

**THE  
FOREIGN  
POLICIES**

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**OF THE**

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**GLOBAL  
SOUTH**

**Rethinking Conceptual Frameworks**

**edited by**

**Jacqueline Anne Braveboy-Wagner**

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# Foreign Policy in the Arab World: The Promise of a State-Centered Approach

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After a half-century of existence as a separate subfield of international relations, foreign policy analysis has proved to be strong on description but relatively weak on explanation. One reason for this has been the overemphasis by global north scholars on decisionmaking processes—in contrast to the political economic focus of many global south researchers. Ever since Richard Snyder et al. (1954) identified the perception, choice, and expectations of leaders as the main notions to be investigated, the process of foreign policy analysis has been dominated by decisionmaking and perceptual frameworks. The descriptive and reductionist approaches that initially dominated were replaced by perspectives overemphasizing the political psychology of leaders. This confined framework has obstructed the understanding of many major problems in international relations.

Foreign policy is indeed about short-term decisionmaking, but that is not all. There is a broader, long-term concern. How a decision originates from a historically determined reality, and how it fits into societal, regional, and international patterns of politics, are eventually more significant than how it is made. Most important, the traditional focus on components, structures, and processes of decisionmaking has obscured the understanding of the role of the state in foreign policy making. This chapter argues, therefore, that a better explanatory approach to foreign policy, at least for Arab states, is a state-centered one that would bring to light neglected phenomena such as state-building processes and the state's need to maintain its position and perpetuate its existence in the international arena.

## Foreign Policy Analysis of Arab States

Summarizing the trends in the study of Arab foreign policies, Bahgat Korany and A.E.H. Dessouki (1991) made note of the underdeveloped state of the study of Arab foreign policy and recognized three traditional approaches leading to syncretistic accounts: (1) the psychologistic approach; (2) the great powers approach; and (3) the reductionist approach. The first school, they argue, views foreign policy as a result of the impulses, desires, and idiosyncrasies of a single leader. Relying on a static, paradigmatic understanding of Arab leaders—for instance, Saddam Hussein as heir of Gamal Abdul Nasser—this school errs by overemphasizing individual choice as the primary determinant of foreign policy.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, it ignores the context (domestic, regional, and global) within which the foreign policy making process occurs. This school has long dominated and has often been relayed by journalistic accounts and, later, political psychology formulations. The particularist dialectic of this approach, which I critique in greater detail below, is an impediment to analysis of systemic aggregations.

Derivative of realist political thinking, the great power approach was dominant during the Cold War and viewed the foreign policy of third world nations as a function of the bipolarity of the international system. The foreign dynamics of these countries, it was argued, could not be but reactive to external political and economic stimuli. The main criticism leveled against this school was that it neglected domestic factors. Other shortcomings were its focus on the East-West conflict rather than on relevant geostrategic interactions, as well as its neglect of internal variables. Moreover, the end of the Cold War and other changes in the international system during the 1990s render the explanatory power of this approach limited, if not obsolete.

One well-known proponent of the great power approach was Nadav Safran (1985), who argued that the determinative role of the external powers is both crucial and constant in the foreign policy of the Middle East states.<sup>2</sup> Specifically, he noted:

The involvement of rival outside powers has been at the heart of the Middle East problem for some two centuries. During the period, the specific geographic focus of the problem often shifted, the particular configurations of domestic and regional weakness changed, the identity of the rival outside powers and the nature of their interests altered, but the matrix that made up the problem remained constant. It always involved the extension into the Middle East arena of big-power struggles involving external interests and wider power configurations. (Safran 1985: 359)

Safran placed the outside powers "matrix" at the heart of the understanding of Middle East foreign policy. Thus the great power dimension, and the U.S.-Soviet rivalry in particular, provided the narrative of the history's region. Domestic developments were secondary. The effects of the great power dimension, Safran maintained, were reflected in all facets of foreign policy: internal politics, regional politics, and conflict situations. Michael Hudson (1976) also adopted that approach, focusing on the occurrence of conflicts and the role of external powers, although he recognized that the interrelationship of regional and foreign powers had become more complex over the years. Noting that the relationship was one of "mutual exploitation," he argued that it is conflicts (Arab versus Israeli, Arab versus Persian, and Arab versus Arab) that form the matrix of the system, providing springboards for influence. Domestic stimuli of foreign policy, as well as the role of the state, were as absent from his discussion as they were from Safran's.

The reductionist, or model-building, approach explains the foreign policies of nations through the use of the same factors as those that affect developed nations. The variations in terms of resources and capabilities provide the framework for comparison. Postulating unchanging rational actor behaviors and similar foreign policy rationales, this approach fails in particular to account for institutional specificities and differing behavioral motivations. James Rosenau's (1969) linkage politics, an older foreign policy approach, is an example of this reductionism, which proved problematic when applied to the Arab world. An offshoot of his concept of a "penetrated" political system, linkage politics was defined as

the recurrent sequences of behavior that originate on one side of the boundary between the two types of systems and that become linked to phenomena on the other side in the process of unfolding, [or] any recurrent sequence of behavior that originates in one system and is reacted to in another. (Rosenau 1969: 45)

The concept proved difficult to apply to Arab political systems. Indeed, as Eberhard Kienle (1990: 26–27) points out, the subtype of linkage processes actually depends on a dichotomy between internal and external politics, for no linkage would exist if the two systems were to coincide. But in Arab foreign policies the frontier between the domestic and the external (other Arab states) is razor-thin, pointing to an overarching Arab polity encompassing in various ways the several Arab states. In short, inasmuch as Arab states' foreign policy making processes are largely affected by the notion of the Arab region as a segmentary society, Rosenau's linkage politics concept—as an example of

a model-building approach—loses much of its explanatory power. To determine the degree of overlap between internal and external Arab affairs, one need only look today and in the past at Syrian-Lebanese, Egyptian-Libyan, Saudi-Yemenese, Moroccan-Mauritanian, or Jordanian-Palestinian relations—all characterized by a high level of policy interdependence and multilayered interrelatedness.

Thus the three traditional approaches identified by Korany and Dessouki lack explanatory power. Focusing on an often arbitrary set of idiosyncrasies, they have tended to account for isolated features. This has resulted in the development of a body of theory too scanty to be useful for the foreign policy analyst. The need is for more substantive and systematic frameworks.

Korany and Dessouki offer their own framework in which the foreign policy output is conceptualized in terms of "role." The role category is broken down into *role conception* (the actor's objectives and strategies) and *role performance* (the actual behavior). This duality is meant to enable the analyst to identify the conformity, or lack thereof, between conception and performance. Against this background, four categories are offered to understand the foreign policy domestic environment: (1) geography, population and social structure, economic and military capabilities, and political structure; (2) foreign policy orientation; (3) the decisionmaking process; and (4) foreign policy behavior. Shaped by domestic conditions, a foreign policy output is the sequential result of an orientation, a decision, and an action.

Korany and Dessouki's recourse to role theory is useful in that it highlights the fact that foreign policy analysis starts from the actor's perspective. As a reaction to great power approaches, where the level of analysis lies beyond the subordinate nation, it is particularly appropriate. The framework is undoubtedly a seminal contribution to the study of foreign policies and a welcome departure from the three classical schools. Yet it is faced with at least two problems. First, little information is conveyed about the actors who conduct foreign policy: although Korany and Dessouki correctly note that the process of foreign policy making takes place in a specific social and institutional context, the interaction between the presidency (as head unit of a regime) and the state (the permanent all-encompassing institutional unit), and the effects of this interaction on foreign policy, are not emphasized at all. Second, although the four categories of information are sound, their interconnections, if any, are not articulated and are not grounded in a historical perspective. Notwithstanding these comments, the work of Korany and Dessouki inspired studies of Arab foreign policies that were more analytically focused and used concepts as varied as ideology, the operational code

(drawing on Leites 1951; George 1969), revolution, legitimacy, and nationalism. This wave of new studies shared a common emphasis on the interplay between domestic sources of foreign policy making and the international environment. In effect, internal constraints and external influences were understood to be the determinative patterns of foreign policies.

One such study is Kienle's (1990). He looks at several determinants of Syro-Iraq relations that have impacted their foreign policies in the period 1968–1989. After analyzing the changing dynamics and successive phases of the Ba'thi-Ba'thi relationship—from party quarrels to state consolidation and conflict and competition for regional influence, with a period of rapprochement in 1978–1979—Kienle concludes that “inter-Arab relations are characterized by a blurred distinction between internal and external affairs” (1990: 170).

More explicit in their use of domestic dimensions are Tareq Ismael and Jacqueline Ismael (1986), who examine the patterns of variation in domestic environments as a way to account for the variation in Arab foreign policies. Their conclusion is that domestic socioeconomic issues (such as the challenge of national development) and ideological concerns (primarily religious ones as well as the attitude toward the West) have a major impact on the foreign policy process of Arab states.

However, most of these research agendas still reserve a disproportionate role for external-internal linkages. “Domestic circumstance and international posture” (Ismael and Ismael 1986: 17) and “the primacy of constraints” (Korany and Dessouki 1991: 25–48) are the overriding and all-encompassing categories. Their interplay supersedes analysis of the state's multilayered and continuous attempts at maintaining legitimacy and authority through foreign policy behavior. Despite the renewed interest in the effect of domestic politics on foreign policy making, the state as a focal point remains largely absent from the reflection. The Arab state is, notwithstanding, the domestic actor that enacts the regional and international designs formulated through the dynamics of internal politics. The state's control over the nation's economic resources also provides it with an opportunity to pursue through foreign policy its own structural state-building agenda with regard, in particular, to notions of sovereignty. Both these dimensions point to the need to go beyond the interplay of domestic and international environments first identified by Korany and Dessouki and followed by other writers. The state itself deserves more analytical attention as both a catalyst and initiator of foreign policy. Furthermore, the identification of the issues (as Ismael and Ismael have done) is only a first step.

If we need to understand the formulation and implementation of policies, then we have to ask what is it in the nature of these issues that

makes them persist. How do the processes of statehood promote such continuity? (I note that in a brief discussion in her general study about Iraq, Christine Helms [1984] isolates statehood, along with strategic vulnerability and authority, as prime considerations in the formulation of the country's foreign policy. Regrettably, she does not discuss this factor at any length.) Finally, how are these problems played out in the foreign policy behavior of each regime?

### **The Fallacy of the Political Psychology Approach**

Before going further, I wish to return to a discussion of one of the most common approaches to Arab foreign policy, described by Korany and Dessouki as the "psychologistic" approach (see Post 1993; George 1992; Renshon 1993; Karsh and Rautsi 1991). Political psychology is essentially concerned with notions of personality and "good" decisionmaking, that is, the analysis and assessment of the quality of decisions taken by the actors in foreign policy. Both foci share a primary concern about individuals rather than governments or regimes. Because studies based on these foci tend to be chronicles—which are certainly informative from a purely historical point of view—the insights we get from this perspective have tended to be more descriptive than analytical. Essentially, the study becomes a narrative, an observation of sequential events.

This approach, however, lacks explanatory power. Focusing on an often arbitrary set of idiosyncrasies, it has tended to account for isolated features of states. Jerrold Post (1993), for instance, examined Iraqi foreign policy during the 1990–1991 Gulf War by looking exclusively at the psychological makeup of Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. Post's view was that the perceptions, calculations, actions, and style of Saddam Hussein were the main influences on the decision to invade Kuwait and what followed. But this analysis errs first and foremost because it uses inaccurate evidence. In his narrative, Post gives an account of Hussein's childhood, which he later offers as determinative in his political career but can cite no authoritative sources. He makes detailed references to founding episodes in Hussein's relationship with his family, without distinguishing governmental propaganda and mythmaking from serious biographical literature.<sup>3</sup> As Post would have it, "Saddam has been consumed by dreams of glory since his earliest days" (1993: 268). That may very well be, but neither the nexus between Hussein's childhood and contemporary Iraqi policymaking nor the relevance of this link is firmly established. Similarly, Post blames, as do even more explicitly Efraim Karsh and Inari Rautsi, the failure of the October 7,

1959, Ba'thi assassination attempt against President Abdelkarim Qassem on "a crucial error in judgment by Saddam" (Karsh and Rautsi 1991: 281). But accounts of this incident show that if indeed Hussein participated in the preparation of the coup and was reportedly wounded, his role was at best peripheral.<sup>4</sup> The mid-1960s split inside the Ba'th party, which initially originated as a result of a dispute in the Syro-Iraqi National Command, is attributed to Hussein, and the 1968 Ba'thi revolution is reduced to a coup mounted by him. In sum, the policies of Iraq acquire meaning, according to Post, only from the impulses of Saddam Hussein. This lays the groundwork for Post's analysis of the Gulf War, which, he notes, was personalized by the president of Iraq. In sum, Post's analysis overstates Saddam Hussein's role and its logic of inquiry is essentially anecdotal.

Stanley Renshon is also interested in using the Gulf War as a test of good judgment insofar as this political crisis "provides us . . . with a set of sharply etched circumstances . . . within a sharply bracketed time frame" (Renshon 1992: 67). In adopting such a perspective, Renshon narrows his understanding of the Gulf War to the whims of one individual during a seven-month period. In addition, as with Post, most of the literature that constitutes his factual reference material is misleading, as is some of the public information on which he relies. Ghazi Algosaibi (1993) and Bishara Bahbah (1991) also present Saddam Hussein's psychological makeup as a prime factor in their analyses of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Algosaibi sees the war as the result of Hussein's "adventurism" and his "gambler" cavalier attitude and extends this vision to all Arabs, arguing that they tend to rationalize international crises in terms of foreign conspiracies. Bahbah, for his part, emphasizes what he sees as Hussein's miscalculations and misperceptions.

By focusing almost exclusively on the psychological makeup of President Saddam Hussein, the analyses of Algosaibi, Bahbah, Karsh and Rautsi, Post, and Renshon obscure the determinative role that the historical context plays in informing both the social and political categories in which the decisionmaker is immersed. As Snyder and colleagues themselves noted in their classic work:

What is required is a sociological conception of personality . . . [a] scheme that places the individual decision-maker (actor) in a special kind of social organization. Therefore, we must think of a social person whose "personality" is shaped by his interactions with other actors and by his place in the system. This does not mean that we reject the influence of ego-related needs and tensions but only that the behavior of the decision-making actor be explained *first* in terms of personality factors relevant to his membership and participation in a decision-making system. In this



way, we can isolate what area of behavior must be accounted for in terms of idiosyncratic factors, that is, self-oriented needs not prompted by the system. (Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin 1962: 161)

The difficulties in assessing the determinative role of personality or context arise, as Snyder and his colleagues further argued, because "we are still confronted by the empirical puzzle of the extent to which an individual policy-maker (such as a particular foreign minister or head of state) influences policy outcomes and the extent to which impersonal forces (such as historical movement, ideologies, and governmental systems) also determine actions" (Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin 1962: 7).

The psychological analyses represented by Post, Renshon, Algo-saibi, Bahbah, and Karsh fail to balance the macro and micro dimensions of foreign policy making in such a way as to place the idiosyncrasies of individuals *within* a historically defined space (the state they lead) and an equally ongoing issue (the foreign policy matter at hand). Foreign policy making is, here, the province of psychological conditions; medical diagnosis is the technique of analysis. Although the political psychology approach does provide a more precise and systematized conception of how to look at foreign policy problems, it in effect requires an amount of information that is excessive and empirically almost impossible to obtain. More important, it reduces the process of foreign policy making to a set of tasks enacted by a decisionmaking unit. In so doing, it obstructs the identification of both the historical role of the state as a builder through foreign policies and the introduction of this continuing state-building process into the decisional background of any given regime or administration.

### The Elements of a State-Centered Approach

An alternative way to study comparative foreign policy is to focus on the state itself. The postulate in research agendas based on the role of the state is that there is a need to look beyond the idiosyncrasies of a decision process, because to limit the analysis to the understanding of how a decision is made confines foreign policy making to ad hoc hypothesizing. Bringing the state back into the analysis of foreign policy can yield improvements in the quality of findings in the field. As noted by Rosenau:

For several decades [students of foreign policy] have not been inclined to treat the state as a substantive concept, preferring instead to equate

it with the actions of governmental decision-makers and thus to bypass the questions of its role, competence, and autonomy. For better or for worse, such an inclination is no longer tenable. (Rosenau 1987: 3)

Despite the ever-increasing influence of nonstate actors in the twenty-first century, the comment is still *à propos* in terms of the continuing need to analyze the role of the state in foreign policy.

The approach that I espouse is a state-building one, with the term *state-building* viewed in two senses: (1) as a continuous process (the state as becoming); and (2) as maintenance of the state's position in the international system, that is, state survival. Both notions are inscribed in a competitive continuum. As such, they are indistinguishable from a historical understanding of a country's position with regard to its regional and global environment. Using the state as the unit of analysis and working within the parameters of these theoretical assumptions, an analysis of foreign policy can be constructed on the explanatory logic that states seek to survive within a competitive and anarchical environment and that states' essential and immediate concern is to gather economic and political resources.

The approach builds on earlier state-centric models that emphasized the interrelationship between the domestic and external environments with the state as core actor.<sup>5</sup> For example, Howard Lentner (1974) posited that foreign policy is policy directed toward or responding to the environment of a territorial state and its government. For him, the state's external environment is understood through the role of both the international system (i.e., a pattern of interaction among states within a structure) and what he terms "situations" (i.e., limited patterns of interaction). In addition, foreign policy is seen as the result of the active interaction between domestic and international influences. Therefore, for Lentner, foreign policy is an exercise conducted by *states* embedded in *situations* within the *international system*.

Maria Papadakis and Harvey Starr (1987) add texture to Lentner's analysis, arguing that to comprehend the nature of foreign policy it is necessary to understand the relationship between the state and its environment. Foreign policy is posited as resulting from the state's action with regard to all aspects of its environment and its capacity to make use of particular opportunities. The state (i.e., institutions and structures) is the central actor whose choices (based on its willingness) affect both the output (i.e., the decision) and the outcome of foreign policy behavior. The effects of this process reverberate at different levels of the domestic and international environments, providing, in turn, opportunities and constraints for the state to act and react. The centrality of the

relationship between the state and the environment stems from the fact that the latter, in both its tangible and relational aspects, establishes the range of possibilities for the former's action.

Nonetheless, both Lentner and Papadakis and Starr formulate a rather static vision of the relationship between the state and its environment matrix, failing in particular to accommodate the historical environment.<sup>6</sup> For if the state, on the one hand, and the environment on the other are permanent structures, given their ongoing set of relationships, foreign policy then becomes a repetitive exercise. The foreign policy behavior of a given regime or administration can better be comprehended as part of a global pattern of the state's historical foreign policy. More precisely, in the case of Arab state foreign policy, the use of specific opportunities (Starr and Papadakis) or situations (Lentner) such as the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait can be seen as answering to the logic of both the state's foreign policy telos and the Ba'thi regime's own disposition.

In addition to the historical environment of the state, a state-building approach to foreign policy analysis should investigate the dividing line between the state and the regime or administration, identifying the concerns of each, as well as the regime leaders' understanding and use of their state's history.<sup>7</sup> Looking at the linkages between domestic politics and the decisions to go to war, J. D. Hagan (1994) demonstrates that the interests and the beliefs that a regime holds and shares with its support network (interest groups, party, military) are an important motivational basis for the general orientation of a state's foreign policy. Pointing to connections between international environment, state, regime, and domestic structure, he notes:

It is assumed that who governs matters because it is normally a small elite who makes choices related to going to war. Nonetheless, the ability of these leaders to carry out their preferred policies is conditioned by ongoing domestic constraints. These domestic political pressures are of sufficient magnitude that they can significantly modify the constraints of an anarchic international system. With these assumptions as a backdrop, it is possible to identify two basic approaches to linking domestic political systems to war proneness—a "regime structure" approach, and a "statist" approach. (Hagan 1994: 84)

I contend that both of these approaches need to be integrated into an understanding of foreign policy as a whole. A state-centric approach to foreign policy analysis makes it possible to discern the role of the effect on foreign policy of both regime structure and norms, on the one hand, and state structure and organization on the other.

In sum, a state-building approach focuses on both state and regime considerations *and* the state's historical position in the global and

regional environment. For example, the contemporary Arab state has generally displayed five major characteristics: (1) an inherently modern nature due to recent decolonizations; (2) territorial problems; (3) the existence of a difficult and complex state-society relationship; (4) the presence of one-man leadership systems; and (5) salience of legitimacy issues. In an analysis of the foreign policy making process of the Iraqi leadership during the 1990–1991 Gulf War, these factors were found to be particularly pertinent to Iraq (Mohamedou 1998). Iraqi regimes have devoted much effort over the years to consolidating their power in the face of chronic political restiveness. In the reconstruction period following the Iran-Iraq War, the Ba'thi regime needed an issue that would give it occasion to act in the name of the Iraqi state, thereby using statehood attributes to regenerate itself. The initial decisions taken were an attempt to reposition Iraq (cashing in on postwar Arab support) in the regional and international environments while at the same time reaffirming the Ba'thi regime's control over society. The annexation of Kuwait after Kuwait's refusal to yield to Iraq's financial demands was an opportunity for the Ba'thists to renew their lease on their own state, that is, to consolidate the state's position and ensure the regime's security.

Although space does not permit a full analysis here, during the Gulf War key decisions taken were almost always determined by the dimensions of the state-building/regime security rationale, with regime security overtaking state development as events turned more and more against Iraq. In fact, because of these self-imposed limitations, the Iraqi leadership enjoyed only a narrow decisional space. As the crisis dramatically turned into an international event with the United States and its allies resolved to defeat Iraq, the Iraqi authorities improvised a strategy of maximization of the regime's interests by closely associating them with the country's fate.

The analysis of Iraq's foreign policy behavior during the Gulf War also reveals the importance of embedding our analysis in history: the many factors that entered into the situation originated from a historically determined reality, and the Ba'thi regime systematically rationalized its behavior by referring to Iraq's historical rights over Kuwait. The coupling of security considerations with long-term statehood considerations was the ultimate expression of the invasion's legitimacy in Iraqi eyes.<sup>8</sup>

### Conclusion

"It is inadvisable to personify states and to attribute decisions directly to them," wrote Joseph Frankel (1959: 2), stressing that "personification implies continuous and constant units." Yet continuity and constancy

are indeed appropriate characteristics of the state. My view holds that the *abstractness* of the state, not the psychological makeup of its leaders, is the locus of foreign policy. The process of policymaking is an aggregate and continuous one, and it is inherently linked to the aspirations and position of the state within a global system. Beyond Weberian and juridical approaches to the state, a normative Hegelian understanding of the state's need to achieve (as a collectivity) becomes a tool to grasp the nature of a country's foreign policy. The rationale behind the approach is that there should be a symbiotic relationship between foreign policy analysis and international relations. This, I submit, can be achieved through the adoption of a state-oriented approach to foreign policy.

The presumption that foreign policy is made by government officials, and that it is in terms of the interests of these officials that the analysis of interests must be constructed, is today complemented by concern about the role of the state and its institutional structures, as well as the way these features are causal to foreign policy behavior. A state-centric approach to foreign policy analysis makes it possible to discern the interplay of state structures, regime structure and norms, historical and global roles, and state action. Given the particular characteristics of the Arab state outlined in the last section, I believe that, among global south states, this model is most appropriate for the analysis of the foreign policies of Arab states. Empirical analysis may show that it is applicable as well to some other regions of the global south.

### Notes

1. This particular thesis was, for example, offered by Peter Mansfield (1982: 62–73). For a counterthesis that proposes Nasser as a universal paradigm, see Saad Eddin Ibrahim (1981: 30–61).

2. Safran's essay is supposedly devoted to the foreign policies of Middle East countries. Yet its very title ("Dimensions of the Middle East Problem") announces that it is providing a modern formulation of the so-called Eastern question.

3. References to unproven episodes include the following: "[Saddam Hussein] left his home in the middle of the night" (1991: 280), or "Saddam's mother . . . may have attempted suicide" (1993: 50).

4. Saddam Hussein's name is not once mentioned in the extensive account that Uriel Dann gives of the incident. Dann writes: "An executive committee [to carry out the assassination plan] was formed composed of Fuad al-Rikabi, Abdallah al-Rikabi; Ayad Sa'id Thabit, and Khalid al-Dulaymi, all members of the Ba'th regional command. The operational responsibility was in the hands of Thabit" (1969: 253). In an equally detailed account, Majid Khadduri (1969: 126–132) makes vague mention of one "Sudam Tikriti" who was present.

5. I am not referring here to political economic models that by nature are state-centric. For example, Bruce Moon (1987) offers a theoretical treatment of the role of the state in his presentation of a political economy approach to foreign policy analysis. In sketching such a perspective, Moon offers three guiding principles: (1) Policies arise from states lodged within a political economy that shapes their behavior; (2) the environment shaping the character and behavior of states is to be grasped globally and with regard to economic as well as political phenomena; and (3) the crux of most countries' foreign policies lies in the sphere of economic relations and domestically determined distribution patterns. Political economy conceptions of the state and its primary objectives highlight economic policy as the centerpiece from which the remaining elements of foreign policy flow. It is nonetheless possible to ask where the logic ultimately leads. For if, as Moon emphasizes, the backbone of the approach is the growing interdependence of public policy, comparative politics, and international relations theory (each endowed with its own research questions), by focusing heavily on the economic bases, structures, and processes of national power reflected only secondarily in foreign affairs, we risk losing sight of the initial query of foreign policy analysis, more simply formulated by Lloyd Jensen (1981) as "why do states behave the way they do?" In the end, Moon's laudable effort boosts political economy analysis, not foreign policy analysis.

6. Papadakis and Starr list six levels of environment (international system, international relations, societal, governmental, role, and individual) that combine to create opportunity or constraints for the state. Adding a historical dimension could have been an improvement. Papadakis and Starr's levels are homogenous, for they are spatial categories, whereas the proposed historical dimension is temporal. Yet if foreign policy is, as has often been argued, a spatio-temporal activity, then a combination of the seven levels is possible. In addition, if, as Papadakis and Starr maintain, some characteristics of the environment will be consistently more important than others, the history of the state can in certain instances gain greater explanatory force with regard to foreign policy behavior. Lentner, for his part, recognizes that by using a concept of the state in foreign policy analysis and emphasizing longer-term considerations, historical developments are brought into theoretical context (1994: 9).

7. As particular and temporally limited incarnations of a state, regimes and administrations are synonymous. The main difference is that the term *regime* tends to be applied to undemocratic governments and also to developing countries where regimes can last for only months, sometimes days, whereas *administration* tends to be reserved for democracies where the alternation of power is usually more peaceful and institutionally stable.

8. For further details, see Mohammad-Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou (1998).