

Preface

This volume grew out of a meeting at the University of St. Andrews convened to develop a book badly needed to fill a gap in the study of Middle East foreign policy. The only multicase text in the field, Korany and Dessouki's seminal *Foreign Policies of Arab States*, had gone out of print and had not, in any case, included the major non-Arab actors making up the Middle East system. There was thus a need for a text that would combine an analysis of the Middle East regional system with case studies of how different individual states responded to a similar environment.

The first task of the project was to generate an analytical framework that would incorporate enough of a consensus on the key variables to allow systematic comparison of the country cases while avoiding imposition of an overly rigid and artificial symmetry. This framework, though presented in this book by Raymond Hinnebusch, is the outcome of a collaborative effort involving both the preparation of country studies and interchanges at the St. Andrews meeting that reached a rough, albeit by no means complete, agreement.

This consensus could be described as a modified form of realism. The insecurity of the regional arena was thought to remain the predominant factor shaping Middle East foreign policies, which exhibited with considerable regularity a realist preoccupation with power. While constraints on foreign policy from economic relations with the developed great powers were acknowledged, the group concluded that this asymmetrical interdependence left considerable autonomy to states in the choice of their foreign policies. Moreover, while policymakers could ignore neither transstate identities such as Arabism and Islam nor domestic opposition, several decades of state formation had given decisionmakers

considerable internal autonomy in policymaking. Despite this “majority view,” each of the contributors to this book gives a somewhat different weight to the mix of factors, reflective of differences in interpretation and variations in the country cases.

In addition to those of the chapter authors, major contributions to the consensus were made by Jubin Goodarzi, Janet Hancock, Burhan Jaf, Ibrahim Karawan, Joseph Nevo, Francis Outram, Patrick Seale, Hans-Jakob Schindler, and Paul Wilkinson. Special thanks are due to Gerd Nonneman for his trenchant and insightful critique of the framework. Funding was kindly provided by the British Academy, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Honeyman Foundation, and the University of St. Andrews, to each of whom we are grateful.

— *The Editors*

The Middle East (the Arab League plus Iran, Israel, and Turkey)



