REVIEW ESSAY

RIDING OUT THE STORM?

The Gulf Crisis: An Attempt to Understand

By Ghazi A. Algosaibi

London: Kegan Paul International Ltd., 1993, 156 pp., with notes, $29.95 cloth.

The Gulf Crisis and Its Global Aftermath

Edited by Gad Barzilai, Aharon Klieman and Gil Shidlo

New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, 1993, 304 pp., with notes and index, $65.00 cloth.

The Middle East After Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait

Edited by Robert O. Freedman

Gainesville, Fla.: University Press of Florida, 1993, 374 pp., with notes, references, list of contributors, bibliography, and index, $49.95 cloth, $19.95 paper.

Reviewed by Andrew C. Hess

The recent history of the Gulf is a history of surprises. Who, for example, warned us about the global implications of the oil price increases of 1973-79?[1] Who prepared policymakers for an Iranian Revolution prompted by Ayatollahs? And who advised political and military leaders in the early summer of 1990 to prepare for Iraq's invasion of Kuwait?[2] No one.[3] This raises the question

1. Alan Gelb and associates, *Oil Windfalls: Blessing or Curse?* (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1988).
2. The reviewer attended the early summer sessions of the 1990 war games at the Naval War College at Newport Rhode Island where intelligence experts advised the players that the likelihood of warfare in the Gulf was not high. Nonetheless the naval and marine officers who participated in this exercise assumed, on the basis of their own assessment of the available intelligence data, that the most likely military event to test their preparedness would be an Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.
3. No doubt some experts did come to the right conclusions in each of the events I have cited above. They were, however, not believed; and one point of the discussion in this review is to discover some reasons why this is the case.

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of why one should read through 834 pages of analytical work on the invasion of Kuwait and its aftermath. If the experts cannot predict what shape the region's future will take, why not let internal events in Gulf countries run their course and watch the results on CNN?

The question not only underplays the importance of the region, but also fails to appreciate the radical character of events in this ill-understood corner of the globe. The three books under review here offer a chance to build up the necessary knowledge to better understand the turmoil in this region. Yet to do this, a brief discussion of the major issues framing modern foreign and regional affairs for the Middle East is required.

The rulers of states with broad international interests have rarely ignored the politics of the Gulf, and in an age in which modern technology intermixes populations and diminishes distance, this is increasingly the case. The Gulf sits astride major communication routes that link Africa, Asia, and Europe. This geographical advantage attracted imperial adventurers through all ages in which human beings possessed the means to dominate the passage ways in and out of the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, and the land routes that connected Eurasia through the Middle East to the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean. In the twentieth century, the geology of the Gulf added a strikingly important reason for its international significance when oil companies discovered there some of the world's largest oil and gas reserves. Since the end of World War II, this rich endowment of raw material has fueled the industrial economy of the world, thus capturing the attention of international leaders when warfare threatens Gulf oil production.

There is a final and less-understood international concern about the states and societies of what had been the geographical and spiritual heart of Islamic civilization. Almost overnight, the forces attached to modern life have overwhelmed the institutions of the well-defined pre-industrial social orders in which the Holy Law of Islam have been applied. Although rarely discussed in detail, this volcanic social upheaval explains much about the instability of the Islamic world in the twentieth century. Among the Gulf responses to the difficulty of accommodating such massive changes are a violent military ethnocracy (Iraq) and a Shi'i form of Islamic fundamentalism (Iran). Since these and other states (Saudi Arabia) are at the symbolic core of the Islamic world, the solution they adopt for the challenge of modernity will influence Muslims elsewhere as well as the international community.

Analyses of the aftermaths of Gulf events seem to have a breathless character, having been written immediately; and the three books under review are no exception. Are ruthless editors responsible for these surges to the wire or is there a contextual factor one ought to consider? Nearly all authors of works on Middle Eastern politics comment on the compressed nature of modern change. The yardstick which is applied is probably the longer European experience with modernity. For the Middle East, the nineteenth century is normally taken as the period during which European colonialism and the introduction of new technologies set off the changes associated with an entirely new way of life. To provide a benchmark for the Middle East, one might take the completion of the

Suez Canal in 1869 and the accompanying development of the Egyptian cotton industry as a date for a solid contact with the West.

Yet for the states and societies of the Gulf, the impact of modern change comes much later and is more intense. Iraq experienced a long period of internal violence which extended from its involvement in World War I to the final establishment of the Baath regime under Saddam Hussein in 1972. For Iran, it is reasonable to use the inter-war rule of Reza Shah Pahlevi as the time during which major internal change began in response to the perceived advantages of Western technologies (oil industry and military weapons). For Saudi Arabia, it was a post-World War II affair when, to paraphrase King Faisal, the Kingdom joined the modern world. This later exposure of Southwest Asia and the Gulf to modern international life seems to have reached a climax in the last quarter of the century: 1972 brought the international forces of the Cold War into the Gulf when Iraq signed a treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union; 1973 brought the first oil price increase; 1975 produced a Marxist revolution in Ethiopia; 1977 saw a military coup in Pakistan; 1978 began an era of revolution in Iran and Afghanistan; 1979 witnessed the end of the Pahlevi regime and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; 1980 started the eight-year war between Iraq and Iran; and 1990 was the year of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the collapse of the Soviet Union. While this is not an all-inclusive list of the important events in the region, it does, however, suggest that one aftermath fades into another, and that the region's difficulties are more serious than the questionable behavior of its leaders.

No one doubts that the Cold War competition between the United States and the Soviet Union in Southwest Asia had much to do with the tumultuous character of Gulf politics in the 20 years since the oil price rise of 1973. Historians and political scientists have barely had time to describe the relations between the great powers in the region, let alone to assess how the policies of each superpower conditioned the changing behavior of its client states, or to examine what role the regional states played in the repeated breakdowns in order. To make matters worse, the internal warfare in the region reached a climax in the Iran-Iraq war of 1980-88, and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait occurred at the height of the Soviet collapse in 1989-90. Under such conditions, scholars and professionals or political leaders are not in a position to apply lessons learned from the study of well-defined subjects for which there is a developed body of theoretical and empirical knowledge.

Under these conditions, however, thorough studies that rise substantially above journalistic accounts of the Gulf crisis do provide the best clues to what may happen in this vital area. The three volumes assembled here not only explain the conflict, but also present the reader with three quite different points of view on what the aftermath of the Iraqi defeat portends. The thin volume of Ghazi A. Algosaibi examines, as its subtitle states, the Gulf crisis from the point of view of an ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *The Gulf Crisis and its Global Aftermath* contains a series of papers written by professors and professionals who have either a formal or informal connection with the University of Tel Aviv. The volume of essays on the Middle East after the invasion of Kuwait,

edited by Robert O. Freeman, contains studies by authors who regularly analyze the foreign policy positions of the United States on Middle East and Gulf affairs. Readers who have had experience with the foreign affairs of the Middle East and the Gulf will immediately recognize how this selection of books reflects two of the United States' major interests in the Middle East and the Gulf: Israel and Saudi Arabia. This review, therefore, does not represent a comprehensive understanding of how other important scholarly communities and professionals might view this crisis and its aftermath.[4]

Gazi A. Algosaibi is a modernist, a servant of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and an author of Arabic poetry and prose. He has, therefore, many reasons for attempting to understand why the Iraqis invaded Kuwait. No one, especially an Arab, can begin an argument about the attack on Kuwait without discussing the character of the Iraqi ruler, Saddam Hussein. According to Algosaibi, characterizing the adventurous behavior of this man as the only reason for the war is too simplistic. Economic events — especially the inability of the state to find employment for demobilized troops, the financial burden of the war with Iran, and the unfavorable shape of the oil market in 1990 for Iraq — were indeed major reasons for the actions. On the other hand, one must also account for the scale of Saddam Hussein's miscalculations: He underestimated the willingness of the United States to defend its interests with force in the Gulf, as well as his ability to intimidate King Fahd. He also misread the signs of the Soviet Union's impending collapse. Algosaibi argues that it was the insularity of this ruler, along with his willingness to gamble everything, that led him to challenge the world's most technically-advanced military forces with an army that lacked the techniques of modern warfare.

If Saddam Hussein acted on the basis of bad intelligence, Arab leaders and U.S. officials developed faulty evaluations of the Iraqi ruler's intentions, making them unable to respond quickly to events both before and after the Iraqi tanks crossed into Kuwait. Algosaibi draws attention to the American Ambassador April Glaspie's now famous meeting with Saddam Hussein just before the August attack, during which she encouraged Hussein to believe the U.S. lacked interest in the preservation of the existing border between Iraq and Kuwait. If such words incited rather than pacified Saddam Hussein, the fainthearted reaction of Arab governments to his bullying tactics also convinced the Iraqi ruler that his potential opponents would not act in unison once he seized Kuwait. He was right. Disbelief, inaction, and division were the immediate reactions among Arab leaders to the swift occupation of Kuwait.

Why did some Arab states support this assault on the ideal of Arab unity? Algosaibi dismisses the popular argument that Iraq's allies joined for economic

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4. Three recently published books which do not approach the analysis of the Gulf crisis and its aftermath from a position based upon the major foreign policy concerns of the United States are: *The Gulf War and the New World Order*, edited by Haim Bresheeth and Nira Yuval-Davis (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1991); *Beyond the Storm: A Gulf Reader*, edited by Phyllis Bennis and Michel Moushabeck (New York, N.Y.: Olive Branch Press: 1991); and Omar Ali, *Crisis in the Arabian Gulf: An Independent Iraqi View* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1993).

reasons: Their political support for Iraq would yield some percentage of the booty. The reasons were more serious than this quaint use of an old tribal practice. Palestinians under Arafat lined up with Saddam Hussein out of desperation. Events on the West Bank had gone unfavorably for the PLO; the long arm of Israel had become harder to avoid and the PLO faced viable competition from the Islamic fundamentalists. Thus Arafat sought impetuously to exploit through alliance the one military force in the Middle East that had won a victory, and appeared, at least in numbers of troops and equipment, capable of defeating the Israelis. King Hussein of Jordan, however, was not given to emotional decisions. Why support Iraq? Internal conciliation of both the Islamic fundamentalists and Palestinians in Jordan, coupled with conflicts with Gulf oil producers over insufficient financial aid, is a reasonable but unsatisfactory explanation in the eyes of Gulf governments. Algosaibi's most intensive criticism of an Arab state's decision to ally with Saddam Hussein is reserved for Yemen, a nation that had benefitted substantially from its connection with Saudi Arabia. He concludes that two fundamental forces motivated Yemeni policymakers: the historical complications that have emerged between the Saudis and Yemenis, and the hostility that has surfaced between the two peoples as a result of great differences in wealth. Other Arab states that expressed support for the Iraqi position did so as a result of Iraqi military aid, or a desire to neutralize the criticism of Islamic fundamentalist groups.

Explaining how the coalition against Iraq came into being is much easier. According to Algosaibi, the industrial world promptly recognized the threat to its interests which the invasion of Kuwait represented. Most helpful in terms of Arab politics, however, was the Iraqi miscalculation of Egypt's interests. Whatever the explanation for its actions, the Egyptian regime played the major role in gathering together an Arab opposition to the Iraqi conquest of Kuwait. Syria's willingness to participate in the coalition demonstrated that Assad had correctly read regional and international politics. Soon, 33 countries representing most of the world's financial and military power arrayed themselves against Iraq. In the words of Algosaibi, one did not require astrologers to predict the outcome.

In one of the most interesting chapters in this small book, Algosaibi addresses what he regards as an Arab failure to exploit the advantages of modern communications technology. In his opinion, the Arab media is boring and ineffective. He attributes this to several failures. First, Arabs have not fully involved themselves in the technology of the modern period: They are not part of the satellite age, just as they are deficient in other technical arenas. Second, a comparison of Arab and Western coverage of the Gulf War demonstrates how the Western media delivered a far more appealing and interesting message on the basis of its exploitation of experience, division of labor (varieties of experts), and the freedom to disagree. In contrast, the Arab media (of the Gulf, with the exception of Iraq) offered interviews in which the host would address the guest with a variety of honorifics and ask utterly safe questions.

This criticism of the patriarchal culture of the Gulf media is followed by an equally interesting discussion of Islamic fundamentalism. Algosaibi's judgment on the motives of the fundamentalists who supported Saddam Hussein is not

that they were attempting to restore the role of religion to its proper place. Algosaibi instead defines these fundamentalists as leaders who have formed parties that seek political power and who "promote Islamic slogans" devoid of content. He notes that they preside over party organizations similar in structure to those used by authoritarian regimes. He then examines why these leaders supported Saddam Hussein during the Gulf crisis, a man whose behavior had regularly been anything but pious, and who was responsible for introducing Western troops into the Arabian Peninsula.

To exemplify a fundamentalist leader, Algosaibi selects Dr. Hasan al-Turabi of the Sudan. Dr. al-Turabi, according to the author, believes the Gulf crisis benefitted Islam because the presence of the American troops in the Gulf exposed those governments which were ignorant of Islamic teachings concerning politics and the distribution of wealth. This apparently included, during the crisis, all of the Gulf oil-producing countries except Iraq. But the object of Dr. al-Turabi's criticism was not to support the Iraqi regime; rather, his motivation was to use the event to increase the influence of his own political (Islamic) party among the masses. Algosaibi contrasts al-Turabi's combination of politics and Islam with the arrangement between the men of religion and the ruling class in Saudi Arabia, in which the political leaders defer to religious figures in matters of doctrine while carrying on their duties as rulers. Despite their support of Iraq and their subsequent involvement in social affairs, the fundamentalists have not been able to achieve any of their goals. Nonetheless, they have not lost major support, and Algosaibi suggests they will continue to be an important part of Arab political reality.

The remaining three chapters in this appeal to Arab liberals and to the use of reason consist of efforts to deal with emotional issues which will, if not directly confronted, encourage yet another conflict. It is not a good idea, writes Algosaibi, to have a Saudi soldier paid more than a general in the armies of some other Arab states. Arab regimes with oil wealth must address the emotions generated by such an extraordinarily divisive gift. He suggests that a program of donations is not a way to handle this problem; rather, he advocates joint Arab action to remove division through economic development. In the same manner, he condemns the belief among many Arabs that the Gulf War was the outcome of an American conspiracy. Here he calls upon Arabs to understand the nature of modern politics. The United States acts as a sovereign nation that realistically determines its policies in an international community of competing states. Policymakers should accept this situation, and when they reconstruct thereby the important meaning of their Arab heritage, they will agree with American positions on some issues and not on others.

Algosaibi's concluding remarks concern what to do about an explosive political culture. An unthinking application of democracy will not work under current conditions: How can its rules apply to societies whose governments have long been established on quite different bases? His solution is to call Arab intellectuals into a common battle against the problems of modernity. Should they fail to resolve the challenges of modernity through dialogue, he warns, the devastation of the next explosion will be more serious than the storm of 1990.

The Gulf Crisis and Its Global Aftermath is a volume of collected essays by academicians and professionals affiliated with the University of Tel Aviv. It reflects the same underlying intensity of interest in the aftermath of the Gulf War as does the work by Algosaibi; but these scholars deliver their messages in a formal academic fashion. There are two major themes at work in what is an unusually well-organized collection of papers: a study of the relation between the domestic politics of the conflict and its international setting; and the global implications of Desert Storm.

Aharon Klieman sets a grand academic stage for essayists with a call to arms somewhat like that of Algosaibi. If scholars are to learn something from this conflict such that they might assist diplomats to produce harmony, they must assess how the realignments and balancing acts resulting from this war are going to take place within the changing international order.

This daunting challenge introduces the first of five articles described as "Middle Eastern Tremors." Bruce Maddy-Weitzman's analysis of the impact of the war on inter-Arab relations confirms the arrival of political realism in the Arab world. Henceforth, the record of one Arab nation invading another will make any claims for the existence of Arab unity appear highly questionable. Efraim Krash reviews the explanations for Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait as a means of understanding what may happen if he should remain in power. His conclusion is that the brutal system within which this ruler survives will provide an environment in which he will engage in future acts of repression and aggression. As one solution to this problem, Krash suggests Iraqi Shi'ites be empowered to restructure the regime in Baghdad. In an equally intriguing article, Jacob Goldberg describes the Manichean behavior of the Saudi Arabian government toward Western military forces: the ability to accept foreign military units when confronted by superior armed forces, and the paradoxical desire to remove promptly any social and cultural influences of the Western presence as soon as the Iraqis had been driven from Kuwait. In contrast to the Saudi military and social policies, there was, according to Menachem Klein, nothing paradoxical about the PLO's behavior in the war. In deep political trouble before the invasion of Kuwait, Arafat saw salvation in an alliance with Iraq. This Messianic choice proved very costly, as it caused the PLO to move inward for a new strategy at a dark time. Elizabeth Often concludes this portion of the book with a demonstration of the dangerous acts of aggression in the Middle East by mapping out the international migrations of the 5.5 million people who were displaced by the war.

The second part of this volume begins with two articles devoted to the impact of Desert Storm on Israel. Although the conclusions of Gad Barsilai and Efraim Inbar have been overtaken by events, their analyses of the impact of Desert Storm upon Israel's national security considerations places this event in a broader context so as to explain why the current government of Israel altered its strategy on the Palestinian question.

Part three of the text is devoted to a discussion of how the war affected the realignment of the great powers in the Middle East. The first two chapters examine the U.S. vision of the new world order after the Gulf War, and the

altered relationship between the United States and its main regional ally, Israel. Robert Tucker's analysis of U.S. actions after the defeat of the Iraqis reveals a policy built upon the fear of a general political disintegration resulting from the unsatisfied political ambitions of various ethnic groups. Thus the new world order of the Bush Administration was in fact a preservation of the status quo. Abraham Ben-Zvi's chapter describes the increased amount of attention the United States had devoted to resolving the Arab-Israeli issue prior to the Gulf War and how the collapse of the Soviet Union and the outcome of Desert Storm would intensify the American peace-making effort: The U.S. attitude toward Israel shifted away from a Cold War relationship to one in which its ally would play a major role in maintaining stability. The most dramatic realignment of a superpower in the Middle East after the war is the subject of Yitzhak Klein's work on the fate of the USSR. The argument is simple: The former Soviet Union is no longer either a superpower or an actor in the Middle East. Its absence from the political stage is a major element in the definition of the new world order, and its departure from the Middle East will bring about major political changes in the region. Ilan Greilsammer's analysis of the European Community's role in the Gulf crisis deflates the claim that this political block will play a major role in defining the new world order: The 12 member states were unable to act in a collective fashion at the height of this international emergency.

A final section of this volume covers the transnational technical issues. Gil Shidlo studied the Third World arms exports to Iraq in order to expose how the entry of developing states into this deadly business has radically internationalized the arms trade. Arms control regimes in the new world order will, therefore, have to face new and perhaps greater challenges than those posed in the era of the Cold War. Gil Feiler concludes that oil issues were at the core of Iraq's complaint against Kuwait, and that the instabilities associated with one of the world's largest oil-producing regions will bring on similar problems in the future. Dina Goren examines the Western media's coverage of the Gulf War. Her conclusions are now familiar to most specialists in the communications arena: The U.S. government approached its relations with the media so as not to inform the audience about the war, but to prevent the media from transmitting information that would undermine the war effort as in the U.S. experience in Vietnam. Thus the new world order of communications in the aftermath of the Gulf War will have to deal with a news agenda dominated more thoroughly by the government.

In the concluding essay the editors of the volume strike an optimistic note. They see possibilities in the new order for the resolution of the Arab-Palestinian-Israeli conflict; they believe the United States will not forego its leadership role in the region; and they believe the end of the Cold War will permit the application of international rules and procedures to address the underlying causes of instability in the Middle East.

Although *The Middle East After Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait* covers many of the issues discussed in the previous volumes, the point of view is quite different. Most of the authors are scholars and professionals who have regularly contributed to the formation of American foreign policy for Middle Eastern and Gulf

issues. In addition, Robert O. Freeman gives us a broader geographical coverage of the war's impact.

Bard E. O'Neill and Ilana Kass begin the discussion with a military and political analysis of the conflict. They expose the strategic mistakes of Iraq; describe the military planning of the United States; and reveal the importance of the qualitative transformation in organization, equipment, and training that U.S. forces underwent since the Vietnam War. Most importantly, they demonstrate how the U.S. government brought its military objectives tightly in line with political requirements. They criticize the decision at the end of the war not to destroy the remaining divisions of the Iraqi Republican Guard. Yet despite this unwillingness to crush Saddam Hussein's army, the brilliant victory did enhance the prestige of the United States and probably will assist U.S. diplomats in dealing with the major political conflicts in the region. Yet, from a military point of view, one cannot say Desert Storm ushered in a new order: Key rivalries continue to exist, the arms race goes on, and huge oil wealth attracts plunderers.[5]

American policy is the subject of Robert E. Hunter's criticism. The failure to assess Saddam Hussein's intentions is inexcusable; but the rapid creation of the coalition and the highly successful management of the war deserve praise. In contrast to the negative judgments of O'Neill and Kass on the decisions at the end of the war, Hunter explains the political reasons for limiting the use of U.S. power in the last stages of the conflict. To go to Baghdad would have risked greater American casualties, the cohesion of the coalition, and the integrity of the region's borders. Long-run stability in the area will not come from the application of military force. In the Gulf it is essential that the United States improve its relations with Iran. American policy in the Middle East requires an aggressive effort to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as meaningful progress in controlling the arms race and promoting the creation of representative institutions, even at the expense of allowing Islamic fundamentalists to take power.

In terms of the other superpower in the region, the Soviet Union, Robert O. Freedman provides a detailed history of a state in accelerating decline. While supporting American aims on the surface, Gorbachev attempted to support U.S. opponents in the Gulf until events associated with the abortive coup of August, 1991 threw him into close alliance with the American administration. He then patched up his relations with Israel, allowed direct flights of Jewish emigrants to Israel, restricted the sale of military supplies to Afghanistan, limited arms shipments to the Middle East, and assisted the United States in convening the Madrid Peace Conference. But the Soviet Union disintegrated, leaving only the fate of the Islamic Republics in Central Asia as a peripheral worry for Gulf policymakers.

A less dramatic story was the reaction of the third major industrial power to the war: Japan. Eugene Brown argues that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait threw the Japanese political elite into disarray. Five different factions emerged to

5. This is also the conclusion of Anthony H. Cordesman, *After the Storm: The Changing Military Balance in the Middle East* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, Inc., 1993), 1-31.

debate the Japanese response to this major international crisis which, once again, threatened to disrupt oil supplies. The result was indecision at a time that demanded international leadership. Brown suggests this unsatisfactory record will impel the Japanese to play a more important role in international affairs.

Why Saddam Hussein was able to stay in power after such a spectacular defeat on the battlefield is the subject of Laurie Mylroie's essay. Her explanation lists the following reasons: The United States failed to plan adequately for the post-war era; Saddam Hussein had the ability to crush his internal opposition; potential rebels in the military force failed to win the Republican Guards to their side; and the state possessed a continued capacity to reward loyal officers. Meanwhile, the middle class in Iraq went bankrupt while many of the civilians who were close to the regime found their positions improved. Thus, the dictator became stronger after losing the "Mother of all battles." In contrast, the regime of the Ayatollahs in Iran was able to improve its position as a result of the war. According to Shireen T. Hunter, Iranian president Ayatollah Rafsanjani rejected the radical position on Gulf affairs and pursued a foreign policy which took advantage of Iraq's poor decisions without identifying Iran directly with the U.S.-led coalition. This approach to foreign affairs, in her opinion, is an example of Iran's adoption of a realistic policy according to which the state will follow courses of action which serve the interests of Iran, rather than vaguely defined revolutionary goals. Will such moderation lead to a major role in preserving stability in the Gulf?

Whatever the answer is for Iran, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia certainly wants stability and security. Gregory Gause devises a test for this state's effort to provide its own regional defense in the post-Desert Storm era. The Saudis must satisfy four requirements to maintain their security: They must improve the size and effectiveness of their military forces; the Kingdom must take the lead in making the Gulf Cooperation Council an effective regional security organization; Saudi Arabia should work out security arrangements with Syria and Egypt; and the special relationship with the United States must be strengthened without producing internal problems. Gause examines each of these requirements in detail and gives the Kingdom an unsatisfactory grade. Finally, any judgements on the security of the Kingdom must be conditioned by how effectively the state will handle the internal protests against the direction of social and cultural change.

A concluding section expands the geographical scope of analysis to the Eastern Mediterranean. Here, those states and peoples to be included in this definition of the Eastern Mediterranean are Israel, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians; excluded are Greece, Turkey, Lebanon and Libya.

Chapters by Marvin Feuerwerger on Israel and Helena Cobban concerning the PLO provide excellent foundations for those who wish to understand the internal political trends in Israel and among the Palestinians both before and shortly after the war. According to Feuerwerger, the main factors which caused the Israelis to consider a major change in their political environment were the collapse of the Soviet Union, the failure to absorb effectively the ensuing Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union, the lack of significant progress on the

Arab-Israeli peace process, and following Desert Storm, difficulties in relations with the United States caused by the government's settlement policies. If Israel had serious political problems, its difficulties were mild compared to those confronting the PLO. Helena Cobban traces the downward trajectory of PLO relations with the United States after Arafat's refusal in the summer of 1990 to denounce the use of terrorism. At the same time, the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories became increasingly disenchanted with the PLO's failure to improve their conditions. These and other challenges to Arafat's authority led him into a fatal alliance with Saddam Hussein. Cobban offers three reasons for this decision: to offset criticism from within the PLO and among the Palestinians; to balance Egyptian pressure to yield to Israeli and U.S. positions on the peace process; and to gain additional financial and military backing. To describe the results of this choice as a disaster, so Cobban writes, is to note how Arafat had no choice but to engage in peace negotiations with the Israelis and the Americans on their terms.

One of the most surprising changes to come out of the war was the improvement in the conditions of Syria. Alasdair Drysdale demonstrates how the flexible policies of the Syrian government resulted in the end of its isolation in the Arab world, and a dramatic improvement of its relations with the United States. The major gains flowing from participating in the legitimation of the coalition forces were: the establishment of Syrian hegemony in Lebanon, the improvement of its financial ties with the Arab oil-producing states to the tune of $2 billion in economic aid from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and the turnabout in foreign relations with the United States, the European Community, Egypt, and the GCC.

Jordan, however, was not as fortunate as Syria. Adam Garfinkle locates the origin of Jordan's move toward the camp of the Iraqi dictator in the economic difficulties of the late 1980s. To deflect criticism from the government, King Hussein permitted parliamentary elections, the result of which produced a vote dominated by Islamic fundamentalists and Palestinian supporters. This left the King with no alternative but to support Iraq during the war if he wished to stay in power. After Desert Storm, the King immediately reversed his position to cooperate with the American-sponsored peace process. The six reasons Garfinkle offers for King Hussein's hasty pirouette provide insight into the future of Jordanian politics: to exploit the weakness of the PLO in order to control the Palestinians living in Jordan; to prevent Syria from taking advantage of its new position to weaken Jordan; to strengthen the government's position in disputes with Israel over the transfer of West Bank Palestinians to Jordan; to improve the possibilities of obtaining aid from the United States and Saudi Arabia; to outflank the Islamic movement; and to hasten the process toward peace.

In the opinion of Louis Cantori, Egypt turned the conflict to its benefit by being able once again to occupy a position at the center of Arab politics. While Egypt cannot claim the position it held in Arab foreign affairs during the early years of Nasser's reign, its close ties with the United States and the relations it developed with Syria and Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm do form a diplomatic network in which Egypt can exert much greater influence than in the years

after the signing of the Camp David accords. Not to be ignored was the financial result of Egypt's decision to support the coalition: One-half of its $40 billion debt was forgiven; it obtained $10 billion in compensation for war-related losses; and it received $9 billion in new loans from the IMF. If these financial advantages of the war represented a great gain for Egypt, Cantori concludes, it cannot afford to misuse this opportunity to improve the material well-being of its population, for the outcome of Desert Storm did nothing to check the destabilizing forces which might arise from radical versions of Islamic fundamentalism.

Cantori's worry is the same as Algosaibi's. The message of this Arab modernist from Saudi Arabia is that Arabs are not thinking deeply about the problems of modern life. It is not just Saddam Hussein who is at fault. Arabs have trouble understanding many modern issues: the shape of international politics, the difference between a true appeal to religious values and sloganeering, the impact on emotions of revolutionary economic changes, how to employ modern technology, and how to accommodate the political forces generated by those upheavals in the material conditions of life over which Dr. Algosaibi himself has presided. But his reasoned appeal for a dialogue on these matters comes at a time of earthquakes in the order of life for Gulf populations. It quite naturally raises questions of whether Arab intellectuals (not defined by Algosaibi) have the corporate unity, independence, and willingness to be critical in the constructive sense that the times demand. Since examples abound in the Gulf and the Middle East of radically conflicting discourses, it appears that the answer to this question is no: Arabs have an ideological storm to ride out.

On a quite different plane, the Tel Aviv scholars raise another fundamental issue about the aftermath of the Gulf crisis. Here, however, one must read into the book recent agreements between the government of Israel and the PLO aimed at resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. This long-awaited convergence on peace reinforces the interest that the United States, Israel, and Middle Eastern states friendly to the peace process hold in the maintenance of post-war conditions. But the studies of this scholarly group indicate that the conditions in the Gulf (Iraq's internal politics), in economic and technical arenas important to the Middle East (oil and the arms trade), and in international politics (end of the Cold War) are highly unstable. What policy should one follow to preserve the peace? If one's foreign policy is based upon the maintenance of status quo for an unstable region of such importance as the Gulf, then it is logical to expect violent surprises. This is in nobody's interest; it is exactly what the U.S. Defense Department analysts are anticipating.[6]

Scholars have defined the boundaries of the Middle East in any number of ways. For most Americans, the Middle East has long been those Eastern Mediterranean territories where the great powers embroiled themselves in the Arab-Israeli conflict. In this crisis, however, the war began in the Gulf and expanded to include Eastern Mediterranean nations and peoples. But only three chapters out of twelve are devoted specifically to the Gulf region in *The Middle East After*

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6. David Isenberg, "Desert Storm Redux?" *The Middle East Journal* 47 (Summer 1993): 429-43.

Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait. The use of a traditional American viewpoint for framing this crisis seems to explain the failure to deal with one major actor, Turkey, and a number of crucial state and non-state issues, only two of which shall be mentioned here. One important outcome of the Gulf War is that the two most populous states with major experience in waging war (on a Gulf level, to be sure) have grievances against the United States. The allies of America, on the other hand, are oil-producing states with small armies whose records in the war were unimpressive in their own opinion.[7] How will a balance be struck in the Gulf over the long-run under these conditions? Similarly, there is no discussion of the unresolved future of two non-state populations whose fate might destabilize the state system in the Gulf and the Middle East: the Shi'ites of southern Iraq and the Kurds.

With slight exception, the articles in this book reflect the shortcomings of a perspective based upon the political and economic issues which seemed to be important for the United States through the end of the Cold War. There is no attempt to set these analyses within a framework of the regional history of the Gulf; there is no serious expansion of the scholarly perspective to include cultural issues; and, surprisingly, there is no speculation on the role ethnic issues will play in the new political order. Should the United States pursue a policy of exporting democracy by aiding those fundamentalist groups which seek power in the Gulf with what Algosaibi describes as Islamic slogans? Are not the ethnic and tribal conflicts of Turkey, the Caucasus, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, the Arabian Peninsula and the Sudan major challenges to regional and global order which require a change of perspective appropriate to the post-Cold War era?

Every year there are sand storms in the Gulf. The bedouin long ago understood the physical climate of their region and were able to minimize the damage of violent winds. Riding out the storms of modern change is, of course, not the same; but at the very least, the nomadic example offers an important lesson to those who wish to understand the feelings and politics of Gulf societies.

7. Cordesman, *After The Storm*, 553-684.