Geopolitics and Middle East Conflict

Hugh Macdonald

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Abbreviations

ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty
BTWC	Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
BWC	Biological Weapons convention
CDI	Co-operative Defence Initiative
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention
EU	European Union
G-8	Group of Eight Developed Countries
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Authority
IDF	Israel Defence Forces
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
MCTR	Missile Technology Control Regime
NAFTA	North America Free Trade Area
NBC	Nuclear, Biological, Chemical
NNPT	Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty
NMD	National Missile Defence
OPCW	Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
P-5	UNSC Veto Powers (France, PRC, Russia, UK, US)
PA	Palestinian Authority
PDFLP	Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PLC	Palestinian Legislative Council
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organisation
PRC	People's Republic of China
SLA	South Lebanon Army
START	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty
TMD	Theatre Missile Defence
UN	United Nations
UNGA	UN General Assembly
UNGAR	UNGA Resolution
UNHCR	UN High Commission for Refugees
UNMOVIC	UN Monitoring and Verification Commission (Iraq)
UNRRA	UN Relief and Rehabilitation Authority
UNSC	UN Security Council
UNSCOM	UN Sanctions Commission (Iraq)
UNSCR	UNSC Resolution
US	United States of America
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

Preface

This essay was initially completed in August 2000, and revised during February 2001. Subsequent events have been disappointingly bloody, but do not alter the basis of the argument. This is the idea that relations between Israel and Palestine cannot be managed separately from, and by different external criteria to, those which prevail in the region. Geopolitical analysis shows that political behaviour in the region is driven by intentions expressed in culture and religion. Actors are motivated by interests in 'Globalisation' and exploitative western or regime stability, not by conflict resolution. This is not to utter the truism that the only real peace will be a 'comprehensive peace'. Indeed 'separate peace' and 'comprehensive peace' are equally and mutually unintelligible. 'Peace' can be defined only by fundamental values. Stability is a precondition for peace only if informed by such values. Hence, new norms and strategies are necessary, which must commence with the self-images of peoples and their leaders. The region is part of an international system, which it has the potential to destabilise. Strategies for stability and peace therefore *ought* to be shaped accordingly.

I am grateful to two dear friends at the Royal Military College of Canada; Professor Lubomyr Luciuk created the opportunity for me to write this paper; Professor Jim Finan pointed out problems in the draft version.

My thanks also go to Professor Efraim Inbar, Director of the Begin-Sadat Centre for Strategic Studies at Bar-Ilan University, Israel. Through his good offices, I was able to spend extended time as a Visiting Scholar at the Centre during 1998 and 1999. I trust he will not be too disappointed with the fruits of my considerations.

I am indebted to friends and acquaintances in Universities, Institutes and Governments in Israel, Palestine, Egypt, Kuwait and other countries, who gave time to discuss some of the most difficult and important issues of or time.

Annie Rapstoff deserves special mention for the patience with which she oversaw the seemingly interminable drafting of this paper.

Thanks to Ewan Anderson and to Routledge, Taylor and Francis (Publishers) for the use of Maps published in, *The Middle East: Geography and geopolitics*.

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The Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies has agreed to re-issue this essay, which was first published in the series 'Distinguished Speakers in Political Geography' by the Royal Military College of Canada in March 2001 as, *Geopolitics and the new Middle East* [ISBN 1-896354-26-2]. It had a small print run and soon became unavailable. I am deeply obliged to the Institute, and particularly to its Editor Tom Kristiansen.

Though by no means unaffected by events of the past twenty-seven months, the argument points to more systemic dichotomies: a deep *existential* gulf between *all* Israeli and *all* Palestinian political values; the undue weight of strategic expectations built around the Oslo Accords; and the wilful indifference with which, following the end of the Gulf War of 1991, the United States and its western allies presided over the slow decay of prestige, trust and power that had been invested, by both themselves and their Middle East clients, in proposals for regional peace and stability.

There is scarcely nothing here about the second *Intifada*, which, breaking out in September 2000, by December 2002 had seen over 2,800 Palestinian and Israeli fatalities. There is nothing directly about 11th September 2001. This was a defining moment in history, which saw western governments finally, yet

also for the first time, awaken to the implications of an unstable region awash with wealth, poverty, new technologies and ancient hatreds. President George W Bush calling for a war on international terrorism; his definition of an 'Axis of Evil' in the world; American-led military intervention in Afghanistan to oust the *Taliban* and root out *Al Qa'eda* – these were all future events at the time of writing. Although the risks entailed by the spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction are discussed in this monograph, I could not have guessed in September 2000 that just over two years later the United States would be on the brink of war with Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, or that North Korea would be using Washington's distractions to expel International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors and re-open its own fissile plutonium facilities.

But neither was I trying to second-guess the course of events. My stimulus to write this monograph was several years of travel to and from different countries in the Middle East, and a period of research and reflection at the Begin-Sadat Centre for Strategic Studies at Bar-Ilan University in Israel; a centre created in the names of two men whose human greatness, with that of President Jimmy Carter, almost transcended the burdens of history dividing their nations.

Both before and during that attachment I was able to spend time among Palestinians, and saw vividly how their civil society structures, and the economic fabric of their family and daily lives, were being stretched thinner and thinner on the framework of Accords that promised everything *later*, but offered nothing *now*. I heard also my Israeli friends, peace-loving people I trust implicitly, voicing, usually to oppose, a rising sentiment in Israeli society, that Yassir Arafat was *not* a trustworthy partner for peace.

In the Gulf states I met people who had been to Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, Kashmir, China – intelligent Arabs, devout Muslims, often in disagreement, yet united in impatiently

wishing to move their societies *forward*, but also out of the all-embracing influence of America.

In Egypt I observed the palpable differences between a few efficient government agencies clustered around the figure of the national leader and his chief deputies, and the sprawling mass of inefficient semi-literate hidden unemployment that passes for the remainder of the state bureaucracy. Yet even if desperately poor by comparison with the privileged few, that great bureaucratic *tranche* of society is lifted inestimably higher than the urban labourer; or the peasant farmer; or the landless poor who subsist in the countryside and collect around the public buildings and tourist routes of all of the cities.

According to the self-image of western democracy we live in an era of *mass society*. Somehow, everybody matters. And if that is because we have *Rights*, well, these have been *gained*; through collective as well as individual effort. Sometimes, indeed, Rights have been wrung from unrepresentative and unwilling governments. But when westerners do 'foreign relations' – above all American – *mass society* is forgotten. Polite references to democracy become explicitly rhetorical when compared with the *action points* pursued by diplomats, soldiers, business-people and even journalists.

Somehow, *domestic* politics are about things we want for ourselves; whereas *international* politics are about things we want from others. Through the spread of Nationalism this pervading western unwillingness to think about the needs of other societies has become virtually universal. Consequently, 'Globalisation' means exactly what the country or leader or organisation using that term *wants* it to mean, neither more nor less. Whatever may be said on behalf of these structures of western life in the world today, they systematically fail to understand the relationship between *international security* and *socio-economic development*.

No region of the world expresses that failing more graphically than the Middle East. And nowhere are the consequences of that

failing more deadly, or more threatening to other countries and regions. It was this conclusion which led me to argue that the western powers need a *new* Geopolitical understanding of the Middle East.

This should relate together security *and* development; *link* the bloody struggle between Israel and the Palestinians to the regime ambitions of Saddam's Iraq; perceive the peril of *external* influences entering the Middle East, and anticipate the *global* ramifications of regional events; cease *under-estimating* the power of tradition, and the value of controlling territory, because the strategic culture of the western powers *over-estimates* what can be seen and done from Space.

Other monographs now need to be written about chapters of events that have been unfolding in recent time. However, I believe those central contentions in what I wrote nearly two-and-a-half years ago do not need alteration.

It is a touching sign of confidence that the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies has chosen to re-publish my monograph with only minor revisions; though no doubt the Institute would also say that once one began the process of making revisions, it would become obvious that a new monograph should be written. I do not resist that judgement; and rather hope that the Editor will ask me to do so in due course.

Hugh Macdonald
Oxford, December 2002

Chapter 1

Introduction

Until recently there was a consensus among observers of the Middle East that a 'new' region is emerging. What that meant was the topic of much disagreement, especially about what kind of international relations the 'new' region would have. Today, the very notion of renewal is challenged. UN sanctions against Iraq are crumbling. The regime of Saddam Hussein has regained much credibility. A second Palestinian *Intifada* is underway, and the Palestinian Authority may lose control over its own people. The February 2001 election in Israel brought defeat to a Prime Minister who sought 'two states for two peoples' on territory and security. Beneath a surface calm enforced by authoritarian regimes, there are tremors of revolution in Iran, Turkey, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. In Washington, apathy prevails over the state of the Oslo peace process. In contrast, activism is growing on the part of numerous non-regional actors, including Russia, China and EU countries. Trans-national influences are pervading the region, bringing new challenges through Globalisation, terrorism, low-intensity conflict, the spread of WMD technologies, drugs, 'black' economic activities, and, perhaps most important of all, new values, perceptions and rationales for conflict.

The aim here is to 'work around' the profound disagreements that this scene is generating, accounting for doctrinal differences or particular schools of thought only incidentally, when relevant

to the geopolitical methodology employed. What that entails is discussed more fully in Section 3. Here, the scope of the paper can be stated as follows:

- In the context of world politics there are forces that operate uniquely or with particular effect in and upon the Middle East.
- In consequence, however the region is defined geographically, its limits and bounds can only be detected by geopolitical analysis.
- Therefore an analysis that accounts for change must relate phenomena that appear specific to the region, to such causal generalities as the rules, forces and structures of an international system.

This geopolitical analysis is developed so as to explore what the 'new' Middle East is about; how its features might differ from the familiar; and what interactions may develop between the region, other regions, and the structures of world politics. Key dimensions of the region are shown in tables and maps (at the end of the study). But its arguments are toward structures, issues and interactivity, rather than descriptive analysis of what is particular, and already 'in' the region.

Chapter 2

Camp David II

On 25 July 2000, Bill Clinton left Camp David, announcing that negotiations between Ehud Barak and Yassir Arafat were not capable of producing an agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. The American President had ostensibly set his cap at success, diverting other business for almost three weeks, spending most days with the negotiating parties, delaying his departure for the G-8 summit in Okinawa, cutting his time there so as to return to the talks. The term 'failure' was widely used to describe the outcome. Yet this surprised nobody. When the Prime Minister and the President-in-waiting of the state of Palestine landed at airports scarcely forty miles apart, at Tel Aviv and Gaza, each was lauded by his own people.

The talks had been sponsored and pressed by the western powers, notably the US. The conflicting parties discussed Jerusalem, borders, refugees, resources and security. This was done 'on the record' and with a view to a 'package' deal. The talks did not break down. The Israelis offered more in territory and status to nascent Palestine than ever before, including 'shared sovereignty' in East Jerusalem, and the return of over ninety per cent of occupied territories. But the Palestinians were not prepared to accept; for, in exchange, Palestine would have had to surrender powerful constraints on the return of refugees, control of regional resources, and the structure and external relations of their new state.

The 'realistic' outcome proffered by an Israel speaking in pragmatic and future oriented terms was rejected by Palestine. Yet the pragmatic question remains. How else can two proud nations share an essentially borderless territory? Instead, Palestine preferred to pursue an 'idealist' outcome. UN Security Council Resolutions and the legal-moral principle of self-determination require the end of 'Zionist occupation'; an unconditional 'Right of Return' for Palestinians dispossessed of their homes in 1948 and 1967, and for their descendants; and recognition of East Jerusalem as the sovereign capital of Palestine. This at least is a good paradigmatic explanation. We shall have plenty of scope to examine and test it later. For the moment, though, other aspects of the situation following the 'failure' of Camp David are more interesting.

Whereas the US administration announced immediately that American envoys would resume the search for agreement, reaction elsewhere was muted, implying different expectations and a longer time horizon.

In Israel, Barak's 'failure' was full of consequence. Within a few weeks he was trailing in opinion polls, having been the most popular Prime Minister ever when elected the previous year. Secular Israelis, whose wish for peace might have led them in other conditions to give even more, were deserting him. Many religious Jews welcomed this. The ultra-Orthodox, whose status and role might become marginal in a state at peace with neighbours, sharing sovereignty in Jerusalem, were irreconcilable. Arguably, all of this was just what Barak needed, since his fractious coalition government would have dissolved in the face of any feasible agreement, and did so anyway, making an early election unavoidable.

Chairman Arafat, privately willing to accept the package on offer at Camp David, flew home *via* Cairo. There, he explained his 'failure' to President Mubarak in terms of American and Israeli pressures to concede the sacred principle of the right of return of refugees to their original homes in what he thus still

refused to recognise as 'Israel'. Mubarak endorsed this position, as did the regime in Saudi Arabia. Hence two of America's three most important regional allies rejected the settlement outright, if indirectly; and as we have seen the third, Israel, was at best equivocal.

In another quarter of the region, too, rejection remained the slogan of the day. Even before his electoral victory over Benjamin Netanyahu in May 1999, Barak had told the world of his aim to settle the long and disastrous military entanglement of Israel in South Lebanon, and to pursue a settlement with Syria as the first priority of his foreign policy. Barak was consistent in this. Even when settlement with Syria proved impossible, he carried through a unilateral military withdrawal, oversaw the dissolution of the SLA, Israel's puppet 'ally', and absorbed into northern Israel a Lebanese migration comprising perhaps 100,000 Christians, Druse and Muslims.

What Barak could not do was commit Syria's leader, Hafez al-Asad, to a final agreement on return of the Golan Heights to Syrian sovereignty. This was offered in principle. But it would be the central component of a wider agreement. In practice, the US would have brokered a settlement in which Syria controlled activities on the ground, but not security or airspace in this vital upland region. Symbolically, Asad insisted on return of the entire territory, without regard to Israel's claims regarding security and water. Substantively, he knew this could not be, without causing another war that would be disastrous for his country. On key issues, tangible differences were small, and in a 'Realist' account could be bridged by American guarantees. But Asad's 'Idealism' about Arab territory kept his more powerful Israeli adversary wriggling on a hook that comprised wider and more complex Syrian aims. Those included preserving influence with other regional actors (Iran, Saudi Arabia) and non-regional powers (France, Russia); maintaining a stake in the Palestinian struggle (Hamas); controlling water and other resources in and

adjacent to the Golan; and conserving Syria's interests in Lebanon (Hizbollah).[1]

Asad's death in June 2000 was followed shortly, but after a significant pause, by the formal adoption of his son Bashar as President. This and other signals showed that the conciliation of diverse interests in Syria's society would now occur through collegial rather than personal control over institutions. It remains to be seen what this will amount to in practice. But in Syria, for so long the self-proclaimed 'front line' of principled resistance to Israel's strategies in the occupied territories, there was particular satisfaction that the Camp David talks 'failed'. Given the power of symbols, Asad's death might have been sufficient to guarantee that failure in the Arab world.[2]

Hence the notion of 'playing to the gallery' is helpful and important to understanding the Middle East. But actors are not doing this in the same way that ideas and values transposed from a western drama might suggest. There is no straightforward 'fit' between 'Realism' and 'Idealism'. Sacred and real, historic and present, the syntax of mood, anger and

[1]Among the most useful news online resources on Israel/Syria/Lebanon are: http://www.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/in_depth/middle_east/2000/mideast_peace_process/default.stm; http://www.monitor.bbc.co.uk/index.htm; http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/cahier/proche-orient/region-liban; http://www.albawaba.com/. More specialised sites cover security and border issues, histories, leadership debates, *etc*: http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAHOOsoO; http://www.moi-syria.com/links.htm; http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa/meria/news/htm; http://nybooks.com/nyrev/wwwarchdisplay.cgi?200006150/OP; http://www.mideastnews.com/htm; http://www.passia.org/palestine_facts/MAPS/Israel_Syria_demilitarised_zones.htm.
[2]'Beyond the barrel of the gun and the confines of the torture chamber, political cults work to generate compliance by producing, through symbolic displays, the potential for coercive power while also economizing on its actual use [...] Asad's cult and the features it seems to share with post-Stalinist East European political cults and ideology suggest a potentially general understanding of language and symbols as political strategies that clutter public space, producing acts of narration that are depoliticising.': Wedeen, *Ambiguities of domination*, pp. 156-8.

acceptance; all are arranged differently in Middle Eastern societies than in open, democratic, western societies. Israel is, of course, both an open society *and* a western state in the Middle East. But this generalisation about symbols, actions and political life extends, too, largely if not completely, to Israel. For example on 7 August 2000 Rabbi Oveida Josef, spiritual leader of Shas, one of the major parties in Barak's coalition, condemned the Camp David negotiations by comparing the Palestinians to 'a snake'. In the same soliloquy he also repeated his long established claim that the holocaust was visited upon Jews who had reincarnated from sinful previous lives. Shas is capable of determining the outcome of an election, or of coalition politics.[3]

This fusion of the symbolic and the actual can have dramatic consequences. Saddam Hussein's attempted annexation of Kuwait in 1990, which western strategic analysts have written off as a case of 'confused signals', was about *the fact that* Saddam believed in a historical mission which years of war with Iran had entitled him to fulfil. Ten years earlier, an attempt to forcibly rescue American hostages in Teheran escalated into a confrontation full of consequence with the entire Iranian people. In this region 'the gallery' leaders are playing to *incorporates* spectators, who experience active participation in the action. At the same time, numerous actors beyond the region *invisibly* shape action, through the politics of oil, weapons, wealth, and the weaknesses of formal institutions. In this highly complex shaping process, out of which a 'new' Middle East is supposedly emerging, the core conflict between Israel and its neighbours therefore remains *the* central, decisive impediment to change and stabilisation.

Thus both the 'failure' of Camp David, and a certain pattern of response to failure, tell us a great deal about the geopolitics of

[3]'For anyone who took the time to read his very detailed publications on the question of *pikuach nefesh* (the sanctity of life) and the Land of Israel, it was clear that the Sephardim leader is neither a dove, in terms that are familiar to the secular left, nor [...] politically naive.': Steinberg, *Land, peace and Shas.*

the Middle East. Our observations so far indicate that the conflict is both ongoing, and susceptible to management. It is, simultaneously, a substantive struggle for political power in the widest sense, and a drama invested with historic and symbolic significance. It has a wide range of participating actors. Some play parts that are central, even though located at a distance; whilst others are marginal, even though located close to the geographical heart of things. Moreover, the status of various actors is subject to change, through change of leaders, generation change, and the consequences of choice in their roles and gestures. We may also sense, though it is difficult to observe, that much of the action is unscripted.

Our quest from this juncture is to discover what geopolitics can tell us about this 'old' conflict and the 'new' region in its world setting.

Chapter 3

Geopolitics

The discipline of Geopolitics forms part of the study of several other subjects, of which Geography, Economics and Politics are the most important. Geopolitics has found its most persistently successful applications, and many of its strongest limitations, within the civil-military tradition of Strategic Studies. As a formal discipline in the contemporary curriculum, Geopolitics is a relatively new subject, dating from the later nineteenth century. But its contemporary roots are to be found over several centuries, in the technological revolutions that gave global domination to Europe and the west. A reading of Dava Sobel's *Longitude* demonstrates why.[4]

Technological mastery of geography was important to the expanding western world in the eighteenth century. By being able to precisely correlate longitude, a ship could plot a course that minimised the distance it would travel during its voyage. Both for warships and for commercial vessels carrying time sensitive cargoes this was a crucial advantage, which, taken together with known topography of the sea, tended to create ever more precise shipping lanes. But that then meant that maritime military strategy could depend less on large fleets in being than on smaller concentrations of naval power, able to link together *via* a system of naval bases. Alfred Mahan's, *The Influence of Seapower upon History* provided a theoretical

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[4]Sobel, *Longitude.*

explanation of what followed from such technological developments and their associated geography:

- The course of history has been shaped by specific decisions, each having its own human causality;
- Geographic factors formed a cultural and economic context for these decisions;
- The determinate outcome has been the accumulation and relative distribution of power;
- In this process, Britain gained strong comparative advantages;
- Such geopolitical determinism is not incompatible with free trade and interdependence in the world economy;
- Countries possessing similar attributes might emulate Britain.[5]

That puzzling literary achievement, *Mason and Dixon* by Thomas Pynchon, concerns the application of astronomical data to global positioning in the eighteenth century. It shows us that in land-locked disputes, as at sea, the new technologies of 'precise' measurement had the capacity to excite 'worm holes of paranoia' over the delimitation of boundaries between states.[6]

In this sense 'geopolitical' conflict, *via* the advance of technologies of mapping and measurement, acquired a self-generating capacity. In a historic region such as the Middle East there are still today at least fifteen significant international boundary issues, some of which have generated crises or wars. Three we have met so far comprise boundaries between Israel and the Palestinians, Israel and Syria, and Iraq and Kuwait. The proximate cause of the eight year long Iran-Iraq war was the boundary between the two countries in the Shatt al-Arab waterway.

[5]Sumida, *Alfred Thayer Mahan, Geopolitician*, in Gray & Sloan, *Geopolitics*, pp. 47-60.
[6]Pynchon, *Mason & Dixon*.

Halford Mackinder offered a general theory of the political significance of geography, with particular reference to the constant interplay of forces vying with one another across frontiers:

> The course of politics is the product of two sets of forces, impelling and guiding. The impetus is from the past, in the history embedded in a people's character and tradition. The present guides the movement by economic wants and geographical opportunities. Statesmen and diplomats succeed and fail pretty much as they recognise the irresistible power of these forces.[7]

In the world today still more complex calculations of time-space relations are contributing to a future theoretical Astropolitics. As Everett Dolman tells us, efficient travel through space entails specific orbits and transit routes that because of their advantages in fuel efficiency create natural corridors of movement and commerce. Hence, because of gravity wells and the cost of getting fuel to orbit, space-faring nations will be bound to develop specific pathways of heaviest traffic. What follows is the verdict that:

> The maximum benefit to be gained from the riches of space will come as the result of a long-term globally co-operative effort. Nonetheless, so powerful is the lure of astropolitics that the *relative* gains anticipated for the state that successfully dominates space continues to provide a compelling incentive to act unilaterally.[8]

The argument so far can now be generalised. Practical problems ('How do I fix my position at sea?') create technological puzzles. Technological solutions emerge, which carry prospectively large

[7]Quoted in Gray & Sloan, *Geopolitics*, p. 2, from Mackinder *The physical basis of political geography*.
[8]Dolman, *Geostrategy in the space age* in Gray & Sloan, *Geopolitics*, p. 104.

implications for military strategy and for commerce. Whether perceived in terms of security, or in terms of profit, the percentage changes induced by technological change in any given *status quo* are significant. This establishes both the need for analysis, and the demand for theoretical rigour equivalent to the technological rigour of the dynamic physical arrangements (naval bases, land boundaries, astroports). But, do astropolitics provide the *incentive* for competition as well as the means of managing it'? Without knowing the answer, we understand that Geopolitics needs to become a *discipline*, concerned not only with questions of method, but also of knowledge.

For the past century we have lived, for the first time in history, with a 'closed' geographical system, and with a superabundance of economic and military power. These factors make 'world domination' a more sustainable strategy of power than ever before. Various totalitarian systems have attempted to get there, underpinned by strong philosophies that address 'the will to power'. Yet we also live in an era of ideological 'freedom' in individual, economic and political arrangements. Numerous existential thinkers have informed the world that 'it is all relative', or anyhow that the mystery of identity dwells within us, and not 'out there' in the world.

But even when methodological rigour has given us a thorough familiarity with the strengths and limitations of military technologies, strategic planning may spectacularly fail to match predicted requirements with real-world outcomes. The analytical realities behind Britain's diplomacy of world power turned into insoluble *guesses* concerning the greater likelihood of war requiring more land power and war requiring more sea power. The Shlieffen Plan could not alter the fact that Germany was trapped by geography between Russia and France, and would be obliged to divide its armies unless one or the other adversary could be neutralised. As an advisor to the British government, Mackinder recommended greater intervention in Bolshevik Russia during its civil war, but was turned down by a Cabinet that was weary of war. Hitler's armies were unable to overcome the immensity and psychological drag imposed by Ukraine, Russia and Yugoslavia. The Second World War was won not by a single grand strategy, but by two that at the end of the day proved politically and ideologically incompatible. In the Yom Kippur War, as in Vietnam, one side won a decisive political victory by comprehensively losing the war on the battlefield. The Revolution in Military Affairs is said to have triumphed in Kosovo; but that still required Milosevic to arrive at a Clausewitzian conclusion that he *ought* to accept a limited defeat.

Hence there are key epistemological questions in the discipline of Geopolitics:

- What technological and geographical conditions can we discover in which an actor's strategic response to conflict will be behaviourally determined?
- Under what conditions are strategic actors able to transcend technological and geographical constraints in responding to conflict?

In the approach taken by Mahan, geopolitical theory is required to be *behaviouralist*, in the sense that it derives predictable behaviour from axioms concerning a 'closed' physical system, and thus generates predictable 'parameters' on conflict. Following Clausewitz, another approach holds that military-political strategy must be *existentialist*, recognising the power of a people, regardless of technological parameters, to endure ultimate, absolute, sacrifice.[9]

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[9]Mahan's explanation of international relations and conflict turned on the concepts of pre-determining geopolitical conditions and 'optimal' decisions by national governments: Sumida, *Alfred Thayer Mahan*, p. 51. The role allocated to political and strategic choice was essentially the same for Mahan as that found in Mackinder's later explanation of the 'world system': Sloan, *Sir Halford Mackinder*, p. 22. The theory is that history is made by large forces: 'Success' in politics is about identifying, managing and

This polarity in epistemology is neither accidental nor avoidable. Mahan wrote about trade and power against the background of British ascendancy and the ideas of Charles Darwin. Hence a rational creature in a systemic setting would not knowingly make itself extinct. Clausewitz wrote about war against the background of Napoleon in the era of Immanuel Kant, for both of whom freedom was not a material condition but a moral achievement. The recognition that behaviouralism and existentialism offer radically different accounts of what we ought to expect from the conduct of groups in conflict, and that each leads in a different prescriptive direction with regard to strategic policy, are not insurmountable difficulties. But anyone seeking a definition of Geopolitics must 'work around' this epistemic divide.

Physics must also grapple with incompatible epistemologies, notably those of Newton and Einstein. Sir Richard Penrose at Oxford is working on 'Twister theory', which theorises how, when one comes 'down to earth' or goes 'out into space', adjustments must be made between the 'readouts' of each framework. We may conjecture that such adjustments between two frameworks of theory could be helpful in addressing the geopolitics of the Middle East.

Similarly, the solution proposed here is to retreat prudentially to a viewpoint situated in methodology. Geopolitics treats 'small scale' (i.e. sub-systemic) conflicts by applying a 'template' drawn

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applying these forces. It follows that this *behaviouralism* (ie. there are objectively determinable 'good' and 'bad' choices for political actors) can be turned into a science of politics, or geopolitics. Contrast this with the Kantian subjectivity of Clausewitz, who held that the dynamic motor of conflict and war is 'political will'. Power is constituted through this will by a 'trinity' of army, government and people. There *are* conditioning forces within history ('The changing balance of power'): but these are *not* systemic; are always liable to be overturned, or even to cause wars; and will be rapidly and perhaps unexpectedly transcended because conflict *always tends to escalate towards the Absolute.* It follows that a *subjective actuality* determines 'the primacy of the political aim': Howard, *The influence of Clausewitz*, p. 43. On systems generally, see Taylor, *Toward a new world order.*

from 'large-scale' (i.e. systemic) mapping of forces and interactions. It is tempting to believe, and often proves wrong so to do, that because the large-scale techniques can successfully 'cover' the small-scale conflicts, therefore the small-scale conflicts form – or can be made to form – parts of disciplined geopolitical outcomes. We coerce the problem being addressed to fit the available solutions. But that problem is about poor practice, and is not fatal to the discipline.

Hence we propose a definition and initial demonstration of what for the purpose of this essay is meant by Geopolitics:

> The study of spatial dimensions that are primary to understanding and managing conflict, particularly inasmuch as new technologies make certain geographical arrangements more salient for strategic policy than others, and thus generate a demand for theoretical explanations of how geography and technology might interact in political and economic terms.

In the Middle East, certain of these spatial dimensions can be located in fixed centres. For example, the struggle between Islam and Judaism has its epicentre in Jerusalem. Here, neither of these great religions can yield permanent dominance to the other. Mecca and Medina are in Saudi Arabia, which means that a conservative Sunni regime and society must periodically share its space with millions of pilgrims, including those from Shia Iran. The regional strategic nuclear balance lies between Tel Aviv and Damascus, though Baghdad, Riyadh and Teheran have also come to figure. Potent linkages may exist, in future even more than today, between religious convictions and the regional spread of WMD.

Demographic forces are less centred, but underlie the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians. Israel has imported a large population of Jews from the former Soviet-type societies, though the identity and loyalties of these incomers have created important tensions. But Israel's Arab population is growing even faster than the rate of Jewish immigration and reproduction,

and both are outstripped by the growth of populations in the Palestinian territories. Inexorably, this is shifting the terms of coexistence. Jordan, weak in other respects, can crucially influence that process. It is primarily economic demography that has made Egypt the leader of the Arab countries in their strategic dialogue with Israel, though it also has historic ties with Palestine and especially Gaza.

Resources, notably oil and finance, are widely dispersed across the Arab Middle East. Since access to oil is indispensable for all industrialised countries, this gives some Arab states influence beyond the region. Saudi Arabia is assisted to remain the guardian of Sunni orthodoxy. Iraq would enjoy the status of the most powerful Sunni Islamic state, had its economy not foundered in war and sanctions. Through another resources, water, Turkey, which exercises control over the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates, and decisively influences the long-term economic potential of the region. High technology affords another resource, which the finances of the Arab world may allow it to acquire mastery of in due course. For the foreseeable future, however, Israel possesses unique strength and diversity in military technologies, computer development, banking, commerce, agriculture and information systems.

Iran, through its revolution, has aspired to lead a movement of Islamic renewal against regimes that have become too conservative, or too close to the west. It exerts ideological and religious influence in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine, as well as in the Gulf and Saudi Arabia. Even though much of Iran's natural resources and industrial strength have been vitiated by war or constrained by sanctions, Teheran can argue that its religious resolve and sacrifice alone prevent Israel from winning decisive advantages in the peace process promoted by the west. Yet Iran faces a similar problem to the Saudis through the allegiance of millions of Shiites, in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere, who look to Iran for direction or even refuge.

It can now be shown that 'Peace' is not a simple option, or a straightforward alternative to war. Through Globalisation and a culture of western security thinking, 'peace' has come to mean conflict resolution by states through mutual adjustments of interest. In those terms, peace treaties have been reached between Israel and Egypt, and Israel and Jordan. Israel, Turkey and Jordan have a trilateral security arrangement. Turkey, a predominately Moslem society, is a member of NATO and an aspiring member of the EU. Lebanon has also aspired to join the 'peace process', but has been frustrated because of internal and external factors. This culture of peacemaking sits uneasily in a region where religions and societies, shaped by their experiences over centuries beforehand, have few fundamental values and perceptions in common.

By looking at these spatial dimensions we can see that, all differences notwithstanding, a web of international connections anchors the Middle East into a world system of political, economic and social relations.

As noted above, access to oil reserves is the single most important geopolitical determinant of strategic behaviour. In turn, Middle East developments have crucially influenced stability and order in world politics. At least ten major wars and violent confrontations have erupted in the region since the Second World War. Directly or indirectly these have shaped energy crises, and the economies and societies of virtually all countries. Wars have also led to UN peacekeeping operations in Sinai, the Golan and Lebanon.

Today, the US protects Israel, patronises Egypt and relies upon Saudi Arabia. The US is therefore bound to strive for a mutually acceptable regional stability that will underpin its vital interests. The Oslo Agreements of 1993 and 1995 created a negotiating process between Israel and the PA, related to UNSCR 242 and 336. The financial balances of the OPEC countries extend their influence, and help guarantee that Israel will eventually concede the 'occupied territories' to a new

Palestinian state. Israel also faces a substantial Arab economic embargo, which has eased only slightly in recent times.

At the same time Israel has key economic and technology relationships with India and China as well as the US and EU. Turkey trades freely with Israel as well as with Arab countries. Both Saudi Arabia and Israel, though professed enemies, enjoy strong trade and technology links with China. Other actors also seek influence in regional affairs. The EU is developing its CFSP. China, Russia, India, Japan and other countries search for markets or finance.

Much of this prevailing pattern of international relations would be affected by a comprehensive regional peace. Both people and geography in the region seem ripe for rapid development. But it can be questioned whether the states of the region are ready. Moreover, there is little infrastructure and few regional institutions.

Islam and Judaism are world religions. Islam has a billion followers. Judaism has maybe twenty million. Yet Judaism participated in the classical world that originated western philosophy, and directly shaped Christianity and the core values of western civilisation. Indirectly, too, secularised Judaism and individual Jews have contributed greatly to the western culture of modernity and science. In comparison, Islam's influence has been limited and indirect. But Islam has had an enormous, largely unmeasured, influence within the world that was dominated until recent decades by western colonialism. Cultures as diverse as the Mahgreb and Mashraq, the Arabian peninsula, Iraq, Iran, Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh, all attest to this.

Hence it is that in today's world, all three of these great religious creeds meet and overlap in Palestine. In a world rapidly approaching material Globalisation, it is apparently paradoxical that this concentration of devotional beliefs in Jerusalem should constitute a grave impediment to a 'final status' agreement between Israel and Palestine. Yet it is so. Indeed within the Islamic world there has been a rediscovery of the existential

power of religious policy. Initially confined to the Iranian revolution, which frightened the Sunni Arab world and contributed to the Iran-Iraq war, Shiism has begun to generate 'alternative model' responses to the cultural values of western modernity, the pressures of Globalisation, and the formulaic behaviouralist ideas that dominate western strategic studies.

Now we can begin to substantiate the theoretical divide outlined earlier, between the *behaviouralist* and *existential* determinants of strategic conduct.

Chapter 4

Globalisation

Unlike Geopolitics, 'Globalisation' is not a discipline. Rather, it is an aspiration searching for an agenda; or, in a stronger form, it is a doctrine pursuing the establishment of a mass following, in other words an ideology. It is this latter form of Globalisation that is of interest here. As such, any proposed definition would be disputed. It is therefore necessary to choose one with which to begin.

Tony Blair in Britain, whose political thought is influenced by Anthony Giddens, has often spoken approvingly of Globalisation. Giddens in, *The Third Way* writes of 'Globalization' (*sic*) and 'Individualism' as two of 'five dilemmas' facing the renewal of Social Democracy. A summary of the argument is as follows:

- Economic 'globalization' is a new reality, not a continuation of previous stages of economic history.
- 'Globalization' is not primarily about economic interdependence, but about the transformation of time and space in our lives. Distant events affect us immediately. Decisions we take as individuals are global in their implications.
- A world of instantaneous electronic communication, in which even those in the poorest regions are involved, shakes up local institutions and everyday patterns of life.

- The pressure exerted by 'globalization' is affecting the position and power of states all over the world. Sovereignty is no longer 'an all-or-nothing matter'.
- The 'scope of government' expands rather than diminishes as 'globalization' proceeds.
- Nations retain considerable governmental, economic and cultural power over citizens and in the external arena.
- 'Governance' becomes a more relevant concept than 'government' to refer to some forms of administrative or regulatory capacity.
- A 'new individualism' is associated with the retreat of tradition and custom from our lives 'under the impact of 'globalization' rather than just the influence of markets'.
- 'Institutionalised new individualism' demands that, 'All of us have to live in a more open and reflective manner than previous generations'. This is the way to realise greater 'Self-fulfilment, the fulfilment of potential' under 'greater democratization' (*sic*).[10]

The first two of these claims deserve immediate comment.

The claim that economic Globalisation is a 'reality' has considerable statistical support. Since the 1950s, world trade has grown beyond anything seen previously. Trade between national economies has consistently grown faster than trade within national economies. Various multinational corporations have an annual turnover greater than the GDP of small or middle-sized nations. Commercial foreign direct investment is the leading instrument of finance-driven development, world-wide. Aggregate demand, conceived in terms of a circular flow of income, consumption, savings and investment, cannot be managed by the macro-economic decisions of single governments. Global interdependence has been demonstrated by the interactive consequences of changes in resource prices. Thus, a comparatively inelastic demand for oil in terms of its price has

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[10]Giddens, *The third way*, pp. 28-37.

permitted the OPEC countries to influence the strategic policies of the world's industrial and military powers. At the same time, the high price-elasticity of demand for many primary products has caused recurrent debt and exchange rate crises for most of the developing countries. The economic crises of 1997–1998 in Asia-Pacific, Latin America and Russia, showed how trans-national flows of capital can rapidly alter the fiscal viability of entire national economies and their largest corporations.

None the less, when one departs from the customary models of economic growth, the economic 'reality' of Globalisation is more difficult to demonstrate. Yes, international trade has grown much faster than intra-national trade. Some economies, like that of Britain, are highly dependent on cyclical movements in the world economy. But regional trade within NAFTA, or the EU, is growing at a faster rate than world trade overall. This might just mean that economic Globalisation is being led by regional growth. And regional institutions may be strengthened at the expense of both national and global institutions.

By way of contrast, some regions, such as the Middle East, exhibit growth largely through inter-regional rather than intra-regional or intra-national exchange. It is plausible to consider that the primary resources of these regions may be siphoned off in a process of Globalisation that leaves them, ultimately, bereft of sustainable development. And if one looks at primarily *qualitative* indicators of development, such as the UN Human Development Index, it is difficult to arrive at any statistically significant 'global' correlation between income, economic growth, and human development. Statistics show the variability of social conditions among societies, and the depth of the divide between different levels of living in the most and least developed economies.[11]

The second main claim Giddens makes is that 'globalization' transforms time and space in their relationships to the

[11]Todaro, *Economic development*; UN Development Programme, *Human development report 2000*.

individual. At a technological level, new spatial-temporal relations are being created, most graphically represented by the 'virtual', and by the World-Wide-Web. As with earlier technological revolutions, this will have geopolitical consequences. However, the notion that the lives of individuals will be profoundly altered by the immediacy of distant events is at best contentious and at worst superficial. Historically, peoples' lives in one place have constantly been affected by distant events. The Internet or CNN make little difference to that. Existentially, the impact of a distant event, for instance the death of Princess Diana, is likely to be less than the impact of that which is immediate but local.

There is also a conundrum in this claim about time and space. Giddens is setting relativity of time and space within the human consciousness, against the empirical measurement of distance and time by the clock. It may be that the events of 'globalization' take over our lives, but that is not the same thing as a revolution in human consciousness.

Having noticed these early concerns about 'globalization', let us note what may be compelling about the envisioned system:

- It justifies abrupt change in the lives of individuals, nations or regions by claiming to be co-terminus with the idea of 'common humanity'.
- All individuals are expected to make a transforming effort to identify themselves as participants in 'globalization', on the calculus that the benefits from doing so outweigh the costs of tradition, custom, or reflexive resistance to interference.
- There are rules: participation means commitment, especially in accepting the [beneficial] replacement of welfare systems by market forces.
- Governance remains accessible and persuasive, rather than anonymous and authoritarian: rules are set and enforced not by traditional elites, but by elected, meritocratic, rulers.

- Global society in this system is rendered compatible with nationalism, through being structured by inter-governmental regulation and the administration of pluralistic trans-cultural forces.
- Global society is preferable to the smothering embrace of localised or national multiculturalism.
- 'Globalization' is co-terminus with common humanity. Hence, the 'common good' of classical inheritance can be redefined as realising 'the new individualism' in a world context.
- The 'common evil' is those forces and activities that would hinder the attainment or progressive deepening of that new individualism.

In order to understand why a doctrine such as this is so widely disputed as it searches for a mass following, we need to interrogate the systemic features of its vision.

In *A History of Economic Thought*, J.K. Galbraith offers the considered view that classical economic theory has been largely replaced by a new and different reality, which it captures and analyses at best poorly. There are three principal aspects of this new reality:

- Large firms make decisions by a bureaucratic system of organisation that brings together many specialised views. This supersedes the classical theory of the firm.
- There is a struggle for dominance between business and the state. This has arisen because of 'the dominant, highly visible role in the modern economy of the great enterprise and its pre-emption in all the advanced industrial states of a large share of all production'.
- Multinational firms do not compete with each other on the basis of market prices, but through complex structures of controlled supply pricing and market oligopoly.[12]

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[12]Galbraith, *A history of economics*, pp. 287-8.

Within the EU, 'Subsidiarity' and 'Solidarity' have become important doctrines in recent years. The contemporary roots of these can be traced to Catholic social teaching about the corporate (fascist) state and society during the 1930s. Then, the Vatican was involved in relaxing its earlier strictures against involvement in politics by the ordinary citizen, and was seeking limits on the powers that the state might claim *vis a vis* 'civil society'. Both doctrines possess clear roots in theology, and in a moral vision of authority.

Structures and institutions in the EU are being revised to tackle a yawning 'democratic deficit'. Soon, the prevailing pattern may look very different. Yet what those structures are *for*, and where the limits of their competences lie, are not in any serious doubt. Indeed, member states of the EU constantly remind Brussels of that. Consequently, powerful and articulate champions of the new doctrines are to be found among states, within civil societies, and inside EU institutions. This is part of the accumulation of nearly half a century of working with functional integration. Even so, 'devolution' and 'harmonisation', synonyms for 'Subsidiarity' and 'Solidarity', have developed slowly compared with executive power in Brussels.

These European doctrines are often bolted onto claims about 'Globalization'. The issues then become whether culturally European ideas can be transposed into a global context, and where one can locate an accompanying institutional framework. The unfulfilled requirement is for nothing less than a 'Meta-system', an overarching mix of structures and values that will subsume, without destabilising, regional systems of national states and societies. If this cannot be constructed then elites and peoples will tend to opt for local and regional structures in preference to yielding up their nations to 'globalization'.

There is, moreover, something odd about the claim that the end of the Cold War has brought an opportunity to 'rebase' the norms of individualism, market competition, democracy and

civil society in 'globalization'. Why should it be believed that the unleashing of new forces of competition alongside suppressed needs and wants will lead to a systematic new social contract? The example of Russia since the end of the Soviet Union shows that 'competition' as Fukuyama, Hayek and others intend it, means a culturally and historically embedded understanding of 'competition'. Or, if it does not, chaos follows. Without time to become instantiated, to acquire at least some of the features of tradition, an imposed economic transition through 'competition' will *ipso facto* fail.[13]

Much effort has been expended to convince opinion in North America and Europe that 'national separatisms', usually former Communist dictatorships, threaten the 'Common good'. A decade ago it was possible to believe that Milosevic in Serbia represented an anachronistic hangover, or that Yeltsin was a softer and more tractable version of the same thing. But the states that succeeded the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia have proved avaricious, unstable, and stubbornly particularist.

And claims that separatist leaders are defending the interests of their peoples have grown too numerous to be dismissed. Let us now reverse the telescope. Accepting the rules of 'Global governance' is about striving for a shared language of political and economic stabilisation across the world. Yet nationalist and factional leaders face demands by their people for 'justice' in an opportunistic world, perhaps against local or regional adversaries. On the other hand there are blandishments to liberalise financial markets, widen access to multinationals, accept 'international' standards of openness in broadcasting and media, and implement Human Rights. Sometimes, as with Chechnya and the election of President Putin, the answer seems to be a new war. In the most intractable cases, powerful western leaders then offer to pay much money, or threaten to use much

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[13]Rourke, *Contemporary globalization*, pp. 490-509; Falk, *Predatory globalization*, pp. 141-6; Lehmann, *Putting globalization back on track*, pp. 76-7.

force; and end up with 'solutions' to problems that often last no longer than it takes for the ink to dry on the agreements they sign.[14]

In such troubled circumstances, inexorably, illegitimate governments thrive. In turn, the 'common good' becomes confused, apparently being redefined as 'What is good for business must be good for all under conditions of 'globalization'. But in these terms the Russian Mafia has become a willing franchisee of 'globalization'. Men and women of good character therefore become frustrated and alienated as the moving finger of the profit motive abruptly creates unemployment and deteriorated conditions of life in the developed countries and, is elsewhere associated with illicit force, economic and moral corruption, monopolisation, usury, and religious bigotry.

Can Globalisation acquire an ethics of its own? It is better to suspend the answer to such a broad question. But we must proceed under the caution that many leaders in the Middle East do not view 'globalization' through the rose-tinted spectacles of western liberals.

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[14]Beyond the comparatively conflict-free geographical bounds of North America, Western Europe and Australasia, three continental regions associated with democracy and social pluralism, every other major region of the world is experiencing on-going civil or international wars or severe economic dislocations. See: The 1999 chart of armed conflict published with *The military balance 1999-2000*.

Chapter 5

People and geography

From the hills above Eilat, Israel's port-resort on the Gulf of Aqaba, international boundaries are hardly visible. Yet four countries almost meet here.

A few miles across the sparkling gulf the busy Jordanian port of Aqaba handles much of the sanctions-breaking trade to and from Iraq. Tourists and others cross between the two towns *via* an official border point, which laboriously issues visas at charges that can vary quite mysteriously. The intrepid can travel north from Aqaba by bus along the Jordan escarpment – the biblical Kings' Highway – to Petra, Amman, even Jerusalem. The more comfort-conscious use plentiful battered taxis, driven with terrifying alacrity by local Bedouin.

Several tracks run through the salt marshes at the head of the Gulf, which provides feeding grounds for some of the world's rarest migrating birds. The careful observer can spot that these are sometimes used by swift official-looking vehicles, as well as by the sheep and goats of the local peasants. It is an open secret on both sides of the frontier that a new international air terminal is planned for this location, making use of the good existing runway on the Jordanian side to replace the main Eilat airport, which is unsuitable for long-haul aircraft. And there are plans, too, for tourist ships to use new, shared, port facilities. Whereas Eilat is approaching over-development, Aqaba remains under-developed.

Fewer go south from Aqaba. But it is possible for non-Israelis who have obtained the right visas beforehand, and who have avoided tell-tale stamps entering their passports whilst in Israel, to take the short drive along the eastern side of the Gulf that leads to the frontier with Saudi Arabia. Were it open for travel, this would be the Darb el-Hajj linking Mecca and Medina with the pilgrimage routes to Kadesh, Nakhl, Migdol, Beersheba and Jerusalem. Signs are that new business and academic elites in Saudi Arabia dare counsel such a course, though officially it remains beneath the notice of the ruling regime, at least until such time as it is judged that a fair peace has been arrived at between Israelis and Palestinians.

On the opposite side of the Gulf again, a little to the south-west of Eilat, the road threads its way between silver sands and high hills to enter the sleepy border crossing with Egypt at Taba. Scene of considerable negotiations between the two countries, Taba has its international hotel, Herz and Avis outlets, banks and other amenities. From here you can explore the Red Sea coast that is becoming 'Egypt's riviera', El-Tur, and the dark Sinai mountains that mark the most probable route of the biblical Exodus, and the encounters of Moses with the Lord.

Overlooking Aqaba and Eilat again – in biblical times this was Ezion-geber, a place for feeding and watering and resting – one walks past now disused anti-aircraft missile emplacements to look at the road built for tanks which runs uphill to another, but little used, official crossing point with Egypt; and musingly observes Palestinians from Gaza, who by this route 'get away from it all' without attracting attention.

Future economic development of this region would require massive infrastructure development, including a fast mass-transit overland route linking Upper Egypt, Gaza, and Tel-Aviv/Jerusalem to the Gulf. Beersheba – a modern Arab settlement in an ancient Hebrew place – stands at the juncture of the most likely routes. Nor should one forget the Hejaz

railway, built by the British, that once linked Medina to Jerusalem.

In the here and now, as in Biblical times, the geography people want to behave by is beginning to matter more than the geography of frontiers and regimes. So here and now, around the Gulf, people are mixing and talking and bargaining in ways that are still much more difficult to the north, across the desert and the mountains, in the maelstrom of conflicting claims, above all in Jerusalem.

There, the contrast could not be starker. West Jerusalem has become a large, modern, exclusively Jewish city. Palestinians (mainly Christians) and others who owned properties before 1948 left, and after 1967 poorer Palestinians retreated to a few suburban Arab enclaves. East Jerusalem has the opposite character. Here, Jews live in settlements, whether ancient or modern, but the culture of the heart of this part of the city is Arab. Each half of the city has its own bus station, one connecting intimately with Israel, the other badly, with frequent breakdowns and security checks, to the Palestinian cities of Ramallah and Hebron, and to the Arab towns and villages of Bethlehem, Zariyah, Abu Dis, al Ram, Kalandia and Kufr Akab.

Within East Jerusalem lies the Old City, crucible of three world religions.

For Judaism, Temple Mount is the summation of everything God covenanted with his chosen people. The remains of the Western wall of the Second Temple are a site of the utmost reverence, the tangible location in prayer of the scriptural tradition. The Jewish cemetery beyond the eastern wall of the Old City also speaks uniquely to the Jewish people: to 'spin in your grave' means that your soul is seeking this place. For most if not all of the ultra Orthodox communities that live here, political Zionism is a deplorable though conceivably necessary means to the recovery of Eretz Israel, the Promised Land. It is unthinkable that the State of Israel, which accords Rabbinic authority to the Orthodox, should rescind its 1980 Annexation

of Jerusalem. There can be no meaningful division of the City, or sharing of sovereignty.

For Islam, the Prophet's bodily ascent into Heaven is identified here. Almost continuously since the time of Saluhadin, Jerusalem has been a city under Islamic authority. Hence two of the greatest Mosques, the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa, occupy the space where the Temple once stood. Although King Hussein gave up Jordan's claim to sovereignty over East Jerusalem and the West Bank, he gifted a fortune to the entire re-gilding of the Dome of the Rock, which proudly gleams its Islamic semaphore over all the occupying activities around. Today, Arafat and his Palestinian counsellors are on the horns of a dilemma. Israel would concede more territorial and political coherence to Palestine if its capital were Hebron, or better still Gaza. But Arafat is a Husseini. His life was about implacable armed resistance to Israel. Temperamentally, and to preserve overarching authority, he must cleave to religious and historic claims whose realisation, in any foreseeable conditions, could never amount to more than a shadow of once great substance.

For Christians the Old City of Jerusalem is the place where Jesus of Nazareth brought his followers to symbolically challenge Roman rule; and was betrayed, tried and executed, the divine victim of human fallibility. Most biblical references to the burial and resurrection of Jesus are also located in Jerusalem. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre inside the Old City symbolises Christian unity and typifies Christian disunity. Beneath its Dome, Russian, Greek, Syriac, Uniate and Coptic Christians, whose presence is in a sense unbroken through the millennia, vie with the smarter, more numerous, presence of the Vatican and other Catholic Orders. Other Christian denominations, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Church of England, cluster around the Old City, or outside its Ottoman walls in East Jerusalem, or around the Church of St Andrew. Christian pilgrims come here in vast droves from the rich societies of the west. Pope John Paul II visited Jerusalem in April 2000. This

both codified a *rapprochement* between the Catholic church and Israel which has led to recognition and a half-apology for not denouncing the Holocaust, and endorsed the need for a Palestinian state, with particular favour towards the role of Christian Palestinians. The Pope has also proposed that Jerusalem should have a new international status, neutralised under the auspices of the UN.

In this pivotal city the geography that matters is existential, inside the head and the heart rather than on the ground. So, unlike Eilat, where clear boundaries are easily permeated, in Jerusalem the boundaries that matter may be undetectable by empirical methods, but are razor sharp in the diametrically opposed views of the protagonists.[15]

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[15]Baskin, *The conflict will end in Jerusalem*'; Inbar, *Jerusalem: the forgotten fortress*; Joffe, *MERIA guide to Jerusalem*'; Mostyn, *Time bomb under Jerusalem*; Prior, *The Bible and colonialism*; Sacks, *Diving the art of double vision*. Israeli (Jewish), Euro-American (Christian) and Palestinian (Islamic and Christian) viewpoints on Jerusalem can be found online:
http://www.virtualjerusalem.com/channels/news/issues/jerusalem/jerusalem.htm; http://www.susqu.edu/history/medtrav/jerusalem/default.htm;
http://www.jerusalem.muni.il/english/; http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAHOcnnO>;
http://www.thebook.com/papax7/jerusl15.htm;
http://www.holylandnetwork.com/jerusalem/history.htm>;
http://www.pna.org/mininfo/jerusalem/jerusal.htm;
http://www.passia.org/jerusalem/publications/ReligiousAspectsText.htm;
http://www.interx-me.com/jerusalem/jerusalem.htm; http://www.al-bushra.org/jerus/I_pray.htm; http://www.ipcri.org/.

Chapter 6

Regimes

Arab and Islamic countries in the Middle East are typically governed either by traditional ruling families, or by post-revolutionary nationalist regimes that depend on the military. Both types of regime tend to be elitist, inefficient, corrupt, and opposed to free-markets. Hence economic performance is inefficient. Entrepreneurial talents and competition are discouraged. Citizenship is restricted. Political participation is limited. There is no free exchange of ideas. The governing classes exploit as their personal fiefdoms resources which belong in law to the whole people.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan and the Gulf States, including Abu Dhabi, conform to the traditional pattern of rule. In these countries, citizens are subjected to social codes that require conformity in exchange for economic inclusion. This results in the partial distribution of wealth through welfare programmes, education, housing, etc., all of which are free. In general, citizens pay no or few taxes. The burden of employment falls upon an underclass of imported or 'foreign' labour. In the region, several million people fall into this 'underclass'; they have a status little different than serfs. They do not enjoy citizenship, or independent personal and economic entitlements. Foreign professionals fill many technical jobs in these countries. Such individuals work on more clearly defined short-term contracts, and have a higher social status with more legal rights. But in

many cases service is being provided to the host government: foreign contractors or governments assign workers to these posts, and are often responsible for their terms of engagement.

Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Iran and Libya conform to the revolutionary council form of regime. In these countries, ordinary citizens are subjected to social and employment rules that sub-serve the economic aims of the state. This means that patronage, or at least considerable time-serving, is required before an adequate job can be secured. The state runs most large enterprises, and thus acts as the main employer.

For both types of regime, major functions of the regime in the economy include:

- defining commercial law
- controlling banking and foreign exchange
- acting as the main channel of commercial lending
- taking a controlling stake in major joint-ventures with foreign-owned firms
- prescribing rules where independent capital-raising stock markets exist.[16]

Turkey does not fall neatly into either of these two categories. Its constitution commits it to secular democracy, though the military is charged with upholding the constitution, and has intervened several times to suspend civilian rule. Democratic rule has been operating without interruption since the mid-1980s, albeit currently with comparatively unstable coalition governments. Turkey is a member of NATO, a strong ally of the US, and has defence Treaties with Israel and Jordan. The EU has been considering Turkey's credentials for membership, and has negotiated a full Customs Union. This means that Turkish labour and goods are able to circulate freely within the Single European Market. Turkey strongly endorses the Oslo accords,

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[16]Brooks, *Political-military relations and the stability of Arab regimes*, pp. 20-35.

and ignores the formal and informal trade boycotts most Islamic countries maintain against Israel.

At the same time, traditionalism prevails in religion and society, based on Sunni Islamic values and the old Ottoman system of circulating elites. The revolutionary council aspects of Turkey's regime come through its guardianship of the constitution, and the capacity of the military to ignore or override elected politicians in foreign and defence policy. Strong and persistent criticisms have been levelled at its Human Rights record, especially over ruthless military suppression of parties and movements supporting Kurdish independence. Islamic parties are strong, hold the balance in the legislature, and may lose patience with a political system that denies them access to the full and ultimate power. The military, secular parties, and professional elites have combined to oppose extremism, and to subject the leadership of Islamic parties to democratic conventions. This is crucial if a repetition of the politics that affected Turkey following the Islamic revolution in Iran is to be avoided. During that period Turkey's elites imposed military government on the country, while the political system was 'cleansed' of fundamentalists. A recurrence of that pattern might fatally affect Turkey's integration into the EU and the broader west. Even more importantly, however, it could transform Turkey into an Islamic republic whose primary alignment would not be the western powers, but with the Arab world and Iran.[17]

Especial attention is required for Iran, because it exercises formidable religious and ideological influence throughout the Middle East. Formerly within Britain's sphere of influence, it was one of the first sources of the supply of oil. Following the Second World War, and the displacement of British power, Iran became a client of the US. The Americans rapidly developed Iran's industrial potential and oil wealth, and relied upon an authoritarian regime and a wealthy *bourgeoisie* to preserve

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[17]Halliday, *Nation and religion in the Middle East*; Zahlan, *The making of the modern Gulf States*.

power. Following the October war, the Shah's regime became policeman of the Gulf, equipped with the most sophisticated US military capabilities. Yet Iran possessed an articulate and restless working class, through which an active communist resistance sought revolution. At the same time a sophisticated clergy, within the country and in emigration, preserved and cultivated fundamentalist Shiism.[18]

Flagrant materialism, lack of legitimacy and ruthless secret police methods led to an unstable coalition of these opposing forces. The Shah was toppled. President Carter contemplated a counter *coup* and military intervention. From the ensuing bloody disorder there emerged a radical conservative religious government under Ayatollah Khomeini, which systematically extirpated all secular influences. Over two decades, and through the protracted bloodletting of an eight year war with Iraq, that regime has entrenched itself as a dedicated opponent of 'western', and above all American and Israeli, interests. Through time the initial spasm of revolutionary religious ideology has shifted in focus, away from the enduring structures of an essentially un-Islamic international system, towards the world of Islam itself. Most notably in Lebanon, whose Shia minority population has acquired equality with Sunni and Christian communities, Hizbollah ('The party of God') has turned into a political movement willing to contend for influence within a national framework. Iranian scholars, engineers, scientists and business people, still controlled by a religious autocracy, have won back the right to study and speak with some independence, and on equal terms to their peers in the west and in other countries. What appears to be developing is a new synthesis between religious and secular values, and a resurgence of Iranian national power on terms of reluctant coexistence with the prevailing international order.

When we turn to Israel, there are some strong similarities between it and the prevailing pattern of regional regimes.

[18]Ansari, *Iran, Islam and democracy.*

Citizenship is defined primarily through religious status, which in turn is determined by Rabbinic laws enshrined in the constitution. These laws also proscribe legal marriages, claims to citizenship, and, consequently, primary property and civic rights. This also directly explains the special additional privileges that attach to religious parties and the Ultra-Orthodox. Shas, a nominally religious party, has built up a formidable economic power base. Its former leader, Ari Deriya, is serving a term in prison for corruption. Around 900,000 of a population of six million are non-Jewish citizens who have, in theory, equal civil and political rights. But this mainly Palestinian and Arab population does not enjoy equality of opportunity in education, social provision, or employment. In some areas this prejudice also applies to Sephardi Jews.

On the other hand there are radical differences between Israel and all other regimes. Israel is an open society and a democracy, in which freedom of opinion is guaranteed by an electoral system, legislature and judiciary having independence from executive control. Minorities are politically organised and represented. Civil society in Israel is strongly secular. Compulsory military service is increasingly resisted. Relations with neighbouring countries are constantly debated. The Oslo Accords are passionately supported, or opposed. This trend has been reinforced by a large recent immigration of Jews from Russia and central Europe. A further element in the population is 'guest workers', allowed to work in Israel because of skill shortages. The official estimate is 300,000, but unofficial estimates are at least double. Formerly, many of these 'guest workers' were Palestinians from Gaza or the West Bank.[19]

[19]The former dependence of Israel's economy on Palestinian labour has been declining rapidly. Initially this was due to a combination of the first Palestinian *Intifada* and the mass exodus of Jews from Russia and other countries in the former Soviet bloc. But during the Oslo process restrictions on Palestinians remained. The rising demand for labour in Israel was met by importing workers from many parts of the world, including South and East Asia. Since the beginning of the second *Intifada*, these restrictions have been

The Palestinians, *en route* to statehood, are also different, and caught between these different types. Palestinian leadership of the PLO possesses features akin to the Revolutionary Council type of Arab regime. But Palestinian leadership under Israeli occupation, in Gaza and the West Bank, absorbed and imitated methods of democracy from the west, and indeed from the Israelis. Furthermore, Palestine has its own Diaspora; businessmen and intellectuals living abroad in exile, whose role will be important in the economic development of an independent state.[20]

Yet another regime that is (potentially) different to the Arab-Israeli polarity can be found in Lebanon. The long-standing Lebanese pattern is one of factions dominating the social structure, with 'confessionalism' prevailing in political institutions: Christians, Sunni and Shiia share representation in roles and in the bureaucracy. This formula gave rise to many difficulties, due to underlying demographic and economic changes, and to increasingly polarised responses to the burgeoning of Palestinian refugee camps and their politicisation following the June war of 1967. Civil war broke out in 1975. Since Israel's disastrous military intervention in 1982, Lebanon has been subjected to rule from Damascus. But Syrian domination has created long-term difficulties for the Syrian regime, and intractable difficulties within Lebanon. Under Asad, several limited experiments in returning autonomy to Lebanese

tightened much further. The consequences for the Palestinian economy and society have been dire. Amira Hass in *Drinking the sea at Gaza* has written vividly about this, and its political repercussions in Palestinian hatred and bitterness against Israel.

[20]Considerable efforts have gone into assisting the future development of Palestinian society: Macdonald, *The significance of civil society* and Tamari, *Governance, civil society and state building*. Yet the outlook for both internal stability and the 'peace process' seem quite bleak. Usher, *Dispatches from Palestine*; Hass, *Drinking the sea at Gaza*. Actual and potential divisions between the existing leadership of the Palestinians, Palestinian society and the *émigré* Palestinian *bourgeoisie* are such that The World Bank has chosen Arthur Andersen to attract business people back to Palestine: http://www.aapepp.com/.

political institutions were frustrated, in part because of the occupation of southern Lebanon by Israel. With the withdrawal of Israel and the death of Asad, elections in Lebanon in September 2000 unexpectedly returned the billionaire Lebanese politician Rafiq Hariri to power, and brought the defeat of Syria's proxy government led by Salim Hoss.[21]

The table provides a 'baseline' statistical profile of what is being termed 'regimes'; that is, states and societies in association.

It shows that in absolute terms Turkey has the largest GDP, but that in GDP *per capita* Israel is far ahead of any other country. For all Israel's momentum of economic development, however, its society is dwarfed, and increasingly being left behind, by demographic growth. This is not seriously challenged by recent large-scale immigration to Israel, though that factor has considerable political significance. Some comparatively un-developed Arab regimes enjoy great wealth, notably Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE. Other Middle East regimes, notably Turkey, Iran and Egypt, enjoy formidable military strength. It is crucial to note that none of these three societies is fully 'Arab', and that in the case of Iran there is intense religious rivalry. Iran and Iraq have large debt burdens due to war, though Iraq's position is clearly worse. Turkey has borrowed heavily to fund industrialisation. There is no accurate published data on the aggregate overseas investments of the region's regimes, but these far outweigh its debt burden, making the region an exporter of vast amounts of capital.[22]

The social geography of this interface between states and societies underpins all differences, ranging from the highly conservative traditionalism of Saudi Arabia, to the pulsating

[21]For instance see *Al-bawaba* 4 September 2000: http://www.albawaba.com/TheNews/htm/.
[22]The table shows a total external debt for the region in 1997 terms at around $345 bn. This may be an under-estimate. Even so, however, the region's total debt may be less than the accumulated overseas investments of just one OPEC country, Kuwait.

expectancy of Palestine. In all cases we find a gradual 'pluralisation' of societies and economies, which is exercising pressures for change and response on governing regimes. Many of these forces of change come from long-term structural changes in economies and demographic patterns, or from Globalisation and other trans-national influences.

Thus, when the focus is shifted to 'domestic' or internal features of state and society, the picture of two variants of authoritarianism on the Arab and Islamic side, with Israel and one or two partially democratised Middle East states on the other, gives way to a more variegated picture. This is also true if one examines Cyprus, or if one extends the analysis of Arab and Islamic states from the Mashraq to the Maghreb. But these extensions are beyond the geopolitical focus of this paper.

Chapter 7

Resources

The Middle East has undergone massive economic change since the Second World War. But development has been uneven, and in some respects distorted. There is a deep divide between countries that have major oil production, and those that do not. On the other hand, conflicts, especially between Israel and the Arab states, have contributed to a lack of integrated regional infrastructure, and to the trade-creating and trade-diverting effects of customs' barriers, embargos, and privileged trade and technology flows, including flows of foreign aid.

Within these parametric conditions, the region remains heavily reliant on agriculture as its chief employment-generating activity. There is a gulf separating Sudan, where over 80% of the active population is engaged in agriculture, and Israel, where 4% is the comparative number. Even in economies where industry and/or services have grown rapidly, typically 30–50% of the workforce is in agriculture. In turn this means that agricultural exports remain an important source of foreign exchange earnings. For a few countries, notably Sudan, Palestine and Syria, agriculture remains the most important contributor to GDP. For another ten countries, however, the proportion is under ten per cent of GDP. Iran and Egypt, large and important economies, generate around 20–30% of GDP from agriculture or food processing. Nonetheless, this picture indicates a

'westernising' pattern of development, in which agriculture is giving way to industry and the services sector.[23]

Aside from oil extraction and its associated pipelines, the heavy industrial structure of the region is concentrated in a few countries: Israel, Turkey, Iran, Egypt and Iraq. Typically, these concentrations are located close to sea outlets and/or large rivers. The main activities include petrochemicals, power generation, shipbuilding, machine building, cement, and transportation. The Gulf and Saudi Arabia have much smaller concentrations of such activities. Vast stretches of the geographical core of the region have no major industries.

Light industry is more widespread, and is heavily oriented to textiles: carpet making, weaving. Mining or mineral extraction is important in some countries, including Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. All of these countries have important mineral deposits, in some cases heavily exploited though in others not, ranging from chromium and zinc to salt, coal and gold. Desalination of water, and its association with new agricultural technologies and food processing, is important in Israel, Saudi Arabia and parts of the Gulf.

While numerous countries have taken ownership over the industrial extraction and transportation of oil and gas, and some have built up large 'downstream' petrochemical complexes, most of the region's oil and gas is transported directly overseas for refining. Hence, port facilities are crucial along the Arab and Persian Gulfs, and along the Mediterranean littoral. Many of the more recently exploited reserves of gas and oil are located offshore, in the Gulf or the Mediterranean, though these fields tend to be smaller than the super-giant onshore fields in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq and Iran.[24]

General industrial development in Iran and Iraq has been heavily constrained by war and sanctions. If once these constraints are fully lifted, vast industrial reconstruction projects

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[23] Anderson, *The Middle East*, pp. 166-82.
[24] Ibid., pp. 82-9, 182-93.

will get underway. The main beneficiaries of such projects, many of which are in a planning or project development phase, include Russia and China. These two countries, together with France, are most heavily engaged in support of nuclear engineering in the region.

Tourism provides a kind of industrial overlap with the evolving services sector of the Middle East regional economy. Most countries have developed a national (or sub-regional) airline. In association with the ultra-modern office and road complexes of the most developed parts of the region, this provides a series of business and tourism 'hubs'. That said, only Israel, Turkey, Cyprus, Egypt, Lebanon and Dubai have made consistent efforts to develop the potential of tourism. In some cases, notably Lebanon, Israel and Egypt, these efforts have been limited or destroyed by violence. In other countries, such as Jordan, lack of infrastructure is the main impediment. Yet others, however, including Iran and Saudi Arabia, restrict or discourage tourism. In Iraq, Iran and Libya, sanctions imposed by the US or UN have also impacted tourism development. As Lebanon recovers from civil war, and searches for renewed independence, it may challenge the Gulf states, particularly Bahrain and Dubai, as the regional hub for business services.

The region's vast potential for developing tourism, and more generally the services sector of its economies, relies ultimately on the attainment of political stability and social openness. But there are also economic blockages in the way. Two of these are lack of water resources and lack of commercial infrastructure.

Agriculture accounts for an estimated 70% of water usage. Yet much of the region is water deficient for agricultural development. At the same time, urbanisation, which is occurring rapidly in many countries, exponentially increases the demand for water. Population in the region is also rapidly increasing. On top of this, any large-scale increase in 'temporary' populations, such as tourism brings, would multiply demand further. This problem can be diminished by the construction of aquifers,

exploiting deep underground sources, desalination projects, recycling waste water, conservation schemes, price and/or priority allocations, and by importing water to the region. But all of the foregoing methods are limited in scope because of underlying technology and running costs, or water security issues.

Hence, all other measures aside, there is no peaceful alternative to riparian countries entering into comprehensive, long term, collaboration. This applies to all of the three major river systems in the region: the Nile, Tigris/Euphrates, and Jordan. These are shown on the maps.

Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia share the Nile. Ethiopia controls the most important headwaters, but Egypt is both the main user and the most powerful of the three states. The Tigris/Euphrates is controlled by Turkey, and shared by Syria and Iraq. Turkey is completing a vast dam project, which will resource its future industrial and agricultural development. Syria and Iraq have exhibited insecurities over this, but are in no position to act effectively. The Jordan system is both the smallest in the region, and the one involving the largest number of riparian states: Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan and Palestine.

The politics of this is central to the Oslo peace process, and to relations between Israel and Syria. Adding industrial and demographic growth to the inherent limits of the system itself means that 'hydropolitics' have become a specific and probably permanent type of geopolitics in this part of the region. Hydropolitics might be crucial to future peace or war, and has been a sub-theme of Israel's occupation strategies on the West Bank and Golan, and in Lebanon.[25]

Geographical features also necessitate trans-national collaboration in commercial infrastructure development for most countries in the region. For example, Turkey's excess supply position with water is partly offset by its requirement for imported oil products. All countries except Israel have a relative

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[25]Ibid., pp. 72-82, 286-96; Latter (ed.), *The Middle East*, p. 7.

deficiency in electricity generation, and can gain from a shared transmission network. The tourist potential of the Jordan Valley, Syria, Palestine and Egypt can only be tapped effectively if there is a regional road/rail network that links Egypt, Gaza, Palestine, Jordan and Israel. The rationale for water sharing has already been addressed. In turn, these types of collaboration would alter the cost/benefit calculus of desalination projects.

Infrastructure development requires capitalisation and technological expertise. Middle East countries have massive accumulated overseas investments, but also tend to run current account deficits. Rather than repatriating those overseas holdings, the most favoured methods of financing commercial infrastructure development would entail FDI in commercially attractive projects, underpinned in high priority cases by World Bank or IMF loans and guarantees. This in turn entails an infrastructure of commercial financial markets, banks and project services' groups, such as specialist contractors, engineers and surveyors.

Here, separately and beyond the Arab-Israeli peace process, turns the key geopolitical issue of whether, and if so on what terms, regional regimes and societies will accept 'alien' measures of governance. The demand for these has been expressed as follows:

> Effective and honest public sector institutions; legal, fiscal and economic arrangements which are conducive to encouraging FDI; open, fair and accountable government; the functioning of open media; the provision of effective education, health care and other public services.[26]

Furthermore, within the daunting set of requirements generated by 'Globalisation' comes the particularly difficult issue of Israel's comparative advantages. These include absolute advantages in such areas as large-scale engineering,

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[26]Latter, *The Middle East*, p. 3.

construction, power generation and commercial banking; and relative advantages in such areas as skilled labour. Unavoidably no Arab or Islamic regime is willing to make peace with Israel over the occupied territories and Palestine, only to see Israelis capturing the commanding heights of a new regional economy.

The Middle East provides the largest supply of oil to world markets, and possesses the largest reserves of natural gas, which is increasingly important as an export. Its reserves of both are crucial to the world economy, particularly to western Europe, Japan and East Asia. That said, in 1997–98 eight OPEC countries in the Middle East and North Africa (including Algeria) produced somewhat less than 30% of world oil production and under 10% of natural gas production. This compares with their sovereign title to 66% of proven reserves of oil and about 35% of proven reserves of gas.[27]

Control over such high proportions of strategically vital raw materials has given oil-rich Middle East states a vast stake in the assets and financial markets of the developed world. For instance Abu Dhabi, leader of the UAE, has estimated investments of $350 billion, and oil reserves amounting to about 4% of proven world totals. Although it is impossible to extrapolate with accuracy from one example, an order of magnitude correlation probably obtains. Saudi Arabia, with 28% of world reserves, might have overseas investments of some $2,500 billion. Such societies and their leaders have become rich beyond their own traditional expectations.

The obverse of this control and financial power is the industrial and financial vulnerability of the developed world economies. The US consumes around 25% of world oil production, and draws around 10% of total Middle East production. Japan and western Europe are still more dependent, drawing around 25% each of total exports from the region. The long-term outlook is that this dependency on the Middle East will increase, as reserves elsewhere are depleted more rapidly than reserves within the region.[28]

Of course financial power is not the same as control. The sequestration of Iranian assets by the US, and the imposition of a strangling UN sanctions regime on Iraq, demonstrate that the western powers are better able to eat their cake and still have it than are the technology and security dependent oil-producers. Since Iraq's failed attempt to annex Kuwait, intimidate Saudi Arabia, and resume its struggle with Iran, US and British military forces have been based in the region. Still, the balance between stability and instability remains critical, and is not ultimately a matter of military power. The October War of 1973, the Iranian revolution of 1979, and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 exemplify how unpredictably it can be upset.

The other side of the coin is that conflict and instability directly impact not only the supply but also the demand and hence the revenues derived from the trade in oil. Moreover, high oil prices such as those prevailing between the mid-1970s and mid-1980s brought about a pattern of spending within the region that was driven by government demand. For example, Saudi Arabia earns over 90% of its export revenues from oil, and this supports around 80% of government spending. When oil prices fell after the end of the Iran-Iraq war, and slumped during the 1990s following the Gulf War, the economies of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Gulf entered recession. Ironical as it might seem, the effect was unemployment. While the brunt of this recession fell on 'imported' labour, particularly Palestinians, the employment prospects and incomes of (younger) Saudis, Kuwaitis and others were severely diminished. Hence, even as the 'swing' producer within OPEC, committed to stabilising the global oil trade, Saudi Arabia (as other OPEC countries) has been running a cumulative balance of payments deficit. This has

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[27]Anderson, *The Middle East*, pp. 182-91.

[28]Ibid., pp. 284-8.

resulted in a sense of social and economic crisis within the Kingdom.[29]

An underlying cause of this propensity to economic and social crisis is that intra-regional trade in the Middle East lags sadly behind that of every other region in the world economy. Exports and imports beyond the region comprise 96% by value of the aggregate visible trade balance for all countries. Much of this external trade is in arms. Latest estimates suggest the region spent an aggregate $65bn on defence during 1998. This is tantamount to a geopolitical deformity. The region possesses a strong body, constituted by the value of its mono-economic oil resource. But its limbs, comprising the pattern of economic activities described above, are severely under-developed, except in military capability.

This brings us to a geopolitical paradox, which is liable to resist being solved for many years to come. The oil trade is, pre-eminently, *the* global industry. Yet it has obviated balanced regional development for most Arab and Islamic countries. This reinforces both traditional and revolutionary regime structures, which have been enabled to prosecute an interminable confrontation with Israel, and thereby resist the message carried by the creed of 'Globalization'.

Hence the geopolitics of the Middle East suggest that the more things change, the more they will tend to remain the same.

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[29]Yamani, *Changed identities*, pp. 15-22; Mai Yamani, 'Awakening' in *The World Today*, pp. 21-2; IISS, 'Saudi Arabia's royal council'. For an important more general account of the economic consequences of war and crisis in the region, see Mofid & Ehteshami, *The economic consequences of the Gulf war.*

Chapter 8

Weapons of mass destruction

Conflicts in the Middle East have long encouraged the spread and use of weapons of mass destruction. Israel acquired an operational nuclear capability in the 1960s, having been assisted to develop the necessary technologies first by France and then the US. Iraq came close to achieving an initial nuclear capability in the 1980s, and has also pursued, and used, chemical and biological warfare capabilities. Under UN sanctions for ten years these capabilities have been stringently limited, though the expertise to resume development has been retained. Iran is developing a range of operational missiles, and is presumed to be acquiring nuclear weapons. It has also used chemical weapons. Egypt has developed indigenous capabilities, but has not proceeded to operational deployments. Syria was assisted by the Soviet Union to acquire a number of missile systems, and is pursuing WMD options. Libya is a broadly similar case. Saudi Arabia has purchased Chinese missiles, and may have WMD warheads on its territory under the control of foreign technicians. Certain of the Gulf states have shown interest in acquiring warheads and delivery systems. Although not regional states by any of the usual geographical criteria, India and Pakistan have delivery systems that may soon reach into the region. The same is true in reverse for Israel and perhaps Iran. All five nuclear great powers – the US, Russia, Britain, France

and China – have systems that could be used in regional conflicts.

Until recently the perspective of the western powers stipulated that this situation was to be treated as 'abnormal', requiring containment through non-proliferation strategies and an elaborate edifice of treaties backed by general international law. It is therefore worth testing that approach against the 'real world' legal and constitutional position of strategic arms limitations and non-proliferation.

International agreements limiting nuclear weapons include START and the ABM Treaty. These were negotiated by the US and USSR. Russia has agreed to be bound as successor to the Soviet Union, and other countries formerly part of the USSR, including Kazakhstan and Ukraine, respect START provisions. Even so, progress in implementing START provisions has been slow. The ICBM of historical imagery is no longer the likeliest vehicle for the delivery of WMD. The 'War of the cities' during the Iran-Iraq war, and Saddam Hussein's use of 'Scud' missiles against Israel in 1991 – albeit with conventional warheads – demonstrated that short and medium-range SSM are far more likely to be used in anger. For that reason, the ABM Treaty is being undermined by the development of new technologies, and US programmes aimed at the deployment of NMD. The US, Russia, China, Israel and countries in the EU are all working on a variety of possible TMD systems, which if fully deployed would render the ABM Treaty null and void.

What then are the other legal constraints that limit proliferation of WMD?

In the field of nuclear non-proliferation the principal agreements are the NNPT (1970) and the CTBT (not yet in force). Signatory states of the NNPT – numbering 186 as of mid-1997 – promise not to develop nuclear weapons, and undertake to let their nuclear facilities be inspected by the IAEA. In exchange for this they are promised extensive technical

assistance with the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

The US Senate rejected ratification of CTBT in 1999, partly in view of nuclear testing by India and Pakistan during 1998, and extensive espionage by China reported to the Senate during 1999. This rejection signals a sea change in expectations about WMD limitation agreements, a loss of confidence in non-proliferation methodologies, and a willingness to bet on expensive and incompletely proven national technical means for strategic defence and missile-launch detection. In turn this seeming movement toward superpower unilateralism will encourage Russia, China, India, Iran and other countries to look to their own missile defence requirements.[30]

Chemical weapons are covered by the CWC (1997), which aims to eliminate all chemical weapons' stockpiles. The CWC has entered into force. Signatories – over 130 as of 1999 – commit themselves to an intrusive inspection regime overseen by the OPCW. Large stocks of chemical weapons are being destroyed, subject to OPCW inspection and verification, by the US, Russia, Britain etc. The US attached reservations to CWC verification of some 'dual use' facilities at the time of Senate ratification, and these are likely to be followed by other signatories.

Biological weapons are to be covered by a BTWC, which is still drafting a protocol for verification and confidence building. Existing prohibitions rest with the BWC (1972), negotiated at Geneva. There have been many developments in microbiological and chemical warfare technologies in the meantime. The existing convention is by now an empty shell, and lacks a verification regime.

The Missile Technology Control Regime is a club of countries committed to controlling proliferation of missile control

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[30]An online source for both the CTBT and the history of nuclear arms control can be found at:
http://www.clw.org/pub/clw/coalition/ctch4050.htm.

technologies. Specifically, it seeks to control technologies and production facilities that would enable the delivery of significant payloads over more than 300km. There are 32 signatories, including the US, Russia, Britain, France, Germany, Canada, Japan, Ukraine, Sweden, Switzerland and other countries with experience in developing guidance and control systems for missiles and aircraft. China, India and Israel are not signatories, but have undertaken to implement MTCR limitations.

Important transfers of restricted technologies have occurred between members, from members to non-signatories, and from countries promising to abide by the regime to others. Transfers alleged to be in breach of MTCR include: France and UAE; Ukraine and China; Russia and China, Iraq, and Iran; China and Pakistan and Iran. North Korea, which is not a member of the group, has allegedly transferred technologies to Egypt, Pakistan, Iran, Syria and Vietnam. In the Middle East and South Asia, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, UAE, Iran, Pakistan and India have all been involved in trade in MTCR restricted technologies. Israel is currently in dispute with the US over the proposed transfer to China of air-to-air phased array radar technology.

All of that said, the international regime of non-proliferation agreements has proved both susceptible to circumvention, and beyond enforcement. At least 35 countries aside from the great powers have short-range SSM systems. Ten countries have acquired systems with ranges over 1,000 km, though not all have moved to, or retained, operational capability. In the Middle East two countries best demonstrate the problematic this presents.[31]

Israel has refused to sign the NNPT, CTBT or MTCR, and in exchange for understandings not to 'advertise' its deterrent, has not been pressed by the US or other western powers to submit to international controls. This Israeli 'exceptionalism' has proved a continual goad to the Arab states. It is too late for the US to reverse Israel's nuclear and WMD developments. But it is

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[31]IISS, *The military balance 1999-1998*, pp. 285-92.

increasingly incredible to leave Israel outside arrangements it will not voluntarily join, without acknowledging the precedent this establishes.

Iraq is a signatory of the NNPT, yet circumvented IAEA safeguards (as have several other signatory states) so as to divert nuclear materials into its clandestine weapons' programme. Iraq signed the BWC, but never ratified the agreement. Iraq also subscribed to the 1989 Paris Declaration reaffirming the validity of the Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use of CBW. None the less, it used chemical weapons during its war with Iran, and against internal Kurdish rebellions. These violations have been condemned by UNHCR and world opinion. Until 1995 Iraq denied having developed biological weapons. But following the testimony of a number of defectors, it admitted having a well-established biological weapons programme. Since that time biological as much or more than nuclear issues have been at the heart of Iraq's disputes with the international community over the lifting of sanctions.

What then of law and sanctions as instruments of response against states that violate international agreements?

All of the treaties, conventions and regimes referred to earlier are subtended to the UN Charter, the Laws of War, humanitarian law and Human Rights law; substantial bodies of law which constitute strong moral and political prohibitions against the use of WMD. Specifically, the Geneva Protocol (1925) prohibits the use in war of chemical or biological weapons, and UNGAR 32/84 (1977) declares the use of nuclear or other WMD illegal. The Genocide Convention (1948) constitutes another strong prohibition, which has been cited recently in conventional war as well as WMD conflicts. The development of international criminal law is providing for sanctions on those who violate humanitarian law and human rights.

During its war with Iran, UN sanctions were applied against both countries. Sanctions covered Iraqi imports of certain types

of weapons and parts, but were applied asymmetrically (*i.e.* they were aimed only at Iran). Thus, countries applying sanctions disseminated sensitive technologies to Iraq. Many new conventional military capabilities and facilities were built up in Iraq by this route. Geoff Simons writes:

> It was the US, Britain, France, the Soviet Union and other states that helped Saddam Hussein to build up his military capacity. Through the 1980s [these countries] showed no concern for persecuted Iraqi minorities or about Iraq's protracted aggression against Iran. On the contrary [these countries] actively aided Saddam [...] by providing weapons, technologies, financial credits, intelligence, and in some cases direct military support. By early 1990, with substantial western [and Russian] assistance, Iraq had moved a long way towards acquiring nuclear weapons; and what was true in the nuclear field was also true in other areas of weapons technology [...] Today the West, keen to denounce all Saddam's perfidies, shrugs off any responsibilities for shaping the events that led to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Does no guilt attach to the man who hands a loaded gun to a known psychopath? The west, having helped Saddam to build up a substantial part of his military capability, then resolved to destroy it.[32]

Following the end of the war with Iran, Iraq was free of any restrictions inhibiting its WMD programmes. It was also freed to export oil, and reclaim credit from neighbours like Kuwait, which had benefited from *seigneurage* in Iraq's oil and financial assets during the war.

When Iraq invaded and sought to annex Kuwait in August 1990, it was subjected to comprehensive new UN sanctions, and to US-led coalition military pressure. Following the Gulf War, an even wider regime of UN sanctions was instituted through UNSCOM, now specifically related to divesting its WMD

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[32]Simons, *The scourging of Iraq*, pp. 75-6. See also Simons, *Primus inter pariahs.*

development programmes, and to preventing its oil wealth from being used to finance their restoration.[33]

The Sanctions Committee at UN Headquarters from 1991 found itself dealing with sanctions on Iraq, former Yugoslavia, and later North Korea. Initially an unexpected child of 'new world order' enthusiasm by the US and USSR, it continued to evolve through disappointment, once it had become clear that the end of the Cold War meant 'a new world disorder'. Even so, for as long as Russia remained weak and China had not yet established secure nuclear deterrence against the US, sanctions continued to be an instrumentality of considerable vigour and effectiveness within the UN system. However, as Russia's alienation from the west grew, culminating in Yeltsin's threats against NATO during the Kosovo war of 1999, and China's boldness in opposing western aims in the Middle East and elsewhere increased, the dynamism of the sanctions regime declined rapidly.

Even at the outset, there was considerable concern that divesting Iraq of its WMD capabilities by comprehensive sanctions would impose an undue humanitarian burden on the Iraqi people. Out of that concern grew a distinction between economic sanctions, which were to be total across the range of trade and financial instruments; and humanitarian exemptions to sanctions, which supposedly confer exemption on everything needed to sustain a reasonable level of living for the population. This eventually led to the establishment of the 'oil for food' regime, in which a quantity of revenue from permitted oil sales is placed in a UN-controlled escrow account and then, under supervision, expended to purchase necessary medicines and foodstuffs.

Problems with this mechanism include the following:

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[33]Macdonald, 'Weapons of mass destruction' in Brady & Hilton (eds) *Sanctions on Iraq*, pp. 100-7; Steinberg, *Report on arms control and non-proliferation developments in the Middle East, 1998,* Pt. 1; Partrick, *Weapons of mass destruction and the threat to the Gulf.*

- What constitutes a 'humanitarian' necessity is essentially defined by the US through the sanctions committee, and has been defined so restrictively as to cause rather than cure a humanitarian disaster.
- The revenues raised from permitted oil sales also go towards covering the costs of UNSCOM and the sanctions regime, so that only a fraction of the revenue raised is applied to relief that actually gets to Iraqis.
- The competent authority for distributing humanitarian assistance is the government of Iraq, which increases the dependence of the people on the regime.

Since 1995 France and Russia have made clear their resistance to new sanctions or military strategies against Iraq. While not directly confronting the US and Britain over their interpretations of what actions may be undertaken under the scope of UNSCR, this in effect gradually crippled the UNSCOM regime. France and Russia also lobbied for an easing of sanctions. Together, Russia and France are owed some $30 billion for contracted arms deliveries and technical assistance provided to Iraq prior to the imposition of sanctions.

China has also often dissented from US policies on Iraq, and has taken advantage from doing so. For a number of years it treated Iraq as 'a problem for the western powers', and abstained rather than using its veto power in the Security Council. But following the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade during the course of the Kosovo conflict (1999), the Chinese became considerably more reluctant to acquiesce in western policies over Iraq. Both China and Russia have resumed co-operation with Iraq in various spheres of military-security activity, including air defence systems and SSM missile technology.

As it became clear that the destruction of its nuclear and chemical warfare programmes were not going to lead to a lifting of sanctions, or even to their substantive easing, Iraq's

relationship with the UN, UNSCOM, the US and Britain became steadily more confrontational. Following intensive air action in December 1998 by the US and Britain, intended to coerce compliance with UNSCOM demands, Iraq ordered UN Inspectors out of the country. Subsequently, it refused to co-operate with a new inspection regime, UNMOVIC, established by the Security Council in 1999. However, Iraq allowed an IAEA inspection of its main nuclear power reactor in 2000.

The struggle between Iraq's claims to sovereign independence in the face of an intrusive counter-WMD regime, and the UN's claims that it acts with legal authority, turns upon whether or not some new consensus can be generated among the P-5. This seems unlikely, which means a confrontation between Iraq and its surreptitious backers, and the US and Britain. Even in those two countries, enthusiasm for prosecuting Saddam is waning, though sensitivity to the needs of Kuwait remains high. The strongest card on the side of the *status quo* is that the Sanctions Committee occupies the legal and moral high ground, and the US and Britain can veto any move to legally revise sanctions. Yet this is an eroding asset. Opinion in both Islamic and western countries has swung behind the view that UN sanctions are 'immoral'. In any case, some Arab countries have openly resumed communication links with Iraq.[34]

This extensive examination of the Iraqi sanctions case allows considerably wider generalisations. The NNPT, MTCR and related non-proliferation architecture remain important to the *status quo*. But this treaty-based regime has been undermined by:

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[34]Resumed US-UK air action against Iraq in mid-February 2001 appears to be explained by the collapse of the UN sanctions regime. As Iran continues to emerge as a regional great power, backed by Rusia and China, the western powers must now make their peace with Saddam. He, in turn, is already co-operating with Syria against Israel. This necessary *rapprochement* appears now so urgent and difficult that it must be 'a rough wooing'.

- Diffusion of technologies and 'embodied human capital'.
- Emergence of new centres of power.
- Widespread treaty violations.
- Inter-regional features of proliferation.

Richard Butler, former head of UNSCOM Inspectors in Iraq, contends that WMD spread is the greatest threat to international stability.[35]

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[35]Butler, *The greatest threat.*

Chapter 9

'Peace'

We are now better placed to see what turns on the Middle East peace process, and why it has been pursued with sedulity. In what follows we shall also better understand why the process cannot lead to the 'final' resolution of any conflict in the region.

Both Israel and Palestine rejected possible outcomes of the Camp David talks in July 2000. The Palestinian people and Arab allies of the Palestinian cause endorsed this on grounds of principle. Israeli opinion accepted 'failure' as a realistic alternative to uncertainty about the consequences of agreement. Once again the dichotomy between ideals and realities seemed to prevail. Given that this was predictable in advance, what motivated the US and its allies to try for a final peace settlement?

'Final status' talks were required by the Oslo agreements to commence within five years. Arguments around the issues that would be involved were privately intense for years, ahead of anything appearing in the public agendas of the two sides. Under Oslo II (1995) territorial exchange and security were to be substantially agreed before the final stage. Within the final stage, until everything was agreed, nothing was agreed. Acrimony and procrastination over territory and security meant that formal final status negotiations on Jerusalem, refugees, water, security, and a final demarcation of boundaries, fell behind schedule.

For many supporters of the Likud government of Binyamin Netanyahu (1996–99), each square inch of territory given over to Palestinian control was like cutting away an ounce of flesh. As a pragmatist, Netanyahu was never able to break with Oslo, though powerful elements in his coalition urged him to do so. Rather, he strove to take added benefits from both the US and the Palestinians for reluctant compliance. This frustrated the peace movement and much of secular society in Israel, while at the same time key supporters in the Knesset and in his Cabinet withdrew at each fresh cut of the knife. Pressure on the handle of the knife was exercised continuously by the US and the EU.

Arafat's position was not necessarily more comfortable. The Oslo Accords, and the Madrid multilateral and Washington bilateral conferences that preceded these, were condemned out of hand by Iran, Syria, and PLO 'hardline' groups. The formation of Hamas from a Muslim Brotherhood rejectionist group symbolised disquiet among traditional Arab regimes. At the same time the PLO leadership, returning to Palestine from exile in Cairo and Lebanon and Tunis, faced new challenges within the Palestinian Council, and from existing Palestinian civil society organisations. This admixture of guerrilla leaders and civil society groups proved unstable.

The election of Barak in May 1999 made possible a rapid transformation of the situation on both sides. Whereas Netanyahu had been dragged down by his ties to land, Barak was a Special Forces General who knew that another *Intifada* would be catastrophic for Israel, and that the situation in South Lebanon was unviable. As leader of One Israel he pitched for a position of progressive Realism. In his election perspective, Israel's long-term interests lay with negotiated security. At the same time, he stated that any terror occurring in Israel would meet with massive retaliation. The scale of his victory surprised many. Barak quickly visited the new King of Jordan, Abdullah, and after a pause met Arafat, and soon afterwards Mubarak.

The fourteen months of diplomatic activity that followed elections in Israel served more to reveal the nature of impediments to co-existence than the scope of a comprehensive agreement. Admittedly, Barak was pre-occupied for much of that period with Syria. And Arafat continued to be preoccupied with his authority and his health, giving no clear preference to any contender for power. Still, what began to crystallise itself was how impossible it would be for Jews and Palestinians living in close propinquity *not* to be interdependent; and how far this situation was already *beyond* being subjected to 'final' agreement. In effect, an agreement negotiated by governments would be vulnerable to rejection; by Palestinians 'from the street'; by Israelis through opposition in the Knesset.

As President Bill Clinton's second administration drew to a close, the summer of 2000 afforded a last opportunity for his principal negotiators to get the shape of a final settlement on record. Given their considerable accumulated experience, this was sufficient justification for holding the Camp David negotiations.

At Camp David II, this emerged as 'Barak's offer':

- Recognition *de jure* of a Palestinian state. This entails legal recognition of a territory, a people, a government, a capital, and a capacity to conduct external relations, including membership of international institutions such as the UN.
- 'Significant, meaningful, real, elements of sovereignty' within (East) Jerusalem. This would include control over Muslim Holy Places, other religious and cultural sites, entry and access points to the West Bank, and the ceding of legal sovereignty over certain districts that would then become the location of (some) Palestinian government administrative offices.
- Withdrawal from the entirety of the 'Gaza strip'.
- Withdrawal from around 92% of the West Bank territories.

- Legal recognition of a Palestinian 'sovereign' overland transit route between Gaza and the West Bank.
- Water sharing, including Palestinian sovereign control over aquifers in the Jordan River valley.
- A negotiated, mutual trade regime.
- Renewed access to the labour market in Israel for Palestinian workers.
- Palestinian control of Customs, immigration and residence, subject to international monitoring.
- Israel's acceptance of a 'Right of return' for Palestinians who left their homes in 1948, which would *not* be transferred to relatives and descendants. Compensation would be offered to survivors who choose not to return.
- Israel's acceptance of a 'Right of return' for Palestinians who left their homes in 1967.
- Israel's acceptance of, and participation in, a joint (international) plan to provide statehood and permanent residence for the Palestinian refugee population supported on the West Bank by UNRRA.
- Formal acceptance that further demands – in limited and mutually agreed areas – may be exercised by a Palestinian state following the determination of 'final status' with respect to such issues as control within Jerusalem, return and compensation for refugees, control over water and other resources, settlements, and boundary disputes.[36]

That extensive offer went beyond what any previous Israeli government had been willing to concede. It reflected pressure by allies, from within society, and Jewish views from the Diaspora. But it is also measured how far Israelis felt able to exchange *existential* insecurity for negotiated security. In a long-term

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[36]The shape of the 'package', the reservations Israel sought to attach to it, and the sense of diplomatic manipulation with which both sides approached the negotiation, are reflected in the commentaries of the Israel-Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI): http://www.ipcri.org/htm.

perspective, that implied two things: firstly, that Palestinian society and its leadership were expected to develop peacefully and in alignment with the west; and, secondly, that peace with Palestine would permit Israel to evolve strong new ties with at least some regional neighbours. In turn, this search for roots within the region reflected the slowly declining strength of strategic intimacy between the US and Israel.

Democratic administrations in Washington from the 1970s on pushed actively for a resolution of conflict between Israel and the Arab world. Republican administrations since the 1980s, with the disastrous exception of encouragement for the invasion of Lebanon in 1982 by Secretary of State Al Haig, also restricted substantive US support to Israel. All US governments after 1973 actively courted the wealthiest and strongest Islamic countries in the region. Hence Clinton's push for a final status agreement carried with it the weight of US strategy over the 'long haul'. Less spectacularly but more persistently, the EU, excepting Britain, tilted in favour of the Palestinian cause. Furthermore, from the beginning of the *Intifada* in 1987 American public opinion began shifting away from the reflexive support for Israel that had been characteristic of the 1960s and 1970s. And much 'mainstream' Jewish opinion in North America, Britain and elsewhere sided with arguments for a 'just' settlement with the Palestinians, and negotiated peace with neighbouring states.[37]

Even so, what Barak tabled at Camp David was by no means the whole loaf of Palestinian statehood and self-determination. Key 'reserve powers and limitations' were asserted by Israel. These included:

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[37]Heller, *Continuity and change in Israeli security policy.* The on-line journal MERIA (Middle East Review of International Affairs) is the best source for up-to-date commentary on Israel-US relations in an Israeli perspective. See: Rubin *External factors in Israel's 1999 elections* (3#4, December 1999); http://meria.biu.ac.il/.

- Recognition *de jure*, in irrevocable terms, of the state of Israel within the boundaries and other terms negotiated by a Treaty.
- 'Land exchange': 8% of the West Bank would be annexed to Israel, and an equivalent territory would be ceded from the northern Negev, which would probably attach to, and therefore enlarge, Gaza. This exchange would codify certain Israeli settlements on the West Bank as parts of Israel; and provide key military transit routes to Palestine's frontiers with Jordan and Syria. In exchange, overpopulated Gaza would find 'living room' for an (agricultural) hinterland.
- Substantive demilitarisation of the state of Palestine. This should include not only the renunciation of certain types of armaments (*e.g.* fighter and bomber aircraft and heavy tanks), but also the explicit renunciation of terror, and of permission for any terror organisations of a third power to operate in Palestine.
- Renunciation of operational control of air space over the West Bank and Gaza.
- Acceptance of the permanent, extra-territorial, military presence of Israel Defence Forces along the Jordan River Valley.
- A self-denying ordnance on Palestine foreswearing military pacts or alliances with third countries, except insofar as these might be part of mutually agreed security arrangements.
- Abrogation of Palestinian sovereign claims to the Old City in East Jerusalem.
- Alienation of the Palestinian claim to a 'Right of return' to all Arab lands in historic Palestine, or in Israel.
- Renunciation of claims for compensation and restitution against the state of Israel, except as permitted under joint and international measures to resolve the status of refugees.[38]

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[38]http://www.passia.org/htm; http://www.ipcri/org/htm.

Plainly, this is far from the sovereignty and justice envisioned by radical Palestinian views. How far it would be compatible with self-determination was also contentious. As a proposed peace deal it clearly tilted the balance between state and civil society in Palestine in favour of a state that would be strong internally, but weak externally. These conditions seemed to many Palestinians gratuitously insulting. And, since Palestinian claims are to succeed Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria in exercising sovereignty over historic Palestine, a deal along the lines of 'Barak's offer' seemed like relinquishing a fundamental principle, namely the claim to *all* of that inheritance.

Despite these objections, many important changes have been wrought in Palestinian politics and society. In exile, the PLO and Fatah were dominated by refugees of the 'Naqba' (Catastrophe) of 1948. These leaders mostly had their roots in Jordan. The PLO relied largely on Arab support, and on training and facilities provided directly or indirectly by the Soviet bloc. Since 1993 the PLO has had to integrate the leadership of the Palestinian masses, who mainly originate in Gaza, and whose perspectives on Israel were shaped by the June War of 1967, and subsequent Israeli occupation policies. Furthermore, the PLO has become an ally of the US and EU, which provide most of the professional and technical support for the transition to statehood. In consequence, the PLO has developed a 'proto-state' structure, including an Authority that functions like the Executive branch of government; a Council that has legislative powers; administrative bodies overseeing the lives of some 2.5 million 'citizens'; and security functions that include the suppression of terrorism. Palestinian society still demands that its leaders 'resist the oppressors'. But today that means negotiating with Israelis, while persuading the people to retain their ideals.

These transformations are unlikely to be reversed, but remain incomplete. Hence it is important to look at groups contending for influence around Arafat's leadership.

Arafat 'loyalists' may comprise between two-thirds and three-quarters of Palestinian elites. Arafat patronises a much smaller absolute number of supporters, whose elevation and reward depend primarily on service to the PLO. But he retains widespread support through this patronage. Most jobs in the new Palestinian administrative infrastructure are funded by the US and EU, including the PA, PLC, and most government agencies. The livelihood and careers of thousands of key professionals turn on transforming the PLO and its leadership. This base therefore allows Arafat to maintain authority when challenged. In turn, prospective successors, including Deputies, Ministers, Mayors, and Party Organisers, can maximise credit and minimise blame for their own activities by claiming the exigencies of transformation.[39]

A second source of legitimacy is that Arafat has not sought to suppress critical comment or even dissent among supporters. Palestinian society is comparatively open. A 'loyal but critical' opposition to Arafat's leadership has developed. Faruq Qaddumi and an important group of Fatah and PLO 'outsiders' have refused to return to Palestine. Without rejecting the Oslo Accords outright, these figures adopted a 'wait and see' approach. Perhaps 20% of cadres within Palestinian society would support this group in a crisis of authority or succession in which Arafat was deemed to have 'failed'. Opposition is further strengthened by the PA ignoring resolutions of the PLC on occasions, and by the security apparatus using illegal methods of interrogation. Pessimists in Palestinian society suggest that power in the new Palestine is being concentrated unduly in the Executive branch, and that the legislature and courts count for little more than window-dressing. This analogy with a fully functioning democracy may be out of place, considering the importance of the Oslo process and the external duress under which the PA has been operating in the area of security. It also

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[39]Rubin, *The future of Palestinian politics: factions, frictions and functions*, pp. 3-5; Rubin, *The transformation of Palestinian politics*.

tends to ignore the palpable strength of 'grass roots' Palestinian opinion.

Hence at the time of Camp David there was a clear Palestinian consensus favouring peace with Israel, providing that the territory of the new state would be consolidated rather than fragmented; that it would cover virtually all the occupied territories; and that economic conditions would improve considerably.

But Fatah militants have a significant power base in Nablus and Ramallah. Marwan al-Barguti, Secretary of the West Bank Committee, is the most prominent figure. His actions first became significant in opposing restrictions on Palestinian organisations that were introduced by the Netanyahu government. Fatah 'insiders' have the capacity to organise protest against Arafat, and continuously do so. Until after the failure of Camp David, they had not acted against the PLO leadership when it 'laid down the law'.

PA security and intelligence forces have been loyal to Arafat, and have an interest in who succeeds him. Pressures from the US, EU, and Israel (including constraints on funding) have meant that the security apparatus must show it is efficient. As Palestinian society shifts towards democracy, the security apparatus cannot invoke 'traditional' authority. Means of repression found in other Arab countries have been curbed. Hence in some ways the security apparatus has been propelled into the political process. This was notable when many Hamas and other prisoners were released from detention following the outbreak of the second *Intifada*.[40]

Much of Arafat's nominal support remains ambivalent. Certain elements are treacherous, awaiting his fall, the failure of his health, or a crisis in relations with Israel. Within Palestinian society there are Social Democrats, Marxists, and Human Rights activists who aspire to a Palestinian state with a very different balance between it and civil society than anything

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[40]'The Palestinian authority and the CIA', *Strategic Comments*, 4#10.

Arafat would want. Their best hope is Abu Ala, who has sounded the most encouraging notes on future democracy.

Hamas is a movement with widespread influence but restricted power in Palestine. Arafat cannot extirpate Hamas. Its roots are to an extent home grown, reflecting tension between the parallel but different Palestinian experiences of violent opposition to Israel under direct Israeli rule, and resistance to Israel that was until recently based abroad. Yet Arafat cannot permit Hamas to become powerful enough to win a civil war. For Hamas to unleash civil war, or even a direct bid for power backed by force, would contradict Palestinian ideals of national unity. Nor does Hamas inherit the whole legacy of the *Intifada*. A former leader, Imad al-Faluji, is in the PA. Many Gaza resistance fighters have entered service with the new Palestinian structures, or become political doves. Inherent tensions between the rejection of Israel, the rejection of Oslo, and the rejection of a Palestinian state, have led previously militant followers in different directions. Sheik Ahmad Yassin, spiritual leader of Hamas, must therefore judge whether, and if so when, the movement will exchange bombs for ballot boxes.

This is what Arafat and al-Faluji have sought to induce; while Yassin, Arab sponsors of irreconcilable opposition to Israel, and elements of the Palestinian 'outsiders', have denied the realistic possibility of peace with the 'Zionist' enemy. Even this concept of a struggle between Hamas and Arafat's support base is too simple. Some Marxist PLO factions, notably PFLP and PDFLP, continue to reject the 'peace process' as a sham that benefits only the Palestinian 'power elite'. Overt support for this position clusters around Hayder Abd al-Shafi, a Gaza leader who resigned from the PLC because Arafat ignored a number of its resolutions.

A large Palestinian family might have members working in highly varied roles, some closely supporting, others opposing, the regime. Much privileged information may pass through such a channel. Add traditional Islamic values, a revolutionary

tradition, secretive methods of organising resistance, strong pre-existing factional and family ties, tensions between Christians and Fundamentalists, Gaza and West Bank, and secular and traditional approaches to such issues as the roles and rights of women. Then also add the susceptibility of Palestinian structures to influences coming from external sponsors. This admixture presents a difficult challenge to Arafat's modified authoritarian rule.

Palestinians as a people pride themselves on being able to resist, survive, and yet do things effectively, with style and honour. Palestinian society is inherently pluralistic on such important subjects as religion, nationalism, market *versus* traditional forces in an economic setting, and democracy. All of this is of immediate importance, as politics within Palestinian society has rather suddenly moved out of the shadows and into the world's gaze. But we must also take account of the massive deterioration of Palestinian living standards, which may have halved in real terms during the Oslo peace process. In this complex social context hope, resentment, fear and a will to 'vengeance', contend around four demands for justice for the Palestinian cause. These have provoked widespread violence, including some 350 Palestinian dead, since the failure of Camp David. The four key Palestinian demands are:

- East Jerusalem must be included in Palestine as its capital.
- Gaza and the West Bank belong unequivocally to a sovereign Palestine.
- Dispossessed Palestinians have a 'Right of return' to their former homes.
- Jewish settlements must be removed from occupied territories returned to Palestinian sovereignty.[41]

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[41]There is little sign that these demands have been altered during the course of the new *Intifada*. However, several rounds of abortive negotiations have been held between Israel and its chief interlocutors, the US, Egypt, the EU and the UN. UN reports suggest that Israel's economic blockade of the Palestinian Authority is on the verge of bankrupting Palestinian civil society

The key issue between Arafat's leadership and Palestinian society is whether these components of the demand for justice are absolute or negotiable. In turn, opposition to Arafat, and political support for him from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other countries, coalesces around what concessions he might propose to make. There is an added dilemma: to concentrate on the satisfaction of injustice may be to sacrifice concessions from Israel in areas of greater substance for a future Palestinian state. This is not a time when Palestinian society and its leaders can make easy or rapid decisions. A process of conscious social reflection, much of it bitter and violent, was to be expected. In an ugly way, Palestinian society can best vent its own frustrations by aiming at the symbolic enemy, Israel.

Arafat, for much of his life spiritual director of implacable resistance to the state of Israel, is due to become the father of a new nation-state. But to become the one, he must finally relinquish the other. Until now, this has been a process, a chrysalis that has seemed irreversible but also indeterminate. Its 'last stage' has nothing directly to do with the Oslo Agreements. It is about consolidating the domestic and external support to justify profoundly difficult compromises. Within a matter of weeks during 2000, from the frustration of Barak's diplomacy towards Syria, the need to do this sprang from the quiet recesses to the floodlit centre stage of diplomacy. Nor was doing it a matter of western-style 'decision-making'. Rather, Arafat had to bring the news, both good and bad, to his lieutenants, his people, and his allies. He then had to compose himself for the 'end game' of negotiation. Only after that could he declare a settlement to be the solemn and sanctified will of the Palestinian people and the Arab world.

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and state institutions. At the same time, the character of violence is changing: Hamas and Hizbollah are making efforts to attack Israel at vulnerable points, close to South Lebanon and inside Israel. Whereas Palestinian demands have not changed, Israel's willingness to negotiate on Jerusalem and settlements has almost certainly diminished.

A peace agreement with Israel might have emerged from this confluence of ideas and dramatic action. But with a US presidential election in mid-November 2000, and mounting evidence of instability in the domestic political process in Israel, there were no strong incentives for Palestinian concessions on key principles. Instead, Arafat allowed his militants to exert force against Israeli settlements and the IDF in Palestinian areas.

For Israel this sudden eruption of a new *Intifada*, however predictable, came as a considerable shock. Its immediate consequences were to undermine the peace movement, destroy Barak's prospects of re-election, highlight the importance of the US presidential election, and bring into question the pivotal role of the relationship between the US and Israel.

According to Jonathan Rynhold:

> Moving from right to left on the Israeli political spectrum, there are four identifiable approaches to relations with the US Executive regarding the peace process: Ultra-nationalism, Conservatism, Realism, and Progressivism. These approaches are distinguishable by their [...] attitudes towards [...] the relative value of maintaining control over the territory captured by Israel in the Six Day War, and the relative value of the [US] as a factor in Israeli security.[42]

Ultra-nationalism is rooted to the idea that the modern state of Israel *ought to* seek Eretz Israel, the biblical land. This idea is often conflated with 'Zionism', particularly in Islamic and Christian criticisms of Israeli politics; but it is ideologically, and theologically, quite different.

The political ascendancy of Ultra-nationalism arrived with the Likud governments of Prime Ministers Begin and Shamir in the period following the October War of 1973. Subsequently, Ultra-nationalism lost its domestic ideological base. In 2000, less than five per cent of Israelis would have supported war with the

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[42]Rynhold, 'Israeli-American relations and the peace process', MERIA 4#2, June 2000); http://meria.biu.ac.il/.

Palestinians. In foreign policy, Ultra-nationalism conceded too much to the US to claim that Israel could have an 'independent' position on any major regional security issue. However, the second *Intifada* of 2000 strongly revived the electoral appeal of a former ultra-nationalist leader, Ariel Sharon. Sharon became Prime Minister in February 2001 after an election campaign in which he gave little away about his strategy towards the Palestinians.

The Conservative approach has usually been associated with the 'pragmatic' wing of Likud: attached strongly to Eretz Israel, but conscious of the need to maintain a broad civic base, and, in foreign policy, of the need to balance aims and resources. Coercion by the US and EU over the holding of negotiations with the Palestinians increased during the 1990s. Netanyahu, Prime Minister between 1996 and 1999, procrastinated but eventually compromised with 'land for peace'. He sanctioned but postponed new West Bank settlements; agreed to return further territories to Palestinian control, but delayed at each juncture; and eventually lost the support of Ultra-nationalists, including his foreign Minister Sharon. It is likely, however, that Netanyahu will make a comeback, particularly if a Sharon government fails to make progress on security issues.

Realists are associated with a military-political view of Israel's options. Shaped by leading Generals who then entered politics, this tradition stems from secular Zionism, the settler movement, the War of Independence, and later wars. Since the October War of 1973, the military establishment in Israel has clearly understood the limited security to be derived from territorial conquest in an era of air power and high technology surveillance. For Israel that war was a triumph won due to extremely costly mobilisation, and heavy human sacrifice. Even so, the confrontational intervention of the Soviet Union sharply reminded the US not to let its regional client break the limits entailed in superpower *détente*. Arms control measures in Sinai and on the Golan, developed through American diplomacy,

were essential to post-war stabilisation, and to the achievement of peace with Egypt. The Israeli military establishment, represented by the Barak government, has shown little fear of a comprehensive settlement with the Palestinians, even one involving major concessions over Jerusalem. Its security perspectives are long-term and long-distance, preoccupied by Iraq, Iran, WMD issues, Hizbollah, and the scope for deterioration of Israel's regional security environment and relationship with the US and EU.

The Progressive approach to neighbours and security has been most clearly represented by Shimon Peres, who recently failed to win the Presidency, and by Shlomo Ben-Ami, Foreign Minister in Barak's coalition. For him, the situation following the Camp David talks was 'a moment of truth'. Progressives accord no significance to Eretz Israel in security policy. Bargaining for territory is not perceived as primary to conflict management. Neither is there a priority for security as understood in military-political terms. Rather, the principles of foreign policy *ought to be* the same as those of 'normal' civil society. International relations should be run on principles of justice, democracy and human rights. This approach has gained significance in foreign policy because of its strength in domestic society in Israel. Palestinians are not seen as enemies or adversaries, but as neighbours and prospective allies, with the same full range of rights Israelis possess. The implicit condition of this is reciprocity; that Palestinians *must* be able to understand and accept interdependence.[43]

Overall, there is a growth of longer perspectives on security in Israeli politics. But no one of these four main approaches is predominant. Ultra-nationalism is a minority position, whose electoral support is concentrated in Ultra Orthodox religious communities. But it has been revived, for the time being, by the renewed Palestinian *Intifada*. Progressivism is a popular approach, which exerts strong moral persuasion. But its

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[43]Sayigh, *Palestine's prospects*; Heller, *Israel's dilemmas*.

optimism does not run as strongly in most of Israel's elites, including the Knesset. The Ashkenazi elite that for long dominated security policy, and underpinned Realism, is being displaced by Sabras and Sephardis, whose views of democracy, Human Rights and coexistence with neighbours are distinctively 'Israeli'. Hence the middle ground in Israeli politics and foreign policy continues to be battled over by Conservative-Realists (*e.g.* Barak) and Realist-Conservatives (*eg.* Netanyahu).

Now perhaps we can arrive at a more substantive conclusion regarding 'Peace'. A Final Status agreement, even supposing that one can be reached, will not end the confrontation that exists between Israel and Palestine. At best, it will shift the terms of confrontation from a process of negotiation driven by the US and EU, towards one in which the two sides have a self-sustaining, overt, dialogue as nominal equals. Yet no Final Status agreement will reconcile irreconcilable aspirations on both sides; or make powerful Israel and weak Palestine true equals.

At Camp David Barak and Arafat still could not agree privately to agree publicly on the terms of an overall outcome. Hence it seemed necessary to agree publicly to disagree within a mutually accepted framework, Oslo, even if that meant undermining the framework itself. Rather than risk losing the substance of detailed private agreements already arrived at, because of the impossibility of agreeing publicly under the terms of a pre-designated timetable, both sides have allowed their differences to become ventilated in their home societies, and in the capitals of allies. The risk in this is that the 'moment of truth' may have arrived, and passed. The exhausted Oslo framework may have disintegrated before a Final Status agreement could be concluded. If that has occurred already, then *existential* will has asserted itself over *behaviouralist* hope.

The precarious possibility of such absolute conflict means that it may take time for Israel and Palestine to resume a substantive dialogue about coexistence.

Chapter 10

Inter-regional international relations

It is important before proceeding further to link together contentions that have already appeared concerning an imminent technological revolution and its possible political consequences:

- The deployment of a 'thin' NMD system by the US is probable, even if that is deemed by Russia and other countries to violate the ABM Treaty. Even so, and even if great power relations remain fundamentally stable, it is difficult to envisage Russia, China and other countries *not* following the US example. This implies a technology competition that will have effects throughout the international order.
- The most immediate and critical development from this technology competition might be the formation of a virtual alliance between Russia and China. One of the last foreign policy achievements of the Gorbachev regime was a settlement of long-standing Russian-Chinese territorial disputes, and restitution to China for much of the economic exploitation it suffered during a previous alliance, when Stalin and Krushchev promised but failed to deliver massive, rapid, industrial development.
- Today, it might not be too difficult for both countries, in light of their vulnerabilities and ambitions, to sink their

differences in a pact that would be *defensive* in terms of the global strategic balance, but *offensive* in terms of institutions and alignments in the international system.

- Should such a pact appear, central Asia, south Asia and the Middle East would become regions of vigorous opposition to western interests. The proliferation of missile technologies by Russia and China, already apparent, would be associated with other, radical, political or even religious ideologies, such as those that prevail in Afghanistan and Iran.
- There follow immediate ramifications for the place of TMD. This is currently being examined by Israel (in association with Turkey, Jordan and perhaps Egypt); and by EU countries (collaboratively and through NATO) as a possible response to regional WMD spread.
- The US is sponsoring a strategy of persuasive and determined consultation (CDI) with other countries as its NMD technologies mature.
- For countries that lack NMD or TMD options, new types of 'defensive strategy' will emerge. For instance, Iraq and Serbia have exchanged experiences of hiding, dispersal, using dummy targets, and 'duelling' with ground-to-air radar. 'Poor men's WMD defence' could be facilitated by Russia and China.
- As Iraq did in the past, these disaffected regimes may avail themselves of conditions of instability in adjacent countries and regions.
- The world wide activities of Osama Bin Laden build on this 'model'. In geopolitical terms, 'next door' to the Middle East is the vast region of Central Asian, which is experiencing under-development, instability, and near-anarchy.
- Such conditions are ideal for traditionalist and fundamentalist adversaries of the western dominated *status quo*.
- Guerrilla warfare, terrorism, brute financial muscle, and even religious orthodoxy might lead to the false perception

that entities of this kind possess little interest in the most advanced military technologies. The example of India under a Hindu nationalist government gives the lie to that serious error.

- Proliferation incentives may originate in threat-specific perceptions of insecurity (*e.g.* mutual fear between Israel-Syria, Israel-Iraq or Iran-Iraq,); yet the *recourse to proliferation* seems to involve a long-term search for self-reliant development with security.
- WMD proliferation may have become causally linked to failures in the Middle East peace process.

The conclusion we face is that the non-proliferation regime of the international system is inadequate to prevent or contain WMD spread across the Middle East. If it is to work more successfully, strategies of 'rehabilitation' must be attuned to *existential* rather than *behaviouralist* ascriptions of motivation.[44] This will not be straightforward because, according to the theoretical cleavage found within the earlier review of geopolitical discourse (p. 23), 'this polarity in epistemology is neither accidental nor avoidable'.

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[44]Walker, 'The imperative of nuclear ordering' in *International Affairs* 76#4, pp. 722-4; Wilkening, *Amending the ABM treaty*; Daalder *et al.*, *Deploying NMD: not whether but how*; Latter, *Reducing the dangers of CBW*.

Chapter 11

The structures of an international system

The British discovered several major lessons about power in the long century following the defeat of Napoleon. First, the creation of a self-transforming world economy based on economic interdependence and free trade entails the eventual relinquishing of hegemony. Second, a world order containing but one superpower can impose a hierarchy on international relations; but heavy security costs are incurred in maintaining a stable long-term equilibrium. Third, if 'hegemonic war' is perceived as non-rational by the dominant power, (as it certainly was by the British) then putative new superpowers, nascent new nations, and other actors seeking advantage through change, may nonetheless violently challenge the prevailing equilibrium. Finally, if war were to be limited, then persuasion and arbitration must be initiated with the aim of gaining the co-operation of all great powers in managing the international system. Tragically, war was not avoided, though Britain, Germany, Russia, France, Japan and the US had more interests in common than interests that were opposed.[45]

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[45]Gilpin, *War and change in world politics*; Kennedy, *The rise and fall of British naval mastery*; Kennedy, *The rise and fall of the great powers*; Strachan, *The first world war – I: To arms.*

This is not an argument that 'history must repeat itself'. Nor does it postulate the permanently operating laws of power politics, or the special dangers of totalitarian nationalism. It suggests, however, that international relations are not an arena of much vision. Instinct and opportunity predominate. The interests of states are supported collectively by large groupings under leaderships that may be wise or foolish. But whether wise or foolish, relations between governments are competitive. Liberal interdependence may have softened this by crystallising some common ideas into theoretical and institutional forms. But has competition among states yet become adequately *bound* by ethical rules or a superior system of law?

The project of 'One World at Peace' expresses the ideals of American foreign policy. This American ideology gained predominance through the catastrophe of a Second World War. The influence of the US appeared to propose that power in international relations should be effectively transposed from the realm of force into that of institutions and law. The UN Charter entered into force in 1945. The formal aim of 'One World at Peace' thus came to be shared by the victorious western powers; Middle East states including Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and in due course Israel, Jordan and others; by rehabilitated Japan and the two German states; and by a multitude of new states created after decolonisation and the end of the Cold War. Today, the UN numbers 191 member states. Within the UN system, war, conquest, territorial annexations and illicit proliferation or use of WMD have become illegal.

For a few brief months in 1990–91 almost all states coalesced against Iraq in favour of the Charter's central norms and resolutions. Yet global unity under US leadership proved evanescent. Chinese support in the UNSC was always at a price. France and Germany, sometimes with Russia, had alternative ideas about managing the crisis. The Arab states were unwilling to see Saddam totally defeated. There was ambivalence when he called for *Jihad* against a western coalition entering Arab

territories, and particularly when he launched SSM attacks on Israel, a spectator in the crisis. The saga of post-war sanctions has been outlined above.

Even so, a 'New World Order' was proclaimed. A decade on, a 'New Economics' is said to be annihilating scarcity, creating a new rationality around controlled market movements. Arguably, such a system makes it possible to buy security, to have NMD and TMD, to build defensive coalitions under CDI, and effectively to entrench the structures of a worldwide western security system. Beneath an over-arching astropolitics, underpinned by 'globalization', justified by 'One World at Peace', a benign new liberal hegemony could be instituted.

This perhaps answers to the first two 'lessons' of the British era: Military hegemony can be traded off in favour of dynamic technological superiority; and the productiveness of the global economy covers most of the costs of *both* security *and* development. But what then, in view of this optimistic *laisser faire*, about the requirements of managed systemic change, namely that in order to avoid war it is necessary to achieve the co-operation of all great powers?

A system must be greater than the sum of its parts, in the sense that:

- There is observable behaviour in a particular arrangement that can be described as 'systemic'.
- Systemic behaviour is rational *because* the system provides optimisation and/or reference.
- Order in a human system entails an equilibrium towards which the system will strive to return (*i.e.* parametric conditions constitute feedback loops to the core arrangement of parts).
- 'Systemic behaviour' recurs or endures and is open to testing.

Human systems are notably difficult to discern, owing to the variability of values and aims that inform conduct. But we may suggest that a system *cannot* be said to exist where orderly behaviour is less than dominant over the sum of its parts, or when such conduct does not endure sufficiently to be open to testing and/or validation.

The 'British School' of International Relations during the past century argued for the existence of an international system that may be described as a 'society of states', on the ground that states obligate themselves to pursue law and order. Hedley Bull, Alan James, James Mayall and Adam Roberts analyse the forces of nationalism; the role of international institutions; and the extension of law into criminal justice and humanitarian claims. Michael Howard and Philip Windsor influenced British strategic studies towards Clausewitz rather than Mahan.[46]

The 'North American school', exemplified by Morton Kaplan, David Easton, Thomas Schelling and Herman Kahn came to be dominated by strategic explanations of international conflict founded on behaviouralist 'rules of the game'. A 'loyal opposition' around Bernard Brodie kept Clausewitz alive; but in the spirit of Mahan's and Mackinder's geopolitics it came to be held that the 'rational actor' will not jeopardise interests that reside in the prevalence of the system, however despicable it may appear. For example, fundamental ideological differences will be subordinated to rules of conduct that flow from the predictable consequences of any intentional use of nuclear weapons.[47]

As the Cold War was modified by *detente*, behaviouralist theory faced a paradox. A true test of 'rules of the game' could

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[46]Bull, *The anarchical society*; James, *Peacekeeping in international relations*; Mayall, *Nationalism and international society*; Roberts, *United nations, divided world*; Howard, *The causes of wars and other essays*; Windsor, *Germany and the management of detente.*
[47]Easton, *An approach to the analysis of political systems*; Kahn, *On escalation*; Kaplan, *Systems and process in international politics*; Schelling, *The strategy of conflict*; Schelling *Arms and influence*; Brodie, *Strategy in the missile age.*

arise only *via* an abrogation of those 'fail safe' mechanisms that underpinned mutual vulnerability. It seemed technology might be doing that work anyhow, by creating novel 'first use' options for nuclear weapons, and by promising to remove mutual strategic vulnerability through strategic defence. The North American school thus became interested in normative theory, and a more sociological approach to international relations. A distinction was established between 'system' and 'structure'. An 'international system' that generated pointless or counterproductive rules of the game could not be a *human* system, but at best one in which its physics far outstripped its politics. According to Stanley Hoffman and Robert Jervis, for instance, a system in which politics manages physics must be capable of sustaining negotiated normative shifts, and of transcending the 'logic of images'. But just as it seemed both sets of powers laying claim to the future of history would be bound to arbitrating their fundamental differences, the Soviet-type societies collapsed altogether.[48]

In *The end of history*, Francis Fukuyama proclaimed the inexorable triumph of neo-liberalism. According to this anarcho-capitalist argument, world-wide competition to sell such things as microwave ovens would provide all the new norms needed to resolve conflicts among interdependent nations. The Gulf War, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the economic vicissitudes of the 1990s have mightily dented that optimism. In defence and security as well as in economics, regionalism appears as the rule of the day. Western unity and transatlantic collaboration are absent as presumptions in the face of challenges and threats to security; and need to be forged anew, at great cost, with every crisis. NATO, though unique, potent, and unchallenged, has shown itself poorly adapted to the requirements of coalition warfare or crisis management. NATO expansion covers but nineteen countries and under a tenth of

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[48]Hoffman, *International relations: the long road to theory*; Jervis, *The logic of images in international relations.*

the world's population. There is no coherent architecture for Globalisation. UN peacekeeping remains sadly deficient.[49]

Western societies and governments are in denial over these facts. Indeed a war in Kosovo was fought to deny them. Overt or covert counter-interventions, for example in Afghanistan or Chechnya, have become the west's commonplace reaction to conditions of conflict that cannot be directly confronted. The credo of 'Globalization' inverts the role of states and markets. All of this proceeds at heavy cost, directly in terms of the economic and military resources involved; indirectly in terms of the example and the lessons which are set before the silent eyes of aspiring regional or global powers. Global great power co-operation therefore seems a chimera. International relations continue to generate wars, conquests and territorial annexations; the proliferation of WMD; struggles between debt and development; clashes of religion and culture; the spread of nations and nationalism; and anarchistic forms of Globalisation.[50] An overall conclusion about the Middle East in the structures of the international system today suggests:

- The region will not be left free of external intervention so long as its resources are prized by powerful nations.
- Coercive intervention remains a norm of international politics.
- 'Globalization' makes such interventions more frequent and intense.
- 'Global governance' regularises interventions.
- The struggle between Israel and the Arab states over territory and statehood contains a deep antagonism between Judaism and Islam.

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[49]Fukuyama, *The end of history and the last man*; Thomas, *The military challenges of transatlantic coalitions.*

[50]Freedman, 'What happened to the balance of power?', pp. 9-12.; Murphy, 'Global governance: poorly done and poorly understood'; Tenet, *The worldwide threat in 2000: global realities of our national security.*

- Within Israel, the language of security is fundamentally sub-divided between irreconcilable religious and secular discourses over peace and stability.
- Turkey and Iran play crucial roles in relation to strategy and symbols in the regional struggle with Israel.
- Turkey has committed itself to a secular form of the state, and has strictly suppressed Islamic extremism, made peace and a security treaty with Israel, and developed its commerce. But Turkish society is infused with the forces of Islamic renewal.
- Iran remains balanced between more and less radical Islamic fundamentalism. Less radical forces have been gaining ground. But the revival of civil society, long frustrated by regime constraints and the costs of war and sanctions, does not mean that Iran will join the regional *status quo*.
- Russia and China are assiduously assisting Iran to modernise and develop major new military technologies.
- Arab and western states may be obliged to accept a resurgence of Iraqi capabilities, in preference to allowing Iran too much regional scope, while persevering with a morally bankrupt campaign of UN sanctions.
- Societies in the Arab states are led by traditional rulers or revolutionary regimes, for whom past defeats by Israel mean little set beside Islamic solidarity and a determination to redress the Palestinian 'Naqba'.
- Another war could easily bring the collapse of ruling regimes in Egypt, Jordan, perhaps even in Saudi Arabia. These regimes are presently unprepared for war. Yet state policy still plays an overarching, negative, role in relation to peace and war, *because* strong civil societies, hostile to Israel, are developing all over the Arab world.
- These civil societies are less attracted to Globalisation than to Islamic renewal, justice and the Palestinian cause.
- This results in greater pressure on the Palestinians, whose social, economic and political structures are literally torn

between the blandishments and pressures exerted by Israel, their lasting neighbour, and their brother Arabs in the wider region.

These aspects of regional instability suggest crucial faults with an international system built on liberal interdependence, *behaviouralist* geopolitics, and prevailing security and development policies. On a theoretical level these structures provide possibilities for creating a new kind of order and equilibrium. But the evidence suggests that in the absence of active new American-led initiatives – pan-regional, geopolitical, and capable of relating security and development to the *values* held by actors – a Clausewitzian logic will justify transcending *existential* rejection of the 'closed' system upheld by the western and Israeli 'other'.

Chapter 12

Conclusions

The 'new' Middle East is the product of cumulative change within a highly resistant geopolitical framework. Optimists wait for this change to qualitatively alter its own context. Pessimists contend this will 'never' happen. Both are mistaken.

There is a 'new' Middle East. Change has inexorably produced something quite other than the region of even ten years ago. Another major war between Israel and its Arab neighbours is most unlikely. A Palestinian state with substantive domestic sovereignty and the scope to make its own way forward is *de facto* recognised by the world. Civil society, though not democracy, is strengthening all across the region except in Iraq. Democracy in the western sense remains unique to Israel; but a language of democratic understanding is shared among the foreign policy and economic elites of almost all countries. There is an appetite for sharing in the riches of Globalisation, and a willingness to see 'peace' being made in that cause.

On the other hand the 'Peace process' initiated after the end of the Cold War, substantiated by the Oslo Agreements, has not significantly altered the geopolitics of the region. Israel has been most reluctant to exchange 'land for peace', particularly following the assassination of Rabin and the election of Netanyahu. 'Peace' for Egypt also meant little of substance after Sinai was recovered. Throughout, Jordan has remained

committed, but too weak to decisively alter either Israeli obduracy or Palestinian resentment. Syria, until the present, has remained beyond engagement. Iran has actively, and with great success, skewed the prospects of the Oslo process, both by terrorising South Lebanon, and by coercing Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States into continued support for Syria. Saudi Arabia has redoubled the difficulties this creates by quietly supporting both Iraq's resistance to the US and UN, and the 'recidivist' elements in Arafat's entourage, who have the closest links to Hamas.

The US and the EU have increasingly pushed a reluctant Israel into conformity with western policy aims that entail regional stability on key Arab terms. But to the extent that this has succeeded, it has stemmed from respect for determined Islamic resistance rather than willing Arab compliance. Iran is feared. Hizbollah claims victory for Israel's military withdrawal from South Lebanon. In death as in life, Asad is respected for refusing to make 'peace', even while virtually annexing more territory than Israel took in the June War. The same western respect is not accorded to the Houses of Saud and Al-Sabah.

In stark contrast, Turkey has aligned itself in economic and strategic terms with a 'peace bloc' including Israel and Jordan, which is aimed, tacitly at least, at frustrating Syrian and Iranian support for terror and subversion. This strategic alignment gives Israel greater security and room for manoeuvre in the longer term. But it does not much affect the peace process directly.

Meanwhile, Russia and China assist Iraq and Iran in their WMD programmes, which could in future trigger new instabilities. China has also developed strong technology links, albeit of different types, with Israel and Saudi Arabia. China, India, Pakistan, Russia and Japan all seek to dilute the strategic role the US plays in the region. Some EU members, while supporting 'western' positions, promote national interests distinctly at variance with those of the US. All of this makes Islamic unity less real substantively, and more important

symbolically. Israel, always prone to lump its Muslim 'enemies' together, plays all sides off against the middle.

Social structures in the Middle East are dichotomous. Security policy and substantive control of the conduct of external relations lie in every state with a committee of Generals. Yet each society has been growing a new and deeper sense of civil and human freedoms. Paradoxically, while the opposing committees of Generals find it easier to speak a confidential language of 'peace', civil societies have become more militant, impatient and prospectively recalcitrant in opposing the kinds of deals that might be done, at Camp David or wherever.

If indeed we are on the cusp, turning between a rapid consolidation of 'One world at peace' and a renewed 'Clash of civilisations', then the discipline of Geopolitics will have a vital role to play in assessing the currents of change. But we must be mindful of the epistemic divide over behavioural and existential modelling. Geopolitical studies established to serve 'system building' behaviourist assumptions will tend to underestimate the living stuff of low-level conflict, and overestimate the potential for control from the skies above.

There is therefore ample scope for a new variant of 'Geopolitics'. This would be a kind of 'Twister theory', aiming to accurately adapt political calculations to the lack of fit between 'covering laws' framed by behaviouralist system building, and the Clausewitzian approach to comprehending absolute wars that, all other advances notwithstanding, are liable to recur.

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Table:

Statistical profile of the Middle East

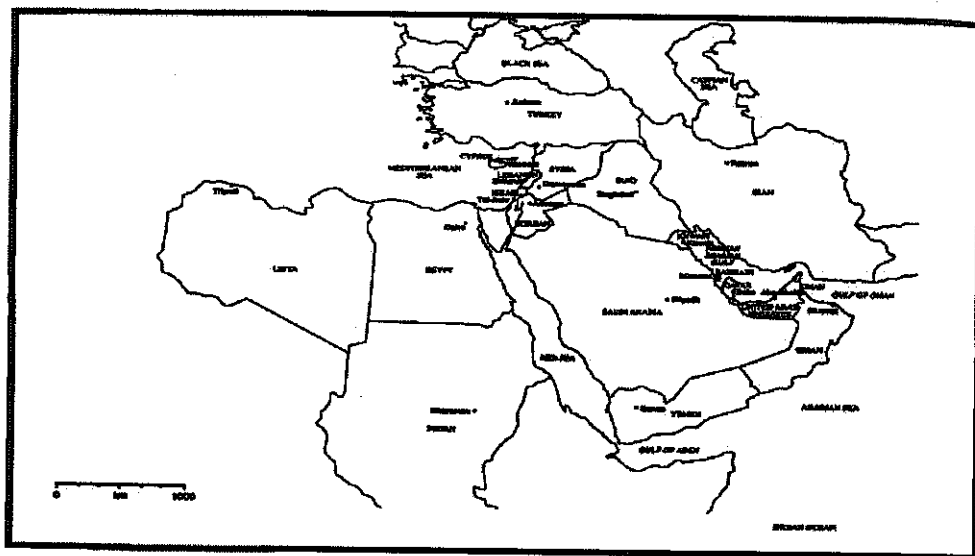|	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Bahrain	5.0	0.7	0.6	0.18	0.3	0.6	11	0.006	3.0
Cyprus	7.9	1.1	0.8	0.24	0.4	0.7	10	0.09	1.8
Egypt	56	8.0	64.8	19,7	2.4	5.1	440	8.6	31
Iran	62.5	9.0	67.5	20.5	2.5	5.3	513	14.2	30
Iraq	18.3	2.6	22.2	6.7	2.7	5.8	400	3.8	40
Israel	79	11.2	6	2	7.2	15.4	75	0.2	55
Jordan	6.6	0.9	4.3	1.3	0.4	0.9	100	0.8	7.3
Kuwait	26.7	3.8	2	0.6	3.1	6.6	15	0.15	8
Lebanon	7.7	1.1	3.5	1.1	0.4	0.6	49	0.09	3
Libya	25	3.6	5.6	1.7	1.4	3	65	15.1	2.7
Oman	12.2	1.8	2.2	0.6	1.8	3.8	44	2.6	2.7
Palestine	3.2	0.5	2.1	0.6	0.9	0.2	17	0.05	0.8
Qatar	7.4	1.1	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.7	12	0.1	5.7
Saudi	125	18	20	6.2	13.2	28	105	19.2	16.6
Sudan	9.1	1.3	32.6	9.9	0.4	0.8	89	21.5	18.5
Syria	30	4.3	16.1	4.9	2	4.3	421	1.6	22
Turkey	167	24	63.5	19.3	6	12.8	640	7.7	75.8
UAE	39	5.6	2.2	0.7	1.9	4	65	0.7	14
Yemen	9	1.3	13.9	4.2	0.4	0.7	42	4.5	8

Key:
1   GDP
2   % Middle East GDP
3   Population (millions)
4   % Middle East population
5   Defence expenditure ($ billions)
6   % Middle East defence expenditure
7   Regular military forces (thousands)
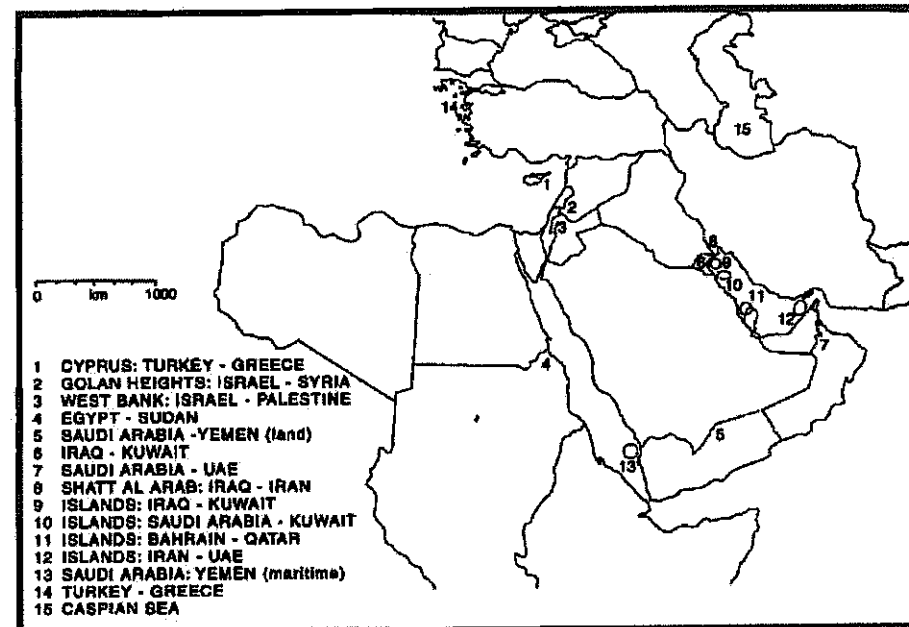8   % Middle East land area
9   Official international debt

Sources:
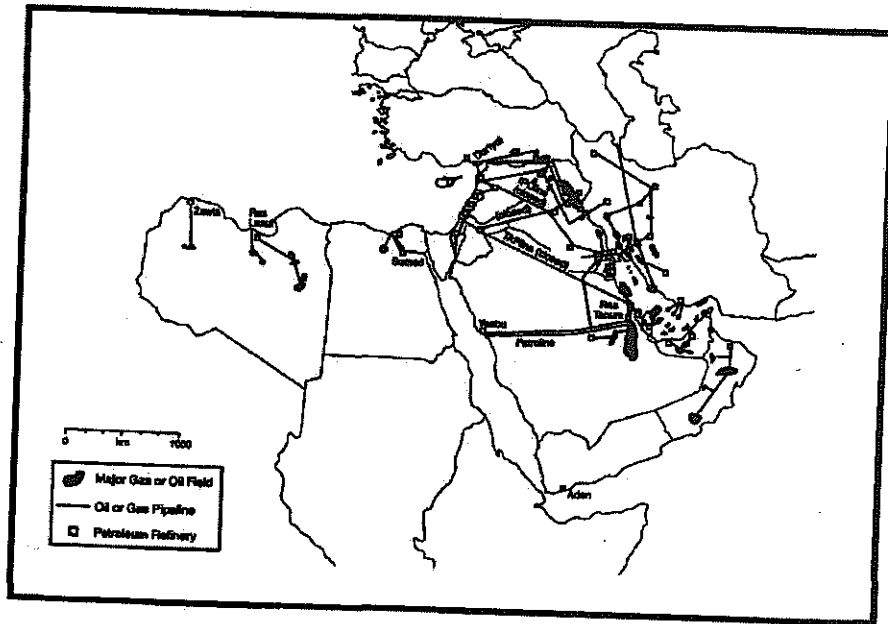Anderson, The Middle East. IISS, The military balance 1999–2000.

Map 1:
Middle East states and capitals

Map 2:
Middle East: Boundary issues

1   CYPRUS: TURKEY - GREECE
2   GOLAN HEIGHTS: ISRAEL - SYRIA
3   WEST BANK: ISRAEL - PALESTINE
4   EGYPT - SUDAN
5   SAUDI ARABIA - YEMEN (land)
6   IRAQ - KUWAIT
7   SAUDI ARABIA - UAE
8   SHATT AL ARAB: IRAQ - IRAN
9   ISLANDS: IRAQ - KUWAIT
10 ISLANDS: SAUDI ARABIA - KUWAIT
11 ISLANDS: BAHRAIN - QATAR
12 ISLANDS: IRAN - UAE
13 SAUDI ARABIA: YEMEN (maritime)
14 TURKEY - GREECE
15 CASPIAN SEA

Map 3:

Middle East: Main elements of the petroleum industry infrastructure

Map 4:

Middle East: Major drainage basins
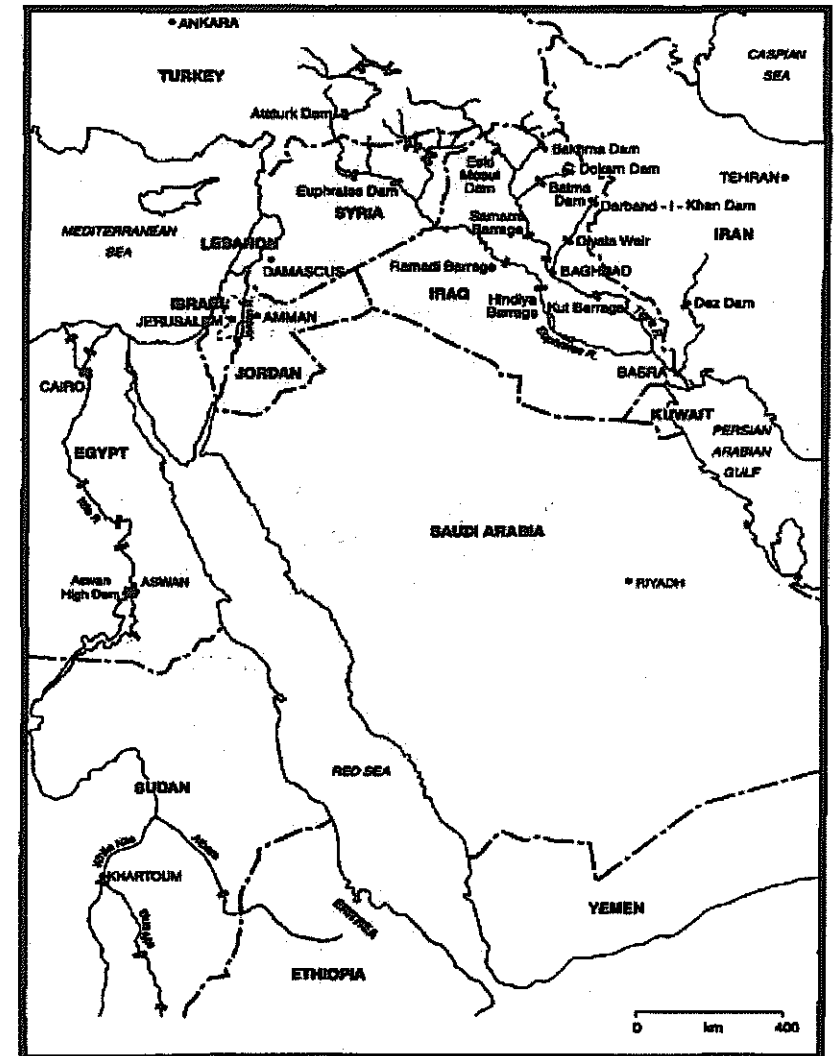
Map 5:

Middle East schematic diagram