BUILDING REGIONAL SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST
International, Regional and Domestic Influences

Editors
ZEEV MAOZ
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Building Regional Security in the Middle East: International, Regional and Domestic Influences

Editors

ZEEV MAOZ, EMILY B. LANDAU, TAMAR MALZ

Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies

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### Acronyms

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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABM</td>
<td>Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACRS</td>
<td>Arms Control and Regional Security working group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Conference on Disarmament</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFE</td>
<td>Conventional Forces in Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Common Mediterranean Strategy</td>
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<td>CSBM</td>
<td>Confidence and Security Building Measures</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSCAP</td>
<td>Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSCE</td>
<td>Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
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<td>EMP</td>
<td>Euro-Mediterranean Partnership</td>
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<td>ESDI</td>
<td>European Security and Defense Identity</td>
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<td>Euro-MeSCo</td>
<td>Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>GATT</td>
<td>General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade</td>
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<td>MID</td>
<td>Militarized Interstate Dispute</td>
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<td>NPT</td>
<td>Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty</td>
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<tr>
<td>NWFZ</td>
<td>Nuclear Weapons Free Zone</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAS</td>
<td>Organization of American States</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organization of African Unity</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBM</td>
<td>Partnership Building Measures</td>
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<td>SALT I and II</td>
<td>Strategic Arms Limitation Talks</td>
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<td>START</td>
<td>Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties</td>
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<td>WMD</td>
<td>Weapons of Mass Destruction</td>
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In June 1997, the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, organized a workshop on regional security in the Middle East. The purpose of this workshop was to expose Middle Eastern scholars and analysts to a body of knowledge regarding regional security theory and structures established and implemented in other parts of the world.

At the time, almost two years after the suspension of the official Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) working group, there was a sense that there was a real need to evaluate the multilateral peace process and its intermission. This would provide an opportunity for reflection and more in-depth thought about possibilities for restarting the process. Scholars who participated in the workshop considered questions regarding the conditions for resuming ACRS; possible frameworks for regional security that might be applied to the region (or, what might be learned from the experience gained in other regions); and whether or not the Middle East had achieved the necessary ripeness for the creation of a new regional security structure.

The suspension of ACRS in 1995 marked a shift away from the more optimistic visions for the future of the Middle East of the early 1990s, to a growing sense that the ‘window of opportunity’ that had opened in this regard was in danger of closing. However, this was also coupled with a greater appreciation of the fact that the arms control process was in fact a process, and that it would most likely take time to reach the stage where a security regime might actually be implemented. This process would necessarily involve changes in security perceptions, together with a lengthy process of confidence building. Thus, there was merit in attempting to advance our conceptual understanding of the issues that were at the heart of this effort.

Since this conference, the region has undergone significant changes that have impinged on the assessment of the prospects and types of regional architectures that might be negotiated in the Middle East. The events in the early years of the third millennium suggested a much changed and deteriorated regional (and international) reality, that seemed even further removed from any prospect of
moving forward in the area of regional security. Especially due to the intense and on-going Palestinian-Israeli conflict, it seemed that the window of opportunity for some kind of regional arrangement was not only near closing, but had actually been shut, at least temporarily.

As we neared publication, the question we had to confront was the justification for continued focus on regional security structures and their application to the Middle East, in light of these new realities. Clearly, the state of the bilateral peace negotiations had always been a central concern when contemplating ideas for advancing regional security, but an active Palestinian-Israeli confrontation had far more serious ramifications in this regard than a ‘merely’ stalled bilateral peace process.

It seemed, however, that even faced with such a dismal reality, research into this topic has great importance. In the first place, on a purely academic level, current political viability is not necessarily the relevant criterion for assessing the worth of a research endeavor. Thus, while not something to be ignored, current policy relevance should not necessarily determine our research agenda.

Second, even taking policy relevance into account, it was always clear that the achievement of ACRS in the Middle East would be a long-term process, with different strands and stages. Thus, even though regional arrangements seemed truly detached from realities on the ground, the situation could (and most likely would) ultimately change. There would thus be a need to do everything possible in the meantime in order to clarify and sharpen our conceptual thinking on these issues. One very important aspect of this is to devote considerable attention to the question of what went wrong in the official process, and what would need to be taken into account if and when negotiations get back on track.

Third, while the agendas of Track II initiatives on arms control and regional security had also been seriously side-tracked due to the fact that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict had been pushed to the fore of these discussions, regional security was still being considered, and discussions would probably benefit from any insights into the subject as a whole.

Fourth, tentative Saudi/Arab, as well as extra-regional initiatives (e.g. ideas advanced in the ‘Quartet’ or President Bush’s ‘roadmap’), if pursued, would necessarily involve multilateral regional discussions. In this regard as well, lessons regarding the means for conducting regional discussion in the Middle East (i.e. the dynamics of the process) could be most useful.

In March 2003, the US and Britain initiated war against Iraq. While it is still too early to provide in-depth evaluations of the implications of this war for regional security talks in the Middle East, clearly this is a significant regional development. Whether it improves conditions for restarting a regional process which includes Iraq and possibly Iran, or not, is still an open question.
It will depend not only on the nature of the regime that develops in Iraq, but also on US motivation to press for a renewed multilateral process. Nevertheless, the prospects of a more moderate regime in Iraq, coupled with the present efforts to push forward the ‘roadmap’ in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, demonstrate the volatility of regional realities, which might once again underscore the policy relevance of research into this subject. The authors of this volume attempted to address these matters, along with the caveats regarding lack of perspective and the pitfalls of prediction under considerable uncertainty.

This volume attempts to assess both the past performance of the Middle East in terms of regional architectures, the difference and similarities of these processes vis-à-vis other regional efforts at regional security regimes, as well as the risks and opportunities in this realm in the future. Authors differ in terms of the latter aspect, but generally agree that considerable progress was made in the 1990s, and that the marks of these processes on the participants were positive and did not disappear despite the recent regional turbulence.

Zeev Maoz
Emily B. Landau
Tamar Malz

Tel Aviv, Autumn 2003
Systemic changes in world politics, together with significant regional developments in the Middle East—most importantly, the Second Gulf War in 1991 and the Madrid peace process—opened the door for the multilateral Middle East peace talks. These developments created the context for seriously pursuing Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) discussion in the early 1990s. Regional players in the post-Cold War period were both enabled and challenged to take a more active role in ensuring their security in the regional context. It became clear that there were common security concerns that could potentially be addressed through cooperative means.

In an effort to get past the constraints of the dominant self-help and often ‘zero-sum game’ mentality that had characterized the Arab-Israeli conflict, and national security policies that had tended to rely either on weapons build-ups or deterrence in their attempts to deal with conventional and non-conventional threats, scholars and practitioners alike began seriously exploring the notion of mutually beneficial cooperation in the security realm. Building on the expected progress in the bilateral peace negotiations, there was an interest in assessing the possibilities for creating some kind of regional security structure/regime that would manage regional security threats in a comprehensive manner.¹

During the first half of the 1990s, scholars engaged themselves more and more with the question of whether, and under what conditions, the Middle East could achieve regional security cooperation, or create a regional security regime. Alongside the official ACRS working group, numerous conferences, seminars and other types of unofficial working groups were held, dealing with conceptual aspects of regional security models and the prospects for their implementation. Some of the relevant literature on the subject was an outgrowth of these conferences.

Of particular note in this regard are the following publications. Steven L. Spiegel and David J. Pervin published a two volume book on Practical Peacemaking in the Middle East,² the first of which focuses on the goals of arms control and regional security in the Middle East. Efraim Inbar’s edited
volume, entitled *Regional Security Regimes: Israel and Its Neighbors*, advances a concept of regional security in terms of five circles of influence: the conceptual and historical grounds for considering a regional security regime; the role of external actors; regional interactions; cultural and nonmilitary aspects of regional security; and the question of how the parties in the region can move forward from deterrence to a security regime. Inbar, together with Shmuel Sandler, also co-edited a special volume of *Contemporary Security Policy* dealing with *Middle East Security: Prospects for an Arms Control Regime.* This volume was an additional attempt to assess the applicability of arms control to the region.

In 1997, Zeev Maoz edited a further volume on the subject, entitled *Regional Security in the Middle East: Past Present and Future.* Articles in the collection reflect some of the theoretical and practical dilemmas involved in thinking about regional security in the region. They focus on trends and processes in the region, and provide a glimpse into the risks and opportunities that were perceived to lay ahead.

The contributions that make up the current collection also concentrate on the regional security idea and its relevance to the Middle East. They all take as their point of departure the belief that the creation of some type of regional security regime for the Middle East would constitute a positive regional development.

However, with the advantage of eight years that have passed since the indefinite postponement of ACRS, the authors have been able to reflect seriously upon some of the explanations for what transpired in these talks. They have made a special effort to include also initial thoughts on the subject in light of the most recent war in Iraq—in March-April 2003.

In her contribution to this issue, Janice Gross Stein raises the question of the advantages of a security regime as a cooperative structure, constructed with the hope of achieving a regional solution to violent disputes. Stein defines such regimes as ‘an uneasy place to be’, as the relationships among the parties in the regimes are basically undefined, limited in scope and transitional.

However, the parties to the regime are joined together under the assumption of having a shared aversion to war. In this regard, Stein discusses the differences between security regimes and other multilateral national structures that are framed in a joint effort of the parties to achieve a common security end.

Zeev Maoz’s analysis views broad regional security conceptions as predicated on fundamental approaches to national security. He presents three such approaches: the neorealist, liberal and revisionist traditions, and connects them to the evolution of regional security patterns. He maintains that making an assessment of regional security prospects merely on the basis of regional outcomes may prove misleading. His analysis suggests an alternative approach: the study of relations between presumed causes of regional outcomes and the outcomes themselves.
As for the implications for regional security architectures in the Middle East today, Maoz highlights certain traces of a liberal approach that have remained in the policies of the region from the time when this approach was prominent (in the 1990s). These indications offer a degree of optimism regarding the evolution of regional structures and institutions once the key conflicts in the region are resolved.

The idea that common security concerns might be addressed in a manner that serves the interests of all is generally considered to be an almost inherently appealing one. The potential benefits of such cooperation would be not only in creating a means for dealing with immediate regional security concerns, but also for establishing norms of dialogue that could be useful for pursuing regional discussion and cooperation more generally. A common theme of the essays centers on an attempt to understand why these efforts have not yet proven successful or produced tangible results in the Middle East. Authors focus on a range of necessary preconditions that are as yet lacking in the region.

In an attempt to trace the reasons for the failure to create a regional security regime in the Middle East, emphasis was placed on the differences between the Middle East security environment and other regional arenas where security frameworks did evolve.

On the basis of an analysis of NATO’s role and contribution to the emergence of a pluralistic security community in Western Europe, Patrick Morgan concludes that the Middle East lacks certain basic elements which had enabled the process to work in Europe. These elements include the lack of broad political consensus among parties regarding their shared desire to avoid war or to support a general rapprochement. Moreover, there is no framework comparable to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in the Middle East, which gave the European parties a cooperative framework for the post-Cold War period.

Drawing on other regions’ successful experiences in security regime building, Steven Spiegel points to the critical elements for achieving such a framework that are missing in the Middle East. Using insights from the levels of analysis framework of International Relations theory, Spiegel explores the issues involved in creating a regional security regime in the Middle East. He focuses on the means which can be implemented in the region in order to improve the prospects for establishing such a regime. Spiegel provides some general rules for leading the region in the direction of establishing a new approach to regional security, at both the conceptual and instruments levels.

Keith Krause concentrates on domestic state factors. He argues that domestic and regional politics are inseparable. As the central issue in security-building (both domestic and regional) is reducing the possibility of organized violence, he draws attention to the role of ideas about institutions and instruments of
organized violence in the domestic realm. Krause argues that the Middle East suffers from weak state-making processes and from unstable regimes. Thus, he concludes, the continued heavy dependence of many regimes in the region on the institutions of organized violence to sustain them is one of the crucial impediments to the emergence of a regional security regime.

Concentrating on the regional level, and on inter-state relations, Mark Heller points to the lack of certain crucial elements in the Middle East, which prevented states from achieving cooperation and creating a security regime. According to Heller, among other important factors, these included cultural-political gaps among the parties; unresolved bilateral and multilateral conflicts; and the basic lack of trust that led the region’s parties to act according to traditional zero-sum politics. Heller also reaches similar conclusions with regard to the European-led Barcelona Process. Overall, he assesses that multilateralism in the Middle East peace process has become just another vehicle for pursuing long-standing policies.

Peter Jones focuses on the experience of ACRS and on the factors that led to its suspension. Jones indicates that the sources of tension that emerged in ACRS derived mainly from different views on the relationship between the nuclear and other issues in these talks, as well as the relationship between the bilateral and multilateral tracks of peace process. Jones argues that the expectations of key parties in the process were very different and could not be reconciled within the framework of ACRS. As for the future, Jones indicates that regional security discussion in the region must address multiple threats on multiple levels. Thus, security dialogue in the region must begin by trying to build a community of experts and opinion makers who will work together to rise above the tensions.

In the concluding essay to this issue, Emily Landau and Tamar Malz show that the seemingly inherent value of cooperative security structures (as understood in the West) can not be taken for granted in the Middle East. Using insights from agent/structure dynamics, Landau and Malz highlight the interplay between social/ideational elements drawn from the international (East-West) experience with arms control, and those that prevailed at the state/agent level, among participants in ACRS. At the agent level, they focus on Egypt and Israel, the major protagonists in the talks. Their analysis reveals implicit clashes that occurred among these different ideational dimensions and their constraining impact on the ability of states to achieve agreement on cooperative security arrangements. They suggest that attention must be directed to these constraints in any attempt to reconvene the ACRS talks.
NOTES


A SECURITY REGIME: AN UNCOMFORTABLE PLACE TO BE

Security regimes, especially in their early stages, generally reflect an uneasy compromise among the participants. Regimes are conventionally defined as those principles, rules, and norms that permit nations to be restrained in their behavior in the belief that others will reciprocate.¹ A security regime is an uneasy compromise where the relationship among the parties is generally undefined, limited in scope, and transitional.

The relationship is **undefined,** because the parties are usually former adversaries who, for the moment, do not think of war as a feasible or practical, or, under some conditions, even a possible instrument. Yet they are far from allies. Indeed, no descriptors adequately capture the relationship of parties in the early stages of a security regime: although they are neither allies joined in a common project nor adversaries actively preparing for war, they are not indifferent to one another. Indeed as former adversaries, attention continues to be sharply focused on one another.

The relationship is also uncomfortable because it is **limited.** What happens inside the regime is only part of what happens in the larger relationship. Participation in a regime does not imply clear behavioral expectations outside the security arena. Egypt and Israel, for example, have been members of a security regime at least since 1974, if not earlier.²

The norms and convergent expectations focus explicitly on behavior that is permissible within the security arena. Economic, political, and cultural relationships are not governed by the regime, unless the parties decided explicitly to the contrary. Even then, some areas of their relationship, by definition, remain outside a security regime. When Israel adopts policies toward the Palestinian Authority that Palestinian leaders find unacceptable, Israel does not violate any norm or expectation within the Egypt-Israel security regime.
When Egyptian officials level charges that Israel’s political leadership finds offensive and provocative about Israel’s policies toward Palestinians, they too violate no norm or expectation in the Egyptian-Israel security regime. Tension grows, however, in the overall relationship and creates an uncomfortable context for their shared security regime. It is all too easy, among former adversaries, to erode trust and rekindle suspicions of long-term intentions. Although they do not govern behavior outside the security arena, regimes do not exist cocooned and isolated from the larger relationship in the surround.

In the end, the parties to a security regime are usually in a transitional relationship: Although the parties have moved away from a full-scale adversarial relationship, it is not clear where they are going. There is no reason to assume that security regimes develop in a linear sequence to become ‘security communities’. ³

Participants in a regime may become allies against third parties outside the regime. Indeed, historically one important impetus to the creation of a regime has been the threat of a looming third party. Under these conditions, the regime is supplanted by an alliance. In a regional context, however, creation of this kind of alliance limits generically the capacity of a security regime to deal with region-wide security problems. Participants may also move to a peaceful and amicable relationship. When such a peaceful relationship develops, for example, as between France and Germany, the regime becomes superfluous, an historical anachronism. Such an outcome, it should be clear, is by no means the necessary or the only product of a security regime.

Finally, the parties can revert to adversarial status. A security regime can collapse. It can be argued, for example, that the nascent security regime in the Sinai in place from 1957 collapsed in the spring of 1967. ⁴ It is the ever present possibility of collapse that creates dynamic tension within a regime and makes it an uncomfortable place to be. An alliance, a peaceful relationship, or a reversion to adversarial roles are all possible products of a security regime. In these three cases, the security regime is supplanted or collapses.

A security regime may also linger for years. The US and Russia, for example, began to build a shared security regime in the 1960s when they were strong adversaries, but certainly did not transform their relationship until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.⁵ Some would argue that even today Russia and the US still do not have the kind of peaceful and amicable relationship where it is difficult to imagine that one could pose a long-term security challenge to the other. A security regime, logically a transitional phase in a relationship, may linger so long that the transition stretches seamlessly into the future with no end in sight. The regime itself becomes the purpose, rather than a vehicle to transform a relationship.
Once we recognize that the presence of a regime denotes a relationship in transition, we can easily understand why security regimes are uncomfortable places to be. If the outcome of the transition is uncertain, if linear progress toward a determined end cannot be assumed, and there is wide variation in possible outcomes, the uncertainty about the outcome creates discomfort. Discomfort in a security regime can grow from the undefined relationship among the parties, the limited scope of the regime within the broader context of an undefined relationship that is compounded by the uncertain trajectory of an undefined relationship in a limited regime. Large uncertainties on issues as critical as security would tend to make security regimes uncomfortable for the participants.

It is useful to distinguish a security regime from security communities and alliances. Security communities are usually understood as communities where war is inconceivable among the members. Although disputes and conflict continue, it is unimaginable to the members of a community that now, or in the future, any member would resort to war to resolve a dispute. What distinguishes a security community from a security regime is the elimination of war as a conceivable policy option within the community; in a regime, war is unattractive for the moment, but conceivable in the future.

Alliances, like regimes but unlike communities, rule out war among their members for the moment, while they are allied against a third party. Like regimes, it is conceivable that members of an alliance could use force against one another once the threat of a third party is eliminated. What joins them together for the moment is the shared perception of a threat from a third party.

WHY ARE SECURITY REGIMES CREATED?

Why Regimes are Created

Paradoxically, security regimes are created by the participants in part to avoid consequences that they do not want but that they fear. Two patterns are possible. First, leaders may share an aversion to war and to its consequences, and be reasonably confident that they share this common aversion. On the basis of this confidence, they move to put in place a regime to prevent accidental or miscalculated escalation. A mutually acknowledged and credible aversion to war creates a more comfortable basis for a regime. Second, each may not prefer war, but nevertheless be uncertain about the preferences of the other. Here, a regime serves additional purposes and tends to be less comfortable.
When Regimes are Created

An aversion to war is likely to develop well into a relationship, when the parties have resorted to force more than once and experienced the costs of violence or the use of force. It is also likely to be strongest after a costly and draining war, and more immediate among the generation that has directly experienced or remembers the violence. In Europe, for example, it was immediately after the Napoleonic Wars that the first regional security regime was created. European leaders, bled by 25 years of revolution and war, created the Concert of Europe to preserve the status quo. Contrary to conventional wisdom, a shared fear of war today is not restricted only to the nuclear powers, to whom the costs of the use of force are obvious and salient by order of magnitude. In the contemporary international system, conventional military technology threatens ever-greater destruction.

A Shared Aversion to War

Even when war or violence is unwanted by all parties, the parties acknowledge that it is unwanted, and their acknowledgment is credible, when the aversion to war is shared and leaders are reasonably confident that it is shared, war can nevertheless occur. Technology, unfavorable capability distributions, or uncertainty compounded by blocked channels of communication can drive leaders to choose strategies they would otherwise not choose in a more benign environment which is rich in information.

Leaders recognize that war can occur by accident or through miscalculation, and create a security regime to reduce the likelihood of both. It is important to note that even when leaders share nothing but an aversion to war or violence, when they have nothing in common but their shared aversion, they can join together to create a limited security regime. Even though a limited security regime is not a very comfortable place to be, it is less uncomfortable than accidental or miscalculated war.

When the parties share a common aversion to war or violence, limited security regimes can be attractive to adversaries because they fulfill important functions and provide valuable resources to their members. Insofar as even limited security regimes provide reliable, low-cost information about members’ activities, they make intentions less opaque, estimation less difficult, and reduce the likelihood of miscalculation. In the limited security regime in place between Egypt and Israel from 1974 to 1979, for example, the US routinely circulated intelligence information about the military dispositions of one to the other.
An Individual Aversion to War and Uncertainty About the Others

A regime will be far more uncomfortable when each of the parties does not want war, at least for the moment, but is uncertain about the intentions of others. Each worries then that their aversion to war can be exploited. Uncertainty about the preferences of others is endemic: preferences are opaque and difficult to fathom, and they change over time. In practice, it is often difficult for one party to establish with confidence that another is averse to war. Declarations of intent can always be discounted, and no action can be construed irrefutably as aversion to war. Preferences can be modeled, and the impact of different preference orderings on mutual outcomes assessed, but it is very difficult to determine empirically the preferences of adversaries in particular contexts.

Often leaders deduce the preferences of others from their behavior. One deed is considered to be worth a thousand words, particularly on issues of international security. The decision to create a limited security regime can be used, therefore, as a barometer of preferences; it indicates an aversion to war. The willingness first to consider and then to create a regime becomes an implicit index of preferences. One of the most valuable contributions a security regime may make to the de-escalation of an adversarial relationship is its capacity to provide a valid indicator of an aversion to war.

When one party is averse to war, but uncertain about the preferences of others, participation in a limited security regime can be attractive if it promises to improve the accuracy of detection and reduce the likelihood of defection. A regime may permit adversaries to monitor each other’s actions with increased confidence by providing more complete and reliable information, by increasing surveillance capabilities for all parties, or by invoking the assistance of outsiders as monitors. It can give leaders more leeway than they otherwise would have to meet a prospective defection by increasing available warning time.

The creation of limited and focused security regimes can be of considerable help in reducing fear, uncertainty, and misunderstanding between adversaries. At a minimum, adversaries gain access to more reliable and less expensive information about each other’s activities that can reduce uncertainty, the incidence of miscalculation, and an inappropriate manipulation of the risk of war. In a complex international environment that is often information poor and technologically driven, lower cost and more valid information can be a considerable advantage.

Security regimes not only reduce uncertainty about the behavior of adversaries, but also about their intentions and the boundaries of the conflict. Participation in a security regime puts boundaries around the scope of a conflict, insofar as the regime ‘fences off’ certain kinds of actions. Limited security regimes also link issues together, lengthening the ‘shadow of the
future’ and increasing the incentives to make some sacrifice of immediate for future gain.\textsuperscript{10}

DIFFUSION AND REVERSIBILITY OF AN AVERSION TO WAR

If security regimes are useful as indicators and boundary setters, as well as providers of low-cost information, they should proliferate as aversion to war spreads at the beginning of the twenty-first century. And, indeed, evidence drawn from the last three decades suggests that in Europe, and in Latin America and Southeast Asia to a lesser extent, security regimes have been created, institutionalized, and strengthened. Not so, on the other hand, in South Asia, North Asia, and the Middle East. It is not obvious why this difference exists. One possible explanation is that the conflicts in the Middle East, South Asia, and North Asia are far more deeply embedded and acute. This is a difficult explanation for Latin Americans, for example, or Southeast Asians to accept. In both regions, historically members have fought innumerable wars, invaded each other’s territory, and disputed each other’s borders repeatedly. Neither region has been free of enduring rivalry and war.

The most pessimistic interpretation of the differences across regions is that security regimes only flourish after a conflict has ended. Regimes reflect rather than promote the ending of hostility and a preference for war. However, the two-decade history of security regimes in Europe before the end of the Cold War challenges this proposition; early security regimes were created during the most intense periods of the Cold War. Indeed, some would reverse the arrow of causation and argue that participation in a security regime helped to end the Cold War.\textsuperscript{11}

Nevertheless, the uneven development of security regimes across regions suggests an important caveat. First, in their early stages, security regimes may well be epiphenomenal; they may reflect nothing more than the short-term preferences of the participants who, for a range of contextually specific reasons, are temporarily averse to war.\textsuperscript{12}

We observed earlier that aversion to war tends to be strongest in the immediate aftermath of a draining and debilitating war. This proposition suggests that aversion is not static, but dynamic, increasing and decreasing with circumstance. It is, in other words, not immutable. Consistent with the reversibility of an aversion to war is the transitional nature of the relationship among participants in a security regime, with no predetermined peaceful outcome.

Insofar as aversion to war is reversible, it makes participation in security regimes that provide for significant arms reduction especially problematic for
participants. Even when adversaries currently share a powerful common aversion to war, they can fear that the preferences of one will change, and that their participation in the regime will be exploited. The cost of unreciprocated participation is inordinately high because security is prerequisite to all other values and even minor miscalculations can have large consequences.\textsuperscript{13}

The defection of an adversary from a regime is almost certain to have graver consequences when the issue is security than, for example, when it is economic. The magnitude of the consequences of error makes limited security regimes especially difficult and risky to build. Closely related to the absolute scope of potential loss in security disputes is the difficulty in estimating the probability of loss. As it can be argued, the estimation of the motives and intentions of adversaries is very difficult, as is the interpretation of an opponent’s behavior. Precisely because the consequences of error are so great, leaders have an understandably pronounced fear of deception.\textsuperscript{14}

Fear of a surprise attack can encourage leaders to try to build limited security regimes but it can also make their attainment immeasurably more difficult. Leaders who otherwise might prefer to participate in a limited security regime may nevertheless refrain if they fear a devastating surprise attack. If the advantage to the side that strikes first is large, then leaders are not likely to weigh future benefits heavily in an uncertain and dangerous present. On security issues it is particularly difficult and dangerous to forego present advantage for future benefit.\textsuperscript{15} In short, the critical obstacles to the creation of security regimes lie in the unique dangers and consequences of error, dangers that are manifest in the extraordinary difficulties of detection and the grave consequences of defection, and in the reversibility of an aversion to war as time passes and memories of suffering during war fade.

WAR AS POLITICALLY TABOO

There is a more optimistic view of security regimes. Aversion to war is reversible in theory, but has become increasingly robust in practice throughout this century as war has become a political taboo. Taboos are far harder to reverse than preference orderings; when they are internationally sanctioned, they are far more robust because they are costly to break. Taboos reduce the danger of participating in a security regime if they are widely recognized and accepted.

It is widely accepted that war has become taboo in the developed world. Prior to the twentieth century, except for some small powers, most thought of war as routine, effective, honorable, and even as an admirable activity. After the Great War in Europe and its catastrophic bloodletting, the idea that war was an
ineffective instrument to achieve objectives, undesired by and undesirable to rational people, first began to take hold.

The taboo against war had begun to diffuse in Europe even before the advent of nuclear weapons, which made war unthinkable to the political leaders of both superpowers. The advent of nuclear weapons deepened the argument that war had become ineffective—its costs immeasurably exceeding its benefits—and anachronistic. Essentially satisfied with the status quo, neither set of leaders seriously contemplated going to war against the other. In postwar Europe, for example, war among democratic, developed states in Europe is increasingly as obsolete as dueling and slavery.16

Although analysts debate the causes of the ‘democratic peace’, the emergence of a security community within Europe is beyond dispute. Associated with the taboo of war are new measures of economic strength and technological innovation as the foundation of power in a global knowledge-based economy. Closely connected is the widespread expectation that war is economically counterproductive.

There is an irony in the creation of security regimes. The European experience suggests that regimes tend to be created after the kind of behavior they are prescribing is already becoming politically taboo, but participants are not confident that the taboo is deeply enough embedded so that it will be universally observed. Once confidence grows that the taboo is universally accepted, regimes tend to fade away as they evolve into security communities.

It is more difficult, however, to break political taboos than it is to reverse a preference ordering. The latter is an individual act, while the former is a social as well as an individual action, with all the attendant consequences. It was necessary at one point to declare dueling illegal and to set up explicit sanctions to punish violations. Today we would laugh at the prospect of a regime to prevent duels. Regimes are created to protect against a possibility the parties no longer want, but fear. They are designed to deal with what is becoming politically taboo, but nevertheless still possible, inadvertently through accident and miscalculation.

Are we at the threshold of such an era in the Middle East? On the face of it, such a proposition seems almost absurd in the face of persistent low intensity violence in the region. Nevertheless, it is worth considering the proposition that, even in the presence of intense violence between Israel and the Palestinians, full-scale war may be becoming taboo. Such a proposition may indeed seem far-fetched, given the repeated rounds of war in the Middle East in the last five decades, but the evidence is suggestive, if inconsistent.

It is precisely the costs and consequences of these wars that may be beginning to contribute not only to an aversion to war but also to an emergent taboo among states like Egypt and Jordan. The overwhelming costs of the Arab-Israel
wars to all the parties—Egyptians, Jordanians, Syrians, Palestinians, and Israelis—are now widely recognized. The carnage of the eight-year war between Iraq and Iran was unequaled since World War II. Increasingly, although far from universally, the international community punishes those who initiate all-out war. Although sanctions are inconsistent and sporadic, the trajectory is clear. Throughout the Middle East, the recognition is also growing, incrementally, unevenly, but persistently, that war is economically counterproductive.

What differentiates the Middle East is the serious dissatisfaction with the status quo by some in the region. Dissatisfaction, if it is not addressed through political channels, continuously threatens an emergent and very fragile taboo against war and can, of course, overwhelm any normative or rational calculus against the use of force. Yet, the costs of the use of full-scale war are growing inexorably in the Middle East as elsewhere, as much for those who use it as for those against whom it is used.

We cannot be confident, however that we are seeing even the very early beginnings of a taboo against full-scale war in parts of the Middle East. There have been alliances among Arab states in the Middle East that have collapsed over time into political conflict and violence. Even in the context of security regimes, where aversion to war is present for the moment, arms racing often continues since states can imagine war in the future, if not now. It is suggestive, however, that the prolonged low-intensity violence between Israel and the Palestinians has not drawn in Arab states and escalated to full-scale war. The containment of the violence may be largely a function of calculation of the consequences of escalation rather than the result of an emergent taboo. Even more important, the status quo in the region is unacceptable, certainly to the Palestinians and possibly to others. Under these conditions, it is unlikely that a taboo against war will take root and deepen.

Even if there is no taboo against full-scale war in the Middle East, is a limited security regime in the Middle East relevant? A limited regime can perform important functions. It can serve first as an indicator of the aversion to war, when few are confident that such an aversion is widespread. It implies deep uncertainty about whether there is a shared aversion to war. Creation of and participation in even a limited regime would enhance the confidence of participants in a shared aversion to war. It can also help to strengthen the very fragile taboo against war.

A collective agreement on even a set of minor confidence building measures (CBMs) nevertheless signals commitment to a taboo against war. It does not imply irreversible commitment, under all circumstances, but it begins the process of strengthening a fragile taboo against war by amplifying the impact of global norms against war. To the extent that a regional security regime embodies similar values to those in the global system, members can draw upon
global institutions, their know-how and their practices, and their normative power, to supplement and reinforce their norms, procedures, and practices.

Finally, it can improve the climate for political concessions to those who are dissatisfied with the status quo. Should the taboo against war deepen, and the parties become more confident of their shared aversion to war, it becomes easier rather than harder to make political concessions that could be otherwise construed as threats to security. Regimes cannot create peace, but they can assist in the transformation from hostility and create a climate for accommodation.

A security regime need not be comprehensive to support a nascent taboo. Indeed, it is unlikely to be comprehensive as long as significant dissatisfaction with the status quo remains among members in the region. Far more likely are limited agreements on CBMs which accumulate over time. Over time, as confidence in the taboo grows and permits political concessions to address that dissatisfaction, a regime can expand coterminously with progress toward peace. The one can reinforce the other.

The central argument of this study, however, is not so much about the importance of a regime over time in creating the possibilities for transformation through learning. It can be argued that the building of even a limited security regime is critically important in giving life to a fragile, tentative taboo against war that is only slowly diffusing in the region. Limited measures can strengthen the taboo and the taboo can strengthen the regime, in turn creating a more hospitable climate for political concession and accommodation. Even if a limited regime does no more than give voice to the taboo against war, it does a great deal in making political accommodation possible.

WAR AGAINST IRAQ: THE BREAKING OF A FRAGILE TABOO OR THE BIRTH OF A NEW SECURITY REGIME?

The war against Iraq was not a war begun by parties within the region. It was initiated by an outside hegemon with revolutionary ambitions to change the status quo. In this sense, it tells us nothing directly about the properties of any security regime within the region itself, or about an emergent regional taboo against war. Internationally, the struggle that preceded the war to legitimate the attack, the fierce resistance in the Security Council, suggests that the taboo against a ‘war of choice’ is stronger than we might have expected. Much of the debate focused precisely on the legitimizing principles that were necessary to justify any use of large-scale force. That the war proceeded without the authorization of the Security Council can be understood as evidence of the fragility of the global taboo against war in the face of a determined global power.
The preventive attack may also serve to legitimate attacks of this kind by other powers in the future. The intensity of the debate also suggests, however, that legitimating principles remain important, even to an overwhelming hegemon.

The war, paradoxically, may have created new openings for the creation of a new security regime within the region. The aftermath of war has proven in the past to be an opportune moment for the construction of security regimes. The change in the regime in Iraq does not in and of itself create security within the broader region. Even were the US to succeed in helping to build a peaceful, democratic Iraq, fundamental challenges to regional security remain.

The Bush administration, disengaged for its first two years from any serious attempt to resolve the long standing Israel-Palestine conflict, is committed to a serious effort to mediate the conflict in the aftermath of the war. Any resolution of the conflict will not only engage the issues between the parties but will also require, as a condition of progress, a new regional security architecture; Israel and Palestine will have to become members of these security arrangements. Even the resolution of this conflict would not reduce the need for new security regimes; states throughout the region perceive a range of threats to their security. In the context of serious worry about a further use of military force by the US, the moment may be opportune for the creation of bilateral and multilateral security regimes that will deepen the nascent and fragile taboo against the use of force by one member of the region against another.

NOTES

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3. Much of the literature on regimes has drawn on examples from the international political economy since 1945. Institutions developed within this context have proven remarkably durable and have provoked a spirited discussion of why they have endured despite the profound shifts in underlying political and economic conditions. See, for example, Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton UP 1984). Scholars argue that security regimes are far more difficult to create than those in the international economy, and they also are more fragile, less resistant to change, and more easily destroyed. See Charles Lipson, ‘International Cooperation in
Extrapolating from cases in international political economy to security regimes is consequently misleading.

4. Stein (note 2).

5. The US and the Soviet Union established a series of limited regimes designed to reduce accident and miscalculation and to delimit the scope of their conflict. At the height of the Cold War, they improved communications in crisis through establishing and modernizing the hotline. Other limited regimes followed: in 1967, the demilitarization of outer space; in 1970, a non-proliferation regime; in 1971, a set of measures to reduce the risks of accidental war; and in 1972, a limited regime to reduce the likelihood of accident and miscalculated conflict at sea. See Sean Lynn-Jones, ‘A Quiet Success for Arms Control: Preventing Incidents at Sea’, *International Security* 9/4 (Spring 1985) pp.154–84. In 1986, with their allies, they negotiated a limited security regime designed to build confidence in central Europe. Advance notification and inspection of large military maneuvers were designed to reduce uncertainty, reassure an alarmed adversary, clarify intentions, and diminish the likelihood of accidental war. In 1987, the US and the Soviet Union agreed to establish nuclear risk reduction centers.

6. Arthur Stein, ‘Coordination and Collaboration: Regimes in an Anarchic World’, *International Organization* 36/2 (Spring 1982) pp.299–324. The distribution of power also contributes in important ways to the creation of international regimes. Analysts have speculated on the impact of different configurations of power. In the classical balance-of-power system, for example, the weaker states had little option but to accept the security regime put in place by the great powers. Security regimes have also been created in the aftermath of an important change in the distribution of power, especially after a major war. See Jervis (‘Security Regimes’, note 1) pp.369–71; and Charles W. Kegley and Gregory A. Raymond, ‘Normative Constraints on the Use of Force Short of War’, *Journal of Peace Research* 23/3 (Sept. 1986) pp.213–27. Analysts have suggested as well that the existence of a ‘hegemon’ facilitates the creation of limited regimes; their evidence is drawn primarily, however, from international political economy rather than from issues of international security. See Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company 1977) pp.38–60, and Keohane (note 3). Analysis of the non-proliferation regime demonstrates, however, that the presence of a hegemon is not a necessary prerequisite of the creation of a limited security regime. On the contrary, collective action occurred in a period of hegemonic decline. See Roger K. Smith, ‘Explaining the Non-Proliferation Regime: Anomalies for Contemporary International Relations Theory’, *International Organization* 41/2 (Spring 1987) pp.268–9, and Keohane (note 3) p.46.

8. Theories of collective action, analyses of market failures, and dissection of the dynamics of conflict where motives are mixed, for example, all document the difficulties participants face either in avoiding outcomes that none prefer or in consummating agreements that would be mutually beneficial. Keohane (note 3) pp.65–84 examines the class of games where policy coordination can avoid unwanted outcomes. Conventionally, in three kinds of games—‘prisoner’s dilemma’, ‘stag hunt’, and ‘chicken’, cooperation can be frustrated in a single play. This contribution deals only with this subset of cases.

9. Within the context of a shared aversion to war, the configuration of interests among prospective members of a regime can be important. Limited security regimes can accommodate ‘egoists’ more easily than ‘competitors’ as their principal participants. Leaders need not be interested in the common good but can pursue their self-interest, irrespective of those of other participants. This capacity to accommodate egoists fits nicely with the evidence that at times would-be challengers are inwardly focused, preoccupied with their own needs and vulnerabilities. Regimes cannot, however, accommodate ‘competitors’ who seek to maximize the relative difference between their own gains and those of their adversary. In game theory, egoists seek to maximize their own gains, irrespective of the gains of others, while competitors seek to maximize the relative difference between their gains and the gains of others. Competitors, therefore, treat conflict as zero-sum, while egoists can choose a strategy, which leads to a win-win outcome. See Martin Shubik, ‘Games of Status’, Behavioral Science 16 (1971) pp. 17–19, and David M. Messick and Charles G. McClintock, ‘Motivational Bases of Choice in Experimental Games’, Journal of Experimental Social Psychology 4 (1968) pp.1–25.

10. This ‘functional’ theory explains regime maintenance rather than the creation of regimes. Insofar as the functions a limited security regime can perform are known to would-be members, however, they can become incentives to participate when adversaries share a common aversion to war. See Kenneth Oye, ‘Explaining Cooperation Under Anarchy: Hypotheses and Strategies’, World Politics 38/1 (Oct. 1985) pp.1–24.


12. Jervis argues that the impact of security regimes on conflict reduction is spurious if the preferences of the parties are to avoid war, see Jervis, ‘Security Regimes’, (note 1).


14. Lipson (note 3).

15. Oye (note 10).

The dramatic changes in the international system over the last decade were accompanied by theoretical and political efforts to redefine security on a national, regional and global level. Various establishments within states and international security organizations are engaged in persistent efforts to identify new functions that would refill the void that seems to have arisen in the traditional realm of international security.

Parallel to this process, a fierce debate is taking place in academic circles regarding the content and structure of the concept of security. Neither the political search for new definitions of security, nor the academic debates have yielded conclusive outcomes thus far. The search is still on.

Despite the lack of universally accepted definitions of security, the situation is far from chaotic. What we are witnessing is a shift from traditional notions of security to new conceptions of the term. Concomitantly, policy making that has not been hitherto considered as a traditional part of the security repertoire of states is now increasingly recognized as security-related. The conceptual and political confusion of the notion of national and regional security is the starting point of the present study. Specifically, this study is concerned with the following questions:

1. What are the basic conceptions of security at the national and regional level?
2. Have they changed over time? If so, how? If not, why not?
3. What are the implications of changing notions of security at the national and regional levels for national and regional security affairs?
4. Are such changes reflected in the Middle East of the last decade?
5. What are the implications of such changes for regional security architecture in the region?
6. Can we think of a regional structure that is best designed to meet future security challenges in the Middle East?
In order to address these questions, this study is designed as follows. Section 1 discusses three major theoretical conceptions of national security: the (neo) realist conception, the liberal conception, and—for lack of a better term—the revisionist conception. Section 2 discusses the implications of these conceptions for regional security affairs. Section 3 reviews certain trends in the Middle East over the last 50 years and examines whether these trends indicate a factual shift in regional security that parallels a conceptual shift in the notion of security as exhibited in the theoretical literature. Section 4 examines the future implications of this possible shift. In particular, it discusses possible designs for regional structures and how such structures may function to meet regional challenges.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO SECURITY

Three fundamental approaches seem to have dominated the literature on national and regional security affairs: the (neo)realist approach, the liberal approach, and the revisionist approach. In this section, I attempt to characterize them very briefly.

The (Neo)realist Approach to Security

The concept of security was traditionally defined in international politics in terms of the physical safety of a given state from external threats. This was typically reflected in the efforts invested by the state to safeguard its territory and its citizens from threats emanating from outside its boundaries. Such measures included the traditional items on the national security or strategic menu, specifically: military allocations, alliances, and conflict behavior.

This basic view of national security is firmly grounded in the realist perspective of international politics that dominated the study of these issues for much of the postwar period, and is still highly influential. It also captures much of the discourse of practitioners.

Several basic assumptions are fundamental to this conception. First, the nation-state is the central unit of analysis in the study of security, at least in an international political context. The state is conceptualized as a unitary rational actor driven by a relatively objective definition of national interest defined in terms of power. Second, national security is fundamentally a relationship between the state and its external environment. Third, this relationship is embedded in the characteristic of international anarchy, the lack of a supreme international authority that is capable of enforcing law upon states.

International anarchy serves as the foundation of the security predicament of the individual state. The paradoxical extension of the national-security logic of states into the dyadic or systemic level constitutes the infamous security
dilemma. International anarchy therefore conditions the behavior of states such that states do what they must, not necessarily what they want.

This property also underlies the fourth assumption: the logic by which states act in security affairs is fundamentally different from the principles that determine their domestic political behavior. Domestic politics are guided by the principle of sovereignty, that is, the existence of an integrated set of institutions capable of devising and enforcing laws on a defined population residing in a defined territorial domain. This set of institutions is thus responsible for the ‘authoritative allocation of values for society’. One of these principal values is that of security. However, since international relations are fundamentally anarchic, national security behavior is based on the self-help principle in a Hobbesian-like state of nature. Thus, the realist conception of international relations, in general, and of international security, in particular, deals with the question of national survival in a system where law is non-binding and non-enforceable. In domestic politics, we study how social groups and individuals behave in a system guided by law and by institutions, which determine what these laws are and how they are enforced.

This logic also differs from what states do in other domains of their international relations, for example, international economic relations, international management, and so forth. In these domains anarchy may not be the principal property of the system. Rather, non-security domains may be characterized by ‘international regimes’, that is, a set of principles, norms, or decision rules that may be unwritten and informal, but nevertheless serve to constrain and to condition self-centered behavior of states.

Alliances are also regimes and they are part and parcel of a realist system. Security regimes may well be the principal examples of how states work out arrangements to somehow survive under anarchy. In the Realist tradition, security regimes consist of both informal arrangements such as ‘rules of the game’, and formal structures such as formal alliances. Both types of security regimes serve to balance the system.

From these assumptions we can derive a characterization of national security in the realist mold. This characterization can be described as a series of questions and answers.

1. What is the problem of national security?

The problem is state survival in a system wherein its physical safety, sovereignty, and territorial integrity are under constant threat. The problem of survival requires the state to deal with potential or actual attempts to challenge its sovereignty and national integrity by other states in the system, principally through the use of military force. An extended conception of the problem entails the
accomplishment of the state’s (political, territorial, ideological) goals vis-à-vis other states with potentially conflicting goals. \(^{13}\)

2. **What are the inputs for national security considerations?**

The principal factors that determine the size and form of the state’s security problem (the state’s threat perception or its perception of security challenges) are external to its boundaries. Most obviously, these inputs concern the actions and statements of other states that endanger the focal state’s physical safety, or its ability to accomplish its aims. The principal inputs to the state’s security consist of other states’ military preparations (their material and human investment in their military power), their strategic diplomacy (the formation of security alliances with other states), \(^{14}\) and their actual threats and uses of force against the focal state or its allies.

3. **How is security policy made?**

First, security policy is made through a rational process that consists of several key steps: (a) **Threat assessment:** the key intelligence and external security organs of the state assess the threats and challenges emanating from the external environment. (b) **Policy exploration:** alternative policy bundles are presented to the key decision-makers by the key bureaucratic and political organs in charge of various aspects of security. These bundles are analyzed in terms of their costs, risks, benefits, and adequacy to the challenges. (c) **Policy choice:** political leaders then select the bundle that maximizes the utility of the state (the difference between benefits and impact, on the one hand, and the costs and risks, on the other). (d) **Policy implementation:** the resources and actions required according to the selected policies are allocated and carried out. (e) **Feedback.** Intelligence and security organizations in the state monitor and assess the extent to which the state’s policies accomplish their objectives, and recommend policy amendments to the extent that deficiencies are uncovered.

4. **What are the principal instruments of national security policy?**

The principal instruments of national security policy consist of economic instruments (both material and human allocation for military purposes, as well as economic inducements and sanctions directed by the state at other states), diplomatic instruments (principally formation and dissolution of military alliances), and military instruments (display and use of military force against other states).

5. **What are the regional or systemic implications of national security policy?**
The key implications of these patterns of security-seeking behavior at the regional and global system levels consist of several processes. These processes concern the key foci of systemic analyses of world politics: (a) **Balance or imbalance**. The formation, maintenance, and breakdown of regional and international equilibria defined principally in terms of the distribution of resources over actors in the system.\(^1\) (b) **Patterns of war and peace in the region/global system.** Change and stability in the system are accomplished by policies designed to promote conflict (e.g., arms races) or prevent it (e.g., deterrence). (c) **The rise and decline of poles in the region/system.** Changes in the system are accomplished through the emergence or downfall of regional/global powers due to war, technological breakthroughs or differences in economic progress.\(^2\) (d) **System change or transformation.**\(^3\)

6. Can regional institutions exist, and are they effective?

From a realist perspective the answer is yes, but only if such institutions are commensurate with the national interests of their members. Such a coincidence may take place if some members of the region are threatened either by other members, or by outside powers. The greater threat of overwhelming power may cause otherwise egoistic members to collude for collective security purposes. Alternatively, regional security institutions may emerge if they do not threaten basic national interests and provide some side-payments to members, such as coordination, reduced chances of inadvertent conflict, and so forth.\(^4\)

This set of generalizations specifies not only what this approach includes, but also what it excludes. Specifically, it excludes inputs, processes, and outputs that are not directly related to the physical safety of the state and to its deployment and employment of military-related power. It also ignores domestic actors and processes that are not formally charged with the making of security policy. This exclusionary logic forms the principal point of departure of the two other approaches.

*The Liberal Approach to National Security*

The origins of this approach are not well defined as in the realist case. However, one good point of departure of the logic underlying this approach is Keohane and Nye’s\(^5\) conception of world politics as characterized by complex
interdependence, or Mansbach and Vasquez’s depiction of world politics in terms of actors and issues.

First, it is important to note that the liberal conception of security does not offer a stark contrast to the realist version. The factors and processes postulated by the realist model are accepted—for the most part—as valid by the liberal perspective. Threats and opportunities that emanate from nations’ environments indeed have a strong effect on their strategic responses. However, the liberal approach differs from the realist approach on several major issues.

1. *Broader Conception of the Content of Security.* The liberal conception of security encompasses actors and processes that concern not only its physical safety, but also its economic, cultural, and environmental well-being. States worry about their survival, but survival—even if it is the supreme goal—is not the only goal. Moreover, in many cases, indeed most of the time, physical safety is not the most pressing or immediate concern of states. Other, more mundane issues capture the attention of foreign and security policy-makers. This is so not only because the management of national security is not all-encompassing in terms of time and attention, but also because economic, cultural, and environmental issues can spill over to matters of physical safety.

2. *National security is affected by domestic factors and processes.* Political dynamics within nations have a significant impact on their national security. States are neither unitary nor necessarily rational actors (at least not in the sense of the existence of an objectively defined conception of national interest, and the permanent definition of national interest in terms of military power). The content and process of national security policy-making varies significantly across states. These variations are affected by states’ political structure, and by the political and economic processes that take place within them.

3. *National security is affected by the political makeup of states’ international environment.* A state’s security perception is affected not only by changes in the capabilities, alliances, and behavior of other states, but by the types of nations that change their capabilities and by the political structure of the nations that make or unmake alliances. Moreover, nations react to the level of political stability in their environment. When nations face stable environments, both their sense of threat and their perception of strategic opportunity is reduced compared to situations of chaos and political instability in their environment.
From these assumptions we can derive the key elements of the liberal approach to national security. Again, the characterization of this approach is done in terms of ‘liberal’ responses to the set of basic questions posed above.

1. **What is the problem of national security?**

   The problem is insuring the state’s well-being in an international environment that is partly anarchic, partly cooperative, but mostly complex. This implies that a state’s well being is defined in terms of its ability to meet security threats, but also to provide its citizens with welfare, culture, education, and economic growth.

2. **What are the inputs for national security considerations?**

   The factors that affect states’ threat or opportunity perceptions are the traditional factors emphasized by realist perspective, as well as other factors that concern the political, economic, and institutional makeup of their international environment. The political and economic and institutional makeup of international environments mediates between the actions and statements of actors in the environment and their interpretations as security-related threats or opportunities. External processes that may be regarded as threatening within one context, may be seen as non-threatening or even reassuring in another context. An important array of inputs for national security making stems from within the state. Specifically, political, economic, and social factors and processes determine both the process and outcomes of security policies of individual states, and generate variations across states’ security policies.

3. **How is security policy made?**

   Security policy—like any other policy—is a bargaining process. Decisions about the proper measures to meet international challenges are not made in a vacuum. They take place within a system of a wide variety of domestic and international demands. There are tradeoffs between domestic and international demands, as well as between security-related and non-security related foreign policy options. Accordingly, security establishments play an important role in shaping security policy, but they do not have monopoly over security choices. Other actors, both domestic and international, play a role in shaping a state’s security policy.

4. **What are the principal instruments of security policy?**

   Here the difference between the liberal and the realist approach is more in nuance than in substance. Specifically, the liberal approach emphasizes non-military instruments of policy, while the realist
approach focuses almost exclusively on military instruments. The liberal approach explores the use and abuse of various forms of positive inducements (e.g. economic and military foreign aid, political support in international organizations), or various sanctions (e.g. denials of aid, economic sanctions, trade restrictions, etc.). Military instruments of policy are used less frequently than are these other forms of influence.

5. What are the regional or global implications of national security policy?

The emphasis on the use of non-military instruments of policy by the liberal approach implies a focus on regional or global institutionalization. Specifically, the liberal approach suggests regional and global security affairs can be understood—to a large extent—as processes of institution building, institution functioning, and the rise and decline of nonstate actors of various forms. Mansbach and Vasquez’s focus on a wide variety of actors—many of them of a nonstate form—and the literature on institutionalization (e.g. Keohane and Martin) suggest that states deal with the international state of nature not only through balancing processes and security alliances, but rather through developing institutional or informal settings that manage risks and reduce uncertainty.

Regional institutions develop and become effective modifiers of self centered, shortsighted national behavior as norms of collective problem solving develop in regional contexts. This happens when states recognize that they cannot solve their key problems on their own and that others face the same problem. This applies first to non-security related realms such as economic, social, or environmental issues, and then spills over to the formation of security communities; because only when cooperation proves to be collectively beneficial does it spill over to the security field.

Finally, regional and international processes are also determined by domestic structures. The reasons for the emergence of ‘zones of peace’ in certain places at certain times are to be found in the domestic (i.e. democratic) structures of states or changes thereof. Specifically, the formation and enlargement of democratic networks within regions may substantially increase the level of stability and peace not only within members of such network, but also—through spillover effects—in the region as a whole.

The liberal approach, it must be emphasized, focuses on the effects of internal structures and internal processes on the national security policy of states. It also opts for a broader definition of the national security concept, to include nonmilitary aspects of national and international safety and well being. As such, it broadens the scope of inputs, processes, and outputs of national
security policy. However, it suffers from a Western, perhaps somewhat idealistic, bias in that it does not attempt to uncover the regime preserving functions of national security policy. This issue is the central focus of the revisionist approach to national security.

**The Revisionist Approach to National Security**

This approach is embedded in efforts to study national security policy in Third World states, mostly in states fraught with domestic instability and authoritarian regimes.\(^{27}\) In such states, military power is a key factor not only in protecting the state from outside threats, but also in protecting the regime from internal threats. Moreover, the military tends to be a major—if not the sole—partner in the regime. In many cases, the military assumes power if and when civilian political movements are perceived to have failed.

For that reason, the key argument of the revisionist approach is that it is often difficult to separate external and internal factors that shape national security policy of states. Quite often, the problem of national security is not to guard the state from outside threats, but the use of military capabilities to assume and sustain power within the state, vis-à-vis other political forces. Thus, it is difficult—if not impossible—to separate domestic order and domestic security from international security. National security is as much a domestic political process as it is an external one.

The revisionist approach, just like the liberal approach, does not challenge the validity of most realist claims about national and international security. Rather, it offers an additional dimension of this process, one that focuses on the relationship between military power and domestic political processes. Hence, this approach is predicated on several assumptions.

1. **The function of regimes is to stay in power.** Security and the well-being of members of a society are means by which regimes seek to maintain power. The key threat to regimes may not be from outside forces, but from internal opposition. National security policy is therefore geared not only—and in many cases not principally—to insure the state’s safety against outside enemies, but rather to insure the regime’s safety against internal enemies.

2. **There is no separation between the instruments by which states seek security against outside threats and the instruments by which regimes seek security against internal threats.** The distinction between military instruments of policy aimed at defending the state’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and the instruments aimed at defending the regime’s monopoly over the use of force within the state’s borders is blurred or nonexistent. Moreover,
policies of material and human allocation for military power are strongly affected by calculations regarding the regime’s survival.

3. There is a fundamental difference between the national security inputs, process, and outputs in developing states and the inputs, process, and output of developed states. Likewise, there are fundamental differences between the national security making process of democratic states and that of autocratic states. The role that military forces play in developing (and/or authoritarian) states in providing a legitimacy basis to the regime define a fundamentally different structure to the economic, diplomatic, and strategic elements of security across state types. Here the distinction is not so much between states with different regime types, but between states at different levels of political development. The underlying structure that shapes national security policies of states is their level of domestic political stability and the role of the military in maintaining it.

From this set of assumptions, we can discern a ‘revisionist image’ of national security, the elements of which are as follows:

1. What is the problem of national security?

   National security is affected by the need to maintain both the state’s sovereignty and territorial integrity against threats emanating from outside its borders and to defend the regime against domestic opposition.

2. What are the inputs of national security?

   This perspective asserts that security is affected both by the statements and actions of other states and by the activities of domestic forces that are potentially antagonistic to the regime. The balance between the international and domestic inputs to security depends on the perceived acuteness and severity of external versus internal threats, but—given equal levels of threat—domestic threats take precedence. In other words, the revisionist school hypothesizes that states are more willing to take external risks than regimes are willing to take internal risks. We will explore this point below.

3. How is security policy made?

   Security policy is made by responding to situational assessments that combine external with internal threats. The actors participating in shaping security policy consist of both external and internal intelligence agencies, and military and domestic security forces. The considerations affecting security policy in the international and domestic realms do not always converge; in such cases, decision
makers tend to accord higher priority to internal versus external considerations.

4. **What are the principal instruments of security policy?**

   Similar to the realist school, the revisionist school views military allocations, alliance diplomacy, and the use of force as the major instruments of policy. However, unlike the realist school, the revisionists argue that these instruments are used for domestic purposes as well as, or in conjunction with, external ones. Military allocations are conducted to optimize the size and strength of the armed forces both as a buffer against external threats, and to provide for an effective and loyal shield to the regime against domestic challengers—including challenges arising from within the armed forces. Alliance diplomacy is done with an eye to receiving economic and military aid that would legitimize and strengthen the regime internally as well as externally. Finally, in most Third World states, the use of force is principally internal rather than external.

5. **What are the regional or global implications of national security policy?**

   An interesting paradox arises as a result of extending the propositions of the revisionist school to a regional or global level. The revisionist school asserts that states’ security consists of responses to both external and internal threats. Accordingly, it envisions a compound security dilemma due to both international and domestic reasons. First, there is the traditional security dilemma, according to which a state’s pursuit of security threatens the security of other states that respond in ways that threaten the security of the focal state. Second, when states feel domestically threatened, they tend to take actions that are intended to meet these challenges. Such actions may include increased military allocations, search for allies that would be willing to provide them with foreign aid, and the diversionary use of military force. This increases the threat perception of external actors, who—in turn—respond by taking similar measures. This compounds the original threat perception of the focal state because it is now confronted by increased external threats as well as by domestic ones. The more states feel domestically insecure, the more acute the external security dilemma is likely to be. The regional and global implication of this approach is that regional and global levels of tension correlate with regional and global levels of domestic instability.

Table 1 provides a comparative summary of the main arguments of the three approaches.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach Element</th>
<th>Realist</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Revisionist</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Security Problem</td>
<td>National survival in an anarchic international system; defending sovereignty and territorial integrity from external threats</td>
<td>National survival and national well-being in a system characterized partly by anarchy and partly by coordination and cooperation</td>
<td>National survival in an anarchic environment, plus regime survival and persistence in a challenging internal system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal unit of analysis</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>State, internal and external nonstate actors, bureaucracies</td>
<td>States and domestic societies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major inputs</td>
<td>Strategic Factors: Military allocations of other states, alliance patterns of other states, use of force against focal state</td>
<td>Strategic Factors + Political and Economic Factors: Regime types of other states, economic interdependence, extent of regional or global cooperative activity</td>
<td>Strategic Factors + Domestic Factors: Nature and extent of domestic opposition to regime stability, regime persistence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional &amp; Global Implications</td>
<td>1. Balancing structures (e.g., global or regional security 2. Arms races 3. Militarized interstate disputes and war 4. System stability and system transformation</td>
<td>1. The rise of regional and international institutions 2. The formation and persistence of international regimes 3. ‘Zones of Peace’ based on domestic structure</td>
<td>1. Relationship between domestic stability and regional stability 2. Relationship between external conflict involvement and performance and domestic stability</td>
<td>Only effects specific to a given model are mentioned, overlapping effects all listed in the realist model’s column</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This discussion of the three approaches is couched—as is often the case in similar theoretical discussions—in quite polemic terms. The main question arising out of this portrait of basic approaches to security seems to be: which approach best characterizes ‘actual’ international relations? The truth of the matter is that such a question is probably misplaced.

In terms of their relative empirical potency, there is unlikely to be a general dominance of one approach over the others. In reality, elements of these perspectives can be observed in any regional setting and at any given point in time. However, elements of one approach may be more typical of some regions at some points in time, while another perspective better accounts for the political processes in other regions at other points in time.

For example, nineteenth-century Europe—particularly during the Concert of Europe era (1815–48)—may well have been characterized by a fundamentally realist conception of security, despite its relative tranquility. Likewise, certain aspects of regional dispute management and cooperation between the major powers in the Cold War era may have been influenced by primarily realist factors. However, the collapse of regional—and, indeed, international—orders may be prompted and driven by domestic factors at other eras (e.g. the collapse of the postwar order in the 1930s due to the revolutionary change in Germany).

This point underscores the possibility of transition from one theoretical approach to another in accounts of the evolution of regional processes over time. It also suggests that a cross-regional analysis at a given point in time would exhibit considerable variation in terms of ‘which model best characterizes politics in a given region’.

When we examine the similarities and differences among the various models, we observe that they actually deal with different determinants of security policy. As such, the ability to ‘best’ explain regional politics in terms of one model does not necessarily invalidate the other models. For example, if a region is characterized by significant internal stability of its members, and if most members in this region are nondemocratic states, all three models agree that security affairs in this region are best accounted for in terms of realist variables.

On the other hand, if most states in the region experience high levels of domestic instability, enlightened realists would probably admit that this instability may well have a regional impact even if the region is seemingly ‘stable’ in terms of balances of power.

Because none of the three approaches claims exclusivity and universality over time and space, it is probably advisable to examine their relative applicability in a comparative fashion. At the same time, predictions and prescriptions of
regional structures, regional institutions, or regional security architecture, should pay proper attention to changes both in regional capabilities and the relative status and alignment of actors, and to the political structures and political stability of regional actors.

One of the major implications of the foregoing analysis is that the ‘fitting’ of security models to regional politics on the basis of regional outcomes may be quite misleading. The rise or decline of the level of conflict in a region (i.e. the regional outcome) does not necessarily indicate the relevant plausibility of the realist model, because all three models of security posit conditions under which a region would experience a surge or downturn of conflict patterns.

The same applies to trends in military capability or to trends in alliance formation and dissolution. A more proper approach is the study of relations between presumed causes of regional outcomes and the outcomes themselves. In other words, the focus in such an approach should be on the relationship between the presumed conditions for regional conflict or regional stability as deduced from each approach, and the actual regional outcomes.\(^{30}\) This is attempted in the next section.

REGIONAL SECURITY PATTERNS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

This section discusses security processes in the Middle East in terms of the relative ‘plausibility’ of the three perspectives of security affairs. This review is based on analysis of ‘causes’ of regional patterns and outcomes. The major regional outcome explored herein is the number and level of violence of Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs) in the region over the 1945–2000 period. The ‘causes’ of these disputes concern the ‘realist’ factors such as military expenditures, alliances, and extra-regional (i.e. superpower) involvement; the ‘liberal’ factors such as democratization, economic interdependence, and regional institutions; and the ‘revisionist’ factors such as regime stability and domestic conflict.

Clearly it is implausible to expect that all parts of the Middle East and all parts of the period would exhibit identical patterns. However, it is plausible to expect that issues and problems that determine the relative plausibility of one of these approaches would dominate some periods. Likewise, some parts of the region may exhibit different patterns than other parts due to different processes of development. Therefore one of the approaches may better explain one part of the region at one point in time, whereas another approach may better explain another part of the region at the same point in time.
Thus, to better structure the discussion of the evolution of Middle East security, this study offers a spatial-temporal classification of the region in terms of these approaches. This classification is given in Table 2 below.

This table suggests a division of the Middle East into three principal subregions. The North African subregion consists of all the North African states and Sudan (with Egypt overlapping with the Fertile Crescent). The Fertile Crescent starts with Egypt in the West and includes Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, the Palestinians, and Iraq (with Iraq overlapping with the Persian Gulf). The Persian Gulf includes Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Yemen, Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Because the formation of these subregions as geopolitical units started in different points in time, we need to establish different temporal divisions for our analysis. However, the different periodization across subregions is due to key processes in each subregion.

What marks the formation of the region as a whole is the establishment of the Arab League in 1945, which suggests a common recognition by a group of states that they are part of one regional system. In practice, however, it is difficult to talk of a region before 1947. Until Syria and Lebanon were granted independence, and Egypt received greater domestic autonomy from Britain, there were no independent states in the region—other than Turkey—that could conduct meaningful regional interaction. After 1947, the Palestine civil war, which served to mark a major portion of regional politics throughout the remainder of the century, was in full gear.

Likewise, the actual formation of North Africa as a distinct subregion did not take place until the early 1960s, with the independence of Libya in 1952, Morocco, Tunisia, and Sudan in 1956, and Algeria in 1963. For the most part, the independence of Saudi Arabia and Yemen since the late 1920s, along with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Region</th>
<th>North Africa</th>
<th>Fertile Crescent</th>
<th>Persian Gulf</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Period</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Formative Period</td>
<td>1952–65</td>
<td>1945–66</td>
<td>1945–70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Realist + Domestic</td>
<td>Domestic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic + Realist</td>
<td>Realist + Domestic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Realist + Liberal</td>
<td>Realist + Liberal</td>
<td>Realist + Liberal</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
the departure of the Soviet troops from Iran in 1946 did not render the Persian Gulf a meaningful subregion.

It was only around the early 1960s, with the independence of Kuwait in 1961 and the subsequent movement towards independence of the smaller Gulf states (Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, and the UAE) that the subregion started evolving as a relatively autonomous subregional system.

The essay proceeds by discussing each of the subregions in each of the periods in terms of the key aspects of regional security examined above.

**North Africa**

A process of decolonization—starting with the independence of Libya, going through the de facto Moroccan acquisition of independence in 1956, and peaking with the independence of Algeria in 1963—marked the 1950s and early 1960s. During this period, virtually all of the conflict activity in the region centered on the Algerian conflict, with most of the indigenous actors in the region exchanging threats, displays, and use of force with France. Given the almost complete absence of independent states in the sub-Saharan areas bordering the Arab North African states, there was no conflict activity in the region. There was also virtually no militarized conflict between indigenous members of the region. The key focus of the North African states was on state building. The military allocations (military expenditures and military personnel) for North African states were comparatively low, averaging 3.2 per cent of the states’ GDP. The human military burden consisted of an average military personnel level of 3.5 tenths of one per cent of their population.

The military forces of Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, and Sudan were no more than police forces, aimed at preserving public order, or in the Sudanese case, fighting internal rebellions. In most of these states, the military played an active role in domestic politics, coming to power in Libya, Sudan, and Egypt at various points during the period, and staying in power ever since. Tunisia and Morocco preserved their civilian governments, but indirectly kept some degree of reliance on the armed forces. In Algeria, the assumption of power by the FLN leadership also suggests a supremacy of military people in the politics of the newly formed country.

All North African states were part of the Arab League, but other than that they had no special alliance relations, either with one another or with actors outside the region. It is also notable that, in contrast to other parts of the Middle East, the superpowers showed little interest in this region, and did not spend significant energy in trying to recruit the states of the region into their respective blocs.
Because of the near absence of security threats in the region, most of the security-related energy of the various regimes was spent on nation building and on political survival. The armed forces of these states were small, inefficient, politically active, and—once in power—working mostly to safeguard the regimes.

The 1966–85 period is marked by a continuation of the trend from the previous period, namely the security forces in most North African states continued to maintain their domestic function of securing the regimes. However, the region was no longer absent any security threat.

Several conflicts emerged in the region. The first was the conflict over Western Sahara between Algeria and Morocco. This conflict involved sporadic violent clashes in 1975, 1979, 1980–84. The second was a set of conflicts centered on Libya’s subversive activities in the Sudan and in Chad and its clashes with Egypt in the desert border between the countries.

Also notable was the series of clashes between naval and air forces of Libya and the US, concerning the Gulf of Sidra dispute on the one hand, and suspected Libyan support of terrorism, on the other. Where these conflicts became major national security concerns (e.g. Morocco, Algeria, Sudan, and Libya), their traces were felt in other dimensions of military preparedness. The defense burden of most countries in the region (with the exception of Tunisia, which represented an island of stability) rose substantially. So did the human burden, in terms of the size of the armed forces.

However, the impetus for military growth in several of these states during the maturity period was not purely international; it was also due to domestic developments. In Morocco, several unsuccessful efforts to assassinate the king and to overthrow the government failed during this period. Libya went through one major revolutionary change in 1965 with the rise to power of Mu'ammar Ghaddafi, and another more minor change with the limitations put on his power by the Libyan military. Algeria experienced some limited level of political instability but no major political change took place during this period. The FLN-led government maintained power through the military elite.

Egypt showed remarkable stability even with the death of Nasser in 1970 and the rise to power of Sadat amid opposition from the old guard. Even the assassination of Sadat in 1981 did not alter the structure of the Egyptian government. Both Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak had to deal with outbreaks of domestic discontent, sometimes even quite widespread demonstrations. However, the Egyptian armed forces were largely left out of the picture of political maneuvers and the maintenance of public order.

It would be fair to characterize the maturity period as dominated by externally induced national security concerns. These concerns affected to a large extent the investment in military manpower and hardware of most North
African states. However, they did not override the domestic considerations of national security policy in the region. The armed forces of most states in the region continued to play an important role in the shaping of both domestic structures and processes, and of the international policies of the governments, even if those governments had been civilian in nature.

The ‘ripeness’ period in North Africa is characterized by a return to international stability, with a substantial decline in the level of international conflict in the region. The rivalries of the 1970s and early 1980s subsided to a low level not involving the threat, display, or use of force. At the same time, the investment of North African states in military hardware and armed forces declined markedly. All North African states—with one notable exception, Algeria—reduced their military spending and the size of their armed forces significantly. This was in line with a global trend of decline in defense-related resources.

Although some of the divisive issues of the subregion, such as the Western Saharan conflict, have not been resolved, the level of regional tension dropped significantly. At the same time, an increased level of institutional cooperation took place during the 1990s in the context of the Barcelona initiative of a Mediterranean dialogue. This dialogue among the European nations bordering the Mediterranean, the North African states, as well as some key members of the Fertile Crescent region (Israel, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Turkey) brought about a greater level of cooperation and institutional design. In general, both the decline in conflict and military efforts of North African states, and the growing institutionalization and cooperation during the 1990s suggest the increased impact of liberal factors on regional security.

As noted, Algeria represents the only exception to the liberalizing trend in the region in the 1990s. The principal reason for that was that Algerian security during this era was dominated by the intense and highly violent civil war between the government and the Islamic opposition. This civil war kept Algeria’s military effort way above the subregional average, and limited its involvement in the institutional process in the region.

This analysis suggests that North African security fluctuated among the three models. The revisionist model characterized the history of the subregion since its inception. However, the impact of domestic politics on national security varied over times and across states in the region. The realist model was particularly influential in the region during the maturity phase, but even then only to a moderate degree. Finally, the liberal approach to regional security has been increasingly prominent in the region since the late 1980s.
The Fertile Crescent

The political formation of this part of the Middle East was completed in the second half of the 1940s, with the independence of Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon in 1946 and of Israel in 1948. These states—especially Israel—served as the link that connected much of the interaction among members of the subregion. Egypt and Iraq were still under the strong influence of Britain. Turkey was the only de facto sovereign country in the subregion at the end of World War II.

The functioning of the region as a security system started to take shape around the second half of 1947, with the inter-Arab activity designed to foil the partition plan of Palestine. The November 1947 partition resolution in the UN, the Palestine Civil War of November 1947-May 1948, and the Israeli War of Independence of 1948 influenced the security-related patterns of this subregion for years to come.

At the center of this interaction was the Arab-Israeli conflict, which captured much of the attention in the subregion over time. Indeed, this conflict accounts for a total of 63 dyadic MIDs over the 1948–92 period, of which 18 involved full-fledged wars. Most of these disputes took place over the first two periods. The security policy of most states in the Fertile Crescent, however, was as much affected by the pathologies of domestic instability in most of the states in the region as it was affected by the ebb and flow of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and, to a lesser extent, Egypt and Jordan—all went through major political turmoil during this period, with the armed forces of these states intimately involved in the plotting and counter-plotting. On the other hand, Israel exhibited a strong level of domestic stability, so much so that a single party within a multiparty democratic system dominated its political system.

During the first period, there were numerous attempts to form and operate regional institutions, and to forge economic and political collaboration among Arab members of the system. A series of summits served as the center of this activity. Starting with the summits dealing with the Palestine problem in 1947, and going on through the 1950s and 1960, in the context of the Arab League, two issues dominated these summits: the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question, and inter-Arab relations in a more general context.

Generally speaking, these efforts were largely ineffective. Almost no coordinated action took place vis-à-vis Israel, and almost all conflicts during this initial period were bilateral conflicts between individual Arab states and Israel. Nobody came to assist Egypt in 1956 when it was attacked by Israel, France, and Britain, and neither did any other Arab state provide assistance to Syria when it attempted to divert the water head of the Jordan River in accordance with the resolution of the Arab League of 1965.
The Union between Egypt and Syria between 1958 and 1961 was a total failure, and the period of the late 1950s and early 1960s was known as ‘the Arab Cold War’. The management of the Arab-Israeli conflict by individual Arab states was based on realist principles, but the endemic domestic instability of states in this subregion also had a strong impact on these states’ security policies. The convergence of domestic instability and external conflict seems to have given rise to diversionary policies, wherein leaders in domestic trouble attempted to cope with these problems by instigating international conflict.

Military allocations during this period were generally low, financial military burdens averaging slightly over five per cent of the states’ GDPs, and human burdens averaging less than one per cent of the subregion’s population. However, toward the end of the period, both material and human burdens began to increase—especially in Egypt and Israel. This trend suggests the increased impact of realist factors compared to domestic political ones on regional security developments in the subregion towards the early and mid-1960s.

The second period, ranging from 1967 to 1983, reflects again a dual impact of realist and domestic factors on the security policies of states in the region. In terms of domestic political events, the period is marked by the 1970 civil war in Jordan, by the replacement of Salah Jadid by Hafez Asad shortly thereafter, by the Lebanese civil war that broke out in 1975 and continued to rage toward the end of this period, and finally by the domestic instability in Syria in 1981–82 leading up to the Hamma massacre of February 1982.

While the regime in Egypt has stabilized considerably, those of Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq went through considerable upheavals during this era. Again, the armed forces of these states were directly involved either in efforts to crush attempts to overthrow the regimes, or in plotting against the regimes.

At the same time, the period is marked by the intensification of the Arab-Israeli conflict, expressed by the outbreak of four wars within a period of 16 years: the 1967 Six Day War, the 1969–70 War of Attrition, the 1973 Yom Kippur War, and the 1982 Lebanon War. Military burdens went up significantly, to average levels of 15 per cent of the subregion’s GDP, and human burdens went up to over 2.5 per cent of the subregion’s population.

In terms of regional cooperation, we can see some evidence of strategic efforts at collaboration, mostly in the context of the Arab struggle against Israel. Examples of that kind of cooperation can be found in the Egyptian attempt to help Syria in 1967 in light of what had been perceived as an Israeli attempt to unseat the Syrian regime. In addition, the Khartoum summit of September 1967 suggested a joint Arab policy vis-à-vis Israel. Finally, the Egyptian-Syrian coordinated attack on Israel in October 1973 suggests a close level of strategic cooperation.
At the same time, however, the Fertile Crescent experienced a significant amount of conflict within the Arab camp. The crisis that preceded the Six Day War was managed to a large extent amid inter-Arab criticism of Egypt’s policy. During the war itself, the Syrians invested only a token effort in helping Egypt.\textsuperscript{40}

During the War of Attrition, there was no effort to coordinate the fighting along the various fronts. Growing Palestinian involvement in Jordan led to the Jordanian civil war, and brought about a military clash between Jordanian and Syrian forces. Following the Yom Kippur War, sharp differences emerged within the Arab camp regarding the proper peace policy vis-à-vis Israel. These led to several rifts, the most serious being the expulsion of Egypt from the Arab League following its peace treaty with Israel in 1979.

A final aspect of the rift in the Arab camp was due to the attitudes of different states vis-à-vis the Iran-Iraq War of September 1980, with Egypt, Jordan, and most of the Gulf states supporting Iraq, and Syria and Libya supporting Iran. In this period too, regional institutions did not have a significant impact on regional cooperation.

The third period shows a remarkable decline in intra-regional conflict since the mid 1980s and a growing level of regional collaboration. This pattern continued into the 1990s and was accompanied by significant reductions of military burdens of all states in the Fertile Crescent. Direct negotiations between all parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict helped forge a series of multilateral talks on regional issues such as arms control and regional security (ACRS), economics, environmental issues, and so forth. Although none of these talks evolved into the establishment of new regional institutions, they did accomplish a certain degree of cooperation, expressed in terms of diplomatic relations, some trade relations, and continued multilateral dialogues in ‘Track II’ forums. Much of this activity was brought to a halt with the eruption of the second Palestinian Intifada in late September 2000, but certain aspects of these dialogues have continued.

The shift in focus from confrontation to conflict resolution and to regional management during this period suggests a growing emphasis on liberal aspects of national and regional security. The shift from a purely military or diplomatic interaction among most states in the region to a wide variety of issues— involving a growing degree of participation by NGOs—provides additional credence to the growing impact of liberal factors on regional politics. The decline in the impact of domestic factors on national security policies of states in the region is evidenced both by significant levels of political stability and by the growing focus of most states in the region on civilian governments and reduced reliance on the armed forces as the legitimators of the regimes.
Several issues highlight the prevalence of realist factors in regional security issues over this period. First, the increased quest for and development of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the region. Israel is said to have continued its development of nuclear weapons, and other states—e.g. Syria and Egypt—invested in acquiring or developing chemical and biological weapons. All states in the region continued to invest in surface-to-surface missiles throughout the period.41

Second, while defense burdens went down significantly during the entire period, absolute levels of military expenditures went up. Because the levels of expenditure on military matters were lower than economic growth in the region, we get an impression of reduced militarization of states in the region. This is hardly the case, as the quantitative arms race of the 1960s 1970s, and much of the 1980s was replaced by a qualitative arms race. This arms race is no less dangerous than the quantitative race of the previous period.

Finally, the last part of this period suggests a return to predominance of realist factors in the shaping of the region’s security policies. Since the breakdown of the Syrian-Israeli negotiations in April 2000 and the outbreak of the second Intifada, the region is back to a conflictual mode, both in terms of rhetoric, and in terms of actual military preparations and conflictual interactions among states in the region.

The Persian Gulf

Domestic issues dominated the politics of the region up to the late 1970s. First, Iran experienced considerable domestic instability in 1950–51. Following the return of the Shah to power in 1951, Iran was preoccupied both with establishing a stable government internally, and in supporting the Kurdish rebellion in Iraq.

Iraq was under significant British influence throughout the 1940s and 1950s and experienced little instability. However, after 1958 it became a hotbed of internal unrest with successive coups in 1958, twice in 1963, in 1968, and finally with Saddam Hussein’s final ascendance to power in 1979. During much of this period, Iraq was involved in a protracted civil war in Kurdistan. The southern part of the Gulf was still under British influence up to the mid and late 1960s. However, the Yemeni Civil War of 1962–67 was the source of significant regional conflict, also involving troop shipments from Egypt.

The last significant event, which was to have a lasting effect on the political and strategic relations in this region was the Iranian revolution of January 1979. The overthrow of the Pahlavi regime and its replacement by a fundamentalist Islamic government continues to shape Persian Gulf politics to the very present.
The armed forces of the key states in the region were fairly small and defense burdens were moderate during this period, averaging less than five per cent of the region’s GDP. The number of militarized disputes between indigenous members of the region was very small, averaging less than one dyadic MID per year over this period. There were no wars waged between members of the region during this period, although several short-of-war military encounters did take place.41a

At the same time, there was little evidence of cooperation among states in the region. On the contrary, underlying tension characterized the relations of most member states. In particular, the relations between Iran and Iraq, while peaceful on the surface, were inherently hostile. On top of the political difference between the regimes, there were several territorial disputes, especially on the control of the Shatt-al-Arab merger with the Persian Gulf and some isles in this area.

The tension between Iraq and Kuwait started with the granting of independence to the latter in 1961. The Iraqi attempt to annex Kuwait in 1961 met fierce resistance by the Arab League and by the UK.42 Both the Iraqi-Irani conflict and the Iraqi-Kuwaiti conflict lay dormant until the early 1980s and 1990s.

The year 1980 was clearly a watershed in the politics of the Persian Gulf. The outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War in September of that year turned the region into a hotbed of strategic struggle between the two most powerful states. It also began to embroil other states in the region in 1984 and to the end of the war in 1988 through the struggle over the shipping of oil through the Persian Gulf.

The Iran-Iraq War was by far the longest and most violent war in the entire Middle East, resulting in over a million and a quarter fatalities on both sides and involving the massive use of surface-to-surface missiles on population centers in what is known as ‘the War of the Cities’.43 The massive mobilization of these two states throughout most of the 1980s increased defense burdens to over ten per cent of their respective GDPs, and human burdens to between one per cent (Iran) and five per cent (Iraq) of their populations. These figures were double the rates of spending of these two states in the preceding decade.42a Other states in the region also increased their defense spending, mainly as a result of increased income due to oil revenues, but this increase was not as significant as that of Iraq and Iran.

Regional cooperation, paradoxically, did increase in the region with the formation of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in 1981 that formed the first meaningful semblance of a regional security institution in the Middle East. This cooperation was manifested in the joint policies members of the GCC pursued during the tanker war of 1984–88, in collaboration with other states outside the region.
Yet, despite the fact that in the late 1980s two members of the GCC—Saudi Arabia and the UAR—were the largest weapons buyers in the world, the former averaging over $7 billion and the latter over $2.5 billion, it was evident that neither of these states, possibly not all of them taken together, could withstand an attack by either Iraq or Iran.

The Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and the ensuing Gulf War of 1991 also represent a major conflict that involved all members of the region. Even Iran, which formally assumed a position of neutrality, provided shelter to the Iraqi air force during the war. All other members participated in the war on the Coalition’s side.

Once the war was over, however, the region returned to a more cooperative mode. With the dual containment policy of the US during much of the 1990s, the GCC states could be reasonably assured that the Iraqi threat had been removed, at least for the time being. The same applied to the less immediate threat by Iran. In this context, members of the GCC began to engage increasingly in broader Middle Eastern peace efforts, getting directly involved in the multilateral talks following the Madrid Conference, and opening direct and indirect political and economic ties with Israel.

As was the case with the Fertile Crescent, with the outbreak of the second Intifada these ties with Israel were formally terminated, but some states in the region continued to pursue collaborative initiatives. The Saudi peace initiative of March 2002 seems a good indication of this commitment. Also, Track II diplomacy involving GCC states and Israel continue to this day.

On the military level, defense burdens were reduced significantly in the region not only because of the restrictions imposed on Iraq after the war, but also due to declining economic growth rates in the region as a whole. Since both threat perceptions diminished, and since avenues of cooperation opened up, states began to spend more resources on economic and political development than on military matters. Growing stability in the states of this region contributed to this trend.

As was the case with the Fertile Crescent, however, the ascendance of George W. Bush junior to the presidency in the US, and the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001 in the US, brought about a major shift in US Middle East policy, culminating in the March-April 2003 war in Iraq and the overthrow of two regimes in less than two years (Afghanistan and Iraq) through the use of force. This continues the trend towards offensive realism by an outside power and may well confront similar reactions by indigenous—state and nonstate—actors. The major actors in the region either tacitly approved the US action or actually supported them.
IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

This discussion of the relationship between the abstract models of national and regional security and Middle East realities suggests several points.

1. Over time, revisionist models of regional security seem to be less valid in terms of accounting for regional patterns in the Middle East. Domestic bases of regional security seem to diminish in importance as regimes in the region have become increasingly stable.

2. However, since most states in the region do not rely on widespread public support in the context of an open democratic system, the armed forces of most states continue to play an important role in both the domestic and international security policies of states in the region.

3. Realist factors continue to play a significant role in the politics of the region. Their importance has diminished to some extent in the 1990s, but seems to be on the rise since the dawn of the third Millennium.

4. Liberal models have become increasingly potent in accounting for regional patterns since the 1980s. This applies to all three subregions, although it applies more to the North African subregion than to the Persian Gulf, and to the Fertile Crescent.

5. Although it appears that the relevance of liberal notions of security for regional politics seems to have peaked in the mid and late 1990s, and to have declined since then, certain processes that were initiated during this period have not vanished completely. It is possible that if and when the Israeli-Palestinian conflict shifts into a more political bargaining mode, and if and when the postwar reconstruction of Iraq gets on track, these processes—such as regional talks on security architectures—will be picked up from where they had been left off towards the end of the last century. In fact, the prospects of a joint venture on regional security is more viable in the year 2003 than it has been since the mid-1990s.

Is the glass half-empty or half-full? The analysis presented in this study suggests that the Middle East has shifted a great deal over the last decade and a half, and that much of this shift has been in a direction that promises a greater deal of regional cooperation on matters of security, economics, the environment, and social and cultural dialogues. None of these shifts are irreversible. On the contrary. It is easier to destroy whatever modest advances have been made in these areas than to rebuild them.

However, even in the height of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the American-Iraqi conflict, a series of formal and informal dialogues continues.
These suggest that the seeds sown by the era of ‘relative liberalism’ in the region have not been completely removed by the new waves of conflict. Moreover, certain forms of cooperation between former rivals have been able to survive despite growing regional conflict. This cooperation—both in its explicit aspects and in its tacit ones—has allowed relative stability in defense burdens and prevented the expansion of the conflicts into broader regional conflagrations.

US policy since the establishment of the Bush administration, and even more so since 9/11/2001, may offer a new conception of regional security: a security architecture imposed by an outside superpower. This model entails the physical or political elimination of hostile regimes and rogue leaders through the use of force, the intimidation of other regimes that attempt to oppose the hegemonic security building process, and political pressure on friendly states to come to terms with a system that requires everybody in the region to make concessions (e.g. President Bush’s ‘Roadmap to Peace in the Middle East’).

While this shift marks the comeback of offensive realism into regional politics, it also contains greater opportunities for regional collaboration than in the past four years. If indeed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can reach some type of negotiated settlement and the reconstruction of Iraq results in the establishment of a stable sovereign pro-Western regime, it would be possible to reopen negotiations on regional security architectures of the ASEAN or even OSCE varieties.

There are several important trends in the recent years that have gone largely unnoticed, but which offer the possibility of a more promising future scenario.

First, there is a growing level of democratization in Iran. The struggle between the reformers and the radicals in that country is far from over, but the growing level of debate in this country over both domestic and foreign policy suggests that there is a fair chance of liberalization of one of the key members of the region.

Second, as noted above, the growing level of stability in most states of the region suggests less pressure on these regimes to try to use aggressive foreign policies and high allocations to defense in order to boost domestic support.

Third, there is a growing awareness in the Middle East, as in the rest of the world, of the need for coordination and collaboration on collective issues such as environmental problems, and there is even a growing realization that many economic issues can be managed only in a collective regional setting.

All this suggests that even at the height of the current regional crises, there is an element of opportunity. If key indigenous regional actors, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Israel, and external actors such as the US, the European community, and Russia can rise to the occasion and overcome their tactical differences, then the next phase of the multilateral and multi-issue process of regional cooperation can take off from where the first stage has ended.
NOTES

1. This study is part of a larger project on the quantitative history of the Arab-Israeli conflict, supported by a grant of the United States Institute for Peace. The responsibility for the analysis and interpretations contained herein is the author’s alone. Many of the datasets used herein can be found in the project’s website at <http://spirit.tau.ac.il/zeevmaoz/qhaicp/html>.


13. The first—and generally accepted—definition of the security problem is principally defensive, and views most aggressive actions of states as a defensive response to potential or actual external threats. For the second conception, associated with offensive realism, see John Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics (NY: W.W. Norton 2001). This conception asserts that some states


21. Maoz, *Domestic Sources of Global Change* (note 16) Ch. 5.

22. See: Zeev Maoz, Threat, Opportunity, and National Security Policy Outcomes’. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association (Boston, Sept. 1998) pp.1–4, for a more elaborate discussion of this issue. Maoz argues that situational assessments which underlie national security policies are fine-tuned processes based on questions such as ‘who does what’, rather than on questions of ‘what happens’. Specifically, assessments of threats and opportunities emanating from a state’s international environment involve both analysis of the internal structure and processes of actors in the focal state’s environment, as well as the security-related behavior of such actors.

23. Mansbach and Vasquez (note 20).


29a. See Morgan, ‘Regional Security Complexes’ (note 3).


31. Some general textbooks on the Middle East do not include North African countries (except Egypt) in the region, e.g., Colbert Held, *Middle East Patterns* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press 1989). Others include Egypt and Libya, for example Congressional Quarterly, *The Middle East* (Washington DC: Congressional Quarterly Press 2000). Still others include all of the northern African countries, see Yaacov Shimoni, *The Arab States: Their Contemporary History and Politics* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv: Am Oved 1977); Maoz employs the more inclusive definition of the region. The list of states in the region is given in Maoz, ‘Regional Security’ (note 4) p. 34. This list is based on a more general classification of the globe into distinct regions (Gochman and Maoz (note 29); Maoz, ‘Democratic Networks’ (note 26)).

32. One exception involving a fundamental security dilemma for Egypt (considered both a member of the North African system and of the Fertile Crescent) entailed its conflict with Israel and external major powers. This will be discussed in the section on the Fertile Crescent. The only conflict registered during this period between indigenous North African states involve two minor clashes between Algerian and Moroccan troops over the Western Sahara in 1962 and 1963 and one incident between Egypt and Sudan in 1958, Source Zeev Maoz (1999) Dyadic Militarized Interstate Dispute Dataset, Version 1.0. <http://spirit.tau.ac.il/poli/faculty/maoz/maoz.html>.

33. This figure is considerably biased upwards by Egyptian military expenditures, which—over this period—averaged over 4.5 per cent of the GDP, and by its military personnel, which averaged one per cent of its total population. See Quantitative History (note 1).


37. One notable exception was the Arab boycott on Israeli goods and on companies trading with Israel.

38. Kerr (note 36).


41a. Maoz, Dyadic MID (note 32).

42. Incidentally, this was one of the few collective actions of the Arab League in terms of inter-Arab politics that can be seen as successful.

43. According to the Correlates of War (COW) project, the Iran-Iraq War is the third most violent war since 1816, after World War I and II. See <http://cow2.1a.psu.edu>.

44. Congressional Quarterly (note 31) p.154.


46. This statement must be qualified since the model of external imposition of a regime structure on an indigenous political entity has changed the level of stability in some states. The US has since the 9/11 attacks replaced two regimes (Afghanistan and Iraq) and has forced political reforms in the Palestinian Authority.

This essay was initiated by the need for a discussion, focused on NATO, of the possible implications that regional security management for Europe might have for approaches to peace and security in the Middle East. Alas, what has been devised for Europe is very interesting, wondrous given Europe’s history, but not very helpful for the Middle East. Other regional systems may offer experiences that hold more promise.

Analysis of what has taken place in Europe since the end of the Cold War begins with the fact that governments there are earnestly attempting to continue a process of transcending traditional international politics that began many years ago; an effort that was initiated and has been driven primarily by security considerations. They are carrying this far beyond rapprochement among previously hostile states; the objective has been to rid participants of worry about the use of force among themselves.

It is such a departure from the past, there and elsewhere, that we lack compelling theoretical explanations and sound empirical findings to guide our understanding of it. Often NATO has been the focus of attention but a good deal of the available theoretical equipment has been useful neither for anticipating what has happened to NATO, nor for guiding the changes in it that took place, nor for explaining all this after the fact. There are plenty of intriguing analyses of European security and some, including this one, may turn out to be useful. Some studies examine rapprochement, the relaxation of a serious conflict by reaching agreement on certain matters and hopefully inciting more cooperation later.¹

Studies of ambitious efforts to reshape an entire international system offer case studies of interest (on the Concert of Europe, the League of Nations, the UN Security Council and other postwar, and now post-Cold War, arrangements). Many of these, however, stress that efforts to remake international politics are common after great wars that end with a decisive victory for one side and leave all sides tired of warfare, that they reflect the winners’ efforts to consolidate their gains, and that eventually the losers recover
and the winners fall out among themselves so traditional international politics returns. More to the point are theoretical and other analyses of how Western countries are doing what they are doing, and how they tried to do it even during the Cold War.

It is always possible that traditional international politics will eventually reappear in Europe, but there are encouraging developments. The ‘nuclear revolution’, which discourages any recourse to war, will continue to have an effect. Also valuable is the fact that the Cold War ended without fighting and thus without the bitter recriminations that losing a war can cause. Its central political conflict ended with a fair degree of consensus among the former opponents; as a result a primary goal of the winners has been to see the losers join them, politically and economically, rather than to repress or isolate them.

Thus there is no sign as yet of fundamental conflicts emerging between them. There is also no sign of major conflicts among the winners, despite their evident disagreement on various issues. Also encouraging is that the effort to transcend international politics is regional, not global—on a regional scale the effort has better chances of success.

This contribution explores one facet of these developments. The central argument is that NATO is being used in a highly creative fashion, along lines in keeping with its historical development, to bridge elements of several alternative models for regional security systems. This is of great interest on its own, but as of now it has little relevance for the Middle East. In fact, both the creative use of NATO and the larger route to European security of which it is a part seem very unlikely to be successfully imitated elsewhere for at least a decade or two, maybe longer.

REGIONAL SECURITY MANAGEMENT

Regional security management is now getting serious attention. It is also reviving as a topic in the field of international politics. The demise of the Cold War meant a decline in the impact of the global system on regional systems with respect to security. The Cold War instigated frequent, often profound superpower penetrations—Buzan refers to this as ‘overlay’—which severely compromised local management of security because important elements were beyond local actors’ control.

Though many governments found ways to use this for their purposes, including the promotion of regional stability, others found it uncomfortable and threatening. Penetration could mean global-power involvement that intensified regional interstate and intrastate conflicts, the injection of major (overt and covert) outside resources into those conflicts, their amplification into clashes supposedly of global significance, the direct military presence of outside powers
through alliances, bases, military interventions, and even participation in some of the fighting.

After the Cold War much of this began to disappear. No longer are global-system actor conflicts driving them, for their own objectives, to project their power into particular regions. We see no wars like Korea and Vietnam which American forces fought primarily as extensions of a global contest. There is nothing today like the Cold War penetration of the Middle East or portions of Africa. It is not that great powers are unable or unwilling but that global-level conflicts do not dictate decisions to do so; much more salient in their policies on regional security situations are terrorism, or fears about proliferation, or humanitarian considerations. They involve themselves because they have direct interests at stake or to promote collective international community values.

Global security concerns certainly can provoke intervention. Nonproliferation can, as Iraq has discovered. The struggle with terrorism is having the same effect. Perhaps other emerging norms will eventually lead to consistent, collectively authorized, interventions—norms against aggression, genocide, extreme repression—in a new world order. However, the evidence is mixed; sometimes the global community acts on those matters, sometimes not, and the same is true for the sole superpower.

Thus, for the first time in decades clusters of states in regional security complexes have the ‘luxury’ of far more freedom and responsibility for shaping their security environments.8 How can the management of regional security be analyzed? We start by discarding the notion that international politics is the same everywhere. Though studying regional international politics once flourished for purposes of policy analysis, in international relations theory it lost out during the Cold War to studies pitched at the global level. Analysis was largely confined to treating regional security complexes as mini-versions of the global system, fine for developing and testing generalizations about deterrence, alliances, multilateralism, etc. Now, striking variations in international politics at this level have undermined that view.

### REGIONAL SECURITY ORDERS

To analyze regional security management it is important to get the dependent variable right, which is how states constituting the system stand in collective relation to one another when it comes to security. Only in traditional international politics is this expressed primarily by the distribution of power. What produces this pattern is profound and pervasive political conflict among the actors (not the other way around). Waltz is correct to suggest that how actors stand in relation to each other is important. The poverty of the neorealist approach comes in trying to capture this everywhere solely by reference to the
distribution of power, while simply assuming serious, i.e. war threatening, political conflicts among the actors. If the level of rivalry and conflict is a variable, not inherent in anarchy, the salience of the distribution of power in system security arrangements varies as well.

Drawing on experience and theoretical analysis, it appears that the identifiable patterns into which regional (or global) security management can fall, in the abstract, are:

1. *acompetitive power structure and power balancing*—traditional international politics. Actors are quite competitive and war is a normal tool. Military power is the key factor in state relationships and system management, distributed in one of three variants: *multipolarity, bipolarity, and hegemony*.

2. *a great-power concert*. The great powers deliberately mute their rivalries and cooperate in managing the system. While some analysts treat this as a managed balance of power, the level of deliberate cooperation in a true concert seems too high for this. In a true concert cooperation is used to escape key elements of power balancing;

3. *Wilsonian collective security*. System members agree to act together to quell any breach of the peace among them, and thus provide a collective deterrence against attacks and war;

4. *a pluralistic security community*. All members arrive at a pattern of relations, no serious political conflicts, in which the use of force is never considered;

5. *asignificant degree of integration*. The members deliberately erode their autonomy and accept rising interdependence in a community where they are less able to resort to force against each other even though they remain largely autonomous;

Counting the three sub-patterns of power distributions of the first pattern, these seven options are listed in order of the degree of departure from international politics involved. Multipolarity is classic international politics—anarchy, little sense of community, weak norms and institutions (if any) to facilitate cooperation and limit conflict. Moving down the typology moves the system away from inherent insecurity (the classic realist conception) toward security via collective action, a development that can extend to intervention to contain or quell intrastate conflict as well.

These are abstract patterns, ideal types. None is readily found in a pure form, as a clear, hard-edged pattern displacing all the others. An entire system will not normally be characterized solely by one pattern—several will exist and operate simultaneously. However, a system normally has a dominant pattern, with one or more subsidiary patterns. Analysis starts with identifying the mix of patterns and continues by exploring changes in this over time. Comparative
analysis of the construction, operation, and evolution of mixtures of security orders is a rewarding approach to the study of regional security today.

Debates over describing systems in terms of polarity or whether they are realist or liberalist have flourished because systems contain elements of more than one pattern. This is directly relevant to trying to derive lessons from one system for managing peace and security in another. The overarching political relationship of the members, in terms of these ideal types, is an important contextual factor that dictates much about the design, timing, and utility of security management. For instance, confidence building is vastly different in a traditional international system than in an emerging pluralistic security community—in one it eases tensions to facilitate modest cooperation among states that remain insecure, while in the latter it embodies an emerging sense of community and the disappearance of insecurity.

**SETTING ASIDE A COMPETITIVE POWER STRUCTURE**

How can we describe security management in Europe now? As a regional security complex its membership includes not only the European but also North American states—we are discussing security management in the transatlantic security complex. Its dominant pattern during the Cold War was a highly competitive bipolarity—the military power of two offsetting blocs sustained stability, order, and peace.

There were periodic efforts to embrace another pattern on a particular security issue, or to move to another dominant pattern. An example of the former is the effort early in the Cold War to reestablish a concert on issues like Germany, Berlin, and nuclear arms control (particularly a test ban). Examples of the later include the effort to lay the normative basis for a pluralistic security community in the Helsinki process, or to make detente measures less bipolar in character and design (*Ostpolitik*). Still, the dominant pattern was bipolar confrontation.

Bipolarity was not the whole story, however. Underneath this dominant pattern each bloc also constituted a security system; *within* each bloc security had to be managed as well. Each started within a hegemonic pattern—order and security was provided among the members by the dominance of the superpower. In the Soviet bloc there was little evolution away from that pattern, despite assertions that it was a (socialist) pluralistic security community and Soviet promotion of bloc military and economic integration. In the West, the hegemonic pattern was never erased because it seemed unavoidable during the Cold War and because it was the guarantee for Germany’s neighbors against a revival of German militarism.14
However, it was supplemented and finally replaced by elements of a concert, a pluralistic security community, and a degree of integration, and the dominant pattern in intrabloc security relations eventually became a pluralistic security community.

How did this happen? We cannot say definitively. After all we have only one case, and it took place in a highly distinctive era. When other groups of states make a similar transition, the process may differ. The author suggests that in the transatlantic security complex the following were crucial to the process: First was establishment of a broad political consensus on basic matters among the members. Second was achievement of much political and military transparency in member relations. Third was the emergence of advanced multilateralism.\textsuperscript{15}

Should democracy be added to this list? Perhaps. Certainly all three were greatly facilitated by the democratic character of most members. However, without comparable cases it is hard to treat democracy as a prerequisite or a necessary condition. ASEAN members, for instance, have taken important steps in the same direction without a similar degree or level of democracy.

On the necessity of a broad political consensus, there is a recurring view that even without it states can be lured or educated into more cooperative security relations via functionalist cooperation experiences, expanding transactions, confidence building measures (CBMs), arms control, etc. However, one may think they apply, if at all, only to easing or relaxing a specific conflict, not to the design of regional security management. For the latter, they are inevitably adjuncts to a political consensus—it is the latter that carries the freight. The author of this essay sees no way to evade or manipulate political leaders and relevant national security elites. Without their commitment to transcending traditional international politics nothing much is likely to happen, especially on the necessary adjustments in national preferences so that the members’ interests overlap sufficiently or conflicts are deferred to build a stable and peaceful environment.

The political consensus that emerged the transatlantic area began with the idea that the overriding goal was securing a safe and orderly environment, above all avoiding war;\textsuperscript{16} that this could only be achieved collectively, through consensus and cooperation among the important actors. This meant setting aside, downgrading, or ignoring past conflicts for the sake of maintaining cooperation, and some clashing national objectives had to be set aside or repressed, for the time being or indefinitely.\textsuperscript{17} This was often difficult and it took years to carry the effort beyond rhetoric but it gradually became a central feature of NATO’s internal politics.

Clearly the consensus also had to extend to the conception of what a safe and orderly environment would look like, otherwise the usual competition over incompatible national objectives would have been reconstituted as disagreement
about the ‘right’ environment. The consensus had to encompass accepting rising security interdependence, shifting away from unilateral security toward ‘common security’. Detailed agreement on all this was not vital, just a homogeneous conception of where to be trying to go and roughly how to get there.

This political consensus pertained to security as traditionally defined—protection from external attack—but used a rather broad conception of what was relevant that included not only military resources and a collective defense posture but economic recovery and development, political development (for former Axis states), and political stability. In turn, these were seen as linked to a burgeoning of trade and investment within a stable international economic system.

Initially, in fact, the nonmilitary components were considered the most important and the consensus was that progress on those required collective efforts. Thus there were budding efforts at significant multilateralism already available prior to the serious development of NATO. This multilateralist context, with associated increases in interdependence, continued to develop alongside NATO. NATO contributed to and was a part of this larger development, not its initiator or initial expression.18

The consensus on the threat and the strategic posture to adopt evolved over time. Initially it was that the West faced a major potential threat and needed a security association. The Korean War made the threat look immediate so the security association turned to rearmament for large forces poised to fight, especially with large American forces in Europe, under an elaborate joint command. Soon the consensus embraced heavy reliance on nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence, and NATO’s basic posture was set for the duration of the Cold War.

The members’ fundamental concerns were overlapping, not homogeneous, as were the preferred forms of implementation—as France’s uneasy association with NATO displayed. Exactly how to define the threat remained disputed. So did the matter of how large and well equipped the forces would be and what the alliance’s nuclear strategy should be. Beyond the US-European clashes, as one analyst recently noted ‘the British, French and Germans…are [now] in agreement on the basis for European defense for the first time for some 40 years…’19

The political consensus would not have emerged without very strong positive and negative incentives. Positive incentives included highly appealing opportunities that would be available largely or only if a more cooperative intra-Western security environment emerged.20 They had to be substantial; normally too little will be ventured to escape traditional international politics for uncertain gains because the risks and costs seem too great. However, negative
incentives were also important; ones arising from intensely unsatisfactory experience in international politics—deadly levels of conflict, crushing burdens associated with war and insecurity.

However, negative incentives alone would not have done the trick either. The realist argument that it is foolish and dangerous to try to elude traditional international politics had considerable historical backing. Only a combination of potent positive and negative incentives overcame the reservations. Even then it may often take special circumstances—the one usually cited for the Western community is a suitable hegemon. The experiences that shaped the consensus included the prewar depression and its contribution to the rise of Fascism, the triumph of democracies (in the West) during the war, the vast and detailed wartime cooperation that created associations, skills, and habits very useful for further cooperation after the war ended.

As for the positive incentives, the advantages of alliance with the US were plain enough to Europeans while the US operated with an internationalist perspective in which close association with Western Europe was the cornerstone of American security. The negative incentives loomed very large: fear of the Soviet Union and another great war if insufficient attention was paid to deterrence (the Munich analogy), fear that with international politics as usual the US would go home, and fear that without NATO states would turn to deals with Moscow—starting with West Germany!

Beyond this broad consensus, another obvious requirement was the emergence of a high level of transparency for Western governments in their interactions and the domestic decisions and related internal processes pertaining to them. Transparency is vital for successful security cooperation on military capabilities, plans, and intentions for obvious reasons. It is even more important politically, with regard to each actor’s general objectives and particularly to its ability to make credible commitments to cooperate when that will be costly to do so. Transparency makes it possible to contain states’ fears that their cooperation will be exploited and that they will learn about instances of this too late to either halt it or protect themselves from it.

In the development of NATO over time the West attained a high level of military transparency. To have large forces in place and make detailed preparations to mobilize much larger forces under a central command, the members began sharing information on military capabilities and coordinating military spending on an unprecedented scale in peacetime. As for political transparency, the democratic character of most members helped greatly; also important was the proliferation of vast official and unofficial contacts and discussions in and around NATO.

This was closely related to the third requirement, the emergence of advanced multilateralism, because NATO became one of the foremost demonstrations of it
in the West. Multilateralism as a modest exercise in cooperation, often within international organizations that have little impact on their own, has a long history. Advanced multilateralism is much more recent and involves recurring patterned interaction that displays three elements: (a) equal application to all participants of some important general principle(s); (b) reflecting a sense that, for the purpose at hand, the members constitute a community; (c) allowing the pursuit of gains from cooperation within an expectation of diffuse reciprocity.\textsuperscript{23}

These elements permit much higher cooperation, leading to increasing interdependence, and often highly institutionalized arrangements with institutions as actors in their own right because they embody and enhance the cooperation.

As noted earlier, parallel developments in advanced multilateralism—in OECD, steps toward European integration, international monetary management, GATT—powerfully complemented the steps specifically to deal with security. Their legacy is apparent today: ‘The Atlantic area is one of the most comprehensively rule-governed and densely institutionalized in the world arena…’\textsuperscript{24} NATO multilateralism started out as an alliance in the regional bipolar structure, and with significant elements of American hegemony. However, it soon made an important contribution to the emergence of a pluralistic security community in the West. NATO-advanced multilateralism \textit{verged on integration}, supplying a framework through which the powerful military capabilities of states with a long history of conflict and rivalry could coexist without provoking traditional fears and insecurity. This was particularly evident in West German rearmament; NATO was the vehicle through which German forces were lodged within a larger entity where the US played the dominant role.

NATO became the most integrated peacetime alliance ever devised involving numerous independent governments.\textsuperscript{25} It is probably the highest level of peacetime integration in military affairs and security policies attainable by sovereign states; to go further would eliminate key components of members’ sovereignty (France has believed NATO does this as it is). This integrative dimension was crucial to the way the alliance supplied security.

Rarely approached as an example of integration, NATO carried multilateralism much further than had hitherto been attempted on security in peacetime. Leading officials were constantly in contact—summits, visits, letters, phone calls, etc. Lower level officials and officers interacted even more intensively in NATO headquarters, in meetings, in regular maneuvers, in information sharing and joint planning steps. Members exchanged plans, intelligence, political judgments, advice. Officials mingled freely with ex-officials, think tank analysts, academics, journalists, and influential elites in a soup of meetings, conferences and conference studies, consulting, articles and
books, reports, columns, editorials, broadcasts. There had never been anything like it. The result was a growing sense of community over time, application of a set of common principles starting with the promise to defend all members equally, and behavior on the basis of diffuse reciprocity which repeatedly facilitated agreements via compromise on sensitive matters.\textsuperscript{26}

Only Greece and Turkey in their relations failed or refused to achieve this and failed to extend the emerging pluralistic security community to their bilateral relationship. And only France was unable to accept the intimacy and integration involved and favored a more traditional alliance, the French foreign policy elite being the most comfortable with traditional international politics and the least ready to give it up or believe others would do so.\textsuperscript{27}

The following factors peculiar to that time and place appear to have been crucial. First was the focal point provided by the nature of the threat. In wartime, governments sometimes reach high levels of cooperation temporarily in confronting immediate and clearly focused dangers. The Cold War similarly focused attention on specific common problems to be overcome, steps to be taken, tasks to be performed—an obvious enemy seemed poised to attack with highly visible forces in specific ways and places. This was the best possible basis on which to organize an elaborate security cooperation. Despite some French inclinations to the contrary, everyone readily recognized that the relevant region (and emerging community) for all these activities would be unavoidably transatlantic.

The hegemonic role of the US was central too, particularly in shaping the character of the advanced multilateralism involved. It was crucial that the US came to view that effort (quite suited to and partly an outgrowth of Wilsonian internationalism) so favorably as to become its foremost champion. As Ikenberry has emphasized, the US thereby accepted constraints on its power and freedom of action that made its position in the community far more acceptable and effective.\textsuperscript{28}

While willing partners were also necessary—the absence of receptive allies is one reason nothing similar developed in security management in noncommunist East Asia—but US leadership was vital. It is hard to imagine anything like NATO emerging if the US had been opposed or just lukewarm. From the start many Americans felt that disengagement from Europe would be better than alliances with countries playing international politics as usual in their relations, and that an association going beyond a normal alliance was the proper basis for confronting the communist threat.

It helped that the US had little historical baggage in Europe that would make advanced multilateralism under its aegis unacceptable. (Unlike in Latin America where the pernicious historical baggage was, and is, substantial.) It was not associated with imperialism toward the continent, being suspected instead
of harboring isolationist tendencies. It displayed political transparency and a susceptibility to allied influence. It had hegemonic stature and capabilities but often seemed eager to push responsibilities onto its allies, readily promoted many improvements in their resources and capabilities, and clearly accepted limitations on its sway that led to the alliance being much more like a great power concert within a broad community. The contrast with the Soviet role in the Warsaw pact was glaring.

Hence, the US tolerated levels of allied forces a good deal lower than it preferred and less support on ‘out of area’ problems than it wished; it endorsed a NATO ‘flexible response’ posture quite unlike the one it had proposed and which, in fact, contradicted the point of its original proposal; it agreed to offset SS-20 missiles which it did not consider a serious threat; and it signed the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) agreements that it regarded as useless or even harmful. Other examples can readily be cited. The larger allies were particularly important in the fashioning of consensus (the concert element), but the smaller members were not without influence. Even on sensitive matters like nuclear weapons or the pursuit of detente the policies of the members were coordinated, not dictated.

Finally it was important that this deepening multilateralism acquired inertia. Up and running, it became steadily harder to imagine doing without it. It was woven into the daily interactions of the governments and their societies. Efforts to turn to other arrangements instead were not readily pursued, both out of satisfaction with the status quo and disquiet over the uncertainty of departing from it. There seemed no other way to ensure a close American association with Europe and a favorable framework for German power, because any alternative was hypothetical and the current one was comfortable.

There were theoretically interesting features of NATO’s development. First, the alliance was given both a political and a military dimension not just in the founding documents (talk is cheap) but in the organizational structure which included two NATO heads (one civilian, one military) ensconced in separate headquarters, with separate staffs and networks of separate committees and national representatives. This was enormously useful for blending foreign and national security policies with military policies, reinforcing the conception that NATO was a community, not just an alliance.

Second, the alliance ended up bridging the various regional orders outlined earlier. NATO was an alliance that contributed greatly to the emergence of a pluralistic security community, not normally a function or result of an alliance. It did so not just by interactions and rhetoric but by pushing cooperation so far. The only way historically antagonistic states with considerable military forces can construct a pluralistic security community is to thoroughly coordinate those capabilities—intelligence, planning, logistics,
training, forces, weaponry. And only an emerging pluralistic security community would make such interdependence, such trust in others, tolerable. This is what allows the participants to gradually set aside the security dilemma.32

THE CREATIVE USE OF NATO SINCE THE END OF THE COLD WAR

The end of the Cold War set off vast speculation about the future of NATO. Much of it concerned whether NATO would survive and rested on the idea that alliances exist to deal with threats and fade away when the threats are gone. Yet, it made little sense to keep emphasizing the existence of NATO as an alliance instead of thinking of it as a ‘security management institution’.33

Of course, it retains aspects of an alliance and the members think they are still important or find it politically necessary to say so. However, thinking of it as an alliance meant ignoring the other facets of its character and, instead, highlighting its hegemonic elements (since the military power of the members is so uneven). As an alliance, NATO’s enlargement would be deplorable because it would increase the commitments while adding little or nothing to its military capabilities. Moreover, this would mean taking seriously the Russian claim that enlargement was threatening movement toward an OSCE-based pluralistic security community.

This perspective was always dubious, as well, because it rests on the premise that an alliance is incompatible with a security community, which is incorrect. While NATO still has the capabilities and the trappings of an alliance for protection from external threats, as there are no such threats the attention, planning, training, and positioning of its forces now has little to do with them.34

NATO’s officialdom and bureaucracy spend their time managing relations with prospective members and other partnership for peace associates, the Russians, proliferation issues, terrorism, and bridge building across the Mediterranean. Conscript forces are giving way to professional soldiers so as to focus training and planning on peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and terrorism. It would take the collapse of the entire new political/economic order in Europe to make NATO actively relevant again as a defensive alliance within Europe.

NATO is primarily a political association for management of security in the regional system. The real threat of NATO enlargement has been not its growth as an alliance but that a community for security management is growing from which Russia was estranged. Once President Putin finally moved to secure a seat at the table, and the allies accepted the general idea that Russia could someday join, that estrangement was removed.35
As for blending security orders, this has been the key to the West’s adaptation—particularly of NATO—to the post-Cold War world. Blending is almost certainly the best way to edge away from traditional international politics. Having the NATO capacity to return to being a defensive alliance is the best way to reassure doubters and build a consensus that embraces the realists, allowing states to risk turning to more cooperative approaches to security.

If NATO became much more than an alliance well before the Cold War ended, if it was a highly satisfactory basis for emergence of a pluralistic security community, then there is no reason to ask why it continues. The members decided long ago that a pluralistic security community is far more attractive than traditional international politics and that view has now spread eastward. The relevant question should be: why would it not continue? If states had thirsted to get out of NATO, regarding its integrative elements as a terrible imposition borne only out of great necessity, then anticipating its dissolution would make sense. However, no member has ever really wanted to get out of NATO.

Thus we would not only expect NATO to continue; we would expect it to *enlarge*, just like the EU. As a major contributor to resolving the intra-Western security problem, the West naturally has relied on it to shape security for Europe as a whole. It has a past history of success, it has inertia, it has appeal to the former opponents. Enlarging NATO is a facet of the continuing utilization of advanced multilateralism, in which’… Europe does not have to start from scratch; much was done during the Cold War which can still be utilized if it is properly built upon. NATO is the obvious place to start…’

NATO’s survival is not just due to its institutional bureaucracy casting about for things to do and to, as neoliberal institutionalist theory emphasizes, the practical benefits such an established regime provides. While members of a comfortable regime will readily try to adapt it when its initial purpose fades, NATO is not adapting so much as doing more, as a community, of what it had been doing for a long time. NATO is a central part of a redesign of international politics, in line with what Walt once cited, almost in passing because he felt it unlikely to persist, as a possible explanation:

One can also imagine an alliance that persists because its members come to see themselves as integral parts of a larger political community. Here the member-states no longer think of themselves as wholly separable units, and thus find it difficult to imagine dissolving the partnership. This sort of alliance contrasts sharply with the traditional conception of an alliance as a compact between separate states…. As a result, this sort of alliance—if alliance is the correct term—is likely to be extremely robust.
Stressing both the integrative elements of NATO and its role in developing a larger Western community gets us much closer to what has been taking place.\textsuperscript{39} That view exposes the foolishness of ascribing changes in NATO in the early 1990s simply to the need to find something for it to do or ways to preserve it as a vehicle for US influence, or to describe enlargement as simply catering to American domestic politics. Such motives were not irrelevant, but highlighting them obscures the nature of the changes as quite understandable extensions of NATO’s past purposes and capabilities.

It is equally foolish now to trace more recent developments to American exasperation with European meddling in the American-run military operation in Kosovo or European alarm at American unilateralism. Again, such motives are not irrelevant. However, Europeanization of NATO has been seen as a natural prospective development, on both sides of the Atlantic, since the Kennedy administration. Now we finally have circumstances suitable for it, and agreement on roughly how it should be done, so once again the members are creatively adjusting NATO (and the EU) to get it done.

This also helps explain why developments in the 1990s recapitulate much of the earlier history of NATO and the West. The three prerequisites cited earlier for intra-Western security arrangements are now being applied for Europe as a whole. Doubts about the new European security arrangements mainly have to do with whether those prerequisites—such as a broad consensus or the successful expansion of advanced multilateralism—will continue to be met.

However, just as in the West after World War II, the end of the Cold War saw emergence of a broad political consensus on what the regional security system ought to look like. Physical security remains a strong concern, particularly in Eastern Europe, but the same additional elements are considered vital—economic stability and development, political stability and development, democratization, greatly expanded international interactions, increased interdependence—and there is the same broad agreement that these things must be pursued collectively. This was crystallized in the Paris Agreements in 1990 which reaffirmed the CSCE formula: the emphasis on market driven economies and democratic political systems, the call for elimination of prior divisions of the continent, and sharp reductions in nuclear weapons and conventional forces.

This is set within deliberate cultivation of vastly more military and political transparency for Europe as a whole.\textsuperscript{40} Arms control agreements, formal and informal, have stripped most of the secrecy from national military establishments; elaborate verification arrangements reinforce the openness but are no longer crucial to it—thus the agreement on open skies has never been implemented but no one cares. More democracy and greater flows of
information have made monitoring, such as by the OSCE, of domestic political developments and policy processes much easier and more effective.

We also see the same proliferation of advanced multilateralism. Organizational expressions of this include the Partnership for Peace, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the European Development Bank, the OSCE machinery, and the enlargement of the Council of Europe. It once included not only NATO and EU enlargement but further development of the WEU. This has now been overtaken by the momentous decision to absorb the WEU into the EU and make the EU the basis for a European pillar in NATO and a European security identity, with a collective military capability for peacekeeping and related military activities. Now serious steps have been taken to add Russia, via a partnership with NATO on a set of major security matters.

The general principles that form the basis for the developing community are drawn from the CSCE/OSCE. Just as earlier, the consensus is on broad principles and outlines and there is nothing like unanimity on many specifics. States still pursue overlapping goals and perspectives, not completely congruent ones. For example, given Poland’s history the concept of a pluralistic security community is not enough; NATO’s capabilities as an alliance retain considerable appeal. To quote an earlier Minister of Foreign Affairs, ‘We would prefer to live in a Europe with no arms and alliances. But we do live in a world where military power remains the ultimate guarantor of security. We know that NATO is not a discussion club for idealists.’

The Russians consistently disagreed with NATO’s forceful approach to the Bosnian and Kosovo problems, as well as with NATO enlargement. France views the emerging EU force link to NATO differently than the US.

Turning specifically to NATO’s contemporary role, there is further evidence of the three prerequisites at work. Early in the 1990s the members reached a consensus on significantly adjusting the alliance functions, doctrine, organization, membership, and military capabilities. Adding regular consultations with NATO associates, particularly the Russians and Ukrainians, has made the alliance far more transparent to nonmembers. And the alliance is agreed on the expanded application of advanced multilateralism.

Looking first at the adjustments, NATO classic military forces are now insurance not against a plausible attack but against a sharp deterioration of the present situation in which the key to security lies elsewhere—‘insurance’ meaning that these capabilities are a last resort, not the first line of security. NATO remains important for its absorption of German military power (and that of others) within a larger framework to forestall ‘renationalization’ of security policies. Yet, this is not a central concern today either, and much of the responsibility for it will eventually be shared with the EU under the ESDI arrangements. NATO continues as the basis for continuing US presence and
leadership in European security, but the plain implication of the ESDI arrangements is that Europe will soon be able to deal with the realistic security threats there on its own and will carry greater weight in the alliance in general.

In the military sphere, NATO has added a self-proclaimed responsibility for multilateral peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peace enforcement, turning itself into an institution for regional security management. In terms of institutional design and implementation this has been a fascinating development. On the one hand, it is rooted in a structural hegemony, as if it was just a facet of traditional international politics. NATO is a collective hegemon on European security, with US military strength as its core capability. Collectively, NATO dominance in Europe grows out of the West’s victory in the Cold War, allowing it to simply appropriate responsibility for security throughout the region.

On the other hand, NATO has immersed itself in huge efforts to secure widespread nonmember participation in security management, is seeking to grow in size rather significantly, and is working to cut back on the salience of American military power. The alliance says it will act only under UN or OSCE authorization in security management operations. It has gone to considerable lengths to involve the Russians. Working with NATO partners has turned out to be very effective in harmonizing NATO perspectives with those elsewhere in Europe. In the Bosnia mission contributions of forces from 18 non-NATO countries eventually amounted to 20 per cent of the personnel. Combined with nonmember representation at NATO headquarters, these arrangements provide reassurance about NATO’s commitment to nonmember security and enhance alliance transparency.

The more pronounced the nonmember participation, the more NATO moves toward becoming a Wilsonian collective security arrangement, and enlargement of the alliance is a further step in this direction. None of this suggests that NATO hegemony is a permanent form of security management.

In a surprise to some observers, NATO is still the ultimate in multilateral integration in security matters, though this may eventually change. It retains a refined and sharply pruned command structure, and the intimacy promoted by the common planning, parallel deployments, and interlocking defense responses to a possible Soviet attack has been sustained by shifting to common endeavors in training, planning for peacekeeping, etc. This has included a huge amount of joint staff work for the contacts and annual training with associates, the Gulf War experience, the intervention in Bosnia, and the war over Kosovo. Even France has moved toward fully rejoining the integrative elements of NATO and Spain has joined the command system.

NATO has also been refashioned to accommodate a more substantial European contribution. First, the Europeans developed joint military units but largely via simply assigning combat units for possible future use in the joint ones
and with too little in the way of serious joint training and command arrangements for effective action. Then NATO created the Combined Joint Task Force Program, in which European NATO units could prepare for an essentially European military intervention somewhere on the continent when the US did not want to participate. Once again, these are mainly regular units planning to be pulled together for a mission, and the command systems were to be based in the WEU, which had a weak image and reputation.

Finally, a bold proposal by the British and French has moved the EU to create its own intervention force for Bosnia-type situations (again with units assigned for potential use) and eliminate the WEU. The force will be approximately 60,000, able to intervene within two months, and sustainable for at least a year. The distinctive change is that it will be an EU force, even though the planning and operations will be an extension of NATO, and it represents the emergence of an alternative multilateral security capability.

Despite scepticism that this will ever come about, the US has officially embraced the idea. The stimulus was the obvious reluctance of the US to put its forces at risk for Kosovo, its domination of the operation nonetheless because its capabilities outstripped those of the allies, and fear that continued US complaints about running such operations, about burden sharing, would foster a more isolationist US posture. Hence this is a gamble that Europeans doing more will not lead the US to do a lot less, and that even if it does Europe will be satisfied with the NATO that results.

NATO continues to supply a reassurance that dispels uncertainty about possible deteriorations in regional security conditions, contributing to canceling the effects, political and psychological, of anarchy alongside the many other steps to solidify common norms, enlarge interdependence, and build a deeper sense of community. Thus far this has been very successful. For example, Britain is shifting its armed forces away from national defense toward power projection for smaller contingencies, on grounds that no conventional threats to the homeland are on the horizon. Others are doing the same, redesigning their forces for peacekeeping and peace-enforcement operations.

NATO continues to blend detectable elements of the patterns of regional security management sketched earlier. In the past analytical appreciation that various approaches to security management can operate simultaneously was grounded mainly in thinking of them as parallel. We have not systematically explored how they can be effectively blended, how they can be kept in phase so they reinforce rather than interfere with each other. There have been plenty of fears that this cannot be done, that NATO enlargement poisons chances for a true security community, that NATO will break down as an alliance because of new peacekeeping responsibilities and new members, that NATO will fall ever more under the sway of the US in a hegemonic pattern, or that NATO
operations in Bosnia and Kosovo undermined the OSCE as a pluralistic security community. As guides on what to expect, these have been roughly on a par with assertions that NATO would soon dissolve. Based on the record, it is quite possible to combine elements of different patterns of security management. NATO ended up making the transition from alliance against external threats to peacekeeping for regional security management fairly smoothly.

The key is to detach many capabilities associated with traditional international politics from the motivations, perceptions, and expectations typical of that pattern. This is how establishing a defensive orientation in military postures, one accomplishment of the CFE arrangements, helps. It is how increased transparency helps. It is how even nuclear deterrence can help. It is how the continued existence of an enlarging NATO itself helps.

All these steps have converted capabilities for harm from barriers to increased security cooperation into insurance against possible failures that permits greater cooperation on security to develop. In combination they have increased perceptions in the regional security complex that the members will go on cooperating, repressing the security dilemma. This opens the way to what Jervis once noted is ‘the possibility of a benign circle and self-fulfilling prophecy of cooperation’.42

As noted above, this broad and deep multilateralism, with a multi functional NATO, did not have to be invented after the Cold War. It involves refinements the West has been pursuing for years, drawing on assets for squelching instability and mistrust among the members that it has long employed.43 Thus the West has an immense backlog of experience to draw upon. A careful study of the domestic politics of the members in making the major adaptations of NATO described above has found that for the most part leaders preferred to avoid big new concepts and arrangements and focus instead on the old agenda and the usual institutions, and to look as usual to the US for leadership.

NATO had a huge advantage in coming to shape developments compared to other available institutions: ‘NATO…possessed a large secretariat, an integrated military structure, an extensive military and civilian transgovernmental network of committees and daily contacts, and—above all—a number of strongly committed member governments.’44 The West is once again doing what it has learned to do, including how to adjust its institutions to new challenges and controversies.

To describe the results now, it helps to think of regional security management as a layer cake. In the past, NATO constituted the bottom layer for the West, providing security against an outside enemy, and contributed greatly to a second layer, a pluralistic security community among the members. Now the cake is much more elaborate. NATO is still supplying the bottom layer, with those capabilities held well in reserve. On top of this is a layer of great power
concert, used in managing German unification and in redesigning NATO-Russian relations twice in the past ten years. The third layer consists of initial elements now emerging of a collective security system, involving participation of many nonmembers in NATO activities, particularly Russia, which the US insists can eventually join NATO (as the final step in building collective security). The fourth layer is the enlarging Western pluralistic security community which will eventually extend from North America to Vladivostok. Also going forward is a fifth layer—greater integration via an enlarged and deepened EU, meant to eventually eliminate most remaining features of traditional international politics from Europe.

This cake is meant to be consumed from the top down. The top layers are to be so satisfying that there is never any need to have recourse to the lowest levels for any security matter within the transatlantic system. Building on an overall political consensus, a rising sense of community, expanding multilateralist ventures, and ample transparency, it has proven possible to combine elements of alternative security regimes in ways not hitherto anticipated.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MIDDLE EAST?

At this stage, it is hard to find much comfort for the Middle East in the modern history of security management in Europe. To start with, the Middle Eastern regional security complex is in no position to transcend traditional international politics. It remains a highly traditional international system where power distribution is the key—a system dominated by dual hegemons, the US and Israel, so disliked—for themselves and for their dominance—that even hegemonic stability has proven elusive.

In this, and in its strong continuing conflicts, it is closer in nature to the regional system centered on South Asia than the transatlantic one centered on Europe. Transcending traditional international politics in this system is largely irrelevant for the time being. The field’s ample literature on rapprochement and dispute resolution seems far more relevant, even if not guaranteed to produce solutions. What the nations of the Middle East need now is an easing of conflicts and related developments so as to make traditional international politics more bearable. Only then might larger ambitions become appropriate.

Missing is a sufficient political consensus even to support a broad relaxation of tensions and conflict, such as has occurred throughout East Asia over the past 30 years, much less a system transformation. Middle East states and societies lack other overriding ambitions and objectives that can replace the goal of triumph in, or at least not relinquishing, the conflicts that have motivated national foreign and security policies for such a long time. This is despite impressive positive and negative incentives for moving to relax the conflicts so the region
can begin to make rapid progress and achieve the sort of autonomy and stature that people there strongly desire.

However, the kind and level of consensus the Far East has achieved does not seem beyond reach in the Middle East. In the East Asian regional system many conflicts have been eased or resolved, and states have shifted to preoccupation with rapid economic growth and national development. They have deliberately opened their economies and societies and taken steps to keep the regional environment peaceful and stable.

States in the Middle East should look to East Asia for practical lessons on how—with the participation of the US as a powerful member of the security complex—to turn away from an intensely competitive and vicious environment and move into one that permits redirecting attention and resources to domestic development, outward-looking economies, and rising interdependence. The East Asian complex is a model of how numerous bilateral rapprochements can gradually reduce the level of conflict across an entire system—there has been no grand settlement, no equivalent of the CSCE/OSCE, yet considerable progress has been made. It is an important demonstration of how much can be accomplished without a flourishing multilateralism.

Also missing in the Middle East thus far is an extended political effort, by states and among nonstate observers and analysts, to develop a meaningful consensus about what international politics there ought to look like. Nothing comparable to the CSCE process, which did much to give the transatlantic complex a ready-made framework for a post-Cold War era, has taken place. There is still no agreement on what domestic arrangements—political, economic, cultural—will be most conducive to system stability.

The variations among societies and states, the diversity in the nature of their political systems, help promote the many conflicts in the system—there is real disagreement across the region on such fundamentals as having a secular or religious state, democracy or authoritarian rule, modernity or premodern societies. The East Asian security complex also struggled to get enough consensus to relax international politics despite considerable variations among the states and societies involved, and it can be studied with profit on this as well.

Not much has to be said about the lack of transparency. The level of conflict is so high that little in the way of arms control has been developed and there is a heavy preoccupation with hiding military capabilities and deployments, as well as a past pattern of wars being initiated by surprise attack. Few political systems are democratic and often the decision processes are quite hidden, precluding the way democracy facilitated much of the progress made in European security management. Many of the economic systems are rather closed and economic data is untrustworthy.
Finally, there is little in the way of advanced multilateralism developing in the Middle East system even in areas that might lend themselves to it. None of its components have taken hold—there are no generalized principles that apply to everyone, no sense of community, and little acceptance of diffuse reciprocity. Of course, this is what we would expect in view of the lack of a broad political consensus on where to go, toward what, and how.

Still, the region does have a bundle of powerful positive and negative incentives to try to step back from traditional international politics, such as the effects of profound conflict and war over far too long a period and evidence that much of the area is badly equipped to compete in the world in the twenty-first century. Breakthroughs on the more serious conflicts in the area in the next few years could allow those incentives to shift more regimes toward making a stable and orderly international environment their main concern. That in turn would invite preliminary collective endeavors to build peace and security. Optimism is not warranted, but should not be completely discarded either. It will not be another transatlantic region any time soon, but it can do better.

NOTES


6. The argument is elaborated in Patrick M. Morgan, ‘Regional Security Complexes and Regional Orders’, in Lake and Morgan (note 5) pp.20–42.


8. This is Barry Buzan’s very influential concept: ‘…a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another.’ Barry Buzan, People, States, and Fear: An Agenda for Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era (2nd edn.) (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner 1991) p.190. For its modified application to contemporary regional systems see Morgan (note 6).


12. This refers to multipolarity within traditional international politics—suffused with serious conflicts. While some analysts treat multipolarity as much more flexible, able to encompass less competition or rivalry in favor of concerts and other forms of cooperation, for a shift from traditional international politics to a serious level of enduring cooperation requires bipolarity or hegemony. Going so far as a durable concert, advanced multilateralism, collective security, etc. would mean departing from multipolarity as usually conceived (power balancing via shifting alliances, arms competitions, and periodic warfare).

14. See Trachtenberg (note 3).

15. For a different but overlapping list of prerequisites for NATO’s high level of cooperation see Fred Chernoff, *After Bipolarity: The Vanishing threat, Theories of Cooperation, and the Future of the Atlantic Alliance* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press 1995).

16. The same applied after the Napoleonic Wars. Using the example of the Concert of Europe, Jervis traces any concert to the decline of war as a legitimate tool of statecraft because it is likely to be unacceptably destructive, see Robert Jervis, ‘From Balance to Concert’ (note 9).

17. Examples: West Germany had to set aside unification and become a normal state again; the US had to abandon plans for Western Europe to stand by itself against Soviet military strength; Britain had to accept a constant military presence on the continent; etc. The result was strong incentives to cooperate that curbed the ever present incentives to defect, making the resulting cooperation less difficult to explain. See: Kenneth A. Oye, ‘Explaining Cooperation Under Anarchy: Hypotheses and Strategies’, in idem (ed.), *Cooperation Under Anarchy* (Princeton UP 1986) pp.1–24.

18. The scale of the resulting interdependence, particularly for the US and EU, is effectively canvassed in Featherstone and Ginsberg, who trace the links between many other interactions and those on security under the NATO rubric. See: Kevin Featherstone and Roy H. Ginsberg, *The United States and the European Union in the 1990s: Partners in Transition* (2nd edn.) (NY: St. Martin’s Press 1996).


20. In a recent example, Tony Blair on cooperation: ‘In a world with the power of the USA; with new alliances to be made with the neighbors of Europe like Russia; developing nations with vast populations like India and China; Japan, not just an economic power but a country that will rightly increase its political might too; with the world increasingly forming powerful regional blocs—ASEAN, Mercosur; Europe’s citizens need Europe to be strong and united. They need it to be a power in the world.’ See: Tony Blair, ‘Speech By the Prime Minister Tony Blair to the Polish Stock Exchange’ (Friday 6 Oct. 2000), distributed by mackay@losangeles.mail.fco.gov.uk.

21. Today, a hegemon may be less necessary because one regional system may learn from another that departing from international politics is feasible, rewarding, and even vital to keep up in interregional competition.
22. See Kelleher (note 19).


25. The US-South Korea alliance has equivalent integration but for only two states. The Warsaw pact displayed even more but between a dominant state and satellites, a very different relationship.


28. Ikenberry (note 3).


32. The state most uncomfortable with this, France, was the only one ever inclined to think about planning to defend itself against its allies.


34. The alliance had forces still largely arranged along old lines to meet a nonexistent threat and in recent years has finally moved to make major adjustments to give Europeans more capabilities for the real NATO functions of today and the future. See Michael O’Hanlon, Transforming NATO: The Role of European Forces’, Survival 39/3 (Autumn 1997) pp.5–15.


36. Marco Carnovale, ‘Vital and National Security Interests After the End of the Cold War’, in idem (ed.), European Security and International Institutions After the Cold War (NY: St Martin’s Press 1995) p.13. The argument that the West is doing what it did earlier because that is what it knows how to do, is comfortable with, knows can work—applied to Western multilateralism in general—was first laid out in


40. Mandelbaum (note 2).


42. Robert Jervis, ‘From Balance to Concert’ (note 9) p.76.

43. See Wallander (note 37).

Regional Security and the Levels of Analysis

Problem

STEVEN L. SPIEGEL

After the war in Iraq and more than two years of violence that has accompanied the second Intifada, it may seem inappropriate, if not naive, to discuss regional security issues in the Middle East. However, the threats of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), terrorism, social and economic decline at a time of increasing regional tension demonstrates the urgency with which these problems must be dealt. Using the level of analysis framework, this contribution will explore the issues involved in creating a regional security regime to mitigate these dangers.

The levels of analysis allow us to identify causal factors of international politics. This approach disaggregates a state’s foreign policy into three levels, which include the systemic level (the interaction between states), the domestic level (including both societal and bureaucratic factors within countries), and the individual level (leaders). After identifying the forces that affect foreign policy at each level, we shall conclude that the best solution for regional security in the Middle East must combine all three levels.

Therefore, since they both complement each other and cancel each other out, we conclude that the best way to promote regional security in these difficult times is to promote Track II, unofficial, informal contacts and negotiations. We will reach this conclusion by reviewing the levels of analysis, suggesting their implications for current Middle East security, and then through conceptual and instrumental means recommend ways of developing innovative methods for developing more stable regional relations.

The outline of the essay is as follows: (1) the level of analysis question and regional security regimes; (2) the challenges of the three levels; (3) countering the challenges by conceptual and instrumental means; (4) specific conceptual and instrumental steps; (5) a new concept of regional security for the Middle East.
THE LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

Systemic

In the systemic level of international politics, the state is the unit of analysis. This approach posits that states are essentially similar in nature as utility maximizers. Indeed, their behavior is partly a result of the system’s structure.\(^1\)

The systemic level of analysis is closely associated with the realist school of international relations. Briefly, (neo) realists assume conflict, not cooperation is the natural relationship among states.\(^2\) In this environment of anarchy, each state is driven by its desire for power and security. Other factors that influence state behavior include several major political actors in the system and their relative strength.\(^3\)

Another perspective that focuses on the systemic level in international politics is neo-liberalism. While both neo-liberals and neo-realists share the view that the state is a rational, unitary actor, they differ in their perspectives about the nature of states and their interests.\(^4\) Neo-liberals believe that states are driven by their interest in wealth and are concerned with absolute, not relative, gains.\(^5\)

Moreover, neo-liberals believe cooperation is possible and will emerge when states calculate it is in their best interest. Another important distinction between the perspectives is that neo-liberals emphasize the important role institutions can play in negotiations. While neo-realists believe institutions are just an extension of a state’s interest, neo-liberals claim institutions are important because they lower transaction costs, change preferences, and induce cooperation.\(^6\)

When we use modern Middle East history to test these systemic theories, neo-realism seems to have the most explanatory power. For example, Arab states cite much rhetoric about their common heritage but they have often behaved contrary to a pan-Arab agenda, even in the Arab League. Egypt attempted to unify the Arab world under the banner of pan-Arabism in the 1950s and 1960s yet it was often at odds with Iraq, Jordan, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. We can even find this pattern of conflict going back to the end of the colonial era in the 1940s.

Broader arrangements such as the Baghdad Pact and the multilateral process in the 1990s did not yield an effective structure or alliance. The Baghdad Pact, although an external attempt to organize a regional security system sponsored by Britain with the support of the US, also faltered on regional tensions, particularly the Egyptian-Iraqi confrontation of the 1950s.

A second example supporting neo-realist claims demonstrates a fundamental idea of this theory: balance of power politics and power calculations. Nasser
tried to undermine the legitimacy and destabilize the Arab monarchies of Jordan and Saudi Arabia. As a result, these monarchies tried (albeit unsuccessfully) to counterbalance against Egypt’s drive for regional hegemony. This process of balancing against a revisionist power exposes the myth of Arab unity and supports neo-realist claims.\(^7\)

The realist view also downplays the role of verbal and written agreements. In a similar manner, realism sees norms (and identity) as epiphenominal. Little is binding in this environment because survival and power for the state are the ultimate concerns. The following two examples after Oslo seem to confirm the realist view. One project was an international conference on terrorism in the wake of a terrorist campaign against Israel in February/March 1996. At Sharm-el-Sheik in Egypt, this conference sought to coordinate efforts to combat international terrorism. States came together in the interests of limiting the destabilizing impact terrorism might have on the region. This meeting, jointly chaired by the US and Egypt, was supposed to be the first of several. The ensuing meetings were never held after Israel retaliated against Lebanon in April 1996 for Hizballah attacks inside its border (Operation ‘Grapes of Wrath’).

A second aborted regional effort was a series of annual economic summits designed to promote business arrangements in the region as well as political dialogue. Beginning in 1994, these meetings were held for four years. They were suspended after a disappointing turnout at the meeting in Qatar in 1997, ostensibly in protest at Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu’s policies.

In sum, we have seen that neo-realism best explains modern Middle East history. This approach highlights the importance of security, but it focuses much more on predicting conflict rather than cooperation. Neo-liberalism, on the other hand, offers the prospect of cooperation through institutions in the hope that the creation and acceptance of norms will influence state interests. Taken together, these approaches emphasize the salience of answering security concerns and, at the same time, working to create an environment conducive for cooperation.

**Domestic**

The domestic level of analysis focuses on a variety of forces which can influence state behavior. Factors that can impact foreign policy at the domestic level include regime type (democratic v. authoritarian v. totalitarian), electoral politics, bureaucracy, political culture, public opinion, and interest groups.

**Public Opinion and Party Politics.** Public attitudes and opinions can exert pressure on leaders by demonstrating the costs they might incur if they take a particular action. In authoritarian regimes, leaders may not have to worry about
the effect of their decisions at the polls, but disapproval may be more costly than
just losing an election.

In much of the Middle East, the ‘Arab street’, or ‘the masses’, can pose
significant challenges to a leader’s policy and his legitimacy. Most Arab leaders
are afraid and often constrained by this domestic force. Many argue that these
leaders might pursue the peace process with Israel more vigorously were it not
for the impact of this factor. A recent example is Yasser Arafat’s insistence that
his people (their potential criticism and the popularity of Hamas and Islamic
Jihad) prevent him from making certain concessions. That was certainly a major
argument used by Palestinians to justify Arafat’s refusal to negotiate at Camp
David in July 2000. While some analysts argue that claiming ‘my hands are tied’
is just a bargaining tactic, especially since Arafat has done very little recently to
stand up to his opponents, others maintain there may just be some truth to the
point.

How a state manages its domestic opposition can affect its credibility as a
peace partner. Certainly, Arafat’s reluctance to confront terrorists has
destroyed his credibility in Israel. In fact, some politicians claim that Israel could
afford to make major concessions in the pursuit of peace only when all Arab
states become democracies. These political claims are often buttressed by the
democratic peace theory, which asserts that democracies rarely, if ever, go to war
with each other.

Complexities of parliamentary politics may further complicate negotiations.
In Israel, for instance, Prime Ministers Rabin, Peres, Netanyahu, and Barak
faced great difficulties trying to pursue their own political agendas. The Labor
party was reluctant to confront settlers before an agreement was reached and
therefore delayed restraining the growth of settlements. Moreover, leaders of
both parties had to simultaneously negotiate at two levels, the domestic and the
systemic. They had to contend with intra-party politics, manage coalitions, and
mitigate external pressures from the international arena.

**Bureaucratic Politics.** This approach challenges the neo-realist assumption that
the state is a unitary, rational actor. The model acknowledges the bargaining
between agencies and individuals that may result in a foreign policy outcome
different from the leaders’ original intention. The phrase, ‘where you stand
depends [up]on where you sit’ is appropriate for explaining the divisions within
governments and how particular agencies can impede the decision-making
process.

An example of this type of problem occurred during the arms control talks in
the 1990s. The leadership of the Egyptians and Israelis were ostensibly
committed to the Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) process, which
was one of the five regional multilaterals during the early 1990s. However,
bureaucratic cultures specific to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry and the Israeli
Defense Ministry, respectively, inhibited efforts to agree on a common set of principles that would serve as the basis for further discussions. For instance, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry is dominated by an emphasis on international legal norms and shaped by personal experiences at the UN. In contrast, decision-making within the Israeli Defense Ministry is characterized by an emphasis on uncompromising self-reliance concerning arms control issues. The result was that the respective countries’ bureaucracies produced policy stances that were difficult to reconcile at the leadership level. These entrenched attitudes continue to inhibit the ability of the Egyptians and Israelis to reach common ground on the arms control issue, constraining the possibility of settlement.

**Interest Groups.** Some interest groups have played an influential role in obstructing the peace process. The groups most opposed to accommodation represent ideological movements such as pan-Arabism, Islamic extremism, and Jewish extreme, right-wing ideologues. Fundamentalist sheiks can effectively mobilize public sentiment against a government regarding its policy toward Israel. In Egypt, both intellectuals and fundamentalists opposed a normalization of ties with Israel. Similarly, unions and fundamentalists have been vociferously opposed to such normalization in Jordan.

In the Jewish State, opposition to the Oslo Accords, expressed through right-wing political parties, delayed and even blocked Israeli concessions. These compromises could well have eased the way to confidence-building measures with the Palestinians and might have prevented the outbreak of a second Intifada. Employing a variety of tactics, these ideologically driven interest groups in various countries have exacerbated tensions within the region and hampered the development of a regional security system.

On the other hand, interest groups can be a source of support for the peace process, a pattern also witnessed in the 1990s. The business and military communities were generally supportive of diplomatic efforts in Jordan, Egypt and Israel. Specifically, individual entrepreneurs and business leaders defended the peace process and spoke of the benefits for all the countries involved. Business leaders often had access to the leaders of their respective countries and sought to convince them of the economic benefits of peace.

In sum, the domestic level is a critical factor in forming a regional security framework. On the one hand, many states are reluctant to enter into regional security arrangements because of pressures within their particular societies and governments. On the other hand, there are several potential domestic sources of support for international cooperation and better regional relations.
The third level of analysis emphasizes the role played by individual leaders in determining the direction of government policy. Scholars who emphasize this level of analysis remind us that leaders can change domestic settings. For instance, one thinks of De Gaulle’s abrupt withdrawal from Algeria, Nixon’s opening to China, Sadat’s trip to Jerusalem, and the dramatic handshakes between Rabin and Arafat, and Rabin and King Hussein. The individual decisions that stemmed from leaders’ beliefs demonstrate the importance of addressing the conflict at the individual level.

Leaders can also change their attitudes and policies ahead of their constituents, as seen in the case of Sadat, Rabin, and King Hussein. The development of personal relations between the heads of state may contribute to this attitude change. For example, some regard the friendly relationship between King Hussein and Yitzhak Rabin as a significant factor contributing to the Israeli-Jordanian peace agreement. It follows that the deaths of these two leaders may have been critical factors leading to the collapse of the Oslo process. Similarly, during the current Intifada, there has been much talk about the effect of the extreme animosity between Sharon and Arafat on their respective decision-making. This notion emphasizes the role of unique personalities and their interaction as the key explanatory factor for state behavior. Moreover, these examples make a strong case for the saliency of the individual level of analysis.

Finally, dramatic shifts in policy often occur when there is a leadership change. In Egypt, the transitions between Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak divide the history of Middle East politics into different periods. Similarly, in Israel the tenures of Shamir, Rabin/Peres, Netanyahu, Barak, and Sharon have brought major changes. It is clear that each leader took his country in different directions in the Arab-Israeli peace process.

THE CHALLENGES OF THE THREE LEVELS

A brief review demonstrates how the dynamics at each level may affect the success or failure of a regional security regime. Realists arguing from a systemic level are the most pessimistic. They warn that no regional security system can be developed except through a common calculation of interest and threat perception. Even under these conditions, cooperation or even alliances should be viewed as ‘marriages of convenience’. Neo-liberals, however, provide mechanisms making regional security work.

The individual level stresses the importance of the personal characteristics of leaders and their personal relations. Moreover, this level allows that regional
security can be built from the elite level downward, whereas the domestic level claims it is only by gaining popular support that regional security systems become possible. The domestic level also encompasses non-official areas of contact.

The Individual and Domestic Level Challenges

In building a regional security system, the domestic level presents the most serious of challenges because one form of the domestic argument basically argues for sweeping changes at home as a precursor to building an effective regional structure. Obviously, a region of thriving democracies and economies, replete with social and economic reform, would make the task of building a regional security system infinitely easier. Political, economic, and even social reforms are necessary before any kind of stable regional relationship could emerge according to this argument. Weak economies often translate to political instability.

Borrowing partially from individual level ideas, many agree that the inefficient distribution of goods and services by political leaders leads to economic and political instability. From this vantage point, particular leaders such as Saddam Hussein, when he was in power, and Muammar Qadaffi are not seen as reliable partners for serious cooperation; nor are they perceived as credible negotiators to conclude international agreements.

The recent publication of the Arab Human Development Report shows that shortcomings are deeply rooted in the institutional structures of the state. The study points out that the combined GDP of Arab economies is smaller than Spain’s and concludes that there is a critical lack of freedom, women’s empowerment, and modern education. Thus, calls for political reform as a solution to these endemic problems have become increasingly widespread.

In adopting a partial argument from the individual level as well, many American and Israeli officials have recently maintained that Palestinian political reform would lead to the ouster of Yasser Arafat or at least his ‘being kicked upstairs’ to the role of a symbolic figure. International and domestic pressure for internal leadership reform came to fruition with the appointment of Abu Mazen as Prime Minister in Spring 2003. This appointment, followed four months later by the selection of a second prime minister, Abu Alla, could mark the beginning of a process of reform and pave the way for a more efficient and equitable distribution of goods and services.

We certainly have evidence of the applicability of the argument that reform is necessary for meaningful economic and social growth in the Middle East. Yet other factors, such as the pressure for globalization from technological and economic developments, have contributed to regional accommodation in the Middle East. Indeed, the rising business class throughout the region has
pressed for Arab-Israeli accommodation in order to create a climate for enhanced foreign investment and domestic growth. The crucial point is that domestic growth, resulting from economic activity focused on the global marketplace, could both be an incentive for intensified regional cooperation in the security arena and a beneficiary of a regional security system.

If social, economic, and political reforms occurred in the region, there is no question that the establishment of a strong regional security system would be likely. However, assuming they would work, even with concerted and effective efforts, it would take years for the recommendations of the Arab Human Development Report to be realized. Meanwhile, the growing tensions and conflicts in the region continue. So the challenge of the domestic and individual levels is to take the kind of immediate steps which may be possible in the short term to facilitate some kind of regional system arrangement, even if these measures prove to be only interim efforts on the way to more complex structures.

The Security Dilemma: Dealing with Neo-Realist Realities

The systemic challenges to regional security are as disheartening as the tasks at the other two levels. As neo-realists emphasize, security concerns have a profound effect and often dictate state behavior in international politics. States may ‘internally balance’ in reaction to a security dilemma which may result in an arms race and crisis instability in the region. It is for this reason that an arms control process is an essential component of a regional security regime. At a minimum, a regional regime must continue to work toward reducing the potential for violent conflict between states.

However, there has been little effort to handle these issues in the Middle East. One rare example after the Madrid Conference in October 1991 was the aforementioned working group, the ACRS, which dealt directly with issues of ‘high politics’ or military security. Although it came close to reaching an agreement on principles, the exercise failed because of the previously cited Israeli-Egyptian dispute over how to address the nuclear question.

Yet even neo-realists themselves recognize that progress is not impossible. ‘If the pressures are strong enough, a state will deal with almost anyone,’ claims Kenneth Waltz.20 He continues, ‘alliances are made by states that have some but not all of their interests in common. The common interest is ordinarily a negative one: fear of other states.’21 On a systemic level, potential common interests in the Middle East encompass the growing threat of WMD, including nuclear proliferation, and transnational terrorist activity, one or both of which could one day form the basis for progress in a regional security regime.
Nonetheless, progress toward such a regime is extremely difficult without adequate domestic support and credible commitments by regional leaders. For example, NATO could not exist without a strong common calculation of interests, a supportive societal infrastructure, and leaders who are ready to cooperate. In the Middle East, these factors have never existed simultaneously, and all three have often been missing. They will not begin to exist until there is an end to Israeli-Palestinian violence and moves toward Arab-Israeli diplomatic progress. But the mistake of the neo-realists is to look only at one level for dealing with the security dilemma. No construction of a regional security regime is possible without taking into account all levels of analysis.

COUNTERING THE CHALLENGES BY CONCEPTUAL AND INSTRUMENTAL MEANS

Developing a More Informal Concept of a Regional Security Regime

Given the conditions identified by the challenges, the first step is to devise new approaches which recognize these problems and move to overcome them. Our central assumption for a Middle East security regime is that it does not need to have a formal structure. We define a security regime, in the words of Robert Jervis, as ‘those principles, rules, and norms that permit nations to be restrained in their behavior in the belief that others will reciprocate.’ Some regimes can have a ‘formal’ structure, organized for collective defense against an outside party, such as NATO. A security regime can also be a collective security organization in which the members agree that they will respond to an act of aggression by one member against another. Led by the UN, the international response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait is the clearest case of collective security in action.

A third type of regional security arrangement is based on the notion of cooperative security. As Janne Nolan has written, ‘[c]ooperative engagement is a strategic principle that seeks to accomplish its purposes through institutionalized consent rather than through threats of material or physical coercion.’ According to Nolan, cooperative security concentrates on reassurance rather than deterrence or containment. This model of security cooperation in Western Europe boasts an arrangement in which disputes occur ‘within the limits of agreed-upon norms and established procedures’.

Unlike collective security, which relies on the threat of military action, cooperative security is ‘designed to ensure that organized aggression cannot start or be prosecuted on any large scale.’
Not all regional security arrangements entail such explicit or formal security provisions. In fact, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is composed of 55 states, and functions only as a broad forum for consultation and negotiation among the participating states. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) began as an economic arrangement before shifting its focus in the 1990s toward more security-oriented issues.

The US has led the Organization of American States (OAS) in regional coordination despite the institution’s existence in the shadow of American dominance. In its early stages, the predecessor to the African Union, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), served primarily as a forum for contact, discussion, and interaction. Indeed, a regional security regime can be any formal or informal arrangement in which the parties discuss their common security needs. This arrangement may be preceded by, or include, unofficial talks.

In some regions, especially subregions, there is a reliance on bilateral relationships to attempt to solve security issues. These regions are epitomized either by conflict and tension (e.g., South Asia) or by exceptional partnership (e.g., US-Canada). Though positive bilateral relations are usually considered a necessary but not a sufficient condition for region-wide multilateral security, in the Middle East with its tragic history of conflict, even bilateral relations would make a dramatic difference. The problem is that in a region of conflict like this one, it is often impossible to maintain any kind of regular contact vis-à-vis security issues. The first step in dealing with this region is to develop an informal, even at times unofficial, structure to maintain ongoing discussions, build confidence, and at a minimum discuss disagreements.

**Responses to Neo-Realist Critiques: Track II and Confidence Building**

One way to begin to deal with the neo-realist challenge is to conduct Track II, academic and unofficial exchanges. The purpose of Track II is to bring elites together from different countries to exchange ideas and establish personal relationships. It is hoped that these informal talks will also create a friendlier atmosphere for future peace-making initiatives. For example, the Oslo Agreements grew out of academic exchange between Israelis and Palestinians. The personal contacts established by these meetings were invaluable for the secret negotiations that led to the accord. Moreover, the so-called ‘Copenhagen Process’, in which intellectuals from Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinians, and Israel work together to promote peace, is another example of this positive process.

Track II exchanges also seek to prevent mistakes that might be caused by cultural misunderstandings or misperceptions at the systemic level. For
example, in early 1978 Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin met with the Egyptian Foreign Minister in Jerusalem and called him a ‘young man’, a derisive term to Egyptians. When the statement was translated, it caused severe problems. The Egyptians walked out of the meeting and returned to Egypt; the process was set back for many months.

Sustained contact between representatives of local societies could serve to alleviate the impact of such missteps. In the spring of 1996, for instance, a series of terrorist attacks waged against civilians disillusioned many Israelis with the peace process and led to the election of Prime Minister Netanyahu, just as the increased violence led to Sharon’s election in early 2001.

Had a variety of Arab intellectuals, particularly the Egyptians, been engaged in confidence building measures in 1996, the disillusionment of many Israelis might have been significantly ameliorated. It would have taken a much more active effort by Arab parties to raise Israeli confidence in 2001. Indeed, the widespread violence probably made such an effort impossible unless Arab states had been vociferous in countering terrorism. They did not do so for their own reasons, which included their countries’ domestic arenas, but the most important point is that they did not even comprehend how such a public relations campaign directed at the Israeli public could bolster their own interests. In sum, the misunderstanding of cultures on both sides has played an important part in preventing the advance of the regional security process and has thereby impeded the parties from dealing directly with establishing regional cooperative security.

Thus, contrasting perspectives have severely diminished progress on regional security. The Arabs generally envision a top-down decision making process in which the leadership imposes policy positions on its constituents. The Israelis, given their democratic political culture, anticipate a process from the bottom up. Because the Israelis embrace a domestic level approach and the Arab states adopt an individual level strategy, they often end up with the worst of both worlds. The Arab states do not understand the importance of the confidence building measures which might lead Israel to make greater concessions and move toward the policies the Arabs desire. For their part, the Israelis often demonstrate little understanding of how to influence the peace process from the top down.

Even Shimon Peres’ famous vision in a New Middle East backfired in the early 1990s. Peres suggested a new approach to Arab-Israeli politics where the two sides would aid each other through economic interchange and personal contacts. Instead, the Arabs, especially the Egyptians, saw his offers as a strategy for Israeli domination of the region. Peres originally intended these steps toward his concept of a Middle East as confidence building measures, but their failure ended up doing harm for several years.
Both Prime Ministers Netanyahu and Sharon often seemed to demonstrate complete ignorance of the impact of their statements on the Arab world. When their confrontational remarks precipitated negative reactions, they merely used them as confirmation that their own analysis was accurate. On the other hand, Arab commentators frequently make statements that elicit the kind of behavior for which they criticize the Israelis. As illustrated by the growing anti-Semitism within the Arab world, Arabs have little understanding of the deep fears and tragedy of Jewish history. Meanwhile Israelis have not grasped the yearnings among many Arabs, especially the Palestinians, for status and international respect.

Track II exchanges can begin to address these misperceptions by allowing parties to begin to understand their differences. As neo-liberals often claim, empirical evidence suggests that these security arrangements can take many forms and that formal structures are not necessary. It follows that unofficial talks or Track II meetings and discussions can be a nascent form of regional security discussion permitting dialogue and planning which would otherwise not be possible. They may also encourage the parties to begin to understand their differences.

Track II discussions underscore the idea that activity is more important than a formal structure. They show how dialogue about security issues can take place in the absence of a formal organization. Furthermore, the actual process of Track II is extremely important because it establishes a foundation upon which to conduct negotiations if Track I fails to produce an agreement. These activities can also precede the onset of formal Track I negotiations or support ongoing, official negotiations.

SPECIFIC CONCEPTUAL AND INSTRUMENTAL STEPS

The following section suggests specific steps to conceptually reorient regional actors to promote this loose idea of a regional security regime. In addition, the instrumental steps that follow are practical measures to guide the search for productive ways of thinking and acting.

The Conceptual

The first three of the following concepts outline steps for an informal regional security system and draw from the systemic level. The fourth concept is rooted in the domestic level.

1. Learning from the experiences of actors in other regions. While the Middle East has unique characteristics, states in the area are fully capable of emulating other regions and learning new, more cooperative patterns of interaction from them.
Thus, European nationalism had an impact on, and directly influenced, the development of both Zionism and Arab nationalism. In the 1930s, an extremely ideological period historically represented by such trends as fascism, liberal democracy, communism, and socialism, similar examples of emulation occurred in the region.

Within the Arab world, for example, Woodrow Wilson—a proponent of liberal democracy and national self-determination—was popular in Egypt after World War I. Fascism was admired in Iraq in the late 1930s. During the Cold War, as in other regions, the Arab-Israeli conflict was fueled by the superpower rivalry. Following the conflict-ridden pattern dominant in international politics at the time, the two sides engaged in bitter disputes, prolonged arms races, and sporadic outbreaks of warfare.

In the post-Cold War era, by contrast, there is a basic contradiction in world politics between the processes of globalization and confrontation. On the one hand, there is increased interdependence and international cooperation. On the other hand, the destructive consequences of international fragmentation demonstrated its potential on September 11, 2001. The Middle East’s struggle to accommodate these global trends has contributed to the halt of accommodation on the Arab-Israeli front. Indeed, the collapse of the Arab-Israeli peace process paralleled the deterioration of the early post-Cold War optimism. New dangers suggested by the potential development of WMD by such states as Iran and Iraq (until the overthrow of Saddam Hussein) combined with internal conflicts over fundamentalism and the growing threat of transnational terrorism.

The major lesson of these historical experiences is that the Middle East states are capable of learning from the great powers and even from other regional powers as well. Indeed, it is entirely possible that Middle Eastern states can learn from regions such as Southeast Asia and Latin America where more pacific patterns of international interaction have emerged after centuries of bitter rivalry.

2. Great Power Cooperation. The ability of Middle Eastern states to learn from the international system, especially the great powers, also means that the major states themselves can influence how local states conduct their relations. One study argues for the importance of a type of ‘Concert of Europe’ as existed after the Napoleonic Wars in the early nineteenth century. This ‘encompassing coalition’ of great powers would mean that there would be a higher level of cooperation between the US, Russia, China, Europe and Japan on a wide variety of issues than has so far been the case during the post-Cold War era.

The study suggests that one of the ancillary benefits of such a coalition would be that the great powers would be setting an invaluable example of cooperative relations for the other states in the system. Despite the obvious continuing
disagreements among them, increased cooperation on the war on terrorism engendered by the events of 9/11 suggest a possible new pattern of collaboration, as does the formation of the so-called Quartet (US, EU, UN and Russia) for dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The impact of these developments not only affects the policies of great powers toward the region, but also the behavior of local states toward each other and toward the global environment. Therefore, great power relations can have a positive impact on the region from the systemic level.

3. Coordinating a common vision for the Middle East with focal points. Middle East states currently suffer from an absence of focal points to coordinate choices that could guarantee mutual gains. If we think of the Middle East in terms of an n-person prisoner’s dilemma game, we often see that states continue to choose to defect because there is no focal point to guide them to a cooperate-cooperate outcome. This deficiency impedes the development of a regional security approach. To overcome this problem there must be a common vision so all parties involved choose to cooperate. A regional security regime or structure cannot exist without shared objectives and a mutual understanding of the nature of the region and its security concerns.

In the early decades of the conflict, the Arabs sought to deny the legitimacy of the state of Israel and the Jewish state sought recognition. Today, the situation is more disparate and complex. Coordinating mutually beneficial outcomes is difficult because there are numerous issues and multiple games being played. For example, Middle East states must be concerned with such issues as the future nature of regional relations, a Palestinian state’s identity and foreign policy orientation, and the meaning and consequences of a possible normalization of relations with Israel.

Yet there have been some recent positive developments. In particular, the Saudi peace plan (2002), however vague and inadequately developed, offered some promise of moving toward a regional framework. An Arab summit in March of the same year endorsed a version of the Saudi initiative that was less agreeable to the Israelis. Although it was not explored, the plan is significant because it alluded to a common vision in which there would be normalization of Israeli-Arab relations.

An additional problem with this coordination game is that it is just the first round in a series of iterations. In the Middle East, however, the Arabs and Israelis focus on final status agreements as the first round but have very little understanding of ‘life after peace’. They tend to assume that after a final settlement, one has relations comparable to those of the US and Canada or Sweden and Norway. This view ignores the long process of peace-making that involves more rounds and continues many years after hostilities are terminated. The US and Canada still have controversies, but the key to their harmonious
relationship is that disputes are handled within the context of common understandings and accepted structures for contact and resolution. These mechanisms, however, are not built overnight and require a significant degree of dialogue to establish a common experience.

One way to create a common vision to coordinate these focal points is to focus on issues upon which all parties can agree. WMD, terrorism, shared economic woes, and humanitarian suffering are potential building blocks, any one of which could become the foundation for constructing a regional security conception. In particular, many states fear the continued spread and proliferation of WMD and technologies to rogue states and non-state groups. It is possible that Middle East states could one day focus on this fear as a lowest-common-denominator as a common vision. This would enable states to escape the prisoner’s dilemma with a cooperate-cooperate outcome.

4. State identity must be compatible with regional goals of cooperation. A state’s struggle to define its political identity at the domestic level may affect its ability to define its proper regional role. The identity a state chooses can constrain or permit certain types of foreign policies. For instance, could Egypt have made peace with Israel waving the flag of Nasser’s pan-Arabism? Which identity must Iran promote to move toward regional cooperation: Is it the exporter of a Shiite, Islamic revolution or the developer of a new, moderate and democratic Islamic states or would a future regime represent the revival of ancient Persia? Who will speak for the Palestinians: Sheikh Yassin, Yasser Arafat, or Abu Alla? Which Israeli identity is more amenable to international cooperation: secular or religious Zionism; nationalist or socialist Zionism?

Instrumental Steps

The three mechanisms that follow are all designed to begin the task of developing a common vision and compatible state identities. All are rooted in the domestic level, and focus on the need to train key leaders, officials, and experts to work together toward regional goals.

1. Cultivation of Elite Personnel for Regional Interaction. We have already discussed Track II as a basic mechanism for developing a regional security system. Here it is used as a basis for preparing officials intellectually for the regional tasks they are likely to confront. Citing the need for this preparation is designed to counter the widespread belief that officials can enter into negotiations without the fundamental preparation and interactions provided by Track II. Indeed, the problems can be compounded if parties move into a Track I arena without having adequately prepared the underpinning political support and intellectual framework.
For example, Track I in the 1990s rested on an inadequate intellectual foundation whereby the pursuit of the so-called multilaterals on arms control, economics, refugees, environment, and water was experimental and even half-hearted. It would have been wiser to develop the process on an unofficial Track II level, awaiting progress in the bilateral arena. In any case, the multilaterals suffered from insufficient exposure to Track II activity after the Oslo Agreement.

2. **Allocation of Adequate Resources to Sustain Engagement.** During the 1990s, even when the multilaterals were in their prime, the co-sponsors of the process often accepted the argument that they could only flower once all bilateral peace agreements had been reached. By not devoting sufficient personnel, funds, and effort to promote the multilateral process, the involved parties ensured that it languished whenever crises in the bilateral talks occurred.

The US could not have single-handedly prevented the problems that arose in the mid-1990s. Yet once terrorist attacks on Israel attempted to destroy the peace process and the Israeli public reacted with disillusionment and revulsion, it was clear that the Americans lacked a coherent concept of a viable regional security regime which deserved attention in its own right. Instead, all major US efforts were directed exclusively at achieving bilateral agreements. When their diplomatic activities failed in 2000, diplomats had no other track on which to rely. The confidence building measures, which might have temporarily ameliorated tensions, had not been prepared and the situation spiraled out of control.

While it may have been impossible to sustain the formal multilaterals once the process declined precipitously, informal avenues were still crucial. One lesson to be learned from these experiences is that the US must remain engaged in this process and devote sufficient resources to sustain Track II activities during times of crisis as one means of developing alternative routes to progress.

3. **Establishment of a Regional Security Institute.** A first step toward the development of a regional regime would be the establishment of a non-official regional institution. A regional security study center would be similar to an IISS (International Institute for Strategic Studies), regional RAND Corporation, or a EuroMesco (Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission). Ideally, parties would come together to meet, share views, and develop concepts at the institute. If the idea of a permanent site for the institute is not feasible, local strategic centers could work in unison to create the foundations of a regional security system. The international community should take an active role in co-sponsoring the establishment of such an institute.
A NEW CONCEPT OF REGIONAL SECURITY

This discussion has been designed to lead us in the direction of producing a new approach to regional security, at least in the short term. The following section will show how the Middle East can implement informal Track II processes to build a potential system for the future.

A Model From Southeast Asia

Our model here is Southeast Asia, where informal regional Track II activities have been organized as CSCAP (Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific). CSCAP, established in 1993, is designed ‘to provide a structured process for regional confidence building and security cooperation among countries and territories in the Asia-Pacific region through the linkage of regional security-oriented institutes.’

One of CSCAP’s particular functions is to provide back-up support for the ASEAN Regional Forum which brings together the foreign ministers from 22 countries to discuss regional security issues. In addition, CSCAP pursues other Track II efforts. However, a regional CSCAP-type arrangement in the Middle East need not lead to a particular official organization, at least not in the short term. Instead, it could serve as a continuing forum for discussion at a level lower than official contacts. It may also serve as a stepping stone for parties not ready to join the formal process.

CSCAP links regional security-oriented institutes and through them it has broad-based member committees (security clubs, we might call them), which are composed of academics, security specialists, and former and current foreign ministry and defense officials. CSCAP member committees have been established in an astonishingly wide variety of countries throughout the region, and also include the US and the EU. Both South and North Korea have committees, as do China and Russia. Taiwanese scholars and security specialists participate in working group meetings in their private capacities and an Indian Institute has joined as an associate member.

Although CSCAP continues to focus its efforts on providing direct support to the official ASEAN regional forum, several CSCAP issue oriented working groups have been organized. These include the following:

5. A North Pacific Working Group (NPWG) focused on the establishment of frameworks for Northeast Asia security cooperation.

6. Preventive Diplomacy.

CSCAP discussions cover a wide range of issues from conventional and nuclear warfare issues, to a generic outline for defense policy papers (white papers) and the refining of other transparency measures. The main lesson that has emerged from CSCAP activities is that the parties cannot be impatient and they must be satisfied with a go-slow approach. As Ralph Cossa, one of the American leaders of CSCAP has put it, they should:

- start small; take a gradual, incremental, building block approach;
- recognize that European models are generally not transferable to Asia and that sub-regional differences exist within the Asia-Pacific; apply individual measures only where they fit; do not over formalize the process; and do not neglect the importance of unilateral and bilateral measures as stepping stones toward multilateral confidence building. In other words, proceed slowly and carefully, but definitely proceed.\(^{37}\)

The underlying question for a regional security system in the Middle East is whether a CSCAP-type process (admittedly without an official body like ASEAN) could be implemented. Regular dialogues between representatives of a variety of institutes in the area could serve to broaden the mechanisms for dialogue that currently exist. Admittedly, this instrument will not solve the many disputes in the Middle East. It may well be, however, that an informal multilateral process involving academics, security specialists, economists, and official representatives in their private capacities where convenient and appropriate could serve as a long-term approach for discussing controversial ideas.

A Middle East CSCAP could also become an incubator for new ideas and agreements that could later be furthered in an official context. This approach would at least serve as a broad-based alternative mechanism to move the region out of its current state of despair toward peace. It is neither a panacea nor a simplistic problem solver, but it is a different model than that which has been previously employed.

_Establishment of a Code of Conduct: The Neo-Liberal Solution_

A Middle East CSCAP could develop ideas which would then be spread throughout the region. Based on consensual agreement among regional participants, Track II activity could, for example, create a code of conduct that
would outline the modes of behavior that encourage cooperative endeavors rather than concentrating on mutual conflicts of interest. The Middle East lacks such established standards of behavior, which inhibits progress toward an accepted pattern of regional norms. The inability to develop such a code explains why neorealism has been a more adequate theory to depict the region then neo-liberalism. In the effort to change this condition, if we begin with a code, what might it look like? What types of policies might regional leaders be encouraged to adopt and what types of actions to take?

(1) An agreement to settle disputes without the threat of violence.
(2) An attempt to control and even convince antagonistic members of societies to take a different approach. Moderates would attempt to persuade educators, unionists, journalists, intellectuals, religious leaders who speak against the other society to reconsider their position. Government leaders may not be able to suppress or change antagonistic language altogether, but they can engage in educational activities and they can set standards that they expect others in the society to adopt. Government leaders can set a tone in which vituperative opposition is unacceptable and they can make positive statements when accusations are obviously false.
(3) Each state could agree to consider the consequences of its actions on other societies and governments before taking steps which may cause difficulties for the other side.
(4) Each could agree to do its utmost to restrain provocative statements by government officials toward others in the region.
(5) Each side could acquiesce in regular consultations among key officials in major countries to limit the damage caused by ongoing disputes or statements to their relations.
(6) Each state could agree not to go to international forums to address bilateral disputes without the consent of its adversary. This provision would also include that neither side attempt to generate international criticism against the other party.
(7) Each side could agree to encourage gatherings between individuals from their respective societies to promote interaction and understanding.
(8) A general agreement could be reached not to refuse to meet with other government officials if they seek sessions ‘to clear the air’. Even in the EU there are often disagreements, statements which are disliked, elections and referenda which other parties find disappointing. Because there is a mechanism for exchange, however, potential disputes are controlled. If a code of conduct were to be implemented in the Middle East, it might contribute to a new atmosphere encouraging moves toward regional security. Even if all steps cited here were not implemented, the very act of agreeing on such an approach would be a
highly beneficial and productive step. A Track II instrument would be doing a
great service by recommending them.

(9) The psychologist Charles Osgood once suggested an approach called
GRIT (Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension-reduction) to indicate
the beneficial, trust-building impact of unilateral gestures. We have several
positive unilateral moves from recent history, including the strategy of the
Russians in reaching the Austrian peace treaty in 1955, Nixon’s overtures to
China in the early 1970s, and the actions of Mikhail Gorbachev in the late
1980s. The Middle East itself has seen an impressive number of unilateral
gestures, including the famous Sadat initiative toward Israel in the late 1970s, as
well as various actions taken by such figures as Prime Minister Rabin and King
Hussein in the 1990s. Clearly, unilateral gestures can make a significant difference
in bringing leaders together and gaining the acceptance of a new type of regional
regime.

CONCLUSION

This contribution has presented a variety of conceptual and instrumental tools
which could be used to confront the huge obstacles to a regional security system
in the Middle East raised by the three levels of analysis: the individual,
domestic, and systemic. We have tried to show that just as each level presents
enormous hurdles to be overcome, each in its own way also suggests paths for
addressing the dilemmas presented so clearly in neo-realistic systemic analysis.

On a day-to-day basis the task may seem hopeless. Yet, through thinking from
a variety of perspectives encouraged by the levels it may be possible to move in
a more limited, informal fashion to alter the mindset which has plagued the
region for so long. There are no immediate cures here; only directives to arrest,
remedy, and ameliorate an unstable and deteriorating condition. Previous
treatments have not worked; it is time to move forward on an informal concept
of a Middle East regional security system.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to thank Lawrence Rubin for his research assistance.

NOTES

p. 73.

3. Analysts generally employ such indicators as military strength, nuclear and conventional deterrence, and gross domestic product to determine the relative strength of each state.


14. On the opposition of intellectuals, artists, journalists, etc. to normalization with Israel just before the Copenhagen conference, see the news report, ‘Anti-


20. Waltz (note 1) p. 166.

21. Ibid.


26. Ibid.


28. Michael Leifer writes that ‘Security was uppermost in their minds [the founders’] but not conspicuously addressed.’ He states ASEAN has declared primary goals of promoting ‘economic growth, social progress and cultural development’ through regional development…’ ASEAN and the Security of Southeast Asia (London: Routledge 1989) p. vii.


33. The Zionist movement actually split over political strategies as a means to achieve ideological goals (the revisionists vs. Labor Zionists).


DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO REGION-BUILDING

The conditions and prospects for building durable peace between neighbouring states, and the interplay between domestic and regional security, has received renewed attention from a variety of perspectives within International Relations.¹ In the Middle Eastern context, the practical implications of this debate have been dramatically underlined by the American-led invasion to oust Saddam Hussein from power, in part on the grounds that he posed a direct threat to regional security.

In this case, scholarship and practice are intimately connected, for our understanding of the underlying conditions for regional security have direct implications for the process of domestic reconstruction in Iraq. Little work, however, has attempted to bridge the gap between International Relations debates on security-building, and the premises underlying post-conflict reconstruction and state (re)building programmes.

Within International Relations, liberal or second-image perspectives (such as the democratic peace argument) challenge structural realist claims about the impossibility of building durable zones of peace.² Although the mechanism behind the democratic peace remains unclear, many authors have moved away from purely structural explanations (i.e. the nature of domestic institutions) towards including more normative, cognitive or ‘identity’ factors.

Drawing on the work of Karl Deutsch, for example, Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett have explicitly incorporated normative factors to explore the concept of ‘security communities’ as a means to understand regional security-building processes around the world.³ Similarly, Bruce Cronin’s exploration of the creation of ‘transnational communities’ rests upon the claim that ‘political elites construct transnational communities by developing common social identities.’⁴
Remaining within a more realist perspective, Barry Buzan and Ole Waever have focused on the weak/strong state dynamic to develop the ideas of ‘security complexes’ and ‘mature anarchy’, in which the ‘patterns of amity and enmity among states’ can develop to the point where the members of a security complex can enjoy ‘the benefits of fragmentation…without the costs of continuous armed struggle and instability’.5

These, and other, recent works have also sometimes examined the processes of (or possibilities for) constructing regional security orders outside of the core European or democratic states, but the ways in which a stable regional security order can be built often remain under-specified or under-researched.6

Thus for example, although Barnett and Adler describe a ‘path dependent’ process by which states initially ‘begin to consider how they might coordinate their relations in order to…increase their mutual security’, and later attempt ‘to encourage greater regional interaction and acceptance for certain “ways of life”’, we have little idea how or why this process might be triggered in particular contexts.7

Similarly, Buzan describes a mature anarchy as requiring strong and legitimate states ‘that are firm in their own definition, and can project their own inner coherence and stability out into the community of states’, although he does not tell us either what the main elements of legitimacy might be, or how this coherence is projected outwards.8 Of course, the strong realist view continues to deny the possibility that durable regional security orders can be constructed at all.9 We are often left with an image of the non-European (or non-democratic) world as a ‘zone of turmoil’ wracked by war and conflict, with few if any clear avenues leading towards the construction of a regional security order.

This essay aims at expanding the debate by describing a crucial, but often neglected, element that goes into the recognition of regional states and regimes as ‘interlocuteurs valable’ for security-building efforts. The author builds on the insight that domestic political configurations matter for regional security-building by arguing that domestic and regional security concerns are inextricably intertwined, and by drawing attention to a specific aspect of the process of security-building at the domestic and regional levels: the role of ideas about, institutions of, and instruments of organized violence in social, political and economic life.

The arguments can be summarized in four interlocking propositions:

(a) Domestic and regional politics are inseparable in any discussion of region-building.
(b) The central issue in security-building, both within and between states, is reducing the possibility of organized violence, and evacuating violence from the ‘public sphere’.

(c) The kind of regional order that is possible is largely determined by the process and historical trajectory of state formation.

(d) The relation between state-makers and war-makers (i.e. between the political and military spheres, civil-military relations) is a crucial element in this process of regional security-building.

The argument to some extent straddles (uncomfortably) the divide between realist and liberal claims, by rejecting the static vision of the realists, but by postulating regional security-building processes that may have less demanding (or at least different) conditions than those postulated by the liberal peace or security community literatures.

Two opening caveats should, however, be registered. First, the accent is placed more on the conceptual side of the argument (the relationship between institutions of organized violence, state-formation and region building), and less on the Middle Eastern case, since other essays in this collection deal directly with the contemporary Middle Eastern context. Examples are drawn from the Middle East, but properly speaking this contribution provides a set of hypothesized relationships for further research rather than a fully demonstrated argument.

Second, some of these arguments might seem straightforward to scholars engaged in studying the Middle East. But the target of this essay lies elsewhere, since it is principally addressing the conceptions of regional security that circulate widely in International Relations as the foundation for a variety of theoretical approaches and research projects. In many cases, these foundations are theoretically and empirically impoverished, and the goal of this essay is to see how they might be refined through an examination of one regional or set of interlocking sub-regional cases.

THE DOMESTIC-REGIONAL POLITICAL NEXUS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

As scholars such as Michael Barnett or Bahgat Korany point out, ‘regional security arrangements generally concentrate on inter-state issues, yet some of the most pressing threats to the state derive from domestic politics, which, in turn, implicate the possibility of regional stability.’ Barnett is here taking issue with those scholars for whom the central issue is the constellation of inter-state power relations within a region. Thus for example, Geoffrey Kemp’s discussion of arms control in the Middle East, or Anthony Cordesman’s Middle East Net
Assessment, examines arms acquisitions, regional conflict, arms races, and/or security policies almost exclusively through an inter-state lens. These scholars often adopt explicitly or implicitly a realist framework, within which the principal function of armed forces is to provide security against external threats, and the domestic configuration of political power is more or less irrelevant. Hence such things as the dynamic of arms acquisitions, or the size and composition of the armed forces, are determined primarily by inter-state rivalries at the regional or global level.

Syria’s security policy, for example, is explained by the existence of perceived threats from Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Israel; Jordan’s policy by threats from Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Israel; Israel’s from most of its neighbouring or neighbourhood states, and so on. Similarly, analyses of the prospects or requirements for arms control and/or confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) in the Middle East seldom examine how domestic and regional insecurities are linked, and how this affects the possibilities for creating CSBMs or making use of their transformative potential.

This state-centric argument is analytically limited, especially when one attempts to assess the prospects for overcoming some of these inter-state conflicts and building a durable regional order. From the perspective of the Syrian regime, for example, the Muslim Brotherhood in Hama, the anti Alawite sentiments of various groups, and the rival branch of the Ba’ath movement in Iraq have also at different times posed real threats to the regime that shaped its security policy and its margin of manoeuvre for policy initiatives.

In Iraq under the Ba’ath the threats to the regime came from Shia’s, Kurds, and non-Tikritis living within Iraq and in neighbouring states, and the narrow base of legitimacy of the regime made accommodations with neighbouring states (for example, Iran) difficult to sustain politically. In both states not only the legitimacy of the regime, but the legitimacy of the state itself, can be threatened. The centrifugal tendencies manifest in post Saddam Hussein Iraq provide a dramatic illustration of this. And although Syria and Iraq may represent extreme cases, they highlight features that are present in varying degrees throughout the Middle East (including Israel), and arguably throughout the post-colonial world.

Of course, very few scholars focusing on the Middle East consistently subscribe to the view that domestic and regional dynamics are completely separate. Many tend, however, to consider domestic factors in institutional or perceptual terms, rather than developing a clear model of which domestic political factors or processes are considered significant and why.

Thus, for example, Efraim Karsh and Yezid Sayigh note that Middle Eastern states have been ‘militarized’ throughout the Cold War, while structuralist International Relations scholars such as Stephen Walt acknowledge that such
things as ‘threat dispositions’ can affect balance of power politics, and that threat dispositions are a function of intentions and perceptions as well as military capabilities.\textsuperscript{14} As the recent debate over ‘omnibalancing’ (and the much older debate over the ‘scapegoat hypothesis’) shows, a state’s security policies often explicitly link domestic and external threats.\textsuperscript{15}

However, many of these scholars bracket the issue of how perceptions or intentions are arrived at, and do not use these insights to develop a more robust model of how domestic and regional factors (including perceptions of threats) may interact. Those that do (such as Zeev Maoz) often focus on pathways that lead to conflict, rather than on security-building processes leading away from conflict.\textsuperscript{16}

Yet the admission that external and internal threats are linked raises some thorny methodological problems; in particular, how are threats to be judged and assessed (by both scholars and policy-makers), and how should we compare, for example, the threat posed by a radical Islamist movement with that posed by a military buildup in a neighbouring state?

To return to Barnett’s argument, although he notes that internal insecurities implicate regional security and order-building, he does not tell us how or why this might be so, and what kinds of tools we need to analyze the interplay of domestic and regional threat discourses. If region-building is about developing ‘normative expectations [about] a state’s foreign policy’, and if these expectations depend on some sort of domestic political order, what is it that political leaders and elites look for in their neighbours, and what should scholars in turn study to assess the prospects for building a regional security order?\textsuperscript{17}

Several answers have been suggested. The simplest is that domestically unstable regimes make poor interlocutors for region-building because regime change can lead to drastic transformations in foreign and security policy. The situation in contemporary Iraq, in which Kurdish and Shia unrest complicates relations with Turkey and Iran, is illustrative. However, the reverse of this argument—that regime stability could lead to regional peace—does not appear to hold in the Middle East at least. Regime change has been less and less frequent, and military regimes have been relatively stable, yet this has not unlocked decades of mistrust between, for example, Syria and its neighbours.\textsuperscript{18}

A second answer is that authoritarian regimes cannot build regional security orders, because the way they treat their citizens is projected outwards in the way they perceive regional relations (this is the flip-side of the normative version of the democratic peace argument). In short, states and regimes that deny their citizens basic freedoms are more likely to be violent with other states. A variation of this, focusing on different types of domestic political coalitions (‘internationalist’ versus ‘statist-nationalist’ coalitions) concludes that
for the latter, cooperative regional arrangements ‘are generally detrimental to their interests’.19

The flaw with this logic is that the East-West conflict, which pitted authoritarian against democratic states, did manage long before the end of the Cold War to construct an impressive edifice of regional security and arms control measures in Europe, suggesting that authoritarian or quasi authoritarian regimes may still be able to build durable regional security structures under certain circumstances without whole-heartedly adopting an internationalist strategy or moving towards an open political model.

A closely related argument is that ‘like-minded’ states that recognize each other as sharing certain characteristics can also form a regional order. The example offered is usually Latin America (or perhaps Southeast Asia), where corporatist or neo-authoritarian regimes established zones of relative regional stability.20

Each of these arguments has some merit, but they tend to be unclear on the nature of the mechanism linking domestic structures and regional security, and to posit a one-way causal relationship (i.e., regional security is affected by domestic political structures, but not the reverse). They may also set the threshold for region-building too high, or place the emphasis in the wrong place, both empirically and politically.

Empirically, the record of regional and sub-regional security cooperation suggests that we do not need to wait until a critical mass of electorally democratic states emerges to at least begin region-building efforts. Politically, if the end products (stable democracies or strong states) are considered as the preconditions for attempts to catalyze regional security building dialogues, security-building projects will be effectively postponed until they are probably not needed. As a result, we need to have a better grasp of which features of the domestic/regional nexus might crucially affect the possibilities for region-building in order to analyze better its prospects in the Middle East and elsewhere.

SECURITY, ORGANIZED VIOLENCE AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

As noted above, even the literature that bridges the domestic-regional divide does not tell us analytically or practically how they are linked. The hypothesis of this study is that any such linkage rests upon a common conception of security (what is being secured and why, and how it should be secured) for without that, analysts or elites cannot make meaningful comparisons of the ‘threats’ that are faced at different levels.
One sort of common conception could be found via the claim that the central issue in security-building (both domestic and regional) is *evacuating violence or the threat of violence from the ‘public sphere’ within and between states*. Historically the idea of security has been inextricably intertwined with the struggle to control the institutions and instruments of organized violence, both between and within states. This struggle has been central to the emergence of the modern state, and its conception of representative political institutions, civil society and civil-military relations.

This (relatively) successful evacuation of violence from the public sphere is in many ways a precondition for politics and political life as we understand it. When violence recedes, a public sphere of discussion, debate and conflict resolution can emerge, which can legitimize political institutions and regimes.\(^\text{21}\)

Although this focus on organized violence might sound like the traditional formulation of security, it differs from it in two important ways. First, this formulation is not confined to either the domestic or regional level, and one of its strengths is to efface the distinction between domestic and regional spheres by focusing on the role of institutions and instruments of organized violence, and ideas about their place in political, social, and economic life at all levels of political organization. This implies that regional order-building is a political project (analogous to domestic state building), and not a simple coming together of pre-given and instrumentally rational actors who are trapped within the anarchic logic of conflict, acting to maximize their interests and power without reference to broader questions of identity or shared understandings.\(^\text{22}\)

In this sense, there is no qualitative difference between building security domestically and building it regionally, for each project strives to reduce the risk of violence in the economic, social and political relations between people and groups. Building security domestically and building it regionally do not necessarily occur simultaneously, and historically arrangements to secure domestic peace were prior to region-building efforts. However, what matters is that different groups in society (economic, communal, bureaucratic, military, etc.) often have different ideas about what security is and how it should be achieved. Some may advocate unilateralist solutions to achieving security (for example, security for one group via control of the state apparatus and repression of other groups) that inhibits the creation of a broader domestic peace, or that renders nearly impossible the construction of a secure regional order. The important issue is how the relative balance of forces between these different groups shifts over time.

Second, this conception moves the focus off the state as the *object* of security, and instead sees it as an *instrument* for its achievement. The modern state is a powerful resolution to the central problem of how to evacuate violence from the public realm, and it is not surprising that arguments about its irrelevance or
disappearance often stumble on this issue of where the control of organized violence is located. What is often neglected is that the object of security is ultimately people and communities, whose primary claim on their state is that it provides them with security from harm from both domestic and external sources.

Since the provision of security by removing violence from the public sphere was an integral part of the process by which the modern state gained its legitimacy, it makes sense to assess the prospects for building both domestic and regional security within this broader process of state formation. This argument parallels that of Mohammed Ayoob, who focuses on state-making and regime security in his analysis of the ‘Third World security predicament’, but with a crucial difference: the ultimate issue for building regional security is not the security of the regimes or states per se (i.e. the ‘dominant concerns of Third World state elites’), but the overall place of violence in political life. In many parts of the world, including the Middle East, it is the state that poses the greatest threat to the security of its citizens, and a secure regime can engage in (and often has engaged in) non-cooperative or conflictual behaviour at the regional level in order to maintain its (regime) security and stability.23

REGION-BUILDING AND STATE-FORMATION

What this implies is that the kind of regional security order that is possible may be largely determined by the processes by which violence is evacuated from the public sphere, which in turn depends on the specific trajectory that state-making takes. In other words, we need to examine the domestic foundations of rule and legitimacy for a particular set of states, and the way in which these interact with the requirements for regional security-building.

The starting point for this work is Charles Tilly’s analysis of state formation, which argues that the evolution of the European state is the product of two interacting dynamics between rulers, ruled, and institutions of organized violence.24

The first is the relationship between state-makers and their war-making apparatuses, a relationship originally forged to build political power in a field of cross-cutting and competing forces. Because early state-making was essentially war-making, nascent state-makers had to amass ever-increasing resources for their expanding war machines, and hence had to create new political and socio-economic institutions (bureaucracies, taxation systems, education and mobilization systems) in order to mobilize resources. As a result, the development of modern military organizations was contemporaneous with such things as the development of professional bureaucracies, the development of capitalism and rise of the modern corporation, and the emergence of mass politics.25
The second dynamic developed between rulers and ruled—between state-makers and other groups and forces within society. The basic bargain was over security: state-makers began by extracting resources for war-making and promising protection and security (against both internal and external threats) in return for a monopoly over the use of force. Over time, however, they were forced to forge broader alliances with a diverse range of social actors (in particular emergent economic actors). As Tilly describes it: ‘agents of states bargained with civilian groups that controlled the resources required for effective warmaking, and in bargaining gave the civilian groups enforceable claims on the state’; these claims were ultimately politically enfranchising, and ‘led to a civilianization of government and domestic politics.’

In short, the relationship between war-makers, state-makers and civil society tilted over time, first in favour of the state-makers who subordinated the military to increasing degrees of control by civilians; and secondly in favour of representative or legitimate institutions within an embryonic civil society. The result was first the expansion of peace and public order domestically throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century (at least in Western states), and somewhat later the expansion of regional or international peace.

Tilly’s model does not posit a linear, lock-step evolutionary process with one historical outcome. In fact, many different paths were followed within Europe itself, depending on the experience of warfare, the path of economic development, and domestic political developments. The contrast between the early achievement of English, Dutch and Swedish constitutionalism with the persistent absolutism of France or Brandenburg-Prussia, was in part due to the pressures of incessant mobilization for conflict.

More importantly, the conditions under which state-making is occurring in the post-colonial world (including the Middle East), are dramatically different than those that shaped the European process, and hence we should not necessarily expect an eventual convergence on Western domestic and inter-state forms and norms. As Tilly put it:

the extension of the Europe-based state-making process to the rest of the world...did not result in the creation of states in the strict European image...states that have come into being recently through decolonization have acquired their military organization from the outside, without the same internal forging of mutual constraints between rulers and ruled.

In many cases, the diffusion of modern military technologies and techniques of organization to post-colonial states, especially in the Middle East, resulted in the institutions of organized violence being the only remotely modern institutions in newly emerging states, rapidly emerging as crucial props of the regime or the
state, especially in crushing internal dissent or consolidating the state. In Iraq, for example, the army was doubled in size in the first four years after independence, used to crush the Assyrian ‘revolt’, and embraced as defender of the nation. The first military coup occurred three years later.30

In Saudi Arabia, between 30 and 50 per cent of state revenues were spent before World War II on security and defence, and in Jordan, King Hussein remarked in the 1950s that ‘everywhere I go in Jordan I find the Arab Legion doing everything.’31 Yet the armed forces did not, as early modernization theorists had hoped, necessarily act subsequently as an integrative force in fragmented societies or as a vehicle for economic and political development. Instead, they represented a tremendous reservoir of political power that could be captured and used by particular groups that had otherwise little foundation for legitimizing their rule in their respective territories to impose a particular (often violent) order on civil and political life. Hence Tikritis, Alawis, and members of the al-Saud family could rise to control Iraq, Syria and Saudi Arabia respectively, but their relatively narrow base of legitimacy severely limited the kind of regional security order that they could construct. The transplantation of unprecedented means of institutionalized violence and surveillance into political arenas that were empty of countervailing checks and balances also produced some of the worst forms of state terror in the twentieth century.32

There are at least three additional factors in the process of post-colonial state-making that affect the evolution of the relationship between rulers, ruled, and institutions of organized violence. First, the existence of ‘quasi-states’ whose existence is guaranteed by international norms in the face of a complete absence of empirical sovereignty or legitimacy means that the process of state consolidation (which extinguished many proto-states) will result in the persistence of several weak states, in which ‘the idea of the state, its institutions, and even its territory’ are not widely accepted by the populace.33 In the Middle East, Iraq, Lebanon, and perhaps Syria (among others) fall most clearly in this category. Ruling regimes in weak states are much less likely to be able to establish the kind of domestic compact between rulers and ruled that reduces the risk of violence, and which could make them eventual participants in regional order building. As Ghassan Salamé argues, ‘the predominance of authoritarian power structures throughout most of the region aggravates this quest for cross-frontier myths: it is always easier for an authoritarian regime to claim to be the proponent of some founding myth than for it to represent democratically a given people.’34

The second factor is the existence of rentier states such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Algeria, the Gulf states, or Libya whose autonomous revenue sources ‘have an effect on state power very different from those revenues that need to be extracted from the population and that must consequently be negotiated with
rather than imposed on social groups. The relationship between state makers and other social groups in rentier states does not unfold along the traditional paths towards representative rule that are outlined by Tilly, since the driving motor of the process (increasing the resources at the disposal of the state to secure it both domestically and externally) is disconnected from society. Rentier states can acquire both guns and butter, and can pursue (for a time, at least), massive military programs without imposing a fiscal burden on their citizens. Hence the domestic compact that is forged between rulers and ruled can be extremely narrow, and usually involves neo-patrimonial alliances among various predatory or parasite elites. It thus does not necessarily evolve towards a greater legitimization or demilitarization of state power to the point where institutions of organized violence are not the main means of survival for the regime and its supporters.

A third factor is the extreme subordination and dependence of most post colonial states, which means that their regimes and ruling elites can be subject to powerful economic, military and political forces that undermine their basis for legitimate rule. This can take many forms. In some cases external parties can support groups within the state that work either to topple the current regime, or to fragment the polity. This has occurred to some extent in most Middle Eastern states over the past 40 years, and was exemplified perhaps by the destabilizing impact of Nasserist movements throughout the region.

In other cases, external powers can, by their demands upon a regime, undermine its legitimacy (or fail to encourage the regime to broaden its base of legitimacy) in a region sensitive to the legacy of colonial control. Both Iran and Saudi Arabia could fit this pattern. External powers can also, by their support for other regional actors, reinforce the external threats that a state/regime faces by tilting the regional balance of power in favour of their ally (this could describe the Soviet/Syrian-American/Israeli dynamic of the 1980s, or the Soviet/Iraqi-American/Iranian dynamic of the 1970s).

Whatever the specific cause, each of these processes drives regimes to rely domestically on higher levels of repression and social control, and exacerbates regional security dilemmas and arms races by forcing even poor non-rentier or quasi-states into competitive armament acquisitions, with all the negative implications this might have for regional security-building.

In the Middle East one can argue that in addition to the ‘normal’ stresses and violence associated with the process of state-making, all of these three factors have contributed to the rise of particularly pathological political formations, usually subsumed under the label of the ‘mukhabarat state’. In Syria, Iran and Iraq, for example, Soviet and American patronage facilitated (along with oil wealth) the construction of massive military establishments, which allowed the ruling elite to entrench itself (for a time at least) without forging broader links
across society. Some details of how heavy the military burden has been on these states are offered in Table 1 below.

THE STATE, INSTITUTIONS OF ORGANIZED VIOLENCE AND THE SECURITY DILEMMA

What, though, is the link between state-formation processes and regional security-building? In the final analysis, one must make a connection between the policy options a regime perceives for the construction of a regional security order with its neighbours and the socio-political foundations of that regime’s power, as shaped by the two dynamics of state-making outlined above. This essay will focus on the first dynamic, arguing that the relationship between state-makers and war-makers (institutions of organized violence) is the crucial link in the state-formation/regional security-building equation.

It is not the overall character of the state that matters (that states must be broadly ‘democratic’ or ‘republican’ in order to form a regional security order), or some aggregate set of characteristics that determine whether or not neighbouring states are regarded as ‘like-minded’. Rather, focusing more narrowly on the role of institutions of organized violence in structuring and influencing the basic choices for security policy might allow a better evaluation of the prospects for constructing a regional security order than that which can be made from a focus on the normative, ideational or ‘identity’ criteria invoked by the security community or democratic peace literatures.

This may even be more the case in regions where the study of norm-creation and identity formation is extremely difficult (if not impossible, depending on one’s criteria of social science). Such an approach also draws attention to the role that institutions of organized violence play in creating (or hindering) ‘dependable expectations of peaceful change’, especially in violence-ridden regions.

What specific criteria could help us to determine whether or not the relation between state elites and the institutions of organized violence facilitates or hinders the construction of a regional order? In the absence of the kind of evidence needed to satisfy the methodological requirements for the study of norm-creation and identity-formation, (access to the detailed documentary record of the policy-makers’ world), we must turn to some more accessible set of indicators. These qualitative factors can be set on a continuum or spectrum:

(a) What is the social base of support for the regime, and what role do the institutions of organized violence play in sustaining its rule?
(b) Is control of the armed forces sectarian or broadly based?
(c) Do they act as custodians of the regime/state and play a large role in internal security issues?
(d) How great are their claims on resources (relative to available resources), and to what extent are the institutions of the state bent to their purposes?
(e) How powerful a role do the armed forces play in defining the source of threats and the best means to address them?

In each case, one would have to assess how the particular constellation of interests mapped by these five factors affect and would be affected by regional order-building efforts. As a working hypothesis, the author would argue that a durable regional order cannot be built unless the institutions of organized violence are subordinate to broadly based civilian control, are not narrowly sectarian, do not serve as the sole (praetorian) basis of legitimacy or support for the regime, are not the sole guarantors of domestic peace and public order, and do not stand

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**TABLE 1 MILITARY INDICATORS, SELECTED MIDDLE EASTERN STATES, 1999**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Military Expenditures per cent GNP</th>
<th>Armed Forces/Population per thousand</th>
<th>global rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>28*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>3**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Developing States

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<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
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<td>3.1</td>
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World

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<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sources:

Note: * The number of Saudi soldiers per thousand is likely understated because population figures include expatriates; the Saudi population is likely around 14.9 million, which would give a ratio of 12.8 per thousand, and a global ranking of 23.
** Figures used for Israel’s armed forces only include active forces of 173,000, and do not include reserve forces. Actual strength is triple the active force level (about 600,000).
above or overwhelm other social, economic and political institutions within society.

The logic behind this is simple. First, the creation of domestic order requires a shift in the logic of internal security from the ‘military’ to the ‘police’, with the latter institution relying less on violence (or the threat thereof) to impose its will, and being understood as the servant and not master of the citizenry. Second, the creation of a regional security order requires that states overcome the exclusively military conception of the security dilemma (the inability to distinguish between defensive and offensive military preparations, and the necessity to judge capabilities in the absence of reliable information concerning intentions) and the worst-case security planning scenarios that go with it, by incorporating a host of intangible factors in judging the relationship possibilities with the ‘Other’.41

Both of these steps occurred in the European context as the ‘civilianization of government and domestic politics’ subordinated institutions of organized violence to civilian control, and led the military to shed its internal security functions to concentrate on external threats to national security. The final step, not realized in many states until the second half of the twentieth century, saw the ultimate determination of what constituted external threats to national security concentrated in civilian hands.42

None of these steps were easy, or won without struggle. In some Arab states anxiety over the potential impact of confidence-building and transparency measures ‘on civil-military relations in non-democratic Arab societies in which the regime is heavily dependent on the military’s backing has [also] been especially pronounced.’43 In addition, the configuration of socio-political power is often such that those groups who stand to benefit most from peace are precisely the ones that are least able to articulate their interests, or who represent a threat to the established order.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR BUILDING A REGIONAL SECURITY ORDER IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

What are the implications of these claims for the prospects for building a regional security order in the Middle East, or in its various sub-regions? The conclusion is rather bleak, at least in the medium term, mainly because many key regional states fall far on the negative end of the continuum for the factors noted above. Even in those that would not score uniformly negative, there are almost always at least one or two crucial axes on which they rate negatively. The rough qualitative assessment offered below as a survey of key regional states that pose major obstacles to regional security building efforts highlights that objective military capabilities are not the only important factor affecting the
prospects for building a regional security order, and that the constellation of civil-military relations that develops throughout the state-making process is crucial to the way in which security is conceived and acted upon.44

In Syria, the original ‘capture’ of the state by the Alawites occurred in part because of the way in which the French recruited for the TroupesSpéciales, and in part because the Sunni and traditional bourgeois elite made the error of believing:

that its economic and financial monopoly would guarantee it without any difficulty the permanent control of the state apparatus, which was more seen as a site of arbitration and representation rather than as a real instrument of power. The powerful apparatus of the state—army, police, fiscal and customs administration—had always been in foreign hands, and one knew well how to accommodate oneself to it.45

Once entrenched, the regime remained narrowly sectarian and relatively vulnerable (as the 1982 Hama uprising and subsequent massacre testify), and the dominant Asad-Alawi group played a major role in all aspects of political and economic life.46 The armed forces and other security institutions (there are at least four intelligence services) are tightly controlled: in the 1980s, Alawis commanded half of all army divisions and controlled all the military intelligence services, although they comprise no more than 15 per cent of the population.

The result was a state in which the armed forces consumed large amounts of resources (in relative and absolute terms) and played a major role in domestic political and economic life. Thus although one can argue that Syria ‘is one of the states that has the most to expect from peace and its dividends,’ Syria ‘is also the country for which peace would most profoundly modify its structures,’ in both political and socio-economic terms.47 These modifications could only occur at the expense of the regime and its social base of power, which is allied with what one Syrian political scientist has called a ‘merchant/military complex’ that represents an extensive network of clientelism, patronage and corruption.48

Arguably the current regime understands all too well the domestic price of peace, and its reluctance to participate in regional security-building is in part conditioned by this. As Gideon Gera points out, ‘Muslim fundamentalists could (and probably would) portray a peace treaty as “proving” the infidel nature of the ruling Alawi elite.’49

The abolition of the Iraqi armed forces and security services by the US administration in Iraq in May 2003 underscores the central role it played in Saddam Hussein’s regime.50 The armed forces have, however, been the central prop of successive Iraqi regimes since independence in 1932 (and the first coup in 1936). Even if one argues that in contrast to Syria, the ‘party’ controls the
‘army’ rather than vice versa, this is a distinction that makes no difference, since the pervasive violence of domestic and inter-state relations transcended even the rule of Saddam Hussein and the Tikriti elite.51

Perhaps the best analysis of the operation of the interlocking web of security institutions, and the total effacement of civil society has been presented by Samir al-Khalil (Kanan Makiya), who noted that at least eight intelligence gathering agencies operated competing and overlapping networks as part of an intricate party-army network of spies, informers and torturers that often spy on each other.52 These institutions of violence were largely (until the Iran-Iraq war) freed from resource constraints because of Iraq’s oil wealth, and other state and social institutions were bent and fused to the sole goal of regime survival.

Given this, and the fragmentation of the state between the Kurdish North, Shia south and Sunni middle, the prospects remain fairly bleak that any successor regime would be able to easily break this pattern of politics, since the Iraqi state-building effectively took a pathological dead-end turn for more than two decades.

The Egyptian situation can be contrasted to these two more extreme cases, since it ranks less badly on most indices. To begin, the regime has been based, since Sadat’s infitah to the West, on a fusion of interests between the ‘technocratic-economic’ elite and the ruling elite, which has pushed the armed forces somewhat to the background in terms of visibility. Nevertheless, the restricted presidential process of foreign and security policy-making, and the fact that the army remains the base of power of the regime, ensures that its interests and vision is strongly present, although not necessarily direct.53 The crucial role of the armed forces in maintaining regime security in the face of the Islamist challenge means that any ‘domestic compact’ that reduces violence from the public sphere will be limited. After Sadat’s assassination, for example, the army:

was able to establish its control over the major paramilitary force, the Central Security Police… As Field Marshal Abu Ghazzaleh was to define the relationship later the same year: ‘the role of the police and the army are complementary and cannot be separated. To both of them falls a unique task: to guarantee the security of Egypt both internally and externally.’54

This constellation of political power will likely generate an evolution either towards immobilistic ‘controlled multipartism’ or a sort of modernization of authoritarianism, since the residual reliance of the regime on the armed forces
reduces its margin of manoeuvre in regional political affairs, even though the situation is not nearly so dire as in Syria or Iraq.\textsuperscript{55}

In Saudi Arabia, the Saud dynasty from the outset maintained tight control over the military forces, using the \textit{Ikhwan} (religious) and tribal forces to conquer and unify the diverse tribes of the peninsula before formal statehood was achieved in 1932. ‘Ibn Saud’s basic security concern…in the period up to World War II…was internal rather than external threats, and the practical problem was money.’\textsuperscript{56}

Ever since then, the Saudi regime has, ‘for internal defense…continued placing primary confidence in the tribal forces [the White Army, later renamed the National Guard],’ which were as large as the regular forces and which served as a means of cementing loyalty to the regime and funneling money to tribal and village leaders.\textsuperscript{57} Through the 1970s and 1980s it was more than two-thirds the size of the regular forces; in 1997 it had 57,000 active members, compared to 70,000 in the regular army.\textsuperscript{58} It was under the direct control of the Saud family, which evidently ‘decided that a parallel army such as the national guard would be a form of insurance against coups’ by serving as an alternative locus of power.\textsuperscript{59}

However, the image of solid central control is slightly misleading, since the armed forces and the national guard are also the preserve of various tribal groupings (Sudairi, Shammar and Jiluwi, among others). Posts and control are distributed carefully among the different groups, and this internal balancing act makes the regime reluctant to take any steps towards region-building that might create domestic political problems, whether these involve accommodation with Iraq, Iran or Israel.\textsuperscript{60} Perhaps more importantly, the relative exclusion of merchants and technocrats from political access (let alone power), a result of the regime’s rentier status, means that groups that may have an interest in a more open regional order are not part of the inner decision-making circle.

The Jordanian situation is perhaps intermediate between the Egyptian and Iraqi/Syrian one. Persistent regime vulnerabilities, Jordan’s relatively small size (compared to its immediate neighbours), and its weak economy make the kingdom vulnerable to threats from a variety of sources, which should, on this account, make the regime both more dependent upon institutions of organized violence and less able to contribute positively to regional order-building.\textsuperscript{61} The first part of this is correct: King Hussein was extremely dependent upon the armed forces, and under King Abdallah the armed forces remain omnipresent in Jordanian life:

Among the various social, economic, and political institutions affecting Jordanian national life, none—with the exceptions of the monarchy itself and the Muslim religion—has been more pervasive than the presence and
power of the armed forces. This condition has persisted since the formation of the first military units early in the country’s political evolution… Throughout Hussein’s reign, the armed forces have been an indispensable instrument for the protection of the monarchy. The government has periodically turned to the army to prevent internal disruption and to maintain law and order.62

On the other hand, King Hussein was able to make peace with Israel and forge a close relationship with the US. The Hashemite regime is based on less repression and arguably greater legitimacy than the Syrian or Iraqi regimes, and the successful transition to King Abdallah (despite some turmoil in royal circles) after Hussein’s death in 1999 reflected a certain degree of regime legitimacy.63 It is difficult to explain how regime stability and a positive contribution to regional security has been ensured, especially in the face of a limited margin of manoeuvre for the regime.64 One possible explanation is that the regime’s dependence on the armed forces has not resulted in their disproportionate influence over national policy precisely because the regime is seen as guaranteeing the overall position of the Transjordanian population from which the majority of the armed forces is still drawn, and which forms the social base of the regime. The ruling family has ensured the loyalty of the armed forces by handpicking the officer corps primarily from traditional East Bank families, with the result that probably fewer than ten per cent of the officers are of Palestinian origin (although they may comprise more than 40 per cent of the soldiers).65

Another possible explanation is that Jordan has enjoyed, despite its relative poverty, a quasi-rentier status (with substantial rents from Saudi Arabia, the US and other Arab states) that have allowed the regime to consolidate its position without having to forge new domestic compacts with groups that might challenge its legitimacy or its security policies.66

The result has been that Jordan’s Western and conservative orientation has made it responsive (with the significant exception of the 1991 Gulf War) to external pressures to contribute positively (or at least not negatively) to regional security-building, even in the face of growing domestic pressures on the regime.67

Israel itself is not immune from this analysis. Although it would rank more positively on some of the five elements noted above (in particular the first three concerning the social basis of government, a broadly based armed forces, and regime security), the near-total interpenetration of civilian and military elites in political life raises several problematic issues for the determination of Israeli security policy. For example, it has been reported that Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu wanted to pull the Israeli army out of Lebanon, but that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) would not provide the military plans for doing
As Yehuda Ben-Meir notes, ‘the integration of so many senior IDF officers into the higher echelons of civilian activity and decision making after they have spent twenty to thirty years in the armed forces results in a massive transfer of manners, work habits, nomenclature, norms and values from the military to the civilian society, i.e., a militarization of the civilian sphere.’ Elsewhere, he notes that the military virtually monopolizes grand strategy and strategic planning, and that the absence of any civilian counterweight means that under certain circumstances, the military adopts politico-strategic assumptions that may be at odds with the political options that civilian leaders need or desire. In addition, the disproportionate political influence of settler and religious movements also means that the maximalist or unilateralist arguments for security, occupy a prominent place in Israeli security policy and render regional security-building efforts extremely difficult, as the current violent impasse in the region demonstrates.

CONCLUSIONS

This analysis has attempted to refocus the debate on regional security building by developing a different and more focused answer to the question: What are the necessary conditions for a state/regime to accept a vision of cooperative or mutual (as opposed to unilateral) security, and to participate in the development of a regional security order that reduces tension and the risk of violence between neighbouring states and peoples?

The answer given here is that a crucial factor determining whether or not a regime can participate in regional security is the nature of the relationship between ruling elites and institutions of organized violence, a relationship that takes its particular shape depending on the way in which the process of state-building has unfolded. Much attention in International Relations has focused on the domestic relationship between rulers and ruled, both in terms of political legitimacy and political forms of representation. However, little work has examined the way in which another aspect of the state-making process in the Middle East—the relationship between state power and military institutions—might affect regional security-building processes.

This essay has tried to show how a focus on this relationship might allow us greater insight into the prospects for regional security-building in the Middle East. The broader hypothesis that follows from this would be that leaders and decision-makers, when assessing the prospects for region-building, take into account the relationship between ‘state-makers’ and ‘war-makers’ in neighbouring states, and more generally the role of institutions of organized violence in political life, in the ways that have been outlined above.
These factors help shape the interpretation that decision-makers give to so-called ‘objective’ elements of threat (military dispositions), and ‘subjective’ elements (declaratory policies and negotiating strategies). The evidence that this contribution could offer to support this hypothesis is so far only suggestive, and concentrated on highlighting the problematic relationship between state elites and institutions of organized violence throughout the region. A more comprehensive analysis would test whether or not such factors do in fact play a role in the assessments of regional leaders vis-à-vis their neighbours.

But the importance of the issue, especially in light of the ongoing state reconstruction project in Iraq, and persistent high levels of violence between Israel and the Palestinians, is undeniable. The continued heavy dependence of many regimes in the Middle East (and elsewhere) on institutions of organized violence to sustain them in the absence of other means of legitimizing their rule, and the thwarting of the evolution towards a domestic compact that legitimizes the state, its regime and its central institutions, is a crucial impediment to the emergence of the inter-state ‘norms of recognition’ that must form the foundation for regional security-building efforts.

These impediments will only be overcome slowly, and not just by inter-state interaction on peace and security issues. Region-building involves a redefinition of the terms of political relations between neighbouring states, and as long as such acts of redefinition are forbidden domestically and the distribution of political power fixed by force, it is difficult to imagine moving towards a peaceful or stable regional security order. The domestic state-formation processes throughout the region, and in particular the role and place of ideas about the role of institutions and instruments of organized violence in political life, are thus critical to the prospects for region-building.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author is grateful to Simeon-David Alder, James Bevan, Barry Buzan, Roland Dominice, Denise Garcia, Barbara Gimelli, Oliver Jütersonke, Florian Plattner, and Abdulhay Sayed for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this contribution.

NOTES


7. Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, ‘A Framework for the Study of Security Communities’, in Adler and Barnett (note 3) pp.50, 53. They concentrate on specifying the indicators that a security community exists, only by implication revealing the underlying processes or mechanisms.

8. Buzan (note 5) pp. 176, 178, 209–21. He also invokes both a notion of progress towards mature anarchy and a spectrum of different relationships of amity and enmity within security complexes, without providing a clear picture of how one might move from one position to another (aside from general claims about, for example, the impact of major war on regional thinking).

the Middle East. See also Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky, *The Real World Order: Zones of Peace and Zones of Turmoil* (New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers 1996).


17. ‘The construction of relatively stable expectations 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 inter-state 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).’ Barnett (note 10) p.598.

18. See Mark Cooper, ‘The Demilitarization of the Egyptian Cabinet’, *International
Waning of the Military Coup in Arab Politics’, *Middle Eastern Studies* 18/1 (1982)
pp.69–81.

19. Solingen (note 16) p.41. Her discussion of the Middle East case (pp. 165–215)
does parallel this analysis in important ways.

20. See Andrew Hurrell, ‘An Emerging Security Community in South America?’, in
Adler and Barnett (note 3) pp.228–64.

21. For an elaboration of this conception see Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams,

22. This being the central image of the realist conception. See Kenneth Oye,
*Cooperation Under Anarchy* (Princeton UP 1986); John Mearsheimer, ‘The False
47.

Conflict and the International System* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner 1996) p.11. He
argues on p.9 that ‘security-insecurity is defined in relation to vulnerabilities—
both internal and external—that threaten or have the potential to bring down or
weaken state structures, both territorial and institutional, and governing
regimes’. For a critique, see Keith Krause, ‘The Third World Security
Predicament: State Making, Regional Conflict and the International System’,

Blackwell 1990); Charles Tilly, ‘War-Making and State-Making as Organized
Crime’, in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Theda Skocpol (eds.),

UP 1977) p.10; Barry Posen, ‘Nationalism, the Mass Army and Military Power’,


27. Ayoob (note 23). His analysis tends in this direction, treating the modern state as
a singular entity and thus downplaying the differences between forms of state and
the implications this might have for region-building. The same is true in a
different way about the democratic peace literature.


application to the Middle East that concentrates on the impact of recent wars on
state power, see Thierry Gongora, ‘War Making and State Power in the


32. Somewhat surprisingly, as Anthony Giddens has pointed out, few scholars have attempted to ‘analyse the consolidated political power generated by a merging of developed techniques of surveillance and the technology of industrialized war,’ and the role of these technologies and techniques in creating new methods of surveillance, social control, and repression. Anthony Giddens, The Nation-State and Violence (Cambridge 1981) p. 295. For exceptions see Christopher Dandeker, Surveillance, Power and Modernity (London 1990), Ch. 3; al-Khalil (note 13); David Ralston, Importing the European Army: The Introduction of European Military Techniques and Institutions into the Extra-European World, 1600–1914 (Univ. of Chicago Press 1990).

33. Buzan (note 5) p. 97. As he notes (p. 99), ‘weak states either do not have, or have failed to create, a domestic political and societal consensus of sufficient strength to eliminate the largescale use of force as a major and continuing element in the domestic political life of the nation’. Unfortunately, this definition risks being tautologically true, since the main empirical indicator of state weakness will be widespread violence, although in principle other ways of assessing weakness can be found.


36. For the argument that a choice between guns and butter will force Middle Eastern states to engage in building a regional security order, see Yayha Sadowski, Scuds or Butter? The Political Economy of Arms Control in the Middle East (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution 1992).


38. For a summary in neorealist terms of the various forms this pattern of resisting or appeasing threats can take, from the perspective of the Middle Eastern state, see Harknett and VanDenBerg (note 5).

40. In the security communities literature, these include ideas of social learning and collective identity formation. Adler and Barnett also seem to seek a middle ground here, arguing that ‘the issue might not be liberalism per se [ie: democracy and political stability] but rather a willingness to allow myriad transactions between societies among leaders who are generally secure in their domestic rule, and agree on general standards of conduct in domestic and international affairs.’ Michael Barnett and Emanuel Adler, ‘Studying Security Communities in Theory, Comparison and History’, in Adler and Barnett (note 3) pp.425–6.


42. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States* (note 24) p.206. By the late 1860s, most European states ‘had decided to place all their emphasis on international war, and to allow their regular forces to slough off their police functions.’ Malcolm Yapp, ‘The Modernization of Middle Eastern Armies in the Nineteenth Century: A Comparative View’, in V.J. Parry and Malcolm Yapp (eds.), *War, Technology and Society in the Middle East* (London: Oxford UP 1975) p.349.

43. Ariel Levite and Emily B. Landau, ‘Confidence and Security-Building Measures in the Middle East’, *Journal of Strategic Studies* 20/1 (March 1997) p.22. Also see Gideon Gera, ‘Reflections on Confidence Building in an Intricate Regional “Security Complex”—the Middle East’, in Gabriel Ben-Dor and David Dewitt (eds.), *Confidence Building Measures in the Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press 1994) p.161, who notes that ‘any routine military steps (such as tension reducing, arms control and limitation, intrusive inspections and other verifications) may have repercussions for the regimes involved.’

44. Krause has not treated the Palestinian Authority in what follows, but obviously it could be subject to the same analysis.


49. Gera (note 43) p.174. Needless to say, the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin by Jewish fundamentalists proves that the converse was also true.


53. For example, although national defence is formally the purview of the President and the National Defence Council, this latter met only 16 times in 11 years under Sadat, and had not met at all under Hosni Mubarak. Those who were consulted by the President understood that their role was purely consultative, and not decisional. See Abdel Monem Saïd, ‘la politique de sécurité égyptienne’, in Kodmani-Darwish and Chartouni-Dubarry (note 13) pp.220–27; Philippe Droz-Vincent, ‘L’armée et le système politique’, *Les Cahiers de l’Orient* 45 (1997) pp.121–36. On the history of the role of the armed forces in Egypt since 1945, see Anouar Abdel-Malek, *L’Armée dans la Nation* (Alger: SNED 1975).

54. The CSP (also known as the Central Security Forces) was founded after the 1967 war to serve as an internal ‘army of the police...[and] the Ministry of the Interior’ to crush demonstrations and dissent without the direct use of the regular army, and by 1990 it was almost as large as the army (numbering about 300,000). See Roger Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East* (London: Routledge 1992) p.204; Middle East Watch, *Behind Closed Doors: Torture and Detention in Egypt* (New York: Human Rights Watch 1992) p.29.


59. Saudi Arabia—A Country Study. The National Guard was also a ‘matter of tribal and family politics [since its head] Abd Allah was considered the leader of the Shammar branch of the A1 Saud, a rival source of power to the Sudairi branch that dominated the regular armed forces.’


64. For a recent attempt to focus on the identity dimension of Jordanian security concerns, see Marc Lynch, *State Interests and Public Spheres: The International Politics of Jordan’s Identity* (New York: Columbia UP 1998).

65. See Jordan—A Country Study.

66. For a detailed study of the ‘budget security’ motivations of Jordanian foreign policy and alliance making, see Laurie Brand, *Jordan’s Inter-Arab Relations* (New York: Columbia UP 1994). She notes (p.43–8) that foreign loans and assistance contributed an average of 43 per cent of total government revenue between 1973 and 1988. As she puts it with respect to the Saudi-Jordanian relationship (p.88), ‘a stable Jordan was seen as a key to Saudi security as well’.


68. The author is grateful to the editors for drawing this example, from a series of articles in *Ma’ariv*, September 2002 (Hebrew), to his attention.

70. For example, the 1966 long-range planning of the IDF was based on the assumption that Israel would retain all captured territory until full peace was achieved. Ben-Meir (note 69) p.146. He also notes the cases of the invasion of Lebanon and the pursuit of the Lavi fighter as examples of problematic civil-military relations, pp. 143–6, 148–68. For other examples see Dan Horowitz, *The Israel Defense Forces: A Civilianized Military in a Partially Militarized Society*, in Roman Kolkowicz and Andrzej Korbonski (eds.), *Soldiers, Peasants, Bureaucrats* (London: George Allen & Unwin 1982) pp.77–106.

It sometimes seems that the dominant feature of post-Cold War international relations is the regionalization of global politics. To the extent that this trend is real, it has been accompanied by another, perhaps contradictory transformation: the globalization of regional security studies. What this means, in fact, is the intellectual hegemony of Western analytical models of regional security studies.

In almost every single regional security setting, analysts are now using the same concepts and terminology, and when they meet, they are able to carry out a common security discourse. This trend is part of the proliferation of regional security institutions—also variously described as regimes, orders, structures, forums, frameworks and architectures. Some of these, including the OSCE, WEU (now absorbed by the EU), and ASEAN/ARF, have achieved a high degree of institutional complexity and have attracted a great deal of scholarly attention. Others, such as the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), SAARC, SADC, the Indian Ocean Rim Initiative, and a long list of other agencies, are in less advanced stages of development and have received less attention in the scholarly literature.

The same taxonomies and the same terminological imprecision which characterize analyses of other regions are also apparent in discussions of Middle Eastern security issues. Here, too, analysts acknowledge the value of regional structures to reduce transaction costs and change the payoff structure of security arrangements by lengthening the shadow of the future. Here, too, policy analysts and practitioners pay lip service to the desirability of reducing uncertainties by implementing non-threatening defense postures. In fact, the globalization of regional security studies reflects much of what has been said...
about security in the Middle East since the formal start of the peace process at
the 1991 Madrid Conference—and very little of what has been done.

For despite all the talk, it is difficult to point to any perceptible progress
toward what is the ostensible aim of all this creative thought: to eliminate or at
least reduce the risk of war by erecting barriers against the possibility that it will
erupt.

Such barriers may range from the most modest security dialogues through
more routinized confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) to the
most highly institutionalized forms of integration. However it chooses to define
barriers, the Middle East has a rather miserable record with respect to their
creation and implementation. True, the multilateral Arms Control and
Regional Security (ACRS) negotiations established at Madrid did produce some
modest progress in the conceptual and operational baskets, though the few
agreed measures (e.g. maritime SAR exercises) were frequently postponed or
canceled.

It is also a fact that there is a rather impressive record of bilateral security
arrangements and CSBMs, formal and informal, between Israel and several of its
Arab neighbors, as well as growing defense cooperation between Israel and
Turkey.3

However, unlike other regions that have created institutions like the
Organization of African Unity (OAU) (replaced in 2002 by an even more
ambitious African Union) and the Organization of American States (OAS) (with
an even more ambitious sub-regional structure—Mercosur), the Middle East
has no region-wide organization or institution to deal with security issues or
even consultations. And with the exception of the Gulf Cooperation Council
(GCC), the few sub-regional organizations that have been created, on the basis
of cultural affinities rather than geographic commonality (e.g. Arab League,
Union du Maghreb Arabe), have had no appreciable security functions.

Instead, concepts of regional security paradigms have simply been grafted
onto traditional political-military doctrine, with the result that multilateralism
has become just another vehicle for the pursuit of longstanding policy, or, at
most, a mechanism for competitive cooperation. In short, in its approach to
regional security, the Middle East talks the talk, but it does not walk the walk.

What explains this non-development? One possibility is that leaders and
publics in the Middle East still do not know what they want in terms of
institutional arrangements. Given the huge cultural-political gaps between
Middle Eastern states as well as the unresolved bilateral and multilateral
conflicts, this is an intuitively appealing explanation. However, this provides
only part of the answer. For even among those who do have a vision of the
Middle East, borrowed to a large extent from the Western European model,
there is no sense of how to get from here to there.4
Difficulties in progressing toward the objective of a regional security structure are often ascribed to the absence of prerequisites inferred from the experience of other regions, especially Europe. Thus, it is frequently argued that the Middle East suffers from structural impediments, that is, from an unbalanced distribution of assets among the members of the region, whether those are military power, external political alignments, wealth or scientific resources.5

In particular, it has been argued that some kind of strategic parity between the two major blocs made possible a regional security structure in Europe, whereas extreme disparities, especially the presumed Israeli nuclear monopoly, preclude a similar outcome in the Middle East.6 Second, political obstacles have been proposed as a factor in explaining the meager results. Some have argued that security negotiations in Europe, in the context of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), were not overburdened by unresolved substantive conflicts—a point sharply disputed by diplomats from the Baltic states—whereas outstanding territorial conflicts are a major obstacle to agreement on a regional structure in the Middle East. Yet, even in the case of the GCC, outstanding border disputes between Bahrain and Qatar were not an insuperable obstacle to the formation of such a structure.

There is a third factor that is frequently cited in the debate about regional security: the cognitive dimension. This refers to the existence of some commonalities among societies or societal elites that facilitate the kind of mutual trust which purportedly makes cooperative security arrangements possible. One aspect of this dimension is the hypothesis that states need to have compatible domestic regimes if they are to cooperate in the pursuit of regional security.

The ‘democratic peace’ was an obvious factor in the Western European system of structures established after World War II, but it was just as obviously lacking in the Europe-wide system of arms control agreements (INF, CFE, etc.) and security structures (CSCE). A second, less demanding commonality is therefore sometimes proposed to explain the possibility of effective organization for regional security: some broad civilizational/ cultural familiarity.

The theme of cognitive familiarity assumes a variety of forms. In addition to economic equality, Michael Barnett cites the importance of a common identity and a common idea of progress in the European case.7 Stephen Rock, in a study of relations among great powers, argues that peace between former adversaries is far more likely to develop among states ‘homogeneous in their societal attributes’ than among those highly dissimilar in important ways aside from their political structures.8

Haggard and Simmons also stress the importance of a common social purpose for partners in security regimes, arguing that regime effectiveness depends on
common values, knowledge and beliefs relative to cooperation, i.e. on learning and ideology with respect to the merit or futility of certain lines of action. And Kishore Mahbubani makes essentially the same point about Southeast Asia when he attributes the entrenchment of peaceful international relations in the region to the emergence during the last few decades of a ‘corporate culture’ for regional security.

Perhaps the most explicit argumentation of the importance of the cognitive dimension is found in Patrick Morgan’s interpretation of the NATO experience. Morgan contends that there are two cognitive prerequisites for moving beyond traditional international relations. One is the existence among relevant elites of a consensus about the need for a safe, orderly international environment, to the point where they are willing to forgo some national objectives. The other is enough of a sense of community to sustain the willingness to act multilaterally or collectively, even when their own national interests are not directly threatened.

Of course, stating the problem in this way risks imbuing regional security organization with the same paradox that has been attributed to arms control: when it is possible, it is not necessary, and when it is necessary, it is not possible. Like most such bon mots, this one is overstated. A normative consensus, a sense of moral community, a shared sense of values, cognitive convergence—whatever the term adopted—is not a panacea for regional security problems, especially if it is confined to elites alienated from their own societies. This is obvious from the fate of the Dreikaiserbund, the Holy Alliance, and several other historical precedents.

At the same time, it does contain a kernel of essential truth. Some degree of cognitive convergence among elites is almost certainly necessary to permit a functioning regional security structure, and whatever that degree may be, it is clearly lacking in the Middle East, even among those who talk to each other, and especially among those who do not. And as long as this situation persists, it will be exceedingly difficult to make any real progress toward agreement on the ‘there’ of Middle East regional security structures.

The reasons for this lacuna almost certainly lie in the insecurities that prevail throughout the region, not just military but also cultural-social and political. Because of these insecurities, the perception of a common interest in cooperation among ruling elites is minimal.

Instead, most regimes have a strong instrumental objection even to ‘normalization’ of relations with Israel, at least in advance of comprehensive peace; they interpret normalization—and certainly cooperation—as a prize or a reward to be given to Israel after it meets their terms for peace. They also have an almost existential aversion to the repudiation of any attributes of sovereignty, which is implied in the notion of a regional security regime, lest
that prove to be destabilizing to their rule in the way that the Helsinki Agreements ultimately helped destabilize the communist regimes in Eastern Europe.

THE BARCELONA PROCESS: PROMISE AND PERFORMANCE

Both these factors—absence of a common elite interest in cooperation and jealous preservation of undiluted sovereignty by regimes lacking confidence in their legitimacy—help explain the inability of the ACRS forum to endure, much less progress. However, they are even more evident in the failed promise of the EMP. The Barcelona Declaration, adopted in November 1995, stipulated three objectives of the Partnership:

(a) the creation of an area of peace and stability based on the principles of human rights and democracy;
(b) the creation of an area of shared prosperity through the progressive establishment of free trade between the EU and its Mediterranean partners and among the partners themselves, accompanied by substantial EU financial support for economic transition and for helping the partners to confront the social and economic challenges created by this transition; and
(c) the improvement of mutual understanding among the peoples of the region and the development of a free and flourishing civil society by means of exchange, development of human resources, and the support of civil society and social development.

In 2000, the European Commission report issued a report, *The Barcelona Process, Five Years On: 1995–2000* that presumed to do the accountancy.\(^{12}\) Such reports are normally full of self-congratulatory retrospectives. But in this case, even the EU Commissioner for External Relations, Chris Patten, was forced to acknowledge, with some understatement, that problems exist. And after listing them in considerable detail, he concluded, with equal understatement, that the process, after only five years, needed to be reinvigorated.

In each of these three chapters (or ‘baskets’), the results have been quite dismal. The Commission’s review of the political-security basket cites the continuation of political dialogue as a ‘major accomplishment’ and claims that the Partnership, through periodic meetings of senior officials, provides ‘the only political multilateral forum in which representatives of Syria and Lebanon regularly participate in talks with their counterparts from Israel.’\(^{13}\) Strictly speaking, this is not correct, since Syrian and Lebanese representatives also sit with Israelis in the same room at the UN General Assembly. In any case,
effective communication and understanding have been no more evident in EMP fora than they are at the UN; senior officials’ meetings generally amount to the continuation of political warfare by other means.

The report also refers to several Partnership-Building Measures (PBMs), a term introduced to replace the more politically contentious concept of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs). Of these, the ones deemed most worthy of elaboration are information and training seminars for Euro-Med diplomats in Malta, and the EuroMeSCo network of foreign policy institutes—hardly an impressive list.

By contrast, the expected capstone of this chapter, the Euro-Mediterranean Charter for Peace and Stability, failed to materialize. The original plan was to adopt the Charter at a Euro-Mediterranean Summit to be held in November 2000. Indeed, the Marseilles Summit was expected to signal the reinvigoration of the entire Barcelona Process. However, pervasive Arab-Israeli tensions following the renewed outbreak of violence at the end of September forced the organizers to downgrade the meeting to a Conference of Foreign Ministers, which Syria and Lebanon did not attend, and the adoption of the Charter was postponed sine die.

The economic and financial chapter fared slightly better, but even here, implementation fell far short of declared intentions. Progress in the conclusion of bilateral association agreements was slow. And a variety of problems (including the failure to work out framework conventions) resulted in what is euphemistically described as ‘the insufficient disbursement rate of MEDA funds’.

Only 26 per cent (890 of the 3,435 million euros committed for structural adjustment, economic cooperation and other bilateral and regional cooperation activities in the period 1995–99) was actually disbursed, and in the case of two partners, Syria and Lebanon, the disbursement rate was close to zero per cent. Moreover, there was little discernible progress in the promotion of freer south-south trade, an essential component in the construction of a Euro-Mediterranean free trade area by the target date of 2010.

Under the third chapter heading, the EU funded a variety of social and cultural activities and exchange programs intended to promote democracy, human rights, awareness and tolerance of cultural diversity, and the vibrancy of civil society (e.g. by supporting NGOs). Without a reliable yardstick by which to measure such things as mutual understanding and tolerance of diversity, it is difficult to render a judgment about the extent of progress in this area. It is undeniably true, however, that third-basket activities have not been immune to government suspicion or the intrusion of factors, especially regional conflicts, that complicate cooperation in the first and second baskets, as well. Some, such as Med-Campus, have actually been phased out.
What accounts for the gap between expectations (or hopes) and reality? The
EMP has been subjected to a variety of criticisms: that it is not a true
partnership because it is dominated by the EU, which initiated it and continues
to fund it; that its decision-making and implementation mechanisms are
cumbersome and lack transparency; and that the connection between its goals,
however praiseworthy, and the primary means—regional cooperation—is not
at all clear.

However, the most powerful explanation is the one mentioned rarely, if at
all: that its conceptual underpinning was fundamentally flawed. The most
critical flaw of all was the assumption that there was a common Euro
Mediterranean space, i.e., that it actually constituted a region in any meaningful
sense of the word, or, at least, that it had enough of the precursor attributes of a
region to justify attempts through institution-building to create a region.

Unlike all other regional organizations in the world, the EMP reflects neither
a common identity nor common values. Its members do not share a cultural
tradition, language, religion or even history of administrative unity. They
possess a wide range of political systems, ranging from liberal democracy to
rigid authoritarianism. Even geography does not hold them together. Some of
its members are European Mediterranean states, some are European non-
Mediterranean states, some are non-European Mediterranean states, and one
(Jordan) is neither European nor Mediterranean.

Finally, its members are not driven together by the kinds of common external
challenges or threats that create alliances or functional communities. Instead,
the interests they do share—peace and stability, prosperity, mutual
understanding—exist only at the same high level of generality and abstraction
that enables the entire world to gather under the wings of universal
organizations like the UN. If it is true that nothing unites the members of the
EMP except the stated desire to pursue common interests at that level of
generality, then the architecture of the Partnership has violated the first
principle of architecture, political or other—that form should follow function.

The inversion of form and function in the EMP is reflected in two other
assumptions: that the member-states (actually, member-governments or
regimes) are equally wedded to the idea of regional cooperation as a vehicle for
the promotion of peace and stability, and that they are equally committed to the
political, economic and social liberalization subsumed in the stated goals of
democracy, free trade and civil society (the last of which does not need to be
promoted, only tolerated). However, the basis for these assumptions does not
stand the test of experience.

In the first place, regional cooperation (and especially sub-regional
coeperation in the Eastern Mediterranean) was ‘contaminated’ by—i.e. made
hostage to—the Middle East peace process and was essentially paralyzed.
Rather than viewing regional cooperation (PBMs) under the aegis of the EMP as an end in itself or even as a means to promote peace and stability, many Arab states insisted on seeing it in the same way they had, with a few notable exceptions, seen the multilateral negotiations of the Madrid process: not as a positive-sum game from which all benefit, but rather as ‘normalization’ of relations, that is, a prize to Israel that should not be conferred unless and until Israel took the measures necessary, in their view, to make peace possible.

In other words, they approached Barcelona, not as an institution or structure that might improve the regional atmosphere and facilitate more productive bilateral negotiations while providing a host of other tangible benefits, but rather as another international institution, like the UN, in which to wage political warfare. As a result, the EMP was reduced to the seemingly absurd situation in which it could not promote peace and stability in the Mediterranean until after peace and stability had been secured.

Second, few of the authoritarian regimes have shown any real enthusiasm for the kind of domestic openness that might subvert their own power. This is particularly true of openness in the context of security. Since so many of them depend primarily on the military and other security agencies for their hold on power, security is the last issue-area into which they are prepared to inject greater transparency.

However, the other baskets are only slightly less sensitive. Many of the requirements of free trade (abolition of state monopolies, reduction of customs and excise duties, legal security), for example, threaten the power base and even the revenue base of neo-patrimonial regimes. And the cautious toleration of autonomous organizations and institutions essential to vibrant civil society has encouraged public criticism of government practices to the point where some regimes have felt the need to repress them, even (as in the case of Sa’ad e-din Ibrahim’s Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development Studies in Egypt) when those institutions operated with funding from the EU.

The shortcomings of the EMP were implicitly acknowledged by the European Union’s adoption of a Common Mediterranean Strategy (CMS) in June 2000. The CMS, one of several common strategies elaborated under the umbrella of the Union’s Common Foreign and Security Policy, posits many of the same goals of the EMP and adds little in terms of substance.

However, its elaboration as a unilateral EU document betrays an unspoken disillusionment with the whole notion of partnership and a reversion to the pre-Barcelona mindset of viewing programs as things that Europe does for the Mediterranean rather than as things that Europe and the Mediterranean do together.

The EU originally promoted the EMP, not just from an altruistic belief that the objectives of the Partnership were admirable in their own right, but also...
because it believed that its own security and prosperity were intimately bound up with developments on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. More to the point, it felt that problems stemming from political paralysis or repression, domestic or regional strife, and economic stagnation/regression in the south would spill over to the northern shore of the Mediterranean, and thence, given the progressive elimination of barriers to the movement of goods and people within the EU, to the rest of the continent. This spillover, it was feared, would take the form of illegal immigrants, smuggling of drugs and other forms of organized crime, and the spread of radical ideologies and practices (including terrorism) among expatriate communities already in Europe.

Europe’s security interest in the Mediterranean does not refer to military threats as traditionally understood (invasion, missile attacks, etc.). Instead, it is grounded in these ‘soft security’ threats, and Europe hoped to preempt these threats by encouraging regional cooperation around the Mediterranean basin in order to ameliorate the political, social and economic problems that give rise to such threats.

For most non-European Mediterranean partners, however, security interests continued to be understood in more traditional terms, i.e. as threats emanating either from belligerent neighbors or domestic opposition forces. Against these sorts of threats, regional cooperation facilitated by greater domestic openness and the reduction of barriers to cultural and economic interaction across borders is not seen as the most appropriate or promising response.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

The experience of Barcelona provides another illustration of how the Middle East (and, by extension, the Persian Gulf), has not moved toward regional cooperation but instead continues to evolve in a different and far more ominous direction. It is not difficult to document a highly negative drift in recent years. The symptoms include declining mutual confidence, rising tensions and aggravated threat perceptions, growing violence, and continuing arms buildups, especially the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and long-range delivery systems.

It is therefore even more urgent to move, even if the direction—the ‘there’—is not yet clear and a consensus on the desired shape of the regional security structure has not yet emerged.

This implies two courses of action. The first is to build some minimal level of cognitive convergence. Obviously, there are limits here beyond which the region cannot move, because some things are simply beyond human agency to change, at least in any meaningful time frame. Thus, countries and peoples of the Middle East cannot build a community based on primordial characteristics such
as religion or language. Yet, it is vital that they break down walls of stereotype and demonization by expanding consultation mechanisms and intensifying Track-II, seminar diplomacy, and other unofficial contacts that can help build a broader sense of common humanity, if only as the earliest precursor of openness and pluralism that could ultimately lead to more compatible political systems. Of course, the distinction between ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ is often hazy, so even Track-II sometimes runs up against the ‘normalization’ obstacle. Therefore, the parties alone cannot do this—if they could, half the problem would be solved—and they need the continuing help of outside governments, NGOs, foundations, and anyone else with a direct or indirect stake in regional security in the Middle East.

This is a modest and preliminary agenda based on the assumption that more forceful outside intervention on behalf of democratization is unlikely elsewhere in the region, even if the consequences of Anglo-American regime change in Iraq do turn out to be positive in this respect. However, even without resort to military instruments, outsiders may promote the emergence of some structural and functional underpinnings of democracy, such as judicial independence and financial transparency and accountability, by a more concerted and determined use of incentives and disincentives, e.g. by attaching some conditionality to assistance and support for regional governments.

The second thing is to bypass what has been a significant stumbling block in this process: the sequencing problem. Israel and some of its Arab partners, especially Egypt, have been unable to agree on whether security-building is a prerequisite for peace or whether peace is a prerequisite for building regional security structures. Rather than trying to resolve this problem, the parties need to make security-building and peace-building mutually reinforcing, by reinvigorating both simultaneously.

Thus, it is vital to enhance reassurance by thickening and deepening the modest network of bilateral and multilateral CSBMs (Confidence and Security Building Measures) that already exist, regardless of what happens in a formal sense to the ACRS Working Group or any other security forum. If these arrangements are promoted at a sub-regional level, i.e. on a bi- or multilateral basis involving ad hoc ‘coalitions of the willing’, they may be less paralyzed by the Arab-Israeli impasse than were comprehensive schema such as ACRS and EMP, especially if Israel’s role in them is muted.

At the same time, it is vital to push through to completion the central elements of the peace process, including those, which relate to the political status of the Palestinians. This question may not impinge directly on security per se, but it inevitably does cast a shadow over the psychological environment in which security arrangements are worked out. Once again, it is difficult for the parties to do this by themselves, and they therefore need ongoing help from
outside parties, even if that implies something that is occasionally rejected as a quasi-hegemonic regional system.

Action along these two tracks—promoting cognitive convergence and bypassing the sequencing problem—will help resolve some of the major problems in regional security. Just as importantly, it will help the parties to live with outstanding differences that one side cannot agree to resolve to the satisfaction of all the others. These kinds of action will not bring about the prophetic vision of the end of days (or of history), which for these purposes means a functionally integrated security community of stable and prosperous members. Yet without them, the region risks going down a very different and far less benign road.

NOTES


4. The most prominent example of transformatory vision is Shimon Peres’ ‘New Middle East’.


6. Explaining the Egyptian position, for example, Foreign Minister Amr Musa argued, after the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, that’…no regional security or political arrangements can be reached in the region unless understanding is reached on this question.’ By ‘this question’, Musa was referring to a zone free of WMD, but his preoccupation was with Israeli nuclear weapons, as is clear from his introductory comment: ‘…there is a committee concerned with arms control and security, through which regional cooperation in this field can be discussed. However, this would not be possible unless Israel takes a step in regard to the Israeli nuclear program.’ Interview in al-Sharq al-Awsat, London, 24 Aug. 1995, cited in FBIS-NES-95–167 (29 Aug. 1995) p.12. Geoffrey Kemp argues that various structural asymmetries are inevitable and comes
to precisely the opposite conclusion. ‘...cooperation in security will not be possible in the Middle East,’ he writes, ‘until the key parties [the reference is apparently to Egypt] come to believe what the western Europeans have accepted: that a state may be secure within a system that permits vast asymmetries in power among its members.’ See Geoffrey Kemp, ‘Cooperative Security in the Middle East’, in Janne Nolan (ed.), Global Engagement: Cooperation and Security in the 21st Century (Washington DC: Brookings 1994) p.410.

13. Ibid., p.9.
This contribution will briefly review the Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) experience, and will seek to position ACRS within the stresses and strains of its time. In particular, it will reflect on the different expectations which many had of ACRS and will ask why the group evolved as it did in relation to the peace process. Finally, the essay will reflect on what this says about possible future attempts to discuss or negotiate a regional approach to arms control and security in the Middle East in the short to medium term and the topics which must be on the agenda of such attempts. The essay concludes by arguing that the time may be ripe for a new, more co-operative and inclusive approach to security in the region.

THE ARMS CONTROL AND REGIONAL SECURITY (ACRS) EXPERIENCE

The ACRS working group was one of five groups active on the multilateral track of the peace process. It met in plenary session six times between May 1992 and December 1994. It also spawned a series of smaller discussions, which were focused either on specific Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs), or conceptual ideas concerning security and arms control in the region.1

Essentially, there were two strands of argument throughout ACRS. Israel argued that the process would be an incremental one and that initial efforts should be expended on a series of CSBMs and other measures which would promote confidence between the regional states. Once this was well underway, and the regional states had developed a rapport and a level of comfort with each other, more difficult issues could be considered. The second strand of logic, argued most vehemently by Egypt with rhetorical support from other Arab states, was that Israel’s nuclear potential must be captured by the ACRS process and captured early. Egypt argued that Israel’s nuclear programme constituted a real physical threat to the Arab states, was a (if not the) cause of other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) programmes in the region and was a problem for the
Arab countries in terms of public perceptions in the Arab world. A broader issue for the Egyptians was the question of Israel’s qualitative edge over a range of military capabilities.

In substantive terms, the nuclear issue was the greatest source of tension in ACRS. As the process moved forward, a relationship developed between the nuclear issue and the other issues which eventually saw ACRS go into the suspended state that it remains in to this day. Egypt became more and more frustrated that its desire to see Israel make some sort of binding and time-limited commitment on the nuclear question was not being taken seriously by the group (at least, in Egypt’s definition), and it began to link progress on other issues to the nuclear issue.

However, this was not the only axis of tension in ACRS. Added to this problem, which was unique to ACRS, one saw a tension endemic to the peace process as a whole; the question of the relationship between the bilateral talks of the process and the multilaterals. The critical question here was that of normalization. Many Arab states felt that going too far in the examination of the pan-regional issues addressed by the multilateral track would have the effect of allowing Israel to become a part of the region, which it was not entitled to be until the issues of the bilaterals had been resolved.

It was generally accepted in the peace process that the bilaterals had precedence, and that the multilaterals could not get ahead of them in any substantive way. When the bilaterals were making progress, so were the multilaterals. When the bilaterals were stalled, the multilaterals suffered accordingly. This linkage of the multilaterals to the bilaterals, which was endemic to the peace process as a whole, constituted the second axis of tension in ACRS.

Thus the important thing to understand about the various problems which beset ACRS was that they really constituted a complex set of national calculations, competing demands and tensions. When they criticized ACRS for going too far in the elaboration of CSBMs, some (such as Saudi Arabia) were talking about the problem of the multilaterals getting too far ahead of the bilaterals from their perspective. Others, such as Egypt, would criticize ACRS for exactly the same thing (too much time spent on CSBMs) but for an entirely different reason; not enough was being done to address the nuclear issue in Egypt’s view.

In spite of these tensions, ACRS accomplished a great deal in a short space of time. Looking back on ACRS, one is constantly struck by just how much was done. CSBMs in such fields as pre-notification of military moves, exchange of military information, communications and maritime confidence-building which took decades to work out in other regional contexts were largely finalized in a few months of active effort in ACRS. Indeed, the measures worked out in
ACRS went beyond those adopted in other regional contexts in some important technical ways.

All of this is impressive. However, it is also the case that none of these measures was formally adopted by any regional state. Moreover, the so-called conceptual discussions which took place in ACRS were less productive in terms of concrete results than their operational counterparts.\textsuperscript{4} This does not mean that the accomplishments of this group were inconsequential, especially when measured against the issues on its agenda. Far from it; the conceptual group dealt with issues on which it was probably impossible to achieve concrete results in the time available. However, in a larger sense, the inability of ACRS to translate its successes into politically tangible results, coupled with its inability to move beyond what quickly became an intellectually, if not politically stale dispute over nuclear weapons, would seem to indicate that ACRS had built-in weaknesses which the participants were unable to rise above given the political realities of the moment.

The inability to adopt agreements achieved, for example, suggests that the political context in which ACRS took place had not kept up with the technical discussions in the group. Though it took many years to reach a point in Europe or Asia where CSBMs could be both agreed and implemented, that time saw the development of a political context which allowed both of these steps to take place. Perceptions of threat were brought to the stage of at least being congruent in terms of the major causes of tension, if not in full agreement with each other. Also, the political elites in the European and Asian cases were not in a position of being physically threatened by opposition forces for entering into an exploration of CSBMs with the other side. The powers in Europe and Asia recognized each other as equals in a legal sense. Finally, and particularly in the European case, the context of the security issue was largely bilateral; most actors did not perceive themselves as facing multiple sources of potential attack as is the case in the Middle East.

This is not to say that ACRS was somehow a worthless experience, or to denigrate its accomplishments. Given the realities of its composition and the moment in time that it existed, ACRS made creditable progress. The question which remains, however, is why the group stalled? The answer lies in two inter-related fields: differing expectations of the manner in which ACRS would tackle the problem of WMD in the region; and the fundamental composition of ACRS and its role as a group of the multilateral track of the peace process.
DETERRENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

On a public level, the fundamental question of the Middle East arms control debate has commonly been attributed to Israel’s policy of retaining a nuclear option and the impact this policy has had on the decisions of other regional states to pursue other WMD options as a possible counter to Israel’s decision. Certainly, this was the point of view espoused by many Arab states, most notably Egypt, in the ACRS talks. While there is obviously a connection between Israel’s policy of nuclear ambiguity and the nuclear, biological and chemical weapons programmes pursued at various times by several other Middle Eastern states, the idea that this is the only reason for those programmes seems far-fetched.

Indeed, Israel’s nuclear policy may in some cases serve as a convenient public shield for other programmes which may have gone ahead regardless of Israel’s status. In looking closely at the WMD programmes of other regional states, and at the actual cases of use of such weapons, one sees a pattern of development and use for reasons having largely to do with inter Arab and Arab-Iranian conflicts, as well, as with internal security in some countries.5

On the specific question of nuclear arms, it is important to note that Israel never said in ACRS that it would not discuss nuclear weapons issues in the Middle East. Rather, the Israelis said that they would discuss these issues in the context of a wider dialogue on creating a zone free of WMD in the region, and when all of the relevant states were part of the process. However, the Israelis refused to give a specific point at which such talks could begin, either in terms of time or of a set of conditions which would have to be fulfilled to allow for talks to commence.6 In the meantime, the Israelis believed that discussions of other security questions could take place. Indeed, they regarded such discussions as essential if a common basis of understanding as to the security perceptions of all regional states was to be created as a foundation upon which more ambitious arms control agreements could eventually be constructed.

In many ways, Israel’s broader goal in ACRS seemed to be to hold discussions with those Middle East countries prepared to recognize Israel’s existence, discussions which would convey to them that Israel’s ambiguous nuclear status was no longer meant to act as a threat or deterrent to them. This is a more subtle variation of Israel’s deterrent strategy and perhaps reflects that state’s evolving position in the Middle East.

No longer is Israel concerned about an existential military threat from its immediate neighbours or even ‘the Arabs’ as a group. Today, the existential military threat to Israel is perceived to come from a group of states on the periphery of the region that Israel believes are prepared to threaten the use of
WMD against Israel in support of their wider aims in the region or even their ideological and religious views.

Thus, for Israel, the task is to keep its nuclear and other military options open until its relationship with these states has changed, but simultaneously to convey to the other states of the region, with which Israel now has emerging relations through the peace process, that Israel’s nuclear and conventional capabilities are not meant to be a threat to them as long as they continue to develop relations with Israel. In effect, what Israel seems to be striving towards is a more subtle kind of deterrence; towards a policy which keeps the nuclear option open, but only in respect of certain states in the region, as opposed potentially to all of Israel’s neighbours as was the case when Israel first began to work on the creation of a nuclear option.7

The ACRS working group was a part of this broader strategy of conveying the new deterrence policy to Arab states prepared to co-exist with Israel. Thus, Israeli expectations of the purpose of ACRS were intimately bound up in its utility as a vehicle for engaging in discussions aimed at putting forward this view to those in the Middle East with which Israel was interested in developing a more normal relationship.

For many other Middle East countries, however, acceptance of such a goal holds implicit the notion that official discussions over arms control would, in a way, justify Israel’s continuing nuclear ambiguity for an indefinite period of time. This was held to be unacceptable for three reasons. First, there is the political unacceptability of such a posture, which tends to confer upon Israel special status in the region. Second, such a posture requires that the positive trend in Arab-Israel relations which began in the peace process would continue indefinitely. Israel’s more selective deterrent posture only removes the ‘threat’ to the Arab states participating in the peace process so long as they continue to accept Israel as a member of the region, whatever actions it may take in future. This tends to put any relief from the perception of being under Israel’s nuclear threat on a kind of Israeli sufferance, a politically unacceptable position.8

Finally, the Egyptians argued in ACRS that Israel’s refusal to give up a nuclear option holds a threat to all states in the region, even those with whom Israel now wants to develop a relationship in which its nuclear and military potential is not such a deciding factor. The logic of this argument is that Israel’s nuclear option is used as a justification by others in the region for their continuing WMD programmes, even though it seems clear that these programmes have other rationales as well. Though the chemical, biological, nuclear and missile programmes of those such as Iran, Iraq, Libya and Syria are putatively (and to some extent genuinely) aimed at Israel, they also threaten other states in the region.
This, in turn, forces those other states to embark upon programmes of their own, thereby placing the region as a whole in a position of a continuing spiral. Moreover, argued the Egyptians, if the revelations of such sources as Vanunu are to be believed, the fact that Israel has embarked on a nuclear weapons programme numbering in the hundreds of weapons calls into question assertions that Israel regards these as solely weapons of last resort.

Of course, it is likely that other states in the region would continue various WMD programmes whether Israel renounced nuclear ambiguity or not. These programmes are probably perceived to meet other needs vis-à-vis their security in the region. Indeed, if one looks at the history of the actual use of such weapons in the region over the past 40 years, as opposed to their declared purpose in terms of the Arab-Israeli question, one sees that Arab-Arab and Arab-Iranian disputes have been at least as great a motivating force for the creation of these capabilities as any difference with Israel. In effect, these weapons are not just part of the pan-regional, Arab-Israeli security complex, but are also intimately bound up with sub-regional security issues throughout the Middle East. Some of these sub-regional issues are only peripherally related to the Arab-Israeli dispute, if at all.

However, the Egyptians argued, Israel’s retention of a nuclear option tends to place these WMD activities in the context of the Arab-Israeli dispute, even those weapons which are not aimed at Israel, thereby making it impossible to address other WMD threats in the region. The Israelis, of course, replied that if these programmes are only partly aimed at Israel, they would probably continue whether Israel renounced its nuclear potential or not. The only achievement of an end to Israel’s policy of nuclear ambiguity in the absence of real and lasting peace in the entire region, this argument runs, would be to remove Israel’s ability to deter these weapons.

THE DIFFERENT PURPOSES OF WMD IN THE MIDDLE EAST: IMPLICATIONS FOR ARMS CONTROL

If it is the case that WMD capabilities have been at least partially developed in the region for sub-regional purposes beyond strictly the Arab-Israeli dispute, a difficulty exists in trying to convene formal arms control talks within a process which takes the Arab-Israeli dispute as its point of departure, as did ACRS. Simply put, arms control requires, to a certain extent at least, that a basis exists for nations to make trade-offs between various weapons-systems involving both the military and the political purposes of those weapons systems.

Such trade-offs do not have to be equal. In the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) agreement, for example, the Russians gave up far more in terms of numbers of individual weapons than NATO did. However, the process needs
to produce a situation whereby the functions which the weapons are supposed
to fulfill are amenable to trade-offs such that a situation of equal and enhanced
security prevails once the process has concluded an agreement.

Put another way, the contribution of arms control to the larger goal of
creating a new security framework is to permit the manipulation of various
weapon types on all sides into a situation whereby a balance of military security
is attained. This may involve trade-offs which are different on each side, if their
forces are differently composed and deployed. The result is not meant to be
equal forces, but equal and enhanced security within an improved relationship
(bearing in mind that arms control is only one aspect in a much larger, and
essentially political process of reconciliation between former enemies and that
arms control cannot, by itself, change a relationship).

However, if one side retains military capabilities for purposes which are so
fundamentally different from those of the other side that they cannot be
reconciled within a broader formula of trade-offs, arms control in the formal
sense becomes much more difficult if not impossible. This is because the
alignment of political and military functions between different weapons, which
is such an important part of arms control, is more difficult to accomplish. In
such cases, the elimination of weapons may occur by means of reciprocal
unilateral reductions, but this will only happen when the larger political
relationship has been fundamentally altered to the point that each side no longer
believes the weapons to be necessary. In such cases, ‘arms control’ will likely
consist of an agreement after the fact to codify the new relationship. To some
extent this is what happened between Russia and the United States at the end of
the Cold War.

The situation is made even more difficult if there are more than two
participants in an arms control process and if the various members of the
process believe that they have different threats to address, both regional and sub-
regional. Trying to bring diverse forces into some kind of alignment such that an
equal security trade-off is possible (even though it might not be a numerically
equal trade-off) is very difficult even in a bilateral negotiation. In a situation
where multiple actors are involved, and many of them believe that they face
multiple threats which are quite different, trying to bring different military
capabilities into some sort of alignment which will permit formal arms control
to take place is a daunting task.

A further level of complexity is introduced if actors in the region have
different relationships with important outside powers. Some may have friendly
relations with these powers, while others may have relations which are highly
antagonistic. In the latter case, retention of a WMD capability may be aimed at
raising the costs of regional intervention by an outside power. Once again,
another justification for the retention of WMD is introduced which renders
formal arms control trade-offs based upon an agreement over equivalent functions of the weapons concerned difficult, to say the least.

In the case of the Middle East, if it is true that Israel’s policy of nuclear ambiguity is intended to deter only select states in the region (Syria, Iran and, until recently, Iraq) complications arise in trying to trade that capability off unless all of those states are at the table. Similarly, though they may claim that their own WMD and missile programmes are aimed at Israel, experience shows that many other states in the region have multiple purposes for those programmes—often involving each other, perceived threats from extra-regional powers and even internal threats. Thus, even if Israel were to announce that it is prepared to renounce nuclear ambiguity, this would not necessarily mean that all other WMD programmes in the region would halt.

The question for arms control involving WMD in the Middle East is thus not how to capture the particular WMD project of one country, be it Israel or any other, but how to develop a security framework within which these systems can begin to be brought into line in terms of their essential functions. It will probably also be necessary to develop a wider political atmosphere of reconciliation in which those functions will begin to be reduced to a bare minimum of last resort, rather than remain an active part of various actors’ arsenals and military planning, as is presently the case in some countries. Only then can trade-offs begin to be realistically considered, or, alternatively, a set of reciprocal unilateral reductions occur. In order to create a situation whereby such a congruence of functions can begin to develop, efforts will have to be made to examine why each and every regional country that has WMD capabilities feels it needs them and what can be done to address those concerns.

ACRS AS A PART OF THE PEACE PROCESS

The second fundamental issue which arose in the context of ACRS was its role in the peace process. As an integral part of the peace process ACRS was, by definition, a creature of that process. Its composition, dynamics and the politics which surrounded its consideration of the issues on its agenda (and those not on the agenda, but in the background) were dominated by the fact that ACRS was part of the peace process.

For example, the official discussion of regional threat perceptions, and the security question more generally, was somewhat artificial. The primary threat perceptions of the states which took part in ACRS can be summarized roughly as follows:

- the Gulf Arab states were most concerned by Iran and Iraq, and to a lesser extent (though they would not admit it) by each other. Their concerns were
primarily devoted to fears of regime destabilization through external meddling in their internal stability, rather than a threat of physical attack, though this could not be discounted;

- Israel felt threatened not so much by the conventional capabilities of its neighbours (the author never met a serious Israeli military analyst or officer who would not quietly acknowledge that Israel’s conventional preponderance over its neighbours is decisive) but by: (a) the long term stability of those neighbours and the possibility of regimes coming to power whose perceptions of stability differed from those currently in power; (b) those on the periphery of the region who sought to threaten Israel with non-conventional weapons as a means of justifying these programmes and shoring up their own standing domestically and in the Muslim world, and; (c) the growing activities of those sub-state actors who continue to reject Israel’s right to exist, particularly those that may aspire to WMD capabilities that can be married to their terror activities;

- In addition to the points made above regarding the nuclear question, Egypt seemed to be concerned about internal stability questions and by the possibility that it might be losing its standing in the Arab world as rapid political changes swept the region;\(^{11}\)

- Jordan felt threatened by some of its neighbours, with the notable exception of Israel, and by potential internal problems;

- the Palestinians were not really part of the ACRS discussions on regional stability in anything but the symbolic sense, although this was extremely important; and

- the North African participants in ACRS felt threatened by economic and social instability, both in their own countries and their neighbours, especially Algeria. Israel did not figure in their security concerns at all except in a political sense.

In looking over this menu of what the author believes were the true though largely undeclared threat perceptions lurking in the background, the striking thing is that the issues which ACRS putatively had on its agenda—especially the Arab-Israeli dispute—did not deal with any of them. In terms of their security concerns, none of the Arab states in ACRS really felt that Israel was going to attack them, and vice versa. Instead, in many cases, Arab states were concerned by some of their Arab neighbours or Iran, and were also worried about their own domestic stability in the face of rapid social and economic changes.

Yet what one heard at any ACRS session was largely the language of the peace process. The formal negotiation was primarily an Arab-Israeli one, and it was often over the tactics of ACRS’ place in terms of the wider Middle Eastern Peace Process (MEPP), or the nuclear issue, rather than the substance of these
real security concerns. One rarely heard, for example, suggestions which addressed the real threat perceptions of the Gulf states.

Indeed, in the operational basket many from the Gulf were initially disinterested in the specific measures which were under discussion as they had little relevance to them militarily. They participated, in some cases actively, but their participation was more a political gesture (often aimed at making points concerning political independence vis-à-vis their own neighbours) than anything else.

The fact that ACRS was a part of the peace process also dictated its membership. That Iran, Iraq, Libya and Syria were not part of ACRS (for different reasons in each case) had obvious implications. For one, Israel maintained, not without justification, that nuclear issues could not be discussed in ACRS in the absence of these countries, especially Iran and Iraq. It also meant that the real concerns of the Gulf countries could not be addressed.

Moreover, the status of ACRS as a part of the peace process meant that it became caught up in the public politics of that process. At the Plenary meeting that took place in Doha in May 1994, for example, the press coverage was exceptional, especially in relation to the significance of what was actually discussed. My impression at the time was that the public perception of the peace process as a whole was something like a shark; it had to keep moving forward, to keep swimming at all times, or it would die. To a large extent, the co-sponsors, particularly the US, may have been behind this view, perhaps as a means of putting pressure on the participants to keep going forward. Certainly the bilateral track of the peace process seemed to develop an atmosphere in which each and every meeting had to produce something tangible or be regarded as a meeting at which the process was setback.

This also seemed to become the case in ACRS. Playing to their own agendas, some countries, Egypt in particular, managed to create an impression that ACRS was falling behind in the process because it was not addressing their particularly critical issue. Yet, anyone who has studied regional security talks in any other part of the world knows that they can take several years to be fully established, and they ebb and flow in accordance with the politics of the moment. Indeed, it is this concept of a process of interaction and dialogue, of mutual education, which is critical; that the process is the result.12

Finally, one needs to remember that the status of ACRS as a part of the peace process meant that it was intimately bound up with the US role in the region. This was unavoidable, and probably necessary too. But it did introduce onto the ACRS agenda certain considerations with respect to the US conception of what would enhance security in the region.

This notion of ACRS’ central dynamic being that of a group of the peace process meant that it was seen as an exercise the intention of whose sponsors...
was to promote a specific vision of the future of the Middle East. However, the vision of the Middle East espoused by the peace process was not the only such vision of the region’s future. There were (and are) others, and one must try to see ACRS in these terms if one is to develop a fuller understanding of where it fit into the region’s dynamic, and of where future attempts to address regional security should be grounded.

COMPETING VISIONS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

The author would argue that most of the broader problems which confronted ACRS and the multilateral track as a whole have origins that trace back to the essential political problem which confronts the peace process in its entirety: the lack of a shared vision for the region’s political future. Not just the lack of a shared vision between Arabs and Israelis; but the lack of a shared vision between Arabs and Arabs, and Arabs and Iranians as well. For it needs to be remembered that the peace process vision of a future Middle East is only one of several competing visions of the future which are at play in the region.

The third vision is too geographically limited, and too concentrated on issues concerning relations between states on either side of the Mediterranean, to serve as a concept for security across the wider Middle East. Broadly speaking, according to Egyptian scholar Saad Eddin Ibrahim, there are at least three others: the pan-Arab vision; the pan-Islamic vision; and the Euro-Mediterranean vision. There are probably others still. The first two of these visions are fundamentally inimical to the basic goal of the peace process: an end to the Arab-Israeli dispute and its replacement with a warm peace featuring co-operation between the former protagonists. The best that can be hoped for if the Arab vision succeeds is a very cold peace. The pan-Islamic vision does not even offer this much.

In reviewing these visions and their objectives, one is struck most forcefully by the fact that, like the peace process today, they are all exclusionary. Indeed, they draw at least a portion of their rationale from whom they exclude and why. The peace process vision excludes Iran, Iraq, Libya and in the case of the multilaterals for the time being at least, Syria and Lebanon. The pan-Arab vision excludes Israel, Iran and Turkey. The pan-Islamic vision excludes Israel. Finally, the Euro-Med vision excludes the Gulf states.

TOWARDS A NEW APPROACH TO REGIONAL SECURITY DISCUSSIONS IN THE REGION

Thus, any regional security negotiation which is to work over the long term (and incorporate serious discussions of the WMD issue) must be broadly
inclusive if it is to have any hope of tackling all of the issues on the agenda. Such a process must also seek to take a broadly inclusive definition of both the region and its security needs as a starting point. Inter-Arab and inter-Islamic concerns and internal stability are just as great a problem for many regional states as Israeli nuclear weapons, and perhaps even more so. In many cases, it is these threats which account for the WMD programmes of regional states, at least to the same extent as does Israel’s policy of nuclear ambiguity.

Moreover, it is arguable that the greatest threats to the stability of the Middle East arise from poverty, the lack of political reform and social upheaval within states, rather than weapons as such. This logically means that these concerns must be on the agenda of any future regional security and arms control dialogue if it is to really tackle the problems of the area. The two are closely intertwined.

Such a process must also be more broadly inclusive in terms of participation than ACRS or the wider peace process were capable of being. If Iran is judged by Israel and many Arab countries to be a threat in security terms, though for different reasons, Iranians simply must be at the table so that their security concerns can be aired as well.

How does one create and sustain such a process? First, it must be recognized that many regional countries will not feel comfortable discussing internal reform issues as they relate to wider regional security concerns. However, while it is generally accepted that many regional states will not want to discuss internal reform issues in official talks, these issues have a considerable impact on regional security, an impact which is destined to grow, and some way must be found to address them or the regime will not have credibility.

In this context, the idea of a ‘variable geometry’ as regards the mechanisms by which different issues could be addressed may be worth exploring. The Asian countries have developed a very sophisticated set of interlocking Track One and Track Two dialogues (and discussions which are known as Track one and half”) which allow both for formal negotiations on issues that are ripe and less formal venues for officials (acting in their private capacities) to discuss and explore issues their governments are not yet prepared to address officially. These methods also allow states that do not recognize each other to sit together.

Such a system in the Middle East would require the development of a more systematic approach to ongoing dialogue and the creation of regional institutes capable of carrying on a permanent dialogue with semi-official backing. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) model may be instructive, but would need to be studied in greater detail and adapted to the particular dynamics and needs of the Middle East.

The creation of such a system will be a difficult affair, but it should be noted that, with the demise of the Saddam regime in Iraq, a historic moment has arrived when far-reaching initiatives meant to re-structure the region’s security
dynamic must be considered and acted upon. Three factors are germane in this respect.

First, the removal of the Saddam regime has changed (for now) a major cause of destabilization in the region. Second, the Roadmap and the potential for serious reforms within the Palestinian Authority hold the promise of progress on that track. Finally, many regional regimes such as Saudi Arabia and Iran are now recalculating the US’ determination to reorder the region and this has led to a new approach to far-reaching change which may be characterized as the states of the region either banding together to initiate and drive change, or having change brought to them in ways that they may not like.

The question of how an official dialogue on the creation of a regional security regime might begin is crucial. One idea, and perhaps the most workable, is that a small group of regional states would take the lead and issue an invitation to all concerned to attend a conference to discuss the creation of such a regime. According to discussions on the issue in such venues as the SIPRI project on a future Middle East security regime, those to be invited from within the Middle East are generally held to include the states of the Arab League, Iran, Israel and Turkey, along with what are regarded as the critical outside parties. These outside parties are believed to include some mixture of the overlapping memberships of the Quartet, the G8 and the P5.

Among the critical factors in issuing such an invitation would be that the issuing states should enjoy constructive (if not yet necessarily full in all cases) relations with all of those to be invited and that it should be recognized that not all would choose to participate in the first instance. In the case of the latter point, it is critical that a seat should be left open for all to come to the process at a later stage, and that the process should operate with the maximum degree of transparency to address any suspicions that a new and exclusionary grouping was being established. Indeed, one of the most important aspects of this initiative should be that it would seek to be as inclusive as possible.

Of course, care should be taken not to sell this as a panacea that would solve all problems at once, but rather as the beginning of a long process. Also, an intensive study of previous Middle Eastern multilateral initiatives should be undertaken to find language and concepts which could be culled from them to make this as region-centric an idea as possible. Placing everything in the context of emulating the OSCE, ASEAN or other regional experiences would not be productive, even if lessons are to be learned from those experiences.

In the wake of the conflict in Iraq, the US attitude towards such an endeavour is a critical issue. Many potential regional participants in such a regime are likely to express concerns that the US Government is ambivalent about this idea. Others may believe that the US would only support it if such a regime were useful to Washington as a tool of regional manipulation. Finally, there will be
concerns in some Arab countries over embarking on such a project if the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is not moving towards resolution and the US is not seen to be willing to put pressure on the parties to make compromises.

These are valid points. However, it is also possible to construct a more positive view. It is likely that the Bush administration is grappling with three interlocking issues as its critical determinants of how to assess regional states: whether a regime is repressive or not; its support for terror; and its intentions towards the development of WMD. Where the US believes a state is beyond ‘redemption’ in these areas, it will act in what it sees as the defence of its own security and that of its allies.

However, the situation is still evolving and it could be argued that an effort to develop a substantive regional security regime, which is led by the regional states themselves, could have an impact in that it would show that the region is serious about change. Some may argue that the US would balk at such a regime in that it would necessarily establish norms of conduct (non-aggression, arms control and security measures, respect for democracy and human rights, etc.) which could limit the US’ scope of freedom if it too is bound by them. A reverse argument would be that the US would benefit from such a regime, if properly structured, in that it would ‘regularize’ its presence in the region. Under such a system, the norms would not impede US action in that the US would only be likely to take action when these norms were violated anyway.

It could also be argued that a co-operative Regional Security Regime would be attractive to various constituencies in Washington. The ‘neo-conservatives’ might be attracted if such a regime held the promise of real discussions over internal reform in several regional states. More moderate forces in Washington may be attracted to the fact that discussion of such a regime may have a beneficial impact on the Arab-Israeli peace process in that such a step would demonstrate that the region is changing for the better and that risks taken for peace will contribute to a more stable region.

Moreover, an emerging Regional Security Regime would assist the region in managing the transitions which are involved in the final stages of the MEPR. Finally, the structure of such a regime could allow countries that are presently not able to talk to sit together for broad-based discussions of security issues.

CONCLUSION

This brief excursion into the broader political themes and trends at work in any discussion of arms control and regional security in the Middle East points to a series of conclusions which are germane to any review of ACRS and the differing expectations which bedevilled it. More importantly, they are germane to any consideration of future regional security discussions.
First and foremost, ACRS was an unabashed creature of the peace process. This fact set the limits in terms of its membership and of the vision of the future of the Middle East which the group officially espoused as the objective of its work. While this was inevitable given the circumstances, and does not invalidate ACRS for what it was, one needs to recognize that there were other, competing visions at play in the region.

Second, the expectations which key actors had of the process were so different that there was little hope of reconciling them within the ACRS framework itself. Moreover, the group never had any chance of dealing with the underlying and multiple sources of threat which many of its members felt and still feel. These threats are not just Arab-Israeli. They are also Arab-Arab, Arab-Iranian and also relate to concerns held by several regimes in the region over social, developmental and internal stability questions. Any review of security in the area must address multiple threats on multiple levels and ACRS was never politically equipped to do so. Nor did its main sponsor, the US, have the desire to do so as this might have offended its own allies in the Arab world.

All of this suggests that a new approach is necessary. Specifically, consideration must begin of the creation of a true Regional Security Regime for the Middle East. Such a regime must begin by rising above the irreconcilable nature of the competing visions of the region’s future and trying to outline what a new, more inclusive vision might contain. It must also recognize that arms control is a part of the region’s security dynamic, but that it does not play only in an Arab-Israeli context, nor can it be viewed in isolation from the broader questions of regional security in the Middle East.

NOTES

1. This essay was written in the author’s personal capacity and the views expressed are the author’s alone. For more on the Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) working group see Shai Feldman, Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control in the Middle East (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 1997) esp. pp.7–16; David Griffiths, Maritime Aspects of Arms Control and Security Improvement in the Middle East, IGCC Policy Paper No. 56 (San Diego, CA: Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation 2000); Bruce Jentleson, The Middle East Arms Control and Security Talks: Progress, Problems and Prospects, IGCC Policy Paper No. 2 (Los Angeles, Univ. of California 1996); Peter Jones, ‘Arms Control in the Middle East: Some Reflections on ACRS’, Security Dialogue 28/1 (1997); idem, ‘Maritime Confidence-Building Measures in the Middle East’, in Jill Junnola (ed.), Maritime Confidence-building in Regions of Tension (Washington, DC: Stimson Center 1996); Emily B. Landau, Egypt and Israel in ACRS: Bilateral Concerns in a Regional Arms Control Process, Memorandum No. 59 (Tel Aviv: Jaffee Center for Strategic

2. The structure of the peace process, and the relationship between the bilaterals and the multilaterals is explored in Peters (note 1).

3. The nuclear issue was the most divisive in ACRS, but the normalization question was always in the background. To these two issues, Landau adds a third: the tensions of the wider bilateral relationship between Israel and Egypt as they spilled over into ACRS. See Landau (note 1).

4. The conceptual group tackled such issues as the definition of the region for arms control purposes, the creation of sub-zones within the Middle East for different arms control purposes, and the creation of an agreed ‘vision’ of the region at peace. It also arranged for visits to verification centres and discussed the possibility of visits to military bases and the development of a set of elements of future arms control negotiations in the Middle East. For more see Jones, ‘Arms Control in the Middle East’ (note 1) pp.63–5.

5. For an elaboration of this argument see Peter Jones, ‘New Directions in Middle East Deterrence: Implications for Arms Control’, *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 4 (Dec. 1997).

6. Though they did eventually say that they will enter such talks two years after a comprehensive peace has been achieved involving all relevant parties, the Israelis have been reluctant to specifically define what this means in practice.


8. Feldman (note 7) p.31, quotes one Arab as saying ‘Israel would like to be loved and feared at the same time. It cannot have it both ways.’

9. Interviews and discussions with Egyptian diplomats and officials, who have requested anonymity.

10. Though many states say that their chemical weapons programmes are intended to serve as a form of deterrent to Israel’s nuclear capabilities, for example, the actual use of CW in the region suggests that these same states have developed these weapons for use against each other (Iraq against Iran and Egypt against opposing factions in Yemen, for example) and as a means of internal control of minorities (Iraq against its own Kurds).

11. The question of Egypt’s concern over its standing in the Arab world, and the impact this had on Egypt’s approach to ACRS is explored in Landau (note 1). See especially pp.25–7. See also Bruce Jentleson and Dalia Dassa Kaye, ‘Security Status: Explaining Regional Security Cooperation and its Limits in the Middle
 Needless to say, Egyptians refute the notion that status considerations drove their policies in ACRS.


14. For more on the role of Track Two in developing regional approaches to security in the Middle East see Dalia Dassa Kaye, *Track Two Diplomacy and Regional Security in the Middle East*, *International Negotiation* 6 (2001) pp.49–71. For an example of the output of such a Track Two dialogue see Peter Jones, *Towards a Regional Security* (note 12).
Fundamental structural changes in global politics in the 1990s have raised important questions regarding the means for understanding international relations. Traditional theories—most significantly, neorealism—failed to forecast the end of the Cold War, and this triggered what is known as the 'third debate' in international relations: a reassessment of the essence of existing theoretical models.1

A measure of disappointment with the ability of traditional theories of international relations to both predict and explain international developments has brought scholars to seriously reconsider the issue of agent-structure relations, including renewed attention to domestic and regional factors in explaining international behavior.

Agent-structure relations, and the question of the prior ontological existence of one or the other (i.e. whether interactions among agents create international structures, or whether it is structure that in large part determines the behavior of agents) has been part of an ongoing theoretical debate among international relations scholars.2

Constructivist scholars, on the basis of structuration theory,3 argue that there is no prior ontological existence to either agent or structure, rather they are co-determined. Moreover, one cannot separate between agent and structure—it is the interplay between them that creates the game of international politics and its rules.

For the purposes of this essay, what concerns us in particular as regards constructivist theory is less the development of the idea of co-determination of agent and structure, and more the basis for understanding agent-structure relations in this manner, namely, the constructivist focus on the social nature of both agent and structure.

In fact, for empirical purposes, we will ‘freeze’ the agent-structure dynamics of co-determination, and in this essay focus on the impact of structure on agent in a specific time period. We will build on insights from the agent/structure mode of analysis, with its constructivist focus on sociality, for examining the
questions that have been raised in this volume regarding the possibility of creating a regional security regime in the Middle East. We will demonstrate their relevance to the case of the Middle East Arms Control and Regional Security working group (ACRS): the first comprehensive region-wide attempt to develop a concept of regional security in the Middle East.4

We begin by analyzing different types of shared intersubjective understandings—operating on both the agent and structure levels—that had direct relevance to developments within, and positions taken with regard to the arms control talks. Through an understanding of the impact of these social structures, we will attempt to reveal an important aspect of the talks: the implicit clashes among them that negatively affected state behavior and constituted a constraint to the achievement of cooperative security arrangements for the region. The agent-structure framework provides us with the conceptual basis for focusing on this dimension of the talks. The shared understandings that we will be considering include normative, epistemic, and cultural criteria.

The analysis will be suggestive, rather than comprehensive. Nevertheless, even this initial analysis will highlight significant, and largely unexplored constraints to cooperation in Middle East. On this basis, we will consider several concrete policy recommendations for any future attempt to convene a regional cooperative security forum, as well as directions for further research and analysis.

AGENT/STRUCTURE RELATIONS IN ACRS: THE SOCIAL DIMENSION

‘Agent’ and ‘structure’ are somewhat fluid terms in the sense that they have no clear-cut referents, outside of context. With regard to the regional arms control talks, one possibility of understanding these terms would be to treat structure as the dynamics and agreements reached between the superpowers and with regard to Europe (international level), whereas agent would refer to their applicability to states in the Middle East (regional level).

We find that different attempts to explain and understand the Middle East arms control experience often take this approach intuitively. The question they address is how previous international security and arms control agreements have been applied at the regional level, and the impediments to such application in terms of the conditions that prevail in the Middle East, and the degree of correspondence of these conditions with those that existed between the superpowers, and in Europe.5

In our analysis, we take a somewhat different path in understanding these dynamics. While also focusing on the influences of structure on agents, in our use of the terms we will be referring to different sets of priorly developed
shared understandings at work at both the international and regional state levels. Thus, by ‘structure’ we mean shared understandings that developed at the international level (primarily between the superpowers and in Europe), whereas ‘agent’ will refer to shared understandings that developed at the state level (regarding regional states that participated in the ACRS talks).

Specifically, at the level of structure, we will be considering the development of shared understandings in the East-West context regarding arms control and cooperative security. This refers to the ideas, norms, and practices that have developed over the years regarding the control of weapons, the means of achieving and ensuring security, and the usefulness and applicability of cooperative regional security endeavors.

We will highlight in this regard that the use of the terms ‘arms control’ and ‘cooperative security’ actually entailed a set of embedded epistemic and normative criteria that were part and parcel of the ideas being offered to the Middle Eastern participants. While these ideas were imbued with a seemingly universal appeal, we develop the notion that they were actually context-dependent, and could not, therefore, merely be taken for granted in other contexts.

At the level of agent, we will be focusing on the state level, on the two major protagonists in the arms control talks: Egypt and Israel. Because the dynamics of ACRS were very much influenced by Egyptian-Israeli interactions and disagreements, our analysis focuses on normative and cultural factors relating directly to them. As regards Egypt, we will be focusing on the prior normative framework of inter-Arab politics, and Egypt’s role within this framework, as these have developed in the Middle East from the 1930s onward. Focus in this regard will be directed to the system of norms and practices that characterized these inter-state dynamics, especially as far as Egypt’s understanding of its leadership role within the regional setting. As for Israel, we will be looking at dominant trends in its security culture, and their impact on Israel’s security thinking.

On the basis of this definition of the terms, our focus will be on the clashing interplay that developed among these different sets of shared normative, epistemic, and cultural understandings, as understood by the participating states in ACRS. We will then assess the constraining influence of these clashes. Significantly, these prior shared understandings were not explicitly expressed within the arms control and regional security talks—nor was the clash among them. We will argue that they nevertheless had an important influence on the way interactions actually developed among states in ACRS, due to the effects they had on how different states were reacting to the explicit agenda of the talks. (Again, our focus in this regard will be on Egypt and Israel, the major protagonists in the talks).
The fact that the clashes were implicit, rather than placed squarely on the discussion table, made their constraining impact on the talks all the more difficult to confront and deal with. The tendency was rather to treat the disagreements that did emerge in the talks solely in terms of the more visible aspects of debate: such as the destructive capacity of dangerous weapons systems, and the weapons-related security concerns of states. However, by so doing, participants and analysts alike have been missing a significant dimension of the contention, i.e. the clashing interplay between the different sets of ideational and normative components.

**STRUCTURE (INTERNATIONAL LEVEL)**

*The Arms Control Ideational Construct*

The dominant ideas, norms and practices concerning arms control and related cooperative security arrangements at the global level emerged in the post-WWII period and during the Cold War years. In the main, these were the outcome of East-West attempts to prevent (mis)escalation and the outbreak of a nuclear world war as well as an international effort to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Looking at the general notion of arms control, our first point is that international security practices are intimately linked to the historical circumstances within which they arise. They are a reflection of framing and interpretive processes carried out by the dominant actors in the international scene. Arms control practices that developed at the global level should thus also be understood as the result of such an interpretive process. They became dominant practices that were included in the cooperative security frameworks which emerged at that time.6

When considering the superpower experience, we find that arms control was actually made up of two distinct traditions: arms control and disarmament. In one sense, both were part of the same historical process. Both became institutionalized in the international community during the Cold War era when decision-makers in the East and West came to recognize that in order to decrease bilateral tensions, and avoid a substantial nuclear confrontation between them (as was almost a reality in the Cuban missile crisis), they would have to reach some kind of understanding in this realm.

Specific treaties and agreements which were developed on this basis were seen as a tool that would help facilitate and manage the relations between the US and the USSR. Moreover, the dangers of additional proliferation of such weapons underscored the need for agreements oriented toward stemming these
trends (non-proliferation), and working to eliminate dangerous categories of weapons (disarmament). As such, both arms control and disarmament involve core practices that together were geared toward mitigating the dangerous implications of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

However, a closer look at the concepts and the practices reveals that they are the outgrowth of two quite different traditions for dealing with the perceived dangers of WMD use and spread. According to David Mutimer, the disarmament tradition developed somewhat differently than arms control between the superpowers. Whereas arms control was the product of bilateral practices, disarmament (including efforts at stemming further proliferation of nuclear weapons) was fundamentally grounded in multilateral practices.

Disarmament efforts were carried out most prominently in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) discussions. Moreover, disarmament practices focus on the need to eliminate weapons, rather than to merely control their effects. Early efforts at nuclear disarmament were dealt with in the Acheson-Lilienthal Report (1946), which was also the basis of the Baruch Plan (1947).

Arms control, on the other hand, was more firmly grounded in the awareness that developed regarding the dangers inherent in exclusive reliance on deterrence as a means of managing relations between the nuclear armed superpowers. Initial arms control agreements achieved between the superpowers were aimed primarily at stabilizing these relations. Superpower agreements such as the Hot Line (1963), and the agreements of the early 1970s regarding the prevention of incidents at sea are in fact more accurately defined as CSBMs (Confidence and Security Building Measures), which highlights their focus on improving relations between states as a means of reducing the dangers of military escalation. Principal achievements of the arms control process, thus defined, are the 1972 Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM), as well as the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I and II) and the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START).

To sum up the comparison of the two traditions, we find that arms control and disarmament actually entail two not only different, but somewhat competing ideational constructs for dealing with WMD:

- **Arms Control**: bilateral or multilateral arrangements; focused more on the nature of inter-state relations; focused on the control of weapons rather than their elimination; tend to be directly negotiated among states.
- **Disarmament Arrangements**: tend to be multilateral in nature; focused on the weapons systems in the hands of states rather than on the states themselves; focused on the elimination of categories of weapons rather than their
control; tend to be negotiated in the context of the UN and other international organizations.

Over time, arms control seems to have become the more dominant ideational construct of the superpowers, while disarmament was relegated primarily to the UN institutions. Thus, with the initiation of ACRS, it was perhaps not surprising that the ‘package’ that was offered to the regional participants was in fact predominantly an arms control package, rather than a disarmament one. The implications of this will be discussed below, in the section on the clashing interplay.

Turning to the concept of cooperative (regional) security, we argue that this, too, is a normative construct. It implies additional norms that were included in the overall arms control construct being offered by the US (in particular) to the Middle East states. The significant notions in this regard, that we will return to in the discussion below, are that of *win-win cooperation*, and the principle of *equality among states*.

The first refers to the idea that cooperation entails a shift from a zero-sum mindset to a positive-sum framing of security issues, so that all may benefit. It relies on a neoliberal assumption that such cooperation—if achievable—is an inherently worthwhile endeavor that will help states address their security concerns effectively on an inter-state level. This involves assumptions both about how security is understood by states in a regional setting, and the value of mutual gains that would be made across the board.

The principle of equality is more deeply embedded and implicit. It maintains that all participating states are *equally entitled* both to have their concerns addressed, as well as to enjoy the fruits of the win-win agreements that are reached. It is these norms in particular that fundamentally clashed with the alternative normative structure for inter-Arab relations and cooperative efforts that had been developed over the years in the framework of Arab politics.

We now turn to a brief discussion of the relevant social context at the agent level: focusing on Egypt and Israel.

**AGENT (STATE LEVEL):**

*Egypt: The Rules of the Game of Arab Politics and Egypt’s Leadership Identity*

Our treatment of Egypt focuses on the social context of regional inter-Arab dynamics and politics that developed over the better part of the twentieth
century, and became most important for understanding Egypt’s behavior in the regional sphere.  

We find that the notion of Arabism (or pan-Arab ideology) played a central role within these inter-Arab politics. Following the important work of Michael Barnett, the authors would like to highlight the normative dimension of Arabism in this regard. In his book, Barnett explains Arab politics from the vantage point of the social and strategic interactions that take place among Arab states. His major thesis is that these interactions have been shaped by the normative structure of Arabism, which both constitutes states’ identities, and constrains their behavior.

The norms of Arabism have changed over the years (Barnett in fact maintains that the major arena of competition between Arab states in the twentieth century was over the definition of these norms), but generally speaking they have related to a commitment to three ideas: Arab unity, a fear of Zionism, and a mistrust of the West.

Accepting that Arabism has had a normative value in the interplay of Arab politics over the years, it is not surprising that we find clear indications that, even after pan-Arabism has lost its appeal as a concrete political plan for the Arab region, the normative effects of this idea linger on. There is much evidence to support the idea that a sense of Arab ‘solidarity’, if not explicit ‘unity’, continues to strongly resonate in Arab politics to this day, as a standard that Arab leaders strive to demonstrate their adherence to. Thus, for an Arab leader to be seen as upholding Arab solidarity still enables him to ‘score points’ in the game of inter-Arab politics.

As far as Egypt in particular is concerned, there is also much empirical evidence to show that important ties exist between Arabism and Egypt’s conception of itself as destined to fulfill a leadership role in the Middle East. Arabism has for many years been an important source of legitimacy for Egypt’s pursuit of a leadership role. Accordingly, Egypt has tended to present itself as the champion of the Arab cause, and of Arab security interests, as a means for basing and bolstering its claim to leadership among the Arab states. Rules of the game have developed whereby Egypt has come to expect its leadership claims to be accepted by these states when it presents itself as champion of the Arab national cause.

In this respect, over time, Egypt’s adherence to the norms of Arabism has become constitutive of its very understanding of this role. Due to this constitutive link, when Egypt presents itself as champion of the Arab national interest, it is not simply using Arabism as a means to bolster its leadership identity, but rather it finds itself to a certain degree dependent upon these ideas to provide the terms of reference for staking its claim. Adherence to Arabism
has become so intimately tied to the image of Egypt as regional leader that it is
difficult to discuss Egypt’s leadership role in isolation from this idea.  
This description captures the essence of the rules of the game of inter Arab 
politics that developed over the years, highlighting Egypt’s role within them. 
It can be argued that with regard to ACRS, Egypt sought to proceed on this 
same basis, and expected its leadership role within the new regional setting to 
be upheld thereby. This argument takes as its point of departure that the nuclear 
issue—that provided the ostensive reason for the breakdown of ACRS—was in 
fact not the primary interest as far as Egypt was concerned. This should not be 
understood to imply that Egypt was not concerned with Israel’s assumed 
nuclear capability. The argument is rather that as far as the talks were 
concerned, Egypt was more focused on its need to establish clear leadership in 
the new regional framework, especially due to the inclusion of Israel. 
To establish its leadership (in line with the established rules), Egypt 
attempted to promote a clear-cut definition of the Arab security interest as 
regards the arms control talks, and to consolidate the support of the other Arab 
states on this basis. Egypt hoped (and in fact expected) that these states would 
recognize that it was upholding its commitment to the Arab national interest 
(i.e. Arabism), and therefore behaving in accordance with the established rules 
of the game. In other words, through its arms control plan, with its particular 
focus on the need to deal explicitly with Israel’s nuclear potential, Egypt hoped 
to present itself as the champion of the Arab cause, and to be granted legitimacy 
in its leadership role within the talks, as far as the other Arab participants were 
concerned. 
Understanding the primacy of Egypt’s leadership interest (as a function of its 
national identity) allows us to better understand the context for implicit clashes 
that were taking place in ACRS. The clashes were implicit first and foremost 
because Egyptian participants in ACRS would not say that Egypt even had a 
leadership interest with regard to the talks—their statements and analyses 
tended to focus on the nuclear issue in a rather straightforward manner, 
namely, noting the need to deal in the context of the arms control talks with all 
categories of WMD, with no special provisions made in light of Israel’s so-called 
‘unique’ security concerns.

However, there is ample evidence that Egypt was in fact deeply concerned 
with its leadership role, especially in the early 1990s, after having been 
reaccepted into the Arab world. This concern was expressed with regard to 
other regional developments, most prominently with regard to the bilateral 
peace process. Egypt’s major disappointment in the arms control talks came 
when it began to realize that the other Arab participants were not rallying 
behind it—namely, accepting and adopting Egypt’s position as their own.
Rather, these states were demonstrating a growing willingness to accept the ideas that were placed on the table for discussion—most significantly, CSBMs. Egypt was not only not receiving the support it expected on the basis of its adherence to the established rules of the game, but was losing more and more ground in terms of its ability to present the ‘accepted Arab interpretation’ of arms control, with the obvious implications that this had for its leadership role.

Israel: The Cultural Basis of Israel’s Security Conception

In an attempt to understand Israel’s security conception, as it was expressed in ACRS, we turn to an examination of its security culture. Security culture has provided the framing for Israel’s perception of its security environment—both in terms of the threats it has faced, and the policy answers it has devised. We can identify two dominant principles that have come to characterize the framing of security issues in Israel: vulnerability and strength.

The process of elevating these two principles to a highly prominent status began in the pre-state period, in light of the central role they played in the process of state-building. They were drawn together by leaders in the pre-state society (‘Yishuv’) into one cultural construct, articulated and disseminated through the use of cultural motifs and myths. Security as an idea, and through the culture that was built around it, played a dominant role in crystallizing the new Jewish-Israeli national identity (in the 1920s and 1930s). This national identity underscored the birth of a ‘new Jew’ in the Yishuv, with a new sense of self-respect. This same security culture construct thereafter fulfilled a key role in the formation of Israel’s security conception and policy, once statehood was achieved.

In the initial period, in an attempt to mobilize the population for the great project of creating a new nation-state, leaders in the Yishuv believed that they needed to emphasize and underscore both vulnerability and strength. They spoke of the vulnerability of the society’s very existence (due to perceived existential threats on the part of surrounding and domestic Arab societies), in order to then gather the necessary strength to overcome these threats, particularly by creating and presenting the image of a consolidated and determined society. For this purpose, they recruited existing cultural myths, as well as created new ones, as a means of building and legitimizing the necessary military effort. This involved also strengthening the newly conceived national identity.

These dominant security culture principles carried into Israeli society after independence was achieved. Israel’s security policy was based on a threat perception that emphasized the state’s vulnerability on two levels. The first was that of the ‘basic threat’ of a second round of war. This was grounded in the perception that Arab states would never reconcile themselves to the existence
of the state of Israel, and would continually be seeking the means to confront
Israel, with the intention of bringing about its annihilation. The second level of
threat was that of ‘current threats’, i.e. the security threats that Israel had to
manage on a day-to-day basis (such as infiltrations, border incidents, terror
incidents, etc.).

Significantly, the level of tangible ‘current’ threats, that were apparent on an
ongoing basis, also helped feed the sense that potentially larger threats were
forever looming on the horizon—thus, the ‘basic threat’ perception, while not
always readily apparent, was thereby injected with a measure of tangibility.
The fact that Israel has been involved in repeated rounds of violent conflict with
its neighbors since the time of its inception has also fed this dominant sense of
vulnerability. Moreover, this perception rests not only on actual warfare, and
calculations of enemy military capabilities and hostile plans, but rather has been
grounded in the more profound and over arching sense that Israel’s existence as
a state in the region has still not been granted legitimacy by all relevant regional
parties. This broad-based threat perception has engendered the development of
a security policy that tended to be based on the analysis of the worst-case
scenario: annihilation.

Drawing on motifs of the dominant national security culture, and the
perceived threats as described, Israel’s security policy came to embody two
central principles: self-reliance and deterrence. These two principles would
provide the answer to Israel’s acute sense of vulnerability; they would be the
expression of its strength and determination. Self-reliance implied the goal of
achieving a significant degree of power under Israel’s exclusive control, in order
to ensure its independent ability to confront any combination of threats to its
existence. Deterrence was the policy-relevant interpretation that was
provided as to how Israel should best make use of its vast military strength.

The approach advocated that strength (and a sense of self-reliance) were to
be understood primarily as means for warding off threats before they
materialized—thus, Israel’s approach was developed as significantly defensive
(maintaining the status quo) rather than offensive (conquering territories).
Throughout the years, even when there have been positive regional
developments, the basic sense that Israel’s very survival is not ensured has
remained predominant. This has led to an ongoing reliance on the principles of
self-reliance and deterrence.
In this section, the authors will attempt to pick up on the different strands that have been highlighted in the previous section, in order to understand the role they have played within the talks, and the influences on how Egypt and Israel were relating to the issues on the table.

Beginning with the international structure itself, we find that it was having two types of implicit effects on the talks. The first had to do with the difference between the ‘arms control’ and ‘disarmament’ packages. As noted, what was offered to the participants in ACRS was much more in the arms control tradition than that of disarmament. However, this was not articulated in so many words. Egypt’s own approach was much more oriented to the disarmament tradition, with its reliance on global agreements such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the idea of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (NWFZ).

The result in this regard was a non-explicit clash between the prescripts inherent in the arms control construct being offered (with its centerpiece that infers that inter-state relations take precedence over weapons per se in cooperative security efforts), and those of disarmament. Within the talks, all participants spoke of arms control, but they were actually referring to very different ideas about how to ensure security, and to different norms of international behavior. While not expressed in these terms by the participants, this underlying divergence had an adverse effect on their ability to conclude agreements. Moreover, the fact that Egypt’s arms control approach was at odds with what the US was attempting to advance had negative implications in terms of its leadership concerns, as Arab states began to gravitate around the alternative interpretation being offered by the US.

The more interesting clash, however, had to do with the additional norms that were embedded in the arms control package, which impacted more directly on Egypt’s leadership concerns. These had to do with the seemingly inherent appeal of the idea of regional arrangements that meet all states’ security concerns (win-win), and the principle of equality. On the basis of the rules of the game for inter-Arab cooperation that had been developed over the years, these norms were not something that could be taken for granted or merely assumed in the context of the Middle East. For Egypt, the notion of win-win arrangements was not something that had inherent appeal. As far as inter-Arab relations were concerned, and on the basis of past experience, Egypt viewed cooperative regional arrangements as something that it would have to lead. In other words, even if all sides would benefit, Egypt’s gain would also have to
include advocacy of its leadership. It was in fact using its arms control agenda in order to establish and base such leadership.

As to the principle of equality, the clash was even more pronounced because Egypt was not predisposed to accept that all states were equally entitled to have their security concerns addressed, or to have an equal say in the process. Here again, Egypt perceived of itself as the state that should take the lead in defining the Arab interest. Egypt’s concern in this regard came out most clearly with respect to Jordan’s role in ACRS. While initially Jordan tended to defer to Egypt in the talks, as time went on its role became enhanced due to the dynamics of the talks themselves. It often took on the role of mediator between Israel and Egypt, and Egypt also feared that Jordan was playing the role of facilitator in forging ties between Israel and some Gulf states. Both roles were regarded somewhat unfavorably by Egypt.

The role of Israel in the arms control talks only served to intensify Egypt’s dilemma in this regard. This was because Israel was perceived as presenting a real challenge to Egypt’s leadership role, due to all the components of its overwhelming qualitative edge. This created an interesting situation whereby, within ACRS, Egypt actually seemed to be strongly advocating and promoting the principle of across-the-board equality when it related to the control of WMD, and Israel’s nuclear capability in particular. In this regard, it was very adamant about pressing for equal treatment for all states, maintaining that there was no justification for special treatment for Israel in light of its expressed unique security concerns.

Clearly, however, Egypt took this position because this particular element of inequality was something that was perceived to work in Israel’s favor, at the expense of Egypt. However, as regards the broad principle of equality, particularly as this relates to the sense of entitlement, rather than obligation, this created a dilemma for Egypt in terms of its leadership role in the Middle East, among the Arab states.

Finally, we will mention an additional cultural dimension that is actually common to many Arab states, but has particular relevance to Egypt’s position. This refers to a more general aversion to Western culture, which locks into an historic fear of the Crusaders. This fear has become somewhat generalized over the centuries, and has translated into lingering fears of Western colonialist tendencies. In this regard, the very fact that the arms control package originated in the West was cause for some suspicion.

This came out in certain reservations that were expressed regarding the questionable relevance of CSBMs developed in the East-West and European contexts, to realities in the Middle East. Moreover, historian Emmanuel Sivan has noted that this ‘Crusader myth’ has also been applied to Israel’s supposed hegemonic designs for the region, and it increased suspicions that Israel was
avoiding dealing with the capabilities that gave it the ability to implement such
designs.

Turning to Israel, our discussion of the interplay initially focuses less on the
effects of structure on agent, and more on how this agent was relating to the
more open manifestations of the talks: in particular, its multilateral format, as well
as the suggestion that Israel’s nuclear option might be a topic for discussion. With
the convening of ACRS, both elements of the talks presented Israel with a real
dilemma as far as the dominant principles in its security culture were
concerned.

The perceived implications of relenting on these issues—especially as far as
the nuclear issue is concerned—went far beyond what might be expected on the
basis of a straightforward rationalist analysis of the situation. Both of these issues
in fact took on a particular significance for Israel, reinforced by its security
culture. However, we will then see how these seemingly serious constraints
were actually less of a problem for Israel in the talks, due to its stronger affinity
to the norms embedded in the arms control construct—the emphasis on
stability of inter-state relations; the notion of ‘win-win’ cooperation; and the
principle of equality.

Beginning with Israel’s nuclear deterrence, this is perhaps the epitome of
Israel’s desire for both a reliable and robust deterrent to perceived
‘basic threats’ to its very existence, as well as the ultimate expression of its self
reliance—an insurance policy that will ensure its ongoing survival, no matter
what. The nuclear option in itself is also an ultimate expression of Israel’s
strength, providing it with a clear qualitative edge over the Arab states.

Thus, all the central motifs of Israel’s security culture come together in the
nuclear issue. Within the ACRS talks, any attempt to broach the nuclear issue was
met with strong resistance by Israel. Israel’s intransigence on this issue
projected a sense that its nuclear potential was virtually non-negotiable within
the arms control talks.  

As for the multilateral format, here too we find the influence of Israel’s security
culture in the sense that over the years, the tendency had been to rely primarily
on unilateral solutions to its security dilemmas. When Israel considered the
option of bolstering its strength with alliances, the tendency had been to think
of this option in bilateral terms at the most. The most significant of such
bilateral alliances is of course Israel’s strategic relationship with the US.  

Multilateral solutions, however, have been in the main foreign to Israel’s
security thinking. This is due not only to the sense that such options are of
limited value due to the perceived hostility of Israel’s neighbors, but by a high
degree of suspicion as to the intentions and degree of commitment that might be
expected from other states over the long term. Yet, most fundamentally,
putting its trust in multilateral arrangements and arms control initiatives, which
take security issues out of Israel’s exclusive control, goes against the grain of Israel’s need for self-reliance.

Ultimately, Israel did agree to participate in the multilateral framework, but not before it made quite sure that the decision-making principle would be one of consensus, rather than majority. This alleviated its initial fear that it would find itself facing a sure Arab bloc on virtually every decision.43

However, Israel’s more fundamental hesitation—regarding any attempt to assume that its basic security concerns might be addressed and ensured in the framework of a multilateral and regionally negotiated security structure—remained strong throughout the talks. Its skepticism in this regard led it to consider cooperation only on those issues that it considered to be the most marginal to its core security concerns. While it advocated a step-by-step gradual confidence building approach to arms control and regional security, it projected a sense that it would not entrust what really mattered to a multilateral regional arrangement, at least not at the present stage.44

What is interesting in the case of Israel is that despite the challenges presented due to the possibility that the nuclear issue would be discussed, and the nature of the multilateral format, Israel’s position was much more congenial to the norms embedded in the arms control package being offered by the US. In fact, when ACRS was launched, Israeli negotiators were already somewhat predisposed to consider it more favorably.45

Within the talks, Israel was happy with the relative emphasis (of the arms control approach) on stability and the nature of inter-state relations, rather than weapons per se. This tied in well with Israel’s security conception, which placed such a high premium on the deterrent value of its nuclear option in dealing with existential threats. Israel was also comfortable with the idea of ‘win-win’ and the principle of equality. The adherence to these principles helped somewhat in addressing major fears that Israel had with regard to the multilateral format. In this sense, we find that in the case of Israel, the normative affinity helped Israel overcome some of the more explicit fears it harbored with regard to the multilateral dynamic that might develop, especially regarding the demands that might be put to it to deal with its nuclear option in the initial stages.

CONCLUSIONS: POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As noted in the Introduction to this volume, concentrating on the attempts to create a multilateral regional security framework in the Middle East, on the basis of Western practices of international cooperation, has, not surprisingly, led scholars to raise and focus on the question of what went wrong. In their search for an answer to this question, different reasons for the difficulties
encountered in achieving that goal have been raised. These include the fact that
the Middle East is not a homogeneous region, and that it suffers from a weak
state-making process and from unstable regimes. Other reasons focus on the
multiple sources of threat and conflicts: Israeli-Arab; Arab-Arab; Arab-Persian;
as well as internal instabilities.

What is missing from most of the explanations offered is the normative or
ideational dimension involved. This refers to the fact that the prospects for
implementing any type of regional security structure or regime are actually
dependent upon an acceptance by the regional players of certain values
embedded in the logic of cooperative security being offered to the region.

Generally speaking, the perceived positive value and ultimate attainability of
mutually beneficial cooperation (which builds on the identification of common
security interests) had for the most part been taken for granted in ACRS. The
experience of arms control in other contexts had seemed to strengthen the
grounds for assuming that, especially when states are able to actually experience
the benefits of regional cooperation, accepting and embracing its stabilizing
value would be only a short step away.

This is, however, not necessarily the case. In his contribution to this volume,
Keith Krause recognizes the significance of the normative dimension that
influences the establishment of a regional security structure in the framework of
his domestic-based explanation. He discusses how the lack of acceptance of
Western values at the state level in the Middle East has hindered progress. We
have taken this a step further, and examined certain constraints that were
encountered when states actually began the process of arms control discussion in
the context of ACRS. Or, how agents reacted to the structure being offered on
the backdrop of preexisting regional relations, and cultural and normative criteria.

Research into the experience of arms control and regional security discussion
in ACRS has shown that there were prior understandings of the notion of
‘regional cooperation’ among states in the Middle East. The inclusion of Israel
in such groupings was a new development, and the impact of prior regional
practices needs to be taken into account. We have seen the additional impact of
Egypt’s perceived leadership role in Middle East politics. The prior regional
experience with cooperation, together with its accompanying norms, had to be
taken into account when assessing the prospects for creating a regional security
regime for the Middle East that would include Israel. ACRS became the scene
of a clash of normative frameworks as far as the pursuit of regional security was
concerned.46

It is important to emphasize, however, that overall, almost all the Arab
participants in ACRS were in fact reacting quite favorably to the agenda of the
arms control talks. Thus, the focus on the clashes between Israel and Egypt, and
the negative stance adopted by Egypt due to its regional concerns, should not
obscure the important gains that were nevertheless achieved in the talks. The purpose of this essay has been, rather, to highlight important dimensions of the negative dynamics that ultimately led to the indefinite suspension of the talks.47

Moreover, it can be seen, in the case of Israel, that when there is a prior normative affinity between a certain agent and the structure, this can help mitigate the effects of other constraints to cooperation. At the same time, it may exacerbate the tensions that exist for other agents—in this case, for Egypt.

*Policy Implications*

On the basis of this analysis, it is clear that in any future effort to promote arms control and regional security in the Middle East, particular attention will have to be given to Egypt’s leadership concerns, as well as to Israel’s uncompromising stance on the nuclear issue, for all the reasons mentioned. As the major protagonists in the talks, some degree of prior understanding will need to be achieved between Egypt and Israel in order for talks to have any chance of being productive in the future. Within such a bilateral dialogue it would be most useful if implicit agendas were placed squarely on the table so that they might be directly addressed.

When assessing the prospects for restarting a regional security dialogue, an additional consideration involves the level of *structure*: the international ideational dimension. As the international community is a dynamic scene, changes have occurred over the past decade which have begun to have an effect on some of the ongoing practices and institutions, especially as far as the US is concerned.

As the question of US motivation to work toward restarting a regional security discussion in the Middle East is likely to be a critical factor in terms of the prospects of this happening, it is worth taking a look at emerging tendencies, particularly in light of recent developments with regard to Iraq.

Over the past two years, we have witnessed indications of a US tendency to move away from arms control as a preferred means of dealing with non-conventional threats.48 This has been due to its sense that it faces new threats in the non-conventional realm—from the direction of Iran, Iraq and North Korea in particular—that it cannot deal with through traditional means of deterrence supplemented by arms control agreements. Before the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, the Bush administration was pressing in particular for implementation of its National Missile Defense program as the most effective means for warding off such threats, even if this came at the expense of a central bilateral arms control agreement signed in 1972 with the USSR: the ABM Treaty.
Following September 11, and the exposed vulnerability of the US mainland, additional concerns were increasingly emphasized—building a ‘wall’ was no longer considered sufficient, and there was a growing tendency to emphasize the need for a more active approach in dealing with WMD threats. The case of Iraq in particular (over the last year) has led to an increased skepticism regarding the ability of existing arms control agreements (most notably, the NPT) and inspection regimes to deal effectively with the dangers associated with potential and actual proliferators.

US disillusionment with arms control has no doubt been profound, especially after September 11, and the even greater emphasis placed by the US on WMD threats. Its disappointment has been both with the arms control and disarmament prongs. Interestingly enough, however, its approach has demonstrated a tendency to rely even more heavily on the nature of inter-state relations, and the need to take these into account most seriously when devising means to confront WMD threats, rather than focusing on weapons per se.

This tendency is actually in accordance with the fundamentals of the arms control (rather than disarmament) tradition, as have been laid out in this essay. In fact, even with regard to its expressed willingness to withdraw from the ABM treaty, Bush emphasized that this agreement was no longer relevant because relations with Russia were so good. His major fear was focused on the inability to achieve initial deterrence with regard to the so called ‘axis-of-evil’ states, let alone proceed to arms control dialogues with them, due to the very deteriorated nature of relations with them.

Thus, while much attention has been directed to the more pronounced unilateralist and even imperialist tendencies in the US approach, which seemed to be confirmed by its decision to go to war with Iraq, we find parallel evidence of a tendency to focus on inter-state relations when contemplating how to deal with WMD threats. This helps explain the very different approach that the US has taken in the cases of Iran and North Korea.

Whether the US will be motivated to make a serious attempt to restart the regional security talks in the Middle East in the wake of the war in Iraq is still an open question. However, the apparent tendency to continue to maintain that dealing with WMD threats necessitates attention to the nature of inter-state relations, could be the basis for continuing with the regional approach in the Middle East, even in light of apparent disappointments with the overall effectiveness of the arms control regime.

A further issue with regard to the question of leadership in ACRS is whether Europe, with its fundamentally multilateral approach to security issues, may take on a more leading role in this regard. In the case of Europe, it is a question of both motivation and ability. For the Arab states, on the one hand, the US and Europe are both considered ‘the West’, but European leadership today would
nevertheless most likely be more readily embraced by the Arab states. For Israel, of course, the preference would be the US.

**Directions for Further Research**

Having placed this analysis within the broader framework of agent/structure relations, the authors of this study were able to take the social/ideational aspect of both agent and structure more seriously. This refers to the idea that regional security as a concept is grounded in a social framework. Within this framework, the goal of cooperative security, wherein all sides might benefit, is considered to be inherently appealing. The appeal of these norms must be examined, however, and not merely assumed.

The authors also directed attention to the level of ‘agent’ within this relationship. Most contributions in this volume have focused on structure. In considering the possibility that Middle East states might reach some type of regional security arrangement, these essays have tended to view this as a direct function of their ability to apply the superpower or European experience to this region. Taking this prior experience as their starting point, their question was whether and how this ‘structure’ might be implemented in the Middle East. This resulted in a greater focus on the conditions for applying a more or less fixed conceptual model, than on the dynamics taking place at the level of the agents wherein which it was supposed to be applied. They admittedly focused on enabling and constraining factors at the regional level, but were less focused on the social aspects of these dynamics.

As revealed in the policy implications, the agent/structure mode of analysis also allows us to consider potential influences on structure itself (i.e. the new international reality). Since structure—norms, ideas and practices—is also influenced by agents, it is a dynamic constellation, and norms and practices at the structural level also change over time. As noted, when questioning and evaluating options for restarting the Middle East multilateral process, one has to revisit the structural level, in order to evaluate changing or challenged international norms and practices. Any changes at the structural level would also be likely to affect the prospects for pushing forward the regional process itself.

**NOTES**


4. See Peter Jones, ‘Negotiating Regional Security in the Middle East: The ACRS Experience and Beyond’ in this collection, as well as note 1 in his article, which references other works on ACRS.


6. Interestingly, these practices were more an outgrowth of realist thinking in international relations, than a break with it. They did not reflect a revolution in policy thinking on the subject, but rather an attempt to introduce a measure of stability into the evolving superpower deterrent relationship. In summing up Emanuel Adler’s discussion on the development of the idea of nuclear arms control, David Mutimer writes that, ‘…arms control thinking was dependent on the prior formulation of strategies of [nuclear] deterrence.’ David Mutimer, *The Weapons State: Proliferation and the Framing of Security* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner 2000) p.34; see Emanuel Adler, *The Emergence of Cooperation: National Epistemic Communities and the International Evolution of the Idea of Nuclear Arms Control*, *International Organization* 46/1 (Winter 1992) pp.101–45.

7. Mutimer (note 6) pp.29–43 developed the idea of this divergence between arms control and disarmament, taking his cue from Emanuel Adler’s work on US arms control thinking (note 6).

8. As Mutimer notes, The practice of “disarmament” framed nuclear weapons in a rather different way. “Disarmament” constructs nuclear weapons not as weapons whose use needs to be constrained by effective strategies or negotiated limits; rather, “disarmament” constructs nuclear weapons as scourges whose destructive potential is so great that those weapons must be eliminated.’ See David Mutimer, ‘Testing Times: Of Nuclear Tests, Test Bans and the Framing of Proliferation’, *Contemporary Security Policy* 21/1 (April 2000) p.7.

9. We should point out, of course, that there have also been isolated experiences with disarmament outside this framework, such as South Africa’s unilateral decision to disarm. In March 1993, President de Klerk declared that South Africa had developed a limited nuclear capability which it dismantled and destroyed prior to its decision to accede to the NPT in July 1991. See: <//www.fas.org/nuke/guide/rsa/nuke/>. For Ukraine’s experience with unilateral nuclear disarmament after the breakup of the Soviet Union, see for example, A.I. Shevtsov, ‘Ukraine’s Experience and Nuclear Disarmament’, *Review of International Affairs* 50/1077 (Feb. 1999) pp.15–20.
10. While START agreements focused not only on limitations (the setting of ceilings), but also on reductions in the numbers of missiles, launchers, and nuclear warheads on both sides, we view these as part of the arms control (rather than disarmament) tradition due to their emphasis on stabilizing bilateral relations. The agreements were directly negotiated between the two parties in an effort to reduce tensions between them. Their goal was not the elimination of nuclear weapons per se.

11. We should clarify that when we take specific arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation agreements one by one, the lines are not as clear-cut as we are drawing them here. For example, how would we categorize NWFZ, which have elements of both non-proliferation and arms control (as defined here, i.e. stability among specific states), and could require disarmament? However, our main point has been to differentiate between agreements that place inter-state relations at the fore, and those that focus primarily on the weapons themselves as the source of threat.

12. This is apparent most clearly in the opening speech of then US Secretary of State James Baker at the initial ACRS plenary. Baker framed his conception of the process as beginning with steps that would relieve tensions among states and build a basis for mutual confidence: i.e. CSBMs.


15. Ibid. p.8.

16. See for example statements made by Esmat Abdel-Meguid (Arab League Secretary General) and Egyptian President Mubarak at the Arab League meeting of March 1995. Both emphasized the themes of solidarity, cooperation, and the protection of Arab interests. FBIS-NES-95–056, 23 March 1995. In a statement two months earlier, Mubarak said that ‘[Arab unity] emanates from past generations and will continue to live in the hearts of the generations to come…the best way to turn it from a hope into a reality is to move with gradual and ascending steps that ultimately lead to the achievement of supreme pan-Arab goals.’ FBIS-NES-95–019, 29 Jan. 1995.

17. An additional dimension of this relationship is apparent in certain indications that once Egypt accumulated power through adherence to the frame of Arabism, it also expected that such leadership would give it a certain right to influence the meaning of the frame itself (for example, with regard to Sadat’s peace initiative—See Barnett (note 14) p.197). In this sense, there were elements of a two-way expectation. However, overall, it is clear that Egypt viewed its leadership in the main as something that it had to be granted by other states, on the basis of its demonstrated adherence to the norms of Arabism, however defined.

19. The nature of Egypt’s leadership agenda comes out most clearly with regard to its attempts to reassert its leadership role after 1989. Mubarak was most anxious to emphasize that the Arab world now recognized that Egypt’s move had been the correct one, that Egypt had correctly foreseen the Arab national interest, and that this was the true mark of leadership. In a representative statement by Mubarak from 1993, he noted that it would have been difficult to convene the Madrid peace conference without Egypt: The late President Anwar al-Sadat had foresight. He saw things 20 years ahead of the world. I can say that most Arab states were in agreement about the soundness of his thoughts and the peaceful solution, particularly the Gulf states. But circumstances imposed something different on them. Now everyone is convinced about the correctness of this position.’ MENA News Agency (12 Sept. 1993), in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 14 Sept. 1993.

20. See Landau (note 13).

21. Egypt’s general efforts to present itself as the champion of the Arab security interest were expressed for example in a Cairo radio commentary from May 1991: ‘One of the unchanging truths in the Arab and international arenas is that Egypt holds the key to war or peace in the Middle East and that it is a sure guarantee for protecting collective Arab security.’ Amr Musa expressed this same idea in late 1991, when he said that ‘Egypt’s concern for the Palestinian issue, the issue of Jerusalem, and regional stability were direct and principal concerns because Egypt was the largest state in the region and because of its responsibilities on the regional and pan-Arab levels.’ In 1995, looking back over the previous five years, Mubarak noted the centrality of regional security as a clear objective of pan-Arab efforts. See, respectively, Arab Republic of Egypt Radio, 11 May 1991, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 14 May 1991; MENA in Arabic, 28 Oct. 1991, in *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 30 Oct. 1991; and *FBIS-NES-95–056*, 23 March 1995. The regional security theme was echoed in statements made by Egyptian leaders specifically regarding the need to control WMD in the Middle East, which underscored Egypt’s interest in framing its arms control agenda in these same terms, and placing itself as the champion of this cause. Beyond Mubarak’s initial (April 1990) proposal for the creation of a WMD free zone in the Middle East, see for example Usamah al-Baz in late February 1991 when he said that an Arab regional security system must stop the arms race, especially regarding WMD. *Al-Wafd*, Egypt, 24 Feb. 1991 in *Hatzav* translation, 4.3.91/836/0489/0.

22. The basis for this Egyptian expectation is developed in Landau (note 13) Ch. 5. The expectation is not formulated as such in any statement, because this was an implicit agenda. However, in light of: Egyptian attempts to reassert its leadership
in the early 1990s (after being accepted back into the Arab fold) as far as the bilaterals were concerned; its tendency to base leadership on an adherence to norms of Arabism; its demonstrated attempt to define the Arab national interest (Arabism) in terms of regional security; the fact that the agenda of ACRS related specifically to the means for attaining regional security; and the fact that Egypt entered the talks with a clear arms control agenda geared to this purpose, seems to provide strong grounds for believing that Egypt was hoping to assert its leadership in the multilaterals as well, through its demonstrated adherence to the Arab national security interest. Egyptian statements repeatedly formulated Egypt’s agenda as the Arab agenda.


24. See note 19. For an additional representative statement on Egypt’s leadership role, see interview with Amr Musa from early 1993, when he discussed the increased importance of the role that Egypt was required to play in the 1990s: ‘Foreign Minister Interviewed by Al-Musawwar’, Cairo Al-Ahram Press Agency in Arabic, 1410 GMT, 4 March 1993; FBIS-NES-93–043, 8 March 1993.

25. See Emily Landau, Egypt and Israel in ACRS: Bilateral Concerns in a Regional ArmsControl Process, JCSS Memorandum No .59 (Tel Aviv: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies 2001)esp. pp.38–50.

26. We follow the definition mentioned in Keith Krause and Andrew Latham, ‘Culture and the Construction of Western Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament Practice’, in Keith Krause (ed.), Cross-Cultural Dimensions of Multilateral Non-Proliferation and ArmsControl Dialogues, Research report prepared for the Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament Division Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ottawa, Canada, 1997, p. 13. Accordingly, ‘[security] culture, as it refers to non-proliferation, arms control, disarmament and security-building issues, consists of those enduring and widely shared beliefs, traditions, attitudes, and symbols that inform the ways in which a state’s/ society’s interests and values with respect to security, stability and peace are perceived, articulated and advanced by political actors and elites.’

27. For further details on the principles, and their basis in cultural myths, see: paper prepared for the EuroMeSCo Project Report on the ESDP and Its Impact on the EMP: Emily Landau and Tamar Malz, Culture and Security Policy in Israel EuroMeSCo Papers, No.21, March 2003. Without going into the dominant cultural motifs (‘a nation that stands alone’, ‘few against many’, determination and initiative, etc.), it should be noted that it is the very frequent articulation and political use of these motifs that ultimately rendered them an overwhelming prevalence in the Yishuv and Israeli society, to the point that we may treat them as principles of a security culture. An example of a central and well-known myth
that was created and became widespread in society in the Yishuv period, was that of Tel Hai. The myth was created regarding an actual battle that took place in March 1920, at Tel Hai, a small Jewish settlement in Upper Galilee. The settlement was attacked by Arabs. Two neighboring settlements surrendered, but the settlers in Tel Hai attempted to hold their ground. Finally the settlement was overtaken and eight commanders were killed. These fighters became heroes for their attempt to stand their ground. The myth that was disseminated includes both the element of vulnerability (the few Jewish settlers facing a much larger Arab force—the principle of ‘few against many’) and strength (the determination of the settlers to fight till the end). For further analysis of this and similar myths, see for example Anita Shapira, *Land and Power* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved 1992) (Hebrew), and Oz Almog, *The Sabra: A Profile* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved 1997) (Hebrew).

28. See Zaki Shalom, *David Ben-Gurion: Medinat Yisrael V’HaOlam HaAravi, 1949–56* (*David Ben-Gurion: The State of Israel and the Arab World, 1949–56*) (Kiryat Sde Boker: The Ben Gurion Research Center 1995) (Hebrew) p.148. Specifically regarding the notion of ‘basic threat’, on p.6 see quote by Ben-Gurion from about two years after the establishment of the state: ‘Many people in the Arab world find it hard to resolve themselves to their defeat in the war against us. They are many, and we are few, and thus there must have been some mistake. Our victory was by chance, and in the next round they will set this right’ (Transl. by the authors).

29. At the funeral of Roi Rotberg, a young commander from Kibbutz Nahal Oz who was murdered by Egyptians who infiltrated into Israel, Moshe Dayan (then Chief of Staff of the IDF) spoke in his memory: ‘… We know that in order to squelch the hope of those who seek our annihilation, we need to be armed and prepared from morning till night. […]Our children will have no life if we do not dig shelters[…]but beyond the border, a sea of hatred and desire for revenge rises and waits for the day when a sense of serenity dulls our preparedness[…]Let us not fear to look this hatred in the face, a hatred that fills the lives of hundreds and thousands of Arabs that surround us, who wait for the moment when they will overcome[…]This is our destiny—to be prepared and armed, strong and determined, otherwise we will lose the sword—and our lives will be amputated.’ (Transl. by the authors) This quote emphasizes how the current threats feed into the basic threat for survival. See Moshe Dayan, *Avnei Derech: Autobiographia (Milestones: Autobiography)* (Jerusalem: Idanim Press 1976) (Hebrew) p.191.


31. Self-help is of course a core assumption regarding state behavior in the international realm, according to neorealist theory. *Self-reliance*, however, is understood in the additional normative sense of being, not an unavoidable
constraint, but rather a positive element upon which a security conception should ideally be based. Self-reliance took on this normative significance due to the fact that it was directly related to Israel’s national identity, as carried through from the pre-state years, and as expressed through its security culture. See in this regard David Ben Gurion’s explicit statements on the necessity of achieving self-reliance: David Ben Gurion, *Uniqueness and Goals: Thoughts on Israel’s Security* (Tel Aviv: Maarachot 1980) (Hebrew) p.122.


33. A more precise characterization of Israel’s security policy would in fact be offensive-defensive. See Ariel Levite, *Offense and Defense in Israeli Military Doctrine*, JCSS Study 12 (Boulder, CO: Westview Press 1989), because clear offensive elements were integrated into it (such as initiative). However, according to Israel’s dominant conception, even when territories were taken under its control, the purpose was to ensure Israel’s security, and this was always viewed as a temporary solution until threatening conditions changed.

34. The zealousness with which these principles are guarded is such that even considering a compromise on either gives the sense that it would almost be tantamount to endangering Israel’s security. See in this regard Dan Horowitz (note 30) p.112 quoting David Ben-Gurion: ‘... Should we depend on France? On the US? [...] Israel cannot depend on their assistance—and not because it doubts their willingness and honest intentions [...] The Israeli people must take care to uphold these friendships and enhance them, and not to believe they can be taken for granted; but the defense of Israel rests first and foremost on its ability to defend itself with its own capabilities, and to deter its enemies until these enemies cease being enemies’ (emphases appear in the original text).

35. Again, when we refer to these agreements as being part of the disarmament (rather than arms control) tradition, we do so in the sense that they are focused on the weapons themselves and the need to eliminate them as the means to ensure security.

36. This came out most clearly in the discussions on CSBMs. The logic of CSBMs (see Ariel E. Levite and Emily B. Landau, ‘Confidence and Security Building Measures in the Middle East’, *Journal of Strategic Studies* 20/1 (March 1997) pp. 143–71) is that of step-by-step progress to reduce inter-state tensions, thereby placing a premium on the nature of relations between states. Moreover, CSBMs are designed to address all sides’ security concerns. Egypt’s suggestion that Israel’s joining the NPT could be an important CSBM demonstrated a very different use of this arms control term, that was not conducive to progress. See Landau, *Egypt and Israel in ACRS* (note 25) p.41.

37. See in this regard two articles by Zeev Schiff published in *Ha’aretz*: 24 Feb. 1995 and 27 Aug. 1995. Interestingly, with regard to Qatar’s bid for a more significant role in the talks, this seems to have been viewed primarily as a challenge to Saudi Arabia, within the Persian Gulf sub-regional dynamics. Saudi Arabia seems not to have been too keen that the ACRS plenary that took place in Qatar in May 1994


39. See for example what the head of the Egyptian delegation to ACRS, Nabil Fahmy, said upon his return from the May 1992 ACRS meeting regarding the fact that no country could have military superiority at the expense of another country, or be excluded from any of the arrangements (note 23).


41. On the basis of private conversations of the authors with Egyptian participants in Track II dialogues.


43. Lecture delivered by Ariel Levite at Tel Aviv University, 27 May 1999.

44. On the basis of private conversations of the authors with Egyptian participants in Track II dialogues.

45. We should note in this regard that the idea of nuclear arms control was part of the US-Israeli dialogue as far back as the 1960s, when Israel’s nuclear development was elevated to a prominent place in US-Israeli relations. However, discussion at that stage was in the direction of disarmament, and Israel was very much opposed. From the 1980s, on the other hand, we find growing evidence of an emerging attempt to develop a theoretical conceptualization of arms control for the Middle East along the lines of the superpower model. See especially Yair Evron, ‘Arms Control in the Middle East: Some Proposals and Their Confidence-Building Roles’, in Jonathan Alford (ed.), *The Future of Arms Control: Part III: Confidence-Building Measures*, Adelphi Paper 149 (London: IISS 1979), and Yair Evron, ‘The Role of Arms Control in the Middle East’, Adelphi Paper 138, in Christoph Bertram (ed.), *Arms Control and Military Force* Adelphi Library 3 (Hampshire: Gower 1980) pp.66–103.

46. As described, the focus in this study is on ACRS as the scene of a clash of *prior* normative frameworks, and not the place where cooperative norms and rules were being established (which would be a separate research question). In this regard, the authors would like to clarify a conceptual distinction. The concept of cooperative or regional security is drawn from the extensive theoretical literature that deals with international regimes. One of the leading scholars of the regime school of thought, Stephen D. Krasner, defines regimes as ‘sets of implicit or
explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors’ expectations converge in a given area of international relations’ (Stephen D. Krasner, ‘Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables’, *International Organization* 36/2 (Spring 1982) p.2). Norms have a dominant role in Krasner’s definition—he sees norms as ‘standards of behavior defined in terms of right and obligations’—which is basically a regulative view of norms. However, according to constructivist school of thought, this essay examined the meaning of norms in a different manner. While it also acknowledges the role of norms as regulative road signs in a cooperative security arrangement, because we have focused on the formation of national interest and behavior, our main interest was on the constitutive effects of norms on state interactions (i.e. how previously developed norms were affecting the way states were understanding their place within the interaction, and vis-à-vis other states). For more on the constitutive role of norms see for example: Jeffery T. Checkel, ‘The Constructivist Turn in International Theory’, *World Politics* 50/2 (Jan. 1998); Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, ‘International Norms Dynamics and Political Change’, *International Organization* 52/4 (Autumn 1998); Ann Florini, ‘The Evolution of International Norms’, *International Studies Quarterly* 40/3 (Sept. 1996); Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security* (NY: Columbia UP 1996); and Nina Tannenwald, *The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Normative Basis of Nuclear Non-Use*, *International Organization* 53/3 (Summer 1999).

47. The willingness of the other Arab states to progress with the agenda of ACRS (which is not the subject of the present study), is discussed at length in Landau, *The Middle East Arms Control Process* (note 13), from the perspective of ‘seminar diplomacy’ (on seminar diplomacy see Emanuel Adler, ‘Seeds of Peaceful Change: The OSCE’s Security Community-Building Model’, in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (eds.), *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1998) pp. 119–60). However, it should be noted that the fact that Egypt alone did adopt such a different (and negative) approach is one of the factors that supports the conclusion that it was Egypt’s leadership concerns (based on previously developed rules of the game) that were its major consideration in the talks. It is these concerns that explain its differential approach to the arms control issues put forth for discussion.

48. This tendency, of which there were indications even during the previous Clinton administration, was aggravated by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the US mainland. On US arms control tendencies in recent years, see Emily B. Landau, ‘The NMD/Arms Control Balance: A Message for the Middle East?’, *Strategic Assessment* 4/1 (May 2001) pp. 17–20, and Emily Landau, ‘Unilateral Arms Control? Post-September 11 Trends in US Arms Control and Non-proliferation Approaches’, *Strategic Assessment*, 4/4 (Feb. 2002) pp. 18–21.

Abstracts

Taboos and Regional Security Regimes

JANICE GROSS STEIN

A security regime is an uneasy compromise where the relationship among the parties is generally undefined, limited in scope, and transitional. The relationship is undefined, because the parties are usually former adversaries who, for the moment, do not think of war as a feasible or practical, or, under some conditions, even a possible instrument. Yet they are far from being allies. A security regime differs in important ways from an alliance or a security community. A security regime is also limited. What happens inside the regime is only a part of what happens in the larger relationship. Participation in a regime does not imply clear behavioral expectations outside the security arena. Finally, the parties to a security regime are usually in a transitional relationship; although the parties have moved away from a full-scale adversarial relationship, where they are going is less clear. Security regimes do not develop in a linear sequence to become ‘security communities’.

Domestic Politics of Regional Security: Theoretical Perspectives and Middle East Patterns

ZEEV MAOZ

Three general perspectives on national security have dominated the literature. The realist perspective focuses on the effects of the power-related aspects of an anarchic system on the security calculus of states and on the conflict and alliance diplomacy outputs of national security policies. On the regional level, this perspective emphasizes the practices of balancing and counterbalancing as the key aspects of regional and global security management. The liberal perspective emphasizes the impact of domestic structures and processes, including the concern for economic well-being, on the formation of security policies. On the regional level, this perspective emphasizes the formation of security regimes and regional
organizations that condition and limit short-term conflict. The revisionist perspective focuses on the regime-preserving function of most security organizations in Third World states. It argues that the pursuit of certain security-related objectives—such as increases in defense expenditures and the design and deployment of armed forces—is guided by domestic considerations. This study examines the relative relevance of the three approaches to the evolution of the Middle East. It argues that the revisionist perspective was the most relevant one in the 1950s and 1960s, the realist perspective was the most relevant one in the 1970s and 1980s, and the liberal approach became increasingly important in the 1990s. Despite the relative decline of the latter approach, it has left traces in the policies of the region that offer some degree of optimism regarding the evolution of regional structures and institutions once the key conflict in the region are resolved.

NATO and European Security: The Creative Use of an International Organization

PATRICK M. MORGAN

This essay deals with Europe’s experience in regional security building. In the author’s view, it is hard to find much comfort for the Middle East in the modern history of security management in Europe. Certain basic elements which made the process work in Europe are lacking in the Middle East. Morgan discusses at length NATO’s role in and contribution to the emergence of a pluralistic security community in Western Europe. It did so by developing a level of advanced multilateralism verging on integration, and by supplying the framework through which the powerful military capabilities of states with long histories of past conflicts and rivalries could coexist without provoking traditional fears and insecurities.

Regional Security and the Levels of Analysis Problem

STEVEN L. SPIEGEL

This study explores the issues involved in creating a regional security regime in the Middle East using insights from the levels of analysis framework of international relations theory. In doing so, Spiegel focuses on the means which can be implemented in the region in order to improve the prospects for establishing such a regime.

State-Making and Region-Building: The Interplay of Domestic and Regional Security in the Middle East

KEITH KRAUSE
In his contribution to this volume, Keith Krause discusses the link between state-formation processes and regional security-building. In doing so, he draws attention to a specific, domestic, aspect of the process of regional community-building: the role of ideas about, institutions of, and instruments of organized violence in social, political and economic life. According to Krause, focusing on the role of institutions of organized violence in structuring and influencing the basic choices for security policy might allow a better evaluation of the prospects for constructing a regional security order.

**Prospects for Creating a Regional Security Structure in the Middle East**

**MARK A. HELLER**

The Middle East talks the talk, but it doesn’t walk the walk,’ argues Heller when relating to attempts by parties in the region to create some kind of a cooperative security relationship. Concepts of regional security have simply been grafted onto traditional political-military doctrine, with the result that multilateralism has become just another vehicle for pursuing long-standing policy. He shows this with regard to the Middle East peace process as well as the Barcelona Process and attempts to forge a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. What should be done in order to promote the process? Heller’s conclusion is that moving along the track of cognitive convergence while bypassing the sequencing problem by simultaneously pursuing both peace and security building will help mitigate some of the major problems in regional security.

**Negotiating Regional Security and Arms Control in the Middle East: The ACRS Experience and Beyond**

**PETER JONES**

In this contribution, Jones focuses initially on the experience of Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) and the reasons why this group stalled. The sources of tension that emerged in ACRS, and which ultimately led to its suspension, derived mainly from different views on the relationship between the nuclear and other issues in these talks, as well as the composition of ACRS and its role as a group of the multilateral track of the peace process. Jones emphasizes that regional security discussions in the Middle East must address multiple threats on multiple levels, and ACRS was never politically equipped to do so. Thus, despite the real, if limited, success of ACRS, any real security regime in the Middle East will be the product of a much more inclusive process which recognizes the essential importance of cooperatively addressing multiple security challenges, including those related to the problems of social and economic
upheaval in the region. Jones concludes with an argument that the time may be ripe to embark on such a process in the wake of the war in Iraq and other far-reaching indicators of change in the region.

Assessing Regional Security Dialogue Through the Agent/StructureLens: Reflections on ACRS

EMILY B. LANDAU AND TAMAR MALZ

Using insights from agent/structure dynamics, the authors highlight the interplay between social/ideational elements drawn from the international experience with arms control, and those that prevailed at the state/agent level, among participants in ACRS. At the agent level, they focus on Egypt and Israel, the major protagonists in the talks. Their analysis reveals implicit clashes that occurred among these different ideational dimensions, and their constraining impact on the ability of states to achieve agreement on cooperative security arrangements. They suggest that attention must be directed to these constraints in any attempt to reconvene the ACRS talks.
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