case of the absence of a collective Arab security, the *Leistung* of Arab states is restricted to each individual one. Therefore, galvanisation, seen from the angle of individual security matters, is a healthy concept

Yet, remarkably, the lesson from the war on Iraq shows that Arab regimes would allow more intervention and they would fully cooperate with the United States. Therefore, the capacity of the Arab state is restricted to regime survival, which in turn affects the making of the security system. Therefore, all security matters in the region revolve around regime survival. The regime survival dilemma stems from the fact that the United States, as a regional player, does not have the same level of relations with all 'Arab' regimes. The degree of closeness of Arab regimes to the United States is not only judged by how many visits an Arab leader will undertake to the White House, but also by the degree of how this regime, composing a single unit within the emerging system, functions within the systemic settings. The regime-by-regime differences in relationship with the United States define the dilemma of the regime. A clear example of this is the relationship between the United States and individual Arab states like that of Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

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<sup>37</sup> Maoz, Z., "Regional Security in the Middle East: Past Trends, Present Realities and Future Challenges," in Maoz, Z. (ed.), *Regional Security in the Middle East* (London: Portland, Frank Cass, 1997), p. 19.

<sup>38</sup> See Michael Scott Doran, "Palestine, Iraq, And American Strategy", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 82, no. 1 (January/February 2003) pp. 19-34.

<sup>39</sup> See Robert Jervis, "The Future of World Politics: Will it Resemble the Past?" *International Security*, Vol. 35, No., 3 (Winter 1991/92), pp. 39-73.

<sup>40</sup> For more on this discussion See D. Baldwin, *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: the Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press 1993).

The close ties between Saudi Arabia and the United States have led some analysts to depict Saudi Arabia's role in the international system as one of classical dependence.<sup>41</sup> In this view, Saudi Arabia has very little autonomy in terms of its foreign- and economic-policy choices. It is forced to follow the lead of the United States because its economic and political stability is dependent upon U.S. support and goodwill.<sup>42</sup> However, the dilemma for the Saudi state is embedded in two factors: the first factor is that Saudi Arabia knows well that it cannot depend on what is called the Arab nation or on other Arab states in executing Arab politics. Therefore it must further depend on the United States as a strong ally who provides it with protection.<sup>43</sup> The second factor which is the important for this study is the experience Iraq witnesses in its confrontation with the United States: the American emphasis on regime toppling in Iraq leaves Saudi Arabia and many other Arab states questioning their own relationship with the United States especially after the attack on the World Trade Centre in September 2001.

Furthermore, the presence of large numbers of American troops on Saudi soil irritates nationalists and Islamists alike and eventually may come to threaten the stability of the Saudi regime.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, the American presence in the region decides very much of the domestic mood in the region. The American presence has become merely a force. The United States is demonstrating forcefully that challenges to its authority in the region will be defeated.<sup>45</sup> Saudi Arabia's and many other Arab states' dilemma then is in their lack of force to keep up with the domestic pressure against the American presence on an Arab soil and to keep up with, say, the overall force the United States is using in the region. On the light of this, for example, the rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iraq during the Arab League summit in Beirut was irrelevant; it does not

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<sup>41</sup> Cited in G. Gause, "The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia," in Hinnebusch R. & Ehteshami A. (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002, p. 194. See also Helen Lackner, *A House Built on Sand: A Political Economy of Saudi Arabia*, (London: Ithaca Press, 1978); Fred Halliday, *Arabia Without Sultans*, (New York: Vintage Press, 1974).

<sup>42</sup> Gause, "The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia," in Hinnebusch R. & Ehteshami A. (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002, p. 194.

<sup>43</sup> For more see Steven Lee Myers, "At A Saudi Base, U.S. Digs In, Gingerly, for a Longer Stay", *New York Times*, December 27, 1997; Howard Schneider, "In the Arabian Desert, U.S. Troops Settle In; Temporary Deployment has Permanent Feel", *Washington Post*, May 3, 2001.

<sup>44</sup> Doran, M. S., "Palestine, Iraq, And American Strategy", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 82, no. 1 (January/February 2003) p. 32.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31-33.



make sense if the United States is unhappy with Iraq that Saudi Arabia would forge closer ties to it.

However, the American presence in the region does not exist without there being "side effects" on America itself. The United States was militarily attacked throughout the 1990s: the bombings in Saudi Arabia, one in Riyadh in November of 1995, and the other on the Khobar towers near Dhahran in June of 1996; the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998; then the attack on the U.S.S. Cole in Yemen in October 2000, on top of that the attack on the twin towers in the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001.

Yet, since September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, the security dilemma of the United States became part and parcel of the security dilemma of the Arab states in the region.<sup>46</sup> For decades prior to 9/11, the United States basically had a deal with repressive governments throughout the Arab world: they could run their countries more or less however they wanted, as long as they were willing to sell oil at reasonable prices to the West, act as strategic allies of the United States and not threaten the Middle East regional order.<sup>47</sup> However, barring any long-term negative fallout from the events of 11 September, regime change became an established part of U.S. strategic thinking towards Middle East.<sup>48</sup> To change regimes in the region, the United States' political agenda became based only on using forceful means to make this new form of politics possible.

To change a regime in the region means the spread of a pattern of force usage for a new purpose in an unprecedented way which causes a threat to other regimes. This has a double-sided effect on regional security: the first one is in the way the United States tends to guard its existence in the region, and the other lies in the way Arab states respond to the United States' policy. The United States uses its absolute power to change regimes, yet these regimes are, or were, the very allies of the United States.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> On changes the 11<sup>th</sup> of September has brought see Robert Jervis, "An Interim Assessment of September 11: What Has Changed and What Has Not?" *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 117, No. 1 (2002), pp. 37-55.

<sup>47</sup> Gordon, P., "Bush's Middle East Vision", *Survival*, vol. 45, no. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 155-165, p. 156.

<sup>48</sup> Ehteshami, A., "Reform from Above: the politics of participation in the oil monarchies", *International Affairs*, Vo. 79, no. 1 (January 2003), p. 54.

<sup>49</sup> See Salim Yaqub, "Imperious Doctrines: U.S.-Arab Relations from Dwight D. Eisenhower to George W. Bush", *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (Fall 2002), pp. 571-593; John Pilger, 'Collateral Damage', in A. Arnove (ed.), *Iraq under Siege: The Deadly Impact of Sanctions and War*, (London : Pluto Press, 2000).

The cooperation between the United States and these regimes is then tied to how much the United States uses force, not to how much it uses diplomacy to keep these regimes good allies. Moreover, the United States started bluntly dictating its will to most Arab governments.<sup>50</sup> Its intervention in domestic political issues of these countries, such as bringing democracy to the region, changes the thinking of Arab states towards the power on which they rely to further exist. In an interview with the *Financial Times*, National Security Advisor to President Bush, Rice, stated the United States wishes to bring democracy and freedom to the Arab world.<sup>51</sup> The Jordanian daily *Al-Dustour* wrote that 'Rice claimed that the United States intends to be a liberating force and dedicate itself to liberating the Islamic world, starting with Iraq, and to establish democracy and freedom. She ignores more than one and a half billion Muslims who suffer from America's greed and oppression. ... Will the black Rice free our Muslim world by the same method that Americans have used against Muslim prisoners in the Giangi Fort in Afghanistan?'<sup>52</sup>

The Arabs became the problem of the United States and the United States is the problem for the Arabs. The first consequence of this political environment is the failure of foreign policy in any matter which concerns the two sides. Hinnebusch for example concludes that:

The failure of regional institutions, multilateral or bilateral alliances, and of the regional power balance to give local states security, brutally exposed by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, opened the door to acceptance of a heightened role for the non-Arab periphery states and for the U.S. hegemon in the region. In the post war era, inter-Arab disputes continued to paralyse the Arab League/summits system as an arena for collectively addressing security threats. The result is a security situation that serves Western interests and narrows Arab autonomy in a way the architects of the Baghdad Pact could only dream of. The quasi-permanent U.S. military presence in the Gulf, partly funded by Arab oil and aimed at Iran and Iraq; the devastation and siege by which Iraq's power was destroyed and its revival prevented; the neutralisation, through economic and security dependency, of Egypt and Saudi Arabia; and the Israeli-Turkish encirclement of Syria, all keep any regional state or coalition that

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<sup>50</sup> See George Crom, "Avoiding the Obvious: Arab Perspectives on U.S. Hegemony in the Middle East", *Middle East Report* (Fall 1998), p. 23.

<sup>51</sup> *The Financial Times*, September 23, 2002.

<sup>52</sup> *Addustour*, (Jordan), September 23, 2002. For more on the reactions to Rice's remarks, see *Al-Hayat*, (London), October 6, 2002.

might seek to reorganise the regional system for collective indigenous purposes effectively hobbled. The notion of an autonomous Arab system has been virtually nullified. Was this price of increased regional security? Pax Americana, far from uniformly enhancing the security of the Middle East, has a contradictory effect. On the one hand, the United States exacerbated power imbalances, sowed the seeds of future Iraqi revanchism and Palestinian frustration, and encouraged the spread of strategic weapons, arguably the single most serious challenge to Middle Eastern security. Instability was contained largely by the deterrent power of the hegemon and its ties to the pivotal Arab states of Egypt and Saudi Arabia, plus the counterbalancing of the Turkish-Israeli and Syro-Iranian axes. As such, rather than a stable new Middle Eastern system replacing the old Arab-centred system, security rests on fluid ad hoc arrangements.

This "system" has several potentially fatal flaws. As Barnett argues, a stable order depends on congruence between the normative expectations of the society and those of state elites.<sup>53</sup> While the international hegemon and key state elites may believe there is no viable alternative to the status quo, significant parts of indigenous society retain visions of an Arab-Islamic order free of Western intrusion and Israeli dominance; this taints the legitimacy of those states seen to support a status quo order devoid of these expectations... To a very considerable extent, the status quo, lacking indigenous popular legitimacy, is erected on hegemonic external force and on economic and security relations that benefit a relative few. The continued application of U.S. force in the region is thus essential to maintain the status quo, but paradoxically further undermines its legitimacy. As such, should that force falter, it seems likely that the regional order would again face destabilising challenges from below and within.<sup>54</sup>

With this all, the United States' security is bound to the ME security. The emerging system dominates the type of security the United States puts itself in. The dilemma for the United States, however, is that it does not acknowledge, or barely acknowledges, the emerging system of which it is itself a part, by not helping to solve the very core problem in the ME—the Arab-Israeli conflict. This is because the United States is mainly seeking security for itself, apart from the security of the regional players who are standing, whether they like it or not, shoulder to shoulder with the United States in its policies in the region.

As Hinnebusch puts it above, the continued application of U.S. force in the region is essential to keep the existing order. However, the same methods applied by the United States to keep the status quo are the same methods which destabilise the order: the

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<sup>53</sup> See Barnett, "Regional Security After the Gulf War", pp. 614-616.

<sup>54</sup> Hinnebusch, R. & El-Shazly N., "The Challenge of Security in the Post-Gulf War Middle East System," in Hinnebusch R. & Ehteshami A., (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002, pp. 86-88.

continuous use of force by the United States keeps it in extreme need to use this force over and over again because it is only force that distinguishes its presence in the region from any other international power. Thus, there will be no co-binding security arrangements between the United States and any Arab state because of the huge gap between the superiority of the American power and the extreme weakness of Arab states. From this point, whenever the United States needs the support of Arab states in order to curb any terrorist groups, Arab states will feel unable to do so because the amount of force an Arab state would apply to do the job would not suit the United States' demands.

### **Arabism: a Drowning Man Will Clutch At a Straw**

Strictly speaking, the concept 'Arabism' never stopped being a part of inter-Arab and Arab non-Arab relations. Arab politics are Arab because of Arabism and they remained Arab politics after the KC.<sup>55</sup> Hinnebusch maintains that 'pan-Arabism continues to have a residual affect on foreign policymaking because states' identities are still no good substitute for Arab identity. In most, if not all, of the Arab states, the legitimacy of regimes continues to be contingent on being seen to act for Arab or Islamic interests, and political Islam.<sup>56</sup> Barnett also maintains that the same Arabism that compelled Arab states to work in concert and to identify with each other also represented a source of conflict and competition.<sup>57</sup>

Indeed, the test of the impact of Arabism on the making of the regional system is mainly addressed through scrutinising the Arab League's performance as a body within which Arab states hold their political activities as Arab states. When speaking of the Arab states, we mainly mean their political body, and that is represented by their League.

Since its establishment and beyond the KC, the Arab League failed to perform in any of the key tests of conflict management and conflict resolution among Arab states – starting with the 1948 meeting on Palestine, going through the conflicts between radical and conservative Arab regimes in the 1950s and 1960s, dealing with the civil war in Yemen (1962-67), and again in 1994, Jordan (September 1970, July 1971), and

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<sup>55</sup> Barnett, *Dialogue in Arab Politics*, 1998, p. 239.

<sup>56</sup> Hinnebusch, "Introduction," in Hinnebusch and Ehteshami (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of the Middle Eastern States*, 2002, pp. 9-10.

<sup>57</sup> Barnett, *Dialogue in Arab Politics*, 1998, p. 255.

Lebanon war, and finally, dealing with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. In none of these cases was there any sign of effective management of the conflicts, let alone any type of resolution. Thus, "the Arab League is seen by its own leading members as a dead horse."<sup>58</sup>

Regarding the issue of Iraq, there were various summits held: the Franco-African Summit in Paris, the Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Kuala Lumpur, The Islamic Summit in Doha March 5<sup>th</sup> 2003, and the Arab League Summit held in Sharm El Sheik on March 1, 2003. The concern of this section, however, is the Arab League Summit which was held in Egypt in March 2003.

### **- The Arab Summit in Sharm el-Sheik March 2003**

The Arab League Summit of Sharm el-Sheik in March 2003 was controversial even before it opened. Some Arab leaders signalled that they thought the meeting was unnecessary because the resolution from the previous summit in Beirut in March 2002 voiced sufficiently united opposition to a war on Iraq.

In the concluding text of the Sharm el-Sheik Summit, Arab states concluded that the summit dealt with the dangerous threats Iraq faces... and the impact of that threat on the Arab national security.<sup>59</sup> Egypt and Saudi Arabia, for example, declared that the nation is facing "fateful and momentous" threats.<sup>60</sup> This is also based on the fact that Arab leaders are aware of the importance and necessity of Arab solidarity to protect the highest interests of the Arab nation, achieving the nation's aims...etc."<sup>61</sup> Put simply, Arab leaders verbally declared that they are against any military action against Iraq because there is a threat to the entire Arab nation's interest.<sup>62</sup> The Syrian president, differing from the others, accused the United States of seeking to secure Iraq's oil and

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<sup>58</sup> Maoz, Z., "Regional Security in the Middle East: Past Trends, Present Realities and Future Challenges," in Maoz, Z. (ed.), *Regional Security in the Middle East* (London: Portland, Frank Cass, 1997), p. 19-20.

<sup>59</sup> [www.al-jazeera.net/special\\_coverages/Iraq\\_crisis/2003/3/3-2-1.htm](http://www.al-jazeera.net/special_coverages/Iraq_crisis/2003/3/3-2-1.htm) .

<sup>60</sup> For full text of the Arab states speeches at the summit see [www.al-jazeera.net/special\\_coverages/Iraq\\_crisis/2003/3/3-2-1.htm](http://www.al-jazeera.net/special_coverages/Iraq_crisis/2003/3/3-2-1.htm).

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

redraw the region's map. He commented that "we [the Arabs] are all targeted... we are all in danger."<sup>63</sup> However, the summit was marked by heated accusations between Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdulaziz and the Libyan leader, Qaddafi.<sup>64</sup>

The summit was also marked by the Emirates initiative calling on Saddam to step down. United Arab Emirates proposal was clearly stated by Sheik Zayed: 'the entire Iraqi leadership must step down and leave Iraq with all the appropriate advantages within two weeks of adopting this Arab initiative.'<sup>65</sup>

Furthermore, in describing the summit, Salama Ahmed Salama, writing in *Al-Ahram Weekly*, observed that "[Arab leaders] come, they meet, they talk, they eat and drink, they issue statements, then they go each his way as if nothing had taken place. As a consequence, no one gives much attention to these summits."<sup>66</sup> Shafeeq Ghabra described the summit as "a stunning failure."<sup>67</sup>

Yet, the fact that Arab states resort to holding the same form of Arab League summits allow them to act out a regional role which they formerly used to play. Put simply, Arab states have been helpless in the face of Israeli force against the Palestinians since the al-Aqsa Intifada broke out in September 2000. They are also unable to contest the continuous American use of force against Iraq. Therefore, their regional role has been eradicated. In this case, holding summits offers the minimum reminder to themselves of their being 'states' and belonging to an organisation such as the Arab League.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> 'Summit Shows Sharp Divisions on Iraq', *Associated Press*, March 1, 2003.

<sup>64</sup> For more on the heated accusations between the Saudi Crown Prince and Qaddafi, see [www.sahafa.com](http://www.sahafa.com), March 1<sup>st</sup> & March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2003. A similar dispute took place during the Organisation of the Islamic Conference meeting in Doha in March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2003. Iraq's vice president, Izat Ibrahim, and Kuwait's minister of state for foreign affairs, Muhammed al-Sabah, clashed over Kuwait's endorsement of the United Arab Emirates' call for Saddam Hussein's resignation. Kuwait believed. For more, see Shafeeq Ghabra, "An Arab House, Openly Divided", [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), March 9, 2003.

<sup>65</sup> 'Saddam Urged to Step Down at Arab Summit,' *Associated Press*, March 1, 2003.

<sup>66</sup> *Alahram Weekly*, March 6.

<sup>67</sup> Shafeeq Ghabra, "An Arab House, Openly Divided", [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), March 9, 2003.

<sup>68</sup> For more on the decline of the role of the Arab states on a regional level, *Alquds* newspaper (London), offers a daily detailed account of events and comments. See also Edward Said, 'When We Will Resist?' *The Guardian*, January 25, 2003 [www.guardian.co.uk/comments](http://www.guardian.co.uk/comments).

Therefore, it can be argued that Arab states found themselves being more states in their 'Arabism' than states in their regional and international orbits. Offering Egypt as an example, Atwan maintained: "We believe that Egypt still bears the biggest Arab national and moral responsibility: Egypt did not achieve victory for Palestine, did not take up arms to defend Iraq."<sup>69</sup> Therefore, Atwan considers its 'Arab'-regional role as unnecessary and unneeded. He further observes that during Arab Summits in the past, the Palestinian question was the backbone of these summits. But, in the latest Arab summit[s] this issue is no longer decisive; it became a matter in the hands of Tony Blair and George W. Bush. He adds,

The Palestinian president, the good friend of all Arab leaders, each of them has thousand kisses on his cheeks from him, isolated on his own in a small room in Ramallah. What could Arab leaders offer in their new summit? They have offered normalisation of relations with Israel and they got nothing in return. Before their [summit(s)], Arafat was free, the West bank was under self-rule, and the summits used to fund the Intifada, even the Summit used to issue statement appraising the Intifada and the heroic actions of the Palestinians. All this evaporated; Arab states in the coming summit will not dare to mention the Intifada because this will anger the United States and will consider this terrorism.<sup>70</sup>

However, Ghabra suggests that

the Arab world, especially the larger Arab states, has invested heavily in trying to stop a war and prevent regime change in Iraq. Yet if the reigon (along with the French and the Germans) had invested similar energy into persuading Hussein to leave power, the Arab world (along with the French and Germans) would have a better reception in Washington and more influence during the next stage of events, both in the rebuilding of Iraq and on the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Arab leaders hold out a vision of Iraq's reintegration with its neighbours after a change of regime. Events are moving fast, and the summit was behind on every issue.<sup>71</sup>

But as Murqah eloquently puts it, "the biggest crisis the summit faced is the loss of clear channels of communication with Baghdad whereas this is not the case with Washington. The United States maintains a significant military, political and economic presence in

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<sup>69</sup> Abd Al-Bari Atwan, *Alquds Al-Arabi* (London), February 21, 2003, quoted from [www.alquds.co.uk](http://www.alquds.co.uk).

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Shafeeq Ghabra, "An Arab House, Openly Divided", [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), March 9, 2003.

most Arab countries, having previously established agreements, mutual interests, and strategic alliances.<sup>72</sup>

### - *More Arabism?*

Barnett observes that Arabism is a resource of identity. Arab leaders can be expected to genuinely care about issues identified as matters of concern to the Arab nation, but Arab leaders had another arguably more immediate and pressing concern: regime survival.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, if Arab leaders competed for regional leadership, they did so in part because they could exchange such titles for political capital at home and financial and military concessions from abroad.<sup>74</sup> Barnett also analyses that

Arab leaders pursued both private and socially determined interests. As Arabs they were likely to closely identify with Arab national concerns; as leaders they were likely to closely identify with regime survival. And as Arab leaders they were likely to portray and fashion their policies in ways consistent with the norms of Arabism because doing so was instrumental for regime survival.<sup>75</sup>

Similarly, Tibi maintains, "The rhetoric of pan-Arab unity has been the prevailing pretension in inter-Arab politics."<sup>76</sup> Yet, conflict, not cooperation, has been the hallmark of highly competitive Arab state policies, and interstate relations have been characterised more by divisive coalitions than by cooperative integration.<sup>77</sup>

Tibi's argument clearly puts the point in place. Arab states still hold summits and even while the war on Iraq was at its peak, the foreign ministers of Arab states met in Cairo to discuss an Arab solution to end that war. Arab states held their summit (as discussed above), following which the American march towards Baghdad began and the Arab states decided to meet up again to discuss the challenges that are facing the nation. The

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<sup>72</sup> Jarir Murqah, *Al-Rai*, (Jordan), March 2, 2003. Iraq remained a member of the Arab League but he was excluded from some Arab summits after the crisis. Some of the Arab states kept full diplomatic representation in Baghdad (Oman, Jordan, and the UAE).

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 237-241.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 237-241.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>76</sup> See Tibi, B., *Arab Nationalism: A Critical Inquiry* (New York: St. Martin's Press, second ed. 1997).

<sup>77</sup> Tibi, "From Pan-Arabism to the Community of Sovereign Arab States: Redefining the Arab and Arabism in the Aftermath of the Second Gulf War," in Hudson, *Middle East Dilemma*, 1998, p. 92



secretary general of the Arab League emphasised the necessity to “review the ‘Arab order’” after its failure to deal with the current developments in Palestine and in Iraq,<sup>78</sup> emphasising that “to substitute the Arab League with another organisation is not an easy task especially while the Arab league has gathered all Arabs together despite their disputes.”<sup>79</sup>

Arab foreign ministers met in Cairo on March 24. They issued a resolution to condemn what they called U.S.-British aggression against Iraq, and the resolution was passed by all those present, except for Kuwait.<sup>80</sup> However, all attempts to create a united Arab front against an attack on Iraq degenerated into name-calling between countries hosting United States forces, like Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and those vehemently opposed to any action, like Libya, Syria, Lebanon and of course Iraq itself.<sup>81</sup> The Qatari Foreign Minister left before a vote was taken saying he did not believe such meetings were useful and that they were organised to appease Arab public opinion.<sup>82</sup> The outcome of the meeting was that the foreign ministers stated that the Arab League would now seek an urgent meeting of the United Nations Security Council to “stop the aggression and secure an immediate withdrawal of foreign forces from Iraq.”<sup>83</sup> Arab foreign ministers forgot that George Bush said “we [the United States] created the United Nations Security Council, so that, unlike the League of Nations, our deliberations would be more than talk, our resolutions would be more than wishes.”<sup>84</sup>

Therefore, these meetings support the above mentioned argument that these meetings are for some states to play a role – but merely a regional role – and this would not be

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<sup>78</sup> Stated in *al-Ahram*, Egypt, April 2, 2003, Vol. 42485, Quoted from [www.ahram.org.eg/index.asp?CurFN=Arab4.htm&did=7713](http://www.ahram.org.eg/index.asp?CurFN=Arab4.htm&did=7713).

<sup>79</sup> Stated in *al-Ahram*, Egypt, April 2, 2003, Vol. 42485, Quoted from [www.ahram.org.eg/index.asp?CurFN=Arab4.htm&did=7713](http://www.ahram.org.eg/index.asp?CurFN=Arab4.htm&did=7713).

<sup>80</sup> Quoted from *ABC online*, March 24, 2003 [www.abc.net.au/news/newsitem/s815516.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitem/s815516.htm) See also ‘Arab Foreign Ministers Urge U.S. Withdrawal’, *New York Times*, March 25, 2003, quoted from [www.nytimes.com/2003/03/25](http://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/25). This meeting was the first since the War started.

<sup>81</sup> Quoted from *ABC online*, March 25, 2003 [www.abc.net.au/news/newsitem/s815516.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitem/s815516.htm).

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Cited in Brian Whitaker, *The Guardian*, September 24, 2002.

possible without Arabism which is not an ideology in this case, but a political tool, as the Qatari foreign minister put it, to reach to the public opinion.

Furthermore, it is in some Arab states' interest to keep Arabism surfacing within the regional order. In October 2002, Qaddafi announced that his country was pulling out of the Arab League. He questioned, "why should we stay in the membership of a futile, ineffective League?"<sup>85</sup> The first reaction by an Arab state (apart from the reaction of the League's Secretary),<sup>86</sup> to Qaddafi's announcement came from Egypt. President Mubarak travelled to Tripoli to dissuade him from his decision. After a meeting in Tripoli, Mubarak stated that "should every country pullout from the Arab League, this Arab League will end."<sup>87</sup>

Egypt's fear was that Qaddafi's withdrawal from the Arab League could encourage other Arab states to follow suit. In the case of the League being dismantled, Egypt would lose leverage over other Arab states and the Egyptian regime would lose leverage domestically, since these meetings organised by President Mubarak tend to add to his own prestige.

In conclusion, the League's summit, or the Intifada Summit, was held in Cairo in October 2000, followed it another Summit in Amman in March 2001. Then a Summit was held in Beirut in March 2002 from which many Arab Leaders were absent. Then the Sharm el-Sheik summit reinforced Arab states' need for Arabism. However, after the convening of the 2002 summit, Israel re-occupied the most of the West Bank and laid siege to Arafat in his compound in Ramallah. After convening the 2003 summit, to deter what the summit called "the aggression on Iraq", the war on Iraq started. Still, while the American troops were moving into Baghdad in April 2003, Arab foreign

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<sup>85</sup> Cited in *Arabic News* (on line), November 1, 2003 'Qaddafi: Arab League is useless; Arab leaders just talk to appease citizens about Arab unity', [www.arabicnews.com](http://www.arabicnews.com).

<sup>86</sup> After Libya announced its withdrawal from the League, Amr Moussa, the Secretary General, announced his deep concern about Libya's decision. The Secretary announced that he, within hours, would head to Libya to discuss the issue with Qaddafi. However, the Libyan decision had been expected since the League's Summit in Beirut in March 2002, within which the Saudi Peace initiative was approved by Arab states, a matter which angered Libya as it considered it as ignoring its own peace initiative which it provided to Arab states during the previous Arab Summit which was held in Amman March 2001. Cited in *Al Khaleej* (UAE), issue no. 8559, October 25, 2002 <http://194.170.160.33/2002-10-25/f%2006.html>.

<sup>87</sup> Cited in *Arabic News* (on line), November 1, 2003 'Qaddafi: Arab League is useless; Arab leaders just talk to appease citizens about Arab unity', [www.arabicnews.com](http://www.arabicnews.com).

ministers held an urgent meeting in Cairo to denounce the aggression. Arab states like Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar attended this meeting with American troops based on their lands. Moreover, Egypt, the organiser of the event, supplies these troops with access to the Gulf via the Suez Canal. The question, then, is why these states continue to hold the same form of summits and meetings. The answer lies in their need to demonstrate more Arabism in order to practice the state's form of static action.

Another reason behind the convening of the summit and adherence to the Arab League is summarised by the saying that 'a drowning man will clutch at a straw'; within galvanisation inter-Arab conflicts and coalitions were reduced and the orientation of states' foreign policies was dictated by the fact that Arab system was ended. The 'gate' to the new ME system was opened when pan-Arabism ceased to be a constraint on Arab states to negotiate peace with Israel<sup>88</sup> because Israeli occupation of the Palestinian land accompanied the entire process of inter-Arab relations and of Arab-non-Arab relations. Therefore, while the peace process was at its peak, a Middle East System could be spoken of as the dominating force that organises all foreign policies of almost all regional units involved in this endeavour. But as the American force in the region became more absolute and peripatetic, changing regimes by force, Arab states found themselves again in need of an institution within which they could at least seek institutional refuge. Arab states then found refuge in Arabism. Arabism, however, in this case constitutes nothing but a 'political refuge' in the face of their losing control over their actual static role in the region.

### **The Middle Eastern System**

Hinnebusch's hypothesis that the Gulf War 1990-91 had shattered the Arab system and caused more foreign intervention in Arab states' affairs confirms the reasons behind the war on Iraq and also describes the circumstances within which the ME system is emerging.

The consolidation of the Middle East system confirms the role of the United States in the region; the United States' might is not to play with, and the nature of the system evidences the power of the United States. The march of its troops into Baghdad

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<sup>88</sup> Hinnebusch, 'The Middle East Regional System,' in Hinnebusch R. & Ehteshami A. (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, 2002.

demonstrated the nature of the international system and thus set the regional one in the light of that international system: what lies ahead for countries which have the temerity to take on the United States in a similar scenario. Thus, the newly emerging system in the region will encourage leaders to think twice before they do anything to upset Washington. It might not be done by military might, however—the United States has many other potent weapons at its disposal.<sup>89</sup> One of these potential *Mittel* (means), specifically in the ME, is its presence in the region and that is to say its galvanisation.

Drysdale and Hinnebusch maintain that after the KC, the Middle East entered a period of fluidity and uncertainty, a time in which both opportunities and dangers multiplied. Now, after the war on Iraq, the regional order has become clearer as a consolidated system is emerging. The United States, like Arab states, behave within a system. The galvanisation of the region over a decade gave the United States a sense of foreign policy orientation and the war on Iraq was the sum of this orientation.

What is clear about the system is that conflict is the mechanism by which to measure the degree of interactions in the region. Haas argues that a Regional system means the interdependency among composites where a change in one part affects the whole system.<sup>90</sup> Indeed, the development on the fronts between the United States and Iraq has brought the system into full consolidation. The concept 'conflict' is a landmark of the ME and there are no considerable ambiguities surrounding the concept when it is connected to the ME.

Underpinning the American policies and motivations in the region can be understood within the framework of the system, which means further conflicts are likely to be on the way. 'The talk is of using Iraq as a model for future operations to pre-empt security threats and to impose democracy and free market economics.'<sup>91</sup> The former CIA director James Woolsey had bluntly told UCLA students that to reshape the ME, the United States would have to spend years and maybe decades. He identified the United States' enemies as the Islamist Shiites who run Iran, the Iranian supported Hezbollah,

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<sup>89</sup> See *Sunday Herald*, April 13, 2003, [www.sundayherald.com](http://www.sundayherald.com).

<sup>90</sup> Haas, E., "The Study of Regional Integration: Reflections on the Joy and Anguish of Pretheorising," in L. Lindberg & A. Scheingold (eds.), *Regional Integration: Theory and Search* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 8.

<sup>91</sup> See *Sunday Herald*, April 13, 2003, [www.sundayherald.com](http://www.sundayherald.com).

the fascist Baathists in Iraq and Syria, and the Islamist Sunnis who run al-Qaeda and affiliated terrorist groups.<sup>92</sup>

The fall of Baghdad sent shockwaves through the ME, where some of Iraq's neighbours fear that their regimes could be next.<sup>93</sup> Convinced that the United States wants to reshape the ME and gain control of the region's oil reserves, many Iranians felt that they are slowly being encircled.<sup>94</sup> 'Iran feels it is going to be strangled gradually by the United States; yesterday it was Afghanistan, now it is another regime like that in Baghdad... the whole scenario is moving to strangle Iran.'<sup>95</sup>

Syria is a case in point. Dowd expresses it thus: 'as U.S. forces made their first armoured thrust into Baghdad, visions of a strike on Damascus danced in the hawk's heads [in the Bush administration].'<sup>96</sup> John Bolton, the US under-Secretary of State, added his voice to a chorus of warnings from the hawks against states in the ME. He said, "I think Syria is a good case where I hope they will conclude that the chemical weapons programme and the biological weapons programme they have been pursuing are things they should give up."<sup>97</sup>

As part of the framework within which war against Iraq was waged is the war on terrorism. The undertaking (the war on Iraq) dovetails conveniently with the 'phases' of what President Bush calls the 'war on terror' and his pledge to go after all countries accused of harbouring terrorists.<sup>98</sup> Hawks in and close to the Bush White House have prepared the ground for an attack on Syria, raising the spectre of Hezbollah, of alleged Syrian plans to welcome refugees from Saddam Hussein's fallen regime, and of what

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<sup>92</sup> Cited in, M. Dowd, *Victory in Iraq shouldn't mean Operation Eternal War*, April 10, 2003, [http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/opinion/116678\\_dowd10.html](http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/opinion/116678_dowd10.html).

<sup>93</sup> Beeston, R., 'Saddam Hussein's Neighbours Fear they may be next in the line of fire', *Times online*, [www.timesonline.co.uk/0,,1-6047-6411178,00.html](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/0,,1-6047-6411178,00.html)

<sup>94</sup> *Times Online*, April 10, 2003, [www.timesonline.co.uk/0,,1-6047-641178,00.html](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/0,,1-6047-641178,00.html).

<sup>95</sup> Zibakalam, S., cited in *Times Online*, April 10, 2003, [www.timesonline.co.uk/0,,1-6047-641178,00.html](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/0,,1-6047-641178,00.html).

<sup>96</sup> Cited in, M. Dowd, *Victory in Iraq shouldn't mean Operation Eternal War*, April 10, 2003, [http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/opinion/116678\\_dowd10.html](http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/opinion/116678_dowd10.html).

<sup>97</sup> Cited in Beeston, R., 'Saddam Hussein's Neighbours Fear they may be next in the line of fire', *Times online*, [www.timesonline.co.uk/0,1-6047-6411178,00.html](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/0,1-6047-6411178,00.html)

<sup>98</sup> See Ed Vulliamy, 'Syria Could be Next, Warns Washington', *The Observer*, April 13, 2003, [www.observer.co.uk/international/story/0,6904,935943,00.htm](http://www.observer.co.uk/international/story/0,6904,935943,00.htm).

the administration insists is Syrian support for Iraq during the war.<sup>99</sup> Furthermore, Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz stated that 'the Syrians have been shipping killers into Iraq to try and kill Americans... we need to think about what our policy is towards a country that harbours terrorists or harbours war criminals.' He adds, 'there will have to be change in Syria.'<sup>100</sup>

Saudi Arabia's role in the system is conflictual in nature because since most of those who attacked New York and Washington in 9/11 were Saudis, one can speak in terms of the Saudi state's fear of its own people. In the scenario of new such acts being undertaken by more Saudis, Saudi Arabia would be the recipient of further condemnation from the United States.<sup>101</sup> Furthermore, the monarchy is concerned about a declared American aim to spread democracy through the region, which worries the Saudi regime. It is worried about the prospect of Shia's Muslim leadership taking control in Baghdad, challenging the Sunni Muslim domination throughout the Arab world.<sup>102</sup>

Within the dominant conflictual environment surfacing in the region, Arab states became less concerned about how much peace could be achieved in the region, but about how much conflict could be managed or saved. The focus on terrorism in the region, mounted by the war on Iraq, has reduced and averted the interest in peace. Within Arab calls for peace lies their call for avoiding more conflict.

Amr Moussa, the chief of the Arab League, after the fall of Baghdad, called for an international conference on how to preserve world peace and security in the post-Iraq-war era. He stated that "international and regional security cannot and should not be left

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Richard Dawkins eloquently commented on the American way of dealing with the Arabs following 9/11. He put it this way: "Whatever anyone may say about weapons of mass destruction, or about Saddam's savage brutality to his own people, the reason Bush can now get away with his war is that a sufficient number of Americans, including apparently, Bush himself, see it as revenge for 9/11. This is worse than bizarre. It is pure racism and/or religious prejudice. Nobody has made even a faintly plausible case that Iraq had anything to do with the atrocity. It was Arabs that hit the World Trade Centre, right? So let's go and kick Arab ass. Those 9/11 terrorists were Muslims, right? And Eye-rajis are Muslims, right? That does it. We're gonna go in there and show them some hardware. Shock and awe? You bet." See Richard Dawkins, 'Bin Laden's Victory', *The Guardian*, March 22, 2003 [www.guardian.co.uk/Print/0,3858,4630925,00.htm](http://www.guardian.co.uk/Print/0,3858,4630925,00.htm).

<sup>102</sup> Times Online, April 10, 2003, [www.timesonline.co.uk/0,,1-6047-641178,00.html](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/0,,1-6047-641178,00.html).

to be defined by one state alone or even a group of states away from the United Nations.”<sup>103</sup> He also stated that “we cannot accept that the council be held in contempt. We cannot accept that its role be confined to repairing the damage of war, thus reducing it to an executing arm of policies which it had not designed...<sup>104</sup> Foreign occupation, [indicating the United States in Iraq] no matter in what cloak, will sooner or later lead to a revolution that will haunt it... people are enraged and infuriated.”<sup>105</sup>

However, Moussa’s Arab League, as an institution, came to operate outside the system boundaries, consequently envisioning the system of peace and security by Moussa still based on the dynamics of pre-war rhetoric, mainly, “the decline of the hegemonic state or its withdrawal from global affairs is seen as likely to lead to disorder and chaos.”<sup>106</sup> Within the disorder in the ME lies the order: if conflict is to be considered as disorder, it is still forms the order, i. e. the system on which structure states operate. It is notable that in a system which is not demarcated by democratic *Rahmen* (framework), the lack of war over time reduces the importance, the demarcation, and the actual sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state. In some regions where states are not fully integrated within an overall democratic system, states need war to still play a role in regional politics because war in this case represents an institution-like environment within which states seek self-confirmation. That shows how in the ME war is still necessary for states to actually survive. Before the KC, it was the traditional conflict between Israel and the Arabs, and after it the crisis came to be one taking place amongst Arab states. The United States entering the circle of conflict makes it the overall *Rahmen* for regional settings. Therefore, a ‘balance of power’ must emerge because ‘balancing power preserves the system but does not necessarily keep the peace.’<sup>107</sup>

The balance exists in the ‘spinal cord’ of the system. It was mentioned above that the American presence in the region was many times attacked in the region and the biggest

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<sup>103</sup> See Reuters, April 11, 2003. Taken from, ‘Arab Leader Seeks Post-War Security Review’, [www.alertnet.org/printable.htm?URL=thenews/newsdesk/N](http://www.alertnet.org/printable.htm?URL=thenews/newsdesk/N).

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Hall, J., & Paul, T. V., “Introduction”, in Hall, J., & Paul T. V. (eds.), *International Order and the Future of World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 7.

<sup>107</sup> Hinnebusch R., “Introduction,” in Hinnebusch & Ehteshami (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States*, 2002, p. 21.

attack was of 9/11. Within the war on terrorism lies the balance: the more the United States gets involved in the region, the more it puts groups like al-Qaeda at the centre of the existing system. Therefore, such groups, although without static basis, represent a power, and then a force, as force is considered as a means of consolidating the system. Subsequently, this group can be treated as a unit in the system. What is remarkable then is regional cohesion: as force is the overall mechanism with which to preserve the system, no one then is better than the other. There is force applied against the Palestinians, Palestinian suicide bombers use force against Israelis, the United States uses force to guard its interest in the region and the al-Qaeda, for example, uses force against the United States for its siding with Israel and for 'occupying Arab and Islamic land'.

It is then, as Neo-Realism puts it, the structure of the system which determines the systemic interactions in the region and thus labels the emerging regional system as the Middle East System. That means that the regional order is represented by the system and the system represents the regional order. Waltz has argued that

Each state arrives at policies and decides on actions according to its own internal processes, but its decisions are shaped by the very presence of other states as well as by interactions with them.<sup>108</sup>

What applies here is the argument of Tibi in which he maintains that inter-Arab states' relations are based on their individual existence as states, not based on their belonging to Arabism.<sup>109</sup> Astonishingly, there is a fundamental difference between politics within each Arab state and politics of these states in the system: within each Arab state, politics tend to be Arab. This says that Arab states hold summits, for example, to denounce the Israeli aggression against the Palestinians and also to call for a stop to the aggression on Iraq. These are politics within the states, but those within the *system* are of full cooperation with the United States in facilitating the war on Iraq. For example, Egypt allows American warships to pass through the Suez Canal, Saudi Arabia allows the presence of American troops and logistics on its soil and at the same time call for a halt to the aggression on Iraq...etc.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>109</sup> See Tibi, *War and Conflict in the ME*, 1998.

<sup>110</sup> These two examples are mentioned above.



This confirms the Neo-Realist vision of system building: the *structure* of the system and the set of interactions determine the system, not the internal politics within the state.<sup>111</sup> The first character of the structure is the ordering principles; Arab states exist in an anarchic system where, for example, there is no longer a room for Arab *Wisayah* (guardianship) and Arab *Muzayadah* (outbidding). Egypt could no longer consider itself as the 'mother of the Arabs'. Egypt, for example, did little for the Arab cause and was the first state to make a peace-deal with Israel while Israel was still occupying other Arab lands.<sup>112</sup> Therefore, Egypt is no longer able to play a hegemonic role in the Arab world. The only heritage Egypt has from the era of Arabism being '*ein Mittel*' (a mean) to shape inter-states' conflicts and relations in the Arab world is that the Arab League headquarters are still in Cairo, the secretary of the League is Egyptian. These factors for Egypt serve merely for prestigious purposes. The main issue however is that the ordering principle of the structure is the state of anarchy which is essentially a self-help one.

Furthermore, structural realists argue that changes in perceived status will lead to change in role<sup>113</sup> definition.<sup>114</sup> Roles define interests.<sup>115</sup> To behave logically, based on the degree of their power, states seek to help themselves by improving their role 'foundations' on regional and world power structures. That is because 'in the international system, there is a competition dominated by the self-help mechanism. Self

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<sup>111</sup> See Waltz, *Theory of International Politics, 1979* especially page 80 where Waltz is quoting Meyer Fortes describing the concept structure.

<sup>112</sup> Louis Cantori expresses it thus: "The Arabism of Egypt's assumed leadership role in the past has now been transformed from a political ideology into a meaningful cultural identity. As a consequence, Egypt's ability, as recently as perhaps the Arab alliance of 1990-91, to be the Arab leader and also to be the interlocutor between the U.S. and Arab states is now significantly ended. Egypt's present and future diplomatic role is likely to be based on its geopolitical position, the size of its population, its military capabilities, its economic strength, and its continued leadership of Arab culture – all of which are conventional factors of international power." See Louis Cantori in Robert Freedman, *The Middle East and the Peace Process*, p. 158.

<sup>113</sup> According to Holsti, "Roles" refer to the 'policymakers own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules, and actions suitable to their states, and of the functions, if any, their states should perform on a continuing basis in the international system', cited in Le Prestre, P., G., "Defining Foreign Policy Roles," in Le Prestre, Ph., G. (ed.), *Role Quests in the Post-Cold War Era: Foreign Policies in Transition* (London, Montreal, McGill University Press 1997), p. 4.

<sup>114</sup> Le Prestre, P., G., 'The United States: An Elusive Role Quest after the Cold War', in Le Prestre P. (ed.), *Role Quests in the Post-Cold War Era: Foreign Policies in Transition*, (London, Montreal, McGill University Press 1997), p. 67.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

help is taken for granted as every state is responsible for its own security and economic welfare.’<sup>116</sup> However, the nature of the international system determines the basic foreign policy orientations of any particular state, and, as Morgenthau holds, whether a state follows a policy of *status quo*, *imperialism*, or *prestige* depends on its location in the international power structure.<sup>117</sup>

Therefore, the nature of the system dominated what one state could or could not do to another. Egypt could no longer for example dictate to any Arab state what to do regarding Arab issues. In other words, there will no longer be a space for leaders like Nasser or Saddam Hussein in the newly emerged system. Arabism does not govern inter-state relations, but a system of survival which determines the behaviour of states. It was legitimate, based on the dynamics of the system, for Kuwait to ally with the United States in order to topple Saddam Hussein’s regime because Kuwaitis still had fears that Saddam would repeat the same form of aggression against their country.

The second characteristic simply refers to the functions that are performed by the units in the system. The units in the system are states and all states have to carry out the same functions.<sup>118</sup> However, Waltz explicitly concludes that states are not, and have never been, the only actors. They have, however, been the most important ones. Crucially, all states possess the attribute that is axiomatically linked to the anarchical structure of the system – namely, sovereignty.<sup>119</sup> The states in the ME are the main actors, while al-Qaeda network, for example, after the huge impact it left on the American foreign policy in the region, can be added to the list. The sovereignty of al-Qaeda is represented by its borders which are also mainly the ME region; the war in terror concentrates mainly on the Arab ME from where al-Qaeda’s leader, Osama Bin Laden, and its most members stem. However, treating al-Qaeda as a body of force left it forceful. That means that the United States’ exercising of a huge amount of effort to fight al-Qaeda gives it the status of being strong enough to undermine the United States’ might. It must thus be treated as the last member of the ME system.

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<sup>116</sup> See Waltz, K., *Theory of International Politics*, 1979.

<sup>117</sup> See Hollis M., & Smith S., *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (London: Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991), p. 97.

<sup>118</sup> See *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

The third characteristic of the structure is the distribution of capabilities among the units that comprise the system. We do not look at the ideologies or beliefs of leaders, but to their power situation. Indeed, this is the case of the ME system: relations between units are not based on leaders' beliefs but on the clear capabilities of the states in the system. That is why al-Qaeda, for example, constituted *a* capability in the actions of its leaders and members, like their attack on the United States on 9/11, which however has made the difference in treating beliefs as force.<sup>120</sup>

The emergent ME system is highly characterised by the structure on which the units conduct their behaviour. Self-help is the main mechanism by which to read into the politics of regional units. The regional order has become complete since force became the common denominator that makes the change in the region.

## **Summary**

It has been argued throughout this chapter that there has been no Arab system that governs inter-Arab relations since the Kuwait Crisis. The Arab system was broken up by the crisis and Arab states entered the orbit of galvanisation by the United States.

Throughout the 1990s and beyond, Arab states faced a new form of security dilemma: the pressure put on them by the heritage of the crisis made them feel insecure within the changes that took place. Iraq remained marginalised until its regime was toppled by force. The peace process did not bring the hoped-for results which could have brought stability to the region. Therefore, more pressure mounted on Arab states as these states lost their regional role.

Their role became irrelevant even when 'Arab' issues were at stake, such as the Palestinian problem. However, with the diminishing of the Arab system, and with the consolidation of a wider Middle Eastern one, Arab states started functioning within this orbit. This made Arab issues like that of Iraqi people and the Palestinian people more of a wider regional issue rather than a specific Arab one.

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<sup>120</sup> This means that the faith of the leaders of al-Qaeda—Islam – has become a 'force'. Those who sat in an aeroplane and killed themselves for a cause did not do that for an economic profit; by killing themselves, they have shown that belief can be treated as a force.

The war on Iraq helped to bring the ME system into full consolidation. This system, however, is characterised by the continuous use of force. Therefore, further political order in the region could no longer be managed without the use of force. Finally, all political events and changes in the region, especially those concerning Arab states, could no longer be conducted out of the bounds of the new system of which the United States and Israel constitute a main part. Therefore, future conflicts will be the main *Mittel* (mean) to keep this system further operating.

## CONCLUSION

### Introduction

A study of the international relations of the Arab states requires a consideration not only of their behaviour as independent actors but also of their continuous group dynamics, and multilateral interactions which are shaped by both their common Arab identity and their distinct interests.<sup>1</sup> The concept 'system' therefore is essential for explaining the international behaviour of Arab states as a group and also as separate actors.

However, the concept 'order' has been central to this study in which it is identified as the main orbit within which Arab states in the Middle East function. It is also critical for comprehending the theoretical 'path' leading to the understanding of the system. An existing order does not mean necessary that a system exists. There is an Arab order but there is no Arab system. The definition of the 'order' and the 'system' has therefore constituted the cornerstone of my study.

The end of the Cold War marks the end of the inter-state conflict that has dominated the world since 1945 and of the Soviet-American nuclear confrontation.<sup>2</sup> This change had affected the international system which was changed from being bipolar to unipolar: the United States emerged as the sole superpower on the world stage. Therefore, the dominant discourse since then has been decisively about the rise of a new world order under the aegis of the United States.

Thus, a new concept emerged, which has imprinted world politics since the end of the Cold War—that of 'The New World Order'. The 'New World Order' was defined in

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<sup>1</sup> Sela, A., *The Decline of The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 1998, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Halliday, F., "The End of the Cold War and International Relations: Some Analytic and Theoretical Conclusions," in K. Booth, & S. Smith (eds.), *International Relations Theory Today*, 1997, p. 41.

this study as an outcome of the change in the Balance of Power. Therefore, this study continued to consider the balance of power as an orbit within which power politics operate: the United States' new position in world politics became the overall referential focal point of the discussion of the new 'order'.<sup>3</sup> This is based on the assumption that the United States retained its 'power', with its powerful position in the World System.<sup>4</sup>

Regarding the Middle East, the concept 'New World Order' emerged during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The concept heralded a new era of the Middle East where the political life of the region became hostage to the connotations of this new concept.<sup>5</sup> In this context, unipolarity became the political pattern for Arab states to deal with.

Throughout this study, the American role in the region after 1990 has been presented as a 'galvanisor'. This concept referred to the outcome of the political relationship between the United States and Arab states. 'Galvanisation' was defined as Arab states being coated within the American powerful presence in the region. Foreign policy of Arab states could not overlook the American strong hand in the region. Therefore, if the inputs of Arab politics have remained 'Arab', the outputs did not necessarily remain so. In other words, the ultimate decisions taken by Arab states had to take note of the American presence and interests in the region.

Subsequently, the Arab system was re-examined on the basis of regional mechanisms. But from 1945-1990, an Arab system did exist, which was characterised by the domination of pan-Arabism in the making of Arab politics.

### **The Arab System 1945-90**

The period from 1945-90 was marked by intensive Arab interactions driven mainly by pan-Arabism. It has been identified in this study as follows. There is a circular logic in inter-Arab relations: in the period from 1945-90 the more Arab states interacted – and their interactions were mainly based on their Arabism – the more they conflicted with

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<sup>3</sup> See Ikenberry, J., *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> See Ikenberry, J., *After Victory*, 2001, particularly pages 215-256.

<sup>5</sup> See Snow, D., *Distant Thunder: Third World Conflict and the New International Order*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

each other. That means, there were certain irreconcilable matters across Arab states and these were mainly the domination of their identity upon their politics. The source of political interaction is their Arab identity and the source of their conflict was that of their Arabness.

Put in other words, the Arab League was established as an institution of Arab states to make collective Arab policies. But the League became the ground for Arab rivalry. Kerr observed that the simple definition of an Arab Cold War was the Arab rivalry in the Arab League, the symbol of Arab system. This was also the forum in which inter-Arab battles of the Arab Cold War were fought.<sup>6</sup>

The issue of Palestine was the hub of Arab interactions. Pan-Arabism was the drive behind Arab states' foreign policy towards this issue. Kerr describes Arab states' policies toward the issue of Palestine as serving their own interests. He maintains that Arab rulers used the Arab-Israeli conflict as a stick with which to beat one another.<sup>7</sup> Hence it would be misleading to argue that the Palestine cause united the Arab states when they were divided on all else. As Kerr asserts:

It would be more accurate to say that when the Arabs are in a mood to co-operate, this tends to find expression in an agreement to avoid action on Palestine, but that when they choose to quarrel, Palestine policy really becomes a subject of dispute.<sup>8</sup>

Pan-Arabism was dominated by the wave of Nasserism until the 1967 war.<sup>9</sup> But Nasserism was a devastating movement in the modern history of Arab states and the military outcome of the 1967 war still dictates Arab-Israeli regional conflict.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> See Kerr, M., *The Arab Cold War: Gamal Abd Al-Nasser and His Rivals, 1958-1970*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

<sup>7</sup> Kerr, M., *The Arab Cold War: Gamal Abd Al-Nasser and His Rivals, 1958-1970*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p 61. Cited in Gerges, *The Superpowers and the Middle East*, p 11.

<sup>8</sup> Kerr, *The Arab Cold War*, 1971, p. 114, as cited in Gerges, *The Superpowers and the Middle East*, p 11.

<sup>9</sup> Sela, A., *The Decline of The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 1998, p. 41, This quote is repeated, it was quoted in chapter two of this study footnotes 20 and 21.

<sup>10</sup> Including the issue of east Jerusalem, which was occupied by Israel during that war.

The Arab system in this period was dominated by its structure, which was mainly the consolidation of the state's features. Arab states competed for regional hegemony. But with the existence of Israel in the region, they tended to share the same burden, which brought them always together to make collective Arab policies regarding the issue of Palestine. This pattern, however, ended when Egypt signed its separate peace-deal with Israel in 1979 and was consequently excluded from the Arab system until 1988.

Arab states, however, were incapable of either liberating Palestine or admitting to their powerlessness so that they could dare to adopt a peaceful strategy. Their divisions and jealousies made secret and separate diplomacy the only practical option for an Arab-Israeli dialogue.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, when the peace process started in 1991, the ground for "talks" between the Arab states and Israel was already asphalted.

### **The Kuwait Crisis 1990-91**

The Kuwait Crisis started with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. It was a turning point in which a new dimension to the meaning of conflict was added. First of all, the 'concept' of conflict before the crisis, apart from the Iran-Iraq war 1980-88, used to indicate the Arab-Israeli conflict. The invasion of Kuwait oscillated the concept and made its application differ. It also became an indicator of an inter-Arab conflict. The 'personality' of the crisis was that it was an Arab crisis in as much as it left a negative impact on the Arab states.

It was argued in this study that the crisis did not create a new Arab order. It further fragmented the Arabs, which meant that it had reinforced an already existing pattern of inter-Arab politics. However, it had an impact on the very use of the concept Arabism. Furthermore, the crisis revealed a deficit in Arab military power and in Arab diplomatic assets. Neither militarily nor diplomatically were Arab states able to solve the problem within the 'Arab house'. Consequently, foreign forces were invited to do the job. The United States, along with a broad coalition, ousted Iraq from Kuwait with costly consequences for all Arab states in the region.

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<sup>11</sup> Sela, A., *The Decline of The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 1998, p. 51.



The presence of foreign forces in the region since the crisis undermined, or made it unnecessary, for inter-Arab security co-operation. The existence of the Damascus Declaration as a 'paper agreement' substantiated the degree of Arab fear from each other. Arab states, particularly the Gulf Arab States, felt that a protective U.S. military umbrella was an absolute necessity for deterring any future aggression from any Arab state.<sup>12</sup>

The American presence in the region, termed in this study as 'galvanisation', quickly developed into an institutional point of reference. The weakness of institutions, such as the Arab League, to act as an umbrella for collective Arab politics made Arab states more vulnerable to American power. Therefore, Arab states lost their regional orientation. They lost their manoeuvring space and therefore lost a central part of their legitimacy. It has, therefore, been argued in this study that the Arab system was ended by the Kuwait Crisis and was replaced by a wider Middle East regional system.

The marginalisation of Iraq, the peace process and the al-Aqsa Intifada are issues that demonstrate the regional setting since 1990 and factors that helped the consolidation of the new regional system.

### **Arab Politics Since 1990**

Two parallel issues have dominated politics of the Arab states since 1990: the marginalisation of Iraq, and the peace process. The marginalisation of Iraq was economic and political on regional and international levels. Economically, sanctions were imposed on Iraq which required all UN member states to prevent any trade of financial dealing with Iraq.<sup>13</sup> Politically, Iraq was marginalised, and effectively, its regional role was dramatically declined.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Muslih, M., "Palestinian and Other Arab Perspectives on the Peace Process", in R. Freedman (ed.), *The Middle East and the Peace Process: The Impact of the Oslo Accords, 1998*, p. 83.

<sup>13</sup> Niblock, T., *Pariah States & Sanctions in the Middle East: Iraq, Libya, Sudan* (Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner, 2001), p. 99.

<sup>14</sup> See Marr, P., "Iraq after the Gulf War," in R. Freedman (ed.), *The Middle East and the Peace Process: The Impact of the Oslo Accords, 1998*, p. 213.

The survival of Saddam Hussein in power after the crisis affected the outcome and furthered the impact of the crisis on inter-Arab relations. Saddam was considered as a symbol of aggression, and hence, a threat to his neighbours.

However, it was clear after the war 1991 ended that the future of Iraq was to be in American hands. The severe impact of the economic sanctions on Iraq had taken a toll on the regime's support base.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, the rapid success of the Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 was mainly because of the weaknesses of the Iraqi political and military infrastructures.

In conclusion, Iraq's marginalisation since 1990 did not paralyse a 'given' Arab consensus because there was none. The absence of Iraq, however, profited non-Arab countries like Israel, since with the elimination of the Iraqi power, Israel was rid of one of its strong opponents. Therefore, a space for the peace *process* was already being created.

The peace process started with the Madrid Peace Conference in October 1991. The entire politics of the region revolved around this concept almost throughout the 1990s. The peace process provided the first signs of a new Middle Eastern order. The bilateral talks between Israel and each of the Arab parties had shown that Arab states were veering towards self-help mechanisms rather than 'gumming' in the 'Arab house'.

Making separate peace-deals with Israel demonstrated the decline of the Palestinian issue in inter-Arab relations. The declining commitment of Arab states to the Palestine conflict was, for the most part shaped by regional rather than global processes. Still, the end of the Cold War was crucial in paving the road to the Madrid peace conference, which sanctioned the principle of bilateral talks between Israel and each of the Arab parties, including a Palestinian presence. This procedure restricted the possibility of cross-Arab interference in each other's negotiations. Unlike the post-1973 peace process, the Madrid negotiations were marked by meagre involvement of the Arab League or the summit conference and a near-absence of any inter-Arab political struggle. In fact, the Palestine conflict returned to its original dimension, involving the

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 225.

immediate neighbouring Arab states and the PLO, with minimum mutual intervention—even on Syria's part—in each other's affairs.<sup>16</sup>

Inter-Arab politics was put to the test when the al-Aqsa Intifada broke out in September 2000. Initially, the success of reaching the negotiation table affirmed the triumph of the state in Middle East politics. The state was the viable actor to do the 'job'; therefore, the outcomes of the peace process – *negative* of course – were bad for the state. The al-Aqsa Intifada confirmed that the peace process initiation was, as mentioned above, governed by regional dynamics rather than international ones. These dynamics were mainly an outcome of the new balance of power mechanism in the region. It is as Ajami put it,

the gradual evolution of Arab states' policies in favour of a contractual peace with Israel did not grow out of a feeling of national pride or collective cohesiveness. Rather it took place in an atmosphere of overall weakness, fragmentation and inferiority vis-à-vis Israeli and American power, which seemed able to impose a political settlement based on what for the Arab world was an unfavourable balance of power.<sup>17</sup>

So, the circle of politics in the region flows back in power mechanisms: only the powerful actor can enforce his politics. Therefore, the behaviour of Arab states, which became based on *Realpolitik*, was governed by self-interest, which in this case meant to make peace-deals with Israel. Israel's power superiority, backed by the United States, dictates the terms of peace.

The consequences of the al-Aqsa Intifada were severe for the Palestinians; the Israeli leadership had condemned Yasser Arafat to the dustbin of history and had moved the Israeli army into Palestinian towns and territories.<sup>18</sup> Israel also remained unprepared to offer any insights into its long-term thinking about the Israeli-Palestinian relations and the final status talks with the Palestinians.<sup>19</sup> Despite conceding that there may emerge a

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<sup>16</sup> Sela, A., *The Decline of The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 1998, p. 350.

<sup>17</sup> Cited in Weitzman, B. M., *The Inter-Arab System and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Ripening for Resolution*, *Perceptions*, March-May 2000, Vol. V, no 1. [www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/percept/V-1weitzman.htm](http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/percept/V-1weitzman.htm). See also Ajami, F. *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998).

<sup>18</sup> Ehteshami, A., *Palestine and the Arab World*, *Record of World Events*, Keesing's, vol. 4, 2001.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

Palestinian state 'sometime in the future', Prime Minister Sharon gave no signs that his government was in fact moving in that direction.<sup>20</sup>

Yet, Arab states, militarily, were unable to help the Palestinians. They then held an Arab League Summit in Beirut in March 2002. During this Summit, a Saudi initiative was brought forward offering Israel full normalisation of relations with Arab countries in return of an Israeli full withdrawal from Arab lands. Israel rejected the initiative and its rejection was another setback for Arab collective action.

However, the Palestinian conflict played an essential role in the emergence of the Arab system.<sup>21</sup> The conflict also played a role in the emergence of the Middle East system. The decline of the conflict as a *central* affair in Arab politics gave way to the rise of a wider Middle Eastern political thought which ultimately helps the consolidating of the new Middle East system.

### **The New Middle East System**

Since 1990 Arab states have shifted their politics from the language of *qawmiyyaa* (Arab-national identity) to *wataniyya* (Arab state-national identity). *Realpolitik* is the most operative term to describe the shift. The structure on which Arab politics was made had changed. Arab states became constrained by the structure of the new emerging Middle East system, which accelerated the diminishing of the Arab system.<sup>22</sup>

Self-help was *das Mittel* (the means) used to uphold the state. The norms, rules, and potential of pan-Arabism were no longer relevant because the American presence in the region whose dominating "force" changed the shape of the regional order. The American 'power' became the 'norm' which now determines the status quo in the region. Only absolute American power determines the form of the system. Therefore, Arab states, while aware of this fact, had not much choice but to ally with the United States.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted in Sela, A., *The Decline of The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 1998, p. 15.

<sup>22</sup> Ehteshami, A., & R. Hinnebusch, "Conclusion: Patterns of Policy," in Hinnebusch & Ehteshami (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States*, 2002, p. 339.

By seeking alliances with the United States, Arab states started behaving in a realistic manner. They could not challenge the power of this 'giant'; therefore, allying with it would be a safe haven. In this case, the security of Arab states became strongly bound to that of the United States. The American agenda in the region created a coercive rather than diplomatic environment for executing its policies. The American agenda in the region has been described by Robert Pelletreau, the assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs in this way:

The prism through which we assess trends and conditions in the Middle East is the protection and advancement of U.S. interests. These are, briefly: a just and lasting peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours, Israel's security and wellbeing, a security framework in the Gulf that assures access to its energy resources upon which we and other industrial nations continue to be dependent, non-provocation of weapons of mass destruction, control of destabilising arms transfer, promotion of political participation, and respect for basic human rights, ending state-supported and other forms of terrorism, promotion of economic and social development of American business and investment opportunities.<sup>23</sup>

For the US to perform this long list, it had to rely on the use of force. US-Arab states' relations became dominated by a coercive environment. Security dilemma results from interactions between states.<sup>24</sup> Interactions across Arab states became locked within the domination of the American power thus Arab states 'new' concerns became how to appease the United States. The United States' regional powerful presence allowed it to play the role of a regional unit. Therefore, interactions between Arab states and the United States became based on this mechanism.

The events of 9/11 further complicated the security dilemma of Arab states; the attacks reinforced the newly emerging system in the ME. The United States' security 'in the region' results from its interactions with regional units. The events of 9/11 diverted most of the foreign policy capacities of Arab states into fighting the war on terrorism. However, their dilemma then became to provide the US with satisfactory results, which in turn means that Arab states had to 'step on the toes' of many existing groupings and forces in the region. Osama Bin Laden made the ousting of American troops from Saudi Arabia his battle cry. He said there was 'no more important duty' than to do so. Yet,

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<sup>23</sup> *Middle East Policy* (MEP) 3, no. 2, 1994, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> Walz, *Theory of International Politics*, 1979.

Osama bin Laden's call to fight the Americans had empowered many people, and at the same time had undermined the authority of the Arab state in that bin Laden was seen as a defender of the Arab and Muslim rights.

However, the showdown between the United States and Iraq demonstrated the extent of the American 'force' since the ousting of the Iraqi troops from Kuwait. The continuous marginalisation of Iraq was a reminder to regional actors of toying with Washington.

The American presence in the region was taking shape. Over the years from 1990 to 2003, American presence was oriented and then shifted from the doctrine of containment to that of pre-emption. What boosted that presence is the success of continuous use of force. However, the main characteristic of the Middle East system is that power and thus the use of 'force' is the determinant factor in shaping politics within the system. Remarkably, the system emerged as a result of the use of 'force'. Iraq invaded Kuwait and was ousted from Kuwait by the use of force. Sanctions were imposed on Iraq by force, the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian and Arab land remained by the implication of force. More importantly, the United States' force remained in its presence in the region, something which had influenced the making of the system by bringing it to full consolidation— also by force— and culminating in the Operation Iraq Freedom in March-April 2003, which is merely a use of force.

This study concludes that Operation Iraqi Freedom has shifted the balance of power further against the Arabs and consequently marginalised them in the system. Syria is a case in point; for the United States, there might be no need to 'hit' Syria in order to bring change in the Syrian stance toward regional issues such as the war on Iraq and the Palestine conflict. The 'force' which the United States used against Iraq is still present in the region. That means the U.S. force has been – and continues to be – clearly demonstrated. Therefore, the shifting of the United States troops from Saudi soil to Qatar has no effect on the status quo; the American forceful presence in the region could not be overlooked no matter where the American troops are stationed in the region.

The use of force generates a 'political rhythm' which could allow space for non-state regional groups to play the role that forms the opposition to the United States. Al-Qaeda is a case in point; this organisation was the last member to be included in the emerged system. The similarity between al-Qaeda and the United States is that they both 'believe' in and 'use' force as a means to an end. Thus, because the 'system' is not built on moral beliefs, but on self-help and a structure, the United States protects its own interests by the use of force, and al-Qaeda opposes the United States by the same means.

Thus, the relationship between the United States and Arab states became governed by mistrust as the United States started calling for broad changes in the region, chief of which was regime change. Therefore, mistrust and the continuous use of force continue to plague Middle Eastern countries, which serve partly to explain the predominance and resilience of Realist notions of inter-state behaviour. Rivalry, hostility, antagonism, and a host of geopolitical disputes characterise state relations – not co-operation and harmony.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, the failure of regional institutions, multilateral or bilateral alliances, and of the regional power balance to give local security to states, brutally exposed by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, opened the door to acceptance of a heightened role for the non-Arab periphery states and for the U.S. hegemon in the region.<sup>26</sup> The overall political order that governed the behaviour of Arab states in the region since the crisis is mainly its regional outcomes; the crisis freed Arab regimes from Pan-Arab constraints and enabled them to pursue their own state interests, and it opened the way for dialogue between the main parties who still engaged in the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>27</sup> However, Arab states, in seeking self interest, were faced with the new realities of the dominating system.

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<sup>25</sup> Sasley, B., Changes and Continuities in Jordanian Foreign policy, *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, (MERIA) vol. 6, no. 1, March 2002, [www.meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2002/issue1/jv6n1a3.htm](http://www.meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2002/issue1/jv6n1a3.htm).

<sup>26</sup> El-Shazli N., & R. Hinnebusch, "The Challenge of Security in the Post-Gulf War Middle East System," in Hinnebusch & Ehteshami (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States*, 2002, p. 86.

<sup>27</sup> Ehteshami, A., & R. Hinnebusch, "Conclusion: Patterns of Policy," in Hinnebusch & Ehteshami (eds.), *The Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States*, 2002, p. 339.

The region was no longer mainly characterised by Arab states being central in the system. They became peripheral in the newly emerged system where Israel backed by the United States took the central role. The *Neo-Realist* model illustrates this: seeking self-interest by one state generates insecurity for other states in the system. Thus states must rely on power in order to further their own interests and to protect these from the intentions and actions of other states. It is thus, the *power* of the United States and of Israel which determines the making of the system. But also the power of the al-Qaeda organisation which create a new impact on the making of politics in the region in which it create panicky and nervous American politics in the region.



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