The Academy of Political Science

475 Riverside Drive · Suite 1274 · New York, New York 10115-1274

(212) 870-2500 · FAX: (212) 870-2202 · aps@psqonline.org · http://www.psqonline.org

POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY

Volume 111 · Number 4 · Winter 1996-97

No part of this article may be copied, downloaded, stored, further transmitted, transferred, distributed, altered, or otherwise used, in any form or by any means, except:

- one stored electronic and one paper copy of any article solely for your personal, non-commercial use, or
- with prior written permission of The Academy of Political Science.

Political Science Quarterly is published by The Academy of Political Science. Contact the Academy for further permission regarding the use of this work.

Political Science Quarterly
Copyright © 1996 by The Academy of Political Science. All rights reserved.

Regional Security after the Gulf War

MICHAEL N. BARNETT

The Gulf War of 1989–1990 unleashed a regional dialogue concerning what security arrangements should be established to discourage a repetition of this bloody encounter and to foster regional security. Predictably, many of the most affected states scurried in various and sometimes opposite directions in the hurried search for security. Numerous happenings reveal a region engaged in an intense debate over how to organize regional politics and how best to protect the security of its members: the 1990 Damascus Declaration that established a nominal military alliance between the Gulf Arab states, Egypt, and Syria; the rapid military build-ups and inflow of arms transfers; the series of bilateral agreements between various Western and Arab Gulf states; the continuing discussions among the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council; the 1991 Madrid Conference that inaugurated the multilateral talks between Israel and the Arab states; the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) that established a framework for ending the conflict; and the tacit and explicit recognition of Israel's sovereignty by other Arab states.

This article focuses on three features of this debate. First, Arab states are exhibiting new patterns of interactions, departing from the promise of close association based on a shared identity and common values. Instead they have converged on "rules of the game" that revolve around sovereignty and are designed to protect the security of the separate Arab states. But Arab states are also addressing whether they and non-Arab states, notably Israel, should construct common institutions. In doing so they are considering the fundamental relationship between the state's identity and the desired regional order.

Second, the region is caught between the impulse of competitive arrangements that celebrate self-help and immediate security gratification and the promise of cooperation that relies on the language of assurance rather than deterrence. The

MICHAEL N. BARNETT is associate professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and is completing a book, *Dialogues in Regional Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order.*

prospect of regional security is highly dependent on whether the region establishes the conditions for strategic stability and mutual assurance. Third, these regional discussions over the future security arrangements largely overlook a primary source of regional instability: domestic politics. Regional security arrangements generally concentrate on interstate issues, yet some of the most pressing threats to the state derive from domestic politics, which, in turn, implicate the possibility of regional stability.

This article surveys these three issues in order to assess the prospects for regional security in the Middle East. My general thesis is that the construction of relatively stable expectations and norms that encourage the assurance that states will eschew violence as they attempt to settle their differences is based on: the acceptance of broad organizing principles that structure interstate relations (regional order); a cooperative security regime that encourages mutual assurance (strategic stability); and domestic stability and a domestic compact that generate a set of normative expectations for the state's foreign policy consistent with the normative expectations of the society of states (domestic order and stability). Although the Middle Eastern states have seemingly embraced sovereignty, the present predilection for competitive security arrangements and the continuing drama of domestic conflict undermines the promise of regional security.

Identity and Regional Order

The subtext to the current (and ongoing) debate over regional order is the relationship between the state's identity and the norms that should govern Middle Eastern politics. As actors defend or promote a political order, they present and define themselves in a particular manner. This can be understood in the following way. The norms that actors forward are usually connected to their identity and self-understanding; such norms may be considered constitutive.[1] In other words, individuals frequently behave in certain ways and not others because of the relationship between such behavior and the individuals' identity, the presentation of oneself in relationship to an "other." This is also true for states. Certain state behavior is considered inappropriate because it is inconsistent with what it means to be a "civilized" or "modern" or "sovereign" state; modern states do not possess colonies, settle differences through war, violate basic human rights, and so on. In these and other cases, certain behaviors are viewed as reflective of the state's identity. Constitutive norms, in short, signify how a state is or is not to enact a particular identity.[2]

These norms are usually connected to a desired order, by which I mean the development of relatively stable expectations and shared norms to govern relations

[1] Martin Hollis *The Cunning of Reason* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 137–41.

[2] Peter Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

among actors; these norms, again, are linked to the actor's identity and self-understanding.[3] For instance, some versions of the "democratic peace" make a direct connection between the identity of the actors—that is, democratic-liberal states—and the norms that are to regulate their relations—for example, prohibiting violence to settle disputes. In Arab politics a shared Arab identity has long been associated with various political projects that are at odds with a regional order premised on sovereignty and exclusivity. In general, those states that share a basic identity and organize themselves into a self-constituted group will exhibit norms that are a direct expression of the state's identity.

Yet actors sharing a basic identity will disagree over the norms and desired political order that are associated with that identity. First, there is no reason to assume that those who share an identity will necessarily have a conflict-free environment. Second, conflict has many sources, and there is no reason to presume that conflict is always driven by the logic of anarchy. Third, a possible source of conflict among actors that share an identity is over their constitutive norms. That is, while members of a self-identified group might agree that they share a political identity, they might disagree over the practices and political projects that are associated with that identity. In this reading, states that share a basic identity and attempt to organize themselves into a self-constituted group may hold rival interpretations of the desired regional order. Such rival interpretations, in turn, can represent a source of conflict.

The debate over the relationship between the Arab identity and its associated political projects exists at the domestic and the regional level. A recurring debate in Egyptian politics has been the relationship between the Egyptian national identity and the Arab national identity, and, relatedly, the obligations that Egypt had, if any, to other Arab states. Such debates generally sprang up around seminal events, including the Arab Palestine Revolt in 1936, the creation of the Arab League in 1945, the defeat in the 1948 Palestine War, and Anwar Sadat's path to Camp David.[4]

At the regional level the debate over the constitutive norms of Arabism and the desired regional order have led to hostility and conflicts. This was particularly evident during the first decades of the Arab states system. Although all Arab leaders identified themselves as Arab nationalists, they had rival interpretations of the political projects that flowed from that identity that were directly tied to alternative visions of the desired regional order. For instance, the Ba'ath Party and Gamal Abdel Nasser's post-Suez War version of Arab nationalism envisioned

[3] Dennis Wrong, *The Problem of Order* (New York: Free Press, 1994), chap. 1.

[4] On the Palestine revolt, see Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Egypt, Islam, and the Arabs: The Search for Egyptian Nationhood, 1930–45* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). On the League of Arab States, see Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation, 1930–45* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995). On the 1948 war, see Ghada Talhami, *Palestine and Egyptian National Identity* (New York: Praeger Press, 1992), 63–66. And on Sadat's policies, see Saad Eddin Ibrahim, "Domestic Developments in Egypt" in William Quandt, ed., *The Middle East: Ten Years After Camp David* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1988), 19–63.

an Arab order that erased its territorial segmentation to bring the state and the nation into correspondence. Yet others championed interpretations of Arab nationalism that were consistent with the territorial division of the Arab world and exclusivity associated with sovereignty. King Hussein of Jordan contrasted his understanding of Arab nationalism and how the Arab world should be organized from that of Egyptian President Nasser's in the following way: "My own concept . . . is quite different from Nasser's. . . . He believes that Arab nationalism can only be identified by a particular brand of Arab unity. . . . I disagree. . . . Arab nationalism can only survive through complete equality."[5]

This debate over the desired regional order highlights two central issues. Again, actors with a shared identity can differ over the norms that should govern their relations. The clash between Arabism and Westphalia—that is, whether Arab states, which were assumed to have a shared Arab identity and interests, should organize their relations around the principles of sovereignty and the norms of noninterference—represented nothing less than a debate over the desired regional order that reflected a debate over the norms that should govern actors with a shared identity. The Arab "cold war" was not simply another instance of balancing dynamics but rather represented a debate over the desired regional order.[6]

Because Arab states were caught between Arabism and Westphalia, they had difficulty establishing the stable normative expectations upon which any regional order would be based. Specifically, sovereignty demanded that Arab states recognize each other's legitimacy, borders, and the principle of noninterference. But Arabism held that Arab states were to defend the Arab nation, to uphold regional standards of legitimacy, to deny the very distinction between the international and the domestic.[7] National identities and aspirations frequently clashed with Westphalian principles and notions of territorial exclusivity, depositing a legacy of regional conflict. The contradictory normative expectations generated by Westphalia and Arabism made regional order an elusive and often violent quest.[8]

If the divisive theme of state versus nation dominated the debate over regional order through the 1960s, since then this debate has quieted and settled on sovereignty. That Arab states are converging on sovereignty can be directly attributed to the development of state-national identities and the weakening grasp of Arab national identities. A change in the desired regional order, in other words, reflects and reveals a shift in the identities of its members. As G. H. Mead observed:

[5] King Hussein, *Uneasy Lies the Head* (London: Heineman, 1962), 74–80.

[6] Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

[7] Gabriel Ben-Dor, *State and Conflict in the Middle East* (New York: Praeger Press, 1983); and Paul Noble, "The Arab State System: Opportunities, Constraints, and Pressures" in B. Korany and A. Dessouki, eds., *The Foreign Policies of the Arab States* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 48–50.

[8] Michael Barnett, "Institutions, Roles, and Disorder: The Case of the Arab States System," *International Studies Quarterly* 37 (September 1993): 271–296.

> The changes that we make in the social order in which we are implicated necessarily involve our also making changes in ourselves. The social conflicts among the individual members of a given organized human society, which, for their removal, necessitate conscious or intelligent reconstructions and modifications of that society by those individuals, also and equally necessitate such reconstructions or modifications by those individuals of their own selves and personalities.[9]

The revolution in identities in the Arab world, involving a decline of Arab nationalism and the rise of state-national and Islamic identities, has altered the debate over the desired regional order. In recognition of this normative fragmentation, scholars and politicians speak of "the return to geography" and "the end of pan-Arabism."[10]

Two factors were most responsible for promoting state-national identities and encouraging Arab leaders to embrace the norms of sovereignty as the basis of their relations.[11] First, the quality of the interactions among Arab states, often premised on the belief that they shared fundamental identities and interests, created regional estrangement. Simply stated, familiarity bred suspicion, and interaction encouraged enmity.

Second, while Arab leaders attempted to maintain their standing by aligning themselves with Arabism, they also engaged in state-building projects that were intended to win over the political loyalties of their citizens. While paying tribute to the importance of the Arab and Islamic political community, Arab governments also were encouraging their citizens to identify with the state and the regime's goals. Therefore, many scholars attempt to account for remarkable regime stability since the 1960s by noting that states are no longer viewed as "artificial" by their citizens and now have a degree of permanence and legitimacy that they did not possess at independence.[12] Any domestic stability, in short, cannot be attributed to coercion alone; and state formation and the growing attachment to the state mean that state-national identities are better able to compete with transnational claims and symbols. Of course, attachment to the state as a territorial entity does not preclude opposition to the regime in power.

In general, as Arab leaders worked for integration at one level, they promoted fragmentation at another.[13] Both interstate interaction and state formation combined to erode transnational identities and obligations, to promote statism, and

[9] George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934), 309.

[10] See, for instance, Ghassan Salame, "Inter-Arab Politics: The Return to Geography" in Quandt, ed., *The Middle East*; and Fouad Ajami, "The End of Pan-Arabism," *Foreign Affairs* 57 (Winter 1978/79): 355–73.

[11] Michael Barnett, "Nationalism, Sovereignty, and Regional Order in the Arab States System," *International Organization* 49 (Summer 1995): 479–510.

[12] Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 451.

[13] Giaccomo Luciani and Ghassan Salame, "The Politics of Arab Integration" in G. Luciani, ed., *The Arab State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 398.

to encourage Arab states to accept each other's sovereignty. To be sure, there remain running examples of Arab states violating the principle of noninterference: Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, Sudan and Saudi Arabia accused of supporting Islamicist movements in other Arab states, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States were rumored to have had a hand in the 1994 civil war in Yemen, and on and on. Still, Arab states have generally converged on sovereignty to organize their relations and no longer deny each other's legitimacy; this in turn fostered regional order by encouraging them to limit their behavior in a continuous and predictable manner.[14]

The weight of pre-Gulf War opinion favored sovereignty as the basis of regional order, and the Gulf War only intensified such sentiments. The importance of sovereignty as the future basis of regional order was exemplified after the Gulf War by the Damascus Declaration, the first post-Gulf War security agreement. Announced in March 1991 as a pan-Arab security arrangement, the Gulf States, Syria, and Egypt pledged further strategic and military cooperation, with an understanding that the latter two would be well compensated for their military commitments and troops.[15] But the Declaration has had little operational value. Its real value, according to ex-GCC Secretary-General Abdullah Bishara, was its recognition of the legitimacy of the Arab state's borders, the right of each state to arrange its own security, and the exclusive claim to its resources.[16]

Coming on the heels of Iraq's denial of Kuwaiti sovereignty and claim that Gulf oil belonged to all Arabs, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states held sovereignty and security as indistinguishable and were intent on institutionalizing sovereignty as the basis of inter-Arab relations. The GCC states were not alone in recognizing this fundamental shift in the security practices of Arab states. The secretary-general of the Arab League nearly pronounced the last rites of the Arab Collective Security Pact:

> Each state determines the needs and boundaries of its security on its own, because this concerns its people and its future. We should basically assume that there should be no interference in any country's security. We must acknowledge and proceed from this basic principle.[17]

Any notion of Arab national security was now buried. The apparent consensus was that Arabism had long outlived its usefulness and that the region should sober up and embrace sovereignty.

The Gulf War, the insistence on sovereignty as the basis of regional order, and the emergence of statism contributed to two striking developments. The first was the division of the Arab-Israeli conflict into an interstate conflict (Israel and

[14] See Barnett, "Nationalism, Sovereignty, and Regional Order in the Arab States System," for indicators of this claim.

[15] For the text of the Damascus Declaration, see Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)-Near East Service (NES)-91-152, 7 August 1991, 1–2.

[16] FBIS-NES-92-241, 15 December 1992, 10–11.

[17] FBIS-NES-92-232, 2 December 1992, 1–2.

the Arab states) and an intercommunal conflict (Israel and the Palestinians). Now reading their interests from the "logic of anarchy" rather than the "logic of community," many Arab states signaled their desire to transform the Arab-Israeli conflict from an ideological into an interstate contest. This transformation, of course, facilitated the détente between Israel and the Arab states. Many Arab states indicated their willingness to reconcile themselves to, if not recognize, Israel's legitimate presence in the region. Therefore, perhaps the surest barometer of the emergence of statist identities and sovereignty is the comparatively rapid integration of Israel into the region. The decline of the Arab political community, the hardening of the Arab states, and a diminished responsiveness to "core" Arab concerns mean that Israel is more fully recognized as a legitimate member of the region.[18]

That said, the election and policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reveal how the conflict still reverberates throughout the region and can mobilize the Arab ranks, if only for presentational and instrumental purposes. Still, that Israel negotiates bilaterally with the Palestinians and various Arab states, and that many Arab leaders frame their objections to Netanyahu's policies on the grounds that they are a strategic setback for a region finally poised to cooperate on other economic and political issues, represents a fundamental change in the organization of the Arab-Israeli conflict and reflects the emergence of state-national interests that are linked to a regional order based on sovereignty.

A second development was the region-wide debate over the boundaries of the region, the desired regional order, security institutions, and regional organizations.[19] In recent years numerous Arab conferences, newspapers, and journal articles have highlighted the theme: What remains of the Arab states system? A conference at Cairo's Al-Ahram Centre in late 1994 was dedicated to the necessity of Arab reconciliation and maintainance of some semblance of an Arab order.[20] The fiftieth anniversary of the Arab League in 1995 provoked a debate with a subtext about the relationship between the identity of Arab states and future regional arrangements.[21] The Lebanese-based journal *al-Mustaqbal al-Arabi* (*The Arab Future*) has been consumed with the general issue of what remains of the Arab order, and, is there an Arab state?

The relationship between the state's identity and the regional order plays itself out in the debate over the concepts of "Middle Easternism" and the "New Middle East." Egyptian intellectuals and officials began to offer the concept of Middle

[18] On the decline of core Arab concerns, see Paul Noble, Rex Brynen, and Baghat Korany, "Conclusion: The Changing Regional Security Environment" in B. Korany, P. Noble, and R. Brynen, eds., *The Many Faces of National Security in the Arab World* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 281.

[19] See, for instance, Ibrahim Karawan, "Arab Dilemmas in the 1990s: Breaking Taboos and Searching for Signposts," *Middle East Journal* 48 (Summer 1994): 433–54; Muhammad Faour, *The Arab World After Desert Storm* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993).

[20] Dooa el-Bey, "Mapping the Future," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 10–16 November 1994, 1.

[21] Mohammed Sid-Ahmed, "The Arab League and the Arab State," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 6–12 April 1995, 8.

Easternism after the Madrid Talks of 1991 as they discussed the possible relationship between the Arab and non-Arab states in the region, including Ethiopia, Iran, and Turkey, and primarily Israel. Those who champion Middle Easternism envision an Arab order alongside a Middle Eastern order, with the former protecting the shared Arab identity and the latter recognizing that all states of the region have shared interests that can be furthered through close coordination and cooperation. Yet the critics of Middle Easternism portray it as burying Arabism and hence emphasize institutions restrictive to Arab states.[22]

The idea that the "Middle East" might supplant the Arab region is most closely associated with former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres's concept of the "New Middle East."[23] Not only does he hope that the Middle East's future will duplicate Europe's past, where modest experiments in cooperation snowballed into greater interdependence and institution-building, but his vision is premised on erasing the cognitive boundaries between Israel and the Arab states and declaring a region called the "Middle East." Few Arab politicians trust Peres's vision of the future Middle East or believe that it is attainable or even desirable. When Shimon Peres speaks the language of interdependence, many Arabs hear a future of dependence.[24]

During a talk at Ain-Shams University in Cairo in spring 1996, one listener responded to my discussion of the possibility of regionalism in the Middle East by asserting that this was "imperialism by regionalism." His views were seconded by many in the audience. Such fears have a number of sources. Israel's GNP equals that of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan combined, suggesting that the Israeli economy will overwhelm that of its neighbors. In the future regional division of labor, Peres has suggested that it will contribute the technology and know-how, while the Arab world will contribute vast markets, cheap labor, and ready capital. Simply put, Israel is poised to become the regional "core," while the rest of the Arab states will become the "periphery." Israel, in this view, stands to conquer through market power what it could not through military power.[25] That Shimon Peres and other Israelis suggest that Israel can provide something of an engine and nucleus for a future regional order only encourages suspicion and fear.

The concept of Middle Easternism and Peres's vision evoke concern not only over relative gains between Israel and the Arab states but also whether and what remains of any hope for inter-Arab cooperation. That Peres ties his concept to a region in which ethnic, religious, and national identities are no longer distin-

[22] Comments by Syrian Information Minister Muhammad Salman as reported in *Al-Muharrir*, 6 November 1995, 6; cited in "Minister Expects Disturbances in the Region," *FBIS-NES-95-215*, 7 November 1995, 50.

[23] Shimon Peres, *The New Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt, 1994).

[24] Amos Elon, "Crumbling Cairo," *The New York Review of Books*, 6 April 1995, 42, 6, 32–36; and Sid-Ahmed, "The Arab League and the Arab State."

[25] See the comments by Ghayth Aramanzi, head of the Arab League's London office, at the conference on the New Middle East at the London University's School of Oriental and African Studies on 19–20 December 1994. Reported in *FBIS-NES*, 7 February 1995, 7.

guishing criteria for interaction conjures up the fear of extinguishing what little remains of Arabism and an Arab identity. A window into this concern occurred when Shimon Peres was rumored to be seeking to gain Israel's admission to the League of Arab States.[26] In a well publicized chance encounter between Peres and Arab League Secretary-General Esmet Abdel-Meguid at the Casablanca summit in 1994, Peres asked Abdel-Meguid, "And when will we be joining the Arab League?" Somewhat surprised by the question, Abdel-Meguid retorted, "The day you decide to speak Arabic." Egyptian Ambassador to Israel Muhammed Bassouni, who supports normalizing Arab-Israeli relations, nearly portrayed the future of the Arab League as little more than a cultural parlor as more high-profile and central issues were handled through bilateral and multilateral channels, but he bristled at Peres's suggestion that Israel be allowed to join the Arab League, characterizing the request as insulting and offensive.[27] In a series of interviews with past and present Jordanian officials in September 1995, a running theme on the issue of the New Middle East was that Israel was attempting to douse what little remained of the Arab identity. As one past top-ranking official put it, "Israel is now trying to rid Arabism from the Arab states; this challenges us to work harder to retain some features of Arab unity."[28]

In general, the emergence of statist identities and the declining salience of transnational loyalties caused Arab states to shift the debate over the desired regional order in two ways. The first is a general disappearance of conflict over rival interpretations of Arabism that were inconsistent with sovereignty to versions that are in keeping with it. That the Middle Eastern states are converging on sovereignty as the basis of their relations represents an important step toward regional order. But there is an alternative possibility that must be raised here that previews the discussion in the next section: the end of Arabism and the rise of "realism" might encourage greater interstate conflict between Arab states. Although pan-Arabism did not stop Iraq from invading Kuwait, myriad instances of sabre-rattling, or attempts to destabilize Arab governments from within, the belief that "Arab states do not wage war on each other" arguably reduced the number of wars that otherwise might have occurred. Whereas pan-Arabism instructed Arab states to settle their differences short of war, realism contains no such rules.

While realists have consistently maintained that the practice of Arab leaders demonstrated that they were more interested in their own interests than those of the Arab nation, the novelty of the post-Gulf War period is that Arab leaders are now seemingly in open agreement with this view. They no longer feel as compelled to legitimate their policies according to the needs of some larger community; they are less hesitant to defend their foreign policies as in the state's

[26] Mohammed Sid-Ahmed, "When Israelis Speak Arabic," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 30 March–5 April 1995, 8.

[27] Interview with author, Tel-Aviv, Israel, 26 August 1995.

[28] Interview with author, 5 September 1995, Amman, Jordan.

interests and are insistent that sovereignty regulate inter-Arab relations. The emergence of statism and the acceptance of sovereignty is consistent with the transformation of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

But the crisis in Israeli-Palestinian relations demonstrates the strong relationship between movement toward a solution to conflict and any plans for regional cooperation that might include Israel. For instance, even though the third Middle East and North Africa economic summit did take place in Cairo in November 1996 during a crisis in the peace process, the Mubarak government considered cancelling the conference, and the conference produced little of note. Even King Hussein, who champions regional cooperation and initially predicted that Netanyahu would adhere to Oslo, began to distance himself from Israel after the September 1996 riots. Israel's prospective ties to its Arab neighbors are dependent on progress in the peace process. But Arab states continue to keep open their bilateral channels and speak of the "strategic needs for peace." The contest over the desired regional order concerns what remains of the Arab order and what constitutes the Middle East. Flux rather than stability continues to define the debate over the regional order.

The Search for Strategic Stability

That the region has converged on the norms of sovereignty represents an important step toward regional security. But because sovereignty is a permissive institution that allows for war and threat-based security arrangements, the adopted security regime will greatly influence the prospects for regional security. Specifically, the end of the cold war and the Gulf War launched a debate over the region's security institutions that suggests two alternative roads: competitive and cooperative security. The prospects for regional security and strategic stability is highly dependent on the path that is chosen.

Competitive security is defined by the reliance on abject force and explicit balancing mechanisms to maintain interstate stability. States, in this view, have two stylized choices as they attempt to increase their security and to respond to security threats: internal mobilization, which involves the domestic mobilization and production of the means of war; and external alignments, which concern the construction of strategic alliances.[29] Although there are advantages and disadvantages to each strategy (generally cast as an "arms-autonomy" trade-off), the overall concern is to increase the state's relative power in order to maintain a balance of forces and a credible deterrent posture, which communicate that the costs of aggression will exceed any expected benefits.

[29] Kenneth Waltz, *The Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1979); James Morrow, "Arms versus Allies: Trade-offs in the Search for Security," *International Organization* 47 (Spring 1993): 205–234.

Such competitive security arrangements are closely associated with the notorious security dilemma. Henry Kissinger's classic phrase captures its essence: "The desire of one power for absolute security means absolute insecurity for all the others."[30] Security dilemmas are hypothesized to reduce the security of both actors in the long term and also potentially to increase their strategic vulnerabilities, which exist to the extent that there is a military advantage to strike first. Said otherwise, if the strategic calculus gives a relative advantage to the side that strikes first, then both sides have an incentive to shoot first and ask questions later.

There are many sources of strategic vulnerabilities in the Middle East. Where there are few natural borders or barricades, defensive arrangements become more difficult and there is an advantage to offensive maneuvers. The same logic applies to military technology. Although some claim that the spread of missile technology and nuclear weapons raises the costs of war and therefore provides a robust deterrent capability,[31] such technology, to the extent that it gives an advantage to strike first, can be highly destabilizing. Indeed, although various arms control regimes have been established to try to limit the spread of missile and nuclear technology, the Middle Eastern states have demonstrated a real talent for circumventing them. Therefore, monitoring mechanisms do not provide sufficient assurance that the signatories of such control regimes will act in good faith. The aforementioned factors, in short, create strategic vulnerabilities, crisis instability, and an incentive to strike first.[32]

The dissatisfaction with competitive security strategies and their attending security dilemmas have led states to seek cooperative security arrangements.[33] Beginning with the recognition that the unilateral moves that generate security dilemmas reduce rather than increase security, cooperative security strategies look to construct institutions and norms to encourage trust and cooperation. Sometimes labelled multilateralism, the argument is that states have common interests that require joint action to obtain their common goals. Because states fear that others will defect from any agreement, they will construct institutions to monitor and encourage compliance. The resulting acts of security cooperation, therefore, are likely to include greater specification of those actions that are and are not considered threatening, policies that are designed to overcome collective action problems associated with interdependent choice, and the development of security procedures that are intended to serve mutual interests. Arms control agreements, defensive positioning, notification of military maneuvers, hot lines,

[30] Henry Kissinger, *A World Restored* (New York: Grosset and Dunlop, 1964), 2; also see Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30 (January 1978): 167–214.

[31] John Mearshiemer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War," *International Security* 15 (Winter 1990): 5–56.

[32] Janice Stein, "The Security Dilemma in the Middle East: The Prognosis for the Decade Ahead" in B. Korany, P. Noble, and R. Brynen, eds., *The Many Faces of National Security in the Arab World* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 59.

[33] Janne Nolan, *Global Engagement* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1994).

military exchanges, and other policies are intended to encourage trust and overcome the security dilemmas that are understood as an underlying cause of conflict.

At present various Middle Eastern states speak the language of cooperative security but act according to the logic of competitive security. The Gulf War caused nearly all states to scramble to increase their security in the most immediate way available: alliances and arms imports. This dash for security was particularly evident among the Gulf states. Eschewing notions of cooperative security that were supposedly the foundation of the GCC and discarding the Damascus Declaration, the Gulf states quickly demonstrated that they had greater faith in the United States and the West than they did in each other. They provided the United States with access to military bases and concluded stockpiling and over-the-horizon agreements.[34] In addition to these external security guarantees, most Gulf states developed a nearly unquenchable thirst for high-technology military hardware, and the United States was happy to oblige. In general, any notions of Arab collective security lay in ruins after the Gulf War as Arab states began emphasizing particularistic over collectivist interests, focusing on state security over core Arab concerns, and demonstrating a strong interest in establishing bilateral security pacts with Western states.[35]

This trend toward unilateralism and the reliance on military force was encouraged by the resurgence of regional rivalry.[36] Border disputes that had been relatively dormant erupted with force and occasional violence after the Gulf War. Saudi Arabia and Qatar, Qatar and Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, and Oman and Saudi Arabia have all exchanged barbs and the occasional bullet in the recent past. Moreover, there seems to be little zeal in attempting to arbitrate such disputes in anything but a bilateral fashion.[37] Consequently, while the Arab states might have recognized each other's sovereignty, they have not necessarily ended their discussion or their conflicts over their territorial boundaries. Saudi Arabia, always viewed suspiciously by its neighbors, became increasingly perceived as a budding hegemon with regional designs and aspirations. Iran, though insisting that Persian Gulf security was premised on mutual security, engaged in various provocative actions, including the military takeover of three islands claimed by the United Arab Empirates (UAE) in the Gulf. Iraq, though under a gripping sanctions regime imposed by the UN, did not relax its hostility and veiled threats against Kuwait and others. The lesson of the Gulf War seemed to be that too much trust and not enough firepower caused adventurism and war initiation.

[34] Anwar-Ul-Haq Ahady, "Security in the Persian Gulf after Desert Storm," *International Journal* 49 (Spring 1994): 219–40.

[35] Baghat Korany, "National Security in the Arab World: The Persistence of Dualism" in D. Tschirgi, ed., *The Arab World Today* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), 166.

[36] See F. Gregory Gause III, *The Gulf Monarchies* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1993), chap. 5, for a good discussion of the Gulf states' post-Gulf War security policies.

[37] "Border Disputes Discussed Bilaterally," *FBIS-NES*, 21 December 1994, 42. But border issues retain a place on the agenda of recent GCC summit meetings.

That arms-building and rivalry are prominent themes of post-Gulf War security politics only heightens the security dilemmas and fears of strategic vulnerabilities. There are few natural borders or fortifications in the Middle East that provide for a defensive positioning. Moreover, qualitative and quantitative developments in missile technology have left most states more vulnerable and fearful. Iraq demonstrated during the Gulf War how highly mobile and easily camouflaged missiles are. Israel now concentrates on the potential missile capacities of Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Because of the nature of military technology and geographical proximity, it is difficult to distinguish offensive from defensive military formations and postures. What one state maintains is a defensive positioning, another reads as an offensive strategy. Numerous Egyptian policy makers and analysts with whom I spoke in March 1995 raised the issue that while Israel pushes the importance of cooperative security, it wants to retain its nuclear option. As Janice Stein ominously concludes: "The dynamics of the international security dilemma make the Middle East inhospitable to the creation of stable security. It does so by creating the legitimate fear of strategic vulnerability."[38]

Alongside the strong competitive disposition, however, are hints of a cooperative security strategy. The Middle Eastern states are involved in various discussions that suggest some recognition that long-term security is based on mutual trust and coordination: the multilateral talks, the recently created and practically defunct Conference on Cooperation and Security in the Middle East, the GCC, the bilateral talks between Israel and its neighbors. These and other regional discussions suggest an effort to overcome the security dilemmas that wreak havoc and encourage fear. Various forces are encouraging the region's leaders to consider a multilateral solution to resolve their ongoing security dilemmas.

The case of Israel is instructive here.[39] Israel has traditionally embraced a self-reliant strategic doctrine for a variety of reasons: an existential view of the precariousness of Jewish existence; a Waltzian realism that holds that anarchy generates self-help behavior; a military-industrial coalition that benefits from arms production; a geographical imperative that suggests a doctrine that is offensive minded and carries the war into the enemies' territory; and a strategic culture that is ultimately premised on deterrence and overwhelming use of force. Such factors contributed to Israel leaning heavily on competitive, rather than cooperative security strategies.

Yet events over the last decade have encouraged Israeli officials to consider the efficacy of cooperative security. First, the peace process and the perceived decline of Arab nationalism inform the emergent view that the Arab states are increasingly reconciled to Israel's existence. Second, the perception by Israeli military officials of an emerging symmetry between Israeli and Arab military

[38] Stein, "The Security Dilemma in the Middle East," 61.

[39] Efraim Inbar, "Contours of Israel's New Strategic Thinking," *Political Science Quarterly* 111 (Spring 1996): 41–64; and Efraim Inbar and Shmuel Sandler, "The Changing Israeli Strategic Equation: Toward a Security Regime," *Review of International Studies* 21 (January 1995): 41–60.

forces means that Israel may be unable to carry its present military advantage into the future. Third, missile technology, as Shimon Peres frequently argues, makes defense of the Israeli population more difficult; this was made dramatically evident during the Gulf War when the Iraqi SCUDs rained on Israel. Fourth, the arms race has not necessarily increased Israeli security. Finally, economic constraints make a renewed arms race unattractive; not only are there fewer resources to channel to defense spending, but the high-technology weapons that are in the greatest demand are increasingly expensive. For these and other reasons Israeli officials are entertaining the desirability of a cooperative security strategy. There is evidence, moreover, that Arab governments are arriving at the same conclusion.[40]

The regional talks on security, arms control, the environment, and water resources are evidence of this cooperative view.[41] Although these talks have yet to produce any dramatic breakthrough, they reinforce the view that the Middle Eastern states—Arab and non-Arab alike—have shared interests that can only be solved through coordination and cooperation. This is the case not only for strategic cooperation but in other areas—most notably environmental and water resources—where cooperation might generate immediate payoffs. An underlying aspiration of these multilateral talks, moreover, is that cooperation and progress in one area might spill over into another area.

The obstacles to cooperation, however, extend beyond the absence of institutional mechanisms to overcome coordination problems. Along with continuing suspicions and fears of Israel by many Arab governments and societal actors, it is important to recognize that cooperation faces technical and material hurdles. Perhaps most prominent here are the obstacles to economic cooperation. To what extent can state-run economies that demonstrate little natural division of labor successfully coordinate their policies to their mutual advantage? How do these semiperipheral and peripheral economies loosen their ties to the core capitalist countries and strengthen their ties among each other? What are the economic costs and advantages to such a change? There have been countless studies of the benefits to be gained from economic cooperation; these surveys nearly always begin by proclaiming the economic and political advantages that will naturally flow from increasing interdependence. They nearly always conclude pessimistically by doubting that the intractable and nearly insurmountable obstacles to economic cooperation can be overcome.[42] Still, hope does remain: despite these

[40] Yahya Sadowski, *Scuds or Butter?* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1992).

[41] Stephen Spiegel and David Pervin, *Practical Peacemaking in the Middle East, Vol. I: The Environment, Water, Refugees, and Economic Cooperation and Development* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995); and Spiegel and Pervin, *Practical Peacemaking in the Middle East, Vol. II: Arms Control and Regional Security* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995). For a discussion of confidence building in the Middle East, see Gabriel Ben-Dor and David Dewitt, eds., *Confidence Building Measures in the Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994).

[42] Stanley Fischer, Dani Rodrik, and Elias Tuma, eds., *The Economics of Middle East Peace* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993); and Stanley Fischer, Leonard Hausman, Anna Karasik, and Thomas Schelling, *Securing Peace in the Middle East* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994).

problems and negative residues of the Casablanca economic summit, by most accounts the follow-on summit in October 1995 in Amman was more successful and encouraging. There continue to be sidebar discussions for other regional and joint arrangements.[43]

In general, where suspicions run deep and trust remains elusive, nearly all exchanges will be scrutinized in terms of the relative rather than the absolute gains that accrue to each party.[44] This is true not only of Israel and the Arabs but also of the Arab states themselves, who have produced few economic agreements. Functionalism might have worked in a Europe where there already existed relatively equal economies, something of a common identity, and an idea of progress. But these critical factors are in short supply in the Middle East. The combination of cognitive and capital obstacles means that there is little prospect of real economic interdependence in the near term; in this respect, zero-sum rather than positive-sum sentiments travel across categories of interactions.

If the regional players are unable to generate trust or build the institutions required for cooperation on their own, then might outside powers or third-party actors, notably the United States, contribute to this end? The United States can help move the process toward cooperative security in various ways by: providing the occasional divine intervention to nudge the parties forward; circulating proposals that derive from its own experiments in security cooperation with the Soviet Union and in Europe; offering to help monitor any interstate agreement; providing security guarantees to those who take a leap of faith toward Israel; demonstrating some self-restraint in its arms exports to the region, particularly of highly destabilizing technology, and encouraging others to follow suit; and attempting to construct and then helping to enforce a missile control regime.

Thus far, however, the record suggests that the United States is better at creating incentives for competitive rather than cooperative security, given its readiness to provide unilateral security guarantees and to fuel a region-wide arms race. In the past the United States has provided financial rewards to the participants in the peace process, most notably the 1978 Camp David Accords, but the end of the cold war has introduced a more frugal mind-set. The United States has provided relatively little to the Palestinians, and in 1995 King Hussein had to lobby various House members to help secure Bill Clinton's prior pledge to absolve Jordan's debts as a reward for Jordan's peace with Israel. As Yasir Arafat has been noted to exclaim: "Billions for war and nothing for peace." The overall post–Gulf War record suggests that the United States is encouraging a competitive security strategy and is either unable or unwilling to provide the carrots and sticks to invite a cooperative strategy.

[43] Serge Schmemann, "Mideast Leaders Confer, But This Time the Talk Is of Making Money as Well as Peace," *New York Times*, 30 October 1995. For various regional proposals, see "Impact of Israel on Middle East Common Market," *FBIS-NES*, 3 May 1994, 37; and "Arab League Studies Middle East Market," *FBIS-NES*, 22 March 1994, 3.

[44] David Baldwin, ed., *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

That said, ultimately the region's future will be determined by its members. The United States certainly has the capacity to encourage movement in some directions and discourage that in others, but it is the will of those who live in the region and their interactions that will largely determine whether they continue down a competitive path or veer toward a more cooperative future. Indeed, it is not exactly clear that many states in the region welcome a strong U.S. role.[45] There remain anti-Western sentiments throughout much of the Arab world, and a United States that actively attempts to stifle instability might very well create a self-fulfilling prophecy. Perhaps the best that the United States can do is, first, to encourage the region's members to develop their own cooperative security system, and, second, to renounce any attempt to construct a regional hegemony.[46]

In general, while many scholars expected that a more stable Middle East would emerge from the institutionalization of sovereignty and the end of ideology,[47] whether regional security materializes is dependent on strategic stability and mutual assurance. There is some movement in this direction, as evidenced by the on-going multilateral talks, which have encouraged the exploration of possible confidence-building measures that might lessen tensions, minimize the possibility of inadvertent war, reduce the conflict over longstanding issues and points of contention, and construct tacit, if not explicit, norms and rules of behavior that can encourage a more stable strategic environment. That, at least, has been the promise. Unfortunately, the region exhibits a loyalty to competitive security dynamics that only encourages strategic instability and undermines the prospects for regional security.

Domestic Disorder/Regional Disorder?

Middle Eastern states face a dizzying array of domestic challenges; in fact, many observers claim that domestic, rather than interstate security threats represent the real challenge to the state.[48] A host of ailments beset most states of the region—economic stagnation and deterioration, demographic pressures, the challenge of political liberalization and democratization, the lack of legitimacy and the resurgence of political Islam. The religiously based war in Algeria was certainly a wake-up call; Egypt is widely thought to be the next to go;[49] and the recent

[45] L. Carl Brown, "The Middle East after the Cold War and the Gulf War: Change or More of the Same?" in George Downs, ed., *Collective Security After the Cold War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 215.

[46] Ibid., 215.

[47] Ben-Dor, *State and Conflict in the Middle East*; Fouad Ajami, *The Arab Predicament* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

[48] Mohammed Ayoob, "Unravelling the Concept: 'National Security' in the Third World" in Korany, Noble, and Brynen, eds., *The Many Faces of National Security in the Arab World*, 31–55; and Korany, "National Security in the Arab World."

[49] Cassandra, "The Impending Crisis in Egypt," *Middle East Journal* 49 (Winter 1995): 9–28.

bombings in Saudi Arabia and turmoil in Bahrain only demonstrate that even those states once thought invulnerable because of their tremendous resources and wealth are facing severe economic and political pressures.

The cure for these ills, however, appear elusive. The time-honored cooptive strategies are less effective and available than they once were. Arab governments have generally attempted to extract political, economic, and ideological resources from international sources in order to maintain domestic stability. The collapse of the cold war, the end of Arab nationalism, and the decline of oil revenues have deprived Arab states of many traditional external sources of material and symbolic capital that were highly important for regime maintenance. Governments have fewer economic resources to buy loyalty, are concerned that political liberalization might unleash a pandora's box of domestic pressures, are no longer able to capture the strategic rents of the cold war, and are less able to draw from various transnational ideologies or to manufacture "authentic" domestic bases of consent.

Although millennialists thrive in this environment, various forces favor the status quo. Perhaps most important is the fear of the unknown; this, above all else, appears to create a winning coalition in support of the government. But how long such a coalition can be maintained is the real unknown. These states also tend to rely on selective and not so discriminate use of force, not a commendable or long-term solution. Still, few states seem immune to the onslaught of domestic disturbances, and even fewer seem able to respond creatively or positively. Egypt, for instance, is the subject of numerous commentaries that recite a litany of the domestic political and economic challenges facing the Mubarak regime and then marvel at its seemingly oblivious disregard of these challenges.

These domestic problems can have regional consequences. Theories abound concerning the possible connection between domestic politics, an adventurous or aggressive foreign policy, and regional instability. There are various scapegoat theories that posit a relationship between domestic instability and foreign policy actions that are designed to increase national cohesion and regime stability.[50] For instance, Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz intimated that a principal reason for Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was the deteriorating economic situation at home that had its roots in Iraq's previous war with Iran (and its accumulated debts) and its declining oil revenues because of overproduction among the other oil-exporting countries.[51] A declining political and economic situation can encourage the government to engage in aggressive military activities and to raise regional havoc.

Alternatively, sagging domestic support can prompt a government to adopt a foreign policy posture that, though perhaps not including overt sabre-rattling,

[50] Jack Levy, "The Diversionary Theory of War: A Critique" in Manus Midlarsky, ed., *Handbook of War Studies* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 259–88.

[51] Milton Viorst, "Report from Baghdad," *New Yorker*, 24 June 1991, 55–73; and Amatzia Baram, "The Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait: Decision-Making in Baghdad" in A. Baram and B. Rubin, eds., *Iraq's Road to War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 6–9.

might not necessarily encourage a more stable international environment. For instance, Egypt's deteriorating domestic situation hands the government an incentive to assert its leadership in regional politics. Such leadership is generally premised on identifying the salience of particular threats, most notably Israel, which demand a defiant foreign policy. This dynamic arguably led Egypt in early 1995 to make Israel's failure to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty a major issue and a possible pretext for delaying its own signature. Egypt's reasons have less to do with strategic calculations and more to do with domestic politics and its attempt to maintain a leadership position in Arab politics. This example, moreover, suggests how domestic considerations might undermine the search for a cooperative security arrangement.

Some states might be considered pivotal because of the relationship between their stability and regional stability.[52] Somewhat reminiscent of the domino theory, the argument is that some states are so key—defined by their population, resources, and stature in the region—that a revolution would have regional if not international repercussions. Egypt is one such example; Hosni Mubarak's overthrow by, say, radical Islamic forces might very well invite militant groups in other Arab states to follow suit. At the very least, it would cause other states in the region to recalculate their foreign policy stances to adjust to the new reality.

More recently, scholars and policy makers have made another connection between domestic order and international order: it is not just any domestic order that leads to a stable peace; rather, it is a liberal-democratic order. This "pacific thesis," the subject of much scholarly debate and assumed by many policy makers, posits that a community of democratic states represents the best guarantor of international order.[53] Not only is there no consensus on the existence of the democratic peace, there is considerable debate over its applicability to the Middle East.[54] Much of this debate concerns whether a community of Arab or Islamic democracies might generate a stable peace comparable to that among Western states

While I do not want to weigh in on the democratic thesis per se, I do want to suggest a possible relationship between domestic and international order: there must be a correspondence between the normative expectations that society has of the state and the normative expectations among the society of states. In other words, the more congruent are the norms and behavioral expectations generated by domestic and international actors for state behavior, the more stable will be the system. It seems important that rulers have a shared understanding and purpose, and that societal actors demand from the state a similar purpose and under-

[52] Robert Chase, Emily Hill, and Paul Kennedy, "Pivotal States and U.S. Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* 75 (January/February 1996): 33–51.

[53] Michael Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *American Political Science Review* 80 (December 1986): 1151–69; and Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).

[54] David Garnham and Mark Tessler, *Democracy, War, and Peace in the Middle East* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

standing. This raises one potentially interesting way for thinking about the connection between domestic and regional order in the Middle East. Do states and their societies agree on the broad principles that should orient the state's foreign policy activities? Are there overlapping or alternative orders that orient social action? In this respect, an enduring issue in Arab politics is the degree to which Arab nationalism, Islam, and sovereignty orient the state's actions in ways that are contradictory or reinforcing.

Consider the following narrative. At the outset of the Arab states system, the Arab regimes demonstrated an interest in juridical sovereignty, if only because of regime survival. Yet many societal actors exhorted their governments to shirk off this "gift" from the West and to consider trading Westphalia for Arabism (which also encouraged these governments to manipulate these alternatives for ulterior purposes). The contradictory expectations generated by domestic and interstate processes create the conditions for regional disorder. Yet, various domestic and regional practices led to the institutionalization of sovereignty and the emergence of a more "centrist" conception of Arab nationalism compatible with it, which suggests a correspondence between the roles and expectations demanded of the state by Arab states and their societies.[55]

While the Middle Eastern states have apparently gravitated toward sovereignty to organize their relations, to what extent do societal actors applaud that orientation and attending normative expectations? In other words, while state actors might have a vested interest in sovereignty, do domestic actors offer alternative normative expectations that undermine a regional order premised on sovereignty? There are two dynamics that suggests as much. First, there is reason to believe that the current romance of the "new realism" may not be fully legitimated by societal forces that continue to expect that the state's foreign policy reflect not simply the state's interests but also those of the community. For instance, there continues to be tremendous opposition in Jordan to its peace treaty with Israel; although the opposition was based on an amalgam of elements, the overall reaction was one of hostile resignation.[56]

This raises a more pressing issue for the contemporary moment: are Westphalia and Islam compatible? Much has been made of how Islam challenges the authority of many Arab states that previously leaned heavily on modernity and secular sovereignty to justify and inform their policies. Islam is readily and repeatedly identified as the real challenge to many Arab governments, and there is little doubt that most feel themselves on the defensive against political Islam. Although such movements have real implications for regime stability, they generally target the government's domestic policies and occasionally make its foreign

[55] Barnett, "Nationalism, Sovereignty, and Regional Order."

[56] Various interviews in Amman, Jordan, 30 August–10 September 1995. "Opposition Figures, Parties Cited on Treaty," *Shihan*, 22–28 October 1994. Cited in *FBIS-NES*, 27 October 1994, 30. "Opponents of Peace Accord Escalate Verbal Attacks," *Jordan Times*, 26 October 1994. Cited in *FBIS-NES*, 27 October 1994, 32.

policy the source of concern (most notably its policies toward Israel). Does an "Islamic" foreign policy challenge and undermine the constitutive principle of modern international politics, namely sovereignty? Does Islam generate a set of constitutive norms that are inconsistent with sovereignty? To the extent that juridical sovereignty is based on modernist notions of legitimacy, including popular sovereignty and exclusivity, then Islam and Westphalia might very well generate contradictory norms and expectations for the Islamic state in the modern era.[57] Yet others contend that Islam and juridical sovereignty are highly compatible, that Islamic law can coexist with the modern states system. Albert Hourani concludes that it is difficult to find where an Islamic foreign policy emits practices that are substantially different from "statist" expectations, except with regard to Israel.[58] Because there is no "authentic" Islamic foreign policy, it will be difficult to make sweeping generalizations outside the crystallization of political practice.[59] The state's borders have always been permeated by transnational forces and have shaped the belief that the state's foreign policy should also be accountable to a wider community; there is little reason to suppose that such factors will soon disappear.

In general, there are two reasons to suggest that domestic instability might undermine regional stability. First, governments are more likely to engage in adventurous foreign policy actions during periods of domestic turmoil. Second, as long as the normative expectations demanded of the state by both society and the society of states are congruent, there is the promise of regional order. Conversely, where the society of states and their societies have different normative expectations of the state's foreign policy, then regional disorder is likely to persist. In any event, because the society of states is engaged in an ongoing dialogue over the norms that should govern behavior, and society can be understood as engaged in a continuing debate over its identity and constitutive norms, no regional order will ever be fully institutionalized, taken for granted, and impregnable to alternative visions. This is certainly the case in the Middle East.

CONCLUSION

The prospect of regional security in the Middle East is premised on the existence of three reinforcing pillars: the establishment of broad organizing principles for interstate behavior that foster regional order; the existence of cooperative security

[57] Bassam Tibi, "Religious Fundamentalism and Ethnicity in the Crisis of the Nation-State in the Middle East," Working Paper 5.4 (University of California, Berkeley: Center for German and European Studies, 1992).

[58] "Conclusion" in Adeed Daweesha, ed., *Islam in Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983). Also see James Piscatori, *Islam in a World of Nation-States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

[59] Dale Eikelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

arrangements that encourage strategic stability and mutual assurance; and the presence of a domestic order that supports or acquiesces to these interstate organizing principles and cooperative security arrangements. Thus far, the region has made substantial progress toward regional order, some progress toward regional stability, and little headway toward domestic stability and order.

Regional order will remain elusive without basic rules of the game and organizing principles to coordinate behavior and inform expectations. On this score there has been a dramatic development in regional politics. Over the last twenty years and particularly since the Gulf War, Middle Eastern states have converged on sovereignty as the basis of their relations. This development transformed not only inter-Arab politics but also the Arab-Israeli conflict. Because the emerging statist identities and interests of Arab states are less likely to differentiate Arab from non-Arab states, there is less reason to deny Israel sovereignty and a place in the future regional order. But as the debate over Middle Easternism suggests, there is no consensus over what that place is—particularly without movement on the Palestinian front.

Yet sovereignty is not enough. It can provide the broad ground rules for interstate interactions, but it permits wars, aggression, conflict, hostility, and so on. Regional stability, therefore, also is dependent on the states' security practices and dynamics. Although there have been some modest experiments and movements toward cooperative security, by and large the region exhibits greater confidence in competitive security arrangements. The region's leaders, notwithstanding the breakthrough in the Arab-Israeli conflict, seem caught in the past and unable to imagine a different future. Specifically, they have an "inclination to let others take the risk, to hedge one's bets, to seek outside patrons even while deploring outside interference, and a tendency to go along with less-than-successful past policies lest change bring even worse."[60] Such proclivities, unfortunately but naturally, encourage a competitive security posture.

There is something of a paradox here. While the Arab states have finally constructed some basic rules of the game among themselves, they are increasingly unable to do the same vis-à-vis their societies. Consequently, there lurks a cooperative security arrangement that does address what is readily identified by all the major players as the primary threat to the region—a concert of states that recognizes each other's juridical sovereignty and attempts to counter radical Islam.[61] The Sharm el-Sheikh conference in March 1994, which brought together regional and world leaders, can be read as evidence of either a global and regional intervention to rescue Shimon Peres's reelection prospects or of a multilateral effort to contain terrorism-cum-radical Islam. This suggests an emerging trend among

[60] Brown, "The Middle East after the Cold War and the Gulf War," 213.

[61] See, for instance, "Israel, Jordan to Cooperate Against Terror," *Yed'iot Aharonot*, 25 October 1994. Cited in FBIS-NES, 26 October 1994, 5. "Algeria Reportedly Offers to Cooperate Against Extremists," *Yed'iot Aharonot*, 31 January 1995. Cited in *FBIS-NES*, 1 February 1995, 1. "Arab Interior Ministers Meeting Reported," *FBIS-NES*, 6 January 1995, 2–3.

Middle Eastern governments to exchange information and to coordinate policies to confront "terrorism"—simply put, radical Islam. Although such a compact might help to contain the militant and radical fringe, governments face a more daily and on-going challenge from their societies to their legitimacy that cannot be adequately addressed through such concerts.

The domestic instability that haunts most Middle Eastern states threatens to undermine the progress they have made toward a more stable regional order. The concern is that the heated dialogue over state-society relations can potentially undermine both the construction of relatively stable normative expectations among states and any chance for a cooperative security arrangement. There is an intimate and immediate relationship between domestic and international order; so long as there is little domestic peace, there is unlikely to be regional peace.