

THE MANY FACES  
OF NATIONAL  
SECURITY  
IN THE  
ARAB WORLD

EDITED BY  
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# The Many Faces of National Security in the Arab World

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# List of Abbreviations

ANP	National People's Army (Algeria)
AOI	Arab Organization for Industrialization
BP	British Petroleum
CW	chemical weapons/warfare
CENTCOM	Central Command (US)
EC	European Community
FAR	Royal Armed Forces (Morocco)
FIS	Islamic Salvation Front (Algeria)
FLN	National Liberation Front (Algeria)
FY	financial year
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	gross domestic product
GNP	gross national product
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)
IISS	International Institute for Strategic Studies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KFAED	Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development
KIO	Kuwait Investment Office
KOC	Kuwait Oil Company
KPC	Kuwait Petroleum Company
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OAPEC	Organization of Arab Oil Producing Countries
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PDRY	People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South)
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
R&D	research and development
RDF	Rapid Deployment Force
RFFG	Reserve Fund for Future Generations (Kuwait)
SPLA	Sudanese People's Liberation Army
SSM	surface-to-surface missile
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

<b>UNDP</b>	<b>United Nations Development Programme</b>
<b>UNEF</b>	<b>United Nations Emergency Force</b>
<b>US</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>USSR</b>	<b>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</b>
<b>YAR</b>	<b>Yemen Arab Republic (North)</b>

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*Economy of Reform in Tunisia; The Political Economy of Morocco; and State and Society in the Contemporary Maghreb.* He is president of the American Institute for Maghreb Studies and past president of the Middle East Studies Association.

# Introduction

This book is a meeting point of two scholarly subfields: security studies and Arab (or Middle Eastern)<sup>1</sup> studies.

Both are presently in a state of flux. Strategic studies (now modernized as security studies) are as old as the nation-state if not older, and have their modern origins in the 1648 Westphalia Treaty that institutionalized the present inter-state system. If we limit our consideration to the post-1945 period, security studies went through a golden age in the 1950s, followed by a relative decline in the 1960s.<sup>2</sup> They have re-emerged in the 1980s, however, with a firmer footing in the social sciences.<sup>3</sup>

The subfield's recent advance is mainly due to its capacity to adapt to a changing international context. For a considerable period, for example, it had as its adage Karl Clausewitz's maxim that war is the continuation of politics by other means.<sup>4</sup>

War was so much a part of international relations that rules by which a state was justified in going to war and by which hostilities themselves should be conducted were codified under the Law of War. Even the rules for those who wanted to stay out of a fight were defined under the Law of Neutrality. In other words, war was not seen as an aberration but as an inherent feature of a system that had yet to create any viable method of regulating but especially of preventing its outbreak. International law was not designed to stop war, just to render it somewhat less horrible.<sup>5</sup>

But with the increasing predominance of nuclear weapons, a general war threatened to bring the discontinuation of politics and of everything else. Concern with this dilemma spurred the establishment of university research centres and an influx of civilian strategists, leading to the development of sophisticated theories of deterrence, that is, the antithesis of war.

These, however, were the 1960s, and the 1980s represented a different global context. Again, the field has responded by attempting to adapt. Thus even in established and traditional periodicals in the field, minority voices have expressed doubt about the basic assumptions of security or strategic studies:

We are, of course, accustomed to thinking of national security in terms of military threats arising from beyond the borders of one's own country. But that emphasis is doubly misleading. It draws attention away from the non-military threats that promise to undermine the stability of many nations during the years ahead. And it presupposes that threats arising from outside a state are somehow more dangerous to its security than threats that arise within it.<sup>6</sup>

This military assumption leads to a 'false image' of reality, which

First causes states to concentrate on military threats and to ignore other and perhaps even more harmful dangers. Thus it reduces their total security. And second, it contributes to a pervasive militarization of international relations that in the long run can only increase global insecurity.<sup>7</sup>

Others have argued that, amid the growing salience of issues of interdependence, it is desirable to deal not only with 'national' but also with 'international' security:

The 1990s will demand a redefinition of what constitutes national security. In the 1970s the concept was expanded to include international economics as it became clear that the US economy was no longer the independent force it had once been, but was powerfully affected by economic policies in dozens of other countries. Global developments now suggest the need for another analogous, broadening definition of national security to include resource, environmental and demographic issues.<sup>8</sup>

And despite impressive technological advances in the world of today, these can still be deficient in overcoming the huge social, political and institutional barriers. As a result, we might very well think of devising social and institutional inventions comparable in scale to what took place after the Second World War.<sup>9</sup>

In all these attempts at adaptation of security or strategic studies, the discussion is still terribly US-centric. Moreover, the problems of the majority of the global system – the Third World – were not dealt with directly. Thus, in Stephen Walt's systematic review of the field, Third-World problems do not impinge on the analysis nor appear in

the references.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, there seems to be little awareness among many specialists of security studies – even the most open-minded – of the specific historical-sociological context of issues of state-building<sup>11</sup> in these countries and how they could affect the pattern of their conflicts.

This is why this book takes as its starting point state properties in the Arab world. Rather than continuing the tradition by limiting itself to inter-state wars, the book aims to investigate the link between the specificities of these states and various types of security problems existing in the region. The aim is not only to draw attention to other types of threat to national security, and thus widen the definition of this basic concept, but also potentially to add to the explanation of the various inter-state wars that plague the region.

The field of Arab studies is also going through an academic change.<sup>12</sup> It is true that in many fields of social analysis the Arab world or the Middle East has – in comparison with Latin American, Asian or African studies – lagged behind.<sup>13</sup> The reason might be an uncritical acceptance of orientalist approaches<sup>14</sup> in explaining the region. Orientalism reduced the explanation of socio-political structures and processes to the influence of culture, and particularly Islam. But the opening to the social sciences does not quite solve the problem:<sup>15</sup>

The social sciences are part and parcel of the world order, through which the developed nations and their institutional infrastructures continue to dominate and shape that order. Paradigms of social structure and social change, of economic development and of associated values, ideologies, and institutions have been exported to the Third World regions in the context of Western economic, political, military, and ideological penetration into these areas. Ideas and models of socio-economic change, no less than commodities and armaments, have been packaged for export. Conceptions of social, economic, and political development have been exported through institutional means.<sup>16</sup>

Hence the insistence on adaptation of these models in all the social sciences: their indigenization.<sup>17</sup> For instance, in political science – even though there is still cause for concern – advances are certainly taking place. The entrance of an increasing number of younger scholars, more open-minded and better-trained in the various social sciences, should help consolidate these advances.

We think that it is important to build on these advances rather than being tempted by a position of *tabula rasa*. Thus, since the region has been so war-prone, it is unwise to avoid what the field of present security studies can offer. After all, in the 116 inter-state or civil wars that took place in the past decade, twenty-nine (or 25 per cent) involved one or more states of this region.<sup>18</sup> A relevant research strategy, then, is not to avoid the subfield of security or strategic studies, but rather to reformulate and widen its basic concept of national security to make it more adaptable to the region's problems.

Certainly, in such efforts at reformulation and conceptual widening, there is the risk of losing a focus so that the concept becomes so elastic as to be imprecise. But should we worship precision at the price of being irrelevant? For if the social landscape changes frequently, and if our conceptual apparatus – the supposed reflection on and explanation of this landscape – lags behind this change, do we not risk being irrelevant?<sup>19</sup> This is the problem that specialists in security studies and the Third World must debate in coming years: what exactly is the most profitable trade-off point? In this volume, we have tried to be both critical and constructive in our efforts to reformulate the study of security in the Arab context.

Though a collective work, the book's main argument emphasizes the linkage between the problems of national security (understood by us as state *and* societal survival) and problems arising in the specific context of state-building and societal development. The emphasis, then, is on opening up the state rather than 'black-boxing' it in order to draw attention to how state-society relations as well as resource levels affect a country's national security.

Chapter 1 starts with a limited survey of (classical) definitions of national security, situates them within their conceptual and epistemological context, and makes the case for the widening of the concept. The rest of the book is divided into three parts, all emphasizing the linkage between the problems of national security and those of development. At the beginning of each part, we have written a short introduction to situate the contributions that follow within this central problematique. In the book's last chapter, we come back to restate the argument, link it to the present context of the region in the post-Gulf War era, and encourage others to join us and look ahead. Finally, a series of appendix tables provides relevant empirical data on security and development in the region.

This book is the first volume produced by the Inter-University Consortium for Arab Studies (Montréal), established jointly by

faculty at McGill University and the Université de Montréal. We would like to thank our two universities for their financial and moral support in carrying out and institutionalizing this collaboration. The chapters published here were initially submitted to a conference organized by ICAS in Montreal in November 1989. We heartily thank our co-authors who contributed to the success of this conference, and who gladly agreed to make the revisions necessary for this book. Both the conference and the book would not have been possible without the financial support of the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. We would also like to thank the SSHRC for its support of individual research projects, which have helped set the stage for this current endeavour. Gratitude is also due to the students of the Arab Studies and Middle East Studies programmes at the Université de Montréal and McGill University respectively, who assisted with the original conference; to the ever-efficient Christiane Aubin (secretary of Arab Studies, Université de Montréal); to Eric Laferrière, Hamish Telford, and especially Adam Jones (McGill); and to Alex Brynen for providing the index.

## Notes

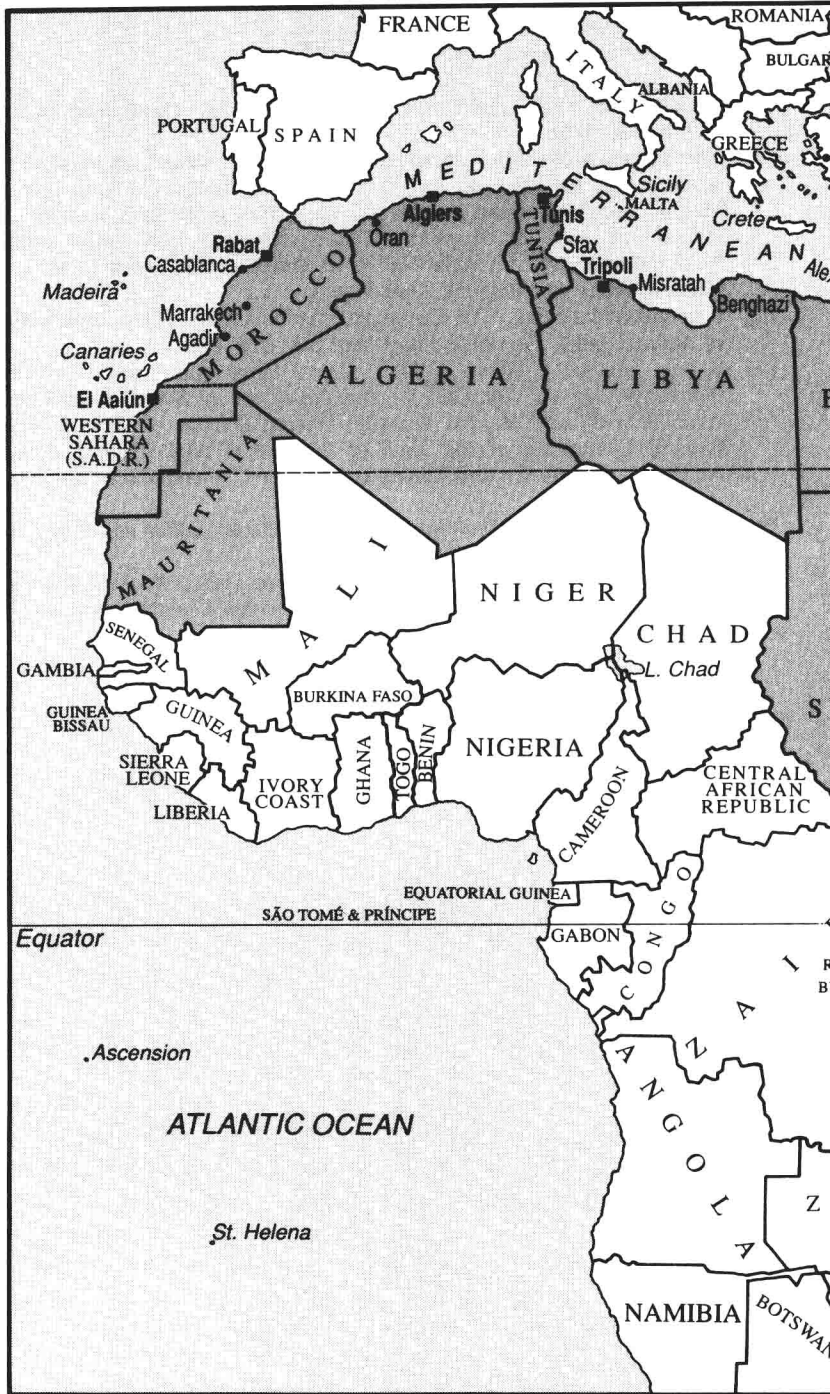
1. In using such a relative and ambiguous term as the Middle East ('middle' from whose point of view, and who is exactly in it and who is out?), we are following conventional usage. For us, the Middle East is composed of all twenty-one members of the Arab League, in addition to Iran, Turkey and Israel. For our approach to regional politics, see Bahgat Korany, Ali E. H. Dessouki *et al.*, *The Foreign Policies of Arab States*, 2nd edn. (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1991).
2. Ken Booth, 'The Evaluation of Strategic Thinking', in John Baylis *et al.*, *Contemporary Strategy*, Volume I, 2nd edn (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1987).
3. Stephen Walt, 'The Renaissance of Security Studies', *International Studies Quarterly*, 35, 2 (June 1991).
4. On this Prussian general and his influence on contemporary strategic thinking, see Raymond Aron, *Penser la guerre: Clausewitz* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 2 vols; Michael Howard, *Clausewitz* (Oxford University Press, 1983); Peter Paret, 'Clausewitz', in Peter Paret (ed.), *Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987); and Paret, *Clausewitz and the State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985).
5. William Olson, *The Theory and Practice of International Relations*, 8th edn (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1991) pp. 217–24.
6. Richard Ullman, 'Redefining Security', *International Security*, 8, 1 (Summer 1983).

7. Ullman, 'Redefining Security'.
8. Jessica Mathews, 'Redefining Security', *Foreign Affairs*, 68, 2 (Spring 1989).
9. Mathews, 'Redefining Security'.
10. Walt, 'The Renaissance of Security Studies'. For some works that do emphasize issues of Third-World security, see Mohammed Ayoob, 'The Security Problematic of the Third World', *World Politics*, 43, 2 (January 1991); Yezid Sayigh, *Confronting the 1990s: Security in the Developing Countries*, Adelphi Paper 251 (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies, 1990); Edward Azar and Chung-In Moon, (eds), *National Security in the Third World* (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1988); Nicole Ball, *Security and Economy in the Third World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988); Caroline Thomas, *In Search of Security: The Third World in International Relations* (Boulder, Col.: Lynne Rienner, 1987); Abdel-Monem Al-Mashat, *National Security in the Third World* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985); Bahgat Korany, 'Vers une redefinition des études stratégiques', in Charles-Philippe David *et al.*, *Les Études stratégiques: Approches et Concepts* (Paris and Quebec: Fondation pour les Etudes de Defense Nationale et Centre Québécois de Relations Internationales, 1989); and Bahgat Korany, 'Strategic Studies and the Third World: A Critical Evaluation', *International Social Science Journal*, 110 (December 1986).
11. In addition to the sources mentioned in chapter 1, see Su-Hoon Lee, *State-Building in the Contemporary Third World* (Boulder, Col. and Seoul: Westview Press and Kyungnam University Press, 1988).
12. For an inventory and for evaluation of Middle Eastern studies at different periods in time, see, for instance: *Arab Culture and Society in Change*, by the Center for the Study of the Modern Arab World, St Joseph's University, Beirut (Dar El-Mashreq Publishers, 1973); G. Fener, *Le Moyen-Orient contemporain* (Paris: Presses de la fondation nationale de science politique, 1975); Leonard Binder (ed.), *The Study of the Middle East* (New York: John Wiley, 1976); Ann G. Drabeck, *The Politics of African and Middle Eastern States* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1976); *Mille et un livres sur le monde arabe: catalogue d'ouvrages edités en France* (Paris: Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1984); Tareq Ismael (ed.), *Middle East Studies* (New York: Praeger, 1989); Hisham Sharabi (ed.), *Theory, Politics, and the Arab World* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Earl L. Sullivan and Jacqueline S. Ismael (eds), *The Contemporary Study of the Arab World* (Edmonton: Alberta University Press, 1991).
13. Lisa Anderson, 'Policy-Making and Theory-Building: American Political Science and the Islamic Middle East', and Judith Tucker, 'Taming the West: Trends in the Writing of Modern Arab Social History in Anglophone Academia', both in Sharabi (ed.), *Theory, Politics, and the Arab World*; see also Rex Brynen, 'The State of the Art in Middle Eastern Studies: A Research Note on Inquiry and the American Empire', *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 8, 4 (Autumn 1986).
14. The basic critical reference in this connection is still Edward Said. See his *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), and 'Orientalism

Reconsidered' in Sullivan and Ismael (eds.), *The Contemporary Study of the Arab World*.

15. For examples of this epistemological problem in some areas of the social sciences, see the chapters by Halim Barakat, Samih Farsoun and Lisa Hajjar, and Peter Gran in Sharabi (ed.), *Theory, Politics, and the Arab World*; and also the chapters by Mark Kennedy, Janet Abu Lughod, Nadia Farah, and Cynthia Nelson in Sullivan and Ismael (eds.), *The Contemporary Study of the Arab World*.
16. Farsoun and Hajjar, 'The Contemporary Sociology of the Middle East', in Sharabi (ed.), *Theory, Politics, and the Arab World*.
17. Soheir Morsy, Cynthia Nelson, Reem Saad and Hania Shalkamy, 'Anthropology and the Call for Indigenization of Social Science in the Arab World', and Bahgat Korany, 'Biased Science or Dismal Art? A Critical Evaluation of the State of the Art of Arab Foreign Policies' Analysis', in Sullivan and Ismael (eds.), *The Contemporary Study of the Arab World*.
18. Michael Kidron and Dan Smith, *The New State of War and Peace* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991) pp. 12–15.
19. Terence Ball, James Farr and Russel Hanson (eds.), *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 1–6.





Map of the Arab World