For a long time two persistent themes—oil and Israel—have shaped the contemporary Middle East. The discovery of huge hydrocarbon resources and the accumulation of massive oil revenues have intensified regional and international interests and conflicts in the Persian Gulf since the early twentieth century. Equally important, the creation of Israel in 1948 in the midst of the Arab and Muslim Levant has led to several major military conflicts between the Jewish state and its Arab neighbors.

Most students of Middle Eastern policy and policy makers in Europe and the United States have addressed these two Middle East subsystems—the Persian Gulf and the Levant—separately. The underlying assumption is that developments in one area are independent of changes in the other region. Despite growing literature on the Persian Gulf and the Arab-Israeli conflict, very few analysts have sought to establish the connection between the two regions. This study seeks to bridge this gap.

International, regional, and domestic developments in the past five years have underscored the strong links between the two regions, particularly the continuing violence between Israel and the Palestinians, the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, and the 2003 war in Iraq. The escalation of attacks and counterattacks in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has further deepened the need to reach a negotiated peace agreement. The death of Yasser Arafat in November 2004 was seen by many as an end of an era and an opportunity to aggressively pursue peace talks. This lack of meaningful peace and the deterioration of socioeconomic conditions have intensified the Palestinians’ sense of desperation and contributed to an increase of attacks on military and civilian Israeli targets. Israeli military operations against Palestinian civilians have been shown on television screens throughout the Middle East. Many Arabs and Iranians see the Palestinian attacks on Israeli targets as a legitimate form of resistance against foreign occupation. Thus Hamas, Palestinian Islamic
Jihad, and the Lebanese Party of God (Hizbollah) drew a great deal of sympathy from Arabs and Iranians. These same groups are considered terrorist organizations by the United States, Israel, and some European countries.

The September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States and the ongoing war on terrorism have highlighted the differences between the United States and the Persian Gulf states on the definition of terrorism and have increased pressure on the latter to disassociate themselves from anyone Washington considers a terrorist. Iran and Saudi Arabia have emphasized that they provide humanitarian, not military, assistance to the Palestinian and Lebanese groups. In addition, Tehran has sought to use its leverage to restrain Hizbollah and prevent an escalation of violence by the Shi’ias either in Lebanon or in post-Saddam Iraq. Equally important, the Saudi leaders have renewed their efforts to reach a comprehensive peace in the Middle East in what is known as the Abdullah Peace Plan. This initiative, launched in 2002, was driven partly by the need to distance Saudi Arabia from terrorism and improve the kingdom’s image in Washington and other Western capitals, and partly by the need to put an end to the bloodshed between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

The 2003 war in Iraq, probably more than any other development, has demonstrated the close links between the Gulf and the Levant. Shortly after the toppling of Saddam Hussein’s regime, an Arab-Israeli peace plan known as the “Road Map” was introduced. This initiative is sponsored by the United States, the European Union, Russia, and the United Nations. This international effort to make peace between the Arabs and Israel in the aftermath of a major war in Iraq is not new. Following the 1991 Gulf War, the Madrid Peace Conference was held with the participation of all major parties of the conflict. In other words, the connections between the Arab-Israeli peace process and stability in the Persian Gulf are not coincidental. Furthermore, the war and its aftermath represent the peak of American intervention in the Middle East. This is the first time in the region’s history that a U.S.-led international coalition toppled an Arab regime, arrested its leader, and occupied the entire country for a prolonged period of time.

To sum up, the Middle East is on the verge of a historic transformation. The world’s only superpower—the United States—is heavily involved in shaping the future of a major Arab country—Iraq. The slow emergence of a post-Saddam Iraq will have a tremendous impact on neighboring states and the regional order. Will a stable Iraq, if and when it emerges, serve as a model for other countries in the Persian Gulf? What role will Iraq play in the Persian Gulf and the Arab-Israeli conflict? What kind of interaction, if any, will Iraq have with Tel Aviv? How will Tehran, Riyadh, and other Arab states respond to
the changing dynamics of the regional order? Will a détente, or a rapprochement, emerge between the Persian Gulf states and Israel?

This volume seeks to provide tentative answers to these questions. Instead of speculating on what might happen, it examines major economic, political, and strategic interactions between Tehran, Baghdad, and Riyadh on one side and Tel Aviv on the other side. Attention is focused on the contribution of each of these Gulf states to the Arab-Israeli conflict/peace process. These contributions were either direct (Baghdad and Riyadh sending troops to fight in the wars against Israel) or indirect (Tehran and Riyadh supporting Lebanese and Palestinian groups in a proxy war against Israel). It is also important to point out that the Gulf states’ attitude toward the Jewish state has not always been negative. The Pahlavi Iran had close relations with Israel. Similarly, Saudi Arabia proposed two peace plans with Israel.

In short, this study examines direct and indirect interactions between the Persian Gulf states and Israel. It sheds light on the main forces that shaped the Gulf states’ attitude toward the Jewish state. Analysis suggests that ideological orientations (pan-Arabism and political Islam), as interpreted by the ruling elites, have hardened the stance toward Israel. On the other hand, economic and strategic interests have contributed to a more accommodative policy. Accordingly, the steady and slow decline of ideology and the relative predominance of national interests in formulating foreign policy in the region suggest that the future interaction between the Gulf states and Israel is likely to be less hostile than it was in the last half century. Indeed, assuming real progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process, prospects for cooperation between Tel Aviv and Tehran, Baghdad, and Riyadh should not be ruled out. Another significant policy implication of this study is that peace between the Arabs and the Israelis and stability in the Persian Gulf are intertwined and reinforce each other. The two subsystems should not be addressed separately. Developments in one region are echoed in the other. A détente between the Persian Gulf states and Israel is essential to reaching a lasting, comprehensive peace in the broad Middle East.

Framework for Analysis

An examination of the Persian Gulf states’ attitude toward Israel over the past half century is so complicated that it defies analyses based on any one conceptual approach to foreign policy. Instead, this study employs a multidimen-
sional approach to capture the complexity of the interactions between the two Middle Eastern subsystems. Specifically, six theoretical tools have been used in this study—international system, realism, geopolicy, ideology, minorities, and decision-making theory.

The International System

Given its strategic location, the Middle East has long been subject to competition from the global powers. The discovery of oil in the twentieth century—first in Iran, then Iraq, and later in the other Gulf monarchies—and the growing world dependence on this strategic commodity have further intensified global interests in the region. The creation of Israel in 1948 with its strong ties to foreign powers, particularly the United States, has added one more dimension to international involvement in the Middle East.

It is important to point out that the American support of Israel and Soviet support to the Arabs during the cold war did not immediately follow the birth of Israel. Seeking to win support from what were then the world’s two superpowers, David Ben-Gurion, the first Israeli prime minister, deliberately adopted “a non-identification foreign policy stand.”1 Besides their status as superpowers, the United States and the former Soviet Union had the two largest Jewish communities in the world. They represented a significant manpower pool for the newly born state. Thus, Israel’s involvement with the superpowers has been of extraordinary intensity since its creation. With the growing polarization of both the regional and international systems, Israel had to choose sides. Gradually the Soviet Union emerged as the main patron of revolutionary Arab states, and Tel Aviv consolidated its close relations with Washington.

This close cooperation between Israel and the United States had been a major source of contention in Washington’s relations with Riyadh. American officials have long sought to separate their policy in the Arab-Israeli arena from that in the Persian Gulf. Many Arabs and Iranians see the two issues as inseparable. The Saudis have always sought to use their close relations with the United States to pressure it to adopt an evenhanded approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Mostly these efforts have been unsuccessful. Like the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq, Saudi Arabia does not recognize the state of Israel. However, the Saudi rhetoric is not as negative as that of Iran or Iraq (until the 2003 war). In 1981 and 2002 two Saudi crown princes proposed peace plans that included a diplomatic recognition of Israel. Thus it can be argued that the close relations between the United States, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Qatar
have contributed to a less hostile stand toward Israel by these three Gulf monarchies.

Similarly, it can be argued that the close relations the shah of Iran had with the United States played a role in his cooperation with Israel. Put differently, the top officials in the Pahlavi regime thought that good relations with Tel Aviv would improve Iran's image in Washington. The Islamic regime's declared hostility toward Israel is a major hurdle in any possible rapprochement with the United States. It is hard to imagine any improvement in American-Iranian relations without relaxation of Tehran's opposition to the Arab-Israeli peace process and some acceptance of the Jewish state.

Finally, the nationalist and leftist regimes that ruled Baghdad from 1958 until 2003 expressed strong opposition to the United States and Israel. The drastic changes in Iraq since March 2003 and the heavy American involvement in rebuilding the “new Iraq” probably will not lead to immediate normalization of relations between Baghdad and Tel Aviv, but it is safe to predict that the post-Saddam Iraq, when it emerges, is likely to be less hostile toward Israel than the “old Iraq.”

Realism

Realism is the traditionally dominant school of international relations theory. Some of its major themes are as follows: The state is the preeminent actor in the international and regional systems. Accordingly, the state is the major unit of analysis in realism. States are seen as unitary rational actors advancing their national interests, responding to external threats, and taking advantage of opportunities provided by the regional and international systems. These national interests are defined in terms of power. Power is viewed as the ability to induce another actor to behave in some desired fashion or to refrain from undesired behavior. This power is attained and maintained either by diplomatic means or by displaying force. Given the conflicting national interests and the fact that the increased security of one state actor is usually at the expense of another, the international system is inherently unstable. Finally, it is maintained that both the above assumptions accurately “characterize the perceptions and actions of foreign policy elites, and that these elites are able to formulate such policy independently of any significant pressures from their domestic political and economic systems.”

The Israeli raid on the Iraqi nuclear reactor Osiraq in 1981 seems to fit this model. Seeking to prevent a regional rival from obtaining and developing nuclear capabilities, Israel sent jets, in a preemptive strike, to destroy Baghdad’s
nuclear facilities. Despite the success of the Israeli raid, it can be argued that it provided incentives for the proliferation of other kinds of weapons of mass destruction. Some of Israel’s regional rivals decided that, since the risks of developing nuclear capabilities were too high, the second best choice was to stockpile chemical and biological weapons. Moreover, the Israeli raid did not stop Saddam Hussein from trying to acquire nonconventional capabilities, including nuclear ones, in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In short, as realism argues, states pursuing their national interests, defined as power, contribute to anarchy in the regional and international systems.

Despite the validity of the realist theory in explaining some of the interactions between the Persian Gulf states and Israel, the model shows some significant drawbacks. Basically, realism “focuses upon the state’s outward behavior but largely ignores its origins and its composition.” In other words, realist writers pay almost exclusive attention to the state’s vulnerability to external powers and little attention to vulnerability of the ruling regime within the state. The Persian Gulf states’ attitude toward Israel can be partially explained by transnational ideological orientations such as pan-Arabism and political Islam. In addition, it can be argued that hostility toward Israel has served as a legitimizing mechanism to some Arab regimes including Iraq, which does not share borders with the Jewish state. In short, in calculating their physical and political survival, policy makers often tend to use foreign policy as a tool to achieve domestic goals.

Geography

A state’s geographical characteristics have a significant impact on the formulation of its foreign policy goals. As Hinnebusch and Ehteshami argue, “A state’s capabilities, plus the strategic importance or vulnerability of its location, shape the main threats it faces and its likely ambitions.” These geographical characteristics include location, resource distribution, and population size and composition. Several components of the Persian Gulf states’ attitude toward Israel can be explained by these geographical attributes. For example, the massive increase in military spending by the Gulf states in the 1970s can be attributed more to skyrocketing oil prices and revenues and less to the intense rivalry with Israel. The same can be said about the increase in Saudi and Kuwaiti financial aid to Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinians following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. Indeed, the Gulf monarchies’ huge hydrocarbon resources combined with their small population have determined their contribution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Their role has always been to provide financial assistance to the more populated Arab states. Militarily, their contribution has
been largely symbolic. Finally, the Gulf states do not share borders with Israel, as do Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and the Palestinians. The former actors have been able to adopt a more radical stand against Israel than the latter ones with less concern about paying a price. Being immediate neighbors to Israel, these “frontline” Arab states have to contain their rhetoric.

The most serious defect of the geopolitical model has been the failure to anticipate and accommodate technological and political changes. For example, the proliferation of missiles in several Persian Gulf states since the 1980s has significantly reduced the importance of the distinction between “frontline” states and other Middle Eastern states. During the Gulf War (1991) Iraq launched several missile attacks against Israel. Additionally, in the last several years some Israeli policy makers have threatened to launch a preemptive strike against Iranian nuclear facilities. Similarly, geographical theory cannot explain the change in Iran’s attitude toward Israel in 1979. This shift in policy was fundamentally due to the toppling of the Pahlavi regime and the establishment of the Islamic Republic, which changed the ideological orientation of the decision makers. Finally, the model cannot explain the anticipated changes in Iraq’s foreign policy following the 2003 war. The main force behind these changes is the American occupation of the country.

Ideological Orientation

The geographical characteristics of a state shape the potential goals it can aspire to achieve on the regional and international scenes. An important factor in determining and prioritizing these goals is the ideological orientation of the political elites. Unlike the geographical characteristics, which are relatively static or slow in change, ideological orientations are often altered, particularly following revolutions and major wars. The change in Iran’s foreign policy since 1979 is a case in point.

As one of the oldest civilizations in the Middle East, the Iranians have always had a strong sense of nationalism. Even when the Iranians converted to Islam they maintained many of their pre-Islamic traditions. The country’s foreign policy has always reflected an uneasy combination of Iranian nationalism and Islam. During the Pahlavi regime, nationalism had the upper hand but was replaced by Islam after the 1979 revolution. Indeed, since the toppling of the shah, Iran’s role in the regional and global arenas has been shaped by the interpretation of the ruling clerics of Islam in general and Shi’a jurisprudence in particular. Within this context, animosity toward Zionism has been one of the major principles of the Islamic Republic. Yet, despite revolutionary and ideological rhetoric, national interests continued to play a role in shaping the
country’s policy even under Ayatollah Khomeini, as was illustrated by secret arms deals with the United States and Israel in the mid-1980s, the so-called Iran-Contra affair.

As early as the late 1980s, Iran witnessed what can be called “de-ideologization,” defined by Shireen Hunter as “the waning of ideological principles as the driving force in shaping foreign policy.” This can be seen as a result of the inevitable learning and adjustment process that revolutionary regimes undergo. It can also be explained by deteriorating economic conditions and the need to be integrated in the regional and global systems.

From its creation as a nation-state in 1921 until the overthrow of Saddam’s regime in 2003, the Sunni minority dominated the Iraqi political establishment. In order to assert Sunni influence and power against the Shi’ia majority and the large Kurdish minority, the Sunni leaders sought to strengthen their ties with the broad Arab and Sunni population in neighboring countries. Thus, even under the monarchy, Arab nationalism was prominent in determining Iraq’s foreign orientation. The Ba’ath Party regime (1968–2003) had further confirmed Baghdad’s leading role in the Arab world and in fighting Israel. The Ba’ath doctrine considered Israel an “artificial Zionist entity” that was conceived by imperialistic powers to prevent the Arab nation from achieving its natural potentials. The toppling of Saddam Hussein’s regime and the process of economic and political reconstruction will certainly change Baghdad’s ideological orientation and foreign policy.

Finally, pan-Arabism and political Islam have dominated almost all aspects of social, economic, and political life in Saudi Arabia. The kingdom is the birthplace of both the Arab nation and Islam. However, unlike revolutionary Iran and Ba’athist Iraq, the Saudi government has sought to promote its version of pan-Arabism and political Islam more by consensus and less by violence. Saudi leaders view themselves as having a special responsibility to the entire Arab world and the global Islamic Umma “community.”

Within this context, Saudi Arabia has seen Israel as occupying Arab and Muslim land. The hostility toward Israel was further intensified in 1967 as a result of the Israeli occupation of east Jerusalem, the site of al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam’s third holiest place after Mecca and Medina. Instead of confronting Israel directly, Riyadh has financially supported Arab states and Palestinian organizations in their fights against Tel Aviv. Furthermore, Riyadh has sought to use its special relationship with Washington to put pressure on Israel to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories.

The closing decades of the twentieth century saw a gradual rise of national interests at the expense of ideological beliefs throughout the entire Middle
East. As Gregory Gause put it, “Increased ‘stateness’ at the domestic level across the region may lead to decreased salience for transnational ideological challenges to the existing state system.” This slow “de-ideologization” of the region has facilitated the fundamental shift in the perception of the Arab-Israeli conflict from an ideological one (Arabs against Zionists or Muslims against Jews) to an interstate contest (Palestinians and Syrians against Israelis). This trend is likely to endure.

Minorities

According to Bengio and Ben-Dor, “Minorities are as varied as there are cleavages in any given society.” In the Middle East, two of the main cleavages are based on ethnicity and religion. The ethnic division has long represented a major challenge. Indeed, the Kurds are one of the largest ethnic groups in the world without a nation-state to represent them. The majority of Kurds are Sunni Muslims, like the majority of Arabs. However, the Kurds do not speak Arabic. They have their own language and reside in several countries, including Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syria. The attempts by several Iraqi regimes to “Arabize” the Kurdish population in northern Iraq have failed. It is not an exaggeration to state that the Kurdish question “has been the most violent issue in modern Iraq.”

The most important societal cleavage is based on religion. On the eve of the Muslim conquest in the seventh century, writes Philippe Fargues, “Most peoples in the Middle East were Christian, with Jewish communities scattered throughout the region and a sizeable Zoroastrian population in Iran (then called Persia).” Islam recognizes three categories of peoples—Muslims, “People of the Book” (Ahl al-Kitab), encompassing Christians and Jews, and “polytheists or pagans, with whom there can be no compromise.” For centuries Muslim and Jewish communities lived side by side in peace in both the Ottoman Empire and Iran. For the most part, Jews enjoyed some degree of autonomy, particularly in conducting their personal and religious affairs such as marriage, divorce, and worship. Furthermore, some Jews (and Christians) rose to the top in the state administration and played a great part in commerce, finance, certain crafts, and the medical field. The status of religious minorities (mainly Christians and Jews) improved substantially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in response to growing European influence in the Middle East. The creation of Israel in 1948 represented a turning point for Jewish communities in Arab countries. The declaration of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people and its desire to encourage, facilitate, and absorb Jews from various Arab and Muslim countries intensified a sense of apprehension. In
some Arab countries the distinction between Jews and Israelis was blurred, if not eliminated.

This issue of ethnic and religious minorities is particularly important to understand foreign policy in the Middle East in general and the Persian Gulf states’ attitude toward Israel in particular. The relatively late creation of some Middle Eastern states and the relative failure of assimilating minorities and reaching a consensus on a national identity have further intensified the debate on the role of minorities in formulating foreign policy in the region. In both the Levant and the Persian Gulf, ethnic and religious minorities are separated socially and politically if not physically from each other and from the majority. Albert Hourani describes the status of minorities in the region as follows: “On the whole, these groups formed closed communities. Each was a ‘world’ sufficient to its members and exacting their ultimate loyalty. The worlds touched but did not mingle with each other.”

The composition of Persian Gulf states’ population has had a significant impact on formulating their foreign policy toward Israel. In interactions between the Levant and Persian Gulf subsystems, regional players used the plights of minorities to promote their national agenda. Two examples validate this proposition: the Israeli involvement in the Kurdish insurgency in northern Iraq in the early 1970s, and the Iranian active role in the Shi’ia community in southern Lebanon, particularly since the early 1980s. The Kurdish case suggests that “ethnic divisions within a state can be exploited by its rivals to weaken it and improve its security.” The Israelis (and the Iranians) were able to play the “Kurdish card” because the Kurds were highly mobilized against the Iraqi government. This was not the case with the Iranian Jews. When Israel was created in 1948, Jews in Iran had little incentive to immigrate to the newly born Jewish state. Finally, it is important to point out that attempts by an outside power (Israel) to champion the cause of a minority in a rival state (Iraq or Iran) is strongly resented and is often seen as a “Zionist” conspiracy. The Israeli government’s role in facilitating the immigration of Iraqi Jews to Israel is a case in point.

Decision-Making Theory

Decision-making theory provides another important theoretical tool to understand Persian Gulf states’ foreign policy toward Israel. Adherents to this model argue that it is difficult to give an operational meaning to the concept of “national interest,” the core of realism. Furthermore, the state and other national institutions such as the executive are abstract terms that are hard to define. Instead, decision-making theorists seek to identify the person(s) or
group(s) whose images of the operational environment shape decisions. According to this model, “decision making is the act of choosing among available alternatives about which uncertainty exists.” Accordingly, decision makers in any country try to reconcile demands by different domestic actors (foreign ministry, national security apparatus, religious establishment, factions within the royal family or the ruling party) with threats from and opportunities in the regional and international systems. This balancing process is filtered through decision makers’ intellectual training, social background, and perception. Finally, in making choices in the foreign policy arena, decision makers pursue both national interests, as they define them, and their own individual interests. In other words, writes Raymond Hinnebusch, “Foreign policy is often used to legitimize the ruling regime. Accordingly, the personalities and perceptions of leaders are pivotal in determining choices.”

Decision-making theory is a useful tool for understanding the process of policy making, domestic and foreign, in both developed and developing countries. Given the relative lack of political institutionalization in the Persian Gulf states, the model is particularly important. The worldviews of such figures as the shah and Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran, Saddam Hussein in Iraq, King Fahd in Saudi Arabia, and Ben-Gurion in Israel substantially shaped the foreign policy of their respective states. Ayatollah Khomeini’s perception of the United States as the “Great Satan” and Israel as the “Little Satan” was the major factor in the drastic shift in Iran’s foreign policy since 1979. Saddam Hussein sought to legitimize his regime and build his image as the leader of the Arab world by championing the Palestinian cause and adopting a more radical stand than most Arab leaders—including some Palestinians. King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia formulated their own peace initiatives to forge a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Similarly, the low level of trade and diplomatic ties between Israel and both Oman and Qatar can be attributed, at least partly, to the personalities and perceptions of Sultan Qaboos and Emir Hamad Bin Khalifa al-Thani. Finally, Ben-Gurion played a pivotal role in formulating several Israeli policies. One of these policies, examined in some detail in this text, is the periphery doctrine of the 1950s.

These examples suggest that the role of political leadership in shaping foreign policy “varies from actor to actor, from issue to issue, and from time to time.” Understanding this role permits tentative predictions of probable responses to similar challenges in the future. Still, like any model, decision-making theory has its own limitations. For example, in the context of this study, analyzing Ayatollah Khomeini’s rhetoric against the United States and Israel does not explain the secret arms deals in the Iran-Contra affair of the
mid-1980s. This episode is better explained by the struggle for survival of the regime in Tehran.

**Organization of the Book**

This study is addressed primarily to university students concentrating on the Middle East, to foreign-service officers and government officials dealing with the region, and more broadly to educated laymen interested in international relations. The volume is divided into three parts. The first part examines the main interactions between Iran and Israel. These include the status of Iranian Jews, the periphery doctrine, the Iran-Contra affair, Tehran’s stand on the Arab-Israeli conflict/peace process, Iranian support to Hizbollah, and nuclear proliferation. The second part analyzes Iraq’s policy toward Israel. The focus in this part is on the massive immigration of Iraqi Jews to Israel in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Baghdad’s contribution to the Arab-Israeli wars, Tel Aviv’s stand on the Iran-Iraq War (1980–88), the first Gulf War (1991) and the second Gulf War (2003), Israel’s involvement in the Kurdish rebellion in the early 1970s, and the Israeli preemptive raid on the Iraqi nuclear facilities in Osiraq in 1981. The third part deals with the Gulf monarchies’ role in both the Arab-Israeli wars and the peace process. The use of oil as a political weapon and Saudi Arabia’s peace initiatives are discussed in detail. The main focus in this part, and indeed in the entire volume, is on the three largest and most populated Gulf states—Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. However, the limited but significant diplomatic and trade ties between Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates are examined in the chapter on the Gulf monarchies.

The discussion in each chapter is preceded by an analysis of the main determinants of the Gulf states’ policy toward Israel. Specifically, four variables are identified and examined in some detail: economic resources and performance, ideological orientations (political Islam and pan-Arabism), geopolitics, and relations with the United States. The concluding chapter seeks to predict the likely interactions between the Persian Gulf states and Israel in the aftermath of the 2003 war. The analysis in this volume suggests that the tense encounters that characterized the relations between the two Middle East subsystems in the last half century do not need to endure. The changing regional and international landscapes as well as evolving domestic, economic, and political forces, indicate that a détente is both desired and possible.